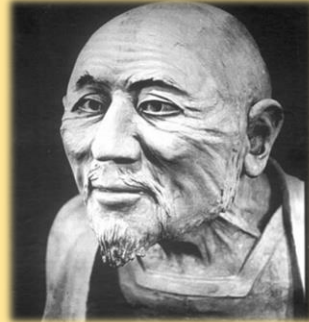


THE HISTORICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE MACEDONIANS AND THE BULGARIANS



Alexander the Great of Macedonia - the most famous Macedonian in world history.



Mostich - one of the greatest Bulgarian generals of all time (9th century). His face was reconstructed on the basis of his skull by the Bulgarian anthropologist Academician Yordanov. CAN THIS GENTLEMAN BE AN ANCESTOR OF THE PRESENT DAY MACEDONIANS?



A postage stamp officially issued by the Bulgarian State Post Office with the figures of the first two Bulgarian khans, Kubrat and Asparuh (both of them of the Turco-Mongolian descent). None of them had ever set foot in Macedonia let alone be the ancestors of the Macedonians!

Aleksandar DONSKI

THE HISTORICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE MACEDONIANS AND THE BULGARIANS

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book is intended for free distribution.
Please spread it wherever you can!

The proto-Bulgarians represented same people with the Mongolian and Manchurian tribes.

The family of Asparukh and the family of Irnik (son of the Mongollan leader Attila, our remark) originate from the ancient Turkish family Dulo, which left many generations of celebrated leaders in the history of the Turks.

From the book "Formation of the Old Bulgarian culture" (Sofia, 1977, p. 15 and 34) by the wellknown Bulgarian historian Stancho Vaklinov

...The Macedonians are one of the most ancient peoples existing in the Balkans, probably long before (the) arrival of the Mycaenian Greeks about 2000 B.C."

Danish medical journal "*Tissue Antigens*" (February 2001, volume 57, The study "*HLA genes in Macedonians and the sub-Saharan origin of the Greeks*").

Today's Bulgarian propaganda claims that the Macedonians were "Bulgarians". Therefore, we want to ask the Bulgarian propagators a simple question: when exactly did the Macedonians become "ethnic Bulgarians" when it is known that the Macedonians lived on the Balkan Peninsula for centuries before the arrival of the Turko-Mongol tribe Bulgarians (who came from Asia at the end of the 7th century)? What year, month and day and at what time did the Macedonians (as one of the oldest peoples in Europe) suddenly become a people of Turkish-Mongolian (Bulgarian) origin?

The Turko-Mongol Bulgarians (as the first recognized ethnic ancestors of today's Bulgarian nation) never settled en masse in Macedonia, so the Macedonians cannot be "Bulgarians" even if they wanted to, because they have no Bulgarian blood in them!

For this and all other absurdities of the Bulgarian chauvinist propaganda, read arguments in this short book!

INTRODUCTION

Republic of Bulgaria today conditions Macedonia's membership in the European Union and vetoes it, abusing the EU law according to which the admission of new members is voted by consensus. The reason for this bizarre attitude is essentially that the Macedonians supposedly "stole" the history of the Bulgarians and that the Macedonians should have recognized their "Bulgarian ethnic roots". In short, the reason for such a veto is pure chauvinism! It is interesting that when Bulgaria was negotiating to be admitted to the EU in 2005 and 2006, it then claimed that it had "excellent relations" with all neighboring countries (including Macedonia), and today, when it is in a position to condition, it behaves chauvinistically towards Macedonia and the Macedonians (with whom she allegedly had "excellent relations" in 2005 and 2006).

In whose interest is it for Macedonia not to join the EU? Some analysts believe that Russia is behind this behavior of Bulgaria, and they remind the fact that the most vocal subjects against Macedonia's entry into the EU are the Bulgarian nationalists who shape public opinion in Bulgaria and who have traditionally close relations with Russia due to the fact that the state of Bulgaria was created precisely from Russia as a result of the Russian-Turkish war in 1877-1878. This opinion is not necessarily correct because Bulgaria, even before the European Union (with the exception of one period), for decades acted chauvinistically against the Macedonians and their history. It is also a fact that today in Bulgaria there are reasonable subjects who oppose this kind of chauvinistic policy, but they are few and do not have the courage to react more loudly.

But let's say that this behavior of Bulgaria would be justified if the Macedonians really "steal" the history of the Bulgarians. But that is not true at all! On the contrary, based on irrefutable arguments and historical facts (mostly quoted from Bulgarian sources) you will understand in a simple way why the Macedonians were never

"Bulgarians" in the history. And not only that. With the help of simple explanations, you will also see that in today's Bulgarian historiography regarding the origin of their Bulgarian nation, there are numerous illogicalities, absurdities, and even ridiculous claims. You will also see what forgeries the Bulgarian propaganda uses against the Macedonians. Now let's move on to presenting the historical facts.

HISTORICAL AND ETHNIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE MACEDONIANS AND THE BULGARIANS

What does the current Bulgarian historiography and propaganda assert?

Proponents of the Bulgarian historiography and propaganda on the existence of the Macedonian nation generally represent the following two positions:

1. The Macedonian nation does not exist and the Macedonians are Bulgarians.

2. The Macedonian nation exists today, but the Macedonians have Bulgarian ethnic roots, which means that the Macedonians used to be Bulgarians.

Common to both views is the alleged "Bulgarian" ethnic origin of today's Macedonian nation.

Ethnogenesis – the most important parameter in the determination of people's origin

The easiest way to determine whether the Macedonians and Bulgarians have or do not have a common ethnic origin, we will call the ethnogenesis for help. First of all we will examine the ethnogenesis of the Bulgarian nation, and then we will determine whether these two nations have a joint ethnic heritage or not. However, before that, we need to answer the following question: why do we take ethnogenesis, that is, the ethnic creation of a nation, and not some other parameter in determining the ethnic origin of a nation?

Proponents of the Bulgarian propaganda and historiography in their claims that Macedonians apparently were previously and presently "Bulgarians", as a fundamental argument use the declaration of certain ethnic Macedonians, who for one reason or another have really declared themselves as "Bulgarians".

Therefore: the declaration of certain ethnic Macedonians as Bulgarians is treated as the only parameter in determining the alleged Bulgarian ethnic origin of the Macedonian nation.

However, can the declaration of certain individuals really be the only parameter in determining the ethnic origin of a nation? The answer is most definitely: NO! Declaration of individuals is a relative category, as opposed to ethnogenesis, which is absolute. Here are some examples to support this.

Take for example, a ethnic Japanese (born of ethnic Japanese mother and father). That Japanese person can declare himself differently several times during his life. So, for example, he can first declare himself a Englishman, then he can think of himself as a Filipino, then as a Indian, a Romanian, a Eskimo, Arab, etc., however, that does not mean, according to his declaration, that he will constantly change his ethnic origin. No matter how he declares himself - he will remain an ethnic Japanese for the rest of his life, because that is his ethnogenetic origin!

At the last population census in Croatia (held at the time of Yugoslavia), several Croats, jokingly or expressing some dissatisfaction, insisted that on the census list they be recorded as Bushmen (members of an African tribe from South Africa)! Of course, their wish was fulfilled, which satisfied their human rights to declare themselves nationally as they wished. However, does that mean that through such a declaration they have automatically changed their ethnic origin, i.e. that these Croats overnight got a darker skin color and turned into ethnic Bushmen? Not only did these Croats decide to declare themselves national as Bushmen, but they could also be identified by other people (their neighbors, friends, relatives, etc.). That also does not mean that they are really ethnic Bushmen.

After all, if the declaration of individuals is really determining the ethnic origin of a nation, then let us mention the very probable tragicomic assumption that today many members of the poor countries of Africa and Asia will declare themselves nationally as "ethnic Swedes" in order to obtain work in Sweden or ask the

Swedish government to finance them until they find a job, as well as provide them with a place to live in Sweden. However, such a thing cannot happen, and the reason is precisely in ethnogenesis. An ethnic Ethiopian, no matter how much he declares himself as an ethnic Swede, can never be that, because his ethnogenesis is different from the ethnogenesis of the ethnic Swede.

In the context of this, we will mention some of the Macedonian revivalists from the 19th century (Prlichev, Miladinovci and others). Some of them, due to lack of information, first declared themselves as Greeks and then as Bulgarians. Does this mean that they were first ethnic Greeks and then turned into ethnic Bulgarians overnight? There are many such cases in Bulgarian history, but today's Bulgarian propaganda is silent about them. Thus, for example, one of the first Bulgarian revivalists, Vasil Aprilov (born 1789 in Gabrovo), first declared himself a Greek until in 1831 when he became acquainted with the works of the Russian Bulgarophile Venelin, after which he suddenly began to declare himself as a Bulgarian. Does it mean that he was first ethnic Greek and then suddenly become an ethnic Bulgarian? In fact, even in the 19th century, many Bulgarians did not know what their ethnicity was, and there is ample evidence of this. Thus, for example, the English travel writer William McMichael in 1818, after visiting several cities on the territory of present-day Bulgaria, made it very clear that the members of the local population declared themselves "Serbs"! This travel writer also visited the village of Hevitsa (today's Lyubimets) near Haskovo and there again he wrote that the population is Serbian. Prominent French diplomat Busbecq, who has been to Bulgaria twice, also claims that Serbs live on Bulgarian territory. He also came to this knowledge based on the conversations with the local population who declared themselves as Serbs (more on this see at the book of the Bulgarian historian M. Todorova: "English travelers about Bulgaria", Sofia, 1987). Prominent inhabitants of Bulgaria also declared themselves as "Serbs". One of them was Yovan Raich from Vidin, who not only claimed that Serbs lived in Bulgaria, but also left significant works on Serbian history. The

same is the case with Nikola Pashich (1845 - 1926) from Teteven, who also declared himself a Serb. He even became a leading political figure in Serbia for almost 40 years. He was the leader of the People's Radical Party and, among other posts, was twice a mayor of Belgrade (1890–91 and 1897), several times Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Serbia (1891–92, 1904–05, 1906–08, 1909–11, 1912–18) and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1918, 1921–24, 1924–26). This ethnic Bulgarian (who declared himself as a Serb) also left significant works on Serbian history.

There were also numerous Bulgarians who declared themselves Greeks, and were treated like that by foreign travel writers. The travel writer Adam Neal wrote in 1805 that only Greeks, Jews, and Turks lived in the Bulgarian city of Razgrad. No trace of the Bulgarians. John Galt, who visited Sofia in 1811, also wrote that Greeks lived there. Well-known Bulgarian intellectuals at that time declared themselves as Greeks, and some of them spread Greek literacy throughout Bulgaria. Some of them are Demetrius Alexandrides, a doctor from Trnovo who translated the "History of Greece" into Greek, Anastasius Georgiades from Plovdiv who translated medical books into Greek, Nikola Savov (an intellectual from Trnovo who declared himself a Greek all his life), Stefan and Alexander Boogorodi of Kotel, who were officials in the Turkish administration and declared themselves Greeks and many others. The well known historians Golubinski from Russia, Drumev, Shishmanov and others also wrote about the declaration of a huge number of Bulgarians as Greeks. They noted that the acceptance of Greek ethnicity by the Bulgarian population was a massive and voluntary occurrence.

There are other ethnic names for the inhabitants of Bulgaria throughout history.

In Serbian sources from the 13th century, Bulgarians are called Goths. There are Byzantine and other medieval documents in which Bulgarians are also called: Scythians, Huns, Mizis, Paristrans, Myrmidons, Pannonians and Tribals. In the Arab chronicles, the

Bulgarians are called Burghians, and there are also medieval documents in which the inhabitants of Bulgaria are called Vlachs, and their state Wallachia. The testimonies from the 19th century about the determination of the Bulgarians as Shopes and Tatars, which were given by nationally conscious Macedonians, are known, as evidenced by the Bulgarian exarchic agent Petko Slavejkov. In the context of all this, we will also mention the excerpt from the Bucharest Treaty of 1821, according to which an agreement was reached to regulate the mutual relations between the Balkan peoples before the upcoming uprisings against Turkey. It is interesting that in this document the Bulgarians are not mentioned at all as one of the Balkan peoples, and this is not the case with the Macedonians either:

“Let's oppose the intrigues and not allow the Romanians to be subordinated to the Albanians, nor the Albanians to be subordinated to the Greeks, nor the Greeks to the Serbs, nor the Serbs to the Macedonians”. (Notis Botzaris. Visions Ballcaniques dans la preparation de 1s revolution, Paris, Geneva, 1962, p. 229).

From all this, it can be concluded that the then inhabitants of Bulgaria, even until the beginning of the 19th century, were largely unaware of their ethnic Bulgarian origin and declared themselves as Greeks and Serbs. Throughout history, there have been at least nineteen different ethnic determinations for the inhabitants of the territory of today's Bulgaria. Significant are the testimonies of their voluntary non-Bulgarian self-declaration, even in the 19th century. Isn't it the same case with the ethnic Macedonians, who were called differently by others in those dark and murky times? We mentioned earlier that declaring of individuals and calling the members of a nation by other names does not play any role in determining the ethnicity (origin) of that nation, but the above documents (cited mostly by Bulgarian sources) completely demolish the hypothesis of the alleged age-old national Bulgarian consciousness among the Bulgarians. On the contrary, we see that the majority of Bulgarians themselves represented an ethnically unidentified and floating mass and even until the beginning of the 19th century (with rare

exceptions) they declared themselves as something other than ethnic. Of course, there are documents from these times that testify to the existence of Bulgarians in Bulgaria, but a good part of those documents do not quite clearly articulate the Bulgarian national identity. Thus, for example, the English travel writer John Barbary, during his visit to Bulgaria in 1665, regarding the population of this country, wrote:

“The population of Bulgaria has experienced many changes, perhaps the most of any other country. First, the Tribals lived in Bulgaria, the second were the Mizis, the third were the Dacians, the fourth were the Romans, and the fifth - the Goths. The Slavs were sixth, and the Bulgarians seventh. The Greeks were eighth and the Turks ninth. But despite that, this country kept the name Bulgaria, which name comes from the Volgari people. The Volgars came from the area around the Volga River and changed the letter V to B, so they were called Bolgars”. (M. Todorova, cited book).

The number of foreign testimonies, in which Bulgarians are simply determined as Christians, is also significant.

So if the ethnicity of a nation is determined by the self-declaration of individuals of that nation, then should it be concluded that today's inhabitants of Bulgaria used to be ethnic Serbs and ethnic Greeks?

Let us conclude that ethnogenesis is the absolute and only parameter that determines the ethnic origin of a nation and determines the characteristics of that nation. Neither the declaration of individuals, nor the naming of others by different names of members of that nation, nor the existence or non-existence of state-building consciousness, can determine or change the ethnogenetic origin of the nation or the individual.

How did the present Bulgarian nation get established?

Due to the fact that the Bulgarian historiography and propaganda claim that the Macedonians allegedly had Bulgarian ethnic roots, in

the following segments we will show how the present Bulgarian nation came to be, using exclusively Bulgarian and relevant foreign historical sources.

The first known people to have lived on the territory of present-day Bulgaria were the ancient Thracians. For the Thracians it is known that ethnically and culturally they were different from the ancient Macedonians, who mostly lived on the territory of present-day Macedonia. One of the most prominent Bulgarian historians of all time, Academician Dimitar Angelov, wrote in his book „The Creation of the Bulgarian Nation“, published in Sofia in 1971, that the Thracians lived almost exclusively on the territory of present-day Bulgaria:

The Thracians are the first population in the eastern parts of the Balkan Peninsula, and especially on the territory of present-day Bulgaria, for whom there are written data.

Not only Dimitar Angelov, but almost all Bulgarian historians who write about the origin of present-day Bulgarian nation, began their work with the Thracians as the first known inhabitants of Bulgaria and as one of the ethnicities that would later give their blood and cultural contribution to the creation of present-day Bulgarian nation. So, Bulgarian historiography justifiably, as an inseparable part of the history of the Bulgarian nation, considers the history of the natives in Bulgaria - the Thracians. This means that Bulgarian historians indirectly write off Macedonia and its population from Bulgarian ethnogenesis, because ancient Macedonia then was populated by ancient Macedonians, who were a different people from the Thracians and were their immediate neighbours. Regarding this, the Bulgarian academic Angelov writes:

Western neighbours of the Thracians were also a number of Macedonian tribes, who in the first millennium BC., inhabited a large part of present-day Macedonia and which in the 5th century BC. created a fairly strong state, whose first ruler was Perdiccas. Regarding the ethnic origin of the Macedonians, there are different opinions. Some researchers believe that they were Greeks or

related to the Greeks, but it is more likely to accept the opinion that they were an independent ethnic group... (Dimitar Angelov, p. 50)

Therefore, today's Macedonians have no ethno-cultural connection with the Thracians what so ever, who (according to the official Bulgarian historiography) were one of the three main ethnic groups that created the present-day Bulgarian nation. Academician Angelov writes that at the time of the Roman conquest of the Balkan Peninsula, the number of Thracians in the Balkan countries was about 900,000, and that most of them lived on the territory of present-day Bulgaria.

The relationship between the ancient Macedonians as the dominant inhabitants of Macedonia and the Thracians as the dominant inhabitants of Bulgaria in antiquity was turbulent and consisted of frequent mutual wars. The Thracians have long been conquered by the Macedonians.

In the book „History of Bulgaria“ (published in Sofia in 1954), in the first volume on p. 28, the Thracian-Macedonian wars are described in more detail:

The conquering activity of the Macedonians during the time of Philip II in our countries developed in parallel with some colonization and construction activity ... Even after Philip's death, his son Alexander the Great, before starting the campaign in the east, was forced to appease the Thracian tribes in present-day northern Bulgaria. However, even Alexander's operations in today's Bulgarian lands could not permanently break the resistance of the freedom-loving Thracians against the Macedonian invaders. The great uprising of the Thracians against the Macedonians was so significant that it gave a signal to the Greeks to revolt against Macedonia and created serious worries for those Macedonian military chiefs to whom Alexander entrusted the military administration of his Balkan possessions...

Furhter on in this book, the brutality with which the Macedonians ruled in the territory occupied by them in today's Bulgaria is mentioned:

The brutal regime, established and supported in our lands by Lizimah, who was one of Alexander's generals, made the Macedonian conquerors even more hated, not only among the indigenous Thracian population, but also among the Greek colonists along the Thracian coast.

Therefore, not only are the ancient Macedonians clearly separated from the Greeks here, but we also see that there was a great hatred between them, and so it was between the Macedonians and the Thracians, as the dominant ethnic groups in Macedonia and Bulgaria. We also saw that those inhabitants of Bulgaria and Greece barely managed to free their lands from the occupation imposed on them by the Macedonians.

In the 6th century, during the Great Migration of the Peoples, the so-called Bulgarian Slavs appeared on the territory of present-day Bulgaria. Here we are obliged to explain that the term Bulgarian Slavs is not quite adequate, because the territory of Bulgaria was mostly inhabited by the people called Ants (although there were a smaller number of Slavs). However, the inaccurate term Bulgarian Slavs (which actually refers to the Ants), accidentally or not, has remained with a good part of the scientific and wider public to this day. It is known that they have been seven (so far unidentified) tribes and that they have settled there, soon after appearing on Bulgarian territory.

After the settlement of the Ants on the territory of present-day Bulgaria (after the period of initial hostilities), their coexistence and gradual ethnic and cultural mixing with the native Thracians took place.

The settlement of the Bulgarians on the territory of present-day Bulgaria

After the start of the mixing between the so-called Bulgarian Slavs (Ants) and natives Thracians, the Bulgarians enter the historical scene in Bulgaria! However, who were the Bulgarians? Let's allow

the Bulgarian historians themselves to answer some of these questions. We will start with the historian Evgeny Vladikov, whose book "Graphic History of the Balkan Peoples", published in Sofia in 1992, and which was used as a school aid in the subject of history in schools in Bulgaria, which means that this is in fact an official Bulgarian historiography. Here we read:

The Bulgarians belong to the newer peoples who immigrated to the Balkan Peninsula (...) Around 670, the Proto-Bulgarians, a people of Turkish origin, appeared in the northeast of the Danube Delta. We call them Proto-Bulgarians in order to distinguish them from present-day Bulgarians. The original homeland of the Proto-Bulgarians is Central Asia. They are moving west and forming a major military alliance called Greater Bulgaria, led by Khan Kubrat, which occupied the lands between Sea of Azov and North Caucasus.

The term Proto-Bulgarians should not be construed as anything other than the term Bulgarians. On the contrary, the so-called Proto-Bulgarians considered themselves and declared themselves as Bulgarians, and the term Proto-Bulgarians was recently imposed on them by Bulgarian science, in order to make a terminological difference between them and today's Bulgarians in the national sense of the word. In fact, some Bulgarian historians have recently advocated the expulsion of the artificially created term Proto-Bulgarians and sought to replace it with the adequate, original term Bulgarian. In order to satisfy the Bulgarian historians with both views, due to the fact that the so-called Proto-Bulgarians (real Bulgarians) came from their native Asia and were of Turko-Mongol origin, in this show we will mostly use the term Turko-Mongol Bulgarians in order that we may keep the real designation for their ethnic name (Bulgarians instead of Proto-Bulgarians), but also to emphasize their origin.

Thus, the members of the Turko-Mongol tribe Bulgarians were of pure Asian ethnicity, and they established their first state, Bulgaria, in Asia. Later, due to circumstances, at the end of the 7th century, some Bulgarians were forced to come to Europe and settle

on the territory of present-day Bulgaria, where they re-established their own state (after the Asian one was destroyed by the Khazars).

There are numerous testimonies and quotations from various authors and publications about the ethnic origin of the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians. In the interest of space we will list only some of them.

In the "Bulletin of the Bulgarian Khans", the Huno-Mongol leader Attila is mentioned as the blood ancestor of the Bulgarians. Here Attila is considered the direct blood ancestor of the first known Bulgarian Khan Kubrat and of the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians. For Attila and his successor Bulgarians, it is written here that, in keeping with the Asian tradition, they had shaved heads. The "Bulletin of the Bulgarian Khans" is an extremely valuable historical work, written in the 8th century during the time of the Bulgarian Khan Asparuh, who was one of the sons of Khan Kubrat.



Illustration of Attila the Hun, who according the "Bulletin of the Bulgarian Khans" (VIII century) was ancestor of the Bulgarians

One of the most known Bulgarian historians, Vasil Zlatarski, in his book „History of the Bulgarian State through the Middle Ages“ (published in Sofia in 1970) writes:

We must undoubtedly look for the first history of the Bulgarians in the history of those Central Asian Turkish peoples, known under the common name Huns ...

Continuing in his book (p. 153) prof. Zlatarski also gives the names of the four (we quote) "Huno-Bulgarian hordes", which constituted the ethnic core of the Bulgarians. Their names are: Kupi-Bulgar, Duchi-Bulgar, Olkhontor-Bulgar and Chdar-Bulgar. This automatically raises the question: did these Huno-Bulgarian hordes create the present-day Macedonian nation?

In the book "Formation of the Old Bulgarian Culture" (published in Sofia, in 1977), the author Stancho Vaklinov writes:

The Proto-Bulgarians were a Turkic-speaking people, whose homeland is located in the Far East, in the heart of Asia ... The Proto-Bulgarians represented a unit with the Mongol and Manchurian tribes.

In the already mentioned book "The Creation of the Bulgarian Nation", academician Dimitar Angelov writes that it is definitely confirmed that the Bulgarians belonged to the family of Turkic-speaking tribes and tribal groups, such as: Huns, Oguzs, Uygurs, Hazars, Pechenezes and others and that they were a Turkic-speaking people.

What were the true Bulgarians?

After the arrival of the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians on the territory of present-day Bulgaria in 681, an European Bulgaria was created for the first time. There is not much information about the life of the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians in their native Asia. It is known that they were nomads or wanderers. In the 6th century, between the Sea of Azov and the North Caucasus, they formed their own state, now known as Greater Bulgaria. It was headed by the Turko-Mongol Bulgarian Khan Kubrat. However, the existence of Greater Bulgaria did not last long. After Kubrat's death, the country was destroyed by the Khazars. After the break-up of Greater Bulgaria, three of Khan Kubrat's sons moved west to Europe, and the other two stayed with some of the Bulgarians in their homeland Asia.

