

ON THE MACEDONIAN MATTERS

KRSTE PETKOV MISIRKOV

ЗА МАКЕДОНСКИТЕ РАБОТИ

145

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CONTENTS

Introduction	i
Biographical Notes	vi
On the Macedonian Matters	
Preface	1
What We Have Done So Far and What We Ought To Do in the Future?	7
Is There a Need for Macedonian Scientific and Literary Societies?.....	30
National Separatism the Basis on Which We Have Been Developing and on Which We Shall Continue to Develop	42
A Few Words on the Macedonian Literary Language	59
Krsté Petkov Misirkov (1874-1926)	67

INTRODUCTION

During the past two centuries the Balkans have been a constant disputing point for the Great Powers; and Macedonia, being situated at the center of the Balkans, has always been subject in a variety of ways to foreign intrigues and machinations. Through the reforms which had already been outlined at the Berlin Congress of 1876 — in the celebrated Article 23 of the Agreement — Macedonia, which was at that time still part of the Ottoman Empire, was supposed to be granted certain autonomous rights.

All the neighboring countries had already been liberated, and the Sultan's Empire was already in its decline, so that it seemed possible that Macedonia might be granted national autonomy in certain respects. This was to have been the first step towards her future emergence as an independent and self-governing state. Time passed, however, and the proposed reforms remained mere documents while Macedonia continued to be under the complete control of the Turks.

Despite this unfavorable situation, however, the Macedonian national consciousness continued to develop during this period — the last decades of the previous century — and a number of exceptional Macedonian intellectuals emerged as national fighters, who, through their single-mindedness and determination, helped to mould the national liberation movement in Macedonia. This movement now began to expand and develop along increasingly clear and well-defined lines. One of the outstanding representatives of this movement was Krsté P. Misirkov. With Misirkov began a period of sound, deep, and thoroughgoing research into the question of public recognition of Macedonia's status as an independent state.

This, however, was also a time when the Bulgarian, Serb, and Greek propagandists were stepping up their activity in Macedonia as a result, the truth about Macedonia and the Macedonians which had every right to be made known, became clouded over and distorted from outside. The propagandists were well armed with powerful "arguments", including bribes of gold or money to induce individual Macedonians to renounce their nationality, the infiltration of terrorist bands, and the publishing of books which "proved" the rights of the

respective country over Macedonia. Such “arguments”, alas, are still being used today by those circles whose concern it is to contest the Macedonians’ status as a separate nation.

The effect of the foreign propaganda at this time was highly destructive to the unity of the young Macedonian nation, which had taken its place after Considerable delay upon the stage of history, and was therefore subject to attacks from all sides. The influence of the foreign expansionists in Macedonia had begun to take on immense and alarming proportions, and great credit is due to the whole national liberation movement for its opposition, and particularly to the dedicated public worker Krsté Misirkov for appealing to the conscience of Europe, through his public appearances and through his book *On the Macedonian Matters*, to intervene at once and put an end to foreign interference, and thus foil them in their dishonorable attempt to engulf an entire nation which could boast of its own past, its own culture and language, and its own territorial unity. Misirkov looked on this psychological, physical, and territorial pressure from outside and from within as a fundamental barrier to the further development of the complete and unified path of progress the Macedonians were following. Misirkov insisted on the unity of the Macedonians and the territorial completeness of Macedonia in defending her own individual existence. He perceived with great acuity that the ultimate aim of the Greek, Serbian, and Bulgarian propagandists was the partition of Macedonia; and this, indeed, was practically what happened during the Balkan wars, ten years after the publication of his book.

As a result of the expansion of the national liberation movement, whose flag bore the words “freedom and independence for Macedonia”, a Secret Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization, better known as VMRO, was formed in 1893 in Salonica. Within a very short time thousands of Macedonians had joined its fighting ranks. Under the leadership of the legendary Gotsé Delchev (1872-1903) the Macedonians prepared themselves thoroughly and intensively for the decisive battle against their oppressors. However, owing to interference from outside, particularly from the Bulgarians, who had their men even among the leaders of the Organization, it was decided to force the launching of a temporary uprising. This uprising took place on 2 August 1903, on the day of St. Elijah’s (Sv. Ilija), after whom it was named as the Uprising of Ilinden. Despite the fact that the uprising was not properly prepared, and although it was swiftly and brutally crushed by the Turkish troops, it nevertheless proved to the world that the Macedonians were determined to carry on stoically with their battle for freedom. The uprising also provided a Macedonian model of state organization in the short-lived Republic of Krushevo (established during the uprising), which was based on just and humane ideals.

It was just at this time, in December 1903, with the smell of gunpowder still hanging over a burnt and devastated Macedonia, that Misirkov’s book *On the Macedonian Matters* appeared. Coming as it did after bitter defeat when the country was in the most dejected state, this book reawakened hope in the value of persisting with the battle for national independence in Macedonia. The purpose of the book was not to bemoan the defeat but to carry out a deep and exhaustive analysis of the achievements made thus far by the national liberation movement and to open up the way for this movement to develop more fully and more successfully. Misirkov, in a sense, created a synthesis between the past of Macedonia and the reality of his own time, and provided a preview of the future of Macedonia.

This outstanding Macedonian scholar analyzed the Uprising of Ilinden according to his own way of thinking. And, although his way of thinking was indeed objective, he still did not fully appreciate the significance of this uprising as part of the development of the Macedonian revolution. He, himself, was not at heart against the uprising although he subjected it to critical analysis in his book. He was closely drawn to the revolutionary

struggles of the Macedonian people, but he was opposed to any attempt at uprising, instigated from abroad, which would be unable to bring about any change since a secret agreement already existed among the Great Powers concerning the status quo in the Balkans, and because there no hope of emancipating Macedonia at that time. This is why he proposed other more gradual forms of action directed against the propagandists from the neighboring countries and aimed at furthering the development of national consciousness and cultural awareness among the Macedonians initially within the framework of the Turkish Empire, through winning certain autonomous rights which the Great Powers would demand from Turkey. This was a condition for the full enactment of the proposals set out in his book, proposals, which would have considerably reduced foreign influence in Macedonia so that the country could begin a more peaceful national life.

In this book Misirkov was the first person to give such a comprehensive and closely reasoned analysis in public of the Macedonian question, an analysis marked by all the virtues and weaknesses of scholasticism in his time. Misirkov grew up in the very heart of the Macedonian Revolutionary Movement and, through his intellectual and creative spirit, reflected the movement in his own specific way, so that his works and thoughts left their own mark, their own stamp, upon the struggle of the Macedonian people, bringing forth — in the hard and troublesome times which had befallen Macedonia — those aims and ideals on which Macedonia was to build up her national and cultural awareness. Through Misirkov's work and activity as an ethnologist, as a first-rate scholar, and eminent public worker, new and special impetus was given to Macedonia's historical relations, an impetus which enabled later generations of Macedonians to trace the path of their national development far more confidently than had been possible before.

The English translation of *On the Macedonian Matters* appears seventy years after the first publication of the book and a hundred years (1874-1974) after the birth of Krsté P. Misirkov. In this book Misirkov explains the specific nature of Macedonia's position with regard to territorial ethnographical, historical, cultural, linguistic, and other matters. The reader will see how this writer, with his polemic spirit and analytic depth, offers us a scholarly and reasoned explanation of why the Macedonians during the various stages of their development, did not always bear the name Macedonian due to the many periods of foreign influence and oppression to which Macedonia was subjected. But the Macedonians were not the only people to suffer this fate; similar incidences occur in the historical development of other nations. This book also examines the evolution and essential character of the Macedonian people.

The last part of the book, which is concerned with language, was exceptionally important for the Macedonians and their cultural development. Misirkov considered that the question of development was crucial if the Macedonians were to maintain their cultural and national unity, and defend themselves from outside pressure. Here Misirkov enters into the basic considerations involved in the formation of the Macedonian literary language. And if justification is needed for his pioneering proposals it may be found in the fact that forty-two years after the publication of this book, when the principles of the literary language were laid down, in 1945, Misirkov's principles were fully sanctioned. On account of their great importance, we shall quote these principles in full:

1. The Macedonian literary language should include those forms of the central Macedonian dialects, which would serve most fully to link all the dialects of the country and might be easily used by people from all parts of the land.

2. The Macedonian literary language should to the greatest possible extent reflect its origins in the people. The word-store of this language should be enriched with words from all the various dialects; new words should be formed with living suffixes; and only in case of absolute necessity should foreign words be adopted.

3. The Macedonian alphabet should be made up of as many letters as there are sounds in the Macedonian literary language. The spelling should be worked out according to the principles of phonetics.

Dr Blazhé Ristovski, one of the best authorities on the life and work of Misirkov, says the following about this book:

Although it was condemned, banned, and burnt, Krsté Misirkov's book *On the Macedonian Matters* is the most important, comprehensive, and relevant work to appear at any time right up till the final recognition of the Macedonians within the Socialist Republic of Macedonia. It is, in fact, the first book on the contemporary Macedonian literary language and orthography, a scientifically designed and theoretically expounded history of the Macedonian people and particularly of Macedonian national thought.¹

Misirkov's thoughts and ideas, not only in this work but also in his later writings, which are supplemented with new facts on the Macedonian's independence, reveal to us a disturbed person, preoccupied with the desire to make public all the important problems and questions of vital interest to Macedonia and her people. It is through Misirkov that Macedonian thought discovers to us its true worth. This is why the well-known academician Blazhé Koneski says of Misirkov:

Misirkov was one of the most underpublicised figures in our history right up to the Liberation. The destruction of his book *On the Macedonian Matters* was a crude attempt to put a stop to his courageous thinking. Nevertheless, few people were more totally present amongst us in those most decisive days of our recent history and in the glorious days of the Liberation when, amongst other things, the question of our literary language was settled ...

Misirkov's discoveries in many ways mean for us the discovery of ourselves. Contact with such people is never static or indifferent. And it is not by chance that his discoveries have left their mark on the making of a nation.²

The greatness and scholarly maturity of Misirkov lies in his constant, unrelenting, faithful, and highly principled struggle for the good of his country, a battle which lasted right up to his tragic death in a foreign land, in a hospital in Sofia, and ended with his immeasurable longing and hope to see Macedonia united and liberated. The ideas he put forward and

¹ Krsté P. Misirkov, *Za Makedonskite Raboti*, the Macedonian edition, Makedonska kniga, 1969, Skopje, foreword by Dr Blazhé Ristovski. 13.

² Blazhé Koneski, *Besedi i Ogledi* (Speeches and Essays), Makedonska kniga edition, 1972, Skopje. 129-130

struggled so zealously to put into practice, together with his fellow revolutionaries and fellow-thinkers, lived an after him to become part of the precious heritage and inspiration of the new generation of Macedonia. His ideas remained as a testament of his deep human distress and concern for the fate of his country and his people. Misirkov looked with the eyes of a visionary upon the future of Macedonia and the Macedonians, and the development of their culture, and so one may say that in the free part of Macedonia — within the Federation of Yugoslavia — his dreams have been realized and his promises fulfilled.

Boris Vishinski

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

- 6th November 1874* born in the village of Postol near Enidzhe Vardar, Aegean Macedonia.
- 1889* left his birthplace and went to Belgrade, where he entered the boarding school of the Community of St. Sava.
- 1890* left Belgrade and went to Sofia, where he entered the second form of the First Boys Grammar School.
- December 1890* returned to Belgrade and continued his schooling in the third form of the First Grammar School.
- January 1891* moved to the newly established St. Sava 1891 Theological Teachers Training College in Belgrade.
- September 1891* continued his schooling at the Grammar 1891 School in Shabac.
- October 1893* moved to the Teachers Training College in Belgrade.
- 1893* became one of the founder members of the Vardar Student Society in Belgrade; the first Macedonian society in Serbia.
- 8th June 1895* graduated from the Teachers Training College in Belgrade.
- October 1895* went to Russia where he entered the fifth form of the Theological Seminary in Poltava.
- 13th September 1897* enrolled as a full-time student at the Faculty of History and Philology in St. Petersburg.
- 1897* read his first research paper to the Imperial Russian Geographical Society on “The importance of the Moravian or Resavian dialects for the modern and historical ethnography of the Balkan Peninsula”; the same year this paper was published in *Zhivaya starina*, the well-known

journal of the society.

12th November 1900 became one of the founding members of the Secret Macedonian-Odrin Circle in St. Petersburg.

1901 went to study at the Novorosijski University in Odessa.

April 1902 defended his graduation thesis at the University of St. Petersburg on “The question of nationality and the reasons for the popularity of the Macedonian King Marko”.

31st May 1902 graduated from the Faculty of History and Philology at the University of St. Petersburg but stayed on at the Faculty to continue his research work as a post graduate student under the famous Slavist Prof. P. Lavrov.

28th September 1902 became president of the Secret Macedonian-Odrin Circle in St. Petersburg.

November 1902 left the Russian capital and set off for Bitola to join in the preparations for the Uprising of Ilinden; he stopped over for a short while in Salonica.

December 1902 arrived at Bitola and began teaching at the First Classical Grammar School for boys.

August 1903 after an eight month stay in Bitola, and after the murder of A. A. Rostkovski, the Russian consul in this town, he returned to Russia with the body of the consul; once back in Russia he wrote articles in several Russian papers and magazines informing the public about the Uprising of Ilinden. He attracted particular attention with his lectures to the Macedonian National Scientific and the Sv. Kliment Literary Society in St. Petersburg.

November 1903 left St. Petersburg for Sofia to arrange for the printing of his book *On the Macedonian Matters*, which had been prepared in Russia.

5th December 1903 went to Belgrade with Voydan Chernodrinski’s touring theatre; he spent several days in Belgrade and during this time delivered lectures on the Macedonian question to the students of the Great School.

December 1903 his book *On the Macedonian Matters* appeared in Sofia and was seized and destroyed by the Bulgarian authorities. After the publication of this book Misirkov was expelled from Bulgaria and returned to Russia.

7th January 1904 began working as a teacher at the Girls Grammar School in Berdjansk.

- 1st September 1905* Vardar, the first Macedonian journal, was published in Odessa.
- 4th September 1905* married Ekaterina Mihailovna in Odessa.
- 30th September 1906* his first and only child, a son Sergei, was born.
- 18th April 1907* the *Macedonian-Odrin Review*, a journal published in Sofia, was printed. One of his articles “Notes on South Slav philology and history (Concerning the question of the dividing line between Bulgarian and Serbo-Croatian and between the peoples speaking these languages)”.
- October 1912* as war correspondent for several Russian papers in Odessa and Kiev he took part in the First Balkan War (up to December of the same year).
- 1st April 1913* transferred from the Lower Grammar School in Odessa to the First Grammar School for boys in Kishinjev.
- 21st November 1917* became national deputy of the Bessarabian Assembly in Kishinjev.
- 29th October 1918* arrested by the Romanian authorities in Kishinjev for alleged anti-Romanian activities, he was sent to Benderi and from here removed to the Ukraine. He arrived at Odessa which was then under Austro-German occupation.
- 2nd December 1918* left Odessa for Sofia; in Sofia he was immediately engaged (21st December 1918) by the Ethnographical Museum as Director of the History Department.
- September 1919* moved with his family to Karlovo where he became Headmaster of the Grammar School.
- 10th August 1923* in Karlovo he began writing his *Memoirs and Impressions*, but stopped writing after a week; nevertheless, this unfinished text is one of the most important documents concerning his life and work.
- 4th September 1925* transferred to Koprivshtica as Headmaster of the Grammar School.
- 26th July 1926* died in Sofia Here the great Macedonian scholar and visionary was buried.

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PREFACE

Every man, as a member of some community or association, has certain obligations and certain rights. The people of a nation are nothing other than a great association founded on blood kinship, on a common origin and on common interests. In order that this kinship, this origin and these interests should be preserved it is necessary for the individual in any nation to renounce some of his personal rights and interests so that he may devote part of his energy to the common good. This is an obligation, which is designed in the interests of the people, because in any nation the personal interests of the individual are protected when he himself does not have the strength to do so. This obligation towards the people is closely bound up with obligation towards the country because the concept of the people is closely linked to that of the country. The individual's obligation towards the people and the country depends on the historical circumstances prevailing over the country and the people; and the obligation is fulfilled according to these circumstances. The obligation towards one's country and people on their way to independence is called a national ideal, and every man of conscience should work for the attainment of this independence. The national ideal is formed according to historical circumstances, so that what today was the national ideal may, once it has been attained, give way tomorrow to another ideal which had previously been given little consideration. It often happens, however, that the historical situation enforces a radical change on the national ideal, deflecting it in quite a different direction or else endangering it to such an extent that it may be completely destroyed. The national ideal, or the obligation towards one's country, is usually interpreted in various ways by the various individuals of a nation. One can best judge which concept of the national ideal is the most reliable, by the unanimity with which it is, accepted by all individuals in, the nation. In order to attain this unanimity and to assess the diverse concepts of the national ideal, the ideal

must be expressed in words or in writing. And it is by no means a vain task to voice ones opinion of these ideals and one's criticism too — for they are an expression of the general spirit of the nation, and it is on the health of this spirit that the health and success of the entire nation's work depend. Popular ideals, improperly understood, simply add to the misfortunes of the people and bring no advantages.

Since it was in this light that I regarded my own obligation towards my country, I decided to present my concept of the ideal of the Macedonian people through a series of lectures delivered to the St. Petersburg Macedonian-Slav Literary Society *Sv. Kliment*, and later to have them printed in book form as they are here, to allow for the inclusion of those reflections which could not be incorporated into the lectures given to this Society. And in so doing, I felt that I had, to the best of my ability, fulfilled, at least part of my obligation towards my people and my country.

Most Macedonian readers will be delighted at the appearance of this book. There will be much in it to surprise them. Some will ask why I speak of breaking away from the Bulgarians when in the past we have even called ourselves Bulgarians and when it is generally accepted that unification creates strength, and not separation. Others will argue that, by breaking away completely on the one side, we run the risk of rousing our enemies who are striving with all their might to “weaken” the Balkan Slavs in order to prepare the ground for the partition of the Balkan lands, which would be divided among them; furthermore, we Macedonians would be forced to renounce our prime obligation — the political battle for freedom — to destroy all that has been achieved in the past and go back, so to speak, to square one. Others will feel that I am claiming that Turkey will become better disposed towards us and towards the European reforms in our country when it has been plainly shown that Turkey never wanted and never will want reforms in Macedonia, and that the other countries are not prepared to press Turkey to offer us any reforms, even the meanest. Many people consider that the foreign states are playing a diplomatic game with the reforms only to trick us into giving up the armed battle against the Turks, for this is disturbing their peace. But if we were to give up, this battle they would give up their demands to the Turks for reforms in Macedonia.

Such are the main reactions I expect from most of my fellow-countrymen. I feel, however, that these reactions are not correct. Let me explain why: my book, it is true, does speak of separation and unification, but this is separation from those from whom we have already broken away, from those with whom we will never be able to unite, and this is unification with those whom we are morally bound to join and with whom unification is possible. If we Slav peoples, by breaking away from the other Balkan nations, manage to unite our own Macedonian Slav population into a whole we will not become weaker, indeed, we will grow stronger, and thus the realization of the ideas expounded in this book will be justified by the saying “Unity is Strength”.

Now we must ask whether our enemies could make use of our separation from the other Balkan peoples, and determine who these enemies are. It is fashionable at present in Bulgaria to say that the greatest enemies of the Balkan Slavs are Russia and Austria-Hungary, both of whom wish to use the Macedonian question to stir up a battle between the Serbs and the Bulgarians and, by keeping this battle going, weaken the strength of these two nations to such an extent that they would be able to step into the Balkans, Russia taking over Bulgaria and Constantinople, and Austria-Hungary moving into Serbia and Salonica. I should like to take the freedom of disagreeing with this deep political “farsightedness”.

The Bulgarians may be right in thinking that without Bulgaria, Russia can exist neither politically nor economically, but this is Bulgarian politics and I have no intention of

politicizing in the Bulgarian fashion. I am a Macedonian and this is how I see the position of my country: it is not Russia or Austria-Hungary that are the enemies of Macedonia, but Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia. Our country can be saved from ruin only by struggling fiercely against these states.

Fighting against these three Balkan states does not run counter to our interests, which may be realized either through revolution and evolution or through the gradual moral and religious development of our people. Revolution we have already seen, and, although it left dreadful consequences in its wake, it also had valuable results, with which those who fought for our national freedom may well be satisfied: I refer to the Mürzsteg reforms which will be implemented when the time and need arises. Nor does the idea of the complete separation of our people from the other Balkan nations run counter to previous struggles for freedom in Macedonia, for it is simply a continuation of those efforts on the basis of gradual development and evolution. Hitherto our people have been most interested in simply gaining full political autonomy; however, while still pursuing our national interests, they allowed various uninvited guests to make their way in, such as the Greeks, the Bulgarians and the Serbs. The political battle, then, is followed by the national battle. But the battle against various forms of propaganda in Macedonia is a step ahead, and not behind, for this too is part of the battle for freedom, a battle against the dark forces which will not allow our country to look at its own interests with its own eyes and force it to see through glasses which darken the truth and color it in Greek, Serbian or Bulgarian shades. The time has come to cast off the blinkers of religious propaganda forced on Macedonia.

Concerning our relations with the Turks, I have only this to say: we are bound to do all that is asked of us to assure Turkey that her continued presence amongst the states of Europe will be locked upon with understanding by us. We are bound to remain loyal subjects of His Imperial Excellency the Sultan. But in so doing we shall demand from his administration, and continue to demand, a number of reforms to secure the main interests of our national and cultural development. I feel that we should be loyal to the Turks but with the understanding that the Turkish government and people should finally realize that their state interests in Europe coincide with ours, on which they are most dependent, that these interests are not contradictory and that therefore the Turks should first evince a true desire to maintain peaceful relations with us, so that they might earn our support for their interests. If, however, they mean to deceive us by fobbing us off, and Europe as well, with promises they have no intention of keeping, then they can hardly complain if we turn towards Europe to bring about these reforms by force in our country, since the European powers hold them necessary for the successful religious, national and cultural development of the Macedonian Christians. Europe will pay heed to our demands, for she is bound to do so on the grounds of two international acts: the February Project for Reform in Macedonia and the Mürzsteg Project. These two international acts guarantee that reforms will be gradually introduced in Macedonia and that we shall have the right to turn in other ways to the two states which were signatories to the reform act, in order to indicate our national-religious and economic needs and to show what has been done by Turkey to meet all our requirements.

I know full well that many will look ironically upon my faith in the European reforms. But I should answer their irony thus: there is no truth in the claim that the efforts of Russia and Austria-Hungary to settle the situation in Macedonia will come to nothing. The reform projects and the efforts to implement them are not, as many think, merely a ploy to let time pass and, leave everything as it was. For Russia and Austria-Hungary the reform projects are an international act which it would be ridiculous for Turkey not to honor and which gives full right to the states enforcing the reforms to take reprisals against any state

that undermines international law. If it were so easy to break international law without fear of punishment many states would undertake obligations one day only to forswear them the next. But it is not so.

The Russian and Austrian reforms are an international act which will always give the Macedonians the right to call upon the Great Powers to ensure that the reforms are enforced. There is no need to think that this act will be buried like the Berlin Treaty with its 23 Articles relating to Macedonia. The Berlin agreement was indeed buried, though not by Europe; it was Bulgaria who brought about the unification of Eastern Rumelia by force, without the consent of the states, which were signatories to the Berlin agreement. And the violation of one article was sufficient to render the entire agreement null and void. The present Russian and Austrian reforms differ greatly from the Berlin agreement because they are simply an international act concluded between three states. We, the Macedonians, are the only other factor of importance besides them. Opposition to the wishes of the two states in league, Russia and Austria-Hungary, can come only from the Turks or from us, but it is most likely to come from us because the reforms lay down obligations not for us but for Turkey, and if we show ourselves to be dissatisfied with the obligations laid down for the Turks we will thereby make it possible for the Turks not to carry out any of the reforms required of them. Turkey will claim that she did everything required of her and that she was unable to do more because the Macedonian guerillas would not leave the people in peace, and in a country where a state of war prevails all good intentions are ruined by the resistance of the disquieted people. And if the state of war continues for more than a year the reforms will become outdated through our own fault, and end up by being shelved. We have already performed a similar service for the Turks — after the announcement of the February reforms. Besides, if we did not want any reforms whatsoever, we could have performed the service in advance. Afterwards, as in the past, we could have thrown the blame on the Great Powers, who are always made responsible for our mistakes.

The development of events thus far has clearly shown how easy it is to foul one's own pitch, in the firm belief that one is doing the right thing.

In order to avoid the casualties which inevitably follow a widespread uprising, the Russian and Austrian February Reform Project was worked out, not to absolute perfection it is true, but with indications that it might be expanded. One month passed, two, five, seven months — but nothing came of it. Why — we wonder. Our people will answer that it is because Turkey and Europe do not want serious reforms. But this is not so. Turkey may not want reforms, but those who worked out the project certainly do. The question, then, was simply: who would come out on top? In those circumstances we were the most important factor. If only we had yielded to the will of Europe, and if only the rebel detachments had surrendered or fled to Bulgaria, if there had only been some negotiations with the states behind the reforms, who could simply have been told that the detachments would go over to Bulgaria or give themselves up provided the Turks did not torture the ordinary civilians on the grounds that somewhere guns might be hidden, if only it had been made clear that peace would come to Macedonia only when Turkey introduced complete reforms and withdrew its army from Macedonia — but this did not happen. And what did the Revolutionary Committee do? It decided to carry on, as though waiting for the outcome of the reforms, and then launched the uprising with a “clear conscience”. When the Uprising was declared, the Committee was able to say that it had not been forcing the state to introduce the reforms. But this is not true. It is a fact that the rebel detachments avoided clashes, but this does not mean that they did not press for the reforms to be introduced. They avoided armed clashes but the Turks sought them, and were more successful than the Committee. The

Committee claimed it had no detachments, that there was no resistance to the reforms on their part, but the Turks declared that there were rebel detachments, that the people were armed and preparing for an uprising, that their troops were often engaged in skirmishes with the rebels, that the rebel detachments were killing civilians who would not obey and who were not faithful servants of the Sultan. If we glance through the newspapers dating from the time when the February Reforms were published — up to and after the declaration of the Uprising in the Bitola District on 20th of July³ — and if we read the telegrams from Constantinople, we will see that the Grande Porte (the Turkish High Command) was constantly drawing the attention of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian ambassadors to the lists enumerating the clashes between the Turkish troops and the rebel detachments, the number of arms found amongst the inhabitants, and the murders committed against civilians by the rebel detachments. And finally they pointed to the lists of the reforms introduced.

