

AMHRC review



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AUSTRALIAN
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Published in October 2011 as a review of our antipodean winter

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A Snapshot Diary of the AMHRC on Tour Around Australia with the Folklore Group from Aegean Macedonia: "Belomortsi" and Aegean Macedonian Human Rights Activists

In Cooperation with: Macedonian Community of Western Australia Inc; Macedonian Community of Adelaide and South Australia Inc; Macedonian Community of Illawarra Inc and the Aegean Macedonian Association of New South Wales

Beginnings

Thursday 11 August 9.15 pm at Melbourne's Tullamarine Airport

The "Belomortsi" troupe from Aegean Macedonia in Greece, consisted of nine members: the bagpipe player, Anastas Jovanov (from the village of Rakita – Kajlar County); Tome Geshov (Krontselevo – Voden); Kachbanova (Ofchareni – Lerin); Natse Dinchev (Dolno Kopanovo – Ne-Ofchareni – Lerin); Stefo Majarov (Popozhani – Lerin/Solun); Areta Jank- (Tushilovo – Kukush); Katina Klopcheva (Krushoradi – Lerin).



Magda gush); Lefa Chicheva ulova (Rosen – Lerin); Atanas Trajanov

Also in their company, came the editor in chief of "Nova Zora" (a Macedonian newspaper distributed throughout Aegean Macedonia and Greece in general) Dimitri Jovanov; member of the central committee of *Vinozhito* (a Macedonian political party struggling for the rights of Macedonians in Greece) and recently elected President of the village of Ofchareni (Lerin), Pando Ashlakov and renowned human rights activists from the Athens based NGO - *Greek Helsinki Monitor* – Dr. Panyote Dimitras and Nafsika Papanikolaitou.

Altogether, a group of 14...tired after 24 hours of flying time...

Day Two A Civic Reception from the City of Melbourne

Friday 11.30 am – our guests were graciously given an official civic reception by the City of Melbourne. *Councillor Louie* presented all the visitors with tokens of welcome and this was followed by a historically guided tour of Melbourne Town Hall.

Dimitri Jovanov, the editor of *Nova Zora*, informed Councillor Louie (with the aid of Vas-ko Nastevski of the AMHRC, who acted as interpreter) about the negative discrimination against all ethnic minorities in Greece, especially Macedonians...



Day Two Continued

Friday evening 7.30pm – AMHRC Advocates Club assembled in the heart of Melbourne central at the Australian Centre for the Moving image (ACMI)

Jason Kambovski of the AMHRC outlined the latest efforts of the AMHRC; Dr. Dimitras praised the work of the AMHRC and MHRMI in connection with their cooperation with the Greek Helsinki Monitor in the preparation of legal action against the state of Greece on behalf of Macedonians who have been denied their citizenship and property rights. Dimitri Jovanov and Pando Ashlakov made an appeal to the audience to continue to spread the word about this monumental campaign and to encourage others to apply to join.

The evening ended with a short performance by the *Belomortsji*, as an 'appetiser' for the main event in Melbourne on the following evening.





Day Three The AMHRC's 28th Annual Dinner

Saturday August 13 by
7.00pm over 500 people
had crammed into Neret
Receptions...

George Vlahov of the AMHRC began proceedings by informing the audience about the most recent activities of the AMHRC and then introduced the guest speakers: Dr. Dimitras, Dimtri Jovanov and Pando Ashla-kov. They were followed with a 'full scale' performance by the *Belomortsi*, who were ably supported by the Vasko Nikolovski band. This program was to be repeated



throughout the tour. The evening ended with the auction of various items donated for the benefit of the AMHRC – and as usual, the auctions were carried out with aplomb and success, by Jason Kambovski of the AMHRC.



Day Four Sydney

A 7am flight from Melbourne airport took our overseas guests and an AMHRC delegation to Sydney. We were greeted in Sydney by representatives of the Aegean Macedonian Council of NSW. The AMC-NSW treated us to a fine lunch and then via a tour bus, we were taken to our hotel lodgings so that we could prepare for the dinner dance at the Rockdale Ilinden Sports Centre.

Another full house 'madly' applauded the same program as was used in Melbourne. An added highlight on the evening was the very vibrant performance of the local junior Macedonian dance/folklore group.

Our thanks to the AMC-NSW and its President, Mr. Mick Veloskey, for organising matters so well and for being flexible hosts.

Day Five Wollongong

Monday August 15 – After breakfast we were on the road again, heading for another Dinner at the community hall of the Macedonian Community of Illawarra, located in the town of Wollongong on the NSW coast, a few hours south of Sydney.

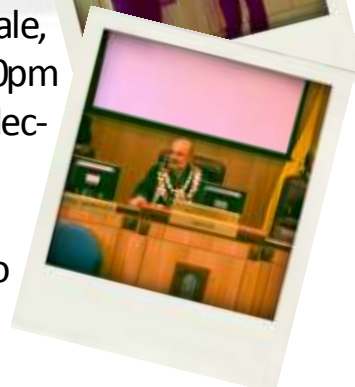
A Monday night dinner...it's not something that we were feeling confident about; one of the leaders of the community, Olga Nikolovska, had assured us that our concerns were needless. All the same, we didn't believe it until we saw it...another absolutely full house – an attendance which, according to community leaders, had not been seen for many years and when the continuance of the AMHRC/MHRMI ***Our Name is Macedonia*** campaign was announced, the applause was deafening...

Day Six Back to Sydney

Another Civic Reception and Greek Human Rights Violations Against Macedonians Recounted at University of NSW

Tuesday August 16—after some sightseeing in Wollongong, we were back in Sydney by 2.30pm - in time for the President of Ovchareni, Pando Ashlakov, to be given a civic welcome by the Mayor of the city of Rockdale, Mr. Bill Saravinovski (also possessing a Macedonian heritage). By 5.30pm we were at the University of NSW, where Dr. Dimitras gave an official lecture before the Law Faculty.

The day ended with the whole delegation taking a 10pm flight back to Melbourne.



Day Seven More Civic Hospitality

Wednesday August 17— The day began deep in Melbourne's outer north with a 10am civic welcome given to Pando Ashlakov by the Mayor of the City of Whittlesea, Mr. Rex Griffin. The discussion between the two was quite far ranging (and this kept the AMHRC's interpreter, George Vlahov, quite busy) and of course Mr. Ashlakov took the opportunity to explain the difficulties he faces as a result of Greek racism. The reception ended very amicably with Mr. Griffin accepting an invitation from Mr. Ashlakov, to be his guest in Ovchareni...



The middle of the day was utilised by our overseas guests to do some much needed shopping in Melbourne central. At one point, on the footpath of Melbourne's famous Elizabeth St. outside a well known department store, *Belmorts* Tasho Jovanov and Tome Geshov, were discussing in 'normal' Macedonian fashion, the purchase of various items, when a worried passer by sincerely and respectfully enquired: "Is everything ok?" This brought on much laughter and I later reflected that while Australians in general are cautious/conservative drivers, they seem to compensate for this as adventurous and imaginative pedestrians...though no doubt, the Macedonian tones fuelled the mind's eye on this occasion...



During a lunch break in Melbourne's Italian district, the consensus was that the tour was too engrossingly pleasurable, for us to notice how tired we all are...never-the-less, a few of us remarked on some strange dreams we had during our slumbers upon returning from *Sydney*...I was the only one willing to admit the nature of my dream...it involved a focus on an ancient myth to do with some no longer extant creatures...the story tells how if they are cut in half, then the two...the halves, would fight each other to death...clearly, I was tired or was it that...

By 6pm we were all assembled in one of the Lecture halls of Melbourne University's Law Faculty to hear Dr. Dimitras deliver a lucid lecture on human rights violations in Balkans. Dr. Dimitras was introduced by Dr. Vasko Nasteovski (himself a graduate of Melbourne University's Law School) of the AMHRC and by Dr. Kirsty Gover from the Law School. The essential focus of the lecture was on violations by the Greek State against Macedonians...



Day Eight Meetings in Canberra



Thursday August 18—A truncated delegation took a 7am flight to Australia's capital, Canberra. The delegation included David Vitkov, Vasko Nastevski, Jason Kambovski and George Vahov, from the Executive of the AMHRC. They were accompanied by Dr. Dimitras, Nafsika Papanikolatu and Dimitri Jovanov.

A very busy day was begun by our attendance at a meeting of the Australia-Macedonia Parliamentary Friendship Group at Australia's Federal Parliament House. Also present, were various other Macedonian community representatives, including Professor Mile Terziovski from Adelaide and Mr. Goran Torbakov from Melbourne. Our focus was to advocate for the development of mechanisms for changing Australia's negative stance on recognising the Republic of Macedonia by its democratically chosen name and on improving aged care facilities for Australia's Macedonian community. Suggestions in this regard made by the AMHRC's David Vitkov and Jason Kambovski, were officially accepted by the Chairs of the Group – Stephen Jones MP and Luke Simpkins MP.

Productive private meetings on various matters, were also held with Bill Shorten MP; the Department of Foreign Affairs; Kate Lundy MP and with Julie Bishop MP – the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs. Perhaps the most important event during this fruitful day in Canberra was the evidence given by our entire group before an official sitting of Australia's Federal Parliamentary Committee on human rights. The sitting was chaired by Laurie Ferguson MP and Phillip Ruddock MP. We submitted both verbal and documentary evidence on the issue of Greek state human rights violations against its Macedonian minority. All of the eight members of parliament showed sincere concern (except perhaps for Maria Vamvakinou MP, who walked out on the sitting quite early) for the matters our delegation raised and even permitted us to extend the discussion slightly to include the issue of racial discrimination faced by Macedonians in other settings.

Our day in Canberra ended with a 10pm flight back to Melbourne...



Dr. Dimitras meets Julie Bishop MP, the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs

Without question, the official introduction to the Australian parliament of evidence on the persecution of Macedonians in Greece, was a monumental first for Macedonians in Australia and we trust that benefits for the Macedonian human rights movement, will eventually accrue.



Luke Simpkins M.P.



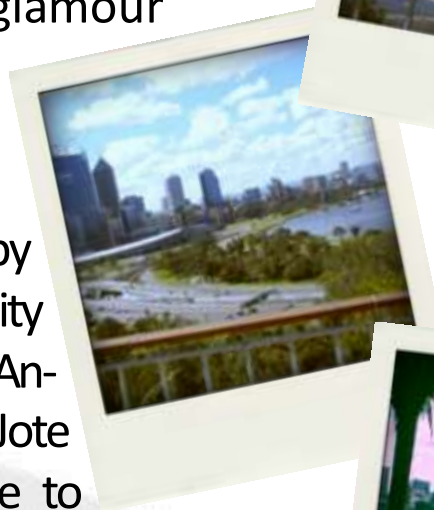
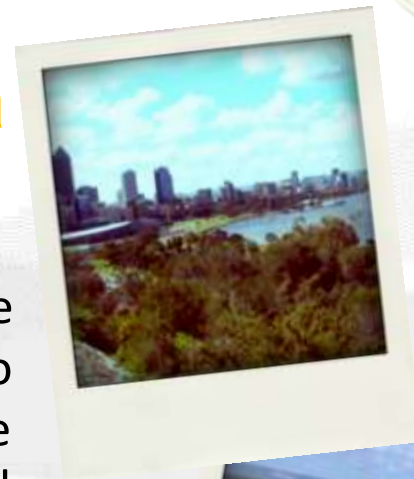
Stephen Jones M.P.

Day Nine Perth, Western Australia Murdoch University

Friday August 19— With the whole troupe assembled again, we flew off to Perth on a 6am flight from Melbourne Airport – those of us who had returned late from Canberra the previous evening, were not entirely happy about this...though the slightly bitter glamour of Perth's salty panorama, soon cheered us up...

In Perth we were warmly greeted by leaders of the Macedonian Community of WA (Inc) – Sam Novachkov, Trajan Andonovski, Chris Angelkov and Jote Candovski. Though there wasn't time to 'dawdle', as by midday we were at Perth's Murdoch University where Dr. Dimitras was again speaking. Dr. Dimitras maintained his equanimity during the Q and A at the end of his lecture in spite of the almost continual rude and irrelevant interruptions of a representative of the local Greek community.

The remainder of the afternoon was spent on settling into our hotel lodgings before Chris Angelkov treated our whole delegation to a splendid dinner.



Day Ten Dinner at the Community Centre of Perth's Macedonian Community



Saturday August 20—We began early as our hosts insisted on showing us the sights of Perth. I tried to tempt my roommates in Perth, *Belomortsi* Tome Geshov and Natse Dinchev, into partaking of the delight of Australia's own *Vegemite* spread...Tome took one look and insisted that his orange juice would see him through...Natse decided to have a go, but didn't look too happy about it...

7.30 pm Another full house appreciated the now 'traditional' Melbourne program of speeches and performances. An added highlight in Perth was the attendance of and speech given by Mr. John Hyde MP, the member for Perth in the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia's parliament. Mr. Hyde has been cooperating with the AMHRC and Mr. Zoran Coseski (Macedonia's Perth Consul) in support of Australia's recognition of Macedonia, by its democratically chosen name.



Left to right: Dimitri Jovanov, John Hyde MP, Naksika Papanikolatau, Dr. Dimitras, Trajan Andonovski and Chris Angelkov.



Sunday August 21— A 9am flight took us from Perth to the capital of South Australia, Adelaide. We arrived at around 1.30pm and were greeted by the community President Vasko Tanevski and others...there was absolutely no time for niceties – straight to the hotel and then to the Community hall and a 4pm start to the official proceedings... Again we wondered about the time and day and how it might adversely affect attendance and again it was needless...the hall was overflowing and again *“such an attendance had not occurred in years”*...

Day Eleven Dinner with the Macedonian Community of Adelaide and South Australia Inc.



Day Twelve Goodbye ...



Monday August 22—From the first, we were brazen with our lethargy...all official duties had ended. The locals took us on the obligatory sightseeing tour and community president Vasko Tanevski, treated us to a smorgasbord lunch that was extremely wide in variety and long in duration.

Then with a 5pm flight it was back to Melbourne Airport for the last goodbye. We in the AMHRC had lived together with our guests, quite intensely for 12 days and nights and it was not easy...we assured each other that we would keep up the good fight at our respective ends and that our cooperation would only get better from now on...but still it was far from easy...the strain showed on some of our faces...I put my camera away...a 10.30pm flight took our guests back to their homes.

PS *This tour was made possible by the voluntary sacrifices of many people and in very numerous different ways. There is not space to describe all of this, though I would like to thank David Vitkov from the Executive of the AMHRC, for his efforts in constructing and in ensuring that we abided by the extensive program – which, in my opinion, was quite miraculously fulfilled in every detail.*

Tour Guide: George Vlahov





Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC)

Membership Application Form

Formed in 1984 the Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) is an Australian based non-government organisation that informs and advocates to governments, international institutions and broader communities about combating discrimination and promoting basic human rights. The aspiration is to ensure that Macedonian communities in Australia and throughout the world are recognised, respected and afforded equitable treatment.

The AMHRC has been involved in the struggle for human rights of the Macedonian people both in Australia and internationally for over 25 years, either directly or through our partner organisations. In addition to taking various politicians to task over their comments and actions concerning the Macedonian people, challenging government policy, defending and promoting the community's interests, the AMHRC has also continued to support our Macedonian minorities in Greece, Bulgaria and Albania through direct funding and other means.

With the issue over the right of the Republic of Macedonia to use its real name reaching a critical phase, there has never been a better time to be engaged or re-engage with the struggle of the Macedonian community for equality and respect. Show your support and become a member of the AMHRC.

APPLICANT DETAILS

Full Name:				Gender:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female
Address:						
Suburb:		State:		Postcode:		
Phone:		Mobile:				
Email:				Date of Birth:		
Occupation:						

PAYMENT DETAILS

Membership Fee:	\$500 <input type="checkbox"/> Advocate	\$120 <input type="checkbox"/> Full Member	\$60 <input type="checkbox"/> Student/Pensioner
Payment Method: (please tick)	<input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Cheque / Money Order (payable to the 'Macedonian Human Rights Committee of Melbourne and Victoria') <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) – I have deposited my membership fee into the following Westpac bank account on this date ____ / ____ / 20____ Account Name: Macedonian Human Rights Committee of Melbourne and Victoria BSB: 033365 Account No: 189484		
Credit Card details: (please tick if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard		
Credit Card number:			Expiry Date: ____ / ____
3-digit security code (on back of your card):			
Cardholder Name:			Signature: _____

Please send completed membership application form with payment details to:

Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee Inc
Suite 106, Level 1
55 Flemington Road
NORTH MELBOURNE, VIC 3051



Editorial

George Vlahov

Our Recent Tour of Australia

The benefits of the interactions just described, are substantial. Educationally, the students and lecturers in the law faculties of three major universities around Australia, were enlightened by Dr. Dimitras; the Australian Federal Parliament and specifically its joint house human rights committee, had put before it, by the AMHRC, incontrovertible documentary evidence of Greek state human rights abuses against Macedonians; and in some cases not only was there education...social ties were created between the Macedonian human rights movement and some of this country's legislators – a number of them located at power's peak and others at a limited municipal level.

The value of these new bonds should not be underestimated. They are just as important as the objective educational content of our message. When the truth is framed with affability and decency, it is more likely to be accepted. Indeed, we have too often seen deceit designed to mask racism, delivered with such cultured élan, as to prove more palatable than the stark difficulties presented by more realistic appraisals – especially if the more accurate evaluations were expounded in the often understandably exasperated tones of the 'wretched of the earth'...thus providing holders of power with a cheap excuse to avoid their responsibilities.

Experience has taught us that form is just as important as content. This does not mean that content is to be in any way watered down or that some sort of reduced tabloid matter would suffice – no, that is not the way for a human rights NGO! Our antecedents lie in the Enlightenment and while we have also empirically learned that educational reason has its limits, especially in the face of irrationally inclined superior force, our hope remains to combine our didacticism with amicability in a manner that will eventually overcome the brutality and tunnel vision of the racist oppressor.

Macedonians find out about Macedonians and Legal Action against the Greek State

The educational and political benefits of our travels around Australia, also applied to the Macedonian community it-

self. There is an old story about a peasant farmer who resided a short distance from Paris throughout the entire Napoleonic era and yet remained unfamiliar with the name *Bonaparte*... Thus it was, with numerous Macedonian Australians, who at best, were only vaguely familiar with the Macedonian cultural and political renaissance currently taking place in Aegean Macedonia...that is, inside the political borders of Greece.

It was the face to face interaction that 'brought home' certain developments...that the pro-Macedonian newspaper *Nova Zora*, is distributed from one end of Aegean Macedonia to the other – 20,000 copies a month delivered by a team of 50 volunteers (!!)...disturbing the relationship between the oppressor and oppressed, familiarising both with historical and cultural actuality and showing the latter, how to read in their native Macedonian tongue; that folkloric troupes have sprung up all over Aegean Macedonia, performing Macedonian dances and songs in traditional attire – the *Belomortsi* are just one of these groups; that there is a huge Macedonian cultural festival that annually takes place in the village of Ovchareni (Lerin County) which is attended by thousands of Macedonians from all over Aegean Macedonia...and they were informed of this by Mr. Pando Ashlakov, the recently elected Mayor of Ovchareni - a member of the leadership of the Macedonian political party struggling for the rights of Macedonians in Greece, *Vinozhito (Rainbow)*...things have come a long way since the Macedonian human rights movement began in earnest in the early 1980's, when there were few signs that matters could change so much in a mere two and half decades...

In all of this, education also served to create a stronger Macedonian political force – politics is power and one aspect of power revolves around the ability to mobilise people and our tour inspired new members of the Macedonian community all over Australia to begin supporting the Macedonian human rights movement. Moreover, we took the opportunity to patiently dispel a series of myths that had developed around the AMHRC/MHRMI legal action against Greece and on behalf of Macedonians which the Greek state has dispossessed of citizenship and property rights. Naturally enough, the result was a sizeable increase in the number of participants in this truly *mon-*

Legal Action against Greek Orthodox Bishop Anthimos, the Voice of the Oppressor

It was during the tour on the afternoon of Tuesday August 16, while in Sydney, that we received an important telephone call from Vinozhito's head office in Lerin, informing us that the Greek Orthodox Bishop in Solun/Salonika, Anthimos, had been captured on video asserting that he and others would go to the village of Ovchareni - a bastion of the Macedonian cultural revival now taking place in Aegean Macedonia - and "*destroy everything*" connected to a planned Macedonian radio station. At that moment I happened to be sitting in between Pando Ashlakov, the *Mayor of Ovchareni* and Dimitri Jovanov, the editor of *Nova Zora*; I asked them both: "*Well what are we going to do with this racist filth in priestly garb?*" We all quickly agreed, that legal proceedings would need to be instigated and now at the time of writing, preparations for this action are already taking place...the voice of the oppressor will be challenged and it will be held to account.