Kubrat's third son, by the name of Asparuh, settled in what is now northeastern Bulgaria. After defeating the Byzantine army in 681,

he formed the first European Bulgarian state, which included the so-called Bulgarian Slavs (Ants) and the Thracians as natives.

The Turko-Mongol Bulgarians had the main say in this so-called First Bulgarian Empire, while the Ants and Thracians played a subordinate role. Among the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians were the first Bulgarian rulers of Bulgaria: Asparuh, Tervel, Kardam, Komertsiy, Sevar, Kormisos, Vineh, Telets, Sabin, Umor, Toktu, Pagan, Tsok, Omurtag, Telerig and others. Ethnic Turko-Mongol Bulgarians who belonged to the yellow race, were also the famous Bulgarian rulers Boris, Simeon and Peter (regardless of the Christian names of the latter two), who lived and worked in the time of the holy brothers Cyril and Methodius and their students. All of these Bulgarian rulers had Mongol anthropological characteristics. Boris' father was the Turko-Mongol Bulgarian Khan Presian, who did not know a single word of the Slavic language. Presian, on the other hand, was the grandson of the Turko-Mongol Bulgarian Khan Omurtag. Even Boris himself (who first bore the title of khan and later became a prince) learned to speak Slavic as an adult, as well as his son Simeon.

Today, some Bulgarian historians are trying to prove that the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians allegedly did not belong to the yellow race. They are doing this to try to cover up the biggest gap and contradiction in the ethnogenesis of the Bulgarian people. Here's what it's all about.

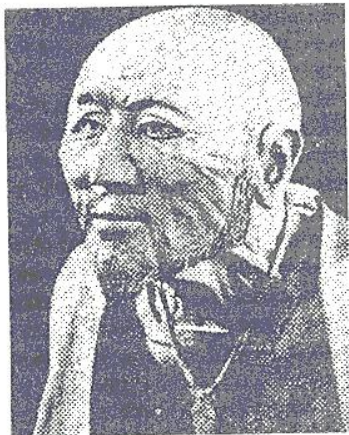
If you ask any modern-day Bulgarian to list the first Bulgarian rulers, he will point out the Turko-Mongol Bulgarian khans: Kubrat, Asparuh, Omurtag, Telets, Toktu, Pagan, Tsok ... and others who belonged to the yellow race.

However, here one immediately notices a great contradiction. Most of today's Bulgarians belong to the white race, while as their blood ancestors they treat people who belonged to the yellow race! This is somewhat funny. It is as if some ethnic Swedes (members of the white race) today would declare a black man from Africa their "ethnic and blood ancestor." Therefore, with all due respect to all races and peoples of the world, here we only point out that the present-day inhabitants of Bulgaria, who belong to the white race,

mention people belonging to another race as their blood ancestors (in this case from the yellow race). As a result, some Bulgarian historians are trying to prove that the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians did not belong to the yellow race. But such attempts have no basis. There is no doubt that the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians (now recognized as the blood ancestors of the Bulgarian nation) belonged to the yellow race.

First of all, we have already mentioned data (from Bulgarian sources) according to which the Bulgarians were a Mongol tribe, and their distant blood ancestor was the Huno-Mongol leader Attila.

Secondly, here are the data from the grave finds of the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians. Their skulls clearly show that they belonged to the yellow race. In 1952, during archeological excavations near Veliki Preslav in northeastern Bulgaria, in the area inhabited mostly by Turko-Mongol Bulgarians, the tomb of a certain Mostich, who was military commander during the reign of the Bulgarian emperors Simeon and his son Peter, was discovered. Based on his skull, by the famous Bulgarian anthropologist and member of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences Yordan Yordanov, the face of this famous Bulgarian military leader has been reconstructed.



пини һәм Гильом де Рубрук
язмаларына да хас. Алар ук
“Мөхәммәд динен башкаларга
караганда да ныграк тотучы”

Дунайский болгарин IX века
— Мостич.

IX гасыр Дунай болгары —
Мостич

The face of the famous Bulgarian military commander Mostich reconstructed by the Bulgarian antropologist Yordan Yordanov. Is he ancestor of the present day Macedonians?

Here we have to ask the following question very forcefully: Is this how the blood ancestors of today's Macedonians looked like? We emphasize that Mostich was probably the greatest Bulgarian military commander of all time, given the fact that he served during the reign of Tsar Simeon (who was also a Turko-Mongol Bulgarian) during which time the First Bulgarian Empire experienced its greatest territorial expansion. Today, as a sign of respect to Mostich, there is a vilage in Bulgaria that bears his name.

In the 1970s, Bulgarian Academician and antropologist Yordanov reconstructed the faces of other Turko-Mongol Bulgarian skulls found in a tomb in Devna, which were buried there in the ninth century. These skulls also clearly show that the Bulgarians belonged to the yellow race. And again the question arises: are these the ancestors of today's Macedonians?



Faces of the Middle Ages Bulgarians reconstructed by the Bulgarian antropologist Yordan Yordanov. Are they ancestors of the present day Macedonians?

As proof that the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians (now recognized as the first ethnic ancestors of the Bulgarian nation) belonged to the yellow race, we will mention today's Tatars living in the Russian Republic of Tatarstan. We have already mentioned that some of the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians did not go to Europe with Khan Asparuh, but stayed in Asia (on the border with Europe). Later they re-established their state known as "Volga Bulgaria". In time, the country collapsed, and the Bulgarian ethnic name began to be forgotten. Later, the Russians began to equate this people with the Tatars, certainly because of the related anthropological characteristics between the Bulgarians and the Tatars. All those with Mongolian anthropological characteristics were "Tatars" for the Russians. Today, however, there is a renaissance movement among Tatars in Tatarstan called the Bulgarian National Congress (founded in June 1990), whose members insist they are not Tatars but Bulgarians, that is, the Bulgarians and Tatars in Tatarstan are the same people. A delegation from the Bulgarian National Congress in Tatarstan paid an official visit to Bulgaria in August 2000 at the invitation of President Petar Stoyanov.

In his book "Who Are We: Bulgarians or Tatars?" (Published in Kazan, Russia in 1992), Tatar historian Halikov very clearly describes the ethnic relationship between Bulgarians and Tatars. This famous Tatar historian is considered a top expert on the ethnogenesis of present-day Tatars. With all due respect to today's Tatars, who are a smart and cultured people, the question arises again if we Macedonians are supposedly "the same people" with the Bulgarians, it turns out that we are the same people with the Tatars, and that is pointless to contemplate.



Front cover of the book “Who Are We: Bulgarians or Tatars?” from the Tatar historian Halikov (Published in Kazan, Russia in 1992) in which he confirms that the Bulgarians and Tatars are same people

In the end, we will mention that serious researchers in Bulgaria today are fully aware that the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians belonged to the yellow race and there is no escape from that fact. A postage stamp was issued in Bulgaria a few years ago, officially issued by the Bulgarian State Post Office with the figures of the first two Bulgarian rulers, Kubrat and Asparuh. And in this illustration, too, they are represented as Huns, that is, Mongols, so they cannot be the blood ancestors of today's Macedonians.



A postage stamp officially issued by the Bulgarian State Post Office with the figures of the first two Bulgarian rulers, Kubrat and Asparuh. It is obvious that they cannot be the blood ancestors of today's Macedonians.

How did the present-day Bulgarian nation get established?

According to official Bulgarian historiography, today's Bulgarian nation is ethnogenetically created by the mixing of the native Thracians, the Slavs - Ants (who settled in Bulgaria in the early Middle Ages) and the Turko-Mongol tribe of Bulgarians, who settled in northeastern Bulgaria in the late 7th century and who belonged to the yellow race. Much of the modern Bulgarian historiography claims that these three peoples lived in coexistence and then mingled with each other, thus creating today's Bulgarian people.

However, such claims make no sense. First of all, there are reports of large-scale massacres committed by the Bulgarians against Slavs and Thracians on the territory of present-day Bulgaria. For

example, in the Ninth Century "Chatalar inscription", it is clearly stated that the Bulgarian khan Omurtag declared that he would kill the Slavs as long as the river Tucha flowed.

In 763, due to internal unrest in the Bulgarian Khanate, according to the Byzantine chronicler Theophanes, a large number of Slavs (according to some estimates over two hundred thousand people) fled from pagan Bulgaria and settled in Byzantium. There are other testimonies of the terror to which the Slavs were exposed by the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians.

It was the same with the native Thracians. In 809, the Bulgarian Khan Krum carried out a massacre of about six thousand inhabitants in the besieged city of Serdica (modern-day Sofia). After realizing that he would not be able to take the city, he promised the citizens of Serdica (who were mainly descendants of the ethnic Thracians) that if they surrendered, they would be free to go to other parts of Byzantium. Because the citizens lacked food, they accepted this condition and opened the city gates. However, as soon as they entered Sredec, the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians insidiously attacked the population and killed about six thousand people, residents of Serdica. Later, the Khan of Krum besieged and captured the Thracian city of Edirne, which was ransacked, and the local Thracians there moved to the other side of the Danube, while seizing their property.

Because of all this, today it really looks like black humor when the present day descendants of the Slavs and the Thracians in Bulgaria are "proud" of the ethnic name "Bulgarians" - a name worn by the murderers of their ancestors!

Finally, if the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians had really mingled with the Slavs and the Thracians throughout the territory of Bulgaria, today's Bulgarians would have anthropological traits of the yellow race, but we know that is not the case. After all, the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians never settled en masse on the territory of the whole of Bulgaria, so they cannot be the blood ancestors of most of today's Bulgarians.

Due to all this data, the conclusion is one and only one. Present-day ethnic Bulgarians are mostly descendants of the famous

ancient Thracians and Slavs living in Bulgaria, but also of other peoples, with a negligible percentage of the blood of the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians, mainly in northeastern Bulgaria. The Slavic language was imposed as the language of this ethnic mixture, and the names of the toponyms largely remained those of the Thracian tradition. In fact, Bulgarian academic Dimitar Angelov lists numerous Thracian personal names and other cultural segments that have survived to the present day among modern Bulgarians.

Finally, we will mention the DNA research related to today's Bulgarians, conducted at the Swiss Institute of Genetics Igenea. According to these data, the blood of every current resident of Bulgaria, on average, has an incredible 49% blood and genes from the famous Thracians, which is the greatest proof that today's inhabitants of Bulgaria are not at all descendants of Turko-Mongol Bulgarians, but rather descendants of one of the oldest peoples in Europe - the Thracians.

However, decades of intense propaganda that all members of Bulgaria's peoples are "ethnic Bulgarians" and "descendants of Khan Kubrat" have so contaminated the consciousness and subconscious of the people of Bulgaria that no one has yet dared to speak publicly and say: "I am not an ethnic Bulgarian, but a descendant of the famous Thracian people"!

On the other hand, mainly in northeastern Bulgaria, there are people with the characteristics of the yellow race. They do not even want to hear that today's Bulgarians are Slavs or Thracians and insist that today's Bulgarians are the same people as the Tatars.

It is interesting that the descendants of these true Bulgarians (members of the yellow race of Asian origin), in the census in Bulgaria in 1880, categorically demanded to be listed as "old Bulgarians", which means that they wanted to ethnically distinguish themselves from the rest of the inhabitants of Bulgaria. This caused confusion among the other inhabitants of Bulgaria (mainly of Thracian-Slavic origin) because they believed that they were "Bulgarians" (K. Shkorpil: "Materiali km vaprosa za sdbata na na Prabulgari i na Severi", Prague, 1933, p. 176).

Practically, it turns out that there are two types of Bulgarians - one belonging to the white race and the other belonging to the yellow race, which in itself has no logic and is another proof that today's inhabitants of Bulgaria for the most part are not "ethnic Bulgarians" at all, but members of various peoples (mostly descendants of the Thracians and Slavs) on whom in the 19th century (under the strong influence of Russia) the foreign Turko-Mongolian ethnonym "Bulgarians" was imposed on them as their common ethnic name. Thus the descendants of the Vlachs, Turks, Slavs, Thracians, Macedonians, Roma and other peoples in Bulgaria were convinced that they were "descendants of Khan Kubrat" (!?). This process was further intensified during the time of communism in Bulgaria when even ethnic Turks were forced to change their Turkish personal names to "Bulgarian" and they were declared "Bulgarians", which then led to public unrest. This chauvinistic policy of Bulgaria continues even today when denationalization is still being carried out on Macedonians, Vlachs, Roma and other peoples in Bulgaria.

As proof of the illogicalities regarding the emergence of the Bulgarian nation, we will mention one more example. In the 1930s and 1940s, there was a nationalist organization in Bulgaria called "Warriors for Progress of Bulgarianism" led by Dr. Asen Kantardziev, which had more than one hundred and thirty thousand Bulgarians and whose statute stated that modern Bulgarians in the majority are direct descendants of the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians. Their statute states that the Slavs were at a lower cultural level than the Bulgarians.

Contrary to this claim, in the official "History of the Bulgarian Church" by the author Stanimir Stanimirov (published in Sofia in 1894 and again in 1925) it is written quite the opposite. Believe it or not, there it literally says that the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians were mentally more backward than the Slavs. Therefore, some Bulgarians glorified, and some belittled either the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians or the Slavs. And all this depending on the policy of the day. When Bulgaria was close to the Russia, then the Bulgarians

became "Slavs", and when it was close to Germany and Hitler, then the Bulgarians turned into "Huns".

How did the present-day Macedonian nation get established?

Most of world opinion considers the present day Macedonians to be of "Slavic" origin, descendants of the Slavs who came to the Balkans in the 6th century AD from a region beyond the Carpathian Mountains without any serious connections with the famous ancient Macedonians. This theory was considered official even in the autonomous Republic of Macedonia in the period when it was a part of communist Yugoslavia.

Do present-day Macedonians indeed have "no relation" to the famous ancient Macedonians? The scientific evidence, as well as substantial additional information that will be presented in short here, shows that the contemporary Macedonians are primarily descendants of the ancient Macedonians.

But before we move on to presenting these evidences, let us also say that many people in the world today believe that the ancient Macedonians were Hellens (Greeks). But that is not true at all. The ancient Macedonians were different people compared to the Hellens and they spoke their own language, which was incomprehensible to the Hellenes. There are testimonies from over fifty ancient (mainly Hellenic) authors who testified about this truth. One can see a large part of these testimonies in the documentary series of 40 episodes in English under the title: „THE ANCIENT MACEDONIANS WERE NOT GREEKS“ at the “ALEKSANDAR DONSKI HISTORY CHANNEL” on YouTube, as well as in the book by the same author under the title “ANCIENT GREEK AND OTHER ANCIENT TESTIMONIES ABOUT THE UNIQUE ETHNIC DISTINCTIVENESS OF THE ANCIENT MACEDONIANS” for free download at: <http://www.pollitecon.com>.

In fact many ancient authors clearly testified that the ancient Macedonians were not Greeks at all, but a separate nation with their own language and culture. Lets mention some of them

The ancient historian Arrian (1st and 2nd Century) wrote that during the battle at Issus between the Macedonian army led by Alexander the Great of Macedon and the Persian army led by Darius, over 30,000 Greeks fought on Persia's side against the Macedonians. Arrian wrote that it was because of a (quote): "*... old racial rivalry of Greeks and Macedonians*".

Latin historian Quintus Curtius Rufus wrote that Macedonians and Greeks communicated with each other through translators, while Demosthenes, Trasymachus and Hesychius described the Macedonians as "barbarians" (which in the ancient times meant people who do not speak Greek).

Ancient historian Justin, while writing about the Macedonian occupation of the Greek territories, stated that (quote): "*Philip ... increased the power of Macedonia which was now a slave yoke over the necks of the Greeks and of Asia.*"

Pausanias (who lived in the second century) wrote (quote): "*... all the Greeks were afraid of the Macedonians and of Antigonos*"

In fact, there are testimonies from over fifty ancient authors who claimed that the Macedonians were not Greeks and who mentioned separately these two peoples. Some of them are: Arrian, Appian, Agrippa II, Dexippus, Demosthenes, Dicaearchus, Dionysus Caliohontis, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Dio Chrysostom, Diodorus Siculus, Dio Cassius, Eutropius, Eusebius of Caesarea, Aemilius Isura, Aemilius Sura, Johnannes Malalas, Flavius Josephus, Justin, Quintus Curtius Rufus, Herodotus, Plutarch, Pausanias, Polybius, Claudianus, Clement of Alexandria, Marcus Velleius Paterculus, Cornelius Nepos, Praxagoras of Athens, Pseudo Scylax, Pseudo Scymnus and many others ...

Now let's return to the main topic and it is the ethnic origin of the present day Macedonians. What is the relation between the present day and the ancient Macedonians? To answer this question we should remember certain points. First, ancient peoples did not simply disappear from the face of the earth. The Ancient peoples mainly carried their blood and culture into the contemporary peoples that appeared on their territory. This is accepted by all

historiographies in the world, and there is no reason for Macedonia and the Macedonians to be an exception.

Folklore should also be considered when discussing this topic. There is a significant number of examples from present day Macedonian folklore that remain as a heritage from the ancient Macedonians. In contrast to these, in Macedonian folklore, in the memory about the history of the Macedonian people, **there is not a single story** that mentions the alleged “beyond the Carpathian” life of the ancestors of the present day Macedonians (a toponym, hydronym or any other element from beyond the Carpathians). This information deserves our attention because the folklore of a particular people has its roots in the ethnic history of that people.

So, these are serious questions, which have been insufficiently considered by many historians in and outside Macedonia.

The existence of the ancient Macedonian people from the time of the Roman occupation and after

In order to prove the connections between today's and ancient Macedonians, we need first to present evidence for the existence of ancient Macedonians and their descendants in Macedonia for centuries after the destruction of the ancient Macedonian state.

In the 2nd century BC Macedonia was occupied by the powerful Roman Empire, which marked the end of its existence as an independent state. But the ancient Macedonians were still there and were the predominant population in their occupied country. They continued to survive and procreate despite their status as a conquered people and the cultural influences that were imposed upon them during the centuries of foreign domination that followed.

The ancient Jewish historian Josephus Flavius mentioned the Macedonians as a people in a quotation from a speech by the Jewish leader Agrippa before the Jews, who wanted to fight against Roman rule. Agrippa tried to convince the Jews that the Roman Empire was very powerful and that their fight would be in vain. To

discourage them from carrying out their intentions he cited the other peoples who were under Roman rule, none of whom dared to fight against this mighty Empire. Among the peoples he named were the Macedonians:

“What confidence is it that raises you up to oppose the Romans? Perhaps it will be said, it is hard to endure slavery. Yes; but how much harder is this for the Greeks... It is the same with the Macedonians, who have more just reason to claim their liberty than you have. (Josephus Flavius: “Wars of the Jews”, II,16,4).

The Roman historian Flocus (who lived in 2nd century AD) also recorded the existence of the Macedonians in the period of the Roman occupation. Describing the Thracian rebellions against the Roman occupation, he also mentioned a Macedonian rebellion against the Romans:

“After the Macedonians, according to the will of God, the Thracians rebelled, who were previously paying taxes to the Macedonians” (“History Textbook of Bulgaria”, Sofia, 1964, page 28. Published in Bulgarian.).

The Macedonians are mentioned in the Holy Scriptures, the Bible, in passages concerning the mission of Saint Paul to Macedonia, where Christianity began its expansion into Europe. For example, in “Acts of the Apostles” (16:9):

“And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man was standing before him, a Macedonian, begging him and saying: “come over to Macedonia and help us””.

And:

“And when we boarded a ship that was to sail for the places near the Asian shore, the ship sailed off. With us was Aristarch, a Macedonian from Salonica”.

These accounts represent a clear proof that the ancient Macedonians not only did not disappear, but they remained to live in Macedonia, conscious of the fact that they were Macedonians. The first citation above suggests that their situation under Roman rule was extremely difficult, since they were asking the Apostle Paul for help.

Evidence of the existence of the ancient Macedonians as the predominant inhabitants of Macedonia in the period after Roman occupation of their country did not come only from foreign authors. There are also testimonies from Macedonians about this. For instance, concerning the freeing of a 12 year old slave, his master had the following inscribed on a tablet, which was discovered in the vicinity of Veria (dated 253 AD):

“I, Desios Cominius Julianos, bestowed to the mother of the Gods the Autochthonous, child by the name of Kalokeron Olympin, of the age of 12 years, a Macedonian by birth.” (Prof. Fotis Petsas: *“At the divide between idolatry and Christianity”*, V. *“Elinokos Voras”*, quoted according to Hristo Andonovski, cited work, page 42).

This inscription reveals that even four centuries after the Roman occupation of Macedonia, the Macedonians still had their Macedonian ethnic consciousness.

Also in the 3rd century, when Macedonia had already been a Roman colony for several centuries, Macedonians demanded that the leaders of their communities be called *Macedoniarchs*.

Sozomenus, a writer who lived from the end of the 4th until the middle of the 5th century, also wrote about the Macedonians of that time. Concerning the Christianization of the Macedonians, which took place during the reign of the Emperor Constantine I the Great (in 4th century), Sozomenus recorded:

“The Hellenes, Macedonians and Illyrians began to practice the faith of Christ without fear” (GIBI - Greek Sources on Bulgarian History, volume 1, Sofia, 1954, pages 50-51. Published in Bulgarian).

Clearly the term Macedonians in this statement was used in the ethnic, and not in the geographical sense, because it is used equally with the other two terms: Illyrians and Hellenes, which also represent ethnic rather than geographic terms.

Theodorus of Cyrus (393 AD to the middle of the 5th century) also wrote about the ancient Macedonians as the predominant people in Macedonia in the early Byzantine period. For instance, he wrote that

the city of Salonica is: “*a large and heavily populated city which belongs to the Macedonian people*” (GIBI, - Greek Sources on Bulgarian History, volume 1, Sofia, 1954, pages 79-80).

Thus, the ancient Macedonians were the predominant ethnic element in Macedonia in the period prior to the Great Movement of Peoples. This was the situation at the time of the great migrations of peoples, which had its own particular effect in the Balkans. The Slavs, who were previously known as Veneti, appeared in the Macedonian land at that time. There is ample evidence and written testimonies that show that after the Great Migration of Peoples, the ancient Macedonians did not disappear or run away. They lived together with the so-called "*Macedonian Slavs*" and mostly assimilated them, even though they were initially opposed to them.

Byzantine sources concerning the siege of Salonica by the Slavs and Avars in 586 AD testify to the simultaneous presence of ancient Macedonians and Slavs in Macedonia:

“If one could imagine all of the Macedonians, Thessalians and Achaians appearing in Salonica at that time, all of them would not even be a small part of the barbarian horde that surrounded the city then [referring to the Slavs and Avars]”.

The author Kammeniates in 904 AD in his work “*On the Capture of Salonica*” wrote:

“To us, my friend, the fatherland is Salonica...That is the first and the largest city of the Macedonians”.

Thus, in 904 AD there were still descendants of the ancient Macedonians living in Macedonia together with the Slavs. Due to the fact that in 904 AD the Slavs were apparently not yet settled in Salonica, the assumption that the term Macedonians in this testimony refers to Slavs is not valid.

Likewise, the Byzantine poet Ephraem said that Salonica was (quote): “*the capital of the Macedonians*” (Ephraemii Chronologii caesares", J.P.Migne, PG 143, Paris, 1891, 198).

The assumption that the term Macedonians refers to the geographic “*Macedonians*” as inhabitants of the Byzantine theme of Macedonia is invalid. It is known that on the territory of Thrace, but

also in the eastern part of present day Aegean Macedonia, in the 8th century the Byzantines created an administrative area (theme) which they named Macedonia. Because of this, there are certain documents from this period that referred to the inhabitants of this theme as Macedonians, even though they were chiefly ethnic Thracians. It is believed that the naming of this theme Macedonia was due to the presence of Macedonians there, who lived along with the Thracians.

Moreover, the referenced testimony of Kammeniates refers to the Macedonians of Salonica, and Salonica at that time was not within the borders of the theme of Macedonia. Thus, here also the term Macedonians refers to the descendants of the ethnic ancient Macedonians, who established this city, and in the 10th century still lived in it as the predominant inhabitants.

In addition, the examples mentioned previously reveal that the ethnic term Macedonians can be found centuries before the creation of the theme of Macedonia. Therefore, it is absurd to claim that this term was specifically related to this theme.,

Also in the 10th century Leonis Diakones in his "*History*" wrote the following testimony:

"Moesians mercilessly plundered the lands of the Macedonians and killed all the adults".