It is quite clear what Turkey wanted to prove by these lists: “I want to bring reform to Macedonia, but instead of reform I shall, for the present, bring in the army, and suffering, because the country is preparing for a revolution which is the result of the mistaken work of the Committee that represents a state within the state; allow me first to quiet down the country and establish peace, then the necessary reforms will be introduced.” In other words: the Committee has made it possible for me to find an excuse for not bringing in the reforms for a year, and after that I shall not introduce them because they will be outdated. This is the service we rendered Turkey by regarding the Austro-Russian reform project with mistrust. Will we once more render Turkey a service, only to end up again blaming others for our mistakes? I think the only course now left open to us is to place full faith in the efforts of these two interested powers to introduce reforms, and so provide them with the incentive to implement them as soon as possible.

In these few words I wished to explain how the book treats some of the most important questions for the Macedonian reader for whom it is intended. As a further mark of my support for the idea of completely separating our interests from those of the other Balkan peoples and independently continuing our own cultural and national development, I have written the book in the central Macedonian dialect, which from now on I shall always consider the Macedonian literary language. The irregularities, which may occur in the language are quite natural, and they could be removed only through a deeper acquaintance with the central Macedonian dialect than I can claim to have. However, things being as they are, I hope that Macedonians will find this language pleasanter to the ear than the languages of our neighbors, which have served us in the past.

³ In the new calendar, 2nd of August, 1903. Editor's note.

ON THE MACEDONIAN MATTERS
**WHAT WE HAVE DONE SO FAR
AND WHAT WE OUGHT
TO DO IN THE FUTURE**

The long-planned and long-awaited Uprising has finally been launched. Our people have shown all their heroism and all their readiness to sacrifice themselves in the interests of the country. The battle has been, and still is, desperate. All Europe is watching us. The newspapers are filled with reports of the Uprising. And, along with the news of the fighting between the rebel detachments and the Turks, reports are coming in of Turkish cruelty towards ordinary civilians. The people of Europe, shaken and horrified by these reports, are bringing all their influence to bear upon their governments, urging them to do something to put an end to this slaughter of civilians and to come to the aid of the unfortunate people of Macedonia. The Bishop of Worcester held a service in Birmingham at which he prayed for the Macedonian Christians to be spared. The Archbishop of Canterbury approached the Prime Minister, Mr. Balfour, in the name of the Anglican Church asking him to send aid to Macedonia. The people of Europe have begun to collect money to help the stricken Macedonians. The German Emperor's travels have taken on a political significance, partly because of affairs in Macedonia. Turkey seems to be finding itself in a tight spot and has proposed to Bulgaria that they should reach an agreement on the Macedonian question. Many governments have made of official declarations concerning the position in Macedonia. Telegraph messages have been sent from Istanbul to many European newspapers (*Standard*) saying that the French and British fleets have received orders to remain close to Macedonian waters. The same sources also announce that War between Turkey and Bulgaria is unavoidable. News comes from Sofia that the Bulgarian Minister of Defense has agreed to let officers from several European and American states join the Bulgarian army.

What do these facts tell us? Do they show that the Movement has: achieved its: end? Can the leaders of the Movement congratulate themselves on their success? Have not all the sacrifices for the liberation been in vain?

Some people, perhaps the majority, will say that it is still too early to evaluate the results of the Uprising. The Revolutionary Committee and the rebel detachments have still to face their main task. So far not even half, not even quarter of the plan drawn up by the Committee and the General Staff has been carried out.

Yes. There are always different points of view to every question. This case is no exception.

I shall have absolutely no compunction in saying that I regard this present movement as a complete fiasco. What little has been achieved over and above the more progressive Austro-Russian reform projects is surely no justification for the hundred thousand people left homeless, the three to five thousand human casualties and the utter demoralization of the inhabitants of Macedonia – it would not even be a justification for the loss of a hundred lives. What has been gained might have been gained without a drop of blood being spilt.

Judging by the results that will follow this Uprising one may say that it is one of the greatest, if not the greatest of all misfortunes to befall our people.

It is not too early to foresee the outcome and the end of our Uprising. The consequences might have been foreseen even before it began.

Even at the time of the Russian February Report it was clear that Europe would not completely satisfy the Revolutionary Committee's demands. These demands could not be satisfied without going to war against Turkey; only through pressure could the Turks be forced to meet our requirements. But neither the Bulgarians nor we could bring pressure to bear on Turkey; it would have to be either the Great Powers or a united force of Macedonians, Bulgarians, Serbs and Montenegrins, with the other states remaining neutral. Under the conditions prevailing at that time, however, neither solution was possible. The Committee, I feel, should have known this. And it did. But the leaders thought differently; they saw, in the future, and in the present reality, only what it pleased them to see. "We want no other country to fight for us," they said, "they can only send their fleets to Salonica and press Turkey to grant us the reforms. We would like them to do with Macedonia what they did with Crete." More than once we have discussed the fact that there are differences between Crete and Macedonia, for there are countries that are interested in maintaining the *status quo* and will do everything to avoid intervening to our advantage. And even if there were to be intervention, are there any grounds for believing that this intervention would really be to our advantage and not to our disadvantage? It has been shown that the present moment is most inauspicious for an uprising; but our leaders closed their eyes to the truth and the uprising was launched. It was launched in glory only to end in tears and sorrow. I was not the only one who felt that the uprising had been started prematurely. Many others shared this opinion, but nobody spoke out against the uprising. The Committee's behavior was criticized in Macedonian circles. But this criticism was ineffectual, and even dangerous, not only for those who were criticized but also for those who did the criticizing: the Committee was all-powerful, the life and death of all citizens lay in its hands and it would stand for no criticism of its actions. Those who were not for the Committee were against it; they were its enemies and they had to be destroyed. The Committee could be criticized only by another committee, which wielded some power. But it was already late to form a counter-committee, and pointless too, because this would simply give rise to a battle in which the committees would attempt to destroy each other.

So the Uprising began, counter to all the dictates of reason. It did have results, but not those, which were expected. Of all the reactions to the liberation movement, that which is most worthy of attention is the Russian *Pravitelstvenoe Soobshchenie* (The Government Announcement) of 11th of September, then the petition of the Austro-Hungarian delegate to the Grande Porte and to Sofia, and the letter from the English Prime Minister, Balfour, to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The *Pravitelstvenoe Soobshchenie* declares that the Russian government demands reforms for Macedonia, that is, the reforms which were worked out in February by Zinoviev and Kaliche, and that these reforms are only an initial move and are subject to expansion according to the needs of the people. This was also the position expressed in the February *Pravitelstvenoe Soobshchenie*, but does it not indicate that we could gain wider reforms than those we have already been given, and that we could gain them through short sharp popular movements, without any revolution? If this is the case, then the present uprising has not changed the situation, in the least.

But there is another extremely important statement in the *Pravitelstvenoe Soobshchenie*: the revolutionary committees; according to a statement made by the Russian government, want to create a *Bulgarian Macedonia*, but Russia, who is closely concerned, with the interests of the other Christian nationalities in Macedonia, does not wish to sacrifice their interests to the Bulgarians.

Has the meaning of these words been understood in Bulgaria? Or in Macedonia? Have we, too, finally understood?

Russia openly tells us what she is doing, because she could not behave differently. Is Russia right in the claims she makes? Could she take a different approach?

If we were to put ourselves in the position of the Russian government, we would not be able to take a different approach either.

Up to 1878 everybody, including the Russian government, claimed that the Macedonians were Bulgarians. After the Berlin Treaty the Serbs began to lay claim to Macedonia. Over the last twenty-five years; and particularly during the last twenty, the Serbs have succeeded, if not in turning the Macedonians into Serbs, at least in convincing Europe that there are Serbs in Macedonia. Although the villagers may still speak as they did in the past – for all over Macedonia only one Slav language was used – in the towns Serbian schools can be found alongside the Bulgarian boys' and girls' elementary and grammar schools. Some villages have Serbian schools and some have Bulgarian schools. Some villagers, along with their teachers and priests, recognize the Patriarchate and come under the protection of the Serbian or Greek consul, while others recognize the Bulgarian Exarchate and place themselves under the authority of the Bulgarian trade representatives. These are all facts for diplomats who should be reckoning with reality and not with theories concerning the nationality of the Macedonians. Politics has nothing to do with science, and even if it had, could one claim that it had been established beyond any shadow of doubt that the Macedonians are Bulgarians? Up to the time of the Russo-Turkish War there existed only one theory concerning our nationality. Now there are two. And a third is making its way in: that the Macedonians are something in between Serbs and Bulgarians. The supporters of this theory, however, are divided into: 1. those who claim that the Macedonians are far away from both the Serbs and the Bulgarians; 2. those who claim that they are closer to the Serbs; 3. those who claim they are closer to the Bulgarians (because one part is closer to the Serbs and the other to the Bulgarians). It is of no importance to the diplomats where the truth lies. What matters is that the Serbs have an ethnographic interest equal to that of the Bulgarians and the Greeks in the Macedonian question. Furthermore, Serbia is by no means less

interested politically than they are in the fate of Macedonia. In fact, this is of even greater importance for Serbia than it is for Bulgaria, because Bulgaria also has an outlet to the Aegean Sea through Kavala and Dede-Agach.

If this is so, can we really be surprised at the attitude of the Russian government concerning the Macedonian question or its declaration that Russia would not help the Committee if it meant the creation of a *Bulgarian Macedonia*?

Some of us may naïvely remark that: “the Committee does not want to make Macedonia Bulgarian; it seeks justice for all Macedonians, regardless of faith or nationality.”

How could the Committee prove that this is what it is working for? This cannot be proved by words alone. The very behavior of the Committee itself contradicts these assertions.

If a revolution is to be started in the interests of all the nationalities living in Macedonia, then the Committee must be formed from the representatives of all the nationalities living in Macedonia. One cannot help asking who gave the Committee the right to act in the name of all Macedonians and on their behalf?

The Committee could have worked both in the name of and on behalf of a large section of the Macedonians, i.e. the most powerful nationalities. But much proof would be needed to show that the Committee’s work is not bound up with the interests of the neighboring states and nationalities, that it is, in fact, opposed to these interests, and that its work is of benefit not only to the ruling nationalities but also to all the others.

No such proof exists. The Organization has close links with Bulgaria. It was in Bulgaria that the movement of the Organization first made itself heard. This showed who was most interested in the Macedonian movement and this was why they shifted its center to Macedonia, making a number of other moves to show that the misunderstandings were internal and that they were the outcome of a self-generative phenomenon. But who was deceived by this maneuver? Is it not perfectly clear that the misunderstanding was in fact closely bound up with Bulgaria, with Bulgaria’s name and Bulgaria’s money?

Most of those, you may say, who sacrificed themselves for the liberation movement belonged to the people. This is true, but one should not forget that most of the organizers of the movement were officials of the Exarchate. It is self-evident, then, that by taking part in the work of the revolution they were acting at variance with the interests of the Exarchate; yet for all this they were still Bulgarian officials.

Thus the Revolutionary Committee was, both by origin and by constitution, a purely Macedonian organization; in its work, however, it represented only a part of one of the nationalities in Macedonia, linked in name, and in church and school matters, to the people of Bulgaria, their country and their interests. Although this Committee was essentially Macedonian, for the outer world and for the Macedonian Christians who did not belong to the Exarchate, it was a *Bulgarian* Committee.

The Committee could not prove to the outer world, or even to the Macedonians who did not belong to the Exarchate, that it was not Bulgarian.

Through his *Mouvement Macédonien*⁴ Radev hoped to convince Europe that the movement was purely Macedonian and that it had nothing in common with Bulgaria. *Pravo* and other Macedonian and Bulgarian papers wished to prove the same point. But did they achieve their aim? No.

⁴ Simeon Radev (1879-1967), the well-known Bulgarian diplomat and politician, Macedonian by origin (from Resen); as a student he edited the *Mouvement Macédonien* in Paris, 1902-1903. Editor’s note.

The late Rostkovski⁵ often said: “The Bulgarians think they are the only people in the world with brains, and that all others are fools. Whom do they hope to deceive with their articles in *Pravo* and other papers saying that the Macedonians want Macedonia for the Macedonians? We know very well what they want!” And what sort of effect was made on the diplomatic world by the announcements made in the newspapers by the Committee and the Bulgarians concerning the Macedonian question! It should also not be forgotten that the European newspapers, when writing of the clashes between the rebel detachments and the Turks, referred to the detachments as “bands”, *Bulgarian* bands what’s more, and not Macedonian. And when speaking of the rebel losses they did not say “so many Macedonians were killed” but “so many Bulgarians.”

One asks, then, who was persuaded by papers such as the *Mouvement Macédonien*, *Pravo* and *Avtonomija* that it was the Macedonians who were fighting for freedom and not those who were called *Bulgarians* and originated from Macedonia or Bulgaria? Nobody.

The Committee did perhaps succeed within Macedonia in being accepted as Macedonian, but in Europe it did not gain this recognition, or only to a very small extent.

The Revolution should be the concern of all. Macedonians, or at least most of them, if it is to be called a general revolution. All the nationalities – or several of them at least – should be represented in the Committee itself. The intelligentsia of these nationalities should offer one another a helping hand and do their best to popularize the idea of the revolution in their region. But what actually happened? Not only were the intelligentsia of all the nationalities, or the greater part of them, not represented on the Committee, not even the intelligentsia of the most powerful Macedonian nationality – the Slavs – were fully represented, for the Serbophile and Hellenophile Macedonian Slav intelligentsia were left out of the Committee, and their attitude was hostile. So, in the towns and villages attached to the Patriarchate, or in certain parts of the towns and villages, the Committee was an uninvited guest. The Patriarchate Slavs could have felt sympathetic towards it, but, since their intelligentsia were opposed to the Committee, the villagers themselves undoubtedly felt very little sympathy, and what sympathy they did feel was mixed up with a lack of conviction in the promises of the Committee. This ill-defined feeling was accompanied by a sense of fear. The villagers were caught between two fires: the army, and the rebel detachments.

When a movement is spread by conviction in one place and by force in another, can it be called a general movement?

We can call the Uprising whatever we like, but in fact it was only a partial movement. It was, and still is, an affair of the Exarchists: that is, a Bulgarian ploy to settle the Macedonian question to its own advantage by creating a *Bulgarian Macedonia*.

Perhaps it is still not clear whether Macedonia will really become Bulgarian if the Committee has its way? I shall try to explain more clearly how the reforms might lead to the Bulgarization of Macedonia.

If one asks which will be the official language, the answer is – the language of the *majority*. Which majority? That remains to be seen.

The question goes no further. Nobody asks how this majority will be discovered.

Let us assume for the moment that somewhere around the time of *St. Demetrius' Day* an international brigade comes and occupies the land. Amongst other things, this division must also settle the question of the official language; but let us leave aside the question of the official language and ask what will happen to language in the schools.

⁵ A. A. Rostkovski (1860-1903), Russian consul in Bitola.

For some people this is a very easy question: several official languages will be recognized, i.e. Turkish, Bulgarian, Serbian, Greek, Romanian and Albanian, depending on the nationality of the population in the various regions. They will also mention what happened in Eastern Rumelia (South Bulgaria), where one can also find Greeks, Serbs, Bulgarians, Turks, Vlachs and Albanians. Some will also mention that Eastern Rumelia was also described as a region where Greeks lived, but after the liberation it became clear how many Greeks there really were. In other words, place the government in the hands of the Macedonians – and this is understood to mean give it to those who are called Bulgarians – and after a few years you will see that there will be no more left of the other nationalities in Macedonia than remained of the Greeks in Eastern Rumelia after it was liberated. So, all of Macedonia will become Bulgarian.

Is it not, then, clear that Bulgaria and the Revolutionary Committee want to create a *Bulgarian Macedonia* to the detriment of the other Christian nationalities of Macedonia?

But why should Macedonia become Bulgarian and not Serbian? It will become Bulgarian because that is the way it is; if there were more Serbs in Macedonia it would become Serbian and the Bulgarian element would grow weaker. This is all very straightforward and correct from the Bulgarian point of view. But it should not be forgotten that there are many other attitudes to the Macedonian question, such as those of the Serbs, Greeks, Vlachs, Russians, Slovenes and Austrians, and many of the countries in Western Europe. If this is the case, which section of the population should be accepted by our theoretical occupying force?

No doubt this international brigade will have no difficulty in settling the question of the language to be used in schools, in local administration and in those places where there are Greek-speaking Patriarchists, Albanian Muslims and Catholics, and Turkish Muslims. It will be more difficult, however, to settle the question in areas where there are 1. Orthodox Albanians, 2. Orthodox Vlachs, 3. Orthodox Slavs, 4. Slav Muslims and 5. Exarchate Slavs.

In their efforts to have greater importance given to the Slav language in Macedonia, the Slavs would request the international brigade to ensure that their language was also accepted as the official language in areas occupied by Slav Muslims; but the Slav Muslims themselves, on account of their religious loyalties, might well demand Turkish as their official language. Which of the two will be given preference? If the international brigade is to act correctly, without giving due consideration to religious needs, it will be resorting to repression. It will come across the same difficulty in an even more complex form when attempting to settle the question of which language should be officially recognized in the schools and in the social administration of the Orthodox regions. The Vlach authorities will demand Vlach, and the Patriarchate will demand Greek for its parishioners. If the requirements of the Vlachs are not met, the decision will be irregular and unjust; on the other hand, if the Vlach administration gets its way against the will of the parishioners, this would again be repression.

The Patriarchate will also ask for Greek as the language for the Orthodox Albanians – the Tosks. National awareness has not yet developed amongst the Tosks, and this would enable the Patriarchate to succeed. But the other Macedonian nationalities, including the remainder of the Albanians, would not be satisfied with the introduction of Greek. There can be no doubt that the occupying forces would not have an easy time finding their way out of this situation.

The most troublesome question, however, is that of the official language and the school language in the Slav parts of Macedonia. Some are Orthodox by faith, others come under the Exarchate, to say nothing of those who are Catholic or Muslim. The Turks con-

sider the orthodox patriarchists to be Greek – *urummillet* – while the Serbs and Bulgarians consider them Serbian and Bulgarian. Those belonging to the Exarchate are considered both by themselves and by the Turks to be Bulgarians, while the Serbs look on them as Serbians. And so in most of Macedonia where Slavs are settled the Patriarchate will establish Greek as the language used in the schools and administration. In these endeavors the Patriarchate will come up against resistance from the Serbs and Bulgarians. But in opposing the use of Greek in Slav areas the Serbs and Bulgarians will find themselves disagreeing as to where Bulgarian should be used and where Serbian.

Does the Committee consider – if it wishes to ignore, the question of language in the various fanatical forms it has assumed in the at least temporarily autonomous state of Macedonia – that the other Balkan nations with interests in Macedonia, especially the Serbs, are also ignoring this question? Does the Committee consider that the Serbs believe that if it is a question of *Macedonia for the Macedonians*, and if one is to ignore the question of the language of the Macedonian Slavs, this question can be simply and justly settled through the acquisition of autonomous rights? If the Committee thinks so, it is mistaken.

If the autonomy of Macedonia should result from the present Uprising, the Macedonian question will be settled not to the advantage of the Macedonians but of the Bulgarians, for the Committee, as we have seen earlier, is working behind a Bulgarian front. Those Macedonians who were educated in Bulgaria have taken over the task of liberating the country and thus far they have played, one may say, not only the main part but also the only part. If their work should be crowned with success they – together with the interests of Bulgaria – will stand above all other interests in Macedonia. If the Uprising should fail it is not clear whether the Bulgarians should be thanked for this, or those people against whom the Serbs are now competing with their own money and propaganda, losing all influence with their clients, who are receiving Bulgarian money and Bulgarian propaganda. Have the Serbs ever really asked themselves if the uprising were to succeed, what language a judge in Tetovo, for instance, would be expected to speak? Does it not occur to them that this autonomous government which is “in the majority” will speak Bulgarian? And so too will the local inhabitants, for it is the Bulgarians and not the Serbs who are the heroes in their eyes. Thus the question of the language to be used in town and village schools will also be settled in favor of the Bulgarians. And since there will be no opportunity for propaganda in an autonomous Macedonia, the Serbs will have to give way in this matter to the Bulgarians. But will the Serbs agree to this? They might agree if the dialect spoken in Tetovo were closer to the Bulgarian literary language; but they know it is not. They know that the Tetovo dialect does have something in common with Bulgarian, but it also has something in common with Serbian; and there are also dialects which have nothing in common with either Serbian or Bulgarian and which are peculiar to Macedonia. One must then ask whether the Serbs would permit – and whether they could permit – an essentially Bulgarian form of language to develop in Tetovo instead of Macedonian or Serbian, and, together with the language, Bulgarian interests instead of Macedonian or Serbian. Have they then the right to protest against the Bulgarization of Tetovo and the surrounding district, to seek protection for their interests against the aspirations of the Bulgarians? Does Russia, in this case, have the moral right to protect Serbian and Bulgarian interests alike?

From all this it can be seen that the problem of language, particularly in regions with Slav populations, is one of the most important matters to be solved in settling the Macedonian question. If there had been national and religious unity amongst the Slavs in Macedonia, and if the people themselves had been aware of this unity, the Macedonian question would already be half settled. But as long as the Macedonians continue to be

divided, some declaring themselves orthodox and others looking to the Exarchate, some claiming to be Bulgarians and others Serbs or Greeks, and all seeking the protection of various Balkan states, thus giving foreign countries the right to interfere in Macedonian matters – as long as this goes on there can be no question of a general uprising. The uprising will remain a partial movement, Bulgarian, Serbian or Greek in character, but never Macedonian.

This is clear to everyone except to us, the Macedonians, and to the leaders of the present Uprising. These leaders are doing everything they can to put their own interpretation on the motives for the Uprising, and on the Uprising itself; but the point is that not only we, but many others as well, have sense enough to see and understand where the truth really lies. The Committee is angry because the consuls do not explain things in their true light. But if they were to do so, it would not please the Committee. In other words, the Committee wants the European authorities to see the Macedonian situation with Macedonian eyes, i.e. with the eyes of the Committee; but if this were all that was needed, the European powers would not have to send their own agents to Macedonia.

Besides, if we had the moral right to require the representatives of the European states in Macedonia to provide their governments and the European public with an accurate and unbiased account of the situation in Macedonia, it would then be our moral duty to let ourselves be presented to our own country in the light of European interests, and particularly in the light of the interests of the Balkan states.

We should have known that the Kara-Vlachs (Romanians), the Serbs, and Greeks would be against the uprising. The Kara-Vlachs cannot look indifferently at the efforts of Bulgaria to give Macedonia an autonomous government.

Autonomy is regarded as a transition phase in the process of joining Macedonia to Bulgaria. Kara-Wallachia cannot afford to let a powerful Bulgaria establish itself along its borders and thus run the risk of later losing Dobrudzha! And even if there were a pure Bulgarian population in Macedonia, these political considerations would stand in the way of unification between the Turkish Bulgarians and the Bulgarian Bulgarians because Kara-Wallachia would not allow the territorial unity of Turkey to be destroyed to her detriment. And Kara-Wallachia is part of the triple league formed to protect the interests of Kara-Wallachia on the Balkan Peninsula.

The interests of Greece in Macedonia are even greater. Despite the fact that there are not many Greeks in Macedonia, Greece is no less interested for her own sake in our affairs than the other Balkan states. Every state, even if it is unable to make new political, economic and cultural inroads into Macedonia, strives at least to preserve those, which have already been made. Using the influence of their Patriarchate in Constantinople, the Greeks have imposed their language on schools and churches in many parts of Macedonia where there are no Greeks to be found. It is natural for the Greeks to make use of all the resources of diplomacy to maintain the position they held in Macedonia during the Middle Ages, especially from the time of the Turkish conquest of Macedonia, and to defend Greek interests in Macedonia not only from Greece itself but also from the great powers, because they do not want the Slav element to gain power.

But of all these states it is Serbia who is most interested in Macedonian matters, for she has come up with ethnographic and historical claims to Macedonia. Furthermore, Serbia also has political interests in Macedonia, for she will never allow the Macedonian question to be settled to the advantage of any of the other Balkan states, above all Bulgaria. Serbia would never countenance autonomy for Macedonia if this were to lead to an attachment between Bulgaria and Macedonia. Serbia would never countenance the expansion of Bulgaria through

the appropriation of Macedonia, not only because this would upset the balance in the Balkans but also because this realignment would result in Serbia being squeezed in between two more powerful states – the Austro-Hungarian and the Bulgarian – by which she would be politically and economically stifled, so that she would have to give way to one side or the other. The state interests of Serbia, therefore, would never countenance the formation of a Bulgarian Macedonia. There can be no longer any doubt that Serbian interests, like those of Kara-Wallachia and Greece, are protected somewhere.

Consequently, the small Balkan states, although they ostensibly play no part in settling the Macedonian question, and seem to be simply in the hands of the great powers, are actually of great importance.

The great states would lead us to believe that they have no direct interest in Macedonia and that they are concerned only to see that justice is done. But, as we have said, this justice is differently regarded by the Greeks, Serbs, Vlachs and Bulgarians, and so the great states, as protectors of the smaller states, turn out to be representing their own kind of justice. This is why one cannot hope for a consolidated effort to settle the Macedonian question; a united front is possible only in the smallest reforms.

If this is the case, in whom did we place our hopes when we launched the Uprising? Russia? But Russia washed her hands of the whole affair several times before the bloodshed started. Instead of inveighing against the Russian representatives I. A. Zinoviev, A. A. Rostkovski and Mashkov, we would have done better to reflect a little on Russian policy on the Balkan Peninsula. Russia is a Slav state, an Orthodox state. She liberated Serbia and Bulgaria; she helped Kara-Wallachia, Greece and Montenegro to win their freedom. She has always been the protector of Orthodoxy and of the Slavs. What then could Russia do for us when so many Slav and Orthodox peoples are involved in Macedonian matters? Could she, for the sake of the Bulgarians, support the other independent Balkan Orthodox states whose independence has been won with Russian blood and Russian money, only to have these states turn from her to some other (West European) states whom they would serve as weapons against Russia? Can Russia pursue a policy, which would drive the Balkan Orthodox states away from her? And what would she stand to gain by this loss? The gratitude of Bulgaria perhaps! But Bulgarian gratitude would merely be a shooting star: later the Bulgarians would say that Russia had been planning to take over the Balkan Peninsula and that the salvation of the Balkans now lay in the hands of the English. And so the Bulgarians, instead of being in league with “the great liberator”, would hasten to join the English or some other enemy of Russia and the Slavs. Thus, in the modern formulation of the Macedonian question, we expected Russia rashly to sacrifice her interests in the Far East for our sake and at the same time suffer a defeat in the Near East. Yes, but it did not turn out as we thought.