Master/Servant or Master/Slave or...Oppressor and Oppressed

Philosophical discussions focusing on the dialectic or relationship between master and servant (some prefer master/slave) have a long history, dating most famously back to Aristotle (who, in my view, ultimately designed his arguments to serve as a means for justifying the status quo in regard to slavery in ancient Athens), then to Hegel in the early 19th century, and Kojève around the mid 20th century, who has been followed by numerous others. I have no desire here to attempt to add anything new to the numerous conflicting interpretations of the theses that have been posited by these famous thinkers. Rather I would like to note that aspects of this discussion have captured the imagination of many members of various excluded groups, who have found it useful to relate it to the tyranny they endure. I will here briefly do the same by utilising the terms oppressor and oppressed.

One aspect of the discussion begins by accepting that humans are, among other things, self-defining beings and from this basis we can further assert that it is an eminently human desire, essential for dignity, for one's self-definition and all the cultural attributes that accompany that self-definition, to be recognised and valued by others.

However, it is often the case that some cultural groups are able to exert power over other groups. The oppressive group negates the value of the oppressed group. Usually it is the case that this type of ideology was originally de-

signed to justify and maintain the exploitation or annexation of land.

If the situation is maintained for generations, the oppressor can become quite addicted to despising and distrusting the oppressed. The recognition of the oppressor's value and identity, by the oppressed, cannot be very reassuring; it cannot be trusted and nor can it be deemed valuable, as it is the word of a mistreated inferior.

Yet this inferior has come to define the oppressor's worth, the inferior is living proof of it...of the oppressor's superiority...the oppressor has come to *need and yet hate the oppressed all the more*...

If we return to our essential premise: the irresistible desire to gain respect for one's definition of one's self, then we know that this situation cannot go on forever. The oppressed will eventually resist and attempt to assert their self-worth. They may fail and recede into fearful submission, but if they survive, re-assertion will be attempted again and again. Moreover, the lessons the oppressed have learnt as a result of their negation, usually means that their efforts at positing their identity as valuable in its own right, will not require the negation or denial of others – they, by their existence in reduced circumstances, learned what the oppressor generally remains blind to: that recognition is necessary for the dignity of all humanity.

Thus it is that the mainstream of the Macedonian human rights movement in Greece does not in its work resort to racism or the negation of the modern Greek – it merely desires respect within the borders of the Greek state and it also seeks, without necessarily even being conscious of it, to end the paranoid hatred, the racism presiding within Greek culture; to free in fact, the oppressor from his sick dependence on the oppressed...

There is much from the discussion above that can be connected to Macedonians from the early 20th century to the present. From around 1904 till Greece's seizure of what became known as Aegean Macedonia in 1913, the Macedonians fiercely, militarily, resisted the attempts of the Greek state to control their cultural and political life. However the post WWI occupation resulted in a long period of inter-war servility and suffering; of vicious cultural imperialism, of violent assimilation, of incarceration, dislocation and expulsion.

The brutality perhaps reached its height during the Metaxas dictatorship in the late 1930's, when an Australian author named Bert Birtles, travelling through Greece at that time, witnessed it first hand:

"And not only by its insane inhumanitarianism has the Greek dictatorship imitated its German and Italian models. It already has developed its own particular brand of chauvinism. If Greece has no Jewish problem, she has the Macedonians. In the name of "Hellenization" these people are being persecuted continually and arrested for the most fantastic reasons. Metaxas's way of inculcating the proper nationalist spirit among them has been to change all the native place-names into Greek and to forbid the use of the native language. For displaying the slightest resistance to this edict – for this too is a danger to the security of the state – peasants and villagers have been exiled without trial." (See pp.387-388 of *"Exiles in the Aegean"*, Victor Gollancz LTD, London 1938.)

Then violence was countered with violence and an attempt to gain recognition was made during the "Greek Civil War" (1946-1949) – as is well known this ended in severe defeat. In the aftermath, what few Macedonians remained in Aegean Macedonia, carried on for decades, in mostly silent submission. Indeed the bigoted Greek historian, Evangelos Kofos, basically proudly proclaimed the end of Greece's *Macedonian problem*, during the 1960's.

Yet a few did remain and they are now reasserting themselves via a vibrant cultural revival that is already manifesting some political success; but what of the oppressor? It is interesting to note the way the Greek state has treated the Macedonian language – in the 1920 census it recognised it simply as *Macedonian*; by the mid-20's it became "Slav-Macedonian" and by the 30's it was just "Slav" and Macedonians were "Slavophones"...speakers of Slav. As indicated by Birtles at the time and as confirmed by more recent research carried out by the Greek anthropologist Karakasiadou, the language was derided as barbaric and various violent methods were utilised in attempts by the state, to stamp it out.

Some of the Greeks who press for the "Slav" nomenclature are fully aware that the word *slave* is derived in their language from the word Slav; they are in effect saying *you have no right to the wonderful Macedonian name, you are not worthy, you are inferior, you are a hideous other that we have subjugated and we will force you to bend to our will, you slav(e)*... And thus it is that when Macedonians affirm themselves as Macedonian, they are not only resisting the violence of their oppressor. They are saying that their identity is inextricably linked to the history of the land they reside upon and that their culture is as worthy as the oppressor's; it is just as beautiful and it is entitled to the name: *Macedonia*...the dignity of self-definition, belongs to them also – for they too, are *human*.

Attempts since the early 1990's by the Greek state to assert that Macedonian means Greek, represent a more sophisticated continuation of the oppressive tradition. Does Athenian today mean Greek? No it is a subordinate regional signifier that could apply to an ethnic or non ethnic Greek resident of Athens. There are Greeks who reside in Macedonia, but they are not referring to their ethnic identity when they call themselves 'Macedonian'. It is not their primary *ETHNIC* identity marker.

Ethnic identity in the modern world is based on reified or standardised cultural values/forms (especially language) that are historically and politically underpinned in a way that distinguishes it in importance from other lesser regional and cultural subsets. This is legally and morally accepted and it will not do to pretend otherwise. Greeks have their own primary ethnic marker: *Greek*, no one is tampering with this! (This is in fact how everyone in Greece is registered in the country's censuses – for in Greece, ethnic minorities are still not recognised.) It is unacceptable to ask Macedonians to change their name, simply because it suits the oppressor to think of them as *Slav(e)s*. The hate of the oppressor is as potent as ever, even though his methods have been necessarily modified. All the same, every now and then, there is a public expression of the desire to return to the physical savagery of earlier times, as exemplified by Anthimos.

The Macedonians in Greece and everywhere else merely want what everyone else possesses: the right to choose a primary ethnic identity marker. Seeing as not one other ethnic group uses the name *Macedonian*, as a primary ethnic identifier, there is no problem – there is nothing *confusing* about this (that is because there are ethnic Greeks who reside in Macedonia and sometimes *regionally* identify as 'Macedonian'), as some servants of the Greek state try to argue... that is plainly an attempt to deny Macedonians the dignity of ethnic self-definition; it is in fact, racism in action!

The Macedonian cultural revival in Aegean Macedonia will not be held in check by threats from the likes of Anthimos. The international climate will not permit the Greek state a return to the violent methods of earlier times and more importantly, the Macedonians are overcoming their fears of the past; their eminently human desire to express their ethnic self worth, has again surfaced.

George Vlahov

Good Things - In Preparation for the Albanian Census

By Eftim Mitrevski

MACEDONIAN ALLIANCE



ALEANCA MAQEDONASE

In Albania, about 5-6 months ago we witnessed the formation of a red-black coalition composed of all political parties and fatherland organisations for the supposed purpose of protecting the national identity of the Albanian state. I am certain that this union is under the sponsorship of the Albanian state and is being directed by the Vice-President of the High Council of Justice, Mr Kreshnik Spahiu. Personally, I understand such a move because it concerns state interests.

In contrast to the red and black union, the 'union' of Macedonians was formed back in 2003. However, unfortunately, when the Macedonian political party was formed (MAEI), the union ceased to exist and even worse, the organisations which formed the union are no longer active. Organisations such as "DrustvoPrespa",

"Mir", "Bratstvo", "Med", "Unijanamladisi", "Unijana-zheni", "Drustvollinden" and "DrustvoSterjoSpase", formed a vanguard for all Macedonian activities in Albania and made a considerable contribution.

Unfortunately, the truth is that these organisations which from the very beginning were at the forefront for all Macedonian activity in Albania and did so much to advance our cause, are now defunct. I am even confident that the official stamps of these organisations are presently being misused; however I have no intention of elaborating on that here. I want to leave this issue for another time, as I am also part of some of these organisations and I also carry some responsibility.

Macedonians, we have no time. Let the responsible leaders of these organisations come together in one place, under one roof, to discuss

Macedonian matters. We have much to achieve, however that which is most urgent, most sensitive and delicate at this moment is the upcoming census in Albania, to be held on 1 October 2011.

For the purpose of renewing and organising our efforts, we have to elect a new body of capable and active Macedonians to unite us all. We should all respect this body which will execute concrete tasks within strict timelines. We have to contact all of the Macedonians, to enter every Macedonian household in Albania and encourage them to declare their ethnic identity as Macedonian! We must inform them that an honest declaration of one's identity is not an act against the Albanian state. On the contrary, it is an expression of freedom, democracy and love for the Albanian state! Let this be the sole item on our agenda. Respected Macedonians, we

have a historic opportunity before us – let's not waste time!

The significance of this meeting will be to also invite Macedonians who are active in Albanian parties eg: the Democratic Party, the Socialist Party, the Republican Party and the Christian-Democratic Party, as they too are Macedonians, regardless of their political affiliations.

Respected Macedonians! This will not be a pre-election campaign, serving personal interests or the interests of a few. No, it will be a meeting in the spirit of unification for the good of the Macedonian cause.

Enough with the divisions, arguments and insults! Let's not deepen the pit of fragmentation and hatred. We are from the same root, the same background, regardless of our political, geographic or religious affiliation.

With this act we will be a shining example to the Republic of Macedonia and the Macedonian diaspora - coming together to form a union with a clear programme and strategy, fighting for Macedonian interests, while respecting the Albanian state and its constitution, as is our civic duty.

Macedonians, those of you who are active in Albanian political parties should know that it is not a sin nor is it shameful to be active in pursuing some political objectives that extend beyond strict party lines. I encourage you respected Macedonian democrats, take the time within your political parties to read this text and give it some serious consideration. Then make the decision and be part of the Macedonian union with your own representatives. We are in most need of you now as you are in power and with your help we can achieve our goals, our national interests, without violating the constitutional order of the state. My dear Macedonian democrats, I know the fine work and contribution you have made, your many great qualities, intelligence and educational knowledge. I also know that despite your party duties together we have achieved in the past, a great deal in relation to our national interests and culture.

I also recognise the quality and courage of your members who through contact such as this will be encouraged to raise their voices for our national values and interests. The efforts of the Macedonian democrat not only in Prespa, Golo Brdo and Gora but in all of Albania is important. The

contribution has to grow and be nurtured not only by gaining a few employment places but more so in the national and culture spheres.

There are many such examples elsewhere in the neighbouring countries and all over the Balkans. You deserve more in your parties as you know the situation better than most. You deserve not to just occupy the last rows in the party conferences and gatherings. I argue that there is a capacity for advancement not only in the regions but also on the state level. I ask you to convey this message to your members and supporters, explaining everything to them in detail.

Personally, I believe that you will make the right decision.

As your parties prepare to reorganise, I implore you in the name of Macedonian interests to read this letter and give strong and serious consideration to joining the Macedonian union which will do much to advance Macedonian interests, Macedonian identity etc. I repeat that your efforts cannot be rewarded with just the offer of a single employment place! You are worth more! And do not fear your Albanian comrades within your parties or believe that they are better,

more educated or have better qualities than you do. You were educated in the same system, we studied at the same universities. In some regards we have better qualities, so don't be afraid to point this out!

From the podiums of your conferences, shout out that your presence within these parties is conditional. It is conditional on the granting of cultural rights. Make this point! Believe me when I say that if you do not do this, you will be nothing more than low level party officials within your respective parties.

Shout out from the top of your voices, that we have quality Macedonian cadres who can make a contribution in each of Albania's institutions. We have a number of fine people who completed their education in the Republic of Macedonia and now can be part of the reform process in the Albanian system. I am convinced that you will understand and are aware of the fact that time is short, however it can be accomplished!

Believe me my dear Macedonians, this is not some fairy tale. On the contrary it is a duty of every country in Europe and the world to fulfil minority rights obligations. Of

course it goes without saying that the obligations will not be fulfilled unless we demand that they be fulfilled and this is exactly what we Macedonians must do!

If we do not make demands, we will not receive anything.

Only in this manner will they begin to appreciate and respect us everywhere. We have a clear example of this in the Albanian government, with the Minister for Labour and Social Policy, Mr Spiro Ksera, a member of the Greek minority and the Democratic Party, who stated in a public interview that the Albanian government has a duty to fulfil its minority rights obligations.

If we are successful in organising ourselves at such a high level, we can be successful in general. Otherwise we will become nothing more than braggers at weddings and celebrations without doing any meaningful work.

In conclusion my dear Macedonians, we do not want to steal from other national cultures, we do not want to offend or belittle anyone. On the contrary, we respect other cultures just as much as we respect our Macedonian culture and history.

We have the opportunity to act together in defending our interests and to demonstrate to Europe that on the road to fulfilling obligations on minority rights, Albania is a genuine leader in the Balkans when compared to other so-called "European" countries like Greece and Bulgaria.

There is no time to waste dragging our feet. On the contrary, let's become the harbingers of "good things". That is why I chose this title, because only the "good" shall be spoken about from now on.

EFTIM MITREVSKI – member of the Macedonian Alliance for European Integration, MAEI. A political party struggling for the rights of Macedonians in Albania.

Special thanks to David Vitkov of the AMHRC for translating this article from Macedonian to English.

Interview with Artist Robert Mihajlovski

By Johnny Tsiglev



Resident AMHRC Artist Johnny Tsiglev interviews renowned fellow Artist: Robert Mihajlovski

We start the interview in the traditional Macedonian fashion. A shot of Rakija (a lovely drop mind you, which Robert brought back from Bitola) and then a beer to wash it down!

Johnny Zdravo Robert.

Robert Zdravo Jonne. Kako si?

Johnny Dobro Sum. I ti?

Robert Dobro.

Johnny We normally converse in Macedonian, (albeit with English thrown in) but for the purposes of this interview we'll chat in English,

maybe with a bit of Macedonian thrown in!

Robert Nema Problem!

Johnny Segal, oops, I mean 'now'. We've known each other for a few years as we worked on a book together, and as a result have become good friends. Can you tell me what you've been up to lately?

Robert I'm preparing myself for an exhibition of my paintings (prints) and woodcuts as well.

Johnny Do they have any particular theme or subject matter?

Robert My artworks are mainly about some (type of) spiritual background, working with our relationship between the human and spiritual world. Contemporary art has

such diversity in choosing its themes. Also, I'm working on my poetry. I have already published two books of my poetry in Macedonian in the past. So I'm preparing a new one.

Another topic I'm working on and interested in is Byzantine Medieval art and history.

Johnny Ok. Sounds like you're busy.

For the readers out there who don't know who you are, can you tell us a little about yourself. Where you were born, studied etc..?

Robert In the 80's I studied arts in Skopje for a few years. I went on to be curator for church art in the museum of Bitola. In 1984 I studied arts in New York at the School of Art and Design. I came to Australia in 1993 where I went on to study printmaking at the VCA in Melbourne.

Johnny I remember you were telling me about your past as being an active environmental campaigner in Macedonia. Can you give me some more details on what and why you were involved, and maybe who else was involved?

Robert In 1988 in Bitola we decided to form the first Environmental Association

(Continued from page 21)

named Molika (a rare pine tree which grows in Pelister National park Bitola). Our idea was to protect the environment from the pollution caused by the thermonuclear power plant (REK) near Bitola.

Johnny (I avoid a possibly bad pun on 'REK' and continue). So what was the outcome as a result of your group's campaigning?

Robert It was a painful struggle and the outcome was that we initiated an environmental consciousness amongst the population in the region. As a result, they (REK) put filters in their chimneys. The population was now aware that the rate of cancer in the area was much higher than in other regions.

Johnny Wow. That's a positive outcome and your struggles obviously weren't in vain!

As an artist myself, I believe that the art chooses us, though not all of us pursue the path. Why did you make your life about art?

Robert Since my childhood, we were very active in the **Pionerski Dom (Pioneer's Home)** in Bitola. It was a place where we got together and did paintings and drawings. My art teacher used to say "The talent (gift) for art is

positive if you make it, but if **you don't make it, it turns to self destruction**". So I decided to follow the positive creative path instead of self destruction.

Johnny Good choice. You have an intimate knowledge of the art world. What is the art scene like in Macedonia?

Macedonia. Why do you think this is?

Robert I think it's because we (Macedonians) are not very well organised and we **don't have the appropriate** institutions and organisations to make the community aware. Both the church and secular organisations are not prepared to guide the new



From Left: Johnny Tsiglev and Robert Mthajlovski

Robert People in Macedonia are very gifted for music, visual arts, crafts and also architecture. They are also very active in producing poetry / literature and possess a well-known tradition in the arts. Today, there are a number of high quality Macedonian artists, and to visit their exhibitions in Skopje is a very impressive experience.

Johnny Many Macedonians in Australia, young and old, **don't seem to know about** this, and also about some of the amazing artistic history of

generations into our cultural and artistic development. **That's our sad destiny in this far away continent!**

Johnny Yes, very true. We definitely lack any real support or incentive to express our Macedonian heritage through the arts, apart from folk dancing I guess. As **you've also mentioned many times, our community in general is happier if you're digging holes for a living than being an artist.**

Robert Ha ha ha.....

(Continued from page 22)

Johnny (Robert laughs with an infectious deep bellow that gets me sucked right in!)

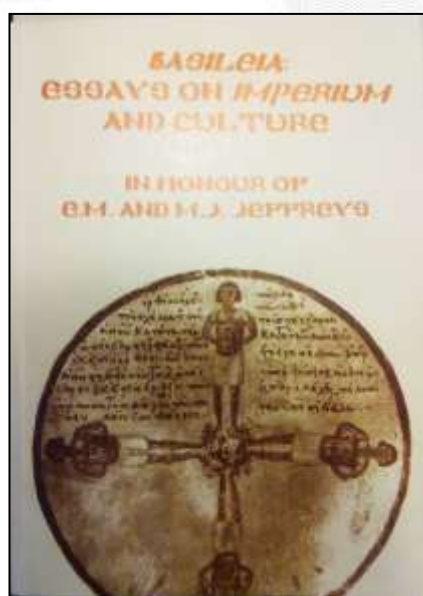
Well I hope some of us, together with the AMHRC can

Robert Some others who influence my work are Francesco Clemente, the German Artist Anselm Kiefer and the New York artist Julie Mehretu who was born in Ethiopia.

Johnny What is it about their art that interests you?

about an exhibition you had in Bitola once. Can you tell me more about any of your exhibitions or experiences **you've had in the old country?**

Robert Macedonia has a poor economy, but in return



help change this.

Can you tell me about any other Macedonian artists worth mentioning or who you might find inspiring?

Robert The ones who come to mind are; Chemerski, Kochovski, Nikolov and Perica Georgievski (Pepsi).

Johnny I recently had a look at some of Chemerski's paintings and found the imagery striking.

Robert Their contemporary approach of the new styles of visual art. It is obvious that art in the west is going into a deep crisis, so they need new artistic inspiration from the east, which I find fascinating.