Theophan's daily log of the campaign of Nicephores Phokas, in 961 in Crete said that his army consisted of: "*Thracians, Macedonians and Sclavisyans*". This represents clear proof that in the middle of the 10th century descendants of the ancient Macedonians and the Slavs (here named *Sclavisyans*) lived in cohabitation, even fought together in the ranks of the same army.

Constantine VII Porphyrogenitis who lived in 10 century, describing the administrative units (themes) in his work "*De thematibus*" (around 934 AD), wrote about the Slavs from the theme of Strymon, and also named the Macedonians as inhabitants of this region.

This testimony also confirms the ethnic (and not the geographic) character of the term "Macedonians". Constantine VII

Porphrogenitis clearly named the Macedonians not as inhabitants of the theme of Macedonia, but as inhabitants of the theme of Strymon.

Even clearer evidence of cohabitation of the so-called *Macedonian Slavs* and the descendants of the ancient Macedonians is available from the period of Isaac I Comnenus (middle of 11th century). During his reign his brother Ioannis Comnenus was installed as ruler of the European part of the empire. For his good rule over the Balkan peoples his contemporary Nicephores Vrieniou wrote:

“When Ioannis obtained the rule of the West, as we have already said, for his deeds he left indelible memories among the Thracians, Macedonians, Illyrians and Slavs”.

The well-known Byzantine historian Anna Comnena (beginning of the 12th century) also wrote about the descendants of the ancient Macedonians as inhabitants of Macedonia. In her work *“Alexiad”*, distinguishing among the names of the peoples that lived in the Balkans at that time, she wrote:

“On each side of the mountain live various peoples. On the northern side are the Dacians and Thracians, and on the southern side are the Thracians and the Macedonians” (Anna Comnena, *“The Alexiad”*, Book XIV, 8).

Anna Comnena mentioned the Macedonians in other works as well, and testimonies about the Macedonians exist also from the centuries that followed.

The Byzantine writer and scholar Nicephore Grigoras, in his travel notes from Strumitsa (1326) wrote that the River Struma is one of the rivers that separate Macedonia from Thrace, and also recorded that in this region the Slavs and the indigenous people (ancient Macedonian) lived together (Nicephore Grigoras, *Corespondance*, Paris, 1927, pages 30-50).

So we have seen that there is serious historical evidence that the descendants of the ancient Macedonians remained living in Macedonia for centuries after the Roman occupation of Macedonia and the disappearance of the ancient Macedonian state. In the

following, we will provide evidence of the significant ethno-cultural heritage that today's Macedonians have inherited from their ancient ancestors.

Ancient Macedonian elements in the present day Macedonian folklore

It is known that the folklore of any nation has its roots in the history of that nation. For instance, an old English legend could not possibly sing the praises of a Chinese emperor (and claim him to be an ancestor of the English people), or describe in detail a Turkish custom (and maintain that it is an “English” custom) etc. Hence, the many examples of Macedonian folklore that describe or glorify the ancient Macedonians or elements related to their material or cultural existence, cannot be understood in any other way than as the cultural heritage from the ancient Macedonians. This constitutes undeniable and irrefutable evidence that the ancient Macedonians are in largest part ancestors of the present day Macedonian nation. Here we will review some elements of Macedonian folklore (recorded chiefly in the 19th and 20th centuries), which were present also in the culture of the ancient Macedonians.

Folk Songs and Tales

Folk songs and tales that glorify famous persons from ancient Macedonian history were recorded by almost all collectors and cataloguers of Macedonian folklore from the middle of the 19th century. This lore was also noticed by foreigners who visited Macedonia.

Byzantine historian and writer Nicephore Grigoras described some of the folk songs he heard in Strumitsa during his visit there in 1326. He stated that the folk songs from Strumitsa reminded him very much of the Phrygian songs. It is known that the Phrygians (Brygians) had a vital role in the ethno-genesis of the ancient

Macedonians, and it is therefore evident that the Macedonians in the 14th century still nourished their heritage in their folk songs.

Much later, French baron Francois De Tott, who was working in Constantinople in the end of 18th century, in his "*Recollections*" wrote:

"Twenty two Macedonians, each with a rifle slung over his shoulder came here, and gathered in a tavern and sang a song about the triumphs of Alexander the Great." (Aleksandar Matkovski: "*Macedonia in the Works of the World Travellers and Chroniclers 1371-1777*", Skopje, Mislal, 1991, page 883. Published in Macedonian.).

Russian traveller and chronicler Viktor Grigorovich also left a record about how the memory of Alexander the Great of Macedon remained with the Macedonians of the first half of the 19th century. Concerning his impressions from the visit to Macedonia in 1844 he wrote:

"In all the areas I visited, I have not heard other names but the names Alexander the Great and King Marko. Both are alive in the memory of the people...Still, the memory of Alexander the Great is the more established among the people".

Viktor Grigorovich recorded one folk tale about the Macedonian emperor Philip II.

The Bosnian collector and recorder of Macedonian folklore and customs Stefan Verkovich, who stayed in Macedonia several years in the middle of the 19th century admitted that he was very surprised when he discovered folk songs in Macedonia dedicated to persons from ancient Macedonia. He even declared these songs to be his chief discovery. In one of his letters Verkovich pointed out:

"This extremely important and unexpected discovery occurred in the first quarter of 1865. It was a little song about Alexander the Great, the Macedonian Emperor. By the end of the year I found another two songs about him. The next year, 1866, I came across an even older item – a song about Orpheus!"

Stefan Verkovich also left other records of Macedonian folklore with ancient Macedonian elements. He noted that a large number

of such narratives, passed down from generation to generation, were found among the extended Macedonian Marvatsi family (residents of the present day Pirin part of Macedonia). He wrote:

“The Marvatsi...live in the Nevrokop district, which is between the Kremen and Momina Kula Mountain and offers panoramic scenes between Nevrokop and Razlog ... The Marvatsis have tales and folklore passed on down through the generations from the very distant past ... They also relate a song about Alexander the Great and his horse Bucephalus; about his crusade in Asia and his war against Darius and Porus – the Indian Emperor. This song is a very important source concerning the origin of the ancient Macedonians, Thracians and Illyrians... It was told by the shepherd Stoyan Ovtcharov...”

This folklorist also recorded that in the southwestern part of Macedonia the people declared themselves to be pure Macedonians, descendants of Alexander the Great.

Stefan Verkovich published another song about Alexander the Great of Macedon, sang to him by the blind folk singer Yovan Mihailov. The song was recorded some time prior to 1862, and it existed in two variants. The song also alludes to a battles that Alexander fought and continues by telling how Alexander found a spring of “live water”. Still, the most interesting part is the end of the song, which describes Alexander’s death:

*Again walks Alexander
again he walks three days and three nights,
chased he is by mosquitoes,
they haunt him and give him no sleep,
bread he does not eat for three days.
leaving for a particular field
there he found the craftsmen
cutting stone in the field,
stone that they cut for a trough.
Then said Alexander:
There is no salvation brother craftsmen,
no salvation from the mosquitoes,*

*let me lie down in that stone trough,
perhaps I can hide
from those flies, from those mosquitoes.
Then he lay down in the stone trough,
but the mosquitoes entered it still:
from the one ear they come in,
from the other they come out.
There he died, Alexander
in the stone trough from the mosquitoes,
his kingdom has collapsed.*

Most of the historians researching the reasons for Alexander's death believe that he died from malaria. That is precisely what is described in this song. Clearly malaria has been recognised as a disease transmitted by mosquitoes, who *haunt him and give him no sleep*. It was not by accident that Alexander complained about the mosquitoes, realising that they were the reason for his death.

It is hard to believe that the blind and illiterate Macedonian singer Yovan Mihailov (from whom this song was heard and recorded in the 19th century) could know the details about Alexander's death caused by mosquitoes. The details regarding Alexander's death from malaria were scientifically supported with arguments for the first time in 1978 by the historian Donald Engels, who presented this theory in his work "*A Note on Alexander's Death*". Later this theory gained increasing support, and it can be said that today this theory is considered accepted by most historians. Thus, the verses from this Macedonian song: *There he died, Alexander, in the stone trough from mosquitoes* are even more amazing. The medical knowledge of the Macedonian folk author is also amazing (mosquitoes as a reason i.e. transmitters of malaria). The first to discover that mosquitoes transmit malaria was the British researcher Ronald Ross. But he made this discovery in 1898, several decades after this old Macedonian folk song was recorded. Ross received the Nobel Prize for this discovery in 1902, but in the Macedonian song the mosquitoes are precisely the reason for the

death of Alexander of Macedon. This indeed is a mystery that needs to be researched.

We can see that the song also mentions the sarcophagus (*“the stone trough”* that was made by the craftsmen) in which Alexander was buried. This can only be another proof that portions of this song remained in the Macedonian folklore of the 19th century from the ancient period. The truth that the mosquitoes were associated with the death of Alexander was simply passed down from generation to generation among the Macedonians, and that way it reached the time of the blind singer Mihailov, who conveyed this factual information through the song.

Kuzman Shapkarev and Marko Tsepenskov, collectors and recorders of Macedonian folklore from the 19th century, also wrote about the representation of Alexander the Great of Macedon in Macedonian folklore. Kuzman Shapkarev wrote:

“My late father during our childhood was telling us many tales, some of them about King Marko and about Tsar Alexander Alexander the Great...” (Kuzman Shapkarev, footnote under the tale N^o. 123, entitled *“The good is never lost”*).

Knowledge of one Macedonian folk song dedicated to Alexander of Macedon is found in the folklore collection of the Aegean Macedonian Dimitar Pop-Dimitrov, who was collecting Macedonian folk tales for years in many towns and villages in Aegean Macedonia. One of the tales he recorded is the song about Tsar Alexander of Macedon, sung to him by the 84-year old Tanas Markov. The following is an excerpt from the song:

*Stand up, stand up / Alexander of Macedon
to see how your sons/ fight for Macedonia...,
 (“Nova Makedonija” from 01 and 02.11.1997, page 7).*

French Slavist Ciprian Rober recorded one song about Alexander of Macedon, in which appealed to the gods to watch: *“over his people, glorious and with courageous hearts...”* This oath was published in original in French in 1852.

A song naming the ancient-Macedonian "Tsar Caranus" was published in *"The Anthology of Macedonian and Bulgarian Folk and Art Songs"* from 1909-1910. The first verses of the song read:

*"Old mountain,/ who will lead the armies in thee
without the proud Tsar,/ Tsar Caranus?"*

A Macedonian folk song about "Tsar Caranus" was also mentioned by the Macedonian activist Isaiya Mazhovski in his *"Memories"* (published in Sofia in 1922). He described his visit to his uncles, brothers Hadzhi Sekov, in the village of Sosalia in 1867:

"In the evening a Jew came to buy wool. After the business was finished they started singing Macedonian folk songs. The brothers Hadzhi Sekov sang a few old songs about the Macedonian Tsar Caranus and the girl Soluna:

'As he listened to the songs, the amazed Jew asked them how can these songs be preserved from such old times. Hadzhi Sekov replied that these songs remained from the old times and were passed down from father to son. They were sung by our fathers and grandfathers, and we learnt to sing these songs from them.' (Cited according to Gane Todorovski: *"Veda Slovena"*, Skopje, 1979, page 30. Published in Macedonian.)

The Macedonian newspaper *"Narodna Volya"* (Blagoevgrad, July 1994) published a Macedonian folk tale about "Tsar Perseus", entitled *"Father's Curse"*. This tale from the Pirin region of Macedonia in many details corresponds to the historical truth. Освен овие постојат и други песни и приказни со античко-македонска содржина објавени во книгата *"The Descendants of the Ancient Macedonians"* by Aleksandar Donski.

Folk Legends

Now we will discuss several legends that contain ancient Macedonian elements that were recorded in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The legend “*Alexander the Great Invented War*” was published in the anthology of folklore by the Macedonian teacher Kuzman Shapkarev in Sofia in 1891). It reads:

“The simple people believe that war was first invented by Alexander the Great of Macedon. When he was travelling the seas, going to another, unknown world, to find and ladle immortal water, to drink it and never die, when he saw the fish in the sea fighting as in a war, he thought of doing the same, and when he came to his empire, he first invented war in this world”.

Traveller and chronicler Pierre Belon visited Macedonia in the 16th century. In his chronicles he wrote that according to a legend among the people living near Philippi the stable and manger of the horse Bucephalus were in Philippi.

Several legends about Alexander of Macedon were recorded by the Institute for Folklore in Skopje. One of them, recorded in 1971, was told by Stanimir Vishinski born in the village of Misimer (Aegean Macedonia) in 1885

In a legend told by Mrs. Loza Kamchevska from Prilep Alexander of Macedon defeated Darius in a bet concerning who could eat more Macedonian hot peppers. Darius was not able to eat as many as Alexander and had to hand over his empire.

Marko Tsepenkov also recorded a legend that mentioned Alexander of Macedon. In the legend about the old city of Gradishte Tsepenkov wrote:

“It is said that this ruined city was built by Alexander, the Macedonian Tsar”.

A legend about Alexander of Macedon is the first to appear in the chapter “*Tales*” in the Miladinov brothers Anthology entitled as “*Tsar Alexander*”.

French Slavist Andre Maison, in his anthology “*Slavic Tales from Southwestern Macedonia*” published in Paris in 1923, published a legend narrated by an older man named Yovan from the village of Nevolyani (Aegean Macedonia), which contains a fantastic combination of Alexander of Macedon, a Medieval King Marko and a hero called Yankula.

The legend of Alexander of Macedon narrated by Nikola Andonov (born in 1883) from the village of Konopishte, was published in: "*Macedonian People's Legends*" by a Macedonian folklorist Tanas Vrazhinovski. This extended legend describes the relationship between Alexander of Macedon and the Persian ruler Darius, beginning with Alexander's childhood until his marriage to the daughter of Darius.

The legend of Alexander of Macedon and his "sister Angelina" is very interesting, because the folk author has created a fantastic combination with this famous Macedonian ruler and the young woman Angelina – a Macedonian mythical girl from the medieval period. The legend was narrated by Petre Andreeski (born in 1893) from the village of Modrishta and is recorded by a Macedonian folklorist Tanas Vrazhinovski.

There is a legend about Alexander of Macedon narrated by Apostol Apostolov (born in 1912) from the Macedonian town Kriva Palanka. The legend is also published by Tanas Vrazhinovski. In this legend Alexander of Macedon, as protector of the Macedonians, is fighting against the Turkish Sultan Murat. This legend indicates that the Macedonians considered Alexander of Macedon to be their ancestor and protector in the period of the Turkish occupation as well.

In this same context we will mention the legend of "*The History of Macedonia*", in which a certain Novko from Debar left to search for that history. Novko went to one monastery and asked the archbishops and the priests: "*Listen up you archbishops and priests, will you tell me where is the History of Macedonia?*". One of the priests replied: "*Yes, we will tell you. The History of Macedonia is in a secret place. On a secret day the History is opened and read. Three times a year the History is read*".

Then Novko went in search of the secret monastery. When he found it, they indeed showed him *the History of Macedonia*, which was written: "*on rabbit's skin and with the feather of an eagle*".

The town of Bitola was also known by the name *Monastir*. The renowned Turkish traveller and chronicler Evliya Chelebi (second

half of the 17th century) wrote about the ancient Macedonian origin of the name *Monastir*:

“They say that here in the time of Alexander the Great there was a large temple, which is the reason why the place was named Monastir”

Ancient Macedonian rulers were also mentioned in the legend *“Ivan Mountain and Progun”*, which is still told among the Macedonians in the part of Macedonia under Albania (near present day Lake Prespa). This legend was recorded by Dr. Stoyan Risteski in his book *“Prespa under Albania”* published in 1993). The legend mentions certain ancient Macedonian prince.

Following the legend about Alexander of Macedon in the Miladinov's Anthology (19th century) there is a legend about Emperor Justinian, who was a Roman Emperor, who was born in Macedonia. This legend concerns the name of the Macedonian town of Ohrid, and according to this Justinian spoke the language of the present day Macedonians.

Another Macedonian legend about Justinian (as well as his army leader Belisarius) is found in the *“Collection of Folklore, Science and Literature”* (published in Sofia in 1889). It is related to the founding of the Macedonian villages Istok and German. The village Istok was named after Justinian's father Istok (again linking Justinian with a Macedonian heritage; Istok means East). The village German in this legend is described as a birthplace of Belisarius, Justinian's renowned military leader ”.

Characters and Motifs in Tales and Other Folklore

A certain number of motifs and characters in Macedonian folklore are of ancient-Macedonian origin. Some of them are: the lion in the tales (lions indeed lived in Macedonia in the ancient times and it remains in more than just Macedonian tales - it has also left a significant mark in heraldry and was also a symbol in the Macedonian liberation movements), the lynx in the tales, the philosopher in the Tales, the motif of three brothers” and the

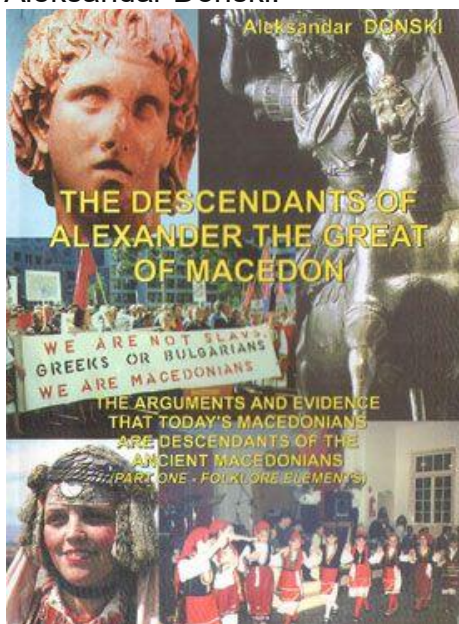
character of the youngest brother (one of the most common motifs in the Macedonian folk tales, obviously inherited from the story of Herodotus about the creation of the Macedonian state), goats in the legend about the founding of Aigai, the motif of a tsar with a hor, the motif of killing the old men, the motif of the fairies, the motif of the Staia, the motif of the gold and silver touch, the motif of personification of the Sun, the motif of the Sun rising and setting unnaturally, the motif of creation of man from mud, the motif of the Lamia, personification of good or bad fortune, the motif of belief in destiny, the motif of Helen of Troy in a Macedonian folk song, the character of a horse with wings, the motif of metamorphosis, the motif of the golden apple, the myth of Heracles in songs about King Marko, the motif of the underworld, the motif of the witch. the motif of the werewolf, the motif of competition of a person and a supernatural being, the motif of a girl who is tied up and becomes the victim of a monster, the motif of a supernatural creature making love with a mortal, the motif of personification of death, the motif of personification of justice, the motif of the God disguised as an old man, the motif of personification of celestial objects, the motif of Phoenix and others.

Ancient Macedonian folk rituals, customs and beliefs among the present day Macedonians

By comparative analysis of the ancient Macedonian rituals and customs found in the records of ancient historians with the records of folklorists from the 19th and 20th centuries one can notice the remarkable similarities in many rituals and customs. Some of these folk rituals and customs are: men and women sitting separately during celebrations (recorded from herodotus as well in 19-th century), breaking (cutting) the loaf during the wedding ritual, electing a king (chief) by means of a general assembly, men's waist-cloth – symbol of masculinity, bequeathing a ring (before dying) to an heir, delineating a circle as a protection against harm, cutting of hair after a great upset or loss, pouring out of a libation before

leaving on a trip, elements in the celebration of the spring christian holidays, elements in the ritual practice for calling rain, offering sacrifices for special occasions, elements in the burial customs of the ancient macedonians (covering the face of the deceased, putting personal belongings of the deceased in his grave, placing money with the deceased prior to burial and others), belief in the raven as a harbinger of misfortune, reverence for the eagle as a symbol of victory, belief in the magical power of the snake, belief that the human soul can be transformed into a flying insect, reverential treatment of the frog and others.

Detailed explanation about everything mentioned above, i.e. about the ancient Macedonian cultural heritage in the present day Macedonian nation can be found in the documentary series in five episodes: "THE DESCENDANTS OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT OF MACEDON (THE ANCIENT MACEDONIAN HERRITAGE IN THE PRESENT DAY MACEDONIAN NATION)" at the ALEKSANDAR DONSKI HISTORY CHANNEL on YouTube, as well in the book "THE DESCENDANTS OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT OF MACEDON" by Aleksandar Donski.



Macedonian activists who declared themselves as descendants of the ancient Macedonians

Despite the anti-Macedonian propagandas, many Macedonians from 19th and 20th centuries proclaimed their ancient Macedonian ethnic origin. There are also some international experts who backed up their claim. This topic has been partially studied by academician Blazhe Ristovski in his books *“Portraits and Processes I”* (Skopje, 1989) and *“Macedonia and the Macedonian Nation”* (Skopje, 1995, both published in Macedonian). We will use some of his research, supplemented by our own research.

The French Baron Francois De Tott, who worked in Constantinople in the 18th century in his *“Memoirs”* wrote the following:

“Twenty two Macedonians, each with a rifle hung over his shoulder, came here and gathered in a tavern and began singing a song about the victories of Alexander”. (*Memories du baron de Tott sur les Turks et les Tartares*”, Amsterdam, 1784, pages 197-198, quoted according to Academician Aleksandar Matkovski, *“Macedonia In the Works Of the Foreign Travelers and Chroniclers”*, cited work).

The traveler and chronicler Cousinery in his chronicle from 1816 wrote:

“Macedonia, so famous with its memories of Philip and Alexander, so unfortunate during the Roman reign, humiliated by the Bulgars and finally so humiliated under the Ottoman sword, today is in a desolate state, being dragged down by fanaticism, ignorance and despotism”. (Travel chronicle by Cousinery from 1816. *Voyage dans la Macedoine I, Paris, 1831*, Esprit Marie Cousinery, page 11, cited according to Aleksandar Matkovski, previously mentioned work).

An unnamed French traveler and chronicler reported on memories of ancient Macedonia among the Macedonians at the beginning of 19th century:

“The damned raya from Macedonia still sing praises of the feats of the conqueror of Persia and India”. (Travel chronicle by an unknown author from 1807. *“French travel chronicles from the Balkan 19th century”*, prepared and edited by Bistra Tsevtkova, Sofia. Taken from *“Archives de l’armee de terre”*, signature MR 1618, 17. Cited according to Aleksandar Matkovski, previously mentioned work).

Traveler and chronicler Johann Heinrich Mayr also visited Macedonia at the beginning of the 19th century. He wrote:

“Later we passed in the region where Alexander the Great made a stopover. The memory of this famous Macedonian is preserved here after several thousand years.” (Travel chronicle of Johann Heinrich Mayr from 1814. *Johann Heinrich Mayr’s Reise nach Konstantinopel, Aegypten, Jerusalem auf den Libanon, 1820*. Washington’s Library of Congress, signature DS 48.M49. Cited according to Aleksandar Matkovski, previously mentioned work).

French traveller Didron also wrote that Macedonians from the 19th century are descendants of the ancient Macedonians. He was disappointed and declared that the once famous Macedonia had fallen into total apathy under Turkish rule:

“In the valley of Macedonia everything is cold and miserable, everything is sad. The Turks ripped the laughter out from the heart of man... Of their slaves, the descendants of Achilles and Alexander, they have made herds of animals”. (A.N. Didron: *“Le Mont Athos Extract Annales Archeologiques”*, volumes 4, 5, 18 and 21. Paris National Library, signature 4° V, 1122/4,5,18,21, cited according to Academician Aleksandar Matkovski, *“Macedonia In the Works Of Foreign Travelers And Chroniclers”*, previously cited work).

The prominent Russian intellectual, traveller and chronicler Victor Grigorovich, concerning his impressions from a visit to Macedonia in 1844 wrote the following:

“In all the areas I visited, I have not heard other names but the names of Alexander the Great and King Marko. Both are alive in the memory of the people...Still, the memory of Alexander the Great is

the more established in the people". (cited according to Blazhe Ristovski).

Grigorovich recorded a folk tale about the Macedonian Emperor Philip II.