Thus the reason why the Uprising failed is perfectly clear: from the very outset it was established on the wrong basis instead of being a general Macedonian Uprising it was a partial insurrection with Bulgarian overtones. The only Macedonian Slavs who played a leading part in the Uprising were those who called themselves Bulgarians. The intelligentsia, not only of the other Macedonian nationalities but also of the Macedonian Slavs themselves, did not figure among the leaders of the Revolutionary Committee. The Committee, as a secret organization, feared to accept on an equal basis members belonging to the other nationalities, including Slav Serbophiles or Hellenophiles, or even those who merely had a Serbian or Greek education, for they were frightened that their secret might leak through to the other Balkan states. The organization was, and still is, veiled by secrecy, and consequently the lower-ranking members were mere pawns, serving only to attend to those

matters dictated by the interests and opinions of the high-ranking members. These opinions were the prerogative of only a few – those who might be described as usurpers, who pushed their way in, and those who were Macedonians that had accidentally found their way to the top. These people took the fate of Macedonia into their own hands and their actions could not be subject to criticism. If anyone was foolhardy enough to criticize these leaders he would soon find himself expelled from the Organization. And this Organization was described as ideal! I am well aware that not all members can be let into all the affairs of the Organization, but if limits must *exist* they should be within the bounds of reason. All the intellectual power of Macedonia ought to be concentrated in the Organization; there should be people capable of taking a wider view of the Macedonian question and of directly and impartially assessing the results of each move made by the Committee.

Is anything like this to be found in the Committee? Who are the Organization's main representatives in Bulgaria? Tatarchev and Matov.

They may both be men who are great patriots and who thoroughly understand the situation in Macedonia, but they are supporters of extreme measures and have no regard for the political situation. Furthermore, as shall be seen, they consider that as far as the nationality of the Macedonian Slavs is concerned there can be only one correct attitude – that they are Bulgarian; and perhaps they consider the question of the nationality of the Macedonians to be a matter of secondary importance which will be cleared up after the liberation of Macedonia. But in future they should look to reality and not to their own concerns.

And all the other leaders, such as Radev, Stanichev, Karayanov and others, belong to the same category. They thought it would be enough merely to intimate that Macedonia would belong to the Macedonians.

The Committee can boast more moderate leaders, but they too see the salvation of Macedonia only in spiritual attachment and submission to the Bulgarians in Macedonia.

The Committee can also boast people who wanted the Macedonians to be spiritually separated from the Bulgarians, but these people confined themselves merely to publishing a few books in Macedonian or to speaking Macedonian at home or with their fellow-countrymen.

Thus, the main reason why the Uprising failed was that it took on a Bulgarian bias. If this is so, what can the Macedonian intelligentsia be asked to do in order to relieve the plight of their countrymen following this recent misadventure?

The first requirement is that the intelligentsia should know their own needs and those of the people.

At the meetings in Sofia and other cities it happened more than once that resolutions were accepted in which the needs of the Macedonians were put forward. But these resolutions were accepted in Bulgaria, through the influence of Bulgarian society and of the Macedonian emigrants in Bulgaria. At these meetings representation was not given to all the Slav peoples and to their Intelligentsia; as a result the resolutions were one-sided and incomplete.

For the present, at least, what the Macedonian people most need is not so much the official voice of the majority, a governor-general belonging to the largest nationality, or freedom of the press, but a means of bringing to an end, of paralyzing the enmity between the adherents of the various religious and national propaganda factions. Efforts must be made to overcome the present distrust in Macedonian intellectuals educated in the various Balkan states to serve as mouthpieces for nationalist and religious propaganda in Macedonia; official recognition must be won for the Macedonian people; in all official documents and

certificates the designation *Macedonian* must be introduced for all persons of Slav origin in Macedonia; it is also necessary for the land to be shared out as it was to the peasants during the abolition of serfdom in Russia, Galicia and other countries. Here numerous other reforms are required, including those drawn up by the Russian and Austro-Hungarian delegates in Istanbul and accepted by His Imperial Excellency the Sultan.

From now on the task of the Macedonian intelligentsia should be to ensure that for everyone – the Macedonians themselves, the Turks, the Balkan states and the great powers – the interests of the Macedonians are kept apart from those of the other Balkan states and peoples, and that close attention is paid to all questions concerning the liberation of our people and our land from its present state of great poverty, and the regeneration of our people in a spiritual and material sense.

This is an extremely difficult task and it demands greatly united efforts. Hence, the examination and fulfillment of this task calls for the participation of all Macedonian Slavs, regardless of religious or national differences. The Macedonian intelligentsia, therefore, should stop treating one another with distrust; they should try to free themselves from propaganda and be constantly on their guard against the intelligentsia and society behind this propaganda. From time to time in the free Balkan states, regardless of propaganda, the Macedonian intelligentsia should organize meetings at which the questions of the spiritual and national regeneration of the Macedonians would be discussed and settled. Even when not engaged on official work, the Macedonian intellectuals should always speak to one another in the central Macedonian dialect (that of Veles, Prilep, Bitola and Ohrid) and this language should be introduced as a compulsory subject in all religious and national teaching, even in the Turkish schools. The central Macedonian dialect should become the literary language of Macedonia.

If the religious and national propagandists do not wish to introduce our language into their schools – naturally, in those places where there are Slavs – and if they forbid their teachers and priests to keep company with the Macedonian intelligentsia and that of other nationalities, then the Macedonian intelligentsia and the Macedonian people should find a way of condemning this propaganda. And if these propagandists are trying to undermine their enemies, the intelligentsia should show the people what unworthy means they resort to and call on the people to defend their own vital interests. If the popular protest concerning religious and scholastic matters, in which the districts ought to be recognized as being free from propaganda interests, turns out to be a revolt with a bias against the state and if state measures are sought against the rebels, then the people and the intelligentsia should turn to the consuls as responsible arbiters.

If, however, some or all of these propagandists persist in opposing our requirements and endeavors by using only their own language in the schools and churches, then strong and sweeping measures should be taken against all forms of religious and nationalistic propaganda in Macedonia.

Freedom of conscience is recognized everywhere; in Macedonia, too, it is and will be recognized. The exploitation of this freedom has been checked everywhere, and it should therefore be checked in our midst as well. The Jesuits have been driven out of practically all European countries for exploiting the national conscience. In France, because of malpractice, the religious orders have been restricted in their activities in the schools. What has been happening all over Europe could also happen here in Macedonia.

Everyone has the right to profess the Muslim religion or Christianity in one of its three basic forms – Orthodoxy, Catholicism and Protestantism. All people have an inalienable right to their religious needs and convictions, but religion should never be

permitted to become a platform for political and national propaganda, as it is at present in Macedonia.

If we consider the present state of religious propaganda in Macedonia we will be struck by the fact that in most cases it serves as a means towards national and political ends.

Protestantism and Catholicism in Macedonia have religious aims only because those who propagate these faiths behave with great respect towards even the most insignificant aspects of the various ways of life of the Macedonian nationalities. And so nobody has the right to complain about their activities.

Unfortunately, however, the Orthodox religion – the oldest, the most widespread, the basic faith of all the nationalities of Macedonia – has completely lost sight of its main aim, which is to encourage brotherhood amongst the different nationalities and to ennoble the hearts of the believers. And instead of pursuing these noble aims the Orthodox religion has simply spread discord and envy. It has now become the chief weapon of those who wish to spread purely nationalist and political propaganda. The Orthodox faith in Macedonia has now become so compromised that one can no longer speak of a true Orthodox church, for there are now three churches, and they are not Orthodox but Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian. Why must this be so? Should not the Church be One, Holy, Episcopal and Apostolic?

Yes. The Church should indeed be One and Holy, and not Serbian, Greek or Bulgarian. In Macedonia the Church has been deflected from its main aim, and so the intelligentsia and the common folk of Macedonia have every right to use all powers available to them to purge the Church of her purely nationalist aims and replace them with those which were laid down by the Holy Founder so that the gospel might be preached in all tongues, i.e. all nationalities would come to the faith through their own language.

If the propounds of religious propaganda try to disrupt the unity of the Macedonian people and the intelligentsia they will come to see that this is impossible and that the only choice left to them is to form One Holy Apostolic Church in Macedonia, i.e. to form an Archbishopric in Ohrid which would be the “Archbishopric of all Macedonia”.

If those who spread religious propaganda have anything against the unity of the Macedonian people and the intelligentsia then it can only be for nationalist motives. In this case it would be natural for these church reforms to be extended to school reforms as well, i.e. the Archbishopric would also take over school affairs, giving due consideration to the nationality of the congregation in each region; thus in the Greek parishes the official language both at school and in church would be Greek, in the Vlach parishes – Romanian, and in the Slav parishes – Slavonic.

This would lead, then, to the gradual disappearance of all the nationalist and religious propaganda, which has split the people into so many groups, all hostile to one another; and peace would follow, peace for the people, for Macedonia, for Turkey and for Europe.

And, indeed, could there be anything better for bringing the Macedonian crisis to an end? It would certainly be the best thing for the people, for they would no longer be plagued by intriguers of various nationalities, they would be liberated from the various measures which interfere with their everyday work, and the unfounded enmity between the various nationalities would be ended by the Church.

This outcome would also be best for Turkey. Turkish diplomats are gravely mistaken if they believe they can keep Turkey in Europe by continuing to stand by the policy of *divide et impera*. As long as there exists a basis for nationalist propaganda in Macedonia, and as long as no attempt is made to ensure that other states do not exert a greater influence in Macedonia than Turkey, it is inevitable that Turkey will lose Macedonia and gain nothing from the country. As long as this state of affairs continues to exist, Turkey must live in

constant fear of losing Macedonia. If, however, it is officially acknowledged that there are not several Slav nationalities in Macedonia but only one, which is neither Bulgarian nor Serbian, and if Macedonia secedes as an independent Bishopric, Turkey will be immediately freed from interference in Macedonian affairs by the three neighboring states.

Our national interests dictate that the Macedonian people and the Macedonian intelligentsia should assist Turkey to make her way out of the difficult situation into which she has been drawn by religious and nationalist propaganda in Macedonia and by the countries behind this propaganda. We do not need to be joined to Bulgaria, or to Serbia or to Greece. The integral unity of Turkey is far more important to us than it is to Russia and Europe. Turkey is a country occupying an excellent geographical position. Since we Macedonians are Turkish subjects and interested in maintaining the unity of Turkey, we too have the right to enjoy our citizenship throughout Turkey. And this right could be of great material advantage to us. It is clear, then, why the Macedonian intelligentsia, if they closely examine their own interests, should for their own sake and for the sake of their people devote all their moral strength to the prime task of maintaining the unity of Turkey. In exchange for this support we shall be granted by our bounteous ruler the right and honor of full autonomy in church and school affairs and full equality before the law in the local self-government of Macedonia. This self-government can in no way endanger the unity of Turkey; on the contrary, it will help to regularize the relations between the peoples of Macedonia once and for all.

Thus the people of Macedonia and the intelligentsia must strive towards national unification of the Macedonian Slavs as a whole, and towards unification of the interests of all Macedonian peoples. Nationalist and religious enmity should remain as no more than a regrettable memory. There must be solidarity between the peoples of Macedonia in their endeavor to preserve the unity of Turkey. In exchange for this Turkey will treat all the Macedonian nationalities justly before the law and in local administration, and will protect and encourage their national development.

If the Macedonians were to pursue such a peaceful policy they would gain the support and approval of the great powers, who have an interest in preserving the unity of Turkey. The great powers will assist Turkey to absolve itself from all the injustices inflicted on the nationalities of Macedonia through religious and nationalist propaganda, thus ensuring the independent life and development of the nationalities.

The small Balkan states, who have a personal interest in supporting this propaganda, will at first be angry with the Sultan's Imperial Government for bringing to an end their century old privileges, but in the course of time they too will come to accept the abolition of propaganda because it will in fact be to their own advantage: they will stop pouring millions of francs every year into Macedonia, an expense which never has been and never will be of benefit to them. These millions were not entirely without effect, for they helped to maintain the enmity among the Balkan states at a time when, on account of their closeness and the similarity of their interests, they should have been helping one another in their common economic development.

A short while ago, when speaking of the failure of the uprising, I attributed this lack of success to the lack of coherence in the movement. What I said, in fact, was that if an uprising is launched in the name of and on behalf of the Macedonians, it should be authorized and supported by all the nationalities in the Organization.

Now that I am speaking of the need to put an end to propaganda in Macedonia and to reconcile and unite the Macedonian intelligentsia and the Macedonian nationalities, it may

be thought that this unification will enable us to launch a general uprising, which would be more successful. But anyone who came to this conclusion would be mistaken.

Only a short while ago I said that we are interested in preserving the unity of Turkey. And, indeed, what advantage would we gain by being joined to Greece, Bulgaria or Serbia? These states are more cultured than we are, and therefore only they would benefit if Macedonia were joined to them. But in the final count it is impossible for all of Macedonia to be joined to one of the Balkan states because the other states would intervene. It would be possible for Macedonia to be partitioned among the smaller states or to be occupied by Austria. But could there be any greater misfortune for Macedonia than to be partitioned or occupied?

The small Balkan states would without the least ceremony move into the conquered parts of Macedonia, exploit them for their own use and turn the Macedonians into beggars once they had begun to lose their national identity and this would be the first thing to happen.

One may easily conjecture what the fate of Macedonia would be under Austro-Hungarian rule: the fate of Bosnia and Herzegovina has clearly shown that, after ten years of Austrian occupation, the Macedonians, regardless of their faith or nationality, would be forced to quit their homes and emigrate.

And even if Macedonia were to become attached to one of the Balkan states – which, like partition and occupation, would never happen – the process would not take place without an internal revolution. And is there any point in these revolutions when His Imperial Excellency the Sultan has guaranteed the continuance of our national and religious existence and assured us that we will be equal with the Turks before the law and in our local self-government? But there are reasonable grounds for thinking that the Imperial government is well intentioned towards the different nationalities of Macedonia. History enables all nations to see the mistakes they have made and to avoid repeating them. The present uprising has been most instructive both for us and for the Turks. The Turks, I feel, must learn from it: nobody can doubt, not even the Turks, that Turkey will no longer be able to keep Macedonia if it continues to pursue the same policy towards us as it has hitherto been pursuing. Turkey cannot retain her provinces without the aid of the local inhabitants. The army alone is not enough, nor even is the satisfaction of the majority of the inhabitants. The Turkish government will be able to maintain its position in Macedonia only if all elements of the population are included in it and consider their welfare and security to be possible only under the Turks. It is the local population, which should provide the main source of support for Turkish interests in Macedonia. And Turkey will win the support of the majority only if it is prepared to ensure the introduction of real reforms in Macedonia and to bring in people capable of looking after the national and religious interests of the subjects, and of protecting their civil rights and economic existence. If Turkey does not look after the needs of its subjects and continues to shirk her duties in implementing reform, she will be the one to suffer most: 1. she will be driven by force to carry out the reforms, 2. if the people are still deprived of their national, religious and economic rights, even after some of the reforms have been introduced, the enemies of Turkey will use this as an excuse to prove that she has devious interests in Macedonia.

The first task of the Macedonian intelligentsia, then, will be to clear away the mistrust that exists between the intellectuals and the various national and religious groups and to unite the intelligentsia both within Macedonia and abroad, to assess the general interests of the Macedonians by getting down to grass roots, to dispel national and religious hatred, to educate the Macedonian Slavs in the pure Macedonian national spirit, to make

determined efforts to see that the Macedonian language is widely taught and to maintain contact with schools in the towns with a Slav population as well as to teach the language in village schools attended by Slavs. In the Slav villages they should ensure that church services are held in Macedonian. If these efforts meet with resistance from any of the foreign propagandists they should call upon the Turkish government and the Great Powers to remove these demoralizing forces from Macedonia and to set up an Archbishopric in Ohrid which would be responsible for the church schooling of Christians of all nationalities in Macedonia.

Our second task is to persuade our brothers who are fighting in Macedonia to lay down their arms so as to make it possible for Russia and the other powers to take all the measures they can to ensure that all our religious, national and economic interests are satisfied.

I am well aware of the disapproval with which many will greet my proposal. They may even describe it as treachery; there may even be some who will say that people who think like this should be removed from the face of the earth.

Let them think, speak and act as they wish against me. My duty towards my people and my country has impelled me to give utterance to my thoughts. I am firmly convinced that there is nothing traitorous in what I have proposed: 1. because the opinions, not only of individuals such as myself, but also of all Macedonians from the field of battle and from Bulgaria, and the opinions, demands and proposals of the entire Bulgarian nation and of the Bulgarian government are not able to alter the attitude of the Great Powers and Russia with respect to the needs of the Macedonian people, 2. all further efforts would bring about hardly any change in the position taken by the foreign states in relation to the Macedonian question. The most that could be achieved would be an European conference, but this conference could not be convened before the spring, and even then it would be called only if the uprising became even stronger than it is at present. But is it possible to foresee what course the uprising will take? And even if we were to allow that the uprising might be stronger than it is now, and that Europe would be consequently forced to call a conference, could anyone hazard the prediction that the decisions passed at this conference would be to our advantage? I doubt it.

People in Europe have been entertaining a mistaken idea of the nationality of the Macedonians and this is why those who bear the full brunt of the present uprising will benefit least from the decisions passed at the conference. We would have to be blind not to see the obvious: all the measures taken at the conference would be for the benefit of the nationalities of Macedonia — but which are these nationalities? The Turks, the Bulgarians, the Greeks, the Vlachs and the Albanians?

How would it be decided at this conference who was Bulgarian, Serbian or Greek? Where does the dividing line lie? And, finally, which of these peoples would be present at the conference? Who would provide the facts about the Macedonian nationalities and their needs? Is it not absolutely clear that we would have no representatives, that they would decide our fate without asking us what we want, and that instead they would turn to our neighbors, who have their own states and their own diplomats and who will derive every possible benefit from the blood we have shed?!

No, brothers! There is no conference which could save us. We would do far better to trust in the states which are most genuinely interested in our affairs, particularly Orthodox Russia, which is well acquainted with our needs, and not place our faith only in ourselves and in conferences of one kind or another. If it were so simple and so worthwhile to hold conferences we would already find ourselves being treated differently, and instead of Europe

leaving Russia and Austria to settle the Macedonian question, all the Great Powers of Europe would want to have an equal say in this matter. For what did the British Prime Minister write to the Archbishop of Canterbury concerning the policy of the Great Powers with regard to Macedonian matters: "if all the Powers were to engage in settling the Macedonian question it would slow down rather than speed up the actual settlement. The best solution at present is to entrust the initiative and the main role to the great countries which have the strongest interest in and the best understanding of the needs of the Macedonians". – Yes, we ought to know that if the whole "orchestra" were to strike up one could only expect great disharmony, a discord which would partially engulf the *Grande Porte* (the Turkish Central Authority) but would be far less injurious than the concerted activity of the two most interested countries. Each country has a different way of looking at this question and this disharmony saves the *Grande Porte* from being fully submerged. Can we expect greater unanimity at the conference than has already been shown in the actions of the two interested countries?

A conference today would be held under quite different conditions from those which prevailed at the time of the conferences before the last Russo-Turkish War. A conference now would be of advantage only to the small states which are attempting to establish and spread the rights of their peoples to the detriment of the Macedonians. If this is the case, and it cannot be otherwise, the conference would be nothing but a sheer waste of time!

One thing is certain; there is no point in continued opposition. Do you know what those people think who are in favor of continued opposition? First, they hope that the Great Powers will be squeezed out; second, they hope that a conference will take place; and third, they say that if neither the one nor the other should happen, Turkey will still end up by being economically ruined through having to maintain so large an army for such a long time. It can be seen straight away that the first two hopes would not be to our advantage. Even less so the third. You ask why?

Is Europe interested in preserving the Turkish Empire; and will it provide Turkey with the means to survive? But who will pay for this, who will provide the interest? – Macedonia, as usual. We may suppose that Turkey's economic disintegration will not affect us. But surely it is clear that if Turkey is economically weakened, we shall be weakened even more drastically? Surely we realize that as long as the rebel detachments continue their fighting, the Turkish soldiers will loot and pillage and cause every imaginable harm to the civilian population? The people will not be able to carry on with their work, and, worse still, they will be forced to feed both hungry Turkish soldiers and rebel detachments.

The battle has taken on not so much a national as a religious character. And it is several times more devastating than ordinary war! There would, however, be some sense in this devastation if there were any hope of success. All our hopes lie in the possibility of Europe's joining in on our side. But it is clear that she will not do so. We think that Europe will take pity on the innocent civilian population and therefore be prompted to intervene in our affairs. But our calculations in fact do not afford the people of Europe the chance to rush to the help of the civilian population. The people of Europe say that they can do nothing, and that the Committee will regard all European moves as an intensification of their own agitation.

This means that as long as the liberation movement continues we cannot expect real intervention on our behalf and as long as it continues the people will be forced to put up with the greatest and most senseless misfortune.

This being the case, is there any sense in continuing to fight? In my opinion there is not. We do not have such great reserves of national power that we can afford to sacrifice our

people to Bulgarian, Serbian and Greek interests, for our present struggle is of advantage only to others. And the strength of our people is needed for the cultural battle as well.

Let us also consider the opposite side of the question and assume that the present struggle will force Europe to interfere in Turkey's affairs and drive Turkey to grant equality to the peoples of Macedonia. If this were to happen could we Macedonians (Slavs) consider the outcome a success? I think not. Equality would be given to all the nationalities, including the Turks, Greeks, etc. So, we should have shed our blood for the rights of the people of these nationalities, who, during the fighting, either took no part or else fought against us. Surely it is no small matter that we should have shed our blood for the interests of others, even our enemies? But our enemies from the free states would take advantage of the blood we had shed and the losses we had suffered to step up their religious and nationalist propaganda, thus splitting us into hostile opposition camps: Serbs, Greeks and Bulgarians.

After the fight in the field of battle comes the fight in the field of culture, but when this time comes, instead of reaping the rewards for the blood we have shed and at last being able to develop culturally, we will find ourselves then, just as we are now, serving the interests of the Serbs or the Greeks or the Bulgarians.

As long as there exists this kind of national dividedness, together with utter economic powerlessness, nothing can be achieved by any conferences, reforms or attempts at intervention because everything will lead to the inevitable partition of Macedonia.

All this, reinforced by the certainty that further successful opposition would be not only useless but also impossible, leads me to believe that it is our duty to urge the Macedonian intelligentsia who have some influence on the present liberation movement to take note of the gravity of the situation and as quickly as possible find ways and means of indicating our full faith in the Great Powers engaged on Macedonia's behalf, and, once we have promised these powers that the fighting will not continue, to turn to them for moral and material aid to help the stricken population. Further, our intelligentsia must ask for all the proposed reforms to be introduced, including those which will be needed in order to expand the program that has already been drawn up; they must also ask for the removal of all propaganda and for the establishment of an Archbishopric in Ohrid with autonomy in the church and in schooling, for amnesty for all emigrants and all rebel fighters, for recognition of the Slavs in Macedonia as a separate nationality Macedonians and for the introduction of the term Macedonian in all official documents, etc.

Once the uprising has been finally stopped, Turkey and Macedonia will reestablish relations agreeable to both sides. It will then be seen how closely our interests are bound up with theirs, so that if the one is injured the other will suffer, and enmity between us will serve only to benefit a third party, most probably one of the small Balkan states. This is particularly clear if one considers the possible consequences of the uprising, consequences which to our good fortune and that of Turkey as well have not arisen. I refer to the possible partition of Macedonia among the small Balkan states.

The uprising has been launched and has destroyed both us and the Turkish state. The damage it has caused both to Macedonia and to Turkey is enormous, but it is still less than it might have been. It was fortunate both for us and for Turkey that Serbia and Bulgaria had reached no agreement concerning the Macedonian question. No agreement was reached because Bulgaria wanted to appropriate the whole of Macedonia to itself, without the help of its neighbors or the great states. Bulgaria was mistaken in her expectations, which was fortunate both for us and for Turkey. Up to the present uprising Bulgaria had made no political attempts to settle the Macedonian question and this is why all schemes to come up with a solution foundered. Bulgaria had not previously realized that the solution to the

Macedonian question could not come exclusively from Sofia but that it would have to come from Belgrade as well, i.e. through an agreement between Sofia and Belgrade. This agreement was looked upon as a change in the standing of the states, but now that the Bulgarian diplomats have been brought up against their own ineffectuality, despite immense efforts to solve the Macedonian question on their own, there will be many Bulgarian diplomats who will find themselves looking on this agreement as an unavoidable evil. If the present Bulgarian attempt had been made earlier a partition would have been arranged between the two spheres of influence in Macedonia, between Serbia and Bulgaria, then later, during the uprising, the Serbian and Bulgarian armies would have marched into Macedonia. This, would have been the outcome of the uprising if the Bulgarian diplomats had been more pressing in their efforts. This time we were lucky enough to have our country saved from partition, and Turkey was spared from losing one of its finest provinces.

The uprising prevented Macedonia from being partitioned, and this is one of its more worthwhile results. But partition was luckily avoided thanks really to the fact that our enemies happened to be inept and inexperienced. If Bulgaria wanted to threaten us even more seriously in the future, when our enemies were more experienced, she might enter into an agreement with Serbia concerning the partition of Macedonia between the spheres of influence. This agreement between the spheres of influence would unfailingly lead to the partition of Macedonia. This is why one of the prime duties of the Macedonian intelligentsia is once and for all to drive Serbian and Bulgarian propaganda out of Macedonia so that Macedonia can establish its own spiritual centre, and free the Macedonians from this give and take relation with the neighboring Balkan states and peoples. Hence the need to forestall the partition of Macedonia and retain it as a province of Turkey. The well known interests of the Turks and the Macedonians clearly dictate that they should not waste their strength in fighting against one another to the advantage of their common enemy, but rather extend a helping hand to one another in order to free themselves of all those who try to undermine their friendly relations and meddle with their common interests.

Once the uprising has stopped Macedonia will turn to peaceful cultural work, and for this good relations will be necessary with all the nationalities living in Macedonia. Our intelligentsia has not yet been able to work out the most satisfactory relation between ourselves and the other nationalities of Macedonia. To some extent this has not depended on them. For instance, the relations of our people to the Turks and Muslims in general depend more on the Turks than on us: if the Muslims had regarded the Christians as people equal to themselves, the relations between Christians and Muslims would undoubtedly have been good; indeed, there might well have been no uprising. Unfortunately, not even at the last moment were the Muslims able to overcome their old prejudices and cease regarding the Christians, would undoubtedly have been good; indeed, there government and the Turkish intelligentsia will come to see how much harm these prejudices have caused, and make every effort to uproot them. This would help to put relations between Muslims and Christians on a better footing.