Johnny The idea of holding an amazingly cultural (and elegant I guess) art exhibition in Macedonia might sound foreign to some Australian Macedonians. I remember how enthused you were when you told me

has a rich cultural heritage, and the people love the visual arts, music, poetry etc... One of my personal experiences was in 2001, with my exhibition in Bitola at Magaza Gallery. They accepted my woodcut prints with great enthusiasm. At the opening I was overwhelmed by the public reception as I was accompanied by a choir and mandolin orchestra. Then, the same exhibition was transferred to the multimedia centre Mala Stanica of the National Gallery of Macedonia in Skopje.

(Continued from page 23)

In 2010 I was invited by an art colony in Stumica to attend for a couple of weeks as an artist from Australia.

There was a group of artists from various European countries and we created our art in a very joyous and positive atmosphere. They told me at

the end that they would be delighted if other Australian Macedonian artists joined them.

Johnny Sounds fantastic.

Maybe I'll have to look into it myself! J.

Te blagodaram Robert. Thank you for taking the time out answering my questions and for the Bitolsko Rakija!

Robert Yeah ok. Nema Problem. Bes gaile!

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Letters...

Dear Mr Ferri,

31/8/2011

I write to you in relation to your candidacy for the Wollongong City Council and your campaign flyer in which you have provided electoral information in various community languages. On this flyer you have provided information in Macedonian, however **you have described the language as “Macedonian/Bulgarian”, thereby indicating that Macedonian and Bulgarian are one and the same language.** This is a distortion of objective linguistic reality. Several Macedonians from Wollongong have contacted our committee expressing deep disappointment that you have identified Macedonian and Bulgarian as being the same language.

The Macedonian language is recognised throughout the world as Macedonian and is taught at tertiary institutions in over 30 countries. The only two countries which do not recognise the existence of a distinct Macedonian ethnicity, language and culture are Greece and Bulgaria which severely discriminate against their sizeable Macedonian minorities.

Several distinct objective differences exist between the Macedonian literary language and the Bulgarian literary language. Such is also the case with the Serbian dialects and their relation to the Bulgarian and Macedonian dialects.

At the end of the nineteenth century, due to the insistence of a series of Bulgarian intellectuals, the deliberate aspiration of the Bulgarian state to conquer Macedonia and the growing number of Macedonians in Bulgaria, numerous Macedonian elements and words entered the Bulgarian literary language, such as the verbal noun form *-jki* (*odejki*, *zboruvajki*) which is expressed in the Bulgarian **dialects using the form “kato”** (*kato hodel*, *kato govorel*). This led to the appearance of a dual system of accenting of the same words such that both variants were accepted as literary forms (for example *vino*

(wine) with the accent on the first syllable—Macedonian form- and the same word with the accent on the last syllable- Bulgarian form). Until 1944 one extra letter was deliberately retained in the Bulgarian alphabet which had as its goal the reconciliation of another basic difference between the two groups of dialects, namely, the use of *e* words (*e-kaneto*) in Macedonian and *ja* words (*ja kaneto*) in Bulgarian (for example, *mleko/ mljyako* (milk), *leb/hjab* (bread), *nekogash/ njakoga* (sometimes) etc). Despite the bigger influence of the Macedonian dialects on the Bulgarian literary language and the relatively smaller influence of Bulgarian on the Macedonian language (through the educational system from 1880-1912, 1915-1918, 1941-1944) there exist even more objective differences. They are large enough so that a speaker of one or the other language would immediately be recognised, even by the not very experienced observer. These differences also lead to Bulgarians being able to easily recognize Macedonians who are speaking Bulgarian (even those who have studied it all their life)) due to the unusual accent system, the hard pronunciation and the specific language constructions inherent in Bulgarian. The opposite also applies.

The following more basic general differences between the two literary languages can be pointed out:

-The different system of accenting: in Macedonian it is immobile and falls on the third syllable back to front, whereas in Bulgarian it is mobile with the accent often occurring on the last syllable.

-Definite Article. In the Macedonian literary language there are three types of definite article which expresses the relationship of the subject to the object in accordance with the level of knowledge and presence (for example, *mazot* (the

man), *mazov* (this man), *mazon* (that man)) while in the Bulgarian literary language there is only one type of definite article with two forms- complete and incomplete definite article- which differ in accordance with whether one is executing an action or not (for example, *mazhut govori* (the man is speaking), *toj govori sas mazha* (he is speaking with the man)).

- In the Macedonian language the double object exists, whereas it does not in Bulgarian.

-Use of e words (*e-kaneto*) in Macedonian vis-a-vis use of ja words (*ja-kaneto*) in Bulgarian.

-The demonstrative pronouns **this** and **that** are very different in Macedonian and Bulgarian (this in Macedonian is *ova* (neuter), *ovoj* (masculine), *ovaa* (feminine), *ovie* (these), whereas in Bulgarian this is represented by *tozi* (masculine), *tazi* (feminine), *tezi* (these), *tova* (neutral). That (far away) in Macedonian is *ona* (neuter), *onj* (masculine), *onaa* (feminine), *onie* (those-plural), whereas in Bulgarian it is *onova* (neuter), *onzi* (masculine), *onazi* (feminine) and *onezi* (those-plural))

-Verb conjugation differs considerably in Macedonian and Bulgarian, especially when one uses the future in the past tense, the past perfect tense and the conditional tenses.

-The transition of the proto-Slavic forms *tj*, *dj* into *kj* and *gj* in Macedonian, whereas in Bulgarian they manifest as *sht* and *zhd* (and as *ch* and *dz* in Serbian). For example *svekja* (Macedonian) *svesht* (Bulgarian), *svecha* (Serbian).

-Apart from that and despite the fact that there is a large fund of common or very similar words in the south Slavic languages, they do not always have the same meaning or sense. Many such examples exist in the Macedonian and Bulgarian languages. For example, the word *vreden* means useful in Macedonian, whereas in Bulgarian it means destructive

and *mrсно* which in Macedonian meanly 26
oily or fleshy, whereas in Bulgarian it means dirty.

- Macedonian and Bulgarian are more different languages than are Serbian, Croatian and Montenegrin or Russian and Belo Russian and at least as different as Russian and Ukrainian, and the Czech and Slovak languages.

It is therefore completely erroneous to describe Macedonian and Bulgarian as being one and the same language. The large Macedonian population in the Wollongong/ Port Kembla and wider Illawarra region, as well as Macedonians throughout Australia, do not agree with your description of Macedonian and Bulgarian as being one and the same language, nor do the overwhelming majority of objective linguists throughout the world.

I would therefore request that you change the description of the Macedonian language in your **campaign flyer from "Macedonian/Bulgarian" to simply Macedonian** and issue an apology to the Macedonian community in Wollongong and Illawarra.

Yours sincerely

Dr Chris Popov

Executive Member

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To Whom It May Concern,

Regarding the Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations International Law and Human Rights objective (<http://www.greeceun.org>): the Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) urges Greece to put into practice what it is preaching, especially if Greece has submitted its candidature for election to the United Nations Human Rights Council for the period 2012-2015.

According to your outlined summary under International Law and Human Rights found on the Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations website (<http://www.greeceun.org/greeceun/content/Folder.aspx?d=3&rd=12106234&f=1300&rf=694450212&m=-1&rm=-1&l=1>) *“Greece remains completely devoted to promotion of democratic principles of government, peaceful resolution of disputes, strict adherence to international law and respect for human rights”*

Such claims put Greece in an untenable position because the Macedonian minority in Greece has suffered and continues to suffer from basic human rights violations under the current government as well as all previous Greek governments. Denying the ethnic identity and language of the Macedonian minority violates international agreements such as the June 1990 Conference on the Human Dimension of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) which states:

To belong to a national minority is a matter of a person's individual choice and no disadvantage may arise from the exercise of such choice. Persons belonging to national minorities have the right freely to express, preserve, and develop their culture in all its aspects, free of any attempts at assimilation against their will. (Paragraph 32)

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which is a binding document of substantive and precise human rights principles states clearly under Article 27 that: *“in those states in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right ...to enjoy their own culture, to profess*

and practice their own religion, or to use their own language”

Article 27 is a statement that is essential to the defense of minority identity, therefore it also reflects a **‘right to an identity’**. The UN Human Rights Committee determined that even though *“the rights protected ... are individual rights, they depend in turn on the ability of the minority group to maintain its culture, language and religion.”*

Accordingly, the UN Human Rights Committee has clarified under General Comment 23 that *“positive measures by the States are also necessary to protect the identity of a minority and the rights of its members to enjoy and develop their culture ... in community with other members of the group.”*

Greece ratified and acceded to the ICCPR on 5 August 1997. Article 27 has also inspired the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, which establishes standards to which member states of the United Nations should aspire. At the outset, Article 1 asserts that:

“States shall protect the existence and the national or ethnic ... identity of minorities ... and shall encourage conditions for the promotion of that identity.” Unfortunately, when it comes to Greece, there seems to be no such prospects. Recently the UN independent expert on minority issues reported how some of the Macedonians in Greece have: *“...described pressure not to display their Macedonian identity or speak Macedonian, previously banned in some villages. Despite their claim of the existence of distinct Macedonian villages, they described a general fear to demonstrate their identity. It was acknowledged that the situation had improved from a previous era, however they described a “softer discrimination” manifested in general hostility and pressure on the part of authorities and the*

media. One participant stated: "I am a Greek citizen...but I am Macedonian when talking about my village, my language and my identity." (Promotion and Protection of all Human Rights, Civil, Political, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, including the right to Development, Report of the independent expert - 17 - on minority issues, Gay McDougall, Addendum Mission to Greece, (8-16 September 2008), A/HRC/10/11/Add.3, 18 February 2009, paragraph 46).

It is therefore rather ridiculous for Official Greece to espouse: *"Protecting Human Rights is not simply a high priority but a fundamental obligation. Despite the fact that there is an abundance of International Treaties and Conventions aiming to promote Human Rights, these are massively and severely violated on a daily basis"*

Declarations such as this are hypocritical and contrary to reality when we consider that Greece denies the existence of not only the Macedonian Minority but all minorities within its borders. Amnesty International released a media briefing on 5 October 2005 under the title *Greece: Out of the spotlight: The rights of foreigners and minorities still a grey area*. Reading through countless infringements perpetrated by Greece against its citizens we come to Amnesty International's analysis of the Macedonian Minority under the heading *Between Existence and Obliteration: The (IN) Visibility of Minority Groups* we find: **"groups in the region of Florina claim their right to self-identification as 'Macedonians'... This dispute led to a number of human rights violations, specifically relating to the rights to freedom of expression, and to freedom of association and assembly."**

A January 2010 Council of Europe report (Minority protection in Europe: best practices and deficiencies in implementation of common standards, Doc 12109, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights) states: *"The Greek authorities have repeatedly denied the existence of any Macedonian minority in Greece and repeatedly referred to the hijacking of local culture by persons and groups which pursue political aims."* (Paragraph 81)

This same report confirms that **"Nevertheless, it seems that still today, persons who express and actively claim a Macedonian identity often come up against the resentment and even hostility of the authorities."** (Paragraph 84)

And paragraph 98 reiterates what so many have said in the past: **"I note that in February 2009"**, says Boris Cilevics, the Rapporteur of this report *"the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights expressed his deep concern about 'the persis-*

tent denial by Greek authorities of the existence on Greece's territory of minorities other than the tripartite 'Muslim' one in western Thrace, despite the recommendations made so far notably by the ECRI, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the UN Human Rights Committee". He also recalled that freedom of ethnic self-identification is a major principle in which democratic pluralistic societies should be grounded and should be effectively applied to all minority groups, be they national, religious or linguistic." Cilevics affirms **"I fully share this view."**

The Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations statement concludes:

"Human Rights issues tend to be controversial and decision making difficult. However, minimum standards already exist in a legally binding framework of international agreements, protecting individual rights and rights of special groups. We should enforce this framework and actively protect those maltreated."

In spite of this avowal, as well as the international human rights laws forbidding discrimination, **"the Greek government has discriminated against and failed to protect the rights of its Macedonian Minority"** (Denying Ethnic Identity: The Macedonians of Greece, 1994, Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, page 26).

To its chagrin Greece has been found to be in violation of the provisions in the European Convention by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) on many occasions. This has not gone unnoticed by various international human rights monitors. For Example, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance excoriated Greece in this regard: **"... persons wishing to express their Macedonian, Turkish or other identity incur the hostility of the population. They are targets of prejudices and stereotypes, and sometimes face discrimination, especially in the labor market. In the Sidiropoulos and others v. Greece judgment of 10 July 1998, the European Court of Human Rights found that the refusal to register the association "Home of Macedonian Civilisation" constituted an interference with the freedom of association as guaranteed by Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights. ECRI deplores the fact that, five years after the decision of the European Court of Human Rights, this association has still not been registered despite the repeated applications made by its members."** (See European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, Third Report on Greece, Adopted on 5 December 2003, CRI (2004) 24, Strasbourg, 8 June 2004, paragraph 81).

In summary, the mistreatment of ethnic Macedonians in Greece has been well documented in recent years by respected organizations such as Human Rights Watch (Denying Ethnic Identity: The Macedonians of Greece, 1994), The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI 2004), Minority Rights Group (MRG 1994), a Council of Europe body which on 8 June

2004 published its third report on Greece and, most recently, the U.N. report titled "Promotion and Protection of All Human Rights in Greece" of 18 February 2009 which was prepared by the U.N.'s expert on minority issues Gay McDougall. One of Ms McDougall's most important recommendations is worth highlighting. It emphatically states that the Greek government should *"... withdraw from the dispute over whether there is a Macedonian or Turkish Minority in Greece and focus on protecting the right to self identification, freedom of expression and freedom of association of those communities. Their rights to minority protections must be honored in accordance with the Declaration on Minorities and the core international Human Rights treaties. Greece should comply fully with the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, specifically those decisions that associations should be allowed to use the words "Macedonian" and "Turkish" in their names and to express their ethnic identities freely."*(p2).

Thus the evidence shows that Greece protects and respects human rights on paper only. The Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee strongly urges Greece to practice what it ostensibly preaches. Recognizing the Macedonian Minority as a separate and distinct ethnicity with its own language and culture in contrast to the denial of, intolerance towards, and discrimination against the Macedonian Minority is essential to implementing the principles of international law and human rights. Exercising these statutes would remove Greece from an awkward and contradictory position. Especially if Greece seeks to hold a post in the United Nations Human Rights Council between 2012-2015. It would also establish peace, tolerance, and happiness which would be most prosperous for both Greece and the Macedonian Minority. Until this happens, we consider it inappropriate for Greece to be considered for such a position.

Regards

Ivan Hristovski
AMHRC New York Representative



ALERT - GREECE

23 August 2011

IPI condemns detention of two journalists in Florina

SOURCE: International Press Institute

(IPI/IFEX) - Vienna, 22 August 2011 - The Vienna-based South East Europe Organisation (SEEMO), an affiliate of the International Press Institute (IPI), condemns the detention of two journalists in north-western Greece.

On 16 August 2011, the Skopje-based journalists, Goran Momirovski of Kanal 5 television and Milena Gjorgjievska, a journalist with the daily Vest, accompanied a group of senior citizens from the Republic of Macedonia, who were trying to obtain their birth certificates in Florina, northwestern Greece. These citizens, born in Greece, live in the Republic of Macedonia.

Momirovski told SEEMO that he was filming the people who tried to get their documents and did not film any public buildings. Gjorgjievska did not film anything. They were detained in the street and held for two hours while police reviewed the filmed material in order to make sure no public buildings were filmed.

"It is not acceptable that police detain journalists in the street in a democratic country. I urge the Greek authorities to respect international standards for media freedom and guarantee foreign journalists the right to work freely in Greece," said Oliver Vujovic, SEEMO Secretary General.

For more information:

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A-1010 Vienna

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"НИКОЈ НЕМА ПРАВО ДА ПРЕГОВАРА ЗА МОЕТО ИМЕ!"

Немојте да бидете измамени од термините "меѓународно, билатерално, уставно".

- Ако се пријеме првич, дур и билатерално, наскоро ќе биде променето
- Дали сакате да бидете наречени "Северномакедонци", "Солзјанци", "Бурдуци" или само **Македонци**?
- Нав и честите на нивната власт за ставот "Ние нема да го промениме нашето име", нојутта се сакат фат дека преговараме, ну кажуваат на светот дека "Ние ќе го промениме нашето име"
- Замислете колку ја промениа Македонија илти дека "ако се постигне билатерално решение, тогг твотка твот решение ќе го прифатат и ќе го користат новото договорено име за Македонија"
- Било кај времна на нашето име е неприфатлива, вклучувајќи и тврдењата како "Димитаровски", "Бурдоски" или "Северни" пред името "Титуларна Македонија". На пример се една таква промена ние би били ослухукани наскоро како "Северни Македонци" и "Северномакедонци" или изборуваат "Северномакедонски" јазик.

НИЕ ПОБЕДУВАМЕ. ВЕЌЕ 127 ЗЕМЈИ ЈА ПРИЗНАА МАКЕДОНИЈА ПОД ИМЕТО РЕПУБЛИКА МАКЕДОНИЈА, ВКЛУЧУВАЈЌИ И 4 ОД 5-ТЕ ПОСТОЈАНИ ЗЕМЈИ ЧЛЕНКИ НА СОВЕТОТ ЗА БЕЗБЕДНОСТ НА ОБЕДИНЕТИТЕ НАЦИИ. НИЕ ИМАМЕ СИЛА ДА СТАВИМЕ КРАЈ НА СЕТО ОВА. ДА ПРЕСТАНЕМО ДА ПРЕГОВАРАМЕ ЗА НАШЕТО СОПСТВЕНО ИМЕ.

Пред 1988 год., Грција тврдела дека Македонија не постои. Тогаш ја преименуваша "Северна Грција" во "Македонија". Сега одеднаш Македонија е грчка?

Во 1995 год., поранешниот грчки премиер Мицотакис призна дека причината поради која Грција се спротивставува на нашето име е за да може да го негира постоењето на бројното македонско малцинство и да продолжи да го прогонува. Сите знаеме дека проблемот на Грција е македонскиот идентитет и јазик.

- Македонците на Балканот се борат за своите сопствени грчки како Македонци и нешто друго

ЗАПОМНЕТЕ, ПАГА Е ДЕКА БИЛО КАКОВ КОМПРОМИС ЌЕ ДОНЕСЕ РЕШЕНИЕ НА ПРОБЛЕМИТЕ СО ГРЦИЈА. ТОЈ САМО ЌЕ ГИ ЗАСИЛИ ПОЗИЦИИТЕ НА ГРЦИЈА ДО МЕДИНАТА КРАЈНА ЦЕЛ - ДА ГИ ИЗБЕРИШЕ МАКЕДОНЦИТЕ ОД ИСТОРИЈАТА, СЕГАШНОСТА И ИДНИНАТА.

Ние сме Македонци! Дали сакате да влеземе во историјата како луѓе кои го променија нашето име?

Кој им дава право на ЕУ и НАТО да бараат да го промениме нашиот идентитет?

- ЕУ и НАТО ги прекршуваат своите сопствени принципи и начела со тоа што бараат ние да се го промениме името.
- Да не се пријавуваме на запитувањата од страна на Грција и нивните скотки претвдувања дека Македонија ќе "протарни" без волта на земјата во ЕУ и НАТО
- Видете ја спротивната економска криза во Грција
- Компаниа засновани на запитување се користат за да ја натера Република Македонија да се го промени името

ЕУ и НАТО се заложници на Грција

- Грција важат за економската состојба во својата земја и сета останата земја членка на ЕУ се принудени да и покажат за да се справи со кризата

ЕУ не смее да дозволи всеноефобичната политика на Грција да ги врзи рацете на нејзините земјин членки. Признајте ја Македонија!

- Ако ЕУ и НАТО настојуваат да се промени името, каков ќе друге последица ќе побараат тие и Грција подготви!
- Се продолжуваат на преговорите ние грчкиме јасно порека дека ќе го промениме името
- Мораме да престанеме да преговараме за нашето сопствено име!

Здравниот разум порачува: Дали некоја друга земја би преговарала за своето сопствено име?

- Дали би пријале американската сојузна држава (узија) (no english) (фруво) да побара од Република Грузија да се го промени името?
- Дали би пријале белгиската провинција Луксембург да побара државата Луксембург да сго промени името?