Lets' mention the statement of one teacher from Ohrid, who is so far unnamed, who came to replace a dismissed Bulgarian teacher in Salonica in 1845. This statement was conveyed in the press at the time without revealing the identity of the teacher. Asked about his nationality, this man from Ohrid answered:

"I am not a Bulgarian, nor a Greek, nor a Vlach! I am a pure Macedonian, as were Philip and Alexander of Macedon and Aristotle the Philosopher". (cited according to Blazhe Ristovski).

The Priest Dimitria from Kriva Palanka (a town in Macedonia), concerning his ancient roots, in the middle of 19th century said the following:

"I am born a Macedonian...It was given by God for my fatherland to suffer from the Greeks, so they do not give us any peace even today, although everyone knows Macedonia was an older state than their empire". (cited according to Blazhe Ristovski).

English traveller and chronicler Charles Thomas Newton visited Macedonia in 1853. He wrote that the people there still kept traditions and customs from olden times:

"I was cordially received by the Bishop of Metilena... He went to Macedonia quite frequently and was telling me some interesting details about the peasants living there and who preserved some very old customs". (*"Travels and discoveries in the Levant"* by Charles Thomas Newton, London, 1865, I and II, page 10, cited according to Aleksandar Matkovski, previously cited work).

An article published on 03.03.1860 in the "Constantinople News" of Constantinople is another old testimonial that the Macedonians from the 19th century were aware of their ancient Macedonian heritage:

"This country is Macedonia and if we look at the nature, temperament, customs and character of the inhabitants, their posture, their physiognomy, we will fully recognise the same men

who in olden times comprised the phalanx of Alexander of Macedon". (cited according to Blazhe Ristovski).

In the 19th century, during a visit to Macedonia, Bosnian folklorist Stefan Verkovich asserted that the Macedonians from southwestern Macedonia belonged to the Pulivakov clan that included the population from several towns in southwestern Macedonia. Concerning their ethnic consciousness Verkovich wrote:

"According to a narrative passed down through the generations in the Pulivakov clan, they are pure Macedonians, descendants of Alexander the Great. (Verkovich: *"Macedonian Folklore 5"*, Makedonska Kniga, Skopje, 1985, page 138. Published in Macedonian).

Prominent Macedonian writer and revolutionary, Ivan Shumkov from Krushevo considered himself a descendant of the ancient Macedonians too. In a dispute with the Bulgarian teacher Salgandzhiev, Shumkov declared that he was not Bulgarian, but a pure Macedonian, as were the famous Philip and Alexander of Macedon. In 1871 Shumkov argued for introduction of Macedonian language in schools in Macedonia.

The grandson of the leading citizen of Salonica Paunchev also introduced himself to Salgandzhiev as: *"pure Macedonian, as were Philip and Alexander of Macedon"*. (Hristo Andonovski: *"Southern Macedonia from Ancient to Today's Macedonians"*, Skopje, 1995, page 55. Published in Macedonian).

Even the Bulgarian activist, intellectual and church official Petko Slaveikov documented these tendencies among Macedonians. Although, in the spirit of Bulgarian nationalism, he attacked these tendencies, through his writing we see that they were wide spread among Macedonians in the 19th century. In the article *"The Macedonian Question"*, published on 18.01.1871 Slaveikov wrote:

"I have heard many times from Macedonians that they were not Bulgarians, but Macedonians, descendant of the ancient Macedonians, and we have always anticipated evidence of that, but it never came...".

To Slaveikov and similar people, who are still present in Macedonia and neighbors to Macedonia, we would reply that precisely because of people like them – agents of foreign anti-Macedonian propaganda, Macedonians were prevented from studying their own history and offering evidence of their historical indigenous nature and national distinctiveness.

The leaders of the famous Kresna Uprising also declared their ancient Macedonian origin. In the Constitution of the Macedonian Rebel Committee from 1878, which led this uprising against Turkish rule, it was stated:

“We took up arms as champions of freedom. With our blood that we spill over the mountains and forests of Macedonia, we serve as a Macedonian army of Alexander of Macedon for our freedom under the slogan: ‘Freedom or Death!’”. (Cited according to Blazhe Ristovski).

The famous Macedonian writer and revolutionary Giorgi Pulevski in his poem “Macedonian Fairy” from 1878 also wrote that Macedonians are of ancient origin:

“Have you heard Macedonians, how old people say:

There have never been more courageous people than the Macedonians –

Tsar Alexander of Macedon three hundred years before Christ

With Macedonians had conquered the whole universe...

And today in the Macedonian Kingdom our brothers suffer

Because we are the only ones left in slavery

Therefore we also want our own fatherland...

Brothers Macedonians of Orthodox Faith,

Let’s unite and courageously fight,

The same as our ancestors led by Tsar Alexander,

To revive the old glory”.

In 1878, concerning the Macedonian uprising against Turkish rule, Giorgi Pulevski wrote the following:

“God willing, in spring we will strike Turkey... We will either all die, or re-establish the empire of Alexander of Macedon”. (Cited according to Blazhe Ristovski).

We also quote an excerpt from the Manifesto of the provisional unrecognized government of Macedonia, published in April 1881:

“Macedonians,

Our dear fatherland Macedonia was once one of the most famous of countries. Macedonian people laid the foundations for modern military practices and with their victorious phalanx and Aristotle’s knowledge, they civilized the whole of humanity. But the once so glorious fatherland of ours, today is on the verge of its destruction because of our mistakes and because of the forgetfulness of our origin. Foreign and suspect people want to take our land and destroy our national identity, which shines with such glory that it will never be destroyed!...

True Macedonians, devoted children to the fatherland! Will you put up with the destruction of our dear country? Just look at it and see its heavy shackles, put on it by the Sultan. Being so powerless and watching it in tears, our dear Macedonia, our dear fatherland is calling on us: ‘You, that are my devoted children, you, that by Aristotle and Alexander are my descendants, you, in whose veins runs Macedonian blood, do not let me die, but help me! What a sad sight for you, true Macedonians, would it be that you should become witnesses of my burial? No! No! Here are my bloody and hideous wounds, here are my heavy shackles: break them, heal my wounds, do everything you can so that the flag I raise will read: The only and united Macedonia! ... Long live the Macedonian people! Long live Macedonia! ... Macedonians, remember your origin and do not give it up!’”.

Members of this illegal government and signatories of this appeal were prominent Macedonian national activists from the end of the 19th century. This government held a national assembly attended by 32 delegates from nearly every major district of Macedonia. In the Protocol resolution, the following was requested:

“From all interested governments the restoration of ancient Macedonia is to be requested. An appeal will also be sent out to all the freedom-loving, and noble sacrifice will be sought from all patriotic men”.

The famous Macedonian poet and writer Gligor Prlichev, who was one among many Macedonian 19th century revival intellectuals and activists that Greek and Bulgarian propagandists tried to counter, in 1885 in Salonica, stated:

“Mother Macedonia is very weakened. After she gave birth to the great Alexander, after she bore Saints Cyril and Methodius, since those labours mother Macedonia lays on her bed terribly exhausted. But a mother that bore such sons, in future will bear others like them...and will restore the fame of the Macedonian name!”. (Cited according to Blazhe Ristovski).

In an article in the paper “Macedonia” from 1888, which was then published in Ruse (Bulgaria), the author, who signed with the initials K.G., wrote:

“Our fatherland Macedonia has a history, its own past, where its power, greatness, as well as its political subjugation by the powerful Turkish empire can be seen...Today, every Macedonian when mentioning Alexander of Macedon says: We have had Emperor Alexander the Great. With these words he remembers the brilliant period and greatness of the Macedonian State. Alexander of Macedon is an image of national pride for every Macedonian!” (Cited according to Blazhe Ristovski).

For the Macedonian revival intellectual and activist Isaisa Mazhovski, the ancient Macedonians and Slavs were the same people. In the speech he gave on the riverboat Ritsar, during a trip down the Dnieper in Russia in 1888 he stated:

“Respected gentlemen, the Macedonian people are Slavic for over 2600 years, brought into Macedonia by Tsar Caranus, who, the same as Philip and Alexander, was a pure Slav...” (Cited according to Blazhe Ristovski).

The previously-mentioned revolutionary Giorgi Pulevski in 1892 published his “*Slavic-Macedonian General History*”, in which he wrote the following:

“Macedonians are an indigenous people on the Balkan Peninsula. They were already there when Bulgarians, Greeks and Serbs settled”.

The fame of the Macedonian Emperor Alexander of Macedon was also present among the Macedonian national activists from the end of the 19th century named *lozars* (after the name of the journal “Loza” that they published). They were fiercely attacked by the Bulgarian newspapers, particularly by the publicist Levov, who, in his article published in 1892, accused the Lozars of being separatists, who call themselves Macedonians and claimed that: “...*Macedonia was their fatherland and it was a separate state, whose past is filled with brilliance, particularly in the period of Philip and Alexander the Great...*” (Cited according to Blazhe Ristovski).

In the anti-Turkish Gorna-Dzhumaia uprising, the military leader of the uprising, Atanas Yankov (a Macedonian from the village of Zagorichani), considered himself a direct descendant of the ancient Macedonians. Prior to the beginning of the uprising he made the following announcement to the rebels:

“Macedonians! Remember the world conqueror, the world fame of Macedonia – the great Alexander of Macedon! Remember the courageous Tsar Samuil, the Macedonian giant, the splendid King Marko, the Slavic fame – that in all of them ran Macedonian blood. They are watching over us from up in the heavens and are blessing our deed already begun. Let us prove to be their worthy descendants!” (Cited according to Blazhe Ristovski).

This appeal was published in many European newspapers. After the uprising Colonel Atanas Yankov, in one interview also from 1902, reiterated that he was a Macedonian, and not a Bulgarian, and later he took part in the great Ilinden Uprising.

The consciousness of ancient Macedonian roots among Macedonians was present even in the period after the Ilinden Uprising, despite the strong Bulgarian Church (Exarchate) influence and propaganda.

Macedonian rebels from the Ilinden Uprising liberated the town of Krushevo, where a free republic was proclaimed. The president of the republic, Nikola Karev, decisively declared himself a Macedonian, a direct descendant of the ancient Macedonians. In an interview with Nikola Karev published in the Greek newspaper

“Akropolis” on 08.05.1903 he positively responded to the question, if he considered himself a direct descendant of Alexander the Great of Macedon.

A Macedonian committee in support of the Ilinden Uprising had been formed in September 1903 in New York and Philadelphia (USA), which sent an appeal to the American public for help for the uprising. In this appeal the participants in the Ilinden Uprising are called Macedonians and descendants of those Macedonians to whom Saint Paul preached the Christian Gospels. Following is an excerpt:

“What Paul saw in the spirit, in the human vision about Macedonia that called him to help this country, all that we have before us. It is urgent that an uprisings be organized in Macedonia to end the suffering and the poverty... About the rights of and injustices done to the Macedonians, we are not interested at the moment, but we can not be uninterested in helping those human creatures, fellow Christians, their wives and children who are killed by the hundreds, and even more. Thousands will be killed unless Christian Europe and Christian America do not save them”. (T.L. Porechki: “The Truth About Macedonia Through Documents”, Belgrade, 1992, page 68. Published in Serbian.)

One unsigned article from the newspaper “Autonomous Macedonia”, published during the Ilinden uprising in August 1903 reads:

“Today, when we are compelled to help in the protection of the oppressed Macedonians, we should do that from our hearts...Even Alexander the Great, that emperor of the whole ancient world, testified to the good deeds of the Slavic tribe, when he said that the Slavs have courageous hearts and deserve to bear the great name Slavs... Now, if Macedonians are not in a position to prevent their extinction themselves and improve their situation, then Bulgarians, Serbs, Montenegrins and other Slavs are obliged to help their brothers in blood and faith”. (Cited according to Blazhe Ristovski).

Poet Petar Zagorov, during the Ilinden uprising in September 1903 published the song “*There*” in “*Autonomous Macedonia*”. Following is an excerpt:

*“There at Pindus and Shar, at Struma and Vardar
where everything is covered by deep wounds,
noble descendants of the Great Alexander,
are fighting heroically against centuries-long
tyranny”* (Cited according to Blazhe Ristovski).

The Macedonian national activist Dimitri Chupovski also held the ancient Macedonian tradition deep in his soul. The Macedonian sun and the bold horse of Alexander of Macedon, Bucephalus, were depicted on the Macedonian flag made in Russia by him and people who shared his views (in 1913 or 1914).

His brother Nikola D. Chuparov in 1924 published an article in which he equated the ancient Macedonians and the “Slavs”. (Cited according to Blazhe Ristovski).

Macedonian revival intellectual and activist Isaia Mazhovski in his *Memories* (published in Sofia in 1922) wrote that during a visit to Tirana (Albania) he saw an old Albanian-Latin history book in which it was written that the ancient Macedonians were direct blood ancestors of the present day Macedonians.

Macedonian national activist Trifun Grekov also considered himself a direct descendant of the ancient Macedonians. During the years 1922 and 1924 he published several articles about the ancient Macedonians in the newspapers “*Macedonia*” in Sofia and “*Macedonian Notion*” in Vienna. (Cited according to Blazhe Ristovski).

In a document found in the archives of the IMRO of Ivan Mihailov, not only are the ethnic differences between Macedonians and Bulgarians emphasized, but it is also said that today’s Macedonians are descendants of the famous ancient Macedonians:

“...There was a famous country with courageous people that gave to the world rulers such as Philip and Alexander of Macedon. Many ancient peoples who left the world stage have risen back up again after some time. Why shouldn’t the same happen also to the

Macedonians?... Bulgaria should return to the Macedonians what is Macedonian peacefully. Why is Bulgaria still keeping what is foreign and presenting it as its own? Are the Macedonians Bulgarian? As much as the Macedonians are Bulgarian – that much Bulgarians are Macedonian! The difference is great! The one people were on the Balkan Peninsula even before Christ, and the other came there in the 7th century...Enough of games with the misfortune of the Macedonian people! It is time to shout: Macedonia for the Macedonians. Liberated Bulgarian Macedonia must be given to the free Macedonians. Give Macedonia autonomy while it is still possible!" (Cited according to Blazhe Ristovski).

This document is signed with the pseudonym “*Komitski*” and written in December 1932. This means that among the members and sympathizers of Vancho Mihailov’s IMRO (although it was a pro-Bulgarian organization) there were those who accepted their ancient Macedonian origin. VMRO 2,3, 4

Even the MPO (a sort of successor organization of Vancho Mihailov’s IMRO) in the city of Lorraine (USA), founded in 1924, bore the name “Alexander the Great”. On their flag the image and the name of this famous emperor were shown.

Among those who wrote about the fact that the ancient Macedonians were not Greek, but a separate people with their own culture and civilisation, were Vasil Ivanovski-Bistrishki (in 1934) and Angel Dinev (in 1938). Between the world wars in the Macedonian town of Prilep, the cult of Alexander of Macedon was particularly popular. The Macedonian national activist Dimche Adzhimitrevski testified to this:

“We have one old book about Alexander of Macedon. That is how we’ve educated ourselves. We considered him our king and have dreamt about such a kingdom that he once created”.

In the thirties of the 20th century the members and leadership of the secret Macedonian organisation MMOR (after a French word, *mort*, which means death – in accordance with the slogan: Death or freedom!) were also fascinated by the glory of Alexander of Macedon. Their leader Blagoya Dimitrov from Skopje reported:

“A major duty was to speak in Macedonian, to buy books. Cells of three members were formed and each cell had its own library. We also had books about Alexander of Macedon and we considered all that ours”. (Cited according to Blazhe Ristovski).

This organisation stood for a united and independent Macedonia and recognition of the national rights of Macedonians, but in November 1934 it was infiltrated and some of its members were arrested by the Serbian police.

In the period between the world wars young people in Ohrid were also caught up in a cult of Alexander of Macedon. The poet Gotse Miteski reported that intellectual youth during the WW2 were captivated with their ancestor Alexander of Macedon.

After the WW2 the cult of Alexander of Macedon and the fame of ancient Macedonia intensified further in the ranks of the illegal anti-Yugoslav Macedonian organisations in Macedonia and abroad, as well as among the wider Macedonian emigration. Even prominent scientific circles in Europe in recent times consider the present-day Macedonians to be descendants of the ancient Macedonians. The French academician Georges Cerbelaud Salagnac in 1992 in Paris published a book entitled *“The Ethnic Origins of Europeans”*. In this book he wrote that the Slavs indeed appeared on the Balkans in the 6th century, but as an inferior tribe they could not become dominant inhabitants of Macedonia, and they were melted into the existing population of ancient Macedonians, who were then a cultivated and civilised people. Following an explanation that the Macedonians were not Greek, he wrote:

“Macedonians still exist today in Europe, divided into two parts. The Greek province in the south and the Republic of Macedonia in the north...Both have a clear notion of their common ethnic origin, and from both Salonica and Skopje they do not feel strangers”.

There are other such manifestations of acceptance of the ancient Macedonian ethnic origin of the Macedonians in the 19th and 20th centuries. It should be emphasized that the declarations bears incomparably greater weight than declarations of individual ethnic Macedonians who declared themselves as Greeks, Bulgarians or

Serbs. The major reason for this was the enormous amount of money spent by Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia on their propaganda in Macedonia. But no one ever did anything to persuade the Macedonians to declare themselves the descendants of the ancient Macedonians. The foreign propagandists with their churches and schools in Macedonia paid by their governments worked to try to suppress such declarations and convince those people that they belonged to the respective foreign nation. Hence, such declarations of the ancient ancestry of Macedonians have far more relevance than the declarations of Macedonians in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries to the contrary. Such declarations are not the result of foreign propaganda, but Macedonians instead inherited this consciousness from their ancestors, and that is the source of the essential strength of such declarations.

In the end, as an evidence of the bias of some international historians, we note that although many of them in their books about Alexander the Great of Macedon rightly point out remnants of the Macedonian culture in various countries in the world (Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Kyrgyzstan and other distant countries), not one of them mentions the cultural heritage of the ancient Macedonians in Macedonia itself, i.e., among the present-day Macedonians. We invite all of them, should they be looking for traces of the culture of the ancient Macedonians, first to visit Macedonia, and then to go to the Asian countries.

Anthropological evidence of the connection between the ancient and present-day Macedonians

The strongest evidence of the connection between the present-day Macedonian nation and the ancient Macedonians has been provided by genetics. The Department of Immunology and Molecular Biology, de Octubre, at the “Universidad Complutense”, from Madrid, Spain, and the Tissue Typing Laboratory of the Institute of Blood Transfusion, Skopje, Republic of Macedonia, conducted the first genetic research on Macedonians and

compared them to other Mediterranean populations. Ten researchers were involved in the research, whose aim was “to determine the relative contributions of Macedonians and Greeks to the present-day genetic pool of Mediterranean peoples”, and for that “purpose, both HLA (Human Leucocyte Antigens) class I and class II DNA typing have been studied in Macedonians for the first time”.

The study *“HLA genes in Macedonians and the sub-Saharan origin of the Greeks”* is presented in the Danish medical journal *“Tissue Antigens”* in February 2001, volume 57. The results of the study shows that the *“Macedonians are related to other Mediterraneans and do not show a close relationship with Greeks”*; however, the Macedonians have a close relationship to the Cretans. The researchers conclude that *“...the Macedonians are one of the most ancient peoples existing in the Balkans, probably long before (the) arrival of the Mycaenian Greeks about 2000 B.C.”*

The researchers were surprised to find out that the Greeks had a *“genetic relationship with the sub-Saharan ethnic groups now residing in Ethiopia, Sudan and West Africa (Burkina-Fasso)”*.

We will also mention the results of the DNA analysis regarding the ethnic origin of today's Macedonians conducted at the Swiss Institute of Genetics "Igenea". According to this information, the average present-day ethnic Macedonian carries most of the blood and genes from the ancient Macedonians. The results of this research were published for a long time on the institute's official website, but were later removed under pressure from Greek chauvinists (although Macedonian activists have retained copies of the Igenea website from the time that this was published).

WHY THE MACEDONIANS WERE NEVER BULGARIAN?

From the data presented so far, the ethno-genetic differences between Macedonians and Bulgarians are defined by themselves. Here are just some of them:

1. The ancient Macedonians attached their blood, culture, territory and national name to the Macedonian, but not to the Bulgarian nation, because they never lived en masse on the territory of Bulgaria. As a support for this truth we mentioned the results of the DNA analysis regarding the ethnic origin of today's Macedonians.

2. The Thracians, as the natives of Bulgaria, gave their blood and cultural contribution to the creation of the Bulgarian, but not the Macedonian nation. Many Thracian toponyms, hydronyms, personal names and other words have survived to this day in Bulgarian (but not in Macedonian) culture.

3. The Turko-Mongol Bulgarians, as recognized ancestors of the present-day Bulgarian nation, also completely differs from the ethnogenesis of today's Macedonians. The Turko-Mongol Bulgarians, that is, the real Bulgarians, never settled en masse in Macedonia, which means that Macedonians, even if they want to, cannot be Bulgarians because they do not have Bulgarian blood and genes in them.

4. In Macedonian folklore there is not a single folk work dedicated to any Bulgarian khan, king or any other Turko-Mongol Bulgarian bolyar or kavhan (in which they are described as our Macedonian). In contrast, in Macedonian folklore there are numerous Macedonian folklore works dedicated to the ancient Macedonian emperors, in which they are described as historical rulers of present-day Macedonians. We know very well that the folklore of every nation has deep roots in the ethnic past of that people, so in this context we should also look at these facts.

5. None of the first well-known Bulgarian personal names: Kuber, Omurtag, Taktu, Pagan, Cok, Telec, Batbayan, Kotrag, Tervel, Kardam, Butail, Ermiar, Eshach, Tsok, Okorsis Sumsuvul, Chakarar, Chepa and the like do not exist among the Macedonians, while numerous names that the ancient Macedonians used are still used by present-day Macedonians.

6. The first Bulgarian khans, that is, the deepest officially recognized ethnic roots of today's Bulgarian nation: Teletz, Taktu,

Pagan, Omurtag, Vineh, Umor, Telerig, Kubrat and others like them, cannot be the first blood ancestors of the present-day Macedonian nation, because a good part of them did not even set foot in Macedonia, and some of them fought fiercely against the Macedonian population.

The first recognized ruler of the present-day Bulgarian nation, khan Kubrat, first of all never in his life had heard of Macedonia, but he also had never set foot in Europe, because all his life (as well as his Mongolian ancestors) he lived in his native Asia. So it is out of the question to claim that this Khan is the ethnic ancestor of present-day Macedonians.

7. Let us also mention the fact that the first Bulgarian symbols were a ponytail that was hoisted on a spear instead of a flag and the head of an ox, which was a symbol of the first Bulgarian coat of arms. There is no historical awareness of these symbols among present-day Macedonians. Not a single Macedonian in his history has ever wagged a ponytail when he went to war. The ponytail was accepted as the flag of the Bulgarians because they, as a nomadic tribe, while living in Asia, were mainly engaged in horse breeding. Horses were very important to them. They traveled and fought with them. And it is no coincidence that the name of the most important Bulgarian of all time, Khan Asparuh, etymologically means - a horse (more precisely - a whirlwind horse)! The first to commit to removing the ponytail, which had been waving for centuries instead of the Bulgarian flag, was the Turko-Mongolian Bulgarian ruler Boris, and that was after receiving Christianity.

Unlike the Bulgarians, the Macedonians are known to have preserved the memory of the ancient eight-ray and sixteen-ray sun from ancient times. Anyone who visits any Macedonian Orthodox church, monastery or gallery, where there are Macedonian medieval and modern frescoes or icons, can see for themselves that similar (or the same) representations of the eight-ray and sixteen-day ancient Macedonian sun are found in huge number of icons and frescoes and this phenomenon remains for further research. The lion is also known to have been a symbol of the

ancient Macedonians, who has remained among the Macedonians to this day.

8. There are several ancient sources from that time, which speak of war and enmity between Macedonians and Bulgarians as two separate ethnicities. Here we will mention some of them.

The first attack in Macedonia by the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians, followed by the destruction of the Macedonian land, took place in 539. Evidence of this is the testimony of the historian Procopius of Caesarea, published in the book „Christomatia po istoria na B'lgaria“ (published in Sofia in 1964). Here, entitled: "Proto-Bulgarians Attack the Balkan Peninsula in 539", writes:

Immediately afterwards, a large Hun army crossed the Istar River and attacked all of Europe. Such things have happened before, but never before have they done so many and so much evill deeds to the people. These barbarians ravaged everything in front of them, from the Ionian Gulf to the outskirts of Byzantium. They captured thirty-two fortresses in Illyricum and captured the city of Cassandra.