Similarly, good relations between the Greeks and ourselves (the Macedonian Slavs) depend more on them than on us. If these relations are to be improved the Greeks should abandon their *megalomania* and acknowledge the right of the Macedonians to exist together with the Greeks in Macedonia. In particular the Patriarchate, as an ecumenical institution, should cease acting as an institution with a Greek character. It should be devoted to looking after the rights of all Christians and not to sacrificing the rights of some to the advantage of others. It is particularly necessary that the Patriarchate should look after the holy right of all members of its flock to enjoy their own national existence. In this way the conflicts between

Greeks and Macedonians would be avoided because the Macedonians do not demand that those who speak Greek should use the old Macedonian language in church and modern Macedonian in the schools, for this is only required of those whose language is Macedonian. If, however, the Patriarchate persists in barring Macedonians from using their own language and forcing them to use Greek, it will end up by making the Macedonians regard the Patriarchate as a tool for Greek nationalist propaganda. If this happens, both the Greeks and the Patriarchate will be looked upon as the enemies of our people and it will become our holy duty to repel all Greek attacks on Macedonian Slavs. In this battle between Christians our responsibility must devolve on the Greeks and the Patriarchate because we would not in this case be attacking, but defending ourselves from the attacks of others.

Our best relations are, and should be, with the Vlachs. Nowhere has there been any conflict between our interests and theirs. The majority of the Vlachs live in the towns, as traders, while most of our people live in the villages, as farm laborers. Those Vlachs who live in the villages are mostly cattle breeders. The Vlachs and the Macedonian Slavs differ in language, national dress and character, consequently they can never lay any claims to our villages, and we have never tried to make out that the Vlach villages are ours. There have never been any misunderstandings in the past between ourselves and the Vlachs. They have never ruled over us nor have they ever done us any harm. On the contrary, ever since the Middle Ages there has been an understanding between us. And on the basis of this understanding the firmest friendship can be expected to develop between ourselves and the Vlachs; this friendship between our two brotherly nations should be deep rooted and should enable us to walk side by side along the difficult road towards cultural progress.

It is one matter to ensure that correct relations are established between ourselves and others of Christian or Muslim nationality, and quite a different matter to ensure that our nationality is accepted by His Imperial Excellency the Sultan, so that the term Macedonian might be recognized by protocol, for this is necessary if we are to take the first steps towards national and religious liberation from propaganda and towards the political changes envisaged by the countries behind the reforms; and it is yet another matter to ensure that measures are taken to bring about the economic stabilization of our village farms. And until these improvements are all made in our national, religious, and economic life, we the Macedonian intelligentsia have something more to do, and this is the most important of all: we must devote all our physical, intellectual and moral strength to the national revival.

This latest uprising has shown us that the path we have been following is wrong and dangerous. Many sacrifices were demanded and little advantage was gained. The revolution has compromised us in the eyes of our government and has not presented us in a favorable light to the rest of Europe. But we are not greatly to blame for all this. On the one hand we were being driven to revolt and on the other hand we are a young nation and it was not difficult for us to be drawn into an immature adventure. Just as at work young people consider it preferable to advance by leaps and bounds and not by working solidly and steadily in one direction, so too young nations prefer leaps and bounds to steady solid work in the same direction. In all our work hitherto it is the uprising which stands out as an ill considered and hasty act; but we must be forgiven for this, firstly because ours is a young nation scarcely conscious of its national identity, and secondly because we have hitherto not been living as a national and religious unit and have been exposed to the influence of various forms of religious and nationalist propaganda. But we cannot continue to be forgiven for what we have been forgiven up till now.

We can no longer regard ourselves and our people as a youthful nation lacking political experience. In our historical development we have passed through stages of such

importance that they might stand as epochs in the history of any nation. And this new epoch brings with it new obligations in the form of cultural work.

Up till now the people have been working together with the intelligentsia, but the work was unequally divided because it was left to the people to carry out the plans of the intelligentsia, who did no more than draw up the plans or supervise the organization of the revolutionary movement. Organizational work is certainly a job, but we cannot say it is one of the hardest. Preparing for a revolution is certainly a job which calls for great expenditure of nerves, but it is not so arduous and difficult as the revolutionaries our young intellectuals seem to think. The preparations for an uprising last from five to ten years, after which all those who were involved either die or, if they remain alive, have to make do with nothing at all or else turn their hand to something for which they are possibly not even prepared, something which has to be learned from scratch. Organizational work is not so demanding as it is made out to be, and, because the organizers usually consider their own lives more important than those of the villagers, they usually foist the most difficult jobs onto the workers or the ordinary people. This is why organizational work is, on the one hand, the job of one man who places far greater emphasis on his own attenuated efforts than on the need for solid steady work. And, on the other hand, organizational work is impersonal because the man who performs it does not sacrifice himself for society, for his people or for mankind; instead he uses the people to help him execute the plans created by his fancy. Intellectuals of Macedonia! – It is time you came to realize that it is wrong to gamble with other people's lives for the sake of plans produced by your fancy.

I am not trying to say that we should forsake our idealism and do without national ideals. No! We could not live without ideals; but from now on our ideals should be purer and more progressive. From now on in our patriotic work we should redeem ourselves in the eyes of the people for all our mistakes. From now on we should sacrifice ourselves for their sakes and so repay them for their trust in us and for their obedience in carrying out the plans of the Organization with such precision. How can our intelligentsia repay the people for the sacrifices they have made? I gave an answer to this question when I spoke of the battle against the disseminators of propaganda and of our people's struggle to live on good terms with the other nationalities of Macedonia.

But, as I also pointed out, our main task is to aid the people through our work in culture and, above all in education.

Science and literature are the most important factors in the development of any people. The level of culture is determined by the extent to which the people are advanced in science and literature. Hence a division is made between cultured and uncultured peoples. Cultured people rule, uncultured people live in subjugation. It is only through knowledge, education and cultural work that our intelligentsia can put itself right and atone to the people for all the wrongs that have been committed.

It may be objected that cultural work is possible only if political freedom exists, and that without this freedom it is impossible. This is true, but it is not the whole truth. The basic precondition for cultural work is not full political freedom but the moral education of the people and of the intelligentsia and the awareness of each individual of his natural obligations to the people. Complete political freedom is worthless if a man does not come to realize that his human debt, his debt towards his country and his people, is work, work and more work. Freedom is useful only to enable us to enjoy the results of our work, but it is not so vital for work itself. And if one is to enjoy the results of one's work, one must first work. It is possible to work and to take pains with one's work even under conditions of political limitation.

If we are to stand with a clear conscience before the people, who have made so many sacrifices, we should turn with all our energy to cultural work. And in doing so we should not judge the value of our work according – to outward appearances but according to inner worth, for the value of work is measured in terms of its power and effect. If we regard work in this light, and if we genuinely desire to repay our debt to the people, then we cannot excuse ourselves by claiming that there exists no basis for cultural work. The basis does exist, but the will is lacking. Provided the will can be found, it does not matter even if we are not able to print many things, because we may be secure in the knowledge that we have an intelligentsia who will then serve as a living encyclopedia capable of furnishing us with reliable and accurate information from all branches of science and literature.

But accurate and reliable information can be acquired only after years of hard work in the knowledge that in this way one is repaying the debt to one's country and people. And these many years of work are more useful, more difficult, but also more constructive than revolutionary work – and more reasonable too.

These long years of study by our intellectuals would be of visible use to the people for they would then be able to look with their own eyes both at themselves and at other nations, and be made aware of their own and other people's merits and shortcomings. An educated people may be compared to an intelligent man; this is why it is our duty to put all our efforts into educating our people.

Cultural work is more difficult than revolutionary work because the former is mental and the latter physical. By way of illustration let us consider classical and modern languages and the correspondence of the Committee or the distribution of the armed bands. Revolutionary activity is temporary and destructive, not permanent and creative. And if a cultured man is to be worthy of this designation he should create and not destroy. A solid building must stand on firm foundations. Therefore one should not, in order to make one's work easier, avoid tackling the more demanding disciplines, such as the study of ancient languages, which are fundamental to many branches of learning. The aim of acquiring accurate information from all the different branches of learning, not only for our personal sake but also for the sake of ourselves as individuals belonging to the nation, should make us stop and think, should make us devote all our energy and free time to mastering those disciplines which are most needed by our people and which demand the hardest work, because the easier disciplines can always be managed in due course. If we wish to face our people and ourselves with a clear conscience we should be prepared to help even with the most difficult tasks and not seek the easy way out with the excuse that we do not have the ability or knowledge required for those disciplines which demand the greatest pains and devotion if we are to dedicate ourselves to them.

Cultural work is more delicate than revolutionary work because through it the intelligentsia is placed at the service of the people while through revolution it is transformed into a heartless experimenter.

And, finally, cultural work is more reasonable. Through cultural work the intelligentsia explains the most important questions concerning itself and the people, and the most important questions are those concerning the knowledge of the people.

Recently we have been going into the demand for political freedom, but we have not stopped to consider whether we are as yet mature enough for it or whether it is what we most need at the moment. I do not undertake to meet our most recent demands, whether they are just or not. The question of our national, religious and economic revival is of far greater importance to me. But this revival can only be brought about through studying our own people as separate individuals, then in conjunction with the other peoples and

nationalities of Macedonia, and finally as members of the Slav national family. If we were to undertake this study, it would lead to understanding in our relations with all the nations just mentioned.

Here you have a fair outline of what the intelligentsia of Macedonia might do in order to correct all the mistakes made in the recent uprising.

Our work, then, should be concentrated on peaceful, legal and evolutionary educational work among the people. It should be aimed at placing the intelligentsia truly at the service of the people, and nothing else. But if this service is to be worthwhile it is essential that we should train persons to carry out the task, an intelligentsia who will be utterly dedicated to the welfare of the people. We need an intelligentsia imbued with the awareness of the moral debt that each man owes to his people and his country; we need an intelligentsia that will aspire towards moral and mental perfection.

Our intelligentsia today should devote all their efforts and all their moral and mental training to the people and to the creation of an ideal Macedonian intelligentsia.

If this debt to the country is recognized, if we manage to unite our intellectuals with Bulgarian, Serbian and Greek educational backgrounds, if we succeed in paralyzing the activity of the propagandists and in getting them driven out of Macedonia for good, if proper relations are established with all the nationalities of Macedonia, and if the political and material position of the Macedonians is improved, then, despite all the sacrifices we have made, we shall have one reason for satisfaction: the uprising has opened our eyes to the fact that the road we were taking, and would have continued to take, was the wrong one and that even without the uprising we ourselves would have prepared the way for the partition of Macedonia. The uprising has opened our eyes to many needs which we could not otherwise have anticipated.

May God grant that this uprising will serve as a lesson to our people, a lesson to all Macedonians regardless of where they were educated or what nationality they considered themselves to be in the past. Let us pray that the blood which has been spilt will bind us as an oath to join together in spreading culture for the benefit and happiness of our common home, our much afflicted country – Macedonia.

ON THE MACEDONIAN MATTERS
**IS THERE A NEED FOR
MACEDONIAN SCIENTIFIC
AND LITERARY SOCIETIES?**

The idea of forming such societies was prompted by the desire to have our interests completely separated from those of the Bulgarians. In this way we hoped to show the Russians that here in Macedonia there was no national antagonism and that it was possible for all the Macedonian nationalities to collaborate in cultural work. Furthermore, we wanted to show the Russians that there were not several Slav nationalities living in Macedonia but only one, and that the Macedonian Slavs were able on their own to break down the barriers which had been set up between them as a result of various forms of propaganda or of the education given to Macedonians in Bulgaria, Serbia or Greece. We wished to show that, despite the upbringing and education we may have had in various foreign countries or at home under the influence of the various propagandists, we would, for our part, aim at fostering the general interests of Macedonia and so avoid serving as a tool for the propagandists and their aims and also fight any attempts at incorporating Macedonia into Bulgaria, Serbia or Greece.

Last year, however, there were certain people who considered that the existence of such a society was quite unnecessary because there was no exclusively Macedonian nationality in Macedonia – only Serbs and Bulgarians – and since there were already Serb and Bulgarian student societies in St. Petersburg there was no need for a Macedonian one as well.

Bearing in mind the criticism that has been leveled against our Society here and the doubt expressed as to its importance and suitability, we are bound to give an accurate report on the reasons which led to its formation. This may be done after an answer has been given to the basic declarations of our opponents, in which they struggle to prove that there is no need for a separate Macedonian Society and that it has not been formed at the right time.

Our opponents claim that this is not the time to bring up the national questions of

Macedonia, when life is at least tolerable for all the nationalities. This is not the time for us to break away from Bulgaria, for she has already sacrificed so many men in the fight for our liberation and will give even more in the future. It would be pointless and ill advised to treat our own interests as separate from the general interests of Bulgaria, for our strength lies in unity and not in separation. If the national question of the Macedonians were now to be brought up we would be set back by more than thirty years. Is it even possible now to bring about the national unification of the Macedonians when in Macedonia we have several nationalities and not just one, and when there is no separate Macedonian Slav nation?

To start with, it must be pointed out that they are not telling the truth when they say that this is not the time to bring up the question of the Macedonian nationalities. By ignoring this question we are not advancing even a step because although we may ignore it none of the other countries, great or small – except Bulgaria – will choose to do so. We, then, would simply be closing our eyes to an unpleasant reality. So, if we are to consider this question we will not be taking a step backwards but rather advancing through the discovery of its importance. Certainly, we will be caught up with the national question for another twenty to thirty years, but the blame for this must be laid on our predecessors who did not discover its importance and did not allow it to come to a head. If they had done so, we would not have to concern ourselves with it now if the question of the nationality of the Macedonians is of prime importance for the Bulgarians, Serbs and Greeks, and if each of these nations treats it according to his own concept, why should we not take this question into our own hands and consider it from all sides – from the Bulgarian, Serbian and Greek points of view – taking a critical look at each so as to work out a Macedonian point of view instead of allowing ourselves to be oriented towards the place where we were educated and be persuaded to adopt a Serbian, Bulgarian or Greek attitude? If we do not work out a Macedonian point of view concerning our own nationality, a point of view which will be fair and just towards all Macedonians, it will mean that we are not capable of coming to grips with ourselves independently, without influence from outside. I could not allow this to happen; for me it would be a profanation. This, then, is why in the first place I do not renounce my right to an independent attitude concerning my fellow countrymen. In my opinion, therefore, our Society is not making any tactical errors concerning the question of our nationality but simply performing certain services in the spiritual interests of the Macedonians.

Next, an answer should be given to the assertion that this is not the time to separate our interests from the general interests of Bulgaria and that such an action would be ill advised because; on the one hand, our strength lies in unification and, on the other hand, Bulgaria has made such great sacrifices for our liberation and will continue to do so.

This statement is very complex and so each question should be answered individually.

What should be pointed out first is that we are not now breaking away from Bulgaria and so destroying an already existing whole, for we have already been separated and living apart for more than twenty-five years. It was others who divided us, creating for us and for the Bulgarians two different lives with different needs, and setting us in unequal positions. And these others will not allow us to unite. From the Macedonian point of view, the unification of all Macedonia with Bulgaria, Serbia or Greece is not desirable, but neither is it particularly frightening. Hence we would have nothing to fight for on these grounds. Neither the small Balkan states nor the great European countries will, however, agree to such a unification. So, as we do not wish to mix our interests with those of Bulgaria, we have given our agreement and are prepared to respect the present rule of law. Only one question then arises: by respecting this law are we acting to our own advantage, for it is said that Bulgaria

has done so much good for us and will do still more? Let us see, then, what sort of good has been done for us by the Bulgarians.

On the appearance of Serbian propaganda the Bulgarians increased the budget of the Exarchate; in other words, they stepped up their propaganda and intensified their interests in Macedonia. They appointed several bishops and opened a number of commercial agencies; they also gave financial help to the uprising in Macedonia and supported many Macedonians who had fled to Bulgaria and were homeless. This was the good which was done for us by the Bulgarians.

What do you feel: is it enough? Or is it a lot? Or is it somewhat more than the good: which was done for us by the Serbs? If we are not to be Bulgarian chauvinists and if we are not to take a biased view of things we cannot help concluding that in, Macedonia the Bulgarians did no more for us than the Serbs. One might even state with certainty that they did less than the Serbs. The good they did, which has already been mentioned, was not done on behalf of the Macedonians but for the sake of Bulgarian interests in Macedonia. Thus Bulgarian money spent on Macedonia is of no greater importance than Serbian money. The Bulgarians appointed bishops to Macedonia; do not forget that even in the more important places these bishops were generally Bulgarians and not Macedonians. The Bulgarians wished to use the bishops to get rid of everything that did not suit them, particularly self-government in the church and in the borough councils. The Serbs, too, wished to use their bishops to perform the same service for us. Why should they be to blame for our having preferred to be a tool of the Bulgarians than the Serbs? The Bulgarians opened commercial agencies in Macedonia! But in whose interest? Not the Macedonians', of course, but the Bulgarians'. The Serbs channeled their interest in Macedonia through their consulates and consulates general. If the Bulgarian commercial agencies were a blessing to us, the Serbian consulates general were an even greater one. The Bulgarians supported our uprising. So did the Serbs. The Bulgarians offered more help because it suited their interests and not because it suited our needs. The Serbs offered their aid in order not to be left behind the Bulgarians: but if Serbian interests had been really bound up with the uprising Serbia would by now have declared war a hundred times against Turkey without waiting for help from anywhere and without wondering whether the outcome would be in her favor or not. The Bulgarians have fed homeless Macedonians, but so have the Serbs.

This is all the good we have received from the Bulgarians. Now let us see how we have paid for this good or how much it has cost us.

If we review what has happened since the last Russo-Turkish war we will realize that all the good the Bulgarians performed for the Macedonians was no more than compensation for the stupidities which they, the Bulgarians, perpetrated over the Macedonian question. In the hands of Bulgarian diplomats and the Bulgarian people, the Macedonian question gave rise to numerous foolish mistakes which were incurred at the expense of the Macedonians through the so-called victories of the Bulgarian independent policy. These follies committed by the Bulgarians are for us Macedonians an ancient parental sin which will be passed on from generation to generation.

And this is what lies behind the ancient parental sin:

The Bulgarians were liberated by the Russians. At that time Russian society was caught by a wave of Slavophile enthusiasm; this enthusiasm cost them about two hundred and fifty thousand soldiers and billions of rubles. But what was the result of that war? The Russians continued fighting against Turkey and, with their own blood, succeeded in liberating almost all the small Balkan states. But never before have the Russians been so disappointed as they were during this last war. Their disappointment was so acute that they

wanted to bury their former enthusiasm and their aspirations to liberate the Slavs on the Balkan peninsula. Their, last burst of enthusiasm – and with it the hopes that Macedonia had placed in Russia – was expended on the Bulgarians. The behavior of the Bulgarian people towards the Russian soldiers and the conduct of the Bulgarian intelligentsia in dealing with the Russian authorities and diplomats was such that the Russians regretted a thousand times over their involvement with these “little brothers”. This regret has penetrated so deep into the souls of all Russians that they now no longer wish even to hear of any “brothers” whatsoever, let alone the Bulgarians. Who is now paying for the behavior and the mistakes of the Bulgarians if not we, the Macedonians?

The enthusiasm of Russia brought about the birth of Bulgaria, but, with the birth of Bulgaria, Russia died for us. All the Macedonians’ hopes were stillborn because of Bulgaria. We had hoped that our faith in Bulgaria would be able to grow and strengthen, that she would offer us help and that with her we could begin to live a free life. Once a free Bulgaria existed, we thought, we would have no need of Russia. Our expectations were supported by the Bulgarians and it seemed as if they would be realized. But Bulgaria, like the late Serbian king, Alexander, proclaimed herself to be of age and indulged in a number of absolute follies which she described as her policy of independence.

She ruined her good relations with Russia and called on Stambolov to place Bulgaria in the hands of the Triple Pact and of England so that she could be used as a weapon against Russia. This new era in the history of Bulgaria, this policy of independence, began with the unification of Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia and the dissolution of the Berlin Treaty, in which lay the Macedonians’ rights to autonomy with a Christian governor-general. The dissolution of the Berlin agreement and the emergence of Stambolov’s regime, christened as the “independent national” policy of Bulgaria, the policy of a politically capricious, immature and abortive undertaking, marked the second blow against the political freedom of the Macedonians. Europe and Russia endeavored to work out a plan of reform for Macedonia, and in 1882 this plan was already completed; they would also have struggled to have it introduced but since the new “political factors” in the Balkans put their veto to the plan, the foreign powers asked not for reforms but for Bulgarian bishops in Macedonia. This, indeed, came to be; but we Macedonians entrusted ourselves to the Bulgarians, believing that Bulgaria through her “policy of independence” was doing no more than maintaining a political victory and that she would reward us with blessings. She pulled the wool smartly over our eyes. Hardly five or six years had passed before Bulgaria’s initial enthusiasm with the policy of “independence” began to cool off. The advances which the Serbian propagandists were making in Macedonia convinced them that they were not the only factor in the Macedonian question and that, in addition to themselves, there were other interested parties and that in the competition success would fall on the side where Russia’s support lay. The Bulgarians, therefore, now became Russophiles; yet they did not do so for pure motives but because they wanted to lure the Russians into helping them administer their own interests in Macedonia. But they were not able to reconcile themselves to the state of affairs in Russian foreign policy because the Russian consuls in Macedonia were supporting Serbian propaganda. As a result, certain political parties accused Russia of being the enemy of Bulgaria and of everything Bulgarian, their main reason for this accusation being Russia’s support of Serbian propaganda. The political figures in Bulgaria were unable to see that Russia’s attitude was largely determined by their own stupidity which had passed under the name of an “independent” or “national” policy. And since this “independent” and “national” policy was being used as a weapon by the enemies of Russia against Russian interests on the Balkan peninsula, how could these Bulgarian politicians expect the Russian

government to remain completely disinterested in events in the Balkans when for more than a century this Peninsula has been the care of Russia? She must look after her own interests there even if this does not suit Bulgaria's "independent" and "national" policy. Through their foreign policy the Bulgarians have become Russophiles and the Russians have to some extent altered their policy towards them. But the Bulgarians' Russophilism was calculated, and did not last long. And Russian policy could not be permanently changed. Only one thing was unknown: to what extent was Bulgarian foreign policy honest and long lasting? Recently the Bulgarians have been dissatisfied with Russian policy, particularly on account of the appointment of Firmilyan and of the Macedonian uprising. They claim that when Danov's ministry put Bulgaria's foreign policy in the hands of the Russians they received no help in return; all that happened was that Firmilyan was appointed to Skopje and nothing was done for Macedonia. If Bulgaria had been able to pursue an "independent" and "national" policy she would not have allowed this to happen and would have settled the Macedonian question by granting greater reforms.

This is Bulgarian reasoning. But if we are to set out from the independent Macedonian point of view we must point out that Bulgaria with its Russophilism did no service whatsoever either to Russia or to Macedonia. Instead, it used this Russophilism to acquire a loan which it received thanks to Russia's participation. What is most important, however, is that these millions which were loaned to Bulgaria were not used for the purpose of war but to fill the state coffers. And even if it had pursued an "independent" and "national" policy, i.e. if it had been a part of the Triple Pact against Russia, Bulgaria would still have achieved nothing because now the relations between Russia and Bulgaria are not as strained as they were at the time of Stambolov. The members of the Triple Pact have now reached a special agreement concerning international questions; they are, working together on, these and quashing all the caprices of the small states which are trying to alter the balance of power in their own favor. There is now no place for Stambolov's policy. The revival of Stambolov's regime in Bulgaria can in no way be justified and would merely be a new political caprice doomed to miscarry. But it is not the Bulgarians who will suffer from these caprices; it is we, the Macedonians, who will suffer, as indeed we already do. Our new friends in Bulgaria say that Russia is to blame for this, that she feared the emergence of a Greater Bulgaria and that this was why Firmilyan was appointed. Russia does not now wish to grant autonomy to Macedonia and has left us to make our own preparations and to fight against Turkey.

Such claims are no more than lies and false accusations made against Russia the liberator by a nation which has been freed from bondage but which is still bound by its own servile instincts which it uses to justify its own "independent" and "national" policy. These people, who are the first and final cause of all our misfortunes, have by their folly drawn us into an unequal battle against the Turks and, at the most decisive moment; left us to our fate. Bulgaria has brought about slaughter in Macedonia similar to that caused by the English in Armenia, and so she has lost her influence in Macedonia. But Bulgaria badly needs this influence and so she is constantly trying to persuade us that as long as a free Bulgaria exists the Macedonian question will not be buried; this is in fact a ploy to justify her own egoistic behavior and to cast on the Russians the blame for all the misfortunes that have befallen us.

Is it not naïve to believe that Russia fears the emergence of a Greater Bulgaria, that she did not wish to see Macedonia liberated and that for the same reasons she stood behind the appointment of Firmilyan?

First, let us see who is to blame for the present uprising and who must accept the greatest responsibility for it.

Russia told us more than once that she would not spill a single drop of blood and that she would not offer us even the minimal material aid if we started an uprising. In connection with the Macedonian question Russia frequently issued government proclamations and on numerous occasions sent memoranda to the Bulgarian and Turkish authorities. In all these announcements Russia made it perfectly clear that we were to bide our time and that if we caused any disturbance she would not be able, and would not wish, to help us. In other words, Russia washed her hands in advance of all the misfortunes resulting from an uprising in Macedonia. After all this can we accuse Russia of dishonesty or subterfuge? Why then should we be angry with Russia?

If we are not mistaken, the Revolutionary Committee and the Organization of the uprising expected help from Bulgaria and not from Russia because in their opinion and in that of the Bulgarian Exarchate the people living in Macedonia are Bulgarians. There are no Russians. Therefore Bulgaria should either have helped or declared categorically that nothing could be expected from her. But Bulgaria did neither the one thing nor the other. She did not offer help because the Bulgarians are a calculating people and would be ready to take Macedonia if someone were to offer it to her; otherwise, if it wanted, it could go to ruin. None of the Balkan peoples could look calmly on at the destruction of a region in which their fellow countrymen live. If the initiative for the uprising had been given by the Greeks or the Serbs, and if these people had known that the uprising would be so powerful, they would have declared war and paid no heed to the consequences even if this war were to end by causing them harm. But the Bulgarians are not of the same caliber: they will declare war only if there exists some other country which will ensure that Bulgaria gets the spoils of the war. And since such assurances are never certain without the engagement of one of the great powers, or several of them, fighting to ensure victory, it was not possible to expect the Bulgarians to intervene in Macedonian affairs. But, since this was how matters stood, the Bulgarians might clearly have told the Macedonians not to expect anything from them; like this the unpleasant outcome might well have been avoided. The "far-reaching" policy of the prince and his "independent" and "national" collaborators should have foreseen and prevented these misfortunes. But the policy makers did nothing. They allowed the uprising to be launched in the belief that if their policy of "independence" were to have no effect then the blood of the Macedonians would induce the "great liberator" to set aside her own affairs and join in our fight, so that later she would be called to Berlin and so lose Manchuria and her influence in Persia. This was an incorrect approach to Macedonian matters and the chief culprits were the Bulgarian officials and the Bulgarian people, who were unable to prevent their rulers from following their chosen course and could not persuade them to take up the cause of their Macedonian "clients" And now the blame for this incorrect approach is being laid upon Russia, upon official circles in Russia, who have nothing in common with the people. The "brothers" whom the Russians liberated will not now admit their mistakes and so they are all declaring themselves to be Russophiles, lovers of the Russian people, but not of the Russian government, which does not express the feelings of the people towards the Macedonians and which dismisses all feelings of sympathy the people may hold towards Macedonia. As proof of these allegations the Bulgarians quote the "secret" government circulars forbidding all further printing of articles On the Macedonian Matters.