НАЈОСНОВНОТО ЧОВЕКОВО ПРАВО Е ПРАВОТО НА САМОИДЕНТИФИКАЦИЈА.

МАКЕДОНСКИОТ НАРОД МОРА ДА И КАЖЕ НА ВЛАДАТА ДА ПРЕСТАНЕ ДА ПРЕГОВАРА ЗА НАШЕТО ИМЕ. ДА ПОБАРАМЕ КРАЈ НА СРАМНАТА РЕВЕРЕНЦА "ФИРОК". ДА ПОВАРАМЕ ВЕДНАШ МЕЃУНАРОДНО ПРИЗНАВАЊЕ ПОД ИМЕТО РЕПУБЛИКА МАКЕДОНИЈА.

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НАШЕТО ИМЕ Е МАКЕДОНИЈА



Grigor Prlichev 1830-1893

"The Sirdar" Review by Dr. Michael Seraphinoff

Grigor Prlichev, possibly the most gifted Macedonian writer of the 19th century, ironically, never achieved the success in his native language that he initially achieved in the Greek language. It has been said that part of this failure can be attributed to Prlichev's decision to write his later works in a kind of pan-Slavic language of his own construction, blending morphological elements from Old Slavic, Russian and the South Slavic languages. This, his original solution to the question of what form a literary language should take in Macedonia, failed to gain influential supporters and may account for much of his later lack of literary success, which he himself recognized, stating at one point: *"I sang like a swan in Greek, while in Slavic I am only able to sing like an owl."*

And indeed, he had sung like a swan in Greek. He had come under heavy Greek influence during his early years of schooling in his native Ohrid, and later when he went on to study medicine at the university in Athens. While there he composed the epic poem *"The Sirdar"* in Greek, which won the highest honors in a state poetry com-

petition and prompted some to proclaim him a 'second Homer'. The poem is, in fact, written in the Homeric style. It takes its theme from the Macedonian epic folk poetry tradition and a well-known poem from that tradition about the exploits of Kuzman Kapidan, a defender of the Christian peasantry against the predations of lawless Moslem overlords. The eminent Macedonian scholar Blazhe Koneski has said that *'Prlichev's poem is on a par with other works of 19th century Balkan literature such as "The Mountain Wreath" and "The Death of Smail Aga Chengich."*

Later, Grigor Prlichev rejected the use of the Greek language in his literary work, though he never lost his love for Greek classical literature, particularly the works of Homer, whose *"Iliad"* he would eventually translate. Instead of pursuing a career in medicine he chose to leave Athens and return to his native land to work for the advancement of his own people. As a teacher in Macedonian schools in the latter 19th century, he followed in the footsteps of his martyred teacher, Dimitar Miladinov, continuing the educational work begun by him and others. Prlichev also

participated in the church struggle against Greek control of Macedonian schools and churches. This resolve to serve the interests of his countrymen, which had already cost him the opportunity to continue his studies abroad under Greek sponsorship in Western Europe, later led to his persecution and eventual imprisonment at Debar, due to the machinations of the hostile Greek clergy of Ohrid.

In addition to a second epic poem, *"Skenderbeg"*, Prlichev also wrote a number of poems for children and his *"Autobiography"* which are also of literary significance. Prlichev's *"Autobiography"*, for example, contains vivid and often penetrating portraits of people and descriptions of events from his native Ohrid region in the mid to late 19th century. He succeeds in creating a remarkably rich portrait of his mother and of his own complex emotional relationship with her. His thoughts and emotions are conveyed throughout this work in an honest and engaging manner.

The poem, *"The Sirdar"*, written when he was still quite young, remains Grigor

Prlchev's most enduring work and, perhaps, his greatest literary achievement. There is a certain irony in the fact that this work did not originally appear in his native Macedonian language, and the Greek authorities who awarded the poem top honors were themselves embarrassed when it became known that a non-Greek was its author. What is important, however, is that we simply appreciate the poem for itself. It is a beautiful work that honors a brave de-

fender of the Macedonian people during a time when they were at their most vulnerable. The great friend of Macedonia and talented teacher and translator of Macedonian works into English, Graham Reid, created a beautiful English language version of the poem in 1973. It is available to readers through the Macedonian Review publisher.

Here is a particularly memorable section of that work. Our present era is

certainly more cynical and our understanding of the world more nuanced than it was during Grigor Prlichev's time. All the same, with the aid of imagination we can also find some degree of the solace that 19th century readers of the poem must have found in this passage in which Kuzman Kapidan's mother imagines the moment her son is reunited with his father in heaven:

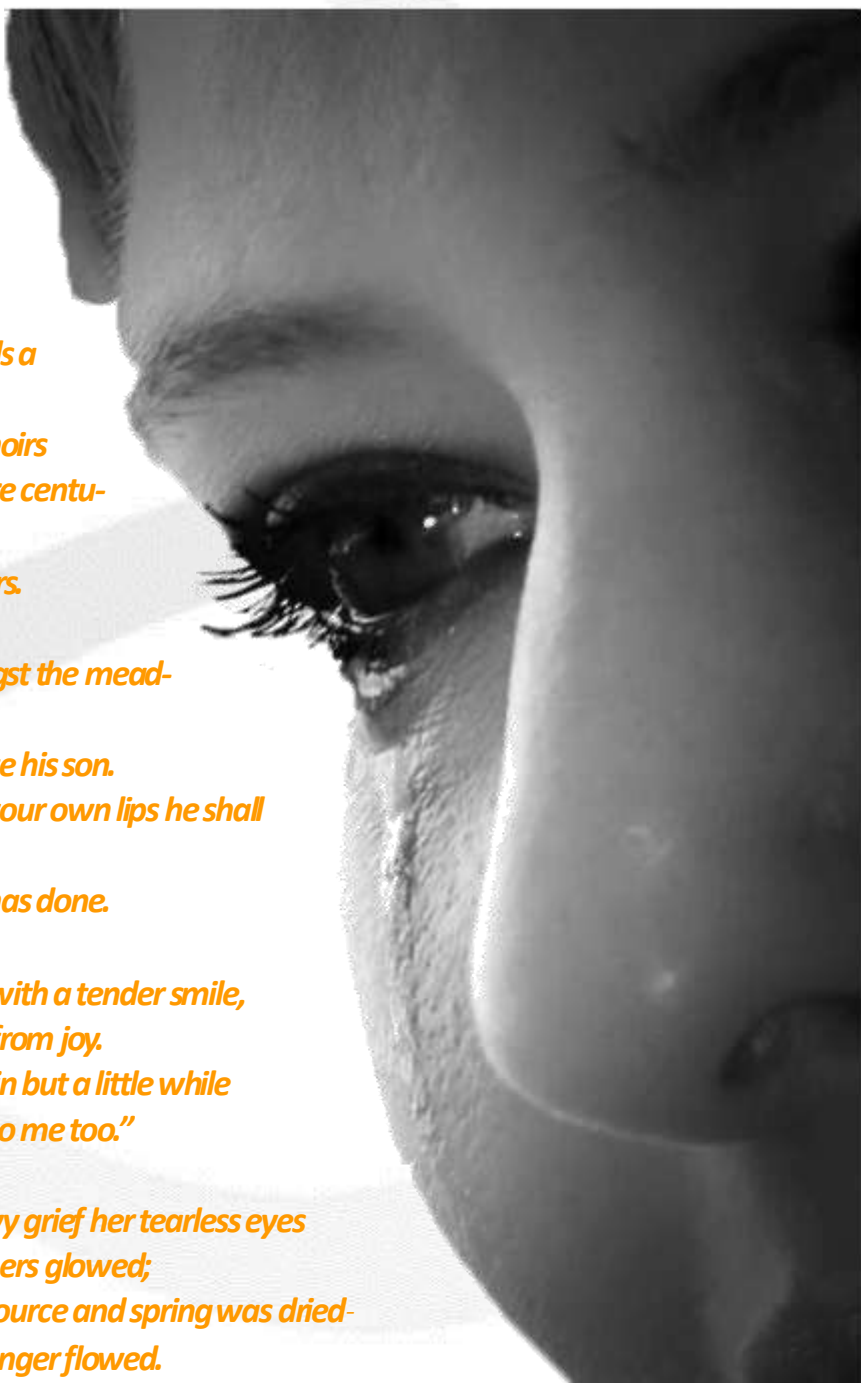
*"...Now you are speeding, son, to
take up as your own
A laurel wreath in the realm
Of endless happiness, where pain and
time are both unknown,
Yonder, there in heaven,*

*"Where hearing simple tales one finds a
wealth of pure delight;
Where songs are sung by choirs
Such as no mortal ear has heard; where centu-
ries take flight,
Passing away like hours.*

*"Father and son will meet again amongst the mead-
ows there;
The father embrace his son.
The news of these wild battles from your own lips he shall
hear,
Of all your band has done.*

*"Then will the hero clasp the hero with a tender smile,
Embracing you from joy.
And perhaps those joyous arms in but a little while
Will stretch out to me too."*

*Thus she spoke. And from her heavy grief her tearless eyes
Like fiery embers glowed;
By that same heavy grief their very source and spring was dried-
Her tears no longer flowed.*



AMHRC EXPRESSES ITS SINCERE GRATITUDE TO WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MP JOHN HYDE FOLLOWING HIS VISIT TO MACEDONIA

28 July 2011, Melbourne and Perth, Australia



Mr. John Hyde MLA

The Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) would like to express its sincere gratitude to Mr John Hyde MLA for the strong and sincere support he gave Macedonia during his visit to the country last week.

Mr Hyde is the Member for Perth in the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia, and is also the Shadow Minister for Multicultural Interests and Citizenship.

After meetings in the Macedonian Parliament, Mr Hyde said that there are strong supporters of the Republic of Macedonia in Australia and that they are striving towards speeding up the recognition of the country's democratically chosen name. He added that Macedonian migrants have made a very positive contribution to Australian society, especially to the economic prosperity of Perth and Western Australia.

The AMHRC is pleased to have contributed to the organisation of Mr Hyde's visit to Macedonia. However a special mention here must be made of the efforts of the Honorary Consul of the Republic of Macedonia in Western Australia, Mr Zoran Coseski

and others who were instrumental in making the visit a great success.

Mr Hyde has demonstrated himself to be a true friend of the Macedonian community and of Macedonia. The AMHRC urges Macedonians around Australia, especially in Western Australia, to contact Mr Hyde's office to also express their gratitude and support for his efforts.

John Hyde MLA

446 William Street

Perth, WA 6000

Tel: (08) [9227 8040](tel:0892278040)

Fax: (08) [9227 8060](tel:0892278060)

Email: john.hyde@mp.wa.gov.au

Established in 1984 the Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) is a non-governmental organisation that informs and advocates before international institutions, governments and broader communities about combating racism and promoting human rights. Our aspiration is to ensure that Macedonian communities and other excluded groups throughout the world, are recognised, respected and afforded equitable treatment. For more information please visit www.macedonianhr.org.au, or contact AMHRC at info@macedonianhr.org.au or via [+61 3 9329 8960](tel:+61393298960).

MP Karygiannis accused of berating civil servants

By Laura Payton, CBC News

Controversial Liberal MP Jim Karygiannis is the focus of complaints from Canadian government officials over allegedly verbally abusive behaviour, CBC News has learned.

Immigration officials have complained that Karygiannis, the MP for Ontario's Scarborough-Agincourt riding, has used what they call unparliamentary language on multiple occasions in dealing with staff and takes an aggressive tone with civil servants.

Reached by CBC News, Karygiannis said he suspects there is an orchestrated campaign to smear him.

"I've had a good working relationship with the civil servants going back to 1988. I can probably get things done that a lot of other members [of Parliament] cannot get done because I contact them and say I need your help, and the help is always there," he said.

"You don't get re-elected time and time again because of the work that you do if you don't look after your constituents. And people will not look after you and not be helping you if you're not nice to them."

A spokeswoman for Citizenship and Immigration Minister Jason Kenney wouldn't confirm the complaints. She pointed to an incident at a House of Commons committee meeting in 2009 when Karygiannis accused a departmental official of not wanting to admit black immigrants into Canada.

"We cannot release details of Mr. Karygiannis's interactions with departmental officials without his consent," Candice Malcolm wrote in an email.

"It is already public that Minister Kenney wrote a letter to the chair of the Citizenship and Immigration committee after Mr. Karygiannis was verbally abusive toward CIC officials when they appeared to answer questions.

"We expect anyone dealing with civil servants, especially members of Parliament, to show the same level of respect and decorum with which they would want to be treated. Yelling and/or use of profane language toward civil servants by members of Parliament is not acceptable.

History of controversial remarks
Karygiannis, the Liberal party's multiculturalism critic, is hosting 19 cultural groups this weekend for meetings in Ottawa with Liberal MPs to talk about issues they face.

But some major cultural groups in Canada are boycotting the meetings and demanding Karygiannis be forced out of his portfolio, alleging he holds controversial views that make him unsuitable for the job.

The groups point to statements made by Karygiannis that they say make him an offensive pick.

CBC News has obtained a letter from B'Nai Brith Canada, a leading Jewish group, as well as press releases from Macedonian, Turkish and Chinese groups, demanding Liberal Interim Leader Bob Rae replace Karygiannis in his role.

Rae wasn't available Friday for interviews.

The letter and statements are, in part, in support of complaints by the Macedonian Human Rights

Movement International, who noted a 2011 event in Toronto where Karygiannis used a derogatory word to describe Macedonians.

Karygiannis says he was referring to a term that's used in Greece to describe Macedonians from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

"The Macedonians of FYROM in Greece are referred to as Skopjans. That's a statement which is true. That's how they're referred to," Karygiannis said.

He's also championed causes that have split cultural communities, including successfully pushing Parliament to pass a motion that "acknowledges the Armenian genocide of 1915 and condemns this act as a crime against humanity." Karygiannis says he's willing to sit down with anyone and talk.

"If they don't like it, then they will say OK, let's do a number on Jim. Well, that's fine. But my motto is respect, accept, celebrate and embrace."

Anita Bromberg, general counsel for B'nai Brith Canada, says the organization is concerned about some of the positions Karygiannis has taken.

"Our point today is that multiculturalism is a call for a united front, for bringing communities together ... where he's been so divisive in the positions he's taken, then we are suggesting to the Liberal Party that they reconsider whether he's the best representative of putting forth that aim."

www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2011/08/26/pol-jim-karygiannis.html

"...some major cultural groups in Canada are boycotting the meetings and demanding Karygiannis be forced out of his portfolio, alleging he holds controversial views that make him unsuitable for the job. The groups point to statements made by Karygiannis that they say make him an offensive pick."

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An ideal way that businesses and organisations can support the AMHRC and contribute to its activities is by becoming an advertiser in the **AMHRC Review**, the official publication of the AMHRC.

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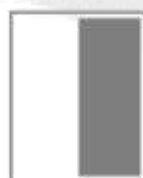
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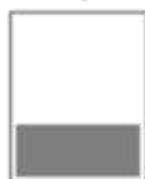
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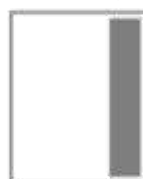
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OMO "Ilinden" PIRIN, the political party of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria, the Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) and Macedonian Human Rights Movement International (MHRMI) confirm that after an abnormally long delay, the results of the Census in Bulgaria, held in February 2011, have at last been announced. Due to the absurdly large number of manipulations which were carried out during the period in which it was held, the Census results were declared as invalid by OMO "Ilinden" PIRIN and other Macedonian organizations in Bulgaria as early as April this year.

This time the Bulgarian state has decided to allocate barely 1,654 people to the Macedonian minority, the existence of which, it totally denies. The results of this quasi Census have only confirmed what we expected - a criminal falsification has been carried out. However, in its desire to reduce to the maximum the number of those belonging to the Macedonian mi-

nority, the state has gone too far and the manipulation carried out by it is obvious to all. During the course of the census, Bulgarian officials systematically refused to accurately record the answers of individuals who declared themselves to be Macedonian.

Following the release of the census results, OMO "Ilinden" PIRIN, the AMHRC and MHRMI have agreed to inform international human rights bodies in the UN, the Council of Europe, the OSCE and the EU of this scandalous act on the part of the Bulgarian state. The incident will be of particular interest to the United Nations Independent Expert on Minority Issues, Ms Gay McDougall who visited Bulgaria earlier this month and is currently preparing a report to present to the UN Human Rights Council at the end of the year.

OMO "Ilinden" PIRIN, the AMHRC and MHRMI also urge Macedonians (and indeed human rights defenders in general)

to take action on this matter by directly contacting foreign ministries in their respective countries of residence and bringing the census scandal to their attention. In particular Macedonians in the United States are urged to write to US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton who just months ago, on 3 March 2011, claimed that: *"Bulgaria has led by example at home, striving to create strong institutions, enforce the rule of law and uphold democratic transitions. Your progress in building a vibrant democracy as a responsible member of the transatlantic community over the past two decades has given hope to so many countries in your region and around the world."*

The stark contrast between Secretary Clinton's official praise for Bulgaria and the actuality of the situation on the ground is exemplified by the huge discrepancy between the 'official' number of Macedonians in Bulgaria (1,654) and the reality in Pirin Macedonia and beyond.

ОМО „Илинден“ ПИРИН, АМКЧП и ММДЧП ги осудуваат „резултатите“ од бугарскиот попис

Благоевград, Мелбурн, Торонто (25 јули, 2011) - ОМО „Илинден“ - ПИРИН, политичка партија на македонското малцинство во Бугарија, Австралиско-Македонскиот Комитет за човекови права (АМКЧП) и Македонското меѓународно движење за човекови права (ММДЧП) потврдија дека по невообичаено долгото одложување, резултатите од пописот во Бугарија кој што се одржа во февруари 2011 година конечно се објавени. Поради апсурдно големиот број на манипулации кои се направени во изминатиот период, резултатите од пописот се прогласија за невалидни од страна на ОМО "Илинден" ПИРИН и други македонски организации во Бугарија уште во април оваа година.

Овојпат бугарската држава одлучи да прогласи едвај 1.654 луѓе како претставници на македонското малцинство, чие што постоење, комплетно го отфрла. Резултатите на овој т.н. "попис" само го потврдија она што го очекуваше – направено е криминално фалсификување. Во својата желба до максимум да се намали бројот на оние кои што му припаѓаат на

македонското малцинство, државата отиде предалеку и направената манипулација е повеќе од очигледна. Во текот на пописот, бугарските официјални лица систематски одбивале да ги регистрираат одговорите на луѓето кои што се изјаснувале како Македонци.

По објавувањето на резултатите од пописот, ОМО "Илинден" Пирин, АМКЧП и ММДЧП одлучија да ги информираат меѓународните тела за човекови права во ОН, Советот на Европа, ОБСЕ и ЕУ за овој скандалозен чин од страна на бугарската држава. Инцидентот ќе биде од посебен интерес за независниот експерт за малцински прашања при Обединетите нации, г-ѓа Геј Меџдугал, која минатиот месец беше во посета на Бугарија и во моментот го подготвува извештајот кој што до крајот на годинава треба да го достави до Советот за човекови права на ОН.

ОМО "Илинден" - ПИРИН, АМКЧП и ММДЧП исто така ги повикуваат Македонците (како и сите вистински борци за човекови права) да се преземе

акција во врска со ова прашање и да ги информираат министерствата за надворешни работи во земјите каде што живеат и да им го посочат овој пример на скандалозен попис. Особено се бара од Македонците во САД да му се обратат на американскиот државен секретар Хилари Клинтон, која пред само неколку месеци (на 3 март 2011 година) го изјави следново: "Бугарија треба да служи како пример поради стремежите да создаде силни институции, да го спроведува владеењето на правото и да ги почитува демократските транзиции. Вашиот напредок во градењето на демократијата како одговорен член на трансатлантската заедница во текот на изминатите две децении дава надеж за многу земји во регионот и во светот."

Колку официјалните пофалби од страна на секретарот Клинтон за Бугарија противречат на реалноста на состојбите на теренот е токму примерот со огромната разлика помеѓу "официјалниот" број на Македонците во Бугарија (1.654) и вистинскиот број на Македонци во Пиринска Македонија и пошироко.