We see that in this document the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians are called Huns. This is due to the fact that the Bulgarians actively participated in the then Hun attacks on Europe.

Later, when the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians settled from Asia in present-day northeastern Bulgaria, hostilities with the surrounding peoples began, with Macedonia and its inhabitants often suffering.

One of the most significant documents testifying to the war between the Bulgarians and the Macedonian tribes is the Presian's inscription found near the old town of Philippi (north of Kavala). This inscription refers to the temporary entry of the Bulgarians into Macedonia in 847. From this inscription it can be conclusively concluded that the Bulgarian Khan Presian was waging a fierce war against the population of Macedonia (specifically against the Smoljani tribe who then lived in Southeast Macedonia). This document is published in Jordan Ivanov's book "Bulgarian Antiquities from Macedonia" (published in Sofia in 1931) and reads:

Presian, the God-appointed prince of many Bulgarians, sent the Kavhan Isbul after giving him an army, and the Boyl Ichugru and the Khan Boyl Kolovur, and the Kavhan against the Smolyans.

The mentioned terms: kavhan, boyal and khan represent the highest military ranks of the Bulgarian army at the time, meaning that it was a large-scale military conflict. The main reason for this great military conflict was that the members of the Macedonian Slavic tribe Smolyani were preparing an uprising against Byzantium for their own independence. However, this attempt failed because of the sudden attack by the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians. According to the biography of the monk Gregory Decapolit, in this great war: streams of blood flowed like a river, and the whole environment was burned and darkened.

Khan Presian was later replaced by his son Boris, who declared war on Byzantium, and Macedonia and its people suffered again. Boris himself held the Asian title of Khan until 864.

His successor and son, the baptized Tsar Simeon, inflicted much suffering on the Macedonians. Members of the family of Bulgarian Tsar Simeon spoke their native Turko-Bulgarian language at home, and they had just begun to learn Slavic. There are horrific testimonies of the devastating wars that Simeon led on the territory of Macedonia, where his armies destroyed everything in front of them. The Patriarch of Constantinople, Nikolai Mystic, excitedly stated about the incursions of the Bulgarian armies into Macedonia:

However, when I think of the number of destroyed temples, monasteries and houses, the slain bishops, the raped virgins, the tortured monks - how can I hope that God will forget all this?

Regarding the devastation by the armies of the Bulgarian Tsar Simeon in Macedonia, the Byzantine historian Leo Deacon wrote in his History:

In September, a second indictment, Simeon the Bulgarian again appeared with his army against Constantinople. He plundered Thrace and Macedonia, where he ravaged and destroyed everything.

The Byzantine historian Simeon Logothetus, on the destruction of Macedonia by the Bulgarian king Simeon wrote:

In September, Bulgarian Prince Simeon and his entire army arrived in Constantinople and besieged Thrace and Macedonia. There they destroyed and burned everything and cut down the fruit trees.

This begs the question: whose country did the Turko-Mongol Bulgarian (baptized by name) Simeon destroy and whose women did his army rape? Did they rape their own compatriots if the Macedonians were supposedly ethnic Bulgarians?

Macedonians suffered from the Bulgarians also during the so-called Second Bulgarian Empire. The ruler of this country, Kaloyan, was especially known for the misfortunes he brought to the Macedonian population. The author Vladislav Gramatik wrote about his crimes against the Macedonian people:

During every return from the battles he fought against the Romans, Kaloyan devastated the Macedonian land and committed many atrocities against the population. He smashed their shelters to the ground, and many people were taken captive and resettled on the other side of the Danube. (Petar Nikov: Materials on the Medieval History of Bulgaria - PSp, book. 55-56, p. 250)

The Byzantine writer Nikita Honiat also testifies to the misfortunes that King Kaloyan inflicted on the Macedonians:

It would be most correct to say that the human eye has never seen, nor has the human ear ever heard, nor has such a thing reached the human heart, as it was that the Kumans and Bulgarians did during their raids. The large, famous and hitherto populated cities, beautiful villages around them, neatly cultivated fields and meadows, flower gardens, which abounded with fruit due to their water supply from the surrounding rivers, tall castles, beautiful palaces artfully built and painted with various colors, comfortable bathrooms, vineyards heavy with fruits, abundant fields and thousands of other objects ... - all this, after the population was exterminated, became the abode of hedgehogs and wild animals. If anyone could take a look at it all - full of pain - he would hit his chest

and say with tears in his eyes that he had seen the collapse of the universe ... There are no such expressions in my language that would be sufficiently detailed. and a complete list of all their many evils ... Thus, these barbarians had neither a measure nor a limit to their inhumanity.

And this poignant testimony speaks volumes about how much the Macedonians and Bulgarians were (in quotation marks) one people.

Regarding Kaloyan's campaign in Macedonia and Thrace, the Byzantine writer Nicephorus Gregory wrote:

Macedonian and Thracian cities were completely destroyed, having previously suffered many casualties first from the Latins, and later from the Bulgarians and the Scythians. There were many other things that these bloodthirsty peoples do to the Christians... (V. Zlatarski: History of the Bulgarian Church through the Middle Ages, 3, 266).

In the "Miracles of St. Demetrius" there is also a testimony regarding the devastation of the Bulgarian Tsar Kaloyan in Macedonia:

Then the ruler of the Bulgarians was Kaloyan ... After overcoming the whole of Macedonia, he devastated all the areas, completely demolished the basic fortresses, looted and destroyed and moved the entire population along the banks of the Danube River - in a word, he made into a desert every place he attacked. Then without a stop he went against Thessaloniki, together with his army, which was more numerous than the sea sand and which consisted of Bulgarians, Kumans, Tatars, Khazars... (Hristomatia ... p. 273).

This means that the Bulgarian tsar Kaloyan ravaged Macedonia and killed the Macedonians with his army, of which the vast majority (besides the Bulgarians) were his relatives the Turko-Tatar tribes: Kumans, Tatars and Khazars.

In 1207, tsar Kaloyan laid siege against Salonica. During this fierce siege, Macedonians from Salonica, both old and young, defended their city with all their might. While the men were at war, the women kept watch day and night in the churches, begging Saint Demetrius

of Salonica to help them. Just when it seemed that the city would fall, Kaloyan was killed under unclear circumstances. This the citizen of Salonica received as the deed of Saint Demetrius. Since then, on frescoes and icons in Macedonia and beyond, Saint Dimitria is depicted with a long spear, mounted on a horse, stabbing the Bulgarian tsar Kaloyan.

There are Byzantine testimonies from the time of the Bulgarian emperor Mikhail Shishman from around the middle of the 13th century about the devastation of part of the Macedonian land. Thus, for example, the chronicler Georgi Acropolis wrote in his chronicle:

When the Bulgarian ruler learned that the emperor was far away, he called the allied Scythian army and sent it against the Macedonian territories to plunder, as well as to frighten the Romeians. (Hrestomatia po istoria na Balgaria, Sofia, 1964, p. 293)

If one tries to note that the term Macedonia does not mean present-day Macedonia, but the Byzantine administrative theme “Macedonia” (which at that time was mainly located in Thrace), we will answer that the documents on the Bulgarian medieval devastation in Macedonia mention parts of present-day Macedonia: Halkidiki, Serres, the surroundings of Salonica, Struma and other Macedonian places, and some documents, especially Macedonia and Thrace are mentioned. This means that the Bulgarians of that time were destroying the territory of present-day ethnic Macedonia.

Later, when the Turks penetrated the Balkans in the 14th century, they were greatly aided by the Bulgarians (although they themselves later suffered from them). Bulgarian Emperor Ivan Alexander was the only European ruler who was a military ally of the Turks at the time of their Balkan conquests! In the book History of Bulgaria (published in Sofia in 1954) we read:

The advance of the Turks in Thrace made the need for a common Balkan front to fight the Turks even greater. Unfortunately, such a front has not yet been created. On the contrary, in 1364 a conflict broke out between the Bulgarians and the Byzantines over the Black Sea cities of Pomorie and Nessebar. In order to oppose the Byzantines, Ivan Alexander used Turkish mercenaries and made an

alliance with Sultan Murat. That was a major mistake that shattered the power of the Balkan states and allowed the invaders to carry out their plans more easily.

Later, the Turks occupied Macedonia, having previously defeated the Macedonian feudal lords at Chernomen near the Maritsa River in 1371. And while the Bulgarians were military allies of the Turks at the time of the Battle of Maritsa, this is how the Macedonians behaved in an attempt to preserve their country's freedom. The quoted book History of Bulgaria states:

... After the battle of Chernomen, the Turks began to move west and entered Macedonia. In many places they encountered heroic resistance from the population, who fought to the end to protect their homes. A drastic example of their courage was given by the inhabitants of Bitola, who have long rejected hostile detachments.

The Bulgarians broke the military alliance with the Ottoman Empire only after the death of Ivan Alexander, after which they also fell under the rule of the Turks.

*

All the data presented so far clearly show that the Macedonians never had and do not have Bulgarian ethnic roots because there has never been a mass mixing between the Bulgarians and the Macedonians in history. In the 19th century, the Bulgarians, with the help of Russia, managed to recreate their state, and since then their propaganda among the Macedonians has become even stronger, often using forgeries that we will talk about on another occasion. There were periods when the Bulgarians and the Bulgarian state helped the Macedonians a lot, accepted the Macedonian refugees on their territory and allowed them to organize socially. After the Second World War, Bulgaria officially recognized the existence of the Macedonian nation on its territory. However, there were also periods of terror and other forms of violence against Macedonians. The future of our two peoples is in coexistence and friendship, but also mutual respect. All that is needed is for Bulgaria to recognize the existence of the Macedonian nation, thus becoming the best neighbor of the Macedonians.

The positions of the Bulgarian propaganda and historiography in relation to some historical events in Macedonia and the response to them

When you get historical materials from Bulgarian historians, you will notice that most of them refer to the views that we will present below along with short reasoned answers to them.

ATTITUDE OF BULGARIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY AND PROPAGANDA: In all documents from the Middle Ages, the inhabitants of Macedonia are called "Bulgarians".

ANSWER TO THIS ATTITUDE: There is a large number of medieval documents in which the Macedonians are mentioned as inhabitants of Macedonia. The Bulgarian historian Dimitar Angelov in his book "Contribution to ethnic and land relations in Macedonia during the first quarter of the 13th century" (Sofia, 1947), writes that there are over fifty documents in which the inhabitants who lived on the territory of Macedonia (which was under the jurisdiction of the medieval church called the Ohrid archdiocese) were named as - Macedonians!. Thus, for example, in document number 72, the person Ioan Ierekar from the village of Vlasto (near Ohrid) is mentioned, and according to the synodal protocol, he was: "Macedonian by birth".

In the middle of the 11th century, the chronicler Michael Psellus, writing about the disturbances in Byzantine empire at that time, mentions the Macedonians several times.

The Byzantine emperor's daughter Anna Komnena (1083-1143), in the beginning of the 12th century, testifies about some of the Balkan peoples:

"On both sides of the mountain live many peoples and rich peoples. To the north are the Dacians and Thracians, and to the south are the Thracians and Macedonians".

Towards the end of the 12th century, in the "Trimarion annals", an anonymous Macedonian from Salonica, describing the glory dedicated to Saint Demetrius, wrote:

“The biggest fair among Macedonians is organized on this holiday. Not only our local compatriots come to this fair, but also all kinds of other people from everywhere. Greeks also come from everywhere, as well as various Mysians, who live in our neighborhood”.

We continue with the presentation of the geographical map (discovered in England) called The Hereford Map, from the year 1290, the original of which is kept today in the English Hereford Cathedral. The name of Macedonia is clearly read on the map, while Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia and Albania are not even mentioned.

There are also dozens of other medieval geographical maps, in which Macedonia is clearly distinguished from the other Balkan countries, with fairly clearly defined borders (more details in: “Macedonia on old maps” by Ilija Petrushevski, Skopje, 1992).

The Venetian naval officer Gio Mario deli Angiolello, who was captured by the Turks, also wrote about the Macedonians as inhabitants of Macedonia. He wrote about his stay on Mount Athos in 1470:

“That mountain is very high and in it there are many monasteries of Christian monks, some of whom are Greeks, others are Macedonians, Vlachs, and there are also Italians and members of other nations... Near the mountain Derio there are two towns inhabited by Macedonians... Greeks and Macedonians live in the vicinity of the city of Kavala...” (Aleksandar Matkovski: “Macedonia in the works of foreign travel writers 1371-1777”, Mislja, Skopje, 1991, p. 66-68, the authentic source is given in the book).

The traveller from Dubrovnik (Croatia), Patančić, in his travelogue from 1505, writes:

“When you leave Skopje, you pass through the Žegligovo Plain, the Konopnishka Dolina, the Berbushka Banja and the Strymon Bridge, which separates the Macedonians from the Bulgarians”. (A. Ishirkov: Izsledonavia za Makedonia, p. 6; cited according to Petar Najdenov: “Narodna wolya”, September-October).

At the beginning of the 17th century, Ohrid's archbishop Athanasius, while he was staying in Austria, Italy and Spain, sought

the creation of a "Kingdom of Macedonia" (Nikola Milev: "Ohrid archbishop Athanasius and his wanderings abroad 1597-1615" in: *Izvestia na Istorichesko družetvo v Sofia*, 1922, vol 5).

The activist Toma Mrnavic in 1622, advocating for the unity of the Balkan Slavic peoples, also mentions the Macedonians (along with the Croats, Serbs and Bulgarians).

In the Memorandum of Gjorge Branković addressed to the Austrian King Leopold I in the summer of 1688, the creation of the Illyrian Kingdom is requested, so in addition to other Balkan peoples, the Macedonians are also mentioned.

In the following, we will recall another important event from Macedonian history, which is the Macedonian Karposh uprising of 1689, which was raised against the Turkish rule. Conditions for Karposh's uprising were created by the Austro-Turkish war that was taking place in the Balkans at that time. After the Turks were stopped in front of Vienna, the Holy Alliance was created against them, in which, in addition to Austria and Poland, Venice and Russia also entered. The armies of the Holy Alliance penetrated deep into the territory of Turkey at that time, reaching as far as Macedonia. However, the Austrian army, although helped by members of the Balkan nations, still failed to stay in Macedonia and soon left for Kosovo. Immediately before her departure, the famous Karposh uprising broke out in the northern part of Macedonia, so called because of the name Karposh of the leader of the uprising. In a short time, the insurgents managed to create a free territory in the area between the towns of Kriva Palanka and Kumanovo. It is assumed that the military actions of Karposh were aligned with the military actions of the Austrian army, and an indication of this is the title "King of Kumanovo", which was awarded to Karposh by the Austrian emperor Leopold. The Turks took energetic steps to liquidate the uprising and the Crimean Khan Selim Giray arrived to help the Turkish army with his fighting and fierce Tatar detachments. When they understood about the superiority of the Turkish army, the insurgents burned Kriva Palanka and retreated to Kumanovo. The big clash took place in front of Kumanovo, where

the insurgents suffered a heavy defeat, and Karpoš himself was captured, after which he was taken to Skopje, where he was impaled and stabbed with Tatar spears. It was in December 1689. About the murder of Karposh, an authentic Turkish document from that time has been preserved, in which it is written:

“The victorious fighters entered Skopje, where they impaled the captured Karposh on the Skopje bridge in Kumanovo. And when his sinful soul flew into the kingdom of heaven, the cunning and swift as blizzards Tartars tore his bodily remains with their sharp blades...” (Die freiwillige Theilnahme der Serben und Croaten, Wien, 1854, p. 229).

After the uprising, a large part of the surviving insurgents, but also many members of the common people, due to fear of revenge and due to the difficult living conditions in Macedonia, fled far to the north, behind the rivers Sava and Danube. Some stayed in Austria, and some even reached Russia.

Of those Macedonians who escaped to Austria, two were received personally by the Austrian emperor Leopold (1657-1705). At the same time, their arrival was marked by the Imperial High Commissioner M. Pauer:

The representatives of the Macedonian people came to the lands of our imperial majesty.

Emperor Leopold, after listening to their pleas to take the Macedonians under protection, on April 26, 1690, issued a decree for the protection of the Macedonian people, from which we will quote a large part:

“I hereby let you know that two Macedonians, Marko Kraida from Kožani and Dimitar Georgie Popović from Salonica, Macedonia, conveyed to me that the Macedonian people, confident in the righteousness of our work and strong desire, as well as serious intentions, want to be placed himself under our protection, in order to get away from the unbearable Turkish oppression, as far as our mercy would show him mercy and safe protection. Because of this, and in connection with our innate mercy and motivated by the mercy to protect the members of the most holy Christian religion, we

receive the mentioned Macedonian people as a whole in every respect under our imperial and royal protection. We recommend to everyone and to each military commander separately that the aforementioned Macedonian people should not disturb or oppress them in any way, but, according to the possibilities, to meet them at every opportunity, to defend them, to show them help and to provides it so that it can preserve our given imperial and royal favors, rights and freedoms..." ("Selected readings for the history of the Macedonian people", Skopje, 1951, p. 193, cited according to older sources).

The members of the Macedonian regiment in Ukraine, who settled in that country in the beginning and middle of the 18th century, also declared themselves as Macedonians (and clearly separated from the Bulgarians and the Serbs). According to the preserved documents, most of them declared themselves as members of the Macedonian nation. The most famous of them was General Ivan Horvat, who, regarding the resettlement of Christian refugees from Turkey to Russia, at the beginning of the 18th century, sent a request to the Russian authorities for the admission of these refugees into the service of the Russian army, in which says:

The Orthodox nations: the Serbian, the Macedonian, the Bulgarian and the Wallachian, with their blood and weapons, want to serve Her Imperial Majesty, the patron mother.

At the beginning of the 18th century, in a report to the Russian Empress Catherine II, regarding the request that Christians who had escaped from Turkey be admitted to Russia, Bestuzhev-Ryumin wrote:

"The Orthodox peoples: Serbs, Macedonians, Bulgarians and Vlachs want to serve Her Imperial Majesty with blood and arms... In peacetime, that corps, composed of Serbs, Macedonians and Bulgarians - Orthodox peoples, homogeneous with us and known for their bravery throughout the world, they will multiply day by day and in case of need they will be useful without any special expenses on the part of Your Imperial Majesty."

Now I propose to present part of the records of the members of the Macedonian regiment in Ukraine. The record consists of a completed questionnaire, which contains the following questions (we will hand them over together with the answers to one of the members of the Macedonian regiment): *Name: Gjorgi Petrov; Age: 39 years; Year of arrival in Russia: 1752; Month: October 24; From which nation: From the Macedonian nation; Marital status: married with three sons; Is it written: Yes; Was he convicted: No!*

In this document (presented here for the first time by Dr. Aleksandar Matkovski: "The Macedonian Regiment in Ukraine", and from this book are the documents mentioned so far from this subtitle) the same questions have been answered by a total of 74 people. All of them clearly declared themselves as members of "the Macedonian nation".

Let's also mention the request sent by the Montenegrin bishop Vasilije Petrović to the Russian government in 1757, in which he informs the Russian government that the Balkan peoples: Montenegrins, Macedonians, Serbs, Bulgarians and others, are suffering from Turkish slavery. By the way, dozens more documents have been preserved in Russia from this time in which the Macedonians are mentioned as a separate people (Aleksandar Matkovski, cited work).

After all this, let us conclude that there are numerous documented testimonies from the Middle Ages, given by foreign sources, which speak about the existence of Macedonians as the dominant inhabitants of Macedonia and this fact can neither be denied nor ignored.

ATTITUDE OF BULGARIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY AND PROPAGANDA: The medieval state known today in history as "Kingdom of Samuel", which covered a good part of the Balkan Peninsula and whose capital city was in Macedonia, was "Bulgarian". In Byzantine, but also in other, medieval sources, it is marked as "Bulgarian", and its population as "Bulgarians", which is "proof" that today's Macedonians are "Bulgarians".

ANSWER TO THIS POSITION: King Samuil came to power in Macedonia after the uprising that he and his father Nikola, as well his three brothers, raised against the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians. In the "Encyclopedic Dictionary" (Broghaus, Efron, St. Petersburg, 1896, p. 416) we read:

"In 963, an uprising broke out in Macedonia, which ended with the expulsion of the Bulgarians and the establishment of their own state". (quoted from the book by Gjorgji Radule, "History of Macedonia", Sofia, 1997, p. 127).

The Bulgarian historian Marin Drinov, in his book "Writings of M.S. Drinov" (edited by Prof. Zlatarski, volume 1, Sofia, 1909, p. 568) writes:

"Macedonia broke away from Peter's kingdom and formed a separate state under the leadership of Samuel". (Giorgji Radule, cit. work, p. 127).

It is also a fact that there is not a single document from Samuel's kingdom in which it is written that that country was called "Bulgaria"! On the contrary, there are indications that Samuel's Kingdom was originally also called Sclavinia (Slavinia).

One of these documents is from the time of the emperor of the medieval state called the Holy Roman Empire named Henry II (1002-1024). This document is actually a miniature, on which four girls (symbolizing four countries-nations) are drawn offering gifts to the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. The names of these four nation-states are written above the heads of the girls and they read: Roma, Galia, Germania i Sclauinia. It is also very indicative that the girl Sclauinia is shown as a blond-haired girl, who holds a symbol of the Sun in her hand, and on her clothes there are elements from the Macedonian costumes of the time (embroidered seam around the neck).

Samuel's Kingdom was also called Sclauinia by some medieval authors, such as the Venetian diplomat John the Deacon in the "Venetian Chronicle" and others.

There are also Macedonian determinations for some segments of Samuel's kingdom. Thus, for example, the poet Ivan Kyriotes,

called Geometres (metropolitan of Melitena from the 10th century), in his descriptions of the events of that time, calls the inhabitants of Samuel's Kingdom: Mizis, Bulgarians, Scythians and Macedonians (Dr. Stjepan Antoljak: *Medieval Macedonia*, Mislal, Skopje, 1985, p. 242).

Furthermore, Leo the Deacon (950 - beginning of the 11th century), describing the army of King Samuel, wrote that it was composed of (quote): "military units of the Macedonians" (Leonis Deaconis, *Historiae*, JP Migne pg 117, Paris, 1964, 727). He recorded that one of the main weapons of Samuel's army was the long spear - the same as the Macedonian phalanx of Alexander the Great used at one time.

Let's also say that the emperor Samuel, as well as his successor Petar Delyan (who, after the collapse of Samuel's kingdom, in the 11th century, raised an uprising against Byzantium) were elected as rulers by the people in the same way as they were once elected and the ancient Macedonian kings (through a general assembly of the army).

Later, after the collapse of Samuel's Kingdom, two uprisings were raised in Macedonia against the Byzantine occupation. After the collapse of Petar Deljan's uprising, some of the insurgents fled to Sicily. The local chroniclers of that time, in the work "Baris' annals", mentioned their arrival with the following words:

"The unfortunate Macedonians arrived from there (from Sicily)".

Let's conclude that Samuel's kingdom included the territories of today's countries: Macedonia, Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Greece. So were all these peoples "Bulgarians"? And are today's Serbs, Montenegrins, Albanians, Bosnians and Greeks "Bulgarians" just because for a short time they were under the rule of a state that was called "Bulgarian" in some medieval sources? In fact Samuel's kingdom was a multi-ethnic state based in Macedonia.

The ethnic origin of King Samuel is also unknown. His brothers' names were: Aaron, David and Moses (typical Old Testament

Jewish names), and his mother's name was Rhipsimia (typical Armenian name).

It is absurd to claim that the Macedonians became "ethnic Bulgarians" just because Samuel's kingdom was called "Bulgarian" in some sources. Especially if it is known that (as we proved above) the Turko-Mongolian Bulgarians never settled en masse in Macedonia.

ATTITUDE OF BULGARIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY AND PROPAGANDA: Bulgarians had a long-standing written tradition, and Macedonians were part of the Bulgarian written tradition for centuries. In 1945, by order of the communists, the Macedonian literary language was "invented".