Here in Macedonia, and in Bulgaria as well, this decree of the Russian government might be misinterpreted, and so it would be advisable to say a few words about it here. First, it should be mentioned that as far as the Macedonian question is concerned there exists no difference in attitude between the Russian government and the Russian people, there is only a difference in the intensity of their interest: Russian society and the Russian people are far

less interested than the government, as can be seen by the aid which is intended for the Macedonians. If we compare this aid with that given to the Boers' of the Transvaal, a great difference will be observed in that they took a greater interest in the Boers' battle than in ours. This relative lack of interest is the result of the Russians' disappointment in their "brothers" And for this we are supposed to be saying "thank you" to the Bulgarians! The Russian authorities have always given full freedom to the press in their country to print articles on all questions, and this freedom lasts for as long as a question is under consideration or until a final solution is found. Once a problem has been exhausted, however, and a final solution has been given, circulars are distributed stating that this question is now closed. This is not done because they want to deprive the papers of their freedom to print but because in the Balkan Peninsula great importance is given to all articles related to Balkan matters and so it is expected that the authorities, under the influence of the press, will alter their policy. The authorities in Russia wish to save us from entertaining futile hopes.

This is all very well, some may argue, but how are we to explain away Russia's policy concerning Firmilyan? Clearly this is a Serbophile policy. Well, let us see if it really is so clear.

The reasons for the appointment of Firmilyan will once again clearly show what a misfortune it is for us that we are known as Bulgarians. These reasons will prove that Bulgaria – that political disaster – is not capable of protecting our interests, or even her own.

Bulgaria has few diplomats, and even fewer abroad. And even those it does have abroad are not capable of improving the reputation of Bulgaria; on the contrary, they destroy it and mock both themselves and their country. As proof of this it will be sufficient to recall only three of them: Bechkov, the secretary and *gérant* of the Trade Agency in Bitola; Tsokov, the diplomat in London; and Stanchev, the diplomat in St. Petersburg.

Ask whomever you like in Bitola about Beshkov, be it the staff of the local consulates, the Bulgarian teachers, the Vlachs, the citizens of Bitola or, finally, the gypsies with whom Beshkov is always chatting as he loafs around the town—they will all tell you who Beshkov is. Yet the Serbs have an excellent representative in Bitola. who enjoys the full respect of the consul; and that is M. Ristich.

Mr. Tsokov displayed all his diplomacy in his conversation with the Reuter correspondent.

But the most interesting case is that of Stanchev, first as a personality, then as a diplomat, and finally as a diplomat holding the most important diplomatic post in Bulgaria. What is immediately striking about Stanchev is that he has been holding the same position for as long as I have known of him (about nine years). This fact is, on the face of it, most comforting because it would seem to point to a certain stability in Bulgarian politics. It is true that the Serbian deputies spend several years in St. Petersburg, but after four or five years they are changed. This consoling fact, however, is only superficially reassuring. During the very first years of my studies I was asked what sort of man I considered Stanchev to be. As I knew nothing about him I explained that I was not in a position to assess him. They then showed me a German book with the title *Die Wahrheit über Bulgarien*. I asked them to lend it to me so that I could read it through. It was after being given this book that I first became acquainted with Stanchev and with Bulgarian affairs, particularly with the status and authority of the Bulgarian deputy in St. Petersburg. Later I heard certain facts about Stanchev and his life in St. Petersburg, facts similar to those mentioned in certain passages of the book just referred to. Through my conversations with journalists I learnt that Stanchev had tried without success to exert his influence upon them. All in all, everybody whom I met or spoke to either did not know Stanchev or else spoke badly of him. They say, however, that during the past year Stanchev himself has sunk very low and, in so doing, lowered the

prestige of Bulgaria in St. Petersburg further than even the greatest enemy of Bulgaria would have done.

And are the Bulgarians aware that while they have their Stanchev in St. Petersburg, the Serbs have Dashich, Gruyich and Novakovich in the same capital? These diplomats are alternately in St. Petersburg or Istanbul and remain several years in one place or the other. They have a wide circle of acquaintances in St. Petersburg and enjoy a warm reception amongst the higher circles of Russian society, upon whom they also exert considerable influence. Their acquaintances include diplomats, professors, editors and newspaper publishers. They speak with conviction and with a profound knowledge of affairs. To this it should be added that Serbian foreign policy is well established and that the Serbs have numerous other assistants in addition to the diplomats mentioned. It will be readily understood that the appointment of Firmilyan is a victory for Serbian diplomacy and a defeat for the Bulgarians, a victory won by the Serbs through their own strength and not something taken over from the Russians; the Bulgarians' defeat was due to the absence of diplomats capable of understanding Bulgarian interests and of defending them through their knowledge and authority.

But Zinoviev sympathized with the Serbs and helped them. This may be true, but he did so not because he hated the Bulgarians but because, as is only logical, the Serbian delegates to Istanbul know their own interests well and are able to protect them. So too, perhaps, the Russian consuls in Macedonia are defending Serbian interests not out of compassion but because the Serbs, like the Bulgarians, are Slavs, and because the Serbs better understand their own interests and are better able to defend them.

So, Bulgarian foreign policy cannot be criticized. But it is the main source of all our misfortunes. This is why one cannot speak of the good which Bulgaria may have done for Macedonia. Is there any good in the material help given by Bulgaria to the uprising, support which has forced us to split up the strength of the people in whom we once found our strength, so that now we are nothing? Is it good that the Bulgarians took care of the Macedonian refugees when Bulgaria was, first and foremost, responsible for the destruction of their homes? Is it good that the Bulgarians offer official posts to Macedonians, who then, on account of their new allegiance, forget their fatherland and sacrifice the interests of Macedonia to those of Bulgaria? Are not the Macedonians who serve Bulgaria, or are candidates for service with the Bulgarians, those who gave a false twist to the actions of the Russian administrators by laying upon them Stambolov's interpretation and invoking them as an excuse to flout the Russians' plea for cautiousness? Oh, Macedonians! It is time we realized that the greatest demon Macedonia must battle against is none other than Bulgaria; and this is why we must keep our interests apart from those of Bulgaria. Common sense demands it.

It is clear from all that has been said above that the Bulgarians' goodness towards the Macedonians is in no way different from that of the Serbs though it costs us a hundred times as much:

1. For the Bulgarian name, which has been endowed upon us by the Exarchate, we have taken over not up to me to try and find out whether some evil Bulgarian demon is responsible for all the evil the Bulgarians have brought upon us, the Macedonians. All that is clear to me is that a great part of our misfortune is the work of the Bulgarian people. The Prince is not to blame, for instance, for the fact that the Bulgarians have no good diplomats. If, for example, Stanchev is the Prince's representative and not the representative of Bulgaria, this is not true of Tsokov, Beshkov and others. No excuses can be made for the Bulgarian people, because unworthy diplomats belong to one party or another and because

the, Prince exercises his right to make his choice from one party or another according to personal orientation. The chief misfortune for Bulgaria and her interests is not only that there are many parties and that they do not all know the interests of their people well, it is also that the Bulgarians have not acquired a sufficient grasp of their national interests, especially those connected with the external world. The Bulgarians do not have a national ideal which would be worthy of all their people and sacred to all of them. These ideals are born by the history of the people but they are added to over a more lengthy period of history. The individual people in any nation should for a long time be inspired by the same national ideal, an ideal which is valid for all and sacred for all. These ideals should be formulated by the most eminent representatives of the nation and accepted by each individual. National ideals should constitute a program towards the realization of which all the combined strength of the nation should be directed. National ideals cannot be realized all of a sudden; their realization should come about as the result of the united and self-sacrificing work of the people. The difficulties encountered in achieving these national ideals serve simply to strengthen the spirit of the people and prepare them for an even greater struggle. On the other hand, if a nation acquires political freedom or gains something else which is important for the life of the people, and if the people play little or no active part in this, either because the national ideals are not yet clearly defined or, if they are defined, because they have not been accepted by all individuals, then the people will not value the national ideals, they will be like a man without any definite aim or course of action. Such a man will turn now to one side now to the other, not because he is convinced that this is how he should act but because he sees around him people whose actions are indiscriminate.

If we look back on recent Bulgarian history what do we see: Bulgaria acquired political freedom, which is most important in the life of a nation, at a time when she still had no national ideals and when the Bulgarians themselves did not know what they wanted. The Bulgarians got their freedom with the minimum of sacrifice and effort; Russia gave it to them. The liberation created an enormous gulf between the old Bulgarian history and life, and the new. In the past the Bulgarians had lived in darkness and so they turned away from this period in their history to appear in their newly won era of freedom as a people without traditions, national ideals or a concept of national and state interests and heritage from the past. So, Bulgaria emerged as a historically unformed state. Thanks to the efforts of Russia this political weakling was somewhat strengthened, but no sooner had it begun to feel the stirrings of its own power than it began to lay claims to a policy of independence which was to be the source of Macedonia's misfortune.

But this policy of independence was not only the cause of our misfortunes; it was also a natural reason for separating our interests from those of Bulgaria and an incentive to the Macedonians here to form a Macedonian Society.

There are other reasons for the formation of this society: the need, for instance, to turn our intellectual powers to the examination of ourselves as members of a people and of a country. In order to achieve this aim it was necessary to form a society of those for whom the study of Macedonia in the ethnographic, geographic and historical sense would be of prime importance; we Macedonians are such people.

If we are to achieve this aim we should break away from the other Balkan peoples and turn independently and critically to an examination of ourselves and our interests, and also of the Balkan peoples and their interests. By so doing we will avoid making the same mistakes as the other Balkan nations.

In order to illustrate more clearly the advantage to be gained by keeping ourselves apart from the other nations it should be sufficient to take a critical look at the Bulgarian and

Serbian student societies here in St. Petersburg.

The Bulgarian students are ambitious to be considered as the forerunners of the latest trends of thought. Nationalism is of no importance to them; they consider it to be redundant and outmoded. They are internationalists. First of all they consider themselves people and only then, if they have time, Bulgarians as well. For them mankind is of greater importance than Bulgaria and so they are more interested in Switzerland or the United States and their history than in Bulgaria with its national interests. The Bulgarian youth here is doing everything in its power to give an appearance of being highly advanced, i.e. socialist: this means interminable and senseless discussions, long hair, well-groomed beards, red or blue Russian shirts and so forth. They are not concerned with national questions and listen with great boredom to lectures on ethnography or any other field of study except political economy. Never the less, each one of them considers it his duty to criticize everything. They are not concerned with scientific questions but they are, by way of compensation, good organizers: they can organize lotteries, spread propaganda, hold a soiree for charity, without giving much thought to the fact that they may disgrace themselves and future generations of Bulgarian students in St. Petersburg. In general, they are ready to take up anything that does not demand great pains, and so they are self-centered and eager for popularity. They consider Macedonia to be Bulgarian in the ethnographic sense but find it unnecessary to waste their energy on getting to know the country better; as a result they know nothing about it, about its history, geography and ethnography. All they know is that there are rebel detachments and rebel fighters who should be aided; and this aid comes from lotteries and not from them personally. This Platonic, only Platonic, and shallow sympathy for the Macedonians, this lack of understanding for their national interests, this absence of national ideals and this longing for popularity through adherence to socialism is a reflection of the spiritual condition of the Bulgarian people and of their society. Hence it is easy to see how ill equipped the Bulgarians are to defend not only our interests but their own as well.

The Serbian students leave one with quite the opposite impression. The Serbs are not internationalists; regardless of whether they come from Serbia, Bosnia, Herzegovina or Montenegro, they are all nationalists. They know that they are first of all Serbs, and then people. They all know of and take an interest in Serbs and things Serbian to be found in other countries. They know their own history and the history of the neighboring peoples and lands. They are primarily interested in the study of culture and history, which they learn as a means for achieving Serbian national aims. In order to defend Serbian interests in the eyes of the Russians they translate or edit books in Russian relating to historical questions. This utilitarian, tendentious and speculative relation towards learning cannot be admired, for it is both the cause and the consequence of national chauvinism, but it is the consequence – at least as far as national chauvinism is concerned – of the historical circumstances affecting the Serbs, particularly after the Berlin agreement. We might accuse the Serbs of being chauvinists, but they are no greater chauvinists than the Bulgarians. The Serbs are nationalists with a good understanding of their national ideals and interests, who, through work, study, writing and diplomacy, are moving as one man along a common path and this is why they beat the Bulgarians at every step. The Serbs are chauvinists, they are fierce defenders of their national interests when these are threatened by the enemy; but if we are to compare Serbian chauvinism with Bulgarian national indifference, and to survey them from the Macedonian and universal point of view we shall have to admit that Serbian chauvinism, as the result of a fundamental knowledge of national interests, stands far higher than Bulgarian national indifference, which results from the lack of any understanding whatsoever of Bulgarian state interests. At a time when the Serbs, from the king and the ministers right

down to the man-in-the-street, are all nationalists and consider it essential that they should all be united in a single body, the Bulgarians are splitting up into socialists and various other *-ists*, who are far from wishing to prove the truth of the saying “unity makes might”. What the Serbs have achieved is all the result of the political maturity of the people: for a whole century they have cherished their national ideals and studied their national interests, and the Bulgarians have tried to do this in a mere twenty-five years.

Come what may, our separation from the Bulgarians will afford us the chance of taking up a critical attitude towards Bulgarian affairs and help us to avoid copying them blindly and transplanting socialism into Macedonia instead of nationalism, as the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization has done. By divorcing our interests from those of Bulgaria we will be saved from aping the merciless acts of the Bulgarians and from having to accept their assurances that Bulgaria is our benefactor and Russia our greatest enemy; thus we will also develop a critical attitude towards our own actions and those of others.

Can there be any greater justification for the existence and activity of our Society? There is, surely, no more we can do now than pray God to help us increase the number of Macedonian societies, similar to the *Sv. Kliment* society in St. Petersburg, wherever Macedonians are living.

ON THE MACEDONIAN MATTERS
NATIONAL SEPARATISM
THE BASIS ON WHICH WE HAVE
BEEN DEVELOPING AND ON WHICH
WE SHALL CONTINUE TO DEVELOP

At the first meeting of the Bulgarian Students Association in St. Petersburg this year I said a few words concerning the results of the recent uprising in Macedonia. I have summarized this under two points: 1. Since the uprising, Macedonia has become lost to the Bulgarian nation, and 2. The Macedonians will come to realize the mistakes which gave rise to this ill-fated uprising; they will renounce the orientation which their national awareness has taken in the past and will start a systematic battle against national and religious propaganda in Macedonia, against those who are inherently Bulgarian, so that, by divorcing their interests from those of the propagandists, they might bring about national unification amongst the Macedonians themselves.

At that time I said that the real state of affairs is one which will not appeal to many, but I cannot speak of what may appeal to some and not to others; I must speak of a matter which is already settled and which sooner or later all South Slavs will have to reckon with — and this is why one must know about the new trends in Macedonia in order to determine clearly the relations between the South Slavs and the Macedonians and so avoid a futile and injurious battle between them.

Many will say that my assertions concerning some of the latest trends in the development of national self-awareness among the Macedonians are simply an attempt at mystification by certain Macedonians, that this mystification is groundless and that it will vanish in the same way as it emerged.

In order to determine whether my conclusions concerning the outcome of the uprising are correct or whether the assertions of my opponents are right we would have to review these events in the light of recent Macedonian history, when national self-awareness reached its peak; we would in fact have to review the birth of Macedonia, the events which

helped to awaken the national spirit of the Macedonians, and the scope and form of this awakening. What sort of relation has grown up, through the Macedonian national revival, between the Macedonians and the other Balkan nations and peoples, and is the position which the Internal Revolutionary Organization is at present taking over the question of the Macedonian Slavs such that it will not be possible to advance further, or will it be necessary to take yet another step for the Macedonians to emerge as the supporters of national separatism by accepting the central Macedonian dialect as the literary language for all Macedonia? And, finally, if the Organization and the Macedonian emigrants in Bulgaria are not prepared to help us particularly those of them who hold well-paid government posts or work as journalists and so pick up fat salaries and manage to exert such influence on Bulgarian public affairs that they are able to run for ministerial posts in Bulgaria — if, I say, we are not able to count on these expatriots, it should still be possible for us to give expression to our revival precisely in the way I have mentioned above, i.e. by divorcing our interests from those of the Balkan peoples and by spreading national self awareness amongst the Macedonian intelligentsia and the Macedonian people.

This review of the events, which preceded the uprising, shows us that the most powerful spur to national awakening amongst the Macedonians was in fact the Serbian propaganda movement in Macedonia. Up till that moment our national self-awareness had been only half aroused; nobody had bothered particularly with the question of our nationality. We did indeed call ourselves “Bulgarians” and “Christians” in the national sense; but why this was so, and whether it really had to be so, we did not very much care to ask.

Our relations with the Bulgarians have been extremely close as a result of the general situation in Turkey: we were brothers through destiny and our relations were equal towards the government and the Phanariot Order. We were given, in our common fate, the common name of Bulgarians right up to the liberation of Bulgaria, and even after the liberation of Bulgaria this remained a tradition in Macedonia. This was the basis on which the Bulgarians established their pretensions to Macedonia; but the Macedonians had expected to be liberated by the Bulgarians.

But the rivalry between the Serbs and the Bulgarians over the Macedonian question, both from the political and from the national point of view, brought the Macedonians themselves onto the political scene. The Macedonians began to step up their interest concerning the question of their nationality and destiny.

The course of this national revival and the consequences to which it led may be roughly described as follows:

The Serbs and the Bulgarians began to contest each other's right to Macedonia, each claiming that all Macedonia was hers, each calling upon one authority or another for confirmation of the justness of her pretensions.

In the midst of this endless dispute between these two brotherly neighboring states the Macedonian Slav population, on account of whom they were quarrelling, gradually began to develop their sense of national self-awareness and endeavored to liberate themselves from the influence of the neighboring peoples in order to be able to take their fate independently into their own hands.

The Macedonians were seeking for national unification among themselves while at the same time stipulating that this unification should not be on a new basis, that it should not encompass the new movement, because much time would be needed for this unification and because unification was important as a means of achieving political freedom. This is why the unification was centered upon what the Macedonians called the Macedonian Bulgarians.

The idea of national unification for the Macedonians albeit under a Bulgarian mask began in 1890. At the end of 1889 thirty to forty Macedonian students from Belgrade moved to Sofia. These students were the heart and soul of all that has happened in Macedonia from that time till the present day. They were well acquainted with Serbia and Bulgaria, with their cultures and their aspirations in Macedonia. They were also aware of the danger that would arise if Macedonia were to be partitioned between these two state's, that is, of course, if the Macedonians did not take to arms themselves and by their own strength and with their own means win freedom and so prevent the partition.

It was upon their initiative that in the eighteen nineties a nationalist-separatist movement was first formed with the aim of divorcing Macedonian interests from those of Bulgaria by introducing a Macedonian tongue which would serve as the literary language of all Macedonians. The organ of this Macedonian separatist movement in Bulgaria was the magazine *Loza* (The Vine); the authorities in Bulgaria and Istanbul, however, did not look favorably upon this spiritual movement and banned further publication of the magazine. They also began to persecute the Macedonian separatists. One of those who made his escape at this time was Dame Gruev, who was one of the Macedonian students who had moved from Belgrade to Sofia, and was also one of the separatists.

Since they could not find favorable ground for their national separatist activity in Bulgaria, the Macedonians who had moved from Belgrade to Sofia turned to organizing revolutionary bodies in Bulgaria and Macedonia. The celebrated Macedonian revolutionary separatists, such as Gotsê Delchev, were simply the pupils of the first generation of Macedonians who had studied in Serbia and Bulgaria. So, too, Sarafov and the revolutionaries who followed were simply the successors and heirs of these first revolutionaries but not the founders of the revolutionary organization.

Right from the very start of the revolutionary organization the Macedonians who were living in Bulgaria or who had been educated there began working under a Bulgarian mask. First, because the majority of the population was called Bulgarian and secondly because in this way they could gain the support of the Bulgarian authorities, the Bulgarian people, and the Bulgarian church.

The game they were playing had both positive and negative results, amongst which we should mention: 1. That the Macedonians who protected the interests of their country through unification gradually became an extremely important factor, as is evidenced by the fact that while they were in apparent alliance with the Bulgarian people and their official representatives and working for Bulgarian interests in Macedonia they were in fact making use of the Bulgarian people, their official representatives and institutions to serve their own, Macedonian, aims and interests; 2. That the Macedonians who were in league with the Bulgarians in trying to settle the Macedonian question gradually became the masterminds behind this league in which the Bulgarians were most solicitous, even fiery, supporters convinced that they were fulfilling all the Macedonians' requirements.

But the Macedonians then began to declare that what they wanted was a *Macedonia for the Macedonians*, an autonomous Macedonia, and not unification with Bulgaria. The Bulgarians received this undoubtedly distressing news with a "heavy heart". The Macedonians comforted them, however, saying: wait a while let them give us autonomy, after a few years you will see that Macedonia will become another Bulgaria because most of the Macedonian intelligentsia have been educated in Bulgaria. They even assured the world at large that the fate of Eastern Rumelia would not be repeated in Macedonia because there were many nationalities in Macedonia, not just two or three, and that all these nationalities, including all the neighboring Balkan states great and small alike, might upset the attempt to unite

Macedonia and Bulgaria. Finally they demanded to know what interest the Macedonians could gain from unification with Bulgaria when it would clearly be far more in the interest of the Bulgarians than of the Macedonians.

The Macedonians did not limit this two-sided game to the various promises they held out to Bulgaria and to Europe; they shifted the center of the revolutionary organization, together with all the national and political questions it entailed, to Macedonia in order to be free from the interference of the Bulgarian administrators in all their actions.

Amongst the revolutionary committees in Bulgaria they began to propagate the idea of complete separation of the interests of the Macedonians from those of the Bulgarians.

Sarafov began working energetically in conjunction with the committees which he represented. As Chairman of the Supreme Committee in Sofia, Sarafov was working in direct opposition to the Bulgarian administration; neither the Bulgarian government officials nor the Bulgarian Prince shared Sarafov's opinion; in other words the committee which Sarafov led was submitting itself, over the Macedonian question, to a program which was up till then only political, which had been worked out beforehand, and on which those who had been invited to defend Bulgarian interests had not been actively involved while those who represented the masses, that is the Bulgarian people, had participated. Thus it is clear that the Bulgarians had swallowed the pill and that it was too late to rectify the mistake. The government did what it could to recover what had been lost — but in vain! It was too late. The Supreme Committee in Sofia was placed under the presidency of General Tsonchev, a Bulgarian and favorite of the Prince. But the Macedonians in Bulgaria convinced the Bulgarian people of the justness of their program as far as it concerned the complete separation of Macedonian interests from those of Bulgaria; they unmasked the political leaders, the Prince and the "General's Committee", or the committee of Tsonchev-Mihailov, as self-seeking and so won for themselves greater power in Bulgaria than that held by the "General's Committee" and the political leaders over the Macedonian question. This power was substantially aided by the solidarity of "Stanishev's Supreme Committee" together with the "Internal Organization".

Thus the committees, together with the Macedonians as a whole, shook themselves free from the influence of the Bulgarian leaders and set up their own independent plan of operation; this was publicized in Bulgaria and so the committee won influence amongst the Bulgarian people and, through them, over their leaders.

Once the Macedonian "job" had been thus settled in Bulgaria the Macedonians began to move into Serbia where they once again set out their program, this time to the Serbian leaders and the Serbian people. Sarafov, Rádev, and Yankov assured the Serbs that they were fighting under the banner of *Macedonia for the Macedonians*, for all Macedonians regardless of differences, and that they would never unite Macedonia with Bulgaria. It is surely clear from these actions that the Macedonians had, through their leaders, decided to settle the fate of Macedonia themselves and that through their efforts they were prepared to make their interests conform to and harmonize with those of the other Balkan states, including Bulgaria, provided these states would agree to aid Macedonia in her designs.

Hence it is clear that the battle between Serbia and Bulgaria for influence over Macedonia led to the growing awareness that the fate of Macedonia should rest in the hands of the Macedonians. The Macedonians organized themselves around their motherland, their duty towards their country and their understanding of their rights. Through this organization it was the Macedonians themselves who became the chief factor in settling the Macedonian question, not only in their own eyes but also in the eyes of all Europe. Now that the uprising

is over we are looked at with respect; before the uprising we were looked upon as a formless mass.

These are the results of our recent upsurge of self-awareness. By gradually separating Macedonian interests from those of Bulgaria, by taking the Macedonian question into their own hands, and, most of all, by launching the recent uprising the Organization has achieved the following result: contrary to its expectations many in Macedonia, instead of seeking freedom, are now convinced that we need to cut off our connections with all Balkan nations and that we should cultivate in Macedonia everything that is original and that belongs to us our language, our customs, our history, our literacy, our Slav nationality, etc.

This was not expected because it was felt that the name “Bulgarian” would bring us everything we had expected from the national movement. But we were deceived in our expectations: the name “Bulgarian” was not only not beneficial to Macedonian interests, it also had a negative effect on the revolutionary “work”. The name Bulgarian and the various assurances made to Europe and Bulgaria concerning the fate of Macedonia after its liberation gave rise to great mistrust towards our revolution, on the part of the peoples of Europe, who considered it a piece of cunning, not Macedonian but Bulgarian, a maneuver by the Bulgarian leaders to get the Macedonian question settled more quickly. The unfortunate Bulgarian leaders found themselves in a fix over the Macedonian question: the Macedonians had outmaneuvered them and used them for their own ends, and the Europeans were accusing them of cunning a cunning they could have little claim to possess. So the name “Bulgarian”, which the Committee and the Organization took over for the Macedonian Slavs, and the unification of our interests with those of Bulgaria in the agitation caused by the Committee in Bulgaria were among the reasons for attributing to Bulgaria the whole Macedonian question and the relations between Europe and Bulgaria, and for considering it as Bulgarian foreign policy which should not be accepted.

Furthermore, the name “Bulgarian” drove the Europeans to mistrust the work of the Organization and look upon it as an ambition on the part of the Bulgarians to upset the balance in the Balkans by revolution; moreover, the instability of Bulgarian foreign policy, which was constantly vacillating between pro- and anti-Russian, was one of the reasons why Russia agreed with Austria-Hungary to find a joint solution to the Balkan questions. This agreement was concluded in 1897 against Bulgaria as the agitating force behind the Macedonians, but the results of this agreement were harmful not to Bulgaria itself, for nobody had the right to interfere in Bulgaria’s internal affairs, but to us Macedonians. This is the negative side of the first period of our national self-awareness, and here lies the reason for the failure of our uprising. The failure, then, is basically focused around the name “Bulgarian” which the revolutionaries took over and publicized.