MHRMI and AMHRC Denounce Clinton's Demands that Macedonia "Solve" the Name Dispute

Toronto and Melbourne (July 19, 2011)



Macedonian Human Rights Movement International (MHRMI) and the Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee

(AMHRC) denounce US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's statement that, *"The government in Skopje needs to know that it will not be able to move forward on its European integration until it does resolve this (issue). And, obviously, Greece has to be willing to accept how the name is resolved."*

In other words Clinton has told a sovereign nation – Macedonia – that it must surrender the most basic right possessed by any state – the right to self-identification; if it wants to become a part of Europe. The US, 'leader of the free world', as on other occasions in relation to Macedonia, has shown itself to be unequal to the task of upholding the most basic tenants of liberty and indeed international law.

The United States recognized Macedonia in 2004, yet it calls for a name change. The hypocrisy is astounding.

Considering the apparent inability of the EU to manage its economic affairs properly, MHRMI and AMHRC are not at all convinced that Macedonia's membership in such an institution is in its best interests. However, the point is that we cannot abide by declarations which amount to the blackmail of *'forgo your rights and change your name or else'*. We have written to the State Department demanding an explanation and immediate US condemnation of the name negotiations.

MHRMI and **AMHRC** began an advertising campaign in Macedonia over a year ago, advocating an end to the farcical and racist name "negotiations" between Macedonia and Greece. For anyone interested in joining the **Our Name is Macedonia** campaign, please use the follow-

ing link: www.mhrmi.org/our_name_is_macedonia

Macedonian Human Rights Movement International (MHRMI) has been active on human and national rights issues for Macedonians and other oppressed peoples since 1986. For more information: www.mhrmi.org, twitter.com/mhrmi, [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/mhrmi), info@mhrmi.org, 416-850-7125.

Established in 1984 the Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) is a non governmental organisation that advocates before governments, international institutions and broader communities about combating discrimination and promoting basic human rights. Our aspiration is to ensure that Macedonian communities and other excluded groups throughout the world are recognised, respected and afforded equitable treatment. For more information please visit www.macedonianhr.org.au, or contact AMHRC by email info@macedonianhr.org.au or via +61 3 93298960.



Дневник

Датум: 01.07.2011

Експертот за малцински прашања во инспекциска мисија Бугарија под лупа на ОН за македонското малцинство

Партијата на Македонците во Бугарија во четврток ќе ги стави на маса пред Мегдугал сите проблеми и притисоци со кои се соочува

Независниот експерт за малцински права на Обединетите нации, Геј Мегдугал во понеделник прв пат ќе дојде во Бугарија, каде што една недела, меѓу другото, ќе ја набљудува состојбата со македонското малцинство. Мегдугал веќе закажала две средби со раководството на партијата на Македонците ОМО „Илинден-ПИРИН“, кои ќе ~ објаснат дека се соочуваат со притисок и непризнавање на нивните малцински права од страна на властите во земјата. Првата средба ќе биде во четврток.

- Ние ќе ~ објасниме какви се проблемите на македонското малцинство. Експертот за малцински права вообичаено се интересира за сите притисоци со кои се соочуваме. Во мај веќе имавме средба со експертот на Обединетите нации за независен судски систем со кој разговаравме за нашиот проблем со регистрацијата и за случајот во Стразбур - вели Стојко Стојков, претседател на ОМО „Илинден-ПИРИН“.

Мегдугал во Бугарија доаѓа по покана на бугарската влада, а како што информираат од Советот за човекови права на Обединетите нации, таа ќе ги испитува законодавството, политиките и практиката која земјата ја има за да ја спречи дискриминацијата.

- Како и сите други европски земји, Бугарија се соочува со предизвици поврзани со различноста. Заинтересирана сум да видам како се справува со тие предизвици, каков напредок е направен, како и со какви позитивни практики Бугарија може да служи како пример во регионот и

пошироко - изјави Мегдугал пред посетата на Бугарија. По нејзината прва посета во Бугарија, која завршува на 14 јули, таа треба да подготви извештај за состојбата со малцинските права кај нашиот источен сосед. Од Женева информираат дека Мегдугал ќе ја започне нејзината посета во Софија, пред да патува во различни региони каде што живеат малцинствата, како Благоевград и Пловдив. Таа ќе има средби со министри и други владини претставници, но и со невладини организации, претставници кои работат со малцински прашања и промоција на недискриминација.

- Задоволство ми е што ќе имам шанса да ја посетам Бугарија, една од најновите членки, која има историски диверзитет на различни етнички, религиозни и лингвистички малцинства - изјави Мегдугал. Експертката за човекови права пред неколку години беше во инспекциска мисија во Грција. По посетата преку својот извештај го повика нашиот јужен сосед итно да ја запре дебатата дали има Македонци, да признае постоење на македонско малцинство на своја територија и да ги почитува нивните права, гарантирани со меѓународни договори. Мегдугал беше во Северна Грција, каде што лично се увери дека македонското малцинство нема соодветен третман од грчките власти. Слични заклучоци се очекуваат и за македонското малцинство во Бугарија.

Ивана КОСТОВСКА

<http://www.dnevnik.com.mk/?>

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OMO "ILINDEN" PIRIN, AMHRC, MHRMI WELCOME VISIT OF UNITED NATIONS INDEPENDENT EXPERT ON MINORITY ISSUES TO BULGARIA

7 July 2011—Blagoevgrad, Melbourne, and Toronto

OMO "Ilinden" PIRIN, the political party of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria, the Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) and Macedonian Human Rights Movement International (MHRMI) welcome this week's visit of the Independent Expert on Minority Issues, Gay McDougall, to Bulgaria.

Today, the Independent Expert met with representatives of the Macedonian minority in the country. The delegation comprised of: Stojko Stojkov, Co-President of OMO "Ilinden" PIRIN and Stahil Tupalski, Central Council Member of OMO "Ilinden" PIRIN; Stojan Gerasimov from the Society of Repressed Macedonians; and Georgi Hristov, the Chief Editor of the pro-Macedonian newspaper, Narodna Volja.

The meeting gave the Macedonian organisations the opportunity to provide the Independent Expert with a first hand, documented account of the problems facing the Macedonian population in Bulgaria. Many questions were asked by Ms McDougall who, according to the Macedonian representatives, demonstrated a good understanding of the issues facing the Macedonian minority.

On behalf of OMO "Ilinden" PIRIN, Stojko Stojkov presented the Independent Expert with a report on the status of the Mace-

donian minority in Bulgaria, as well as a document outlining the irregularities carried out in the recent census together with the text of the declaration issued by Macedonian organisations in Bulgaria in which they announce that they will not recognise the census results.

At present the Bulgarian state does not recognise the existence of a distinct Macedonian ethnic group and has actively pursued policies to suppress individuals and organisations expressing such an identity. One such organisation is OMO "Ilinden" PIRIN, a political party founded on 28 February 1998 and based in south-west Bulgaria, in the Pirin region. On 29 February 2000 the Bulgarian Constitutional Court declared the party unconstitutional and dissolved it. However in 2005 the European Court of Human Rights ruled that the ban was in violation of the European Convention on Human Rights and ordered the immediate re-registration of the party. Since that judgement, the party has tried on no less than three separate occasions to reconstitute itself, however all applications have been rejected by Bulgarian authorities. This denial of the right to freedom of association has been noted by the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee as well as several international human rights bodies such as the Council of Europe, the Organisation for

Security and Cooperation in Europe and by the European Parliament.

AMHRC/MHRMI have consistently demanded that Bulgaria re-register OMO "Ilinden" PIRIN and recognise the Macedonian minority in the country. We have also repeatedly called on the international community to ensure that Bulgaria fulfils its human right commitments and in this connection, we hope that the visit of the Independent Expert will lead to a change in the policy of the Bulgarian government. Namely, Bulgaria must afford equal recognition to Macedonians, and other minorities, in accordance with international standards, such as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Person belonging to Minorities and the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

At today's meeting, the Macedonian minority organisations recommended, *inter alia*, to the Independent Expert that:

- *Bulgaria officially recognise the existence of a distinct Macedonian identity, Macedonian language and grant full minority status to the Macedonians of Bulgaria.*
- *Bulgaria extends the legal scope of application of the Framework Convention for the Protection for National*

Minorities to also include the Macedonian minority.

- Bulgaria fully execute the judgement of the European Court of Human Rights in the case of OMO "Ilinden" PIRIN and Others against Bulgaria, judgment of 20/10/2005, final on 20/01/2006 and re-register OMO "Ilinden" PIRIN

as required under the European Convention on Human Rights.

- The Bulgarian government forms an independent commission to investigate allegations of discrimination, harassment and persecution of members of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria.

OMO "Ilinden" PIRIN, AMHRC and MHRMI demand that the Bulgarian government engage constructively with the UN Independent Expert and work with the Macedonian minority organizations to implement the recommendations which will be presented to the UN Human Rights Council by the end of the year.



Ms. Gay McDougal—Independent Expert on Minority Issues in Bulgaria

ОМО „Илинден“ - ПИРИН, АМКЧП и ММДЧП ја поздравуваат посетата на Бугарија од страна на независниот експерт за малцински прашања во Обединетите нации

7 јули, 2011

Благоевград, Мелбурн, Торонто - ОМО „Илинден“ - ПИРИН, политичка партија на македонското малцинство во Бугарија, Австралиско-Македонскиот Комитет за човекови права (АМКЧП) и Македонското меѓународно движење за човекови права (ММДЧП) ја поздравуваат посетата на Геј Мекдугал, независниот експерт за малцински прашања во Обединетите нации која што оваа недела престојува во Бугарија.

Денес, независниот експерт се сретна со претставници на македонското малцинство во земјата. Делегацијата се состои од: Стојко Стојков, ко-претседател на ОМО „Илинден“ - ПИРИН, Стахил Тупалски, член на Централниот совет на ОМО „Илинден“ - ПИРИН, Стојан Герасимов од Здружението на репресираните Македонци и Георги Христов, главниот уредник на про-македонскиот весник, Народна Волја.

Средбата им овозможи на македонските организации документирано и непосредно да го информираат независниот експерт за проблемите со кои што се соочува македонското население во Бугарија. Од страна на г-ѓа Мекдугал биле поставени бројни прашања и според македонските претставници, таа покажала добро разбирање за проблемите на македонското малцинство.

Во име на ОМО „Илинден“ - ПИРИН, Стојко Стојков на независниот експерт и' поднесе извештај за статусот на македонското малцинство во Бугарија, како и документ со нотираните неправилности при последниот попис заедно со декларацијата издадена од страна на македонските организации во Бугарија, во која тие се изјаснуваат дека нема да ги признаат резултатите од пописот.

Во моментот бугарската држава не го признава постоењето на посебна македонска етничка група и активно политички ги прогонува поединците и организациите кои што сакаат да изразат таков идентитет. Една таква организација е ОМО „Илинден“ - ПИРИН, политичка партија основана на 28 февруари 1998 година и со седиште во југозападниот дел на Бугарија, во Пиринско. На 29 февруари 2000 година бугарскиот Уставен суд ја прогласи партијата за неуставна и ја укина. Сепак, во 2005 година Европскиот суд за човекови права пресуди дека забраната е во спротивност на Европската конвенција за човекови права и наредил веднаш пререгистрација на партијата. После таа пресуда, партијата се обиде во три одделни прилики да се пререгистрира, но сепак, сите апликации беа отфрлени од страна на бугарските власти. Ова негирање на правото на слобода на здружување е забележано од страна на бугарскиот Хелсиншки

комитет, како и од неколку меѓународни тела за човекови права како што се Советот на Европа, Организацијата за безбедност и соработка во Европа и од Европскиот парламент.

АМКЧП / ММДЧП континуирано бараат од Бугарија повторно да ја регистрира ОМО „Илинден“ - ПИРИН и да го признае македонското малцинство во земјата. Истовремено, со оглед на тоа што постојано бараме од меѓународната заедница да и' наложи на Бугарија да ги исполни своите обврски во остварувањето на човековите права, се надеваме дека посетата на независниот експерт ќе доведе до промена во политиката на бугарската влада. Имено, Бугарија мора да дозволи признавање на Македонците и другите малцинства, во согласност со меѓународните стандарди, како што е Декларацијата на ОН за правата на припадници на малцинствата и на Советот на Рамковната конвенција на Европа за заштита на националните малцинства.

На денешната средба, организациите од македонското малцинство, меѓу другото, на независниот експерт и' препорачува:

- Бугарија официјално да го признае постоењето на посебен македонски идентитет, македонски јазик и да им даде целосен малцински статус на

Македонците во Бугарија.

- Бугарија правно да обезбеди опсегот на примената на Рамковната конвенција за заштита на националните малцинства да важи и за македонското малцинство.

- Бугарија да постапи согласно пресудата на Европскиот суд за човекови права во случајот на ОМО „Илинден“ - ПИРИН и другите против Бугарија, пресуда од 20/10/2005, конечна на 20/01/2006 и повторно да се регистрира ОМО „Илинден“ - ПИРИН како што се бара во рамките на Европската конвенција за човекови права.

- Бугарската влада да формира независна комисија за да ги испита наводите за дискриминација, малтретирање и прогон на припадниците на македонското малцинство во Бугарија.

ОМО „Илинден“ - ПИРИН, АМКЧП и ММДЧП бараат од бугарската влада да пристапи конструктивно со независниот експерт на ОН и со организациите на македонското малцинство да работи на спроведување на препораките кои ќе бидат презентирани од страна на Советот за човекови права при ОН, на крајот на годината.



In Review: The Poetry of *Dushan Ristevski*

Dushan Ristevski was born in 1954 in Bitola – Macedonia. He migrated to Sydney in 1973.

Having completed his Diploma in Welfare Work in 1985 and Bachelor of Social Sciences in 1991, in 1996 he gained his Masters Degree in Counselling.

Dushan has been actively involved in community welfare since 1976. As a founder of the *Macedonian Australian Welfare Association* in 1982, Dushan played an instrumental role in establishing community welfare services for young people, women and the elderly. Through his involvement with the *St George Migrant Resource Centre* he also played a major role in the establishment and improvement of welfare services for the multicultural communities in the St George area. Between 1987 and 1990 he served as a part time commissioner with the Ethnic Affairs

Commission of NSW. Since 1991 he has been working as a Counsellor for the *St George Mental Health Service*.

Dushan is the author of the following published books of poetry: **Polutici** (1984) republished bilingually **Polutici – Fragments** (1989), **Dream-Agony** (1992), **Clasp** (2001), **Flower-Woman** (2003), **Stolen Thoughts** (2009), and **Forbidden Love** (2009). He also wrote two monodramas: **Mother**, performed in Sydney and in Prilep (Macedonia) at the Vojdan Chernodrinski Theatre Festival in 1990 and **Neda**, performed in Sydney in 1996. He is an author of the scripts: **Protest** (1992), **Raskol** (2009) and the dramas **Fear and Shame** published in Macedonian (2006) and in English (2009), **Mr Balkan** (2009), **Old and Happy** (2010). He has also published poetry in various anthologies in Australia, Macedonia and

the United States.

For the play **Fear and Shame** in 2007 he was awarded with the *St George Hospital and Community Health Service Award of Excellence for Innovation in Health Education*. In 2008 he was awarded with the Macedonian Community **Golden Sun Award** for art and literature. Dushan has also received two prestigious poetry awards, **Ise-lenichka Gramota** (2010) and **Stojan Hristov** (2011).

Dushan is a founding member of the Macedonian Literary Association of Australia “*Grigor Prlichev*”, member of the *Writers’ Association of Macedonia* and of the *Journalists’ Association of Macedonia*.

Some of the compositions by Dushan, which have stirred the imagination of the Macedonian literary world:

Знам каде се свездите
од каде изгрева сонцето
каде се игра со песокот
морињата и океаните
каде цвеќињата цветаат
по планините и падините
знам каде е жуборот
на потокот и реките
цвркотот на птиците
и песната на пчелите
Незнам каде сум
како да дојдам до нив
каде ќе бидам утре
и зошто сум овде...

ПРАЗНИНА

Темница во собата
тежина во душата
тишина во собата
самотија во душата
-го бројам отчукот на срцето.

Вратата претешка од клинците
на прозорецот решетки
пристан за гулабите.

На подот огледало
ја отсликувам длабочината на животот
ги фрлив клучевите
прозорецот и вратата ги засидав
и се заковав на креветот...

ЗАТВОРЕНИК НА МИНАТОТОТ

Само јас и таа
сенка и соба празна
послана со килим-старокрајски
исчадена со пораки од графити
-немој да ја допираш сенката
врата нема – само прозорци
со решетки ковани
од битолските ковачи
-нејзината облина се назира
собата се гуши со мирис од валери
застарена пот и чад од цигари
-чувството на виновност го затворив
алишта расфрлени на подот
измешани со остатоци од јадење
чекаат креветот да се разбуди
и зачекори кон вратата.

ПАТ НА ИСЧЕКУВАЊЕ (На мајка ми)

Мајко
не се вјасај за умирачка
отвори ги портите
слушни ги моите чекори
и радоста на децата.
Креветот
веќе одамна ти стана
живеалиште на твоите болки
скаменетите коски
и згрчените мускули
кои бараат спас во чекање.

Кожата
бела и просирна
го покрива скелетот
кој се ниша и влечка
по празните соби
ги бара сликите
од децата...
Прошепоти
синко, однесиме во градината
цвеќината да ги помирисам
и ја слушнам песната на пчелите...

Рече
шепотам оти се плашам
од гласот свој
-чекам спасение...
Време е
време е да ве напуштам
ме вика мајка
да ѝ се придружам...

НЕПРООДЕН ПАТ

Незнам
каде сум...
Денот носи неизвесности
намерата
е само неисполнета желба
која демне остварување.

Прашај се
што незнаеме
ивратата
на непознатици
се отвора
на добри
и лоши трепети.

Не се бега од болот
тој е дел од постоењето
не се срами
од голопијата на вистината
не оди назад
во утробата на зачнатоста
расти
со годините на возраста
и длабоката свесност...

БОЛ

Ја сакам болката
ја пречекувам
со отворени раце
-не бегам од неминовноста
бегството те враќа
во вонземните длабочини.
Сакам болката
да пати со мене.

САМОТИЈА

самотијата е посестрима
на чувството на кривост
посестрима на лутината
стравот и патењето

самотијата е посестрима
на маката од постоење
на очајот
и безнадежноста

самотијата е болка
на животот

ОСАМЕНОСТ

Осаменост
гледам во твоите очи
дождови
го прскаат твоето лице
солзите
се невидливи грмотивици
плачот
глуво го цепи небото
облаците
сlegtле и те обвиткале.

Знам
осаменоста сакаш да ја гледаш
во очите и сенката
да ја колнеш да си замине
ама стравот те обзема
и се клешти околу тебе
ја сака твојата осаменост.



Mother dear,
why rush to leave this world?
Open the gates
hear my steps
and the joy of my children.

Your bed
has long become
the home of your pain
petrified bones
and stiff muscles
that seek salvation in waiting.

Your skin
pale like parchment
covers your skeleton
that sways and hobbles
through empty rooms
seeking photos
of us children...

She whispered:
Carry me out into the garden, my Son,
so I can smell the flowers
and hear the song of the bees...

She said:
I whisper for fear
of my own voice
I am waiting for deliverance...
It is time
it is time for me to leave you
Mother calls
for me to join her...

LONELINESS

Loneliness—
I see it in your eyes
rain
splashes your face
your tears
are invisible claps of thunder
your crying
silently splits the sky;
have the clouds
come down and enveloped you?

I know
you want to look loneliness
in the face
and beg the shadow to leave
but fear grips you
and grins as you swoon
it loves your loneliness.

IN SEARCH OF MYSELF

I know where the stars are
and where the sun rises,
where the seas and oceans
caress the sand
and the flowers bloom
in mountain meadows.
I know where the streams
and little rivers gurggle,
where the birds chirp
and the bees bumble.
But how can I reach them
when I don't know where I am
or where I will be tomorrow
or why I am here...

APATH YET UNTRODDEN

I don't know
where I am...
The day brings uncertainty
intention
is nothing but a wish unfulfilled,
waiting and longing to come true.

Ask yourself
what we do not know
and the door
of the unknown
will open
with a quiver of joy
and trepidation.

There is no fleeing from pain
it is part of existence
do not be ashamed
of the nakedness of truth
do not go back
to the womb
grow
with the passage of your years
and deepening consciousness...