ANSWER TO THIS ATTITUDE: Contrary to such completely unfounded claims, numerous authentic sources say that even at the beginning of the 19th century, the majority of Bulgarians were not only illiterate people, but did not even have their own literary Bulgarian language. The Bulgarian literary language, as it is known, was created only in the second half of the 19th century).

The traveller Robert Walsh in the travelogue of his visit to Bulgaria in 1827 described this situation very vividly:

Where the Greek language is not used in religious services, the old written language is used, but since the Bulgarians do not understand either, it means that they practically listen to the service in languages unknown to them. In the few schools that exist in the cities, all the textbooks are written in Greek, even though the people do not know that language. As a result of all this most of the people are illiterate. The language they use is only oral and this language has never been literary. Only recently, several booklets were printed in this language, but I did not manage to see any of them... In many places there are neither schools, nor churches, nor books... Through all the villages I passed through, I did not meet either a man who can read and write. (M. Todorova, cit. work).

We see that the Bulgarians in general did not even understand the medieval so-called Church Slavonic language, so it is unclear

why their propaganda, beyond all logic, claims that that language was – “Bulgarian”!? Before the Bulgarian literary language was created (the middle of the 19th century), the rare Bulgarian pan-Slavists first wrote in a language that was a mixture of Old Slavic, Russian and Serbian, and this language was difficult to understand for the few Bulgarians who could read (and not to mention today's).

Later, after the uprising in Serbia, at the beginning of the 19th century, the Bulgarian revivalists began to write their works in - Serbian! The great Bulgarian poet Luben Karavelov also wrote in Serbian. Because of this, the texts of the Bulgarian revivalists from the 19th century are translated into the modern Bulgarian literary language today in Bulgaria.

In the book titled “Periodical press before the liberation” from V. Pundev (Sofia, 1927) is a representative selection of original Bulgarian texts from the forties to the sixties of the 19th century. A large part of these texts are written in a mixed Bulgarian-Serbian language. Due to the writing of the Bulgarian revivalists in a Serbized language, the famous Czech Slavist Josef Dobrovski claimed that the Bulgarian language does not exist and that the language of the Bulgarians is a dialect of Serbian.

That the Bulgarian language is a dialect of the Serbian was also claimed by Shafarik in 1826, about which the Bulgarian historian Shishmanov also writes.

Almost all Bulgarian revivalists from the middle of the 19th century complained that a Bulgarian literary language did not exist and that one should be created urgently. The most decisive in this is the revivalist Teoharov, who wrote in his work “A few words about Bulgarian literature” (1860):

Bulgarians not only do not have modern literature, but they have not yet made even initial attempts in that direction... Thirty years ago, the Bulgarian people were convinced that they did not have their own literary language and that they could not write in Bulgarian. scientific books, but only with Greek, and that with the help of the Greek language, every Bulgarian can become literate. (“Periodical press...” cited work).

According to these facts, the question arises in itself: in what Bulgarian literary language did the Macedonian revivalists write, when the Bulgarians themselves claimed that such a literary language did not exist at all even in the second half of the 19 century? If we accept the notorious truth that the first work written in the modern Macedonian literary language appeared in 1903, then the time difference between this work and the first works written in the real, non-Serbized Bulgarian literary language would hardly be surprising. So, the hypothesis about the alleged "thousand-year-old character" of the Bulgarian literary language, in which the Macedonian revivalists allegedly wrote and from which they supposedly separated in 1945, is completely destroyed.

The truth about the emergence of the Bulgarian literary language in the 19th century is well known throughout the world. As evidence, I will mention the quote from the large multimedia computer CD Grolier Encyclopedia (USA, 1995), where it is written that the Bulgarian literature appeared only in the 19th century as an expression of patriotic articulations against Turkish slavery.

ATTITUDE OF BULGARIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY AND PROPAGANDA: In the 19th century, the inhabitants of Macedonia demanded the establishment of a Bulgarian Church (known under the name of the Bulgarian Exarchy), and after its establishment, they massively joined it, which means that they were "Bulgarians".

RESPONSE TO THIS POSITION: It is true that some ethnic Macedonians participated in the establishment of the institutions of the Bulgarian Church in Macedonia, but in those times of intensified anti-Macedonian propaganda, a certain number of ethnic Macedonians actively participated in the Greek and Serbian Church in Macedonia as well. The reason for all this is the fact that the Turks (under whose rule Macedonia was at that time) did not allow the Macedonians to create their own Macedonian church, so in the absence of their own church, they had to satisfy their religious needs in those churches that at the time existed in Macedonia (Bulgarian, Serbian and Greek). However, many prominent

Macedonians even at that time advocated for the restoration of the Ohrid archdiocese as an independent church of the Macedonian people. One more point should be taken into account, and that is the fact that in Turkey at that time the peoples did not play such an important role as was the case with the religious beliefs. Because of that, the Orthodox "Slavic peoples" were allowed by the Turkish authorities to establish only one Church of their own on the territory of Turkey. The Bulgarians, being more numerous and more influential in Istanbul, with the help of Russian diplomacy, managed to fight for that church to be the Bulgarian one. So the ethnic Macedonians under the Turkish government, were offered to choose between the two existing solutions - the Bulgarian or the Greek Church.

Some assume that the Turkish sultan gave to the Bulgarians (and not to the Macedonians) a Church, due to the fact that he considered that the Bulgarians also have Turkish blood in them, i.e. that they are a related people to the Turks. Thus, for example, the Bulgarian leaders Chomakov and Averij (who later became a metropolitan in the liberated Bulgaria) in the mid-sixties of the 19th century, had negotiations with the high Turkish representative Ali Pasha regarding the creation of the Bulgarian Exarchate. At the same time, Ali Pasha, after promising them that he would fulfill their desire to create a Bulgarian church, told the Bulgarian representatives:

"You know very well that we Turks and you Bulgarians have the same blood and that neither we, nor you, are Slavs... It depends on your ability whether you will manage to Bulgarianize everything... to become ours successors in Europe". (Iv. Ivanovic: "Iz crkvene istorije Srba u Turskoj u 18 i 19 veku", p. 46. Ivanovic was a contemporary of Averij and knew him personally, so from his statements he transmitted this declares).

Not long after that, the Bulgarian Church was indeed created. Due to the similarity between the Macedonian and Bulgarian languages, the Macedonians, as a resistance to the incomprehensible Greek language, mostly declared their

membership in the Bulgarian Exarchy. However, after they saw that through the Macedonian exarchy, the Bulgarian national affiliation and language was aggressively imposed on them, many Macedonians started to act against this Church, continuing the struggle for the restoration of the Ohrid Church archdiocese as an independent Macedonian church.

In fact, the Macedonians advocated for the restoration of the Ohrid archdiocese even before the establishment of the Bulgarian Church. Immediately before the preparation of the Sultan's decree for the creation of this church, the population of the Doyran, Voden and Ohrid dioceses submitted a request to the Turkish government that they do not want to be included in the Bulgarian Church, because (as they stated in the request), they were not Bulgarians, although they spoke the Slavic language. There are other such examples (more details about this in the book "Ethnogenetic differences between Macedonians and Bulgarians" by Aleksandar Donski).

Regarding the activities for the restoration of the Ohrid archdiocese, there are also testimonies from the Bulgarian sources of the time. Thus, for example, the Bulgarian newspaper "Pravo" (November 30, 1870) wrote about the anti-Bulgarian activities of the Macedonian activist Kuzman Shapkarev:

"That poor teacher in Kukush leaves his service when he feels like it and goes from town to town on a crusade against books written in the Bulgarian language (...) In Ohrid... his first words were full of hatred for everything Bulgarian. He said: We barely got rid of the Greeks, now shall we become Shopes again? From everything stated above, it can be clearly understood to what ruin that so-called gentleman wants to push the people, which is why some have already dared to declare that: We are Macedonians, not Bulgarians! We have heard from travelers before that some of the teachers in Macedonia, and above all Shapkarev, convinced our Macedonian brothers that Bulgarians and the Bulgarian language were one thing, and Macedonians and the Macedonian language were another".

Let us also mention the Bulgarian activist and exarchic agent Petko Slavejkov who, after disappointedly stating that the establishment of the Bulgarian exarchy among the Macedonians is not going so easily, in his article "The Macedonian Question", published in 1871 in the newspaper "Makedonija", made the following confession:

"Some Macedonians divide themselves from Bulgarians and say that they are pure Slavs, while Bulgarians are Tatars".

And further:

"Since ten years ago, we heard from some people in Macedonia that they are not Bulgarians, but Macedonians - descendants of the old Macedonians, then that Macedonians are Slavs, and Bulgarians are Tatars and I don't know what else".

The Macedonian student R. Popov in a letter writes to his friend: *"People in Macedonia are called Bulgarians, because they were forced to do so by the Turks".*

Furthermore, this student says that he returned to his hometown, where he asked many Macedonians about their opinion in relation to the Bulgarians and they told him: *"If necessary, we will be under the Turks for so many more years, but there will be no to be under the Tatars".*

The Bulgarian activist Krsto Rakovski wrote in the Russian magazine "Life" (November 1899) regarding the previous activities in Bitola to open Macedonian schools:

"Part of the local intelligentsia advocated for separatism, which manifested itself in the desire to push Bulgarians born in the Principality out of all places in the Exarchate and from school institutions and to replace them with Macedonians".

In the context of the fight against the Bulgarianization of the Macedonians, we will also mention the secession of the six Macedonian municipalities (Solun, Kukush, Voden, Doyran, Strumica and Malesevo) from the Bulgarian Church and their entry into union with the Pope in order to express their independence.

Special activities in this direction were also taken by Metropolitan Teodosia of Skopje, who advocated the restoration of the Ohrid

archdiocese even under the auspices of the Catholic Church. Because of his activities, he was arrested and then imprisoned in a monastery in Bulgaria (where he remained until the end of his life). Enraged by his elimination, the inhabitants of Veles sent a petition to the Patriarch which, among other things, said:

“In order to make us Bulgarians, the Exarchate took away our only protector, Metropolitan Teodosia of Skopje. In order to protect ourselves from Bulgarian propaganda, we want to restore unity with the holy Orthodox Church. We want to separate from the Bulgarians and have our own schools, where we will pay the teachers ourselves”.

Such requests were also sent by Macedonians from other Macedonian cities (Ohrid, Struga, Resen, Tetovo, Bitola, Prilep, Veles and others).

At a meeting in Kratovo, held at the end of the 19th century, the Bulgarian teacher was expelled with the words:

“We don't want an exarchic teacher! We do not want Bulgarian books, which our children do not understand and which are written in a foreign language!

When he saw what happened, a Serbian agent approached them and called them to join the Serbian Church. However, the prominent resident of Kratovo, Gjorgi Toshev, answered him:

“What is the difference between Bulgarians and Serbs? So far we have been driving in a Bulgarian car, so there is no way we will be driving in a Serbian one now”.

There are other numerous testimonies about the Macedonians' resistance to the Bulgarian Church and the efforts to restore the Ohrid archdiocese as an independent Macedonian church, which in the interest of space we will leave for another occasion.

Finally, let's mention the positive actions of the Bulgarian Church (exarchy) towards the Macedonians. Thus, for example, the Macedonian revolutionaries often found their refuge in the churches and monasteries that were under exarchic jurisdiction, and some of them also worked as exarchic teachers, thus spreading the revolutionary activity.

ATTITUDE OF BULGARIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY AND PROPAGANDA: All Macedonian revivalists in the 19th century and all Macedonians from this period declared themselves as "Bulgarians".

RESPONSE TO THIS ATTITUDE: It is true that due to the aggressive activity of foreign (Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian) propaganda, some Macedonian revivalists in the 19th century declared themselves as belonging to foreign nations, but we have already cited data that this was also the case with Bulgarian intellectuals in those dark times.

However, such individual declarations cannot be proof of the ethnic origin of a people. Let's take for example the extraordinary Macedonian poet Gligor Prlichev. At first he declared himself a Greek and as such won a high prize in a literary competition in Greece with his famous poem "Serdarot". Later, for some time, he declared himself as a Bulgarian. But after staying in Bulgaria, he left this country disappointed and ended his life as an exarch high school teacher, but with a special focus on the study of the history of Macedonia since the ancient times. Therefore, the Bulgarian propagandists should not manipulate only with one short period of his life and in the same time to keep silent about the other stages of his development during that dramatic time.

In 1885 in Salonica, on the occasion of the 1000th anniversary of the death of Saint Methodius, Gligor Prlichev said:

"Mother Macedonia is very weakened. After giving birth to the great Alexander, after giving birth to Saints Cyril and Methodius, since then mother Macedonia has been lying on her bed terribly exhausted. But a mother who gave birth to such sons, in the future will give birth to others like them..., who will be beacons of our schools and pillars of our faith and who will glorify the Macedonian name!"

We will present a testimony from a certain Ivan Krainchanets, who was a student of Gligor Prlichev in Salonica. The testimony was given at the beginning of the 20th century and it reads:

“Gligor Prlichev... could not master the Bulgarian language and mostly spoke and wrote in the Bresyac dialect (one of the Macedonian dialects, my remark). He did not make us pronounce our translations from Greek and French in the Bresyac dialect”. (Ivan Krainičanec: “Memories of a past path in my life”, Skopje, 1942, p. 15. Taken from Blaže Ristovski: “Portraits and Processes 1”, Skopje, 1989, p. 194).

What kind of “Bulgarian” was Prlichev when he failed to learn the Bulgarian language?

Macedonian revivalist Rajko Zhinzifov also declared himself as both Greek and Bulgarian. However, the Bulgarian national activist, writer and publicist Luben Karavelov wrote in 1874 that Zhinzifov “did not know the Bulgarian language”. (“Periodical press before liberation”, cited work).

Macedonian revivalist Yoakim Krchovski published a book in 1846, which he wrote was in the “Bulgarian language”, although that language was actually Macedonian. But when this book was taken to Bulgaria, the Bulgarians there could hardly understand it at all, so the Bulgarian Nayden Yovanovich from Tatar-Pazardzhik, had to translate Krchovski's book into Bulgarian. On the cover of the translation, he wrote that it was translated: from Slavic to the Slavic-Bulgarian language.

Similar was the case with the collectors of the Macedonian folk deeds Konstantin and Dimitar Miladinov from the middle of 19th century. Their collection of folk songs was called “Bulgarian Folk Songs” and therefore today's Bulgarian propaganda claims that they were “Bulgarians” (although they previously declared themselves as “Greeks”).

But the truth is completely different. The reason for this title of the Collection is that the seventh part of the published folklore works were indeed - Bulgarian! Konstantin Miladinov received these poems at the last moment before printing by the Bulgarian Cholakov. Later, Cholakov himself wrote that Konstantin asked him for Bulgarian poems so that he could call his collection that way:

...My late friend Konstantin Miladinov asked me to give him a hundred songs from the eastern parts of Bulgaria so that he could name his collection: "Bulgarian folk songs". (A facsimile of the letter in Bulgarian can be found in YAZU, cited according to Haralampie Polenaković, "Studii za Mladinovci", Skopje, 1973, p. 199).

However, Konstantin Miladinov was well aware that there are Macedonian folk songs as separate from the Bulgarian ones. The proof is the letter he sent from Moscow to the Bulgarian national-revolutionary actor Georgi Rakovski on January 8, 1859, in which he wrote:

"...I also have many Macedonian songs, which I want to release a little later, because the conditions do not allow me now."

Let's also say that none of the Macedonian revivalists received their alleged "Bulgarian national feeling" from their parents, but as adults due to the influence of Bulgarian propaganda (just as before they were under influence of Greek propaganda). And not a single Macedonian revivalist who declared himself "Bulgarian" has mentioned the Turko-Mongolian origin of the Bulgarians, which is an undoubted proof that they were held in the delusion that the real Bulgarians were "pure Slavs" (as was an official claim of the Bulgarian propaganda in that time in order to attract the Macedonians).

We will mention a few more pure Macedonian national articulations from the 19th century.

In 1846, the teacher from the Macedonian city of Kriva Palanka named Gjorgi Makedonski said:

"I learned the Slavic script from my father, Dimitria Makedonski... I also took my nickname Macedonian, not after my father and grandfather, so that it would be known that we are Slavs from Macedonia". (Documents on the struggle of the Macedonian people for independence and for a national state", Volume One, Skopje, 1981, p. 182).

The teacher from Veles, Jovan Nešković, writes that in 1846 the people of Veles advocated that the school in Veles be taught in

Macedonian and not in Greek. (Dr. Blaže Ristovski: "Macedonia and the Macedonian Nation", Skopje, 1995, p. 156).

In 1876, an uprising against the Turkish rule was raised in Macedonia, known as the Razlovtsi Uprising (after the name of the village of Razlovtsi). In the letter signed by 15 insurgent leaders of this uprising, addressed to the then British Consul General in Salonica, it is said:

"For good hopes for us Macedonians, residents of Malesevo district! With our Macedonian blood, we are determined to bleed this two thousand years ago mercilessly condemned and despised Macedonia..." ("Liberation of Bulgaria from the Turkish yoke", documents in three volumens, Moscow, 1967, p. 325, taken from: Blaze Ristovski, "Macedonia and the Macedonian nation", p. 180).

In 1878, another uprising against Turkish rule, known as the Kresna Uprising, was raised in Macedonia. In the proclamation of the uprising, it was emphasized that the insurgents are descendants of Alexander the Great of Macedonia and that their goal is the creation of a separate Macedonian state.

The leader of the Razlovtsi and Kresna uprisings, Dimitar Popgeorgiev Berovski, was eliminated from the uprising by order of the Bulgarian government, and the reason for that was the national declaration of the insurgents as Macedonians and their public manifestation of resistance to the Bulgarian (but also to any other foreign) government. The Bulgarian government, through its agents, managed to decapitate the uprising. The most prominent leaders were arrested and shot by the Bulgarians and their Macedonian servants and the Kresna Uprising was suppressed!

The old Macedonian fighter Ilyo Maleshevski also criticized the interference of foreign propaganda in Macedonia (including the Bulgarian one), as evidenced by the Macedonian national activist L. Voulgaris in his diary.

The people of Krushevo who also advocated for Macedonian national uniqueness were: Ivan Shumkov (who declared himself a descendant of the ancient Macedonians) and Marko Atanasov Mushevich, who in 1887 participated in the initiative to publish the

newspaper "Makedonski list" in Constantinople. Mushevich advocated the introduction of the Macedonian language in Macedonian schools.

In 1887, the Macedonian activists Evro and Grupche, together with their like-minded people, sent a Memorandum to the diplomatic representatives of the great powers in Constantinople, in which they demanded the stopping of Serbian, Bulgarian, Greek and Romanian propaganda in Macedonia. (Dr. Klime Dzambazovski, cited work, 1065-1066).

In 1888, the Macedonian activist Temko Popov wrote about the Macedonian national uniqueness:

"The national spirit in Macedonia has already reached such a level that even if Jesus Christ himself descended from heaven, he would not be able to convince the Macedonian that he is Bulgarian or Serbian". (More details at: Klime Dzambazovski "Nova Makedonija, 1,2 and 3 01. 1960).

Macedonian activist Kosta Shahov in the newspaper "Macedonia", on August 19, 1889. writes:

"We cannot seek our salvation neither as Greeks, nor as Bulgarians, nor as Serbs, but only as Macedonians!"

In June 1891, a teachers' meeting for the Bitola province was held in Prilep. In the presence of 32 delegates, a resolution was passed, in which the Bulgarian Church was openly attacked. In the end it was concluded:

"In Macedonian schools, teaching should be conducted in the Macedonian language. Macedonia is flooded with textbooks and other aids in Bulgarian, Serbian or Greek, just not in our mother tongue. We have the strength to print our own textbooks, if the government of His Majesty the Sultan approves us to print in the imperial printing presses". (Detailed in Dr. Blaže Ristovski: Macedonian folklore and national consciousness, 2, Skopje, 1987, 190-192).

Apart from these, there are also foreign testimonies that in one way or another testified to the Macedonian national separateness.

Thus, for example, the prominent slavist Bulgarian Petar Draganov vigorously advocated for Macedonian national independence, after working in Macedonia for some time and seeing that Macedonians are something completely different from both Serbs and Bulgarians. In 1900, Draganov publicly branded the insidious Serbian-Bulgarian claims towards Macedonia:

“Both warring parties, regardless of their public convictions in front of the whole world about their love for Macedonia and the Macedonians, on the spot, i.e. in Macedonia itself, they treat the local dialect and the basic needs of the local population with the greatest hatred. This especially applies to the Bulgarian and Serbian teaching staff in Macedonia. Their hatred for the oppressed and persecuted local Macedonian "dialect" has no bounds... The so-called "Macedonian dialect" has its own peculiarities in the accent, in the voices, and in syntax and especially in vocabulary...”

Today, Draganov's activities are hidden from the general public in Bulgaria, even though he himself was Bulgarian.

At the end of the 19th century, the Estonian linguist Leonard Gottfried Mazing also wrote about the uniqueness of the Macedonian language. He even wrote a doctoral dissertation on the emphasis on the Macedonian language, which was later published (R. V. Bulatova: “The First Researcher of the Macedonian Language Slavic L. G. Mazing (1845-1936)”, Macedonian language, 32-33, Skopje, 1982, pp. 62-63, cited according to academician Blaže Ristovski: “Macedonia and the Macedonian nation”, p. 210).

The Polish linguist and Russian professor Yan Boduen de Courtene distinguished the Macedonian from the Bulgarian language in his lectures to the students, as did the Russian Komarov and the Austrian publicist Karl Hron (who also worked in Macedonia for a while), who also wrote about the Macedonian national distinctiveness.

Today, Bulgarian historians hide from the general public that in the 19th century in Bulgaria, a great persecution of Macedonian activists took place. Such persecution was particularly intensified

during the time of Bulgarian Prime Minister Stambolov. He banned the publication of the newspaper "Macedonia" prepared by Macedonian emigrants in Sofia, closed the printing house that printed it, and threatened the organizers that he would deport them to Turkey. By order of Stambolov, the Macedonian Charitable Society was disbanded, and the Macedonians' rallies in Sofia were banned.

ATTITUDE OF BULGARIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY AND PROPAGANDA: In all Turkish documents from the 19th and early 20th centuries, Macedonians are described as "Bulgarians".

RESPONSE TO THIS ATTITUDE: This is not true at all. In documents from the Turkish period, the terms: raya, infidels, Christians, etc. was mostly used for the Macedonian people, and the term "Bulgarians" was used by the Turks mostly after 1870 (especially at the beginning of the 20th century), and that exclusively for those ethnic Macedonians who (due to the lack of a Macedonian church) joined the Bulgarian church (exarchy) where they were misled as "Bulgarians". As proof of this, one can look at the five volumes of the edition under the title: "Turkish documents for Macedonian history 1800-1839" (Skopje, 1951), where are published hundreds of documents of an administrative nature of the Turkish empire in connection with Macedonia: sales contracts, wills, weddings, voluntary contributions, etc. In them, the Macedonians are named as: raya (ordinary people), infidels, Christians, etc., and all the documents belong to the greater part of the 19th century.

After the establishment of the Serbian Church in Macedonia, all Macedonians who joined it were registered in the Turkish documents as "Serbs". The same was the case with the Macedonians who were members of the Greek church, so in the Turkish documents they were misled as "Greeks".

ATTITUDE OF BULGARIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY AND PROPAGANDA: Europe knew that Macedonia had always been a "Bulgarian country" and the Macedonians were "Bulgarians".

ANSWER TO THIS ATTITUDE: Macedonia was a "Bulgarian country" only when it was under occupation by the Bulgarians (first by the Turko-Mongol Bulgarians), and in the 20th century by the state Bulgaria, which was an ally of the greatest criminal of all time - Adolf Hitler .

No normal person can believe that a nation will change its ethnic consciousness and accept the ethnic consciousness of the people that occupied it for a short time. In fact, in the entire millennial history, Macedonia was under Bulgarian occupation only for several decades (and in different centuries) - just as Bulgaria was under Turkish occupation for several centuries, and yet the Bulgarians did not become "Turks".

In fact, the biggest supporter in the 19th century for Macedonia to become a "Bulgarian country" was precisely Russia. In 1879, Russia proposed the creation of the Principality of Bulgaria, whose borders included almost all of ethnic Macedonia and a small part of Serbia. This Russian project is known today under the name "San Stefano Bulgaria" after the name of the place San Stefano where this draft agreement between Russia and Turkey was signed. Although it was never implemented in practice, this project left a great impact among Bulgarian nationalists, who even today refer to this Russian initiative when they claim that Macedonia was "Bulgarian".