The revolution, however, does mark an epoch in the life and the growth of self-awareness of the Macedonian Slavs. It will make our people and our intellectuals look back upon those actions which brought about the unsuccessful uprising. It will force the Macedonian intelligentsia of all backgrounds to unite so that the people might be united, but not on the basis it formerly chose when it demonstrated its lack of tenacity; it will be on a new, purely Macedonian basis. The uprising has shown that we Macedonians cannot expect help from any of the Balkan states because the resolution of our question lies mainly in the hands of the Great Powers, and so we do not need to unite and join our interests with any of the Slav peoples in the Balkans. What is most essential for us is internal unity, mutual unity in Macedonia we do not need Serbs, Bulgarians or Greeks, for we are none of these; we do not need patriarchists, or exarchists because we are only Orthodox Christians. The partition has been artificially made by the Balkan states which intended to partition Macedonia

according to the existing situation. But the Macedonians, at their present level of national development, are not merely material in the hands of the small Balkan states but a powerful ethnographic and political factor, and it is on them that the fate of Macedonia depends and not on the small Balkan states. These Macedonians who have shown such skill in their national-political organization, who have been so exemplary in sacrificing their interests to the interests of their motherland, will be no less successful in organizing all preventative measures against the nationalist and religious propaganda which today is splitting our people into hostile camps.

The Revolutionary Organization and the Macedonians have so far set the interests of the Macedonians far apart from those of the Bulgarians. It is only one step from this situation to complete separation from Bulgaria and to the proclamation of Macedonia as a special ethnographic region, separate from Bulgaria and Serbia. This step is the essential second phase in the failure of our recent uprising: it has already been half taken. Macedonia's complete secession from the Balkan states in the ethnographic sense will come to the attention of the public once Macedonia settles down.

The intervention of the Bulgarians and Serbs in Macedonia was the result of various circumstances: the Macedonians had gone hand in hand with the Bulgarians as far as the Church was concerned, which explains why the power of the Exarchate had spread in Macedonia. Serbia became involved in Macedonia when she lost hope of incorporating Bosnia and Herzegovina into her territory.

But now new circumstances have arisen for us Macedonians as well, circumstances which will shake us and show us the new paths we should follow in the future. The pretensions of the Serbs and the Bulgarians, on the one hand, have shown us that the rivalry of these two states alone has been enough to condemn us to slavery for some time still to come; on the other hand, these pretensions of theirs have, in spite of this, assured us of a certain truth — that in all Macedonia there exists only one Slav nationality and not several. So, the partition is artificial and in the battle against it we should first begin with completely new work on the further development of our national self-awareness.

Thus the terms Serb, Bulgarian, and Greek have served their time in Macedonia and there is no longer any place for them. It is time for them to be changed for a name common to all Macedonian Slavs, the name *Macedonian*. This exchange is simply the logical outcome of the work of the Macedonian Committees, the Organization, and the intelligentsia, and it is conditioned by new circumstances. This exchange has already been partially affected and the time is not far off when it will celebrate its full success.

In all that has been said above of the new trends in the development of our national self-awareness I have the impression that many of you will again find in my thoughts and words nothing but mystification. Some of you may ask: 1. If the Committees have so far been playing a double role — telling the Bulgarians that the Macedonians are Bulgarians and that Macedonia will one day be attached to Bulgaria, and telling the Europeans that they are seeking an autonomous Macedonia for the Macedonians only because they have no intention of uniting with the Bulgarians — how is it that I know the Committees are lying to the Bulgarians and not to Europe? This may be quite the contrary of what I said above about the Committees, i.e. that they are ready to give Europe every guarantee that Macedonia will not unite with Bulgaria and will never allow the Bulgarian language and the Bulgarian name to be used in Macedonia to the detriment of the central Macedonian dialect and the name *Macedonian*, in other words what I said — that there is only one step from the position held by the Macedonians and the Macedonian Committees concerning the Macedonian question with relation to Bulgaria to the complete secession of Macedonia and the Macedonians from

Bulgarian national interests is not true, because it is not one step but a whole gulf which divides the one from the other, and the Committees will show the most powerful opposition to the new trends; 2. If it is accepted that the committees will not agree to using the Bulgarian language and the name Bulgarian in Macedonia, and if all Macedonian intellectuals who have been brought up as Bulgarians are to join them in opposing all new trends, where would the new trends in this case draw their strength from? Who is to be the theoretician of the new trend, where will the theoreticians develop their activity, what sort of auditorium will they have and where will it be, where will the finances be found for publicizing the new ideas, how will they get through to the people and how will they survive? Where will the money be found for new textbooks, who will prepare them and whose money will be used for running schools in Macedonian? It is clear that if the Committees and the Macedonian intelligentsia in Bulgaria begin to resist the new trends, or, if they do not resist, simply refuse to support them, nothing will be left of all this is the fantasy of a handful of Macedonians will be laughed to scorn, and that is all.

Is this, in effect, how matters stand? Let us now examine how well grounded these suppositions are.

First we must consider what attitude the Committees and the Macedonian intelligentsia will take towards the new national trend in Macedonia, a trend which demands not only the political but also the national and religious liberation of Macedonia; i.e. what will be their attitude towards a trend which has as its slogan *Macedonia for the Macedonians* and is set against all other rival ideologies in Macedonia, and against Bulgaria and the Bulgarians at the same time. Let us assume that this new trend is of no significance: if so, we must settle the question of our attitude towards it. If, from the point of view of the Committee, the new trend is undesirable and dangerous it should be rooted out from the very start; if it does not rest on sufficiently firm ground one may expect that it will die out of its own accord; but if it is in fact useful for Macedonia then the Macedonians should support it.

The question of whether this new trend has a future or not will be considered later when it will be seen that if left to itself and ignored it will develop on its own and not die out. So, if we accept that the new trend will develop on its own, we must now ask whether the Committees will fight against it or give it their support.

First we must ask whether the Committees, if they are to assess the situation logically, can declare war against the new trend? One might admit that such a war could be expected, for there are people in the Committees who are not just Macedonians but also Bulgarians, and the latter will never agree with the new trend because it would mean burying the interests of the Bulgarians in Macedonia; there are also Macedonian committee members who will reason as follows: now that we are old we cannot learn a new language Bulgarian is the language we know and we shall speak Bulgarian; we are Bulgarians.

This will be the feeling of the minority; the majority of the Macedonian emigrants in Bulgaria, however, will be opposed to the new trend for purely egoistic reasons. More than five thousand Macedonians hold government posts in Sofia alone, and the number of candidates for the civil service is no less. The majority of these Macedonian emigrant intellectuals have held, or will hold, high functions in the government or expect to be promoted to such positions — even to rise to the rank of cabinet ministers. It is well known that most of these gentlemen think above all of their own interests; the interests of Macedonia are simply a means of getting promotion in the civil service and of retaining office. And God alone knows what the interests of the Bulgarians mean. Furthermore, in order to carry out their egoistic designs and land themselves with a cushy job, they are prepared to show themselves greater Bulgarians than the Bulgarians themselves, they are

ready to take on the role of Bulgarian chauvinists, to exploit the Bulgarian Prince, the interests of the Macedonians, the interests of the Bulgarian people and European public opinion; in short, to lie all round and to hide their lies behind the excuse that they are performing some patriotic duty while they are in fact bent on getting a good job and on winning power and popularity. The Macedonian intellectual emigrants are on the whole people of this sort who have set their own interests on the same plane as those of the Bulgarians and who flock round the Bulgarian Prince, who makes and breaks ministers as the mood takes him and who is capable of appointing ministers from among those people who not only have no popularity among the Bulgarians but also belong to no party, those who are “independent”, i.e. “who ride with the wind”. So, we have people who think that man’s basic dignity lies not in serving his own people honorably but in outwitting everyone, i.e. in telling lies all round. It is natural, then, that the new trend in the national self-awareness of the Macedonians will meet with no support amongst the Macedonian emigrants in Bulgaria.

There is no need to speak of Macedonians educated in Bulgaria: they will unanimously pronounce the new trend as absurd for, they will say, the Macedonian nation has never existed and does not exist now, and the Macedonians are Bulgarians, etc. This has always been the case everywhere, and so it will be in Macedonia. The educated, the aristocracy, the intelligentsia, and in general all classes of society with personal interests, traditions, and prejudices will fight against new trends which embody truth and justice. These trends first take root in the lower classes and among people who are free from prejudice and who are ready to fight against prejudice to protect the new ideas which must be realized in order to ensure their happiness and the happiness of the people. As an illustration of the course and final outcome of the battle between the old and the new we need only recall the battle of Christianity against Jesuitism, the reforms in Russia introduced by Peter the Great, the rebirth of the Czechs and the Lithuanians, the language reforms of Vuk Karadzich, etc.

Let us leave aside for the moment the battle between the old and the new trends in Macedonian national feeling; let us continue to consider the question of the Committee’s attitude towards the trend. A short while ago I said that most members of the Committee would be in favor of fighting against the new trend. But do you think that they will be victorious in this battle? No. They will simply be digging their own graves and, moreover, compromising Bulgarian policy in Macedonia. And this is why:

Up till now the Committees have been assuring the world at large that they are working only for a *Macedonia for the Macedonians* and that they are ready to offer any guarantee that there will be no unification between Bulgaria and Macedonia. Bulgaria has been promulgating the same policy with regard to the Macedonian question. The Committees say that the general Macedonian uprising was planned and launched by all the Macedonian nations together and not just by the “Bulgarians”. But when you ask them how it could have been a general uprising of all the Macedonian nations and why the Committee had its headquarters in Bulgaria and not in Serbia, Wallachia, and other places they will answer that although the Committee did have its headquarters in Bulgaria one should not allow oneself to draw the wrong conclusion that the Macedonian Committees were Bulgarian; as far as the Macedonian Committees were concerned, Bulgaria was no more than a country which had offered hospitality to the Macedonians and had permitted them to work freely as long as their work did not cause harm to the country; i.e. in the Macedonian uprising Bulgaria simply played the role of Kara-Wallachia in the Bulgarian uprising. And the Bulgarians say the same. The Europeans, of course, did not believe this. And now how false will these assurances of

the Committee and of the Bulgarians seem if both of them — on account of their passive attitude towards a movement which demands *Macedonia for the Macedonians* and not for the Bulgarians, or because they have discounted the movement should join battle against it? This battle will remove the mask from both of them and will awaken the sympathy of European society and of the European leaders in favor of the new trend and against the deceivers. But without Europe and Russia neither the Committees nor the Bulgarians will be able to alter the fate of Macedonia by one jot.

One thing is certain: that the Committees, thanks to their disdainful and passive attitude towards the new trend, will have to do an about-turn and begin supporting it. And that is the answer to the question of what attitude the Committee will have towards the new movement.

Let us now pass on to the second question: where will this new movement draw its strength from if the Macedonian intelligentsia and the Committees in Bulgaria begin to oppose it? What forces and means can the new movement draw on?

In order to answer this question we must give a brief outline of the role of Serbia in the Macedonian revival. It would be very shortsighted to neglect the attitude of Serbia towards the Macedonian question and to ignore the role it has played in the Macedonian national revival. One may even say that, in the recent history of Macedonia, Serbia has played a greater role than Bulgaria. When Bulgaria was making a great fuss about her intention to settle the Macedonian question, and while she was being led a merry dance by the Macedonian emigrants, Serbia kept quiet and went on working with great success in Macedonia, in true keeping with the saying: "still waters run deep". There were times when the roles of these two countries were reversed: Serbia fussed and Bulgaria worked,

Let us be more precise:

Up till the Serbian-Bulgarian war of 1885 the Bulgarians had been working quietly in Macedonia. Slivnitsa proved to Serbia that if Bulgaria, together with Eastern Rumelia, could defeat Serbia at Slivnitsa, the unification of Bulgaria with the subjugated Macedonia would in the future mean complete defeat and subjugation for Serbia. Slivnitsa forced Serbia to begin a new battle with Bulgaria for Macedonia. This battle was at first on paper: the Serbs began with thunderous empty phrases to claim that they had a greater right to Macedonia than the Bulgarians. From here they moved on to high-powered but unsuccessful propaganda in Macedonia, promising the Macedonians, the young students from the Bulgarian and Greek schools, golden hills in Serbia. After 1888 the patriotic St. Sava society opened a hail of residence for its scholarship holders. In 1889 the number of scholarship-holders increased, only to drop again a few months later; in November of this year about forty Macedonian students, some secretly, some publicly and openly, made a mass move from Belgrade to Sofia where they continued their schooling (with Bulgarian money, needless to say). This failure did not dishearten the courageous Serbs; the St. Sava society opened a patriotic subscription in Serbia for the construction of a new building for the society, which would serve as a hail of residence and school building. In 1890 a three-storied building was erected and in January 1891 the *Theological Seminary College* was opened, only to be shut half a year later. But during this half year the society of St. Sava kicked up quite a dust: in addition to the teaching of science, the curriculum included cadet parades and marches through the streets of Belgrade and the suburbs, as well as summer excursions through Serbia. All this involved much self-aggrandizement. This marked the end of the Serbs' dust-raising and thereafter the Serbs began to work quietly and thoroughly: the propaganda passed on from the patriotic society to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ministry began by sending its

students into the provinces of Serbia to study and then recalled them to Belgrade where they were sent to special schools or High Schools.

The work of the Serbs was not without result in settling the Macedonian question. Through their schools in Macedonia the Serbs managed to bring the other Europeans and the Russians round to thinking that there was a Serb population in Macedonia. This illusion was even passed off as a tact to the leaders of the Great Powers. Hence it is clear that in settling the Macedonian question one must also bear in mind the demands of the Serbian rulers. Serbia, then, achieved more than Bulgaria in this battle because Bulgaria kicked up a fuss and found herself on the losing side. If the course of national self-awareness among the Macedonians had not taken a new turn, leveling the loses of the Serbs with those of the Bulgarians, one might have said with certainty that after the uprising the Bulgarian interests had been simply destroyed while those of Serbia had been advanced. But Serbian propaganda, in addition to the illusion it spread concerning the Serbs in Macedonia and the endeavor to prevent the Macedonian question being settled in Bulgaria's favor, had further results.

In their propaganda campaign the Serbs had no intention of trying to turn the Macedonians into Serbs; they wanted simply to get as much out of Macedonia as they could when the time came for the Macedonian question to be settled. They attempted to achieve this aim first of all by stressing historical and other rights and then by giving a different slant to the question of the nationality of the Macedonian Slavs. These Slavs had to be regarded either as a kind of mean between the Bulgarians and the Serbs, i.e. as neither Serb nor Bulgarian but simply Macedonian or Macedonian Slav, or else as Serbs. The first theory attracted fewer supporters and was set aside to be presented to European public opinion. But the way into Macedonia was closed to the protagonists of this theory and also to all those places from whence the propagandists came. This theory was dangerous for Serbian interests in Macedonia because it would have entailed Serbia's agreement to the formation of a separate Macedonian state, and so Serbia would not have been able to get even a part of it. The second theory, i.e. that all Macedonian Slavs are Serbs, just like the Bosnians, Montenegrins, and others, had its roots in Serbia. The Serbs used this theory to deceive not only European public opinion and the Macedonians, but also themselves: they began to spread the same idea among their own people through their schools and books. These schools and books were tendentious as far as the nationality of the Macedonians was concerned. The illusion which the Serbs spread in Europe concerning their interests was not unfruitful; nor was the illusion that had been spread amongst the Serbs themselves entirely without effect: if war was to break out over Macedonia, no matter with whom, the Serbs would present a united front to the enemy the Serbian army would fight with the strongest feelings of patriotism for Macedonia.

The Serbian efforts to have the Macedonian question properly studied were crowned with success. The Bulgarians could console themselves that the question of the nationality of the Macedonians had been settled in their favor. They could consider it settled. But the scholars are not all in accord with this. There are several, such as Prof. J. A. Baudouin de Courtenay, P. A. Lavrov and V. Jagich who consider the Macedonian dialects as special forms of the Slav family of languages. This study and this conclusion mark a victory for the Serbs.

The Serbs brought about a reversal in both the aspirations and the ideas of the Macedonians, a reversal which was not even to their own advantage and far less to that of the Bulgarians. They wanted to turn the Macedonians into Serbs by insisting that in all forms of propaganda and publicity they should be referred to exclusively as "real, true" Serbs. This,

however, did not happen. The Macedonians began to delve more deeply into the question of their nationality and their interests and reached the conclusion that they were neither Serbs nor Bulgarians, that the only interests that mattered to them were those of Macedonia, and that they had nothing to do with Serbian, Bulgarian or Greek interests. The Serbs did not manage to fulfill all their aspirations but they did reach a point from which it would have been very hard to go back; they also managed to pacify the less intractable elements among the Serbian people.

The influence of Serbia on the development of Macedonian self-awareness and the results of this influence may be seen from the following:

In 1899 there were between fifty and sixty young Macedonians staying at the hostel of the *St. Sava Society* in Kosmajaska Street, Belgrade. And among them there were even “old Serbs”, although they were all exclusively from Macedonia and were divided on the grounds of their education, right up till their arrival in Serbia, into “Bulgarophiles” and “Hellenophiles”; there were no “Serbophiles” among them.

The old “Bulgarophiles”, together with the new arrivals that year and a number of “Hellenophiles” (between thirty and forty altogether), set off for Bulgaria, some secretly, some openly and demonstratively. These young Macedonians, educated in Serbia in the national spirit, i.e. to love first their country and their people, and then mankind, set off for a country where there was no national self-awareness, where there was simply there complete indifference towards national interests, bringing with them a new wave of national enthusiasm, a will to work for the liberation of Macedonia. It was they who were the initiators in Bulgaria of the work that was to be carried out on behalf of Macedonia.

The “Hellenophiles” in Belgrade gradually increased their numbers over the years as they were joined by new “Hellenophiles” or “Bulgarophiles”, but both these groups, while living in the interior of Serbia, found it extremely hard to turn themselves into “Serbophiles”. It was only those who had been sent as off officials to Macedonia, as part of the Serbian propaganda program, that managed to become “Serbophiles”. But these Macedonians were “Serbophiles” only for the sake of outward appearances and for those who represented rival propaganda programs in Macedonia; these disseminators of Serbian propaganda never felt themselves to be spiritually “Serbian” or “Serbophile”, particularly during the first ten years, although they were living in Serbia.

The life of the young Macedonians in Serbia had always been beneficial for the interests of Macedonia. While in Serbia the Young Macedonians began to take up the question of their nationality with Serbian philologists, to examine the historical arguments concerning their nationality, to discuss Serbian patriotism, and, in its extreme form, chauvinism or the blind preference of things Serbian to anything foreign, to question the reasons for Serbian chauvinism, to consider the role of Serbia, past and present, in relation to the Macedonian question, and to discuss many other important and interesting matters.

From past experience they were able to judge clearly how Serbia had been promoting her own interests in Macedonia; but the Macedonians now also learnt that Serbia was a state with military and diplomatic power, and that the Serbs were a people who would defend their own interests in Macedonia by both exemplary devotion and extreme fanaticism.

The battle being waged against Serbian interests in Macedonia was no less exacting for liberated Bulgaria than for the Macedonians, who had no state, no national budget, no army and no diplomatic corps, and so the Macedonians in Serbia gave up the idea of open conflict with the Serbs though this did not mean that they renounced the interests of their motherland.

After the flight of the first group of Macedonian students in 1889 there were constant escapes right up to 1895/96; occasionally these were small groups of five or six but sometimes they fled alone or in twos. Nevertheless most of the Macedonians stayed in Serbia and strove to find a way of working for the interests of Macedonia without entering into open conflict with the Serbs.

In order to work out this program the Macedonian students in Belgrade in 1893/94, while subject to the supervision of the Head of the Men's College, Djuro Milijashevich, decided to found a Macedonian Society in Belgrade. The aim of this society was to acquaint its members with a program, which was yet to be worked out, but which would be carried out in Macedonia without the knowledge of the Serbs. The explicit aims of this program were to study Macedonian ethnography, geography, philology and history.

This Society, of course, came to nothing because the Serbs showed no trust in the Macedonians and began to fill up the society with "old Serbs", i.e. Montenegrins, Bosnians, Herzegovinians, etc. This lack of confidence on the part of the Serbs, followed by the attempt to fill the Society with non-Macedonian "Serbs", was particularly evident in the second year of the Society's life, when Professor Jarishich was in charge of the College. But although the Society was practically disbanded, the feelings and aspirations of the Macedonians in Serbia did not alter. The Macedonians began to be drawn towards the Revolutionary Organization, which had been set up by those with Bulgarian and Serbian educational backgrounds; thus they also accepted the attitude of the Serbs towards this Organization. They took up a stand over Serbia's role in connection with the Macedonian question, both in the past and the future, because they had the honor of being the instigators of national separatism amongst the Macedonians. They were, in fact, the main supporters of this separatism and amongst them were people with a strong sense of patriotism and a sound understanding of Macedonian national interests.

These Macedonians gave open expression to their beliefs concerning the Macedonian question through a paper, the *Balkanski Glasnik*, which began to appear in Belgrade in 1902. The publication of this paper could not have pleased the Serbian chauvinists, and the Serbian newspapers began to react to it, criticizing the editor for collaborating with the Macedonian revolutionary Committees; as a result the editor was expelled from Serbia.

Such were the effects of Serbian propaganda on the students and fledgling administrators who had been born in Macedonia. As far as the nationality of the Macedonians was concerned, the Serbs stuck to the second of the two theories mentioned, i.e. that the Macedonians were in fact Serbs, and it was precisely because of this that they achieved the opposite effect to the one they had intended: the Serbs had hoped to persuade the Macedonians to serve Serbian interests, i.e. to consider themselves Serbs and to present themselves as Serbs to their fellow countrymen. But instead of doing so, the Macedonians began to consider themselves Macedonian, with their own special aims; and they wanted to bend Serbian policy to enable them to achieve purely Macedonian aims instead of having to serve as instruments in the hands of the Serbs.

There was not a single Macedonian with a Serbian education, especially if he had lived in Serbia, who believed the Serbs when they said that he was a Serb. Indeed, most of them began to hate the Serbs for their chauvinism, and did all they could to pull the wool over their eyes in order to achieve their aim — acquiring an education. After leaving school some of them may have gone on to become officials in the Serbian propaganda system but at the same time they hated the Serbs and cursed their fate for having to pay lip-service to a propaganda which was aimed directly against the interests of their fatherland — Macedonia.

This kind of Macedonian had usually attended a Greek or Bulgarian school, or both, before entering the Serbian school, and he could well remember how they had constantly tried to convince him at his previous school that he was Greek or Bulgarian; now they tried convince him that he was a Serb. The question he now had to ask was where the truth lay, for all sides had been ready with their persuasive arguments. Counterargument did not help the Macedonian to work out which of the persuasions was correct and so he began realize that they were all false and that there was only one incontrovertible truth: that the Macedonian Slavs were Macedonians and Slavs, and so each Macedonian was bound to consider the interests of his country and his people, and not those of the nations who were trying to spread their propaganda.

Let us consider another type of Macedonian educated under the Serbs: he may still consider himself a Bulgarian even after spending four or five years in Serbia. After completing his schooling in Serbia, where should he go — to Bulgaria or to Macedonia? What would he do in either Bulgaria or Macedonia? Bulgaria and the Bulgarian church in Macedonia have more officials than they need, but even if there were any openings they would not be given to anyone who had finished his schooling in Serbia; a vacant post would be given to some other candidate. Now, even if we concede that he might be given a post in the Bulgarian government service, can we be sure that he would feel at home there? No. During the time he spent in Serbia he was influenced by numerous circumstances which did not exist in Bulgaria and so his view of the world would differ greatly from that of someone educated in Bulgaria where he would not have been subjected to foreign thoughts and prejudices; in these new social surroundings he would be least likely to feel at home.

Thus Serbia, by interfering in the Macedonian question, achieved great success and we should admit that we are fortunate that this success is more to our advantage than to Serbia's. Serbia opened schools, set up consulates, and appointed Firmilyan, so giving a new turn to the Macedonian question. Serbia deluded public opinion in Europe into thinking that there were Serbs in Macedonia and this delusion passed for fact in Europe. Serbia put a stop to any further consideration of the question of the Macedonians' nationality and any resolution of the problem in favor not of Bulgaria or Serbia but of Macedonia as a separate nation. Serbia educated a whole generation of Macedonians who had, still have, and will have a decisive effect on Macedonian history. Those people, educated by the Serbs, have played an important role in the Macedonian question, paying scant regard to whether they were labeled Bulgarian, Serb or Macedonian and making no distinction between those who had a high sense of morals and those who did not. Those educated by the Serbs belonged to all possible categories and in all of them the Serbian influence proved beneficial for Macedonia. Those who were treated as Bulgarians (or considered themselves Bulgarian), who founded and supported the Macedonian revolutionary movement, deserve credit for achieving separatism. It is the idealists working under Serbian guise, while remaining at heart Macedonian, who are to be credited for bringing about national separatism; those who were educated in Serbia were brought up in the active national spirit instead of in the mood of national indifference which prevailed in Bulgaria, although some of them did not fully agree to calling themselves Bulgarians; but a vast gap developed between them, between the Macedonians who had been educated in the pure Bulgarian tradition, and the Bulgarians themselves. On account of their education they held a middle position between the Bulgarians and the Serbs; this means that by tradition they considered themselves Bulgarian although in their hearts they had ceased to be Bulgarians and felt themselves to be Macedonian. And last of all, the lowest and most wretched cogs in the Serbian propaganda wheel, those who were born in Macedonia, were also of service to their country because they

formed the class of those who were dissatisfied with Serbian propaganda, those for whom there was no path towards the Bulgarians; and they were to enlarge the class of national separatists.

So, if we are deluded in assuming that national separatism can be supported by the Revolutionary Committee, by the Organization, and by the Macedonian expatriate colony in Bulgaria, it would still be sufficient to have a powerful Serbian propaganda drive in Macedonia for national separatism to reach the highest peak.