PAIN

I love pain
and welcome it
with open arms
I do not run from
the inevitable
-running returns you
to the gulf of the abyss.

I want the pain
to suffer with me.

PRISONER OF THE PAST

I am alone with it:
her shadow in an empty
room
laid with carpets from the old
country,
filled with a smoke of
scrawled messages.
Don't touch the shadow!
There is no door—only win-
dows
with bars wrought
by the smiths of Bitola.
Her contours and the room's
blur in the air thick with lav-
ender,
stale sweat and cigarette
smoke.
The feeling of guilt is shut
away.
The scattered cloths
and scraps of food on the
floor
now wait for the sleeper to
rise
and brave a step outside.

SOLITUDE

Loneliness is akin
to the feeling of guilt
akin to rage
fear and suffering

Loneliness is akin
to the pain of existence
to hopelessness
and despair

Loneliness is the pain
of life

EMPTINESS

Darkness in the room
a heavy, leaden gloom
silence in this space
and solitude in my soul
-I count the beats of my heart.

The door is studded and heavy
bars on the windows
a refuge for pigeons.

A mirror on the floor
reflects the depths of my life
I have thrown away the keys
walled up window and door
and chained myself to the bed...

Towards a partial reading of Dushan Ristevski's Stolen Thoughts

by Jim Thomev

It is appropriate to begin at the beginning:

Имам желба
Да одлетам некаде
Ама не знам каде
I long to
Fly away
But don't know where

This is the opening of the very first poem of the first of three cycles of this collection. It proclaims the permanent impulse of the restless, of those without a secure abode, of those not at home in the world¹:

We are here at the very source of the inspiration of modern Macedonian poetry - I will venture that this is on the verge of parody or a post-modernist up-date of Konstantin Miladinov's famous *T'ra za jyr* or *Longing for the South*, which is the poem ritualistically read at the opening of the Struga Poetry Festival that has been held every August in Macedonia. Konstantin Miladinov, was a minor poet and a great collector of folk materials with his older brother Dimitrija, two leaders of the 19th century Macedonian rebirth who gave the world the golden book (*Зборникот*). His most famous poem begins:

*Орелски крилја как да си метнеш
И в наши ст'рни да си прелетнеш!
На наши места ја да си идам,*

He yearns for eagle's wings, to go and see "our places", where he belongs, where all is known, and where he feels great joy in the familiar, solid ground. Dushan Ristevski makes a bow towards the iconic poem (a locus classicus in the Macedonian tradition of nostalgia), with the simple, "I long to/Fly away". With strict economy our contemporary Australian-Macedonian poet gives us his more serious plight that is beyond the conventional nostalgia of Miladinov; a more drastic dislocation is expressed so tersely that it carries its own burden of being at a loss: forlornly, a yearning for his nowhere to become a somewhere. (I should make absolutely clear at the outset that when I speak of the poet or "he" or "Ristevski", I speak of the poetic *persona* that is narrating, to be distinguished from

Dushan Ristevski the man, whose creation and vehicle it is.)

Thus the unfocussed goal of the deep longing, is a pallid, thin abstraction, bringing to mind the straw men, the hollow men of T S Eliot. It is the abstraction that embodies (!) the frustration, of *небиднина*-non-being, both over there, here and within the poet. Konstantin yearned for the view of his native town Struga in very specific ways - its sun, its lake, its warmth, familiarity- a particular place, the basis for a solid relationship to the world. Ristevski expresses the desire for the sense of non-being (the *небиднина*) to cease, to be actualised, somewhere. This is the underlying strand, for me, of all of Ristevski's poems in this collection, its subtle, tough call, for his sense of insecurity and his desire to end it, goes beyond the fact that he has nowhere to call home-he is ontologically insecure, as his next poem suggests when he laments that he has nothing to bequeath to others, except unseen deeds.

BEFORE LEAVING

Time passes by
and we are not eternal
all we leave behind
are unseen deeds
and nothing else
for anyone.

Every day we
paint life's picture
for our parents
children and grandchildren...
but nothing is left
for us
- nothing at all.

Last night I dreamed of the home
of my bones
- in the mountains
above the lake.

The poetic form is sturdy and stark-perfect simplicity for the documenting of moods, for the crystallization of thoughts with dazzling concision.

Further on, we come to this remarkable

opening verse which begins the poem titled *Тишина во мислата*²:

Утрото
го бакна првиот зрак
на сонцето
и го фрли во морето.
Morning
kisses the first ray
of sun
and throws it into the sea.

Thus Dushan Ristevski exhibits the essence of his poetic technique - a lyric grace that captures both the gentleness, the caress, of his simple poetic line, and its emotional power often hard to distinguish from emotional violence.

For those fortunate enough to have an inwardness with the Macedonian language as well as English, the beauties and resonances, are multiple, profound. With this first line, if we recall the Macedonian proverb, *Прај добро и врли го в море-Do a good deed and throw it into the sea*³-we have the further dimension of the people's voices echoing in the poet's consciousness - the 'stillness in thought' therefore, presents more than an image of morning sun, a new beginning, with the day moved by a kiss of love which is then cast into the vast waters of the ocean, a lovely enough image in itself. Such concision, such condensation, is miraculous - it is part of what it means to have a deep heritage.

Ristevski's poetry is not consistently replete with this degree of allusion; its power lies in its simplicity, at its best, in a directness of statement. For it is not 'difficult' in the sense that modern poetry of much of the twentieth century was "difficult" or "obscure" with its paradoxes, contradictions, ironies and ambiguities and its tendency over-all, in the final analysis to lapse into self-pity, however justifiable that self-pity may have been.⁴

On the other hand, the impression that Ristevski's poetry finally leaves is one of a radical modesty, paradoxical, given the preoccupation with the self it exhibits. For

(Continued from page 45)

there are no great claims made for himself, his 'I', his *persona* does not thrust his ego-tism at the reader, as he does not obtrude by trying to dazzle with an attention seeking demonstration of virtuosity or "literariness".

Dushan Ristovski's performance in this three cycle collection does something personal, unique to him, to his self. And because of its connectedness to two disparate societies and two countries and two languages, his poetic utterance, with its clarity and discipline, documents a mind in a variety of moods, and gives body to his values, loves and losses.

We are startled when we come to lines of this compactness:
на дрвениот мост
кај каменот жртвеник
се зацртува
црвена линија
на ужасот
on the wooden bridge
at the sacrificial stone
I glimpse
the red line
of horror

Here are adumbrations of great events, things of sorrow and of horror, of trauma, yet of immense vitality, in a place where much has happened, much human experience has accrued, of life lived and life diminished, but never merely put down, suggesting that the historical or life process is in any way meaningless – perplexing, yes, but never meaningless or pointless.

More and more the native strength of the Macedonian language, its rare, sonorous, and mellifluous qualities of sound, and its sinewy and durable quality is captured throughout the poems⁵.

Let us take the whole of the following poem

СТРАВ II

Како некои црнила
да ја облеаја главата
и обзеде душата
сонцето зајде
облаците ставија завеса
над месечината и ѕвездите.

Стравот го победува

црнилото во душата
е потемен
од длабочината на морето
потемен од ноќта
потемен...
потемен
од смртта...

FEAR II

Like a blackness
that flooded my senses
and seized my soul
the sun went down;
the clouds hung their curtain
over the moon and stars.

Fear routs and vanquishes
the blackness in my soul
it is darker
than the deeps of the sea
darker than night
darker...
oh yes,
darker than death.

Here we have a poem that cannot be translated⁶: the Englished version sounds conventional enough with its rhetoric and commonplace attitude in the first section only becoming something startling when we hear the first two lines of the second section,

"Fear routs and vanquishes
the blackness in my soul

The Macedonian original, however, presents the fear as something utterly other from start to finish, totally transforming the personality. It also does not refer to the 'I' like the English translation which is okay, at a pinch, but not strictly what the poet tells us...

Стравот го победува
црнилото во душата.

"the fear defeats the darkness in the soul..." (Macedonian does not use the first person pronoun).

Another feature of the Macedonian natural voice, the movement and rhythm of the lines, is the remarkably evocative repetition of the colossal vowel 'a', for which the mouth needs to be wide open as if in opening the major orifice of the body, it enables the fear to invade and overwhelm the soul. This is use of the resources of the Macedonian language at their optimal that lend subtle, powerful effects – it is as if the intelligence of the unique Macedonian

words has been harnessed to the poet's purpose of presenting his deepest terrors, emotions that ordinarily can destroy the soul. The poet with typical resilience (and complexity of response) is tough-minded, survives and articulates the worst extremities of mental pain with terrifying lucidity. This is the very elemental terror that is,

потемен...
потемен
од смртта

The "darker" (потемен), is repeated with a hesitant pause, giving a note of wonder and perplexity before the phenomenon of fear which is "darker than death" – смртта, the four consonants with the 't' repeated like an incomplete crucifix before the the mouth opens on the 'a' to receive the invader.

Poetry is out there in real life, and is reflected in both the heart and soul of the poet. Life's tensions and struggles are taken very seriously by Dushan Ristovski. Thus when he sings a basic fact, like solitude, he presents, not the pain of loneliness, but the fear that loves solitude and keeps the individual atomised.

ОСАМЕНОСТ

Осаменост
гледам во твоите очи
дождови
го прскаат твоето лице
солзите
се невидливи грмотевици
плачат
глуво го цепи небото
облаците
сегле и те обвиткале.

Знам

осаменоста сакаш да ја гледаш
во очите и сенката
да ја колнеш да си замине
ама стравот те обзема
и се клешти околу тебе
ја сака твојата осаменост.

LONELINESS

Loneliness –
I see it in your eyes
rain
splashes your face
your tears
are invisible flashes of lightning
your crying

silently splits the sky;
have the clouds
come down and enveloped you?

I know
you want to look loneliness
in the face
and beg the shadow to leave
but fear grips you
and grins as you swoon
it loves your loneliness.

Through his persona, the poet presents himself as a significant fact in the swirl of particulars in the world. He does not question in any serious sense his own worth, but rather highlights his perplexity, which lies in probing the nature of identity in this highly personal quest. His angle on that world is essentially something that comes to him through the gift of his own heritage: the language, imbibed from the Macedonian hearth, the family, a people, not just any people, but those who have always expressed their loves, hatreds, joys, miseries through the sounds and symbols they share, their Macedonian language, source of both their stigma and their dignity.

The language and the memories of the distant historical experiences it embodies are once again dynamically involved in Ristevski's poems in capturing and embodying-making flesh-the life lived by a soul in its sojourns without any other support or bulwark against a harsh world the stability of which always seems impermanent and fleeting. The essential passion is the discovery of the self, the marvellous sensation of being a human being and trying to patch the world into an ongoing coherence, a unity, in which one can be sustained against the rigours of (typically) a hostile world. Ristevski's grappling with this task with the co-presence of two cultures in his soul is laudable and impressive.

Ristevski's struggles seem to me to be that of a man resisting spiritual demolition by clinging to values that have been the most positive strengths or survival mechanisms of his group of origin. In this respect there is a stoic insistence underlying the collection which says: "here I am"-the 'I', a *persona*, is indispensable as both the point of departure as well as point of arrival. Notwithstanding his use of this self-referring pro-

noun, the poet never claims anything special for himself, or asking any indulgence of the reader. His articulation of those aspects of life that oppress and at times overawe or even threaten to overwhelm him, such as loneliness or loss, are resisted with energy and clarity of consciousness.

I have titled my reflections of this collection a "partial reading" as I feel there are too many riches and strange complexities beneath what appears a transparent surface to do justice to the whole with a short essay. I could continue to look closely at each of the poems but that can only have a lengthy book as its outcome. This would be totally unnecessary, as I have given enough indication of my strong sympathy and my sense of joy when reading these poems. I am interested in offering my response as merely one of many varieties of valid responses to the text presented.

It is understood that the reader is a free agent and can make of my thoughts whatever he or she will. Ultimately a direct engagement with the voice of Dushan Ristevski, its utterances of the poetic word with the tone and sensibility exhibited, is the very serious challenge which will reap rewards.

Jim Thomev

Melbourne October 2011

Endnotes:

¹ I do not wish to have truck with psychiatry and speak of the schizoid, or of the divided self of R D Laing. I have little knowledge and still less understanding of such matters. But I am aware more concretely of the struggle to belong, the cease to be the stranger, the inept man that's never quite right, the inconvenient man who cannot please the directors with their culture of control, the bosses in charge. (I see all alienation as ultimately politically derived-the imbalance of power that leads to powerlessness in many).

² My own preference for the translation of the title of this poem is 'Stillness in Thought', as the Macedonian makes no reference to the first person or 'I' of the poetic persona.

³ In the monumental 10-volume folkloric collection of Marko K Tsepenkov-volume 8, p246, proverb no. 4713 (Makedonska Kniga, Skopje, 1972).

⁴ Modern English poetry from the first quarter of the 20th century, which was profoundly influenced by the critical work and practice of poetry by T S Eliot, usually required the phenomenal erudition of the writer

himself to be appreciated or at least the same cultural reference points as the poet.

⁵ The reader should be informed that the writer of this appreciation loves the poetic word in any language, but the sound of his mother (and father) tongue more than any other – I do not think I am alone or rare in claiming for one's native tongue a privileged pride of place as the dispenser of individual fate - certainly in my own life, it determined decisive life choices and directions.

⁶ I am firmly of the opinion that Robert Lowell is correct in assuming that poems can only be imitated rather than translated. In his Introduction to *Imitations* (1962), among the many things this American genius of the English language says, the following is impressive:

I believe that poetic translation-I would call it an imitation-must be expert and inspired, and needs at least as much technique, luck and rightness of hand as an original poem.

I recommend Lowell's book of imitations because it gives access to a whole world of knowledge about language and poetry-he translates from languages of which he is ignorant on the basis of other people's translations. In my own experience, the most remarkable translation, if you will, of this kind I have come across, is that of W B Yeats' rendering of the Oedipus Rex by Sophocles, where the Irish poet used six alternative translations/interpretations by others as he had no Greek himself, with a remarkable result.

However, after writing in both Macedonian and English myself, with translation working both ways, I decided that Macedonian originals had very little chance of ever being heard in English – (one could perhaps generalise and say nothing can be translated in any ideal sense because of Aristotle's logic: if A is not A it will remain B, C, D or whatever else...

But I will assert the following: Ben Jonson, robust poet and writer of comedies and friend of William Shakespeare, imitated Catullus in poems such as "To Celia" and presented the English language with new sensibilities and tones. Over a century later, the English lexicographer and biographer *par excellence*, Dr Samuel Johnson, makes a substantial contribution in a similar vein in his remarkable consoling poem for those resigned to the hardships of the world, with his imitation of Juvenal's tenth satire, which he Englishes with the title "The Vanity of Human Wishes" and by which he gives the world new dimensions of stoic resilience and comic wit.

Ilinden in Ofchareni, Lerin County, Aegean Macedonia 2011

Dimitri Jovanov



The traditional annual fair which the village of Ofchareni has been holding for decades - in honour of both St. Elijah and the *Ilinden* uprising by Macedonians against Ottoman rule in 1903 – is no ordinary gathering of the inhabitants of the region. It represents a single all Macedonian manifestation; a protest by Macedonians against the intolerance and racism of official and unofficial Greek state structures. *Ilinden* in Ofchareni embodies a united Macedonian voice...declaring that Macedonians, in spite of the horrors of the past, are still here and will continue to remain here!

As is the case every year, the fair was held on the 19th and 20th of July and was organised by the *Cultural Association of Ofchareni*. The result was absolutely splendid: thousands of Macedonians from every part of Aegean Macedonia were present and celebrated their 'Macedonianess'. Even though the dates fell on work days, this did not prevent Macedonians from the surrounds of Kukush, Negush, Voden, Serres, Kostur, Kajlar, Enidze and Solun, from coming together with the Macedonians from Lerin in order to sing in Macedonian and dance to Macedonian music until the

early morning hours. Particularly heartening were the songs about Macedonian heroes and those which expressed a love of Macedonia in general and a condemnation of the persecution which Macedonians have suffered.

The program prepared for the fair, was very rich - on the first day, a performance of songs and dances were delivered by the folklore groups "*Solunchani*" and "*MAKEDONTSI*" from the village of Tsrmarinovo, Negush County. A large amount of interest was taken in the dance troupe of the Turkish Union, "*Ksanti-Trakija*", which performed Turkish songs and dances of the Turkish minority in Thrace. Members of the troupe declared to the editorial team of *Nova Zora* that they were delighted to have attended a Macedonian celebration and to have familiarised themselves with so many Macedonians. They also asserted that the cooperation between the two ethnic groups would increase in their joint struggle to gain official recognition of their existence, by the Greek state.

After the Turkish troupe, songs and dances for all to participate in

(Continued from page 48)

were performed till very late in the night by the musical group "Akroama", which is a band consisting of young Macedonians from the counties of Lerin and Voden.

The second day of the celebration, which is considered to be the main day, was attended by such a mass of people that one wonders whether such a multitude will ever again be assembled. Apart from the Macedonians of Greece, there arrived Macedonians from the Republic of Macedonia, Pirin Macedonia, Albania, the Macedonian diaspora and in particular, Macedonian refugees originally from Greece and now scattered all over the world. For these multitudes, the Cultural Association of Ofchareni, performed a variety of Macedonian songs and dances, stemming from all parts of Macedonia.

On the evening of the second day, the main attraction was the cultural association *Kitka*, which came from the town of Istibanja in the Republic of Macedonia. The beautiful songs the group sang while they danced to the accompaniment of bagpipes and traditional Macedonian drumming drove some of those present to tears of joy...

The evening was concluded by special guest singer from the Republic of Macedonia, Irena Spasovska, who was accompanied by "Akroama". The general impression created during the fair was as if every inch of Ofchareni was emitting Macedonian music and songs, as apart from, though concurrently with the main performances in the central schoolyard, other Macedonian musical groups were also performing in the other quarters of the town.

The *Nova Zora* team along with members of *Vinozhito* (a political party struggling for the rights of Macedonians in Greece) from all over Aegean Macedonia were also present with a long table cov-

ered by copies of *Nova Zora* and the new *Macedonian to Greek dictionary*, which was recently released via *Vinozhito's* publishing house, *Zora*, with financial aid from the European Union. Of course the opportunity was taken to distribute significant numbers of both publications among the crowd.

About the Ofchareni fair as a whole, we asked the opinion of President of the town, Mr. Pando Ashlakov, who among other things, stated: *"Until 1983, we danced Macedonian dances without songs, because that was not permitted. It was lifeless, dancing without the singing – everyone knew the songs, but... It was very painful to want to dance and sing and to not be allowed because your language is banned... Today, this fair and many of the other fairs organised by Macedonians in Greece, constitute a type of remedy for healing the wounds of the Macedonians in Greece, though it will still be quite difficult to heal these wounds completely."*

Courageous and moving was the speech given by the President of the Cultural Association of Ofchareni, Mr. George Kachbanov: *"Macedonians, my dear compatriots, this year, we again welcome you to our fair. St. Elijah's day brings here to this schoolyard every year, so that we can celebrate as one, this fair, which is the main manifestation of our cultural association. Macedonians from all parts of Macedonia, on this day, come to experience our fair in order for us to all be reminded of our roots, even though some of our people don't want to bring them to mind. We exist, we live and we maintain our customs, language, tradition, no matter how much certain people don't like it. In these days of crisis, economic, political crisis, crisis of values; we remain here, always here! Children of those who at some point left and did not return; children of those who were expelled from this country and have never been permitted to return, children of Macedonians who are unable to return and light a candle by the graves of their ancestors and children of those of us who continue to live here as ethnic Macedoni-*



(Continued from page 49)

ans; this grand evening is dedicated to all these Macedonians, even the ones who cannot be here with us tonight. Old and young meet here at this fair every July 20, to sing, to dance, to party and to converse in their language, their dear native tongue. Tradition, culture, dance and song are part of our roots and we live them in this country. This is part of the inheritance left to us by our grandparents, many of whom were terrorised and banished and yet remained proudly dignified. We wish the well being of Macedonians throughout the world...wherever they may be...we wish their well being for many years to come and for on this day a year from now. We thank everyone who has aided the Cultural Society of Ofchareni in its struggle, without fear of the threats of certain people and institutions. Thank you to all of you for making this event grow bigger and bigger each year, as that gives us the strength to continue."