It is interesting that such a Russian initiative was immediately opposed by the most important European states. Thus, for example, Count Andraschi, who was then the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, stated in relation to the San Stefano Treaty in May 1878:

"Let Nelidov (Russian ambassador in Constantinople) know that our government will not tolerate a broad Bulgarian principality at all. In the San Stefano preliminary peace agreement, the ethnic principle is not preserved at all... The territory of Macedonia is inhabited by a diverse population, in which the Slavic element prevails. However, it is known that a strong current is emerging in the Slavic population there, which is trying to go its own way. Our interests in recent times require us to enter Macedonia and exit to

the Aegean Sea, using the favor of the Slavic population in Macedonia". (Hof-und Staatarchiv Wien, Politisches archiv 38. Türkes, Carton 129, cited by Slavko Dimovski: "Testimonies and documents").

This Russian initiative was also opposed by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Waddington, who stated in connection with the San Stefano Agreement:

"We continue to stand by the point of view that, apart from the Bulgarians, there are also other peoples on the Balkan Peninsula who should be liberated in due course... Our government strongly opposes the preliminary agreement of San Stefano". (Documents diplomatique item 2. 431, 15.05.1878, cited according to S. Dimovski: "Testimonies and documents").

Regarding the collapse of the Russian idea of joining Macedonia to Bulgaria, the Bulgarian editor of the church organ A. Shopov (although he himself promoted a pro-Bulgarian position) made the following confession regarding San Stefano Bulgaria in 1885:

"The Berlin Congress did not give autonomy to Macedonia and did not join it to Bulgaria for the simple reason that England firmly stood by the position that the vast majority of the population in Macedonia is not Bulgarian... And not even today in 1885, if Europe would ask the Macedonian population to define itself and say to which nationality it belongs, we are confident that the greater part of Macedonia will fly from our hands. If we exclude two or three districts from Northern Macedonia, all other Macedonians are ready to give any written document you want that they are not Bulgarians..." (Ofeikov: "Macedonia during the thousandth anniversary of St. Methodius", Plovdiv , 1885 and A. Shopov: "Materials for the Bulgarian revival in Macedonia", Periodical magazine, vol. 18, Sredets, 1885, p. 440).

So, neither the Macedonians enthusiastically accepted the Bulgarian church (exarchy) as their spiritual freedom, nor did the European powers stand behind the Russian project for San Stefano

Bulgaria, mostly due to the fact that Macedonia's population was never Bulgarian.

However, a certain number of Macedonians agreed with the ideas of San Stefano Bulgaria, thinking that this way they would get rid of the Turks. However, a good part of the Macedonians who wanted San Stefano Bulgaria, imagined it as a joint federated state of Macedonians and Bulgarians, and not as a unitary Bulgarian state that would deny the existence of Macedonians. Thus, for example, an organization named Bulgarian-Macedonian League advocated for San Stefano Bulgaria, but as a federated state of Macedonians and Bulgarians. On 05.02.1879, this league made an appeal for a new uprising in Macedonia, which among other things states:

“Macedonians! Macedonia, our mother moans and cries with bitter wails under the Turkish fire and scimitar... Macedonian and Bulgarian heroes! Our bright lion roars in our Macedonian mountains and valleys, mountains and deserts and calls us all to arms... And we, with hope in God and with the San Stefano Agreement, should all show ourselves as true descendants of our fathers and grandfathers.. Macedonians! Now is the time to convince our traitors that even now, after five centuries of slavery, Macedonia is still giving birth to sons and heroes.”

Due to the fact that in this call the Macedonians are clearly separated from the Bulgarians, it is clear that they envisioned freedom from Turkey within the framework of a joint Macedonian-Bulgarian state. It was important to get rid of the Turks, and when the full content and purpose of the San Stefano Agreement was revealed much later, the majority of Macedonians condemned it.

ATTITUDE OF BULGARIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY AND PROPAGANDA: The Serbs "invented" the Macedonian nation to "harm" the Bulgarian cause in Macedonia.

RESPONSE TO THIS ATTITUDE: Such an imbecile attitude is not even worth commenting on. However, we believe that we should point out some historical facts that today are also hidden from the

general public in Bulgaria. This primarily refers to the fact that Serbian propaganda from the beginning of the 20th century claimed exactly the same thing that Bulgarian propaganda claims today (of course, with the roles reversed), namely that Bulgarian propaganda was supposedly "invented" by the Macedonian nation. to "harm the Serbian cause in Macedonia".

Let's take as an example the brochure "Demons against the Yugoslavian ideas" by the Serbian publicist Milan Jovanović, published in 1929, in which almost the entire Macedonian history is attacked and belittled, while Serbian history is glorified. Most interesting, however, is that on p. 34 and 35 of this brochure, the author attacks and accuses Bulgaria of allegedly "inventing" the Macedonian nation in order to harm the Serbian cause in Macedonia (!?). Here we read:

“Bulgaria advocates before foreign factors to promote some kind of Macedonian nationality... and even claims to restore some kind of Macedonian state, although such a nationality does not exist, nor are there any inhabitants of the Balkan Peninsula who have any Macedonian tradition... This this is the thesis that official Bulgaria suggests to its body - the Macedonian Committee, and with that it makes the entire Bulgarian people ridiculous...”

That the Macedonian nation is an "invention" of the Bulgarians was also claimed by some Greek entities. Thus, for example, according to Teofilos Papakonstatinu, the Macedonian nation and the Macedonian language were supposedly: "a myth created by the Bulgarians and the Russians" (Hristo Andonovski: "South Macedonia from the Ancients to Today's Macedonians", p. 190).

But that's not all. The Bulgarians also accused Austria-Hungary of being the "inventor" of the Macedonian nation. In one period, the activity of Macedonian revivalists Misirkov and Chupovski was characterized by Bulgaria as "Austro-Hungarian deed".

The Bulgarian, Greek and Serbian chauvinists also accused the communists (the Comintern and the Croat Tito) of being the "inventor" of the Macedonian nation, so woe to us Macedonians with so many candidates as inventors of our nation!

The representatives of the Great Serbian propaganda claimed as early as 1902 that the Bulgarians "invented" the Macedonian nation. The most drastic example of this is an article published in the Belgrade newspaper "Srbin" in the issue of July 14, 1902, in which the Bulgarians are attacked for forcing "Macedonianism" to harm the Serbian cause in Macedonia. At the same time, Macedonian national activists in Serbia were persecuted and arrested, and their newspapers were banned. So the Greater Serbian propaganda forced the Macedonians to declare themselves as "Serbs", and accused those who declared themselves as Macedonians of being "agents of Bulgaria" and there are numerous examples of this.

Here we would also like to mention the Serbian activist Stoyan Novaković, who at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century advocated for the national uniqueness of the Macedonians, after he saw that the Macedonians are neither Serbs nor Bulgarians. The Bulgarian propagandists accuse Novaković that his perception of the reality of the national uniqueness of the Macedonians actually meant his "inventing" the Macedonian nation. But these propagandists forget about their own distinguished Slavist, the Bulgarian Petar Draganov, who acted approximately at the same time as Novakovic and who also advocated the recognition of Macedonian national distinctiveness. The statements of the renowned Bulgarian slavist Draganov in connection with the Macedonian nation and the uniqueness of the Macedonian language in relation to Bulgarian and Serbian are today hidden from the general public in Bulgaria.

Bulgarian propagandists also claim that Stoyan Novakovic wanted to introduce Serbian propaganda into Macedonia by forcing the Macedonian language. But they don't know or don't want to know that the Bulgarians tried to do the same twenty years before Novakovic! One of the leaders of the Bulgarian national movement, Petko Slaveykov, and his like-minded supporters as early as 1869 advocated for forcing the Macedonian language through which they wanted to bring Bulgarian propaganda into Macedonia, for as

testified by the Macedonian revivalist Kuzman Shapkarev, who writes:

The Bulgarian reading room in Constantinople took on the noble goal of helping the poor Bulgarian schools in Macedonia. To achieve this goal, it had published several basic books and given them to those schools. But later it was noticed that those donated textbooks, in the Upper Bulgarian or Thracian dialect in which they were issued, could not bring the benefit that the donors expected, so it was decided in the Reading Room - with them the second edition, those books should be published in the Macedonian dialect...

This is a testimony, from which it can be seen that long before Novaković, the Bulgarians tried to do the same thing that he tried to do after two decades, which is to introduce their propaganda into Macedonia through the Macedonian language. (More details on this at: academician Blaže Ristovski: "Macedonia needs a national program!" see "Macedonian sun", 07.11.1997, p. 13).

ATTITUDE OF BULGARIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY AND PROPAGANDA: All Macedonian revolutionaries in the uprisings against Turkey from the beginning of the 20th century declared themselves as "Bulgarians".

RESPONSE TO THIS ATTITUDE: At the very beginning of the 20th century, two uprisings against the Turkish government were raised in Macedonia. One was raised in 1902 and today is known under the name Gorna Dzumaya Uprising, and the other was the big uprising raised in August 1903, which today is known under the name Ilinden Uprising.

Before moving on to data on the ethnic declaration of the leaders and some of the participants in these uprisings, we are obliged to give the following explanation. We have already said that at that time the Turks did not allow the opening of Macedonian churches and schools, which is why the Macedonians were forced to fulfill their religious needs and education through the Bulgarian, Greek and Serbian churches and their schools, which then operated freely

in Macedonia. The Bulgarian Church (exarchy) was especially involved in that regard. All the Macedonians who wanted to satisfy their religious feelings there were convinced that they were Bulgarians, they were recorded as Bulgarians in the documents, and that's how they were presented to the wider foreign public. In the courtyards of all major churches, there were open schools in which the students who studied in them were told the Bulgarian history, and the historical evidence of the Macedonian national uniqueness was falsified or hidden.

To explain that the Macedonians, who were members of the Bulgarian Church, were not Bulgarians at all, we will use a simple example. Let's take three brothers, ethnic Macedonians, and suppose that each of them attended a different church and different church schools - Bulgarian, Serbian and Greek. What would happen then? One of them (under the influence of Serbian propaganda) would be listed as a Serb in Turkish (but also in all other) documents. This student, in accordance with the historical knowledge he would have received in the Serbian school, would claim that the Macedonians are Serbs. The other two brothers, who would go to a Greek and a Bulgarian church, would behave accordingly and they would claim that the Macedonians are Greeks or Bulgarians, and as such they would be listed in Turkish documents and censuses. Unfortunately, this is the situation we still have today with the denationalized Macedonians in Greece and Bulgaria (but also in Serbia) who, although belong to same nation, claim to be Greeks, Bulgarians or Serbs. That is the tragedy of the Macedonian people.

This tragedy from the beginning of the 20th century was very plastically depicted by the author Nikola Naumov, who in 1905, regarding the successes of foreign propaganda in Macedonia, wrote:

“We (Macedonians, members of the Bulgarian Church, my remark) were brought up in Bulgarian schools, we are imbued with the Bulgarian spirit and we feel like Bulgarians. I do not know how to use any other language than Bulgarian, just as those

Macedonians who were brought up in Serbian schools, cannot use any other language than Serbian". (Blaze Ristovski: "Krste P. Misirkov"... p. 327).

Regarding the foreign propaganda in Macedonia the Macedonian revivalist Krste Misirkov in September 1905, depressingly noted in the introductory article of his magazine "Vardar":

"With money, a person in Macedonia can create from our Macedonians, not only Bulgarian, Serbian and Greek..., but also a Gypsy nation".

Due to this whole situation in Macedonia, it should not be at all surprising that in some of the foreign and Turkish reports about the Ilinden Uprising, the Macedonians were referred to by the name "Bulgarians", or that some of the insurgents (educated in Bulgarian schools) really thought that the Macedonians were "Bulgarians".

But it is also correct to mention the positive actions that Bulgaria had towards the Macedonian insurgents at the time, such as: allowing Macedonian organizations to operate freely on their territory, arming them, receiving and helping the Macedonian refugees (in which special care was shown by the ordinary Bulgarian people, who unselfishly welcomed the Macedonian refugees into their homes, for which we today's genes should be grateful); participation of individual Bulgarians in and around the uprising and a number of other actions.

However, despite all these positive manifestations (regardless of the hidden plans of the Bulgarian government about the fate of Macedonia), and despite the strong Bulgarian propaganda to which the Macedonians were exposed, individual revolutionaries from the beginning of the 20 century, clearly declared themselves as Macedonians (decisively emphasizing that they are not Bulgarians).

We mentioned that in 1902 the so-called Gorna Dzumaya Uprising was erected (so called after the name of the city of Gorna Dzumaya). The leader of this uprising, Anastas Jankov (an ethnic Macedonian, employed as a colonel in the Bulgarian army) considered himself a direct descendant of the ancient

Macedonians. Before the beginning of the uprising, he addressed the following proclamation to the insurgents:

“Macedonians! Remember the world champion, the glory of Macedonia - the great Alexander the Great! Remember the brave king Samuil, the great Macedonian, the great King Marko, the general Slavic glory - that Macedonian blood flowed in all of them. They are now watching over us from the heavenly heights and blessing our begun work. Let us prove ourselves to be their worthy descendants!”

At the end of the following year (1903), in an interview, Colonel Yankov stated:

“I am not a Bulgarian, but a Macedonian and I wish Macedonia freedom and self-government. That is the goal of all true Macedonians...” (“Shtampa”, 01.12.1903).

In 1903, we mentioned that there was a great uprising against Turkish rule, known as the Ilinden Uprising. The leader of this uprising, the great Macedonian revolutionary Boris Sarafov, declared as early as 1902:

“We Macedonians are neither Serbs nor Bulgarians, but simply Macedonians. The Macedonian people exist independently of the Bulgarian and Serbian people. We sympathize with both the Bulgarians and the Serbs, and whoever will help our liberation - we will say thank you to him, but let the Bulgarians and Serbs not forget that Macedonia is only for the Macedonians!”

This statement of Boris Sarafov was given for “Balkanski Glasnik” in the issue of 07.07.1902.

In 1903, i.e. in the year of the Ilinden uprising, Sarafov is decisive again:

“In Serbia and Bulgaria, they still do not realize the huge importance for the autonomy of Macedonia and therefore they are fighting to prove that Bulgarians and Serbs live in Macedonia. We Macedonians are neither Bulgarians nor Serbs, we are only Macedonians and we want freedom for us and for our Macedonia.”

Sarafov gave this statement to the newspaper "Shtampa" (November 30, 1903), and a similar statement was published in the Sofia daily "Mir" (December 2, 1903).

Foreign newspapers also wrote about Boris Sarafov as a Macedonian (not Bulgarian) national activist. Thus, for example, the Austrian newspaper "Die Zeit" wrote about Boris Sarafov and his advocacy for an independent Macedonia in 1902:

"Sarafov works for Macedonia to gain political independence. The fact is that there is a certain difference between the Macedonian dialect and the language spoken in Serbia or Bulgaria, which is why there is a desire for the dialect of this province to develop independently. In that sense, Sarafov gave the motto: Macedonia to the Macedonians!..."

The French newspaper "Le Temps" (July 30, 1903) writes that Boris Sarafov stated that the Macedonian insurgents had decided either to die or to win freedom. The newspaper also writes that Sarafov stated that the Macedonian insurgents will implement the "Macedonia of the Macedonians" program, independently of Bulgaria.

Even the Japanese newspaper "Osaka Mainichi Shimbun" in the issue of August 14, 1903, writing about the Ilinden Uprising, described Boris Sarafov as the leader of the Macedonians:

"Referring to the news coming from London, the uprising is still spreading, and on top of that, the Russian consul has been assassinated. The insurgents are made of: Macedonians, Bulgarians and Albanians, while Boris Sarafov, who leads the Macedonians, is considered the most important person."

Let the Bulgarian propagandists think about how the largest number of ordinary insurgents and local leaders declared themselves as soon as their leader Boris Sarafov publicly declared that he was Macedonian and not Bulgarian. They will also have to answer the question: why today's Bulgarian historiography does not write anything about the Macedonian national manifestations of Boris Sarafov, but also of other Ilinden revolutionaries?

During the Ilinden Uprising, the city of Krushevo was liberated and a republic was declared, which lasted only ten days. The president of that short-lived Macedonian republic was Nikola Karev. In an interview for the Greek newspaper "Acropolis" on May 8, 1903, Nikola Karev clearly declared himself as a descendant of the ancient Macedonians.

The most famous revolutionary of the late 19th and early 20th centuries in Macedonia was Gotse Delchev, who was killed by the Turks before the beginning of the Ilinden Uprising. Although he was an exarchic teacher, he also made several unequivocal statements regarding the Macedonians:

"The one who wants to work for the accession of Macedonia to Bulgaria, Greece or Serbia, he can be a good Bulgarian, a good Greek, or a good Serbian, but not a good Macedonian".

Because of his views, Delchev was attacked in Bulgaria. Some Bulgarian newspapers even two whole years after Delchev's death were still attacking his character and his Macedonian national activity. As an example of this, we will quote an excerpt from an article published in the Sofia newspaper "Reformi", and also transmitted in the Bulgarian newspaper "Svobodno slovo" from 1905:

"Delchev really began to imagine that he was the real master of the Macedonian work and that his will should be the supreme will. Later, famous phrases began to flow from his mouth, such as: "As long as my shoulder carries the rifle, no Bulgarian officer is allowed to set foot in Macedonia!" The border is a plank of pikes, the edges of which are directed at the chests of the officers."...

This is indisputable proof of the extremely negative attitude of the Bulgarian press towards Gotse Delchev. It was only later, after realizing his reputation among the Macedonians, that the Bulgarians began to exert themselves to prove that he was "Bulgarian". These Bulgarian attacks of that time are today hidden from the wider public in Bulgaria.

As a publicly declared Macedonians from those times were: Boris Sarafov's close friend Matej Gerov from Tetovo, the military

leader Blaze Birincheto, Dimitar Miraschiev and his comrade Jordan Angelov (who were arrested in Sofia because of this), Milan Stoilov, Filip Nikolovski, Nikola Kirov Mayski and others.

The Macedonian national articulations among the revolutionaries were criticized by the then Bulgarian newspaper "Svobodno slovo" (1.6.1905), but also by other Bulgarian subjects.

In the same year 1905, the Macedonian activist Gligor Hadjitashkov wrote in the newspaper "Avtonomna Makedonija":

"Macedonia is neither Serbian nor Bulgarian, but ours, Macedonian... Various committees continue their work, preach Serbianism, Bulgarianism and Hellenism in Macedonia, arm the Macedonians alone against each other, brother against brother, because the first say that Macedonia is Serbian, the second that it is Bulgarian, and the third that it is Greek... Our newspaper does not promote Serbian ideas, Greek or Bulgarian, but Macedonian."

In 1903, the Macedonian revivalist Krste Misirkov published his book "About the Macedonian Affairs", which was attacked both in Serbia and Bulgaria due to its Macedonian national content. Here are excerpts from this book:

"We need to create such a situation in Macedonia that there will be neither Bulgarian, nor Serbian, nor Greek interests, because there are neither Bulgarians, nor Serbs, nor Greeks, but only Macedonians..."

And further:

"As long as some Macedonians will be considered Bulgarians, others as Serbs, others as Greeks and will seek patronage from various Balkan states, thus giving them the right to meddle in Macedonian affairs, until then they cannot think of a general uprising, but will be only parts with Bulgarian, Serbian or Greek, but not Macedonian character at all."

Regarding Bulgaria, Misirkov also made the following statements:

"As a Macedonian, I feel like I'm in a foreign country in Bulgaria."

And further:

“Let Bulgaria dream of its expansion. Macedonians are not interested in that. Macedonians need reunification and independence. Macedonians do not need a great Bulgaria, but a united and free Macedonia”.

We will also mention the letters that the Bulgarian agent Eftim Sprostranov sent to the Bulgarian Prime Minister R. Petrov in the time immediately after the Ilinden Uprising. In them, Sprostranov clearly described the situation about the articulations of the Macedonian national consciousness from the beginning of the 20th century. In a letter dated in November 1903, he writes:

“As you can see, Mr. Prime Minister, such ideas, which are already widely accepted by the Macedonian population, are not to be underestimated in the slightest so that they are not given much attention. If I add to that that the propagators of Macedonian separatism set about very studiously and enthusiastically printing books, dictionaries, reading books, history textbooks and grammar in the Macedonian language, then you can understand more realistically the danger for Bulgaria in Macedonia. I am convinced that in a very short time, except for the thin layer of the Macedonian intelligentsia educated in Bulgarian schools, the people will reject the Bulgarian language and accept the Macedonian, that is, their mother tongue, because there will be no need to learn it, as he is learning the Bulgarian language with difficulty!”

Here we would like to emphasize that there was no any “Macedonian separatism”, as Sprostranov claims, but only the truth that the Macedonian national consciousness among the Macedonian revolutionaries was inherited from their ancestors. We also see that he admits that the Macedonians learned the Bulgarian language with difficulty.

The participants in the time around the Ilinden Uprising gave statements about the Macedonian national feeling much later. Thus, for example, the famous Macedonian revolutionary and assassin Pavel Shatev stated in 1926:

“The ideal of any Macedonian is the creation of a homeland, a separate Macedonian state, with a Macedonian nation, with its own history and its own independent political and cultural life”.

The dozens of surviving participants in the events in and around the Ilinden uprising, who welcomed the national freedom of the Macedonians in 1944, were witnesses to the declaration of the people of Ilinden as Macedonians. A large number of them wrote or recorded their memories, mainly in the forties and fifties of the 20th century, in which they themselves say how they felt and for whom they fought.

There were other numerous foreign testimonies about the Macedonian national distinctiveness around the Ilinden period.

Thus, for example, the Russian professor P. A. Lavrov in 1900/1901, introduced the Macedonian language as a special subject at the St. Petersburg Faculty of History and Philology.

The Romanian scholar Zamfir Abure, in his article dedicated to Boris Sarafov, under the title “Boris Sarafov is Macedonia”, published in Bucharest (1901), wrote that the Macedonian language is a separate language, which was a direct successor of the language of Saint Cyril and Saint Methodius.

The Vienna newspaper “Die Zeit” (October 1, 1903) writes:

“In Macedonia, we are talking about a nation that uses the right to self-determination, the right that fundamentally changed the map of Europe in the 19th century... The Macedonians are actually not asking for anything else, but for the same that before them achieved the Greeks, Serbs, Bulgarians...”

In 1903, Romuald Przewalski from Poland also wrote about the effort of Macedonians to separate their language from Bulgarian, and he also wrote about the independence of Macedonians.

In the Slovenian city of Celje on June 1, 1903, a protest meeting was held in connection with the events in Croatia and Macedonia. In the Declaration that was read in relation to Macedonia, the Macedonians are mentioned as a separate nation (Dr. Vasilij Melik: “The Slovenes for Macedonia and the Yugoslav Question in 1903” in: “Ilinden 1903”, INI, Skopje, 1970 p. 414). Here we read:

“...Since the Turkish government is not able to humanly rule over the Christians, we see the only solution for the Macedonians in their complete liberation from the Turkish yoke. So, we express our wish that the superpowers, including Austria, influence Macedonia to become independent.”

There are also Greek testimonies of the time about the Macedonians. In March 1904, Pavlos Melas, who was a Greek artillery lieutenant, and also the head and organizer of the Greek movement in Macedonia, visited the Macedonian villages of Gabresh, Chernovishta, Rulya, Burma, Zhelevo and Orovnik. About the visit to the village of Rulya in his "Memories" published in 1926, he wrote:

“We all visited the school together. The teacher speaks very bad Greek. He asked the children to sing. We didn't understand whether the language was Macedonian or Greek... I also learned a few Macedonian words and I tell them to the women, especially the mothers”.

There are other such Greek testimonies.

The Russian civilian agent Petrayev, in 1907, after visiting Macedonia, wrote:

“The population itself begins to feel very noticeably burdened by the propaganda and it most sincerely demands to be left alone. Delegations from the villages came to the Kostur district and told us that they did not want either Greek or Bulgarian teachers and priests, but begged to be given Macedonian. When asked about their nationality, they answered that they were Macedonians.” (Dr. Simon Dracul, “Macedonian Sun”, 20.02.1998, p. 13).