Fortunately, however, the new trend has been warmly received and will continue to be warmly received by the most intelligent and uncorrupted amongst the Macedonian intellectuals thanks to their natural mental development. There are many Macedonian intellectuals, and there will be more, who are ready to give their lives for their country and their people and who will ask themselves: what is most important for Macedonia the interests of the Bulgarians, the Serbs, the Greeks, or the Macedonians? And their answer will be that the interests of their country always come before general national interests, that general national interests are simply a means towards the realization of the interests of the country and that the reverse is not true. One does not need to reflect deeply to realize the truth of this. First and foremost, everybody knows that we love our country, Macedonia, and our people; we are constantly thinking about Macedonia and we feel that this is the country to which we belong. Ever since our childhood we have felt that whatever is dear to others is dear to us as well; whatever gives pleasure to other people gives pleasure to us as well they weep, so do we, they laugh, so do we. It is this universal happiness and sorrow, together with the customs and habits we share, that makes us one nation, one whole. But if we cross the borders of Macedonia to the northeast, to the south or to the north, that is to Bulgaria, to Greece or to Serbia, we will immediately feel that a different wind is blowing; we will feel that we are uninvited guests and if they want to make it seem that we are brothers they will do so in order to mislead us and expose us to exploitation by the Greeks, Bulgarians or Serbs. All our neighbors are constantly assuring us that we are of their nationality and that our only hope of salvation lies in uniting the whole of Macedonia, or at least the greater part of it, with their countries. We will all realize that these people, of whom we have learnt only from books and whom we have grown to look upon as people willing to help us win our freedom, will approach us as friends and fellow-countrymen and will, to all appearances, be our protectors, not because we are Greeks or Bulgarians or Serbs, and not because they are concerned with any universal human interests which include us as well, and not because they wish to help us and rescue us from peril, but because they have purely egoistic aims which lead them to exploit the fact that we use their names to describe ourselves. They use this fact — that the people of Macedonia are described variously as Serbs, Greeks, and Bulgarians — as an excuse for expanding their states and securing their interests by taking over, if not all, at least the greater part of Macedonia. Does this not prove that the small states by pursuing universal aims also pursue inhuman aims which are not directed towards the liberation of the subjugated nations but are in fact a purely material egoistic expansion of their own interests in which no thought is given to whether the fate of Macedonia will be improved or not. This means that local interests come first and universal interests second; the first are the goal and the second the means. The very names — Serb, Greek, and Bulgarian — indicate for Macedonia the means by which these small states would like to subjugate us. If we, too, love our country and ourselves we should respect our local Macedonian interests and hold them above those of Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece. We should attempt to create a state of affairs in Macedonia in which there are no Serbian, Greek or Bulgarian interests because there are no Serbs, Greeks or Bulgarians in Macedonia, only Macedonians of Slav origin and certain other

Macedonian nationalities. We should examine our own interests and protect them ourselves, not allowing others to interfere so that the small Balkan states are able to exploit our interests for their own ends.

National separatism, then, will find the places and the people that will look on things from the practical point of view without bothering much about the theory of our nationality. They will reason as follows: if Canada can anger England because it has sacrificed the interests of Canada to the United States in order to maintain good relations with North America, and if Canada now wishes to break free from England and defend her own state interests because she understands them best, why should Macedonia not anger Bulgaria when the Bulgarians not only cannot protect Macedonian interests but even exploit them? And why should Macedonia not be able to say: we have spilt the blood of our sons and they should defend only our interests and not those of Nachovich, Tsakov and Stanchev.

Many will, moreover, remark that the small states re distrustful towards the role of Bulgaria in Macedonia just as the Great Powers were distrustful of the role of Russia in the liberation of Bulgaria; they were afraid of a San Stefano Bulgaria because they thought Russia would take it over. So, too, the small states now think that Bulgaria wants to liberate Macedonia in order to occupy it and take it over. But when the Western countries realized that they had been deceived and that Bulgaria was producing people such as the late Stambolov, such as Svircho, they calmed down and began to blame Russia for what they themselves had ruined in Berlin. Will there not be people in Macedonia as well who will come to realize that the trust of the small states with regard to Macedonia will depend on our Stamblovs and Svirchevs or on those who will see the danger to our interests in Bulgaria and not in Russia? One should have more faith in the possibility of finding such people — and they will be the extreme separatists.

Finally, many will point out that our greatest misfortune lies in the fact that we have no local Macedonian patriotism. If there were patriotism in Macedonia, no matter where, we would think and work only for Macedonia. But now some of us still consider ourselves Bulgarian and link our interests with those of Bulgaria instead of studying our own country, Macedonia, in all its aspects; for, instead of studying the history of Macedonia from all times, we study Bulgarian interests and Bulgarian history and often these periods have nothing to do with Macedonia. So, for example, Mr. Balasachev, who was born in Ohrid, instead of making a special study of the history and interests of Macedonia, began to take up the study of Bulgarian interests and Bulgarian history, which has the same meaning for Macedonia as the history of Abyssinia up to the time when the Abyssinians were Christianized. Other Macedonians in Greece have studied Greek interests and Greek history. Yet another Macedonian from Ohrid, Dimitsa, ranges over Greece and for him the history of Macedonia is of importance only up to the time when it was conquered by the Romans. The other Macedonians in Serbia put on a show of Serbian patriotism and work not for Macedonian but for Serbian interests, A rich fur-trader called Kosta Shumenkovich, for example, left 500,000 francs after his death to Serbian school. These wretched instances of what happens when we ally our interests with those of others should suffice to convince most people that our salvation lays only in national and religious separatism.

The driving force of the new movement will lie in people who hold such convictions and, indeed, in all Macedonians who are dissatisfied with the foreign propaganda work in their country. But this is how it will be only in the beginning; later the number of supporters, open and secret, will increase not just from day to day but even from hour to hour. It is clear that as there is a Bulgarian propaganda movement in Macedonia we shall also have to put up with Serbian propaganda. Both propaganda movements are being supported by Bulgarian

and Serbian money. Up till the time of the uprising the number of those who disapproved of Serbian propaganda was far greater; after the uprising people in Macedonia turned against Serbian and Bulgarian propaganda alike. But even if this were not the case, Serbian propaganda alone would be sufficient to set up the necessary counter-reaction which would precede the new movement. All Macedonians who were involved in Serbian propaganda would be in favor of the new movement: the organs of propaganda would work in secret and the unpaid Serbs would publicly acknowledge their Macedonian nationality.

Finally, many Macedonian Slavs educated in the Greek tradition will count themselves as Slavs. At present they will not do so because they are supposed to call themselves Bulgarians, and the name Bulgarian has considerably dropped in status in Greece. Thus all Macedonians are ready on their part to do what they can to unite and form a national whole, but not one of the supporters of the three forms of national propaganda will give up the side he supports and capitulate before the others. The national unification of the Macedonians can be brought about only by mutual compromise and not by capitulation; and this compromise is the new Macedonian national movement.

Hence it is clear that even if the new movement does not receive any support from the numerous Macedonian intellectuals living in the Bulgarian colony it will still progress, but it will then develop along lines directed specifically against Bulgarian interests in Macedonia. If this new movement were to take on massive proportions and if strong opposition were shown by Bulgaria one might expect support from the Serbs. Even if it should turn out to be dangerous and unreal for Serbia it would still not run counter to Serbian interests. What matters for Serbia is that if Macedonia cannot be Serbian it should not be Bulgarian either. It has been seen for once and for all that Macedonia can never be Serbian the Serbs have had to desist from claiming that Macedonians are really Serbs and must now recognize them as a Slav race in their own right, equally close to both Bulgarians and Serbs.

Thus the Macedonian National Revival Movement is developing as a historical process with a firm foundation and a great future; it is basically the result of the competition between Bulgaria and Serbia over the Macedonian question. The revolutionary political organizations and the policy of political separatism which they are pursuing represent a transition stage in the movement towards completely divorcing Macedonian interests from those of Bulgaria and Serbia, i.e. towards national separatism. The increasing rivalry between Bulgarian and Serbian propagandists and the number of people dissatisfied with this propaganda will prove to be the main factor behind the growing support for national separatism. National separatism will also attract those who are now coming to appreciate the true implications of the various forms of national and religious propaganda in Macedonia, those who claim to be defending our interests while they are in fact blatantly exploiting them and who will, in the end, come round to fighting for the national unification of the Macedonians against all these forms of propaganda. The battle will be dangerous, not for those who support national unification but for their opponents. It is the supporters of national unification who will triumph and their triumph will be all the greater because the reforms in Macedonia will give Macedonia the opportunity to free itself from foreign influence and to transfer the core of the revival movement inside the borders of Macedonia.

ON THE MACEDONIAN MATTERS
**A FEW WORDS ON THE
MACEDONIAN LITERARY
LANGUAGE**

In the previous four sections of this book my aim was to draw the attention of my compatriots to the need for making a radical change in the process of our spiritual development, and also to point out that in this respect my views are by no means something new and unsubstantiated but rather an advance in the development of our national self-awareness, and hence perfectly natural and justifiable.

It is, of course, not possible in a book as small as this to enter into more detailed consideration of all the questions involved, for each by itself might merit a whole book. At present, however, there is no great or pressing need for such detailed consideration of these matters; nevertheless, it has been necessary to say a few words about each of them, because if they are taken independent of one another they become unclear and confusing. But if the appearance of this book is to be justified, we must now, in addition to considering these matters, say a few words about the topical importance of the book and about our literary language.

Many people will perhaps say that although the problems raised in this book are indeed worthy of consideration, the moment is not yet opportune. For this book, they would say, brings us strife and discord instead of the unity which we so dearly need at present. We can start thinking about the Macedonian nation, Macedonian literature and the Macedonian literary language only when we finally begin to lead a free political life, and until then we ought to be united and leave aside the national question.

In answer to this I can only say that in my opinion the present, i.e. Müurzsteg, reforms are the most that the revolution can hope to get out of Europe. The most foolish thing we could do would be to launch a spring revolution; it would be of benefit to no one but our enemies who are working against our national interests. A spring revolution would bring

about only our own ruin and destroy all that has been so far achieved through the Revolution, because it would be directed not against the Turks but against the Reform Powers. For this would all happen not in accordance with our interests but in compliance with the calculations of certain Great Powers and small Balkan states which would force us into action and then abandon us in the middle of the road. And finally, if, in spite of all the dictates of common sense, we were to launch an uprising we would simply become the prop for a diplomatic battle against the reform states and some third force, and this would result in our destruction. This is why we should give up all idea of a spring revolution, all the more so since the reforms must be introduced, because they are bound up with the honor of two Great Powers who are capable of arranging everything as they think fit. And this is why we should rather engage in the cultural struggle in which priority shall be given to the question of our nationality and our national and religious development. So, then, now is the time to start thinking about

our language, about our national literature and about our education in the national spirit. Now is the time for interest in national and religious questions.

This interest is somewhat belated, but this does not mean that it is out of place or that it might prove injurious to us.

If we are to be consistent we must admit that the autonomy of Macedonia, for which the revolutionaries have been fighting, makes sense only if the revolutionaries have found in our people qualities which cannot be found among the other Balkan peoples, qualities peculiar in the Macedonians. It is only through the recognition of the specific features in the character, nature, customs, life, traditions, and language of our people that we can give tangible proof of our opposition to the partition of our country, and our desire for autonomy; for partition will destroy all that is dear to us and inflict upon us something that runs directly counter to our national spirit. Only a distinctive national consciousness can furnish us with the moral right to fight against the demands of the young Balkan states for the partition of our country and the strength to stand up against the propaganda which is paving the way for this partition. And if autonomy cannot be won, can we choose to ignore this propaganda and find some other way of fighting against those who disseminate it, in the hope that we would thereby be able to undermine even the most powerful forms of propaganda? Certainly not, because no form of propaganda — no matter how powerful it might be could offer us exactly what we have been led to expect from it. All forms of propaganda are designed to promote their own interests, never ours; and the people have never enjoyed any particular benefits from propaganda. Our salvation will never come through propaganda, because although today one form of propaganda may be strong, tomorrow it will be another, and the first will consequently begin to lose strength. Propaganda can only attain its ultimate objective — partition — which is not desired even by those in favor of national separatism. And national separatism, under present conditions, is not impracticable; it might even be beneficial to us, and, at all events, it would probably cause no harm.

National separatism is worthwhile for one reason only: that it must show attachment to all that is national and, above all, sympathy for the national language.

Language is the means by which we are enabled to understand the thoughts, feelings, and desires of others. Language contains individual sounds, signs, or words for all man's thoughts, feelings, and desires. This is why language is the spiritual heritage and treasure of a nation through which all the thoughts, feelings, and desires the people have experienced in the past are unlocked and released through words and sounds to be handed down as something sacred from one generation to another. Preserving one's national language and defending it as something sacred means remaining faithful to the spirit of one's forefathers

and respecting all that they have done for posterity. Renouncing one's national language means renouncing one's national spirit. This may explain the wishes and endeavors of the subjugators, who set out with the deliberate intention of forcing the subject nations to renounce their own language and take up that of the oppressor; it so reflects the determination of the subject nations to preserve their national spiritual heritage, and particularly their language.

We, too, should be loyal in this way to our national language if we wish to remain faithful to the spirit of our forefathers. Loyalty towards our language is both our duty and our right. We are bound to be loyal to our language because it is ours, just as much as the country in which we live. The first voices we heard were those of our fathers and mothers — the sounds and words of our national language. Through them we were given our first spiritual nourishment, because they gave meaning to all that we saw with our own eyes. Through the national language we are brought closer to the way of thinking of our fathers and forefathers, and we become their spiritual heirs in the same way as — through our physical strength — we perpetuate them in body. If we show contempt towards our national language we are also showing our lack of gratitude towards our parents for passing on to us their spiritual beliefs and for giving us our upbringing. Yet we have not only the duty but also the right to defend our language, and this right must be sacred to us. Whoever attacks our language is our enemy just as much as anyone who attacks our religion. Religion and language are the soul of a nation, and if the people change them they bring about a radical spiritual transformation by relinquishing the past and adopting something new. This transformation, if it takes place gradually over the centuries, is not dangerous because part will belong to one generation and part to another. Thus, part of the transformation will belong to the heritage of the nation, and only a small part will be new. Such radical changes are not dangerous only if they result from the independent development of a nation.

If, however, a nation changes the language and religion over a brief period of time and under strong influence from outside, allowing itself to be drawn unawares into this change, it is renouncing itself and its interests and surrendering both itself and its interests to the stronger nation, which will treat it as it sees fit. In other words, if a nation renounces its language, it renounces both itself and its interests, which means that it ceases to see itself through its own eyes, to judge itself and others with its own mind, and instead waits for intervention from without. A nation that has lost its language is like a man who has lost his path and does not know which way he is coming or going, and who therefore does not know why he is going one way rather than another. The faster a nation changes its language the more dangerous and desperate its position becomes.

The people of Macedonia and their interests are in grave danger from foreign propagandists who are using all means, fair and foul, to root out our language and, hence, our spiritual interests, and foist on us instead their own languages and their own interests. This menace not only obliges us, it gives us the full right to use every means, legal or illegal, to preserve our national language and, through the language, our national interests. In so doing, we would not be asking for what is not ours, but simply protecting what belongs to us.

Language is the acoustic result of the physiological functioning of the human organs of speech to which a certain meaning is ascribed. The principle elements of language or human speech are: the speech organs, their physiological functioning, hearing, the psychological reception of the physiological effects of the organs of speech through hearing, and the assimilation of this process from the functioning of the organs of speech through the voice towards a certain meaning. Accordingly, language is primarily a physiological and

psychological ability and, as such, depends on all that enables man to change, i.e. through the development of an individual man or of a people one may also come to understand the development of their language, and vice - versa. Man changes in time and space; so too does his language. The changes occurring in the language of a people gradually become the history of that people's language, while the changes that take place in the various regions represent contemporary variants or dialects, sub-dialects, accents, etc.

Each national language has its history and its contemporary variants, dialects, sub-dialects, etc., and our language is no exceptions. The history of our language shows that the present variants are derived from older ones, which is proof that they originate from a common Macedonian language, and that Macedonian comes from the South-Slav group, and so on. On this basis one may determine which variant or dialect in any particular period was most used in the written language.

The history of Macedonian, like the history of other languages, shows that any dialect, regional variant or accent may be used in literature. The privilege any dialect or regional, accent may enjoy through being made the vehicle of literature as historians of the language might say is not granted on the basis of any aesthetic superiority it may have, but for purely practical considerations, i.e. as a result of historical and cultural circumstances. These circumstances can raise one dialect to the level of a literary language today, and another tomorrow.

Historical and cultural factors have always been influential in forming a literary language. For this reason we have lately been neglecting to choose the speech of one of our own regions as the general literary language, and instead we have been writing and learning in a foreign, neighboring tongue, chiefly Bulgarian. Now, however, thanks to circumstances, we are taking the dialect of central Macedonia (Veles-Prilep-Bitola-Ohrid) as our general literary language.

What historical and cultural factors, then, have been preventing us from creating our own literary language and from choosing our own dialect, e.g. the central Macedonian dialect?

They are as follows:

We have already seen how closely national interests are bound up with language, and language with the character and spirit of the nation. We have also seen that three nations are struggling one against the other in our country to force us to accept their religious and national propaganda, and that all three together are battling against us and our interests, hoping to deal us a mortal blow by taking church and school activities into their own hands so that through these institutions they might subjugate our interests, stifle our national consciousness, and force us to accept their language instead of our own. But our national interests require us to keep these others at bay and defend our language against the onslaught of propaganda. This defense will be successful and will help to lay bare the propagandists' schemes only if it is a united and general resistance. But in order to achieve this it is necessary that we should be unanimous in choosing one of our dialects as the general Macedonian literary language. And unanimity will be reached if each of us makes his choice neither according to aesthetic standards nor to local attachment, but on the grounds of common interest. Common interest demands that the peripheral dialects give way to the central dialect. Just as in any country there is a center, which is best situated in the middle of the country, towards which all aspects of life should flow, so too in the field of language there should be a center which, by virtue of its importance, would be related to the peripheral dialects in the same way as the center and capital of a state is connected to the outlying districts. All our scientists, academics, and writers should group themselves around

the central dialect in order to cleanse it from the influence of other Macedonian dialects and turn it into a fine literary language. This dialect should serve to create rich and attractive scientific, academic, and literary works through which the literary language might be spread throughout Macedonia, thus eradicating all the influences from the languages of the propagandists. And while eradicating these influences and establishing our own literary language we will also force out the interests of the small Balkan states and replace them with a language embodying the interests of Macedonia.

Thus the advantages we will gain from having a common literary language will serve as a yardstick in choosing the dialect, all of which is germane to the formation of our new literary language.

When a dialect is raised to the level of a literary language, aesthetic qualities never play any part because practical application is far more important than aesthetic considerations, which are more relative and subjective.

This is why one normally feels that the dialects and accents which one is accustomed to hear are the most beautiful. This is why one cannot speak of the aesthetic when discussing language, dialects, and sub-dialects.

So, a Macedonian from the eastern, southern, western or northern part of Macedonia would have no right to object to the choice of the central Macedonian dialect as the literary language simply on the grounds that it did not appeal to his ear. There would be no reason for Kim to object to the central dialect, because the choice has been made for practical reasons.

Let us now see whether the choice of the central dialect as the literary language is, in fact, practically useful.

Bitola was chosen as the residence of the General Inspector of Macedonia and his civilian advisors, and became the capital of Macedonia. The new capital was not far from the old ones, Prespa and Prilep, and from the seat of the, until recently autocephalous, Archbishopric of Ohrid. One may say, therefore, that the central dialect is historically justified because the capitals are situated in the center, both geographically and ethnographically. The central town of Macedonia is Veles, and one need go only a short distance from there to reach Bitola and Ohrid via Prilep. This movement away from the geographical center can be explained by the fact that Prilep, Bitola, and Ohrid are of greater historical importance in Macedonia and, moreover, sufficiently distant from the Serbian and Bulgarian language centers to be able to form the Macedonian language center. The Veles-Prilep-Bitola-Ohrid dialect is truly the core of the Macedonian language because to the west one finds the Debar dialect in which, for example, the word arm (*raka*) is pronounced *roka*, while in the south (the Kostur dialect) it becomes *ronka*, in the east (the Salonica dialect) *r'ka*, and in the north (the Skopje dialect) *ruka*.

For us, in Macedonia, the creation of a literary language is a spiritual need, for this would put an end to the abuse of our interests by the propagandists and would enable us to form our own literary and academic center so that we would no longer be dependent on Belgrade and Sofia. This, however, is no easy task, and it can only be accomplished if the Macedonian of the north will offer his hand to his brother in the south, and if the Macedonian from the east will do the same to his brother in the west. And their meeting-place will be around Prilep and Bitola.

Thus the Macedonians will create a cultural center of their own, which will come to be what Bitola now is as the capital of Macedonia, or what Ohrid, Prilep and Bitola have been in the history of Macedonia. It will, like all these places, become a geographical and

language center, and all this helps towards the creation of a common Macedonian literary language with its central dialect.

In making our choice of a dialect to represent the Macedonian literary language, we should also consider the question of Macedonian orthography.

To begin with, a few remarks should be made concerning orthography and the direction of our cultural development. The orthography of a language should, like the formation of a literary language, develop gradually and consciously. For an illiterate man is capable of learning the alphabet of a nation more cultured than his own and of expressing his thoughts through this foreign alphabet or else applying it to the sounds of his own language. But if his own language contains sounds which do not exist in the language from which he has borrowed the alphabet, he will amend it in order to distinguish between the sounds of the two languages. This borrowed and amended alphabet is handed down from generation to generation, changing in the process until it is made to suit the language of the borrower. Thus, gradually and imperceptibly, we see the formation of an alphabet belonging to a nation at a low cultural level in contact with nations at a higher level. But this process of assimilation can be justified only if the two neighboring nations are politically unequal, i.e. the more cultured nation ruling, and the other, less cultured, subject or deprived of even the minimum political freedom. It is a different matter, however, if both nations have their own states. In such a case the borrowing is gradual and insignificant. Thus Christianity and literacy were introduced in Macedonia earlier than in any other Slav country; they expanded over the centuries, moving constantly upwards, i.e. progressively. This is why there are no historical references to the conversion of the Macedonians to Christianity. But the conversion of a nation to Christianity entails a change in its level of literacy; and failure to mention our conversion means bypassing the process of our development towards literacy.

This is why our spiritual revival, and the spread and development of literacy in Macedonia, which took place for geographical and historical reasons in the first millennium A.D., did not follow the direction taken by other Slav nations. In Macedonia the process was gradual and imperceptible, while with the other Slav nations it was quicker and more clearly defined.

At the time when Turkey overran the Balkan peninsula, a certain change occurred: the Turkish rulers severed all our links with the past. Macedonia, being the central province of the empire, was hardest hit by this abrupt break, and, therefore, at the time when the other Slav Orthodox nations were gradually developing their own literary language and orthography, we were losing our linguistic coherence and had almost completely renounced our language for the purposes of literature. From time to time, during the 19th century, attempts were made to write in Macedonian, but for historical reasons these attempts were not nearly as successful as might have been expected.

The efforts of Macedonian writers in the 19th century failed, unfortunately, to attract much following. This is why any attempts that may be made now, in the 20th century, to write in Macedonian are more likely to be made for amusement's sake than for patriotic reasons or out of the desire to set about the language in a systematic way. Here lies the essence of our Macedonian national and spiritual revival in comparison with the development of the other Orthodox Slav nations; i.e. just as we were once the first of all Slav peoples to accept Christianity and the alphabet, so, later, when all the Orthodox Slavs were gradually developing their literary language, their literature and orthography, we were left lagging behind without any literary tradition. And not because we do not have one, but because we have come to forget our tradition through learning in a foreign tongue.

We should now hasten to work out our literary language, fix our orthography, and set about creating a literature which would meet all our requirements. Through our present national revival we are setting ourselves against the other Orthodox Slavs, just as we did in the past; only, in the past we led the spiritual revival, which took place slowly in Macedonia but quickly elsewhere, and now the opposite is true: in the past they were hard pressed to catch up with us and they went about it with speed and purpose, now we should do the same.

The development of a nation's language and orthography depends on the development of the nation itself. If a nation gradually builds up its alphabet and gradually alters it, and if this process is not impeded or interrupted by any historical events, the literary language and the orthography will then contain many elements which do not truly correspond to the sounds of the language as it is spoken at that moment. But if the cultural development of the nation spans two periods, between which there is a third — forming a barrier, an insurmountable obstacle — then the new period in the development of the national consciousness brings about a revival of the national spirit, which, though perpetuating the old principles, now embraces new aspirations in keeping with the spirit of the time and the specific needs of life. This revival is also reflected in the literary language and the orthography, thus both are in a sense freed of those elements of tradition which no longer accord with the state of the spoken language.

Hence, the history of the cultural development of a people, in accordance with its progress, is completed either through a purely etymological or historical orthography or through a mixed etymological-phonetic, historical-phonetic, or simply phonetic orthography. These three types of orthography depend on the degree of attachment to the old or new forms of the spoken or the literary language. One of the three orthographies comes to be used for the literary language of an awakening nation, depending on the tendency dominant at the time of revival.

One thing is sure: our orthography and the development of our literary language should be entirely dependent on the tendency guiding us in our national awakening. And in this book one may see what sort of tendency this might be. However, I should like to take the liberty of repeating it: firstly, Macedonia should take up a neutral attitude to Bulgaria and Serbia, and remain at an equal distance from both these states; secondly, Macedonia should be linguistically united. These principles should guide us in creating our literary language and orthography.

These principles entail: 1. The adoption of the Prilep-Bitola dialect, as the central dialect in Macedonia for the purpose of creating a literary language equally different from Serbian and Bulgarian, 2. The adoption of a phonetic orthography with letters as used in this back and with minor concessions to etymology, 3. The collection of lexical material from all the regions of Macedonia.

KRSTE PETKOV MISIRKOV
ON THE MACEDONIAN MATTERS
MACEDONIA.ORG

ON THE MACEDONIAN MATTERS
KRSTÉ PETKOV MISIRKOV
1824-1936



I.

Krsté Petkov Misirkov was born on 18 November 1874 in the village of Postol, near Enidzhevardar, where he spent the first fifteen years of his life. Here, in his birthplace, he attended the Greek primary school for six years. While he was still only a child of twelve or thirteen he was left motherless. His father moved into a large family commune with his brother, but Misirkov's life was dogged by the problems and miseries of an orphan; this, together with the hard conditions of life in the family, obliged him to seek his own way of life and attempt to realize his great wish to study. By 1889 he had already left his birthplace, setting off first, no doubt, for Salonica where he would have been able to make friends and acquaintances, and thus find a way of moving on to Belgrade to continue his schooling.

At this time the Serbian propagandists had begun to step up their activity in Macedonia. One of their chief concerns was to attract young people and students to study in Serbia, where, in addition to the education they received at school, they would also acquire an education in the spirit of this propaganda. To this end various scholarships were made available. Misirkov made use of one of them to continue his schooling in Belgrade, where he enrolled in the High School. At that time there were quite a few young Macedonians who, like Misirkov, had come to Serbia under similar circumstances to complete their education in Serbian schools; similarly, there were many who had gone for the same reason to Bulgaria. In both countries the Macedonian students were exposed to a distinct bias in their schooling and education, a bias determined by an expansionist policy that led to dissatisfaction and

revolt among the students. As a result, it frequently happened that individual students, or even entire groups, would flee from Serbia to Bulgaria or the other way, believing that the grass would surely be greener on the other side.