We all hope that this celebration will continue to become more

successful and we hope that all Macedonians in Greece will overcome their fears and begin to maintain, respect and develop that which they are— Macedonians!

A small sample of what occurred at *Iinden in Ovachareni* can be viewed by clicking this link:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EeJ2tE7bwyM&feature=channel_video_title

Dimitri Jovanov – Editor of the monthly pro-Macedonian newspaper, *Nova Zora*, which is distributed throughout Aegean Macedonia in Greece. <http://novazora.gr/>

Translated from Macedonian to English by George Vlahov of the AMHRC.

ИЛИНДЕН ВО ОВЧАРАНИ - 2011



Традиционалниот панаѓур, кој веќе повеќе децении се прави во селото Овчарани, Леринско, на чест на прославата на Пророкот Илија, но и на востанието на Македонците против Отоманската Империја во 1903, познато како Илинденско Востание, веќе не преставува едно обично традиционално собирање на жителите на областа. Преставува едно семакедонски собир, еден протест на Македонците кон нетолерантноста и расизмот, што ги обзема официјалните и неофицијалните грчки власти и сочинува еден соединет глас на Македонците дека и покрај страшното минато, беа тука, се тука, и ќе бидат тука!

Како и секоја година, така и годинава, панаѓурот беше на 19 и 20 Јули и беше организиран од Културното друштво на селото. Резултатот беше фантастичен. Илјадници луѓе од поширокиот регион, но и од целата Егејска Македонија каде што живеат етнички Македонци, присуствуваа и ги славеа сите заедно овие два големи празници. Ја празнуваа нивната Македонштина. Иако датумите паѓаа работни денови, тоа не им попречи на Македонците од Кукушко, Негошко, Воденско, Серско, Костурско, Кајларско, Ениџевардарско, Солунско, да се најдат заедно со Македонците од Леринско и заедно да заиграт и запеат македонски песни и ора, до раните утрински часови. Македонски песни кои зборуваа за Македонските херои, за љубовта и земјата, кои ја колнеа туѓината и прогонството.

Програмата на манифестацијата беше богата.

Првиот ден на панаѓурот, на 19 Јули, престава со ора и песни приреди играорната група Солунчани, која доаѓаше од поширокиот регион на Солунско и Кукушко, како и културното друштво МАКЕДОНЦИ од село Црмариново, Негушко. Голем интерес предизвика играорната група на Турската Унија на Ксанги-Тракија, која изигра турски ора и песни од турското малцинство во Тракија. Како што изјавија за Нова Зора, радоста за нив беше многу голема, да присуствуваат на македонска прослава и да се запознаат со етнички Македонци. Ветија дека соработката ќе продолжи и ќе порасне и дека двете етнички зедници ќе ги зацврстат нивните врски, во заедничката борба за нивно признавање од страна на грчката држава. Следеше оро и песни за сите, до доцна навечер, со музичката група Акроама, која е составена од млади Македонци, од Леринско и Воденско. Вториот ден на прославата, главниот ден, бројот на народот кој дојде, беше нешто неповторливо. Освен Македонците од Грција, стигнаа и Македонци од Република Македонија, Македонци политички бегалци од Егејска Македонија, Македонци од Пиринска Македонија, од Албанија и од Македонската Дијаспора. Македонски ора и песни од пошироката област, престапи културното друштво на Овчарани.

Атракцијата на вечерата беше културното друштво Китка од градот Истибања – Република Македонија. Звукот на гајдата и на тапанот, во комбинација со убавите песни кои се слушаа од устите на играорците, ги тераа присутните луѓе да се ежат и да се трогнуваат. Следеше оро и песни за сите со музичката група Акроама и гостувањето на пеачката од Република Македонија, Ирена Спасовска. Освен од дворот на училиштето, каде се случуваше главната манифестација, македонски музички групи имаше и во повеќе други места на селото и така се добиваше впечаток дека од

целото село извира македонска музика и песна.

Нова Зора беше присутна, со поставена голема маса и нејзини членови, членови на Виножито, кои пристигнаа од сите делови на Егејска Македонија, делеа весници на народот и го презентираа новиот Македонско-Грчки Речник, кој издавачката куќа на Виножито, Зора, го издаде неодамна, со финансиска помош на Европската Унија.

За панаѓурот во Овчарани го прашавме Претседателот на селото Пандо Ашлаков, кој меѓу друго ни изјави: «До 1983 година, игравме македонски ора без песна, бидејќи тоа не беше дозволено. Беше сурово да играме ора без песни, сите ја знаеа песната, но не ја пееа. Колку боли да сакаш да играш и да пееш и да ти го забрануваат јазикот, твојот јазик. Денес овој панаѓур, како и многу други панаѓури во места каде живеат Македонци, сочинуваат еден вид лек за раните на Македонците во Грција, кои рани многу тешко ќе се излечат целосно». Трогателен и храбар беше говорот на претседателот на културното друштво на Овчарани, Ѓорѓи Качбанов, кој го кажа следното:

«Македонци и Македонки, сакани наши сонародници, ви посакуваме и годинава добродојдовте во нашиот панаѓур. Денот на Свети Илија не носи секоја година тука во дворот на училиштето за да го прославиме сите заедно овој панаѓур, кој е најголемата манифестација на нашето културно друштво. Македонци од сите места на Македонија, овој ден заживува нашиот панаѓур за да не потсети сите нас и нашите деца за нашите корени, кои некои луѓе не сакат да си ги гледат. Ние постоиме, живееме и ги одржуваме нашите адети, јазик, традиција, колку тоа и да преставува пречка за одредени луѓе. Денови на криза, економска, политичка криза, криза на вредности, ние сме тука, секогаш тука! Деца на тие кои некогаш заминаа и не се вратија, деца на тие кои беа истерани и прогонети од оваа земја и никогаш не им

дозволија да се вратат, деца на Македонци кои не можат да се вратат и да запалат една свеќа на гробовите на нивните предци, но и деца на тие кои живеат и продолжуваат да живеат тука, како етнички Македонци. На тие Македонци е посветена оваа величествена вечер, на тие кои не можат оваа вечер да бидат тука со нас. Стари и млади, секоја година на 20 Јули се среќаваат на ова оро за да запеат, да заиграт, да се забавуваат и да прозборат на нивниот јазик, нивниот сакан мајчин јазик. Традиција, култура, оро и песна се нашите корени и со нив живееме на оваа земја. Наследство кое ни го оставија нашите дедовци, уплашени, протерани, но секогаш горди и достоинствени. Македонци од целиот свет ве поздравуваме каде и да се наоѓате. Посакуваме за многу години и до година пак тука, на овој собир. Им благодариме на сите познати и непознати кои секогаш му помагаат на културното друштво на Овчарани и го подржуваат на неговата борба, без да се плашат од војната која му прават некои луѓе и институции. Благодариме на сите вас, кои секоја година сте повеќе и повеќе и тоа стига за да ни даде сила да продолжиме».

Сите ние се надеваме дека оваа прослава ќе продолжи со уште поголеми успеси и дека Македонците во Грција ќе успеат да ги надвладаат нивните стравови и ќе започнат уште еднаш да го одржуваат, да го сакат и да го развиваат тоа што се - Македонци!!!

Еден мал вкус за тоа што се случуваше во Илинден на Овчарани, можете да земете преку интернет, на адресата http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eej2tE7bwyM&feature=channel_video_title

Димитри Јованов – уредникот на месечниот Македонски весник Нова Зора, што се распределува низ цела Егејска Македонија.
<http://novazora.gr/>



The BBS Channel 5 Interview with Aristotle

By Jim Thomev

The following is the edited transcript from the popular television series on philosophy produced by Lord Reardon, FRS, in which he interviews Aristotle. Lord Reardon is the author of *From the post-modern to antiquity*, his most paradoxical book to date. As a former Oxford don, he was a neo-Platonist. Aristotle, (born Stagira circa 384/5, Kingdom of Macedon died 323 BCE) of course, is the immortal philosopher, who without ceremony recently returned to earth. He left, as he told Lord Reardon, his pleasant Lyceum in the hereafter for a brief sojourn in the world as we know it. His wonder and curiosity at the continued absurd behaviour of "the creatures of a day" had evidently got the better of him.

Lord Reardon: (*Oxford accent verging on self-parody due to the oracular tone he often lapses into*) Aristotle, welcome to the program! A rare delight indeed to have you back with us!

Aristotle: The pleasure is all mine! What a wonderful garden! (*He waves to the surrounding arbour as they sit in easy chairs with cool drinks with flowers in full bloom behind them.*) It's good to be back, albeit briefly.

Lord Reardon: Would you say one gets tired of heavenly perfection? I mean, like the sort one would inevitably experience in a state of eternal bliss in the hereafter...

Aristotle: Of course, any monotony is *a priori* a heavy burden. You moderns hate clichés like the very devil. In fact you wage war on them and avoid them like the plague. But clichés have their place – solid thinking can be conducted in the most vulgar, commonplace language – I always maintained that one should think like a philosopher but write like the ordinary people...I even used to go so far as to run some of my best and original ideas past the lovely washerwoman who took in my washing in Athens.

Lord Reardon: (*Clearing his throat*) Indeed, indeed, I take your point. I will be perfectly frank with you, for a long time – nearly three centuries of the modern era – for all scholars at Oxford and Cambridge, every word of your *Nichomachean Ethics*¹ was compulsory reading!

Aristotle: And rightly so! That guidebook of dreary platitudes was the obvious punishment for the British imperial ruling class. I couldn't conceive a better way of giving malicious joy to Anglophobes...

Lord Reardon: (*shuffles awkwardly*) Of course, in point of fact, imperialism was a dreadful, a nasty and totally regrettable business; however, one must concede that the spread of British institutions was a good thing. You may conceivably agree with me on this head, given your own preoccupation with justice and the rule of law and constitutions etc. After all, even today's lefties...or what's left of them, if you will excuse the *calembours*²...

Aristotle: (*quickly*) Yes and no, as the awful politicians all

down the ages have said and still say.

Lord Reardon: I would have thought the "awful" was needless...and polities...by definition...

Aristotle: Don't talk to me when I am interrupting you!

Lord Reardon: (*stunned, looks at his interlocutor in dismay*). My dear Aristotle...

Aristotle: (*Breaks into a bright smile and laughs*) Sorry about that. I was just trying on a Jewish joke I heard recently³.

Lord Reardon: (*laughs nervously, plainly relieved*) You will have to excuse me, I thought you had genuinely lost your temper! And that, after all, a man who taught the golden mean or moderation in all things or the *pan metron ariston*⁴, the *miden agan*⁵...

Aristotle: Your good lunch is making you blather, Lord Reardon...Cheers! (*raises glass*) (*They have a sip of their glasses of white wine.*)

Aristotle: On a very serious note, I am a bit concerned about what is happening to my original native land, Macedonia, these days – the former Kingdom of Macedon⁶.

Lord Reardon: Of course there's all that childish nonsense over the name the Greeks are so peevish and touchy about. Their foolishness is not located to their nationalistic politics; tax evasion on a mass scale with a negligent, conniving administration has led to national financial ruin without sufficient penitential remorse and remedy dragging the Euro zone with them...they are persisting in their folly, and still demand a name change to the small sovereign nation of Macedonia next door. The oppression has been a scandal, as they used their political clout to slap on the crazy acronym FYROM⁷ – I am not even sure what it stands for anymore.

Aristotle: I know all about that – nothing escapes me where I am coming from. Why anyone would believe anything that disgraced lot in Athens say anymore is beyond all comprehension.

However, I was certainly amused by aspects of the absurd situation. The British Press even had their little jokes with – speaking of *calembours* – with headlines such as *Fire 'em!*⁸ Yes, while no one national or whatever group has a monopoly on foolishness, as it seems, and the one that considers itself particularly special or exceptional is the hardest to dislodge from its folly. One of the most laughable things I've ever heard has been the idea that the people who call themselves Greek seem to take so much pride in the achievements of the people who lived in that part of the world thousands of years ago. Certainly, for all the massive transformations of history in the land where I was born, with over two millennia of tumults, wars, religious conflicts, culture clashes, and migrations this is a manifestly ludicrous attitude. But it is a veritable microcosm of what human beings get up to in many places, and therefore repays close study.

Lord Reardon: Yes, a proper *salade macédoine*⁹ has certainly been the outcome of such changes and movement, as some culinary French wit put it.

Aristotle: An ill-advised food metaphor. Your own British intelligentsia did crack some distasteful jokes not long before the total collapse of the Ottoman Empire earlier last century.

Lord Reardon: Yes, quite, shameful... particularly egregious was the one put into circulation after a few of the Macedonian uprisings were brutally crushed – they found amusing, such eye-brow raising quips as, if I can have your pardon, a Macedonian Massacre was indeed a Turkish Delight¹⁰.

Aristotle: What an outrage! Of course they were the same imperialists who brought British justice everywhere, and tied living men to the mouths of cannons before firing – an occasional method of execution by the Raj. But pathological humour abounds in any age – there has even been a book of jokes published about the Holocaust...¹¹ when the only valid deity is Mammon...¹²

Lord Reardon: (*quickly*) Of course, anything goes... including child prostitution... Though to be fair, Our Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone had urged that Macedonia should belong to the Macedonians in 1897.¹³

Aristotle: How nice for the Macedonians Christians! My dear Lord Reardon, have you ever thought of becoming a real estate agent?¹⁴

Lord Reardon: (*deeply embarrassed*) What do you mean?

Aristotle: Forget it. *A propos*, the Macedonians and the Greeks...

Lord Reardon: The general view these days of course is that Alexander the Great was your most famous pupil and that as a result of your brilliant teaching two chaotic worlds were united – the world of philosophy and the world of politics. This noble and epic project has been attributed to “two magnificent Macedonians” – you and Alexander. An American philosopher wrote that.¹⁵

Aristotle: It must be true if an American wrote it, as following George Washington's example, whom Gladstone considered as the purest of men by the way, the Americans, (God bless them and America!) never tell anything other than the truth. Yes, we certainly were Macedonians. If you will recall the basic logical law of identity...

Lord Reardon: (*keenly*) Your discovery and development of deductive logic was your most remarkable achievement... it's hard to go past the syllogism for inventive genius, it still has me in raptures...

Aristotle: As I was saying, (*dourly ignoring the florid flattery, speaks with his characteristic firmness and bluntness*), and I cannot make this any simpler, the simplest logic tells us this: a Macedonian *qua* Macedonian cannot be a Greek *qua* Greek or vice versa – just as something cannot be both blue and red all over at the same time. This is the elementary law of identity I have described in my treatise on Logic. But, please, Lord Reardon, spare me the banalities and nonsense of the modern chauvinists. Alexander, in the final analysis, was my best pupil, but also my biggest disappointment once he conquered what he and other foolish people thought was the entire world. In any case, Philip's statesmanship has been grossly underrated.¹⁶ His hot-headed son had learnt more from him about military strategy and politics than from anything I had tried to instil in his ambitious head about the ethical life. Moreover, the Alexander that has come down through the ages is a myth, a product of legends and people's needs for a great man, for a glorious hero, someone who will free them from the responsibility of facing the struggle of existence in their own right. The same thing happened to my philosophy, more precisely science, most of which I got wrong – the Christian Church thought it would add weight to their power and influence, so they elevated my ideas to dogmatic truth and thereby retarded scientific progress. I can hardly be blamed for what people did or what excuse they gave for the use of my ideas.

Lord Reardon: You are becoming positively existential...¹⁷

Aristotle: (*ignoring this provocation*) I was more than a little irritated at what Alexander took away from the East that he had marched through in triumph with his Macedonian phalanx; I mean, the more negative attitudes like the divine right of kings... and even worse, I was shocked when he instituted the cult of his personality – elevating himself to the status of a divinity (while still alive even!) in order to be worshipped. His own people, let it be known, laughed at such an unheard of idea. An appalling business, really, a very grim joke! Incidentally, in many other respects the East which neither he nor the Macedonians and Greeks appreciated at the time, had traditions and qualities and depths which make the achievements centred in Athens of that time, crude, not to say puerile in comparison¹⁸. But that's by the by... the Hollywood approach to history did not begin with Hollywood, or the Americans...

Lord Reardon: (*Gingerly*) At the risk of sounding like a salesman, I think you are being too hard on yourself. But please, give us your overview of Macedonian history, of your take, so to speak, on the crucial issues...

Aristotle: Perhaps I should explain what I have been doing

since I died in 322 BCE, one year after Alexander had died. He, of course, had already demonstrated his limited views of life when he assumed that there was nothing left but to drink himself to death after conquering the world at the age of 25.

Lord Reardon: It is not the usual opinion of him.

Aristotle: So much the worse! Once I had died and was gathered into eternity, or timelessness, I roamed among books, conversing with like-minded companions and learning every language and everything worthwhile that has hitherto been written and said. As I had promoted the calm contemplative life as the most beautiful of lives on earth, this was my dream come true: I had gone straight to paradise which consisted of a magnificent garden, an infinite library with all the masterpieces of every language known and used by human beings, dialects included. And with eternal time at my disposal, my happiness has been guaranteed.

Lord Reardon: I sincerely hope I suffer the same fate! I think it is noble to become totally wise.

Aristotle: (*brusquely*) Total wisdom is out of the question for human beings – why, even after all my reading and thinking in the hereafter since I died, I still find life, the universe and human beings infinitely perplexing. The more enlightened viewers of this program will also note that I still have many blind spots and fall far short of total wisdom.

Lord Reardon: Could you at least help by replacing the moderator Mr Matthew Niernitz who is conducting the name dispute negotiations between the Greeks and the Macedonians that have been going on for nearly 20 years?

Aristotle: Is that a serious activity for rational beings? The moderator should either induce people at the round table to laugh themselves sick at each other, or look for a job appropriate to his dignity and status as a man. Humour, of course, has never been a *forte* area with me...

Lord Reardon: (*with an ingratiating smile*) You will underestimate yourself, my dear Aristotle! After all, that quip about Democritus' theory about the void having nothing in it, was a gem. Your very best calembour, as far as I am concerned...

Aristotle: Not really what a grave and mentally tidy man would want to be remembered by. Funnier things have been said about Democritus and that void that could only have been in his head, which even nature, which I had incorrectly argued hated a vacuum, could not penetrate. But such was his temperament that he would have doubled up with laughter and laughed his head off over such jokes, as he considered human life vanity and had earned his epithet the Laughing Philosopher.

In hindsight, I sincerely regret my method of stating other philosopher's views (fairly or unfairly) and then viciously demolishing them. Philosophy, I now realise, should involve play between intelligent people and the humour should not be malevolent – this is the practice in the hereafter, and it is

a particularly edifying approach with Averroes and Avicenna when we dispute about the meaning of our collaboration over the millennia.

Lord Reardon: I couldn't agree with you more. No doubt you were stung when our own first British empiricist, Francis Bacon, made a brutish remark about your method of inquiry into any subject, I quote from memory – "Aristotle, after the Ottoman manner, thought he could not reign secure without putting all his brethren to death."¹⁹

Aristotle: Let's face it, Bacon had to free himself from the past and most academic careers (if such things are still possible) begin with the demolition of someone else's work and the autocratic proclamation of one's own merits. I refuse to be all penitent and masochistic about my own contribution to this approach...

But let us continue our discussion of naming, language and identity as it is crucial to clarify basics to understand the conflict between the Greeks and the Macedonians. Anachronism is a strange business and need not be a serious problem *per se*. In retrospect, with the flow of the river of time, much is illuminated and better understood. For instance, the language in which my lecture notes and much of my thought had been recorded in, both by others and myself was the Attic language – it was not known at the time what it was later to be known as i.e. Ancient or Classical Greek.

That is why there is no good reason why what has been called Old Church Slavonic should not be renamed Old Macedonian, and I am glad to hear that there are scholars who have already done this. The Christian Orthodox missionaries, Saints Cyril and Methodius²⁰, were instrumental in the creation and spread of the Glagolitic alphabet, and then the Cyrillic alphabet with its variations and simplifications based on the Macedonian speech of the Salonika region. As men of learning, the two brothers and their colleagues should be praised whenever their names are mentioned as I still believe in knowledge as the greatest aspiration for the human mind and the person who invents alphabets to communicate effectively engages in a most noble activity.