The Austrian prof. Dr. Rudolph Kindinger studied in Macedonia around the time of the Ilinden Uprising, because his father worked there. Later he published his Memoirs under the title “Excerpts from my memories before, during and after Ilinden (1903) in Macedonia” (INI, “Ilinden 1903”, Skopje, 1970). In his memoirs, Dr. Kindinger clearly mentions the Macedonians as inhabitants of Macedonia, who spoke their own Macedonian language. Here we read:

“My father often worked with Macedonian workers on the railway, and besides them there were always two Macedonians - train drivers, who had to spend the night with us in case of need. Even as a small child, I learned the Macedonian language from these workers...”

And further:

“In 1892 I came to Salonica to the German primary school where, as I mentioned, the children of the railway workers studied. There, approximately in 1894, I learned for the first time from our school official - a Macedonian, who was from Gevgeliya, that a secret organization was founded for the liberation of Macedonia... I was the only one in the school who could to speak to him in his own language, because our Austrian teachers at the time did not understand Macedonian.”

In Romania, the professor of Slavic studies at the University of Iasi, Iliia Barbulesco, wrote around 1908:

“All these Slavic settlers on the territory of Romania, whom sometimes we Romanians, because of the false theories that are served to us, think that speak Bulgarian, are mainly workers and gardeners who immigrated from Macedonia and say about themselves that they are Macedonians, not Bulgarians.” (I. Barbulesco: “Romanians vs. Serbs and Bulgarians - especially with regard to the issue of Macedonian Romanians”, Belgrade, 1908, p. 95).

In the interest of space, we will stop here with the presentation of testimonies about the Macedonian national independence from the period we reviewed, although there are many more such examples.

ATTITUDE OF BULGARIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY AND PROPAGANDA: In a large number of medieval and modern documents it is written that "Bulgarians" live in Macedonia.

ANSWER TO THIS ATTITUDE: Even a superficial analysis of a large part of those documents will show that the use of the ethnonym "Bulgarians" as inhabitants of Macedonia was not always

with an ethnic meaning and it can be considered from several different aspects.

1. Use of the name "Bulgarians" for all members of the Bulgarian church (exarchy). In this case, the term Bulgarians was not used in an ethnic sense. It was used here as a term for determining all members of the Bulgarian Church (exarchy). We will illustrate this with a well-known example. In several Bulgarian historical books, the Macedonian revolutionary from the Ilinden Uprising Pitu Guli is mentioned together with other Macedonian rebels, and all of them are claimed to have been Bulgarians (!?). However, it is well known that Pitu Guli was ethnically - Vlach! So he couldn't be Bulgarian at all. Pitu Guli, as a Vlach, satisfied his religious feelings in the Bulgarian church, and because of that, even though he was a Vlach, he was misled as a Bulgarian in their documents, and later he was called a Bulgarian revolutionary by the Bulgarian peopagandists. So this is a case according to which the term Bulgarians was not used in an ethnic sense, but as a term for all who belonged to the Bulgarian Church, regardless of their ethnic origin. It was the same in the Greek and Serbian churches which operated in Macedonia and which in their documents treated as Greeks or as Serbs, all who belonged to their churches regardless of their ethnic origin.

2. Disguised use of the term "Bulgarians". Some Macedonians, due to fear or simply for pragmatic reasons, in the countries where they were persecuted, not being allowed to use the ethnic name Macedonians, used various disguised names. Thus, in Bulgaria the Macedonians used the camouflage syntagma "Macedonian Bulgarians", in Greece the term "Endopi" was in use, and in Serbia – "Povardarians". Of course, the voluntary use of the term Bulgarians for pragmatic reasons should also be considered here. Namely, in order to get a job in Bulgaria, many Macedonians of that time, whether they wanted to or not, had to declare themselves as Bulgarians. The same is the case with the Macedonian revolutionaries who, due to their work in the Bulgarian services, had to declare themselves as Bulgarians because otherwise they would

have been expelled from their jobs. In such cases, ethnic declaration falls into the background in relation to the activity. Namely, some Macedonian revolutionaries, on the one hand, wrote that they were Bulgarians, and on the other, they did a series of anti-Bulgarian actions, for which they were severely criticized, persecuted and arrested in Bulgaria itself. This is supported by the comment of the editor of the reputable Sofia newspaper "Dnevnik" named Nikolov, in which he claims that the Macedonians were close to both the Serbs and the Bulgarians until they were freed, after which they would tell them goodbye to both. (More details at Blaže Ristovski: "Krstev P. Misirkov...", p. 383-384).

This category also includes certain petitions and requests that ordinary Macedonians sent to the high authorities of the Bulgarian government (such as: requests to intervene with the Turks to release an imprisoned relative of the petitioner from prison; to find a place for the petitioner to live in Bulgaria; to enroll the petitioner in one of the Bulgarian schools, etc.). It is obvious that in all these documents the petitioners had to declare themselves as Bulgarians in order to get what they are asking for. Macedonians in Serbia and Greece, and later in Yugoslavia, were forced to do the same.

3. Use of the term "Bulgarians" as inhabitants of the Byzantine theme "Bulgaria" In the 8th century, for reasons that are not completely clear, Byzantium formed a "theme" (administrative area) on the territory of Macedonia, which it called "Bulgaria", and at the same time, on a large part of the territory of today's Bulgaria, it formed a theme (administrative area) which it called "Macedonia". So the Byzantines "changed" the names of the two areas (just like when today someone would name Holland as "Belgium" and Belgium as "Holland"). So, there are Byzantine documents in which all inhabitants of the theme "Bulgaria" (which was mainly located in today's Macedonia) were named "Bulgarians" (in the sense of residents of that administrative area), and all residents of the theme "Macedonia" (which was mainly located on the territory of today's Bulgaria) were named "Macedonians".

However, today's Bulgarian propaganda tries to use this to its own advantage by interpreting such documents unilaterally. Byzantine documents that mention "Bulgarians" as inhabitants of the theme "Bulgaria" are said to be "proof" that "ethnic Bulgarians" lived in Macedonia, and for documents that mention "Macedonians" as inhabitants of the theme "Macedonia" (mainly in today's Bulgaria) write that it was not an ethnic term, but an administrative-geographical term for the inhabitants of the theme "Macedonia" (!?). So this is the double standard that the Bulgarian propaganda is trying to act with.

4. Use of the term "Bulgarians" as a derogatory word - a synonym for people of lower culture. This use of the term "bulgarians" (with a small "b") is found in some Byzantine documents. The racial prejudices that the Byzantine public had in the past towards the Turko-Mongolian Bulgarians mostly contributed to the determination of this treatment of the Bulgarian ethnic name by some later Byzantine writers as well. Let's just remember the violent destruction and terror that these Bulgarians committed in Byzantium (burying alive captured Byzantines, destroying monasteries and churches, raping, cutting fruit trees, etc.). All this contributed to the Byzantine public identifying the Bulgarian ethnonym with a synonym for people of a "lower cultural level".

Of course that the Byzantine army was not any milder in its destructive campaigns against the Bulgarians and it is certain that they were not treated better by the Bulgarian side either - these are normal phenomena when it comes to relations between enemy nations.

The biggest evidence for this treatment of the ethnonym Bulgarians is that other (according to Byzantium) "peoples with a lower culture" were also named as "Bulgarians" in some later Byzantine documents, although they did not live on the territory of Bulgaria at all. Thus, for example, Bosnians, Slovenians, Croats and others were also named as "Bulgarians". We will mention the example of the Byzantine writer and archbishop Theophylact of

Ohrid (11th and 12th century), who claimed that in the 6th century "Bulgarians" lived in "Illyrian land" as well as in "Macedonia" (Jordan Ivanov, "Bulgarian Antiquities from Macedonia" ", Sofia, 1931, p.121). This means that practically he claimed that Bulgarians lived in the present-day territories of Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia, Montenegro, and maybe even part of Albania, which of course is pointless to assume, so that during the time written by Theophylact of Ohrid (6th century), the Bulgarians still lived in their homeland Asia. Even later they never settled in these territories, let alone in the 6th century.

So, it is clear that the inhabitants of these lands, for Theophylact of Ohrid, were "people with a lower culture", so he called them with the term Bulgarians, which in his time (11th and 12th centuries) was already used exactly as a synonym for "people with a lower culture" (from the point of view of Byzantine aspects).

It is known that there are other examples in the world when a certain ethnonym is used as a synonym for some phenomenon or human characteristic. So, for example, the ethnonym "Scot" is sometimes jokingly used as a synonym for "miser" and so on.

Because of all this, the term Bulgarians in the Byzantine medieval sources should not be manipulated, because empirical evidence says that it was not always used in an affirmative sense.

ATTITUDE OF THE BULGARIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY AND PROPAGANDA: During the Second World War, Bulgaria was not a fascist state and it "liberated" the Vardar and part of the Aegean part of Macedonia.

RESPONSE TO THIS ATTITUDE: With such claims, Bulgarian propagandists are trying to deny notorious and well-known historical facts. So here are some of them.

Bulgaria was a military ally of the greatest criminal in the history of mankind, Adolf Hitler. Bulgaria officially acceded to the Axis Powers on March 1, 1941. As a faithful ally of Hitler, on 13.12.1941, Bulgaria declared war on Great Britain and the United States. Previously Bulgaria (which occupied a small part of Macedonia in

1913) in April 1941 occupied another part of Macedonia, part of Serbia and part of Greece. It was a reward from Hitler for his ally Bulgaria.

From these occupied parts, the Bulgarian government terrorized the local population and deported a total of about 11,400 Jews (men, women and children), of which over 7,200 were from the Vardar part of Macedonia. It happened on the night between March 10 and 11, 1943, when the cities of Bitola, Shtip and Skopje were blocked, and the Jewish settlements were surrounded by the Bulgarian army and police. In the early morning hours of March 11, the gathering of the Jews began. Armed policemen, agents and soldiers went from house to house and rounded up the Jews. Women, children and the sick were loaded into trucks. The policemen told the people to take all valuables and money with them, because they would need them, and that they would be transferred to Bulgaria. However, they were all deported to the Treblinka camp where they were suffocated in gas chambers and none of them returned. Their properties were looted by the Bulgarian policemen and soldiers, and a large part of their houses were demolished. Earlier, in 1940, Bulgaria passed an anti-Semitic law.

However, it is also true that thanks to the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and a certain number of Bulgarian intellectuals, the deportation of around 50,000 Jews from Bulgaria itself was prevented, but this does not absolve the then Bulgarian authorities of the crime they committed against the Jews from the occupied parts of Macedonia and Thrace.

At the beginning of the war, i.e. from April 1941 until the middle of 1943, the Fifth Bulgarian Army consisting of two divisions and a large gendarmerie force were engaged in the Vardar part of Macedonia, and in 1943 Bulgaria sent another 1 division and 2 regiments of the 29th division to the Vardar part of Macedonia, 2 battalions for securing the railway-road routes and numerous gendarmerie. In total, in the Vardar part of Macedonia, in 1944 there

were about four Bulgarian divisions. After the capitulation of Italy, two more German divisions arrived.

Macedonians and members of other nations in Macedonia started an armed uprising against the Bulgarian and German fascist occupiers as early as 1941. The partisan form of armed struggle prevailed until the middle of 1943, when larger military formations were formed. During the war, seven divisions and three corps were formed in the Macedonian army. The strength of the Macedonian army in December 1944 was about 66,000 fighters, and in April 1945, the National Liberation Army numbered over 100,000 regular soldiers.

The Bulgarian fascist army also committed crimes against the Macedonian civilian population, the most famous of which is the massacre in the Macedonian village of Vataša in June 1943, when 12 young people were shot. Later, the responsible Bulgarian officers, as well as other accomplices of the Bulgarian fascist occupier, were sentenced to death and shot by the Macedonian authorities.

During the Bulgarian fascist occupation, more than 8,000 Macedonians were arrested and interned in camps, and during the clashes with the Macedonian partisans, the Bulgarian army and police suffered great losses (for which there is extensive documentation).

As a result of the alliance with Hitler and the war that Bulgaria declared on the United States and Great Britain, the allied Anglo-American aviation repeatedly bombed the territory of Bulgaria, especially the capital Sofia, in the period from 1941 to 1944.

So, for example, in April 1941, British aviation bombed Sofia with the surrounding villages and Haskovo, and before that, Kyustendil was also bombed, causing dozens of victims. Sofia was bombed in November and December 1943, as well as in January and several times in March and April 1944. During the April bombing alone, Anglo-American aviation dropped over 2,500 bombs on Sofia. The exact number of Bulgarian soldiers and civilians killed during these

bombings is not known, but it is known that over 1,700 were wounded and over 12,500 buildings were destroyed.

ATTITUDE OF BULGARIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY AND PROPAGANDA: Macedonian historians falsify Bulgarian history.

RESPONSE TO THIS ATTITUDE: In fact it is quite the opposite. The Bulgarian propagators who claim this have so far not offered any evidence for such claims. On the other hand, there are a large number of examples of falsification of various segments of Macedonian ethno-cultural identity throughout history and today by Bulgarian historians and publicists, but also by other subjects.

These falsifications cover a wide range: from changing the content of the original documents to hiding and destroying evidence of Macedonian national identity throughout the history. Let us illustrate this with a few examples.

The writer Slave Makedonski (otherwise declared an ethnic Macedonian from Bulgaria) when he was alive testified that Bulgarian chauvinists imported fakes in his novels (at least during the period of communism in Bulgaria when book publishing was strictly controlled by state censorship). So, for example, not wanting to mention the Bulgarians as inhabitants of Macedonia, and not even daring to mention the Macedonians (who lived under terrible terror and denationalization during the Bulgarian communism) in the manuscripts of several of his novels, about the Macedonians he used the compromising and masking terms: Christians, Christian and others.

However, after the publication of his books, the terms Christian, Christian and the like - everywhere in the text were replaced and falsified with the terms: Bulgarians, Bulgarian etc. Of course, there was no question of any kind of protest, if he didn't want to end up in prison. But what will happen in the future? Bulgarian propagandists would try to "prove" that Slave Makedonski was "Bulgarian", because he "himself" wrote about the Bulgarians in his books and because he "himself" used the Bulgarian terms. The Macedonian writer commented on this in a tragicomic way, declaring: I am a

living Macedonian and everywhere I declare myself as such, and they, before my eyes, make me a Bulgarian. What will happen when I die - I can only guess.

A similar event was once witnessed by the Macedonian linguist Gjorgi Kiselinov. During the Serbian occupation of Macedonia (1918 – 1941) he published articles with Macedonian national content. But during the Bulgarian occupation (1941 – 1944) he suddenly started glorifying Bulgarianism in his articles. However, after the liberation of Macedonia, Kiselinov publicly declared himself a Macedonian and put himself completely at the service of the progress of the Macedonian nation. For his pro-Bulgarian articles, Kiselinov testified that he was ordered to write them by the Bulgarian occupiers, and it often happened that his texts were later adjusted by the editorial offices where he published, i.e. Bulgarian determinations for our people were additionally thrown into them (Dr. Stojan Risteski: "Tabu-temata: Kiselinov-Koneski", Ohrid, 1994, p. 16).

There are many other such cases. Unfortunately, the result of such decade-long forgeries are the Macedonians, who lightly accepted such works as "proof of the Bulgarian character of the Macedonians". But when the truth at least partially will come to light (which is already starting to happen), the defeat of the Great Bulgarian propaganda will be even more convincing.

An even bolder forgery was made on a poem by the great poet and Macedonian revolutionary Nikola Yonkov Vaptsarov. It is about the song "Doklad". In this poem, the poet, singing about Macedonia, wrote the words: "*for her*"! However, in the Russian translation of this poem (made by the Bulgarian D. F. Markov), instead of "*for her*" the words: "*for our Bulgaria*" (!?) were inserted. This kind of shameless forgery will speak to Russian readers for a long time about the "Bulgarian national consciousness" of the Macedonian poet Vaptsarov. Based on this Bulgarian forgery, it is possible that some Russian analysts, historians or essayists will later write articles about the "Bulgarian national feeling" of Vaptsarov. And not only that. Later, Bulgarian propagandists could refer to exactly such

Russian works as proof that in other countries it is claimed that Macedonians are (or used to be) Bulgarians.

A brazen forgery was also made in the Bulgarian translation of the "Memoirs" of the French baron Francois de Tot. In his "Memoirs" he wrote:

"Twenty-two Macedonians, each with a rifle on his shoulder... were singing songs about Alexander's victories in a bar". ("Memories du baron de Tott sur les Turcs et les Tartares", Amsterdam, 1784, cited according to G. Radule, cited work, p. 250).

However, the Bulgarian historian Arnaudov, in his book: "Verković and Veda Slovena" (BAN, Sofia, 1968, p. 12), commenting on this description of Baron Francois de Tot, writes:

"Baron de Toth very correctly records that the Bulgarian workers celebrated the victories of Alexander the Great during their vacations".

So, the term Macedonians here has been brazenly replaced by Bulgarian workers. Truly an example of an shameless fake!

The following is a funny example of Bulgarian forgeries related to Macedonian history. The Bulgarian historian Ivan Kolarov, in the preface to his book "Macedonia and the Bulgarian Tribe" (Sofia, 1932), wrote that Alexander the Great was - Bulgarian!?! Here he wrote that he was studying (quote)...*"the struggles, the greatness, the fall and the rise of the Bulgarian tribe from Alexander the Great to the present day"*.

In his interview for the world Macedonian weekly "Macedonian Sun" (08.05.1998), the well known fighter for human rights of the Macedonians from the Aegean part of Macedonia in Greece, priest Nikodimos Tsarknias, reacting to an anti-Macedonian statement of the Greek politician Pangalos, among other things, he says that on the streets of Salonica: *"...Mr. Pangalos will make sure that the people there do not speak Greek, but Macedonian"*.

Part of Tsarknias' interview was broadcast in the Bulgarian newspaper "BNS Makedonija" (June 3, 1998), but there the word "Macedonian" was carelessly replaced by the word "Slavic" (!?). So, Bulgarian readers are brazenly subjected to a falsified statement by

Archimandrite Tsarknias in order to continue to mislead them regarding Macedonian history and reality.

At a large number of international folklore festivals or other similar events, Bulgarian folklore ensembles often perform Macedonian folk songs and dances, which they present as “Bulgarian”. This is to prove that Macedonian and Bulgarian songs are “the same”, which in turn sends a message that Macedonians and Bulgarians are “the same people”.

The same is the case with other Macedonian cultural segments, which in Bulgaria are presented as “Bulgarian” (folk art, costumes, architecture, etc.).

Forgeries were also made by planting falsified historical monuments that “prove” the alleged Bulgarian character of Macedonia. Such forgeries were made as early as the 19th century.

In 1997, news broke in Bulgaria that an inscription from the time of tsar Samuel was found near the Macedonian town of Voden, which supposedly dates back to 989. This inscription became known under the name of “The Voden inscription”. In it, tsar Samuel clearly declares himself as a “Bulgarian”, and defines the inhabitants of his kingdom as “Bulgarians”. But the director of the National History Museum in Sofia, Božidar Dimitrov, after the expert examination of this inscription, decisively stated that there is no doubt that it is a classic forgery. As falsifiers, Dimitrov pointed out the Bulgarian national-romantics of the 19th century, who, in their romantic enthusiasm, falsified this record and buried it for future times.

Finally, let's mention the occurrence of hiding documents and other objects, which prove the Macedonian national separateness throughout history.

In 1944, in the vicinity of Gorna Dzumaya (today's Blagoevgrad) in Bulgaria, the monument from the Roman period was removed, on which it was written that the city of Skaptopatra (a city that was located near the our city of Sandanski) was a “Macedonian city”. On the monument it was written:

“I, Caesar, forbid my soldiers, as well as my officers, to enter Skapopatra and disturb the inhabitants of this Macedonian city-state”.

If this monument is really destroyed (as some assume), then it is a matter of pure barbarism of destroying remains of ancient history.

In the 1960s, it was possible to research the newspaper “Macedonian voice” (1885) in Bulgarian libraries. But when the Bulgarian propagandists discovered the contents of this newspaper, it suddenly disappeared from the Bulgarian libraries and was no longer accessible to scientific researchers from Macedonia.

The same thing happened with the original work “Report” of the poet Nikola Yonkov Vaptsarov, which was in his museum in Sofia. After Macedonian historians showed interest, it was removed from the museum overnight. The reason is that, there Vapcarov clearly declared himself as a Macedonian.

Of course, there are other such numerous examples, but the most numerous are the forgeries of personal documents and other documents of the Macedonians that were carried out during the totalitarian regime of Todor Zivkov, when hundreds of thousands of Macedonians forcibly were registered as “Bulgarians”.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF MACEDONIA

Around 808 – 777 BC. The ancient Macedonian state was established by the emperor Caranus.

336 – 323 BC. Macedonia is ruled by Alexander the Great of Macedon (son of Philip II of Macedon), who makes this country the greatest world power.

168 – 148 BC. The Roman Empire destroys the ancient Macedonian state after the three great Roman-Macedonian wars.

End of Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Macedonia is part of the Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantium).

End of the 9th and beginning of the 10th century. Macedonia was temporarily occupied by the Turco-Mongolian Bulgarians led by Tsar Simeon, during whose time Bulgaria experienced a great territorial expansion in the Balkans.

969 – 1018. Macedonia becomes independent as the center of a multi-ethnic state called Samuil's kingdom. In 1018 Byzantium subdues Samuel's kingdom. The Macedonians raise two unsuccessful uprisings against the Byzantine government.

12th – 14th century. Macedonia was temporarily under the rule of both the Bulgarians and the Serbs.

End of the 14th century. Macedonia was occupied by the Turks and for the next 5 centuries the Macedonians were part of the Ottoman Empire, against which they raised several uprisings.

1912 and 1913. The previously created Balkan states of the Ottoman Empire: Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria declare war on Turkey and divide the territory of Macedonia among themselves. A small part of Macedonia remains within the borders of the newly created state of Albania. Denationalization began with the Macedonians, during which they were convinced that they were Serbs, Greeks or Bulgarians. Macedonians are putting up fierce armed and intellectual resistance against this situation.

1918 – 1941. The Vardar part of Macedonia (which was occupied by Serbia) is within the borders of kingdom Yugoslavia. Macedonians fiercely oppose forced denationalization.

1941 – 1944. Bulgaria (as an ally of Hitler) occupies most of the Vardar part of Macedonia and part of the Aegean part (which was under Greece).

1941 – 1945. Macedonians in all parts of Macedonia are raising an armed uprising against the occupiers.

1944. The Vardar part of Macedonia has been liberated from the fascist occupiers. The Republic of Macedonia was proclaimed within the framework of communist Yugoslavia. **1945 – 1948.** In the Pirin part of Macedonia (under Bulgaria), the national rights of the Macedonians are recognized and there is already open talk of uniting this part of Macedonia with the Vardar part within the Balkan Federation.

1946 – 1949. The Civil War is raging in Greece, in which the Macedonians are actively participating as part of the Democratic Army of Greece (DAG), which promises them national rights if it comes to power.

1949. After the defeat of DAG in Greece, tens of thousands of Macedonians are forced to leave this country. Those Macedonians who remained are subjected to terror and denationalization. At the same time, Bulgaria (under the dictates of Stalin) revokes the national rights of the Macedonians and confronts the Macedonian republic, which is within Yugoslavia.

1991. Yugoslavia is falling apart, and the Vardar part of Macedonia (the Republic of Macedonia within Yugoslavia) declares independence in a referendum. Since then, the problems that this country has with its neighbors Greece and Bulgaria begin, who are obviously afraid that Macedonia can support the Macedonians who remained in the parts of Macedonia under their rule, where they are still subject to denationalization.

2019. Under pressure and blackmail from Greece, the Republic of Macedonia changed its constitutional name to the Republic of North Macedonia, after which it became a member of NATO. To this day, Bulgaria creates problems for Macedonia to enter the EU, setting unreasonable demands, behind which other foreign interests are obviously hidden.

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Aleksandar DONSKI is born in Stip. He comes from an artistic family. He is the author of over thirty books, dozens of radio and TV documentary shows and hundreds of articles in the area of Macedonian history, folklore, religion, travel and literature, for which he has received some awards and accolades.