Lord Reardon: It would be remiss not to praise such men. Bishop Kallistos (Timothy Ware)²¹, an acclaimed historian of the Orthodox Church, has immense respect for the work of those saintly men as they based the new literacy on what he calls the Macedonian speech of the time; Kallistos does, however, lament that the Orthodox faith's liturgy being grounded on the language and culture of the locals throughout the Eastern Orthodox world has led to virulent nationalisms...

Aristotle: As if chauvinism of one sort or another did not occur anywhere else among the Christians! Think of the religious wars in the West that unleashed untold woes and calamity. But I shall go back to the thread of my argument about naming languages. If someone indignantly presupposes that Old Macedonian should not be considered the correct name for Old Church Slavonic, then they are committed to consider as even more absurd, and more illogical, the use of the term "Greek" to describe the Attic language of the ancient Athenians. It was the most developed language I had access to and it was what most of my philosophical predecessors and especially my master Plato used. The

English word “Greek” comes from Graeci which was the name the Romans used for a Peloponnesian tribe of Greeks, if you will, and has entered the international vocabulary as generic term to denote all Greeks. Names are ultimately arbitrary – there’s really no reason to suppose why one sound to denote an object or entity more appropriate than another, like the very true observation by Shakespeare’s Juliet about Romeo “a rose by any other name would smell as sweet”. Serious difficulties begin when issues of power, control and politics are involved. In other words when it is a question of who is to be boss, as Humpty Dumpty tells Alice. The power relation between the masters and those they want to make their slaves or subordinates can be determined by the way the world is described by the Word, or simply the label.

While all this may be of great interest to scholars, it does not have much bearing on who has rights to name him or herself (self-identify) in the 21st Century and why it is impermissible for people to be oppressed because their detractors have some extravagant fantasies about the achievements of others thousands of years previously who lived in the same geographical area.

Lord Reardon: A bit like using other people’s money in order to live the high-style, I suppose.

Aristotle: Dead on the money there, Lord Reardon! But, it really is a very curious business, this naming business. Writers, historians etc did not refer to the Eastern Roman Empire of Christian Orthodoxy as Byzantium until the 16th century. Indeed, in very recent modern times, the multi-millionaire left wing singer and composer Mikis Theodorakis, sang a stirring patriotic song about the plight of Greece when the military declared a dictatorship in 1967. His upbeat song exhorts his comrades “not to weep for Romyossini” – which is the Turkish term meaning Land of the Romans – and he was referring to modern Greece in the 1970’s!

Lord Reardon: Oh my Goodness! How wonderful is that! When one reflects how the modern Hellenic Republic, which is less than a 100 years old with its present borders, has been making such a fuss, and even sabre-rattling about the landlocked Republic of Macedonia! Some of their scholars whose CV’s alone take ages to read comprising as they do of the chauvinist nonsense they have spouted at conferences and blundered into print with, have had the gall to propose other names for Macedonia like *Dardania* for instance. I suppose the idea is that like the Romans the Macedonians had their origin in Troy. They are trying to pass off such flights of fancy as serious scholarship...

Aristotle: An ugly, degenerate business, politics. People who want to live the moral life must avoid it. It is impossible to have anything remotely resembling a conscience and be a politician at the same time; that much has become clear.

Lord Reardon: So Plato, your own teacher, may have got it right when he said only a small and very intelligent group of communists should rule society.²²

Aristotle: Plato and I didn’t agree about much in the end,

and both of us got many things wrong. All intellectual friendships are fraught and those in the public domain especially can be distorted, misrepresented etc beyond all truth and decency by the malicious – no news there, it happens all the time. But I am starting to get tired...

Lord Reardon: I beg your pardon, I really do apologise... Please tell us about how you came to flee from Athens after Alexander died in 323 BCE.

Aristotle: Alexander had not done me a favour when he compelled the Athenians to erect a statue of me in central Athens. I suppose he felt he should flatter me, as he was uneasy about ignoring all the vital bits I had taught him. He himself was horribly vulnerable to flattery. Indeed, such was his monumental vanity that he had well over a dozen cities named after himself. Demosthenes was still alive (he died a few months after me in the same year) and his tongue was even more venomous about Alexander and myself than it had been about Philip. We all know what he spewed about Philip and the people of Macedon as we have heard it repeated *ad nauseum*.²³ (One would have thought Demosthenes’ view taken on its own, would suggest that the modern claim to Macedonia by Greece on the basis of the argument from primacy or antiquity is utter nonsense.) Anyway there was a hysterical surge of patriotic joy when the news had reached the Athenians that Alexander had died, followed by a massive rebellion which drove out the unpopular Macedonian rulers.

I was of course a supporter of the Macedonian party in Athens. Just as it had been for Socrates in 399, hemlock was also prepared for me, this time by the high priest of Athens. He charged me with corrupting the youth by teaching them the most rational thing every sensible person should know, that praying to the gods was a general waste of time. I was a robust 62 year-old, not a paunchy 70 year-old with a bulbous red nose thanks to too many banquets like Socrates whose legs could scarcely carry him. So I opted for exile but no good came of it as I died only a year after my glorious pupil had done so at half my age, (*shaking his head*) no doubt exhausted by his phenomenal orgies and complete debauchery.

Lord Reardon: There is a theory that he died of typhus, but I suppose you are referring to the damage to his immune system. The modern Greeks of course are going potty over the bronze statue of Alexander mounted on Bucephalus²⁴ that has been erected in the central square of the capital of the Republic of Macedonia, Skopje.

Aristotle: They can hardly object – Alexander was born and bred in ancient Macedonia, as I was – there was a world of difference from an upbringing in the south or Athens or elsewhere. My knowledge of Greek was of course flawless, but I was, I must say, in that social context, still not quite Greek, in the sense modern chauvinists who want to boast about ancient Greeks would have. Alexander was the king of that nation, a world conqueror. Nevertheless, people are often bizarre about who or what should be commemorated.

Lord Reardon: Perhaps it would be in order if they had your statue alongside Alexander’s in Skopje.

Aristotle: Not if he remains mounted on his rearing Bucephalus...I think they should have him seated in a desk, aged 13, while I am giving him an earful on human conduct and politics.

Lord Reardon: Indubitably.

Aristotle: There is one other point I want to make about naming. Words through time and history accrue associations or assume connotations which can even change their denotations. A subtle but clear argument for how the term "Macedonian" is appropriate as a name for the modern Macedonians lies in the association Macedonians themselves - the ordinary people - make with its two syllables, a semi-jocular and long-standing cross-linguistic pun, a sardonic *calembours*, to use your French version for the word. Thus in modern Macedonian the word for Macedonia is "Makedonija" (or more accurately as written in the Cyrillic alphabet - Македонија). If we break down its five syllables into its two root components "make" and "donija" we have words that resemble "*maka*" - literally translated as suffering or hardship in Macedonian, and *dounija* - world, earth, this life (*originally came from Turkish* dünya, to the Balkans, but widely used in many Muslim societies). So clearly the name of the Macedonian land through the experiences of modern history assumes a new dimension; its people's sufferings have given it a new meaning due to its actual history. It is alleged that in the ancient language/dialect of the kingdom of Macedon it meant "land of tall men" or "highlanders" or whatever - no certainty here. However, given how much water (not to mention blood) has flown under the bridge since, it is not surprising the modern word Makedonija (Macedonia) is now freighted with immense significance beyond whatever semantic value its original use may have had thousands of years ago.

A people's history is invariably reflected in their language. And if suffering has been the key note of their experiences in a world of oppressors and unrelenting enmity from neighbouring peoples and propagandas, it is understandable that they have earned the moral right to a name that is an emblem of their Golgotha, and glory. The association of "suffering" and "this life" that are combined in the Macedonian word for Macedonia is therefore apt and logical and gives the people their moral authority against their detractors. (The Turkish word for this life or world is a poignant stroke given the centuries long oppression by the Ottoman's and their impact on the language of their subjects.

Human beings in history do not exist and achieve for individuals in the present to big note themselves about ancestral glories and achievements on the basis of either blood descent or cultural continuity or some affinity-irrelevant absurdities, all of them. Everyone has or should have their own life's task, their own moment in history which only they as individual's can live. I believe in knowledge. It can best be obtained through knowledge of words.

Lord Reardon: Fascinating! And as Francis Bacon said,

mention of Bacon again, but does not interrupt) So what does all this mean for the fact that your original texts (whether rightly attributed or not) came back to European culture and civilisation via the Arab language. They were of course preserved by those first rate philosophers like Avicenna and Averroes²⁵ and then translated into Medieval Latin! 56

Aristotle: This is a fraught controversial area, as it should be. No doubt there is no such thing as ideal translation because it is such a complex process and by its nature involves betrayal. It involves interpretation (or more accurately, misinterpretation), and it involves a transformation where human judgement, bias and prejudice are big factors. In the medieval era with the revival of humanism and learning my philosophy was largely discussed by the scholars in Medieval Latin - a language I never knew. And the translations had gone back to the European language of scholars via Arabic! I have mentioned that I still dispute with Averroes and his Great Commentary and part of the fun is both of us agreeing about where the errors in both the translations and interpretations lie!

Lord Reardon: You are still credited as being the single mind that put together the greatest synthesis of human knowledge that influenced human beings for the longest period of time in history.

Aristotle: Let's face it, my sciences-biology, astronomy, etc were a setback for civilisation-I did not have a telescope, microscope, thermometer, clock, or chronometer, sextant...and as for cybernetics...what a story that is!

Lord Reardon: But surely, much of your speculations in all areas of human knowledge have been cause of profound thought and discovery in others - stimulus to greater work, especially deductive logic as we said earlier... and especially the syllogism.

Aristotle: I don't see anything exceptional in any of that-my logic like my ethics seems to have been used, after all, merely as a form of punishment for schoolboys who were later to exploit the peoples of the world through empire-building. People ignored my basic attitudes-that we should be wary of our spots of blindness as we all have them - the Christians ignored all that, like they ignored their own sacred scriptures with all their wars, crusades, inquisitions, empires and no end of bad behaviour. And really when it comes down to it, the "soft" stuff, like ethics and politics is something we shall always be arguing about - it is in human nature never to get the answers right for everyone at any one time because only utopias are perfect and they exist only in the mind, are essentially *u-topias* - "nowhere" lands. In the messy process of life, human beings seem to me to behave and think not rationally but rather use their reason to rationalise, to find excuses, to vindicate their actions and beliefs, to feed their infinite capacity for self-delusion...

Lord Reardon: How said that we have run out time. But it is only a television program...
(*They both laugh heartily.*)

Endnotes:

Knowledge is power. (*Aristotle winces and frowns at the*

¹ Aristotle's famous book of ethics in which he basically confirms what most people work out by middle age – we will all be happy when we are nice to each other and behave sensibly and have a few good friends.

² Calmbour pun or play on words (rare in English -1830 from French for pun, (also Russian *каламбур* and Greek, *καλαμπούρι*).

³ Cited by George Steiner in his *Lessons from the Masters* (2004)

⁴ "Moderation in all things" (Gr.)

⁵ "Nothing in excess" (Gr)

⁶ The first Macedonian state founded circa 7th/8th BCE. With Philip II it initially conquered the Hellenic world and with Alexander III the Great his son it expanded into an empire through military strength.

⁷ FYROM, an offensive labelling of the Republic of Macedonia which declared its independence in 1991 after the collapse of the Yugoslav communist federation, which was insisted upon by Greece. It stands for former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

⁸ Mark Mardell, BBC correspondent, 2008 – a pun on the absurd temporary reference to the new nation.

⁹ French for Macedonian salad

¹⁰ Lokum in most Balkan languages – an excessively sweet sweetmeat made from gelatine with tough consistence and sugar coated. Often used as one of a trio namely, Turkish delight, Turkish coffee, and Turkish bouzouki to joke about spurious chauvinist Greek claims to uniqueness of modern Greek culture.

¹¹ The Holocaust – the annihilation of the 6 million people of Jewish origin by the German Nazis – generally used as definitive fact of the racist cruelty in the 20th century by western writers.

¹² Babylonian god of money (still alive, apparently, unlike all the gods from the Olympic pantheon)

¹³ "The hopelessness of the Turkish Government should make me witness with delight its being swept out of the countries which it tortures. Next to the Ottoman Government nothing can be more deplorable and blameworthy than jealousies between Greek and Slav and plans by the States already existing for appropriating other territory. Why not Macedonia for the Macedonians as well as Bulgaria for the Bulgarians and Serbia for the Serbians?"

Letter quoted in The Times (London), Mr. Gladstone and The Balkan Confederation (1897/02/06)

¹⁴ Clearly a dig. Aristotle astutely refers later to the real estate agent whom he evidently regards as the archetypal salesman of western culture.

¹⁵ Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy*, (last renewed 1961)

¹⁶ H G Wells, *The Outline of History*, (popular ed. 1930) Chapter 22, opening paragraph:

"The true hero of the story of Alexander is not so much Alexander as his father Philip. The author of a piece does not shine in the limelight as the actor does, and it was Philip who planned much of the greatness that his son achieved, who laid the foundations and forged the tools, who had indeed already begun the Persian expedition at the time of his death. Philip beyond doubting was one of the greatest monarchs the world has ever seen; he was a man of the utmost intelligence and ability, and his range of ideas was vastly beyond the scope of his time. He made Aristotle his friend; [] Philip so far as we can judge, seems to have been Aristotle's 'Prince'; to him Aristotle turned as men turn only to those whom they admire and trust..."

¹⁷ Existentialism, as a philosophy stresses the primacy of individual choice and responsibility for one's own life. Jean-Paul Sartre is considered its most important exponent.

¹⁸ Will Durant, op.cit., Chapter II

¹⁹ Francis Bacon, in *The Advancement of Learning*, (1605)

²⁰ Saints Cyril and Methodius were brothers who spread the orthodox Christian faith in the 9th Century CE-they were scholars based in Salonika known as *Константинопольци* by the Macedonians.

²¹ Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, Pelican Original, 1963.

"In their translation the brothers used the form of Slavonic familiar to them from childhood, the Macedonian dialect spoken by the Slavs around Thessalonica..." further on "Unlike the Church of Rome in the west with its insistence on Latin, the Orthodox Church has never been rigid in the matter of languages; its normal policy is to hold services in the language of the people." Chapter 4, page 83.

²² Vide Plato's Republic where the idea of the philosopher king is crucial to Plato's just government in the ideal state. Plato believed that the political community can only be ruled justly by highly trained philosophers.

²³ Demosthenes, Philippic III, in Greek Political Oratory, Penguin Classics, translated and edited by A N W Saunders.

"There is another thing which is common knowledge: that any troubles inflicted on the Greek states by Sparta or by ourselves were at least injuries inflicted by genuine inhabitants of Greece, and one would look upon them in the same way as on a true-born son, who had come into considerable property, but made some mistake or injustice in the administration of it. In itself this might deserve criticism or accusation, but it would be impossible to deny that it was a relative and the heir to the property who had done it. But had it been a slave or an illegitimate claimant who had lost or damaged what did not belong to him, goodness knows how much more heinous, how much more resented his action would have been. **There is no such feeling about Philip and his present proceedings. He not merely does not belong and is not so much as related to the Greeks, but is not even of respectable foreign descent; he comes of that Macedonian riff-raff which could not even offer a good slave for sale in the days gone by.**

"There is no limit to our degradation. He caps his destruction of towns by celebrating the Pythian Games, **the festival of the Greeks alone**, and if he is not there himself, he sends his slaves to organize the celebrations."

²⁴ Alexander's famous horse which had a huge head hence its name meaning "ox-head".

²⁵ Avicenna (980-1027) and Averroes (c.1126-98) were magnificent Muslim polymaths. Both championed Aristotle's philosophy in the Muslim world with little impact. Avicenna was known as the Supreme Master as well as the "Baghdad Aristotle". His original contributions to science and medical knowledge were of extraordinary scope. Averroes lived in Andalusia and was most famous for making a lengthy commentary on all of Aristotle's works. His translations of the originals help preserve the Stagyrte's philosophy and science which enabled their proliferation in the European world via translation into Latin.

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"WHO GAVE YOU THE RIGHT TO NEGOTIATE MY NAME?"

Do not be deceived by the terms *international, bilateral, constitutional*

- Change it once, even bilaterally, and it will be changed *everywhere*
- Do you want to be called 'Northern Macedonian', 'Yordanian', 'Slavjan' or simply 'Macedonian'?
- We applaud the Macedonian government for saying "We will not change our name", but by negotiating we are telling the world "We will change our name"
- No dual name.** Greece is the only country that objects to our name. It is not our problem. No bilateral or international "solution" is needed.
- Countries that have recognized Macedonia have said "If a bilateral solution is reached, we will abide by that decision and use the new name for Macedonia."
- Any change to our name is unacceptable, even 'gslither' like 'Dinacotia' or 'Northern' is best of 'Republic of Macedonia'. We would be known everywhere as 'Northern Macedonia' and 'Northern Macedonians', who speak 'Northern Macedonian'.

WE ARE WINNING. 127 COUNTRIES HAVE RECOGNIZED MACEDONIA, INCLUDING 4/5 UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS. WE HAVE THE POWER TO END THIS. STOP NEGOTIATING OUR OWN NAME.

Prior to 1988, Greece's policy was that Macedonia did not exist. Then it renamed 'Northern Greece' to 'Macedonia'. Now suddenly Macedonia is Greek?

As former Greek Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis admitted in 1995, the reason Greece objects to our name is to deny the existence and persecution of its large Macedonian minority

- Macedonians in the Balkans are fighting for their human rights as Macedonians, nothing else

REMEMBER: IT IS A LIE THAT A COMPROMISE WILL SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS WITH GREECE. IT WILL JUST STRENGTHEN GREECE'S POSITION TOWARDS ITS FINAL GOAL: TO ERASE MACEDONIANS FROM HISTORY, THE PRESENT AND FUTURE.

We are Macedonian! Do you want to go down in history as the people who changed our name and identity?

What gives the EU and NATO the right to ask you to sell out your identity?

- The EU and NATO are violating their own principles and laws by asking us to change our name
- Do not give in to scare tactics from Greece and media reports that Macedonia will 'collapse' without EU & NATO membership
- Look at the current economic crisis in Greece
- Some *evangelizing* is being used to get Macedonia to change its name

Greece is holding the EU and NATO hostage

- Despite overwhelming support for Macedonia's NATO membership, Greece was permitted to use its veto power against Macedonia
- Greece lied about its economic situation, and now the rest of the EU is being forced to bail them out

The European Union cannot allow its member-states to be handuffed by Greece's xenophobic policies. **Recognize Macedonia.**

- If the EU and NATO insist on a name change, what other concessions will they ask for?
- By continuing the negotiations, we are telling the world "we will change our name"
- Stop negotiating our own name

Common sense. Would any other country negotiate its own name?

- Should the US state of Georgia demand that the Republic of Georgia change its name?
- Should the Belgian province of Luxembourg demand that Luxembourg change its name?

THE MOST BASIC HUMAN RIGHT IS SELF-IDENTIFICATION.

THE MACEDONIAN PEOPLE MUST TELL THEIR GOVERNMENT TO STOP NEGOTIATING OUR NAME.

DEMAND AN END TO 'FYROM' REFERENCE.

DEMAND IMMEDIATE INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION.

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www.mhrmi.org

AMHRC
AMERICAN MACEDONIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL, INC.
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and other Macedonian organizations - www.mhrmi.org/en_macedonia

OUR NAME IS MACEDONIA

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MACEDONIAN SOCIETY "ILINDEN" TIRANA

A Macedonian cultural association in Tirana, Albania

Website: www.ilinden-tirana.com



NOVAZORA

A Pro-Macedonian newspaper based in Aegean Macedonia, Greece, edited by Dimitri Jovanov and with a printed circulation of 20,000 copies per month

Website: novazora.gr



NARODNA VOLJA

A Pro-Macedonian newspaper based in Pirin Macedonia, Bulgaria, edited by Jan Pirinski and Stojko Stojkov. The first edition was published in 1980.

Website: www.narodnavolja.com

ABOUT THE AMHRC

Established in 1984 the Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) is a non-governmental organisation that informs and advocates before international institutions, governments and broader communities about combating racism and promoting human rights. Our aspiration is to ensure that Macedonian communities and other excluded groups throughout the world, are recognised, respected and afforded equitable treatment.