So, in 1890, when Misirkov was in the second form, a group of students left Belgrade for Sofia. This was a generation that continued to develop, and later set the Macedonian people's fight for freedom on a higher level, giving many outstanding names to the struggle. Amongst the pupils and students who left Belgrade and went to Sofia were several future revolutionaries such as Petar Pop-Arsov, Dame Gruev and others. Krsté Misirkov was also with them. After finishing the second form of High School in Sofia, where he was a scholarship-holder, Misirkov left Bulgaria and returned to Serbia, where he studied in Belgrade and Shabats. In 1895 he passed out of the Teachers Training College in Belgrade.

But this did not mean that his education was complete. He now went to Russia to enroll at the university in Russia, however, his diploma from the Teachers Training College was not recognized as the equivalent of a certificate of matriculation. So he first had to enroll at the Poltavian Theological Seminary, where he completed two years (fifth and sixth forms), and subsequently succeeded in being accepted at the Faculty of History and Philosophy (Slav-Russian department) in Petrograd. In 1902 he graduated with a First from the University.

Krsté Misirkov then decided to return to Macedonia and devote his energy and knowledge to the service of his country. From the first of December 1902 he worked as a full-time teacher at the Boys Grammar School in Bitola. In addition to his regular teaching work — and through it Misirkov was fully involved with the questions of Macedonia's national development and the Macedonian people's struggle for liberation and for social, political, and cultural independence. Already in his student days he had been interested in these questions but he now began to study them more intensively and, through close examination, attempted to arrive at the most satisfactory means of settling the inherent problems. In so doing he strove to make his own unique contribution to the question, based on his appreciation of the circumstances around him and on his own attitudes and inclinations. This was why he maintained friendly contact with the Russian consul in Bitola, A. A. Rostkovski, and even became a tutor in his home. Through this friendship he was able to give the consul as complete a picture as possible of the true condition of the Macedonian people and of their needs, and, through him, to influence Russian policy in Macedonia's favour. But it was due precisely to this friendship that the course of his life was shortly to be altered. In August 1903 a political assassination was carried out on Rostkovski; after this Misirkov, worried for his own sake on account of their friendship, was obliged to leave Bitola and get out of Macedonia. He then returned to Petrograd.

At the end of September he was already reading papers of his own to gatherings of Macedonian students in Petrograd. He had undoubtedly been working on these addresses while he was still in Bitola. After delivering these addresses he compiled a separate edition entitled *On the Macedonian Matters* and set off for Sofia to have it printed. Just as the book was about to be released from press a fierce campaign was launched in Bulgaria against its publication and against the author, both because of the views expressed and because of the very language in which it was written Macedonian. And since on both counts the book conflicted with great-Bulgarian interests, practically every copy was withdrawn from circulation in various ways as soon as it had been released. The government authorities and other opponents of Misirkov and his ideas collected the copies and destroyed them, and forced the author to flee from Bulgaria threatening him with death "if he set foot in Macedonia". During this campaign only a very small number of copies managed to escape

the fate of the rest of the book and find their Way into various hands, to be preserved as copies of the author's historic work.

Thus on 7 January 1904 Misirkov returned to Russia where he was to spend the next thirteen years of his by no means long life. During this time he worked for one year as a teacher of history and geography in Berdyansk, for seven or eight years in Odessa, and finally in Kishinyev, in Bessarabia. It was here that he saw the October Revolution of 1917. After the Revolution Bessarabia separated as an autonomous republic, first within the Russian Federation, later becoming independent and, finally,

with the arrival of the Romanian army in January 1918, being annexed to Romania. At that time Bessarabia had its own parliament, in which Krsté Misirkov was a national deputy for the minority groups. Throughout this period, from 4 December 1917 to 11 November 1918, he was also the parliamentary secretary and performed several other functions. But it was not long before the Romanian government drove Misirkov out of the country because of his disagreement over the annexation of Bessarabia to Romania. He then returned to Odessa and from there, one month later, went on to Sofia which, at that moment, was his only possible sanctuary. In Sofia he began work as director of the History Department of the National Ethnographic Museum. A year later, in 1918, he was transferred to the post of history and geography teacher in the District Grammar School at Karlovatz; and from here he was sent to Koprivshitsa as Head of the Grammar School.

Here his life ended.. He died of a brain tumor on 26 July 1926, aged 51. Thus ended the life a man who had been condemned to wander for ever outside his homeland, driven from one place to another, from hardship to suffering, but carrying within him the eternal and unquenchable desire to return one day to his home, and cherishing the hope that the day of Macedonia's liberation would come.

II.

While he was still a student Misirkov had already begun to engage in socio-political, national and cultural activities. He took a particularly lively interest in the work of the University Geographical Society in Petrograd, reading his papers at their meetings and also publishing one of them in the Society's magazine.

This was a time when there were numerous students from the southern Balkans at the University and other institutions in Petrograd and elsewhere in Russia. The Serbian and Bulgarian students had organized their own Scientific and Literary societies, and the Macedonians had either to join them or be left on the side. Those Macedonian students who had developed a greater sense of national awareness entered with great zeal into the task of organizing a similar society, specifically for the Macedonians in Petrograd a meeting-place for all the Macedonian students. Krsté Misirkov was one of the most prominent instigators of this move, which was organized, basically, by Dimitria Chupovski, another Macedonian, from the village of Papradishte near Veles. These students all succeeded later in organizing the Macedonian National Scientific and Literary Society Sveti Kliment (St. Clement), which rapidly developed into an extremely active institution.

At meetings of this Society during September and October 1903 — immediately after leaving Bitola and returning to Russia Krsté Misirkov read the three addresses which then went to make up his book *On the Macedonian Matters*. These three addresses were:

What We Have Already Done and What We Ought To Do in the Future?
Is There a Need for Macedonian Scientific and Literary Societies? and
National Separatism — the Basis on Which We Have Been Developing and on
Which We Shall Continue to Develop?

Two further papers were added:

Can Macedonia Turn Itself into a Separate Ethnographic and Political Unit? Has It
Already Done So? Is It Doing so Now? and
A Few Words on the Macedonian Literary Language.

This is how *On the Macedonian Matters* was composed, a book which was his most important work and which helped to rank him among the most outstanding leaders of the Macedonian National and Cultural Revival. As may be seen from the chapter headings, his interests, thoughts, and activities were fully focused on the basic questions of Macedonia's National Development, on the theoretical analysis of this question and on the discovery of a practical solution. The questions involved were those of Macedonian history and culture, the Macedonian language, and Macedonian social and political development.

This outline of his interests can be further completed by referring to an article of Misirkov's which appeared in Russia in 1903 under the title *The Economic Background to the Macedonian Movement*. In this article, which was published in two consecutive parts, he analyses the socioeconomic and political situation in which the Macedonian people were living at that time.

The following year, 1904, while he was teaching in Berdyansk, far from Macedonia, Misirkov was still caught up with the idea of starting a Macedonian monthly journal which would be published in Macedonian. At the end of the year he approached the authorities in Odessa with a request for permission to publish this journal under the title of *Vardar*; together with his request he gave a detailed explanation of his plan of work. This monthly journal was to appear in Odessa, the town to which Misirkov moved the following year. After being granted permission he himself prepared the first number and sent it to press in September 1905. It is still not known whether the magazine was released from press in its complete state because nothing remains of the first number but the proof sheets. It is thought by some that the main reason for delaying the final appearance of *Vardar* was that there was nobody in Odessa who knew Macedonian and who would be capable of censoring the magazine. There are, however, certain indications that the reason for this delay was of a different nature, i.e. that the same people who had been opposed to the book *On the Macedonian Matters* hastened in various ways to crush this attempt as well, since they were always prepared to resort to the toughest tactics when dealing with this writer. What means they did in fact use to settle their score with Misirkov we still do not exactly know.

Misirkov's other works on literature, history, language and similar subjects later appeared in Russian and Bulgarian magazines in the languages of those countries. His paper *On the Importance of the Moravian or Resavian Dialect for the Modern Historical Geography of the Balkan Peninsula*, which was his first published work and appeared while he was still a student in Petrograd in the *Journal of the University Geographical Society*, was followed now by an article, *The South Slav Epic Legends on the Marriage of King Volkashin in Connection with the Reasons for the Popularity of Marko Krale amongst the South Slavs* (Odessa, 1909), and, in 1910, his *Notes on South Slav Philology and History*, which appeared in the magazine *B'lgarska sbirka*.

No reliable facts are available concerning his activity in these areas during the following ten years. It is known that he also worked as a translator, and this enabled him to make use of his knowledge of many languages. A questionnaire shows that, in addition to Macedonian, he wrote and spoke Serbo-Croatian, Bulgarian, and Greek; he was also able to speak Turkish, and to read in German, French, English, Romanian, Czech, Polish, Lithuanian, and Lettish.

For two or three years before the end of his life, in 1923 and 1924 to be precise, he reemerged as a writer by publishing a number of articles in the magazines *Ilinden*, which was the mouthpiece of the former Macedonian-Odrin Revolutionaries and was then being published in Bulgaria, and *Mir*, which was a Bulgarian magazine. He signed these articles Krsté Misirkov-Macedon. Amongst the better-known of these articles are:

Our Faith, Will We Succeed?, Macedonian Culture, Several Macedonians, Macedonian Nationalism, Self-determination for the Macedonians, and others.

In recent years another of Misirkov's works has been found. It is entitled: *Recollections and Impressions*, and is in a sense an autobiography. So far only the first part of this work has been published, and that is the Introduction, which appeared in the *Journal of the Institute of National History, Skopje* (no. 1, 1951).

All these things testify not only to the constancy of Misirkov's ideas and opinions, but also to his dedication in expounding them, and to the setbacks and trials he had to bear throughout his life on account of the direction he followed in his ideas and actions.

III.

For us the most interesting side of Krsté Misirkov is his attitude to the questions of Macedonian nationality and the Macedonian language, and his own activity in these areas; for it is here that he reveals his farsightedness and his clear Macedonian national awareness while equally clearly, openly and uncompromisingly acclaiming the idea of independence for the Macedonians in establishing their national literary language; for it is here, too, that he, revealed his deep understanding of the position of the Macedonian people, of the path they would have to follow, and of the dangers and obstacles standing in their way.

In all his opinions, most of which are expressed in his book *On the Macedonian Matters*, he is far closer to us and to our times than other outstanding contemporaries of his, and he will go down with them in the history of Macedonia as one of the great leaders of the cultural revival.

His basic thoughts on Macedonian nationality are reflected in the following words: “The formation of the Macedonians as a separate nation is a straightforward historical process similar to that by which the Bulgarian and Serbo-Croatian peoples were formed from the former South Slavs.” The greater part of his book *On the Macedonian Matters* is, in fact, devoted precisely to the theoretical elaboration and explanation of this process, the process of Macedonia’s national revival.

Misirkov, through his book *On the Macedonian Matters*, proved to be the person who marked a fresh advance in this process, and he did so by waging a battle against the

Propagandists (as he describes those who were engaged in spreading the expansionist policies of Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece in Macedonia) who pronounced Macedonia to be a Bulgarian, Serbian, or Greek land. According to Misirkov, the Macedonians are Macedonians just as much as the Bulgarians are Bulgarians, and the Serbs are Serbs, i.e. through their “language, customs, history, literacy, national consciousness, etc.”, and through all of these together, these three countries are all of Slavic origin. Macedonia had always been subject to special geographical political and other conditions, and this was why the Macedonians were not able to develop their national identity in the same way as the Serbs and Bulgarians. For a while Macedonia was under Bulgaria and the Macedonians were forced to call themselves Bulgarians, then Serbs, and later, when the Turks came, they were known variously as “rabble, Christians, *giaours*”; finally the first of these names began once again to gain a hold. But, says Misirkov, this in no way proves the presence of Bulgarian or Serbian national elements in Macedonia, for these names had not had any national significance up till the middle of the 19th century.

But if one is to look at the question in this light, if one is to look upon the Macedonians as a separate people and to feel oneself to be Macedonian, how is one expected to express one’s feelings and opinions?

These feelings, says Misirkov, should be reflected “in one’s love towards all that is national, and, above all, to one’s national language... If a nation renounces its language it is said that it has renounced itself and its interests, that it ceases to look upon itself with its own eyes and to judge itself and others with its own mind and reason — it becomes a nation, which expects everything to come from without. A nation that has lost its language is like a man who has lost his way and no longer knows where he has come from or where he is going, or why he goes one way and not another.”

And this is why we should love our own language: “it is our duty and our right”.

Concerning the question of the dialect, which should be chosen as the basis for the Macedonian literary language, Misirkov opted for a solution which history was later to prove fully justified. He pointed out that in selecting this dialect one should not be influenced by any “aesthetic considerations” relating to the various dialects, because such considerations would be “too subjective”. One should rely on “clear practical reasoning, i.e. on the historical and cultural development of the nation”. And the present historical and cultural conditions in Macedonia must lead us he says later on to choose the central Macedonian dialect for our literary language. Unlike the dialects of the outer regions, this dialect is free from foreign influence and possesses characteristics, which would prevent it from being drawn towards Serbian or Bulgarian. Furthermore, this dialect “has behind it, one may say, a historical right, for Bitola has been turned into the capital of Macedonia. And this new capital is not far from the old capitals — Prespa and Prilep” ... Finally, Bitola, Ohrid, and Prilep, in addition to being historical places for the Macedonians, are centrally situated not only in the geographical but also in the ethnographic and linguistic sense. Thus the dialect spoken in Veles, Prilep, Bitola and Ohrid is the “kernel of the Macedonian language” and should be adopted by the Macedonians as the basis of their literary language.

Once we have finally chosen the dialect, which is to form the basis of the Macedonian literary language, we still have one more question to settle — the question of orthography. The solution of this question depends on “the way a nation and its language have developed”. If a nation has gradually built up its alphabet and if there have been no interruptions to the development of literacy and general culture in that country, the choice of orthography will be different than for a country whose development was interrupted for a long period, thus leaving a considerable gap between the old period and the new. In the

latter case both the language and the orthography are “more or less free from any traditions which do not conform to the present state of the spoken language”. The history of a nation’s cultural development will be of help in deciding whether to have “a purely etymological or historical orthography, a mixed etymological-phonetic, a historical-phonetic, or, finally, a purely phonetic orthography”. This “basically depends on the tendency which dominated during the national revival”.

Misirkov, then, was already well aware that historical and cultural conditions would lead the Macedonians to choose the central dialect for their literary language, and that the orthography of this language would have its phonetic basis as indeed it does today. This is how he finally formulates the guiding principles for determining the norms of the Macedonian literary language:

“1. The dialect of Prilep and Bitola should be chosen for the literary language since it is equally removed from both Serbian and Bulgarian, and is central to Macedonia, 2. The phonetic orthography together with the punctuation marks used in this book (*On the Macedonian Matters*, Author’s note), should be accepted with slight etymological deviations, 3. The dictionary material should represent all the Macedonian dialects in a composite form”

These are, basically, Misirkov’s views on Macedonian nationality and on Macedonian language and orthography.

But these views of his did not remain merely views: Misirkov made a serious attempt to provide a practical example of what he envisaged through his use of Macedonian — of the dialect which he supported first in speaking to the Macedonian students in Petrograd, and subsequently when addressing the general public through his book *On the Macedonian Matters*.

The central Macedonian dialect, he says in the introduction to his book, “will from now on be the Macedonian literary language for me”.

Amongst Krsté Misirkov’s other works, special mention should be made of his article *The Economic Background to the Macedonian Movement*, not only because as one of the first such works in our country — it casts fresh light on the spiritual interests and the mental scope of the author, but also because it offers a truly rare, vital and objective analysis and description of the socio-economic situation in the village of Postol, and, hence, of the Macedonian village altogether during the second half of the last century and particularly during the last two or three decades of that century.

The initial reason for writing this article was to rectify the utterly inaccurate, superficial, and distorted picture given in articles written by two Russian journalists on the situation in the Macedonian village and on the position of the Macedonian people at that time.

According to these journalists the Macedonian people were well dressed, and, therefore, wealthy and disinclined towards rebellion; and the Liberation Movement was set up and supported from outside the country through detachments which were sent into Macedonia from Bulgaria. Misirkov points out that these two journalists had no first-hand knowledge of the economic situation of the Macedonians, though this knowledge would have certainly revealed to them the reasons behind the Revolutionary Movement; instead, they satisfied themselves with the purely superficial impressions they picked up while gazing out of the train window. If they had attempted to get down to the real reasons, they would

have come to quite different conclusions about the material situation in the Macedonian village. Misirkov, however, tried in his article to give a real description of the state of affairs. He concentrated mainly on the socio-economic relations within the system of land-ownership by great estate holders, i.e. the relations between the estate owners and the hired laborers during this period, and particularly the changes that took place in these relations during the latter quarter of the nineteenth century, changes which marked a new phase in the development of these relations and in the position of the village on the whole.

Krsté Misirkov was an intellectual, who, owing to three of circumstances, did not join more wholeheartedly in the practical revolutionary work of the organization led by Gotse Delchev, Dame Gruev, and other members of this remarkable generation; he was also a philologist, and, furthermore, a man who did not refrain from expressing his opinion concerning the political questions of his time and, indeed, disputed them with some of the leaders of the Organization; but his interest was still chiefly centered on the Macedonian national and cultural revival, which was a subject to which he felt the revolutionaries had not paid sufficient attention. It was this revival, he felt, that offered the most salutary basis for the spiritual unification of the Macedonian people and, consequently, would provide the most effective bulwark against attempts by the propagandists to divide the people. And so, he says, our future work on the development of our national self-awareness “should begin right from the fight against partition, against the separation of our various nations — which is natural, i.e. anti-propaganda and from the battle for internal unification” This is a historical necessity which categorically commands us Macedonians either to unite amongst ourselves and separate from the other Balkan nations (i.e. the propagandists, Author’s note) or to prepare ourselves for the partition of our country!”¹

In following this Line of thought, Misirkov again turns primarily to the Macedonian intelligentsia and outlines for them the main requirements for which they should fight: “the removal of national and religious hatred; the education of the Macedonian Slavs in the pure Macedonian national spirit; the compulsory study of the Macedonian language in schools and in towns with a Slav population, and the study of Macedonian in village schools with a Slav population.”

While discussing these points, Misirkov explains the need for separate Macedonian student “fraternities” in Petrograd and says that these bodies should be made up of those people “for whom the study of Macedonia in the ethnographic, geographic, and historical sense is of prime importance and we, the Macedonians, are such people”.

It is known from history that this kind of work amongst the intellectuals is characteristic of the national revival period of almost all nations: it is, in fact, the most striking manifestation of the revival. If, however, the intelligentsia is not engaged in such work, this is an indication that the national revival is still not progressing or never will progress as it should, that it is not complete and comprehensive, that it is not taking the open road, and that it has been impeded, as was the case with the Macedonians; we know, in fact, that this work began to spread in Macedonia to no small extent during the sixties and seventies of the last century, but later it was quashed, chiefly by the Exarchate, in various pro-Bulgarian ways. Misirkov was one of the greatest champions of the revival and continuation of this work. One might even go so far as to say that it was in his works that the concept of Macedonian nationality and the idea of a Macedonian literary language were most clearly expressed at that time.

Misirkov, clearly, was not an incidental or isolated figure in Macedonian history; nor was he the first to proclaim these ideas — they had been born half-way through the previous century at the time of the Brothers Miladinov, Partenie Zografski, Gjorgji Pulevski, and ot-

hers. Misirkov, with his sound historical approach towards the national and cultural revival in Macedonia, was directly linked to the movement which had emerged through the activity of the so-called Lozari (Vine-tenders) whose magazine was known as Loza (The Vine), and on his own advanced their work to a considerable degree.

Who were these Vine-tenders? Some mention was made of them earlier; but this is how Misirkov himself describes them:

“At the end of 1889 thirty or forty Macedonian pupils and students transferred themselves from Belgrade to Sofia, in Bulgaria. These students were the heart and soul of all that happened in Macedonia from then on; they were acquainted with Serbia and Bulgaria and with their cultural pretensions in Macedonia; they had also learnt of the danger of Macedonia being partitioned between these two states... Early in the eighteen nineties, at their initiative, a national separatist movement was formed with the aim of keeping Macedonian interests separate from those of Bulgaria by introducing one of the Macedonian dialects to serve throughout Macedonia as the official recognized literary language. The official journal of this separatist movement, among the Macedonians in Bulgaria was called Loza (The Vine)”.

This is how Misirkov describes the Vine-tenders, as the group of Macedonians connected with the magazine Loza is usually called today. The chief founder of Loza was Petar Pop Arsov, and the magazine was published by the Young Macedonian Literary Society, which was founded in 1892 in Sofia by the same Macedonians.

Both the Society and the journal, as Misirkov says, were operating under a Bulgarian mask. But from the type of material appearing “in Loza, from the spelling itself, and, to some extent, from specific features of the language used, one may also gain an impression of the kind of aspirations behind this movement. Loza was published, one might say, in a distinctly Bulgarian language, using new forms of spelling which differed from official Bulgarian orthography. Altogether, the vocabulary used in Loza included numerous Macedonian words and forms.

And the very problems which had been taken up by the writers behind Loza — problems which at the outset were passed off under the guise of purely literary questions — were, in fact, the problems of Macedonia and the Macedonians, covering Macedonian life, history, ethnography, geography, and so forth. This is why the publication of Loza was banned by the Bulgarian authorities in its very first year.

Misirkov continued along the same lines, but it is in fact only in his work that this idea was fully and openly expressed. One might say that in the cultural history of Macedonia, Misirkov brings to art end a period of more than half a century during which, in spite of the exceptionally difficult conditions, the Macedonian national spirit was formed, a period which marked the struggle to build up the Macedonian literary language, and to establish a national literature and general culture. But Misirkov seems also to stand at the beginning of a new period in Macedonian history (and it is not just for good measure that Misirkov speaks of the “new trend”) during which the struggle for state formation and national liberation in Macedonia ran parallel with the struggle for economic and socio-political liberation and passed on to a new phase when the new revolutionary forces finally appeared to take over the battle and lead the movement.

When speaking of this aspect of the Macedonian revival one has the impression that Krsté Misirkov, with his outlook on nationality and the Macedonian language, stands at the transition stage between one period and the other, and that thereafter the new trends in social and national development began.

IV.

Most of the articles which Misirkov wrote in the latter years of his life are still of especial interest to us. They indicate clearly that he remained faithful to the ideas he had set out ten years earlier in his book *On the Macedonian Matters*. The fact that for a while he was not as outspoken as he had been in publicizing these ideas in no way indicates that he was losing the strength of his own convictions, as his opponents wished to prove, but rather that his activity was being hampered against his will by the conditions under which he was living. These articles may be taken simply as proof that Misirkov was ready to seize the slightest chance to continue with his work.

It should be mentioned here that he signed these articles as: Krsté Misirkov-Macedon.

We shall now give a few extracts from the articles he published in the Bulgarian journal *Mir* (written, of course, in Bulgarian) in 1924 and 1925. These articles cast still further light on Misirkov as a person and illustrate the great range of his ideas.

MACEDONIAN CULTURE

Our confidence, not only in the preservation of our nation but also in the ultimate triumph of the ideal of all Macedonians to achieve independence, is founded as we mentioned earlier not so much on the weakness of our enemy, or on aid from abroad, as on the knowledge of our people and of their past.

Some, however, may ask whether there really exists a Macedonian national culture and a Macedonian history which could be compared to that of the Serbs (read in here “and Bulgarians” — B.K.) and which would serve as foundation for the Macedonian an ideal of an independent Macedonia?

Fortunately, we are able to give a positive answer to this: Macedonian national culture and history, being different from those of Serbia and Bulgaria, exist primarily because they have not been submitted to systematic and unbiased study. Both the Serbs and the Bulgarians, with great partiality and self-interest, chose to take from Macedonian culture and history only those aspects which attested to glory of the Serbian or Bulgarian national name, and simply ignored the questions of crucial importance either because they did not concern them or because they ran counter to the national ideals of the Serbian or Bulgarian historical researchers and their fellows.

I said that this was fortunate for Macedonian national culture and history because the Macedonian people were thus armed with an invincible weapon in their battle for human rights and a free national life on an equal footing with the other cultured nations.

Unfortunately, the independent study of Macedonian culture and history was begun only a short while ago by the Macedonians themselves, who, at the end of the last century began to lose faith in the scholars of Belgrade and Sofia with their more or less unanimous contention that the Slavs, during the Middle Ages, were a disorganized and unenlightened people who were spared from Hellenization thanks only to the state which had been first founded by the Turanian Bulgarians and later included in the Serbian state of Nemanjich.

But such assertions were equally erroneous in Belgrade and in Sofia, being backed as they were by the authority of Jagich and Marin Drinov.

We Macedonians have found this to be an error which resulted in a misconception on the part of both the Bulgarians and the Serbs, not only of the history of Macedonia and the Macedonians during the Middle Ages, but also of the history of the Serbs and Bulgarians. We are able to show that the case was quite the contrary, that it was in fact the Macedonians who were the most active of all the South Slavs, more so even than the Turanian Bulgarians, throughout the entire Middle Ages right up to the conquest of the Balkan Peninsula by the Turks; we can also show that it was the Macedonians who waged the longest and hardest battle for their spiritual and political emancipation during the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth century.

Our failures, both in the Middle Ages and in more recent times, were the result of circumstances, which had nothing in common with the national awareness, and alleged lack of organization of the Macedonians.

The age long struggle of the Macedonians for cultural advance and national preservation, beginning 400-500 years before the emergence of the Serbian state of Nemanjich and continuing through the rise and decline of this state, taken together with the epic struggles for religious and political freedom, has gone to the making of Macedonia's national culture and of our national history.

MACEDONIAN NATIONALISM (12. 3. 1925)

We, the Macedonian intelligentsia, undoubtedly bear the greatest responsibility for the situation facing our country today. There are, however, certain extenuating circumstances which might justify us in the eyes of our unfortunate fellow-countrymen, especially those who have been driven from their homes and are now forced to wander, unwelcome and unwanted, in various part's of Bulgaria.

For a full thirty years the Macedonians have been waging a heroic battle to release themselves from the yoke of Turkey. But at the same time the foreign propagandists have been infecting our country and demoralizing part of the population. The Macedonian intelligentsia have largely devoted themselves to revolutionary activity; but there have been some who have found other ways possibly no less important than that of the revolutionary struggle to ensure the success of Macedonia's endeavors.

My book *On the Macedonian Matters*, published in 1903 in Sofia, and my article *On the Importance of the Moravian or Resavian Dialects for the Historical Ethnography of the Balkan Peninsula*, have shown that some of the Macedonian intellectuals are seeking and have found, another way of fighting, i.e. an independent Macedonian scientific way of thinking and a Macedonian national Consciousness.

I do not regret having declared myself in favor of Macedonian separatism twenty-eight years ago. Separatism was for me, and remains, the only way out, the best means by

which the Macedonian intelligentsia could pay back and continue to repay their debt towards their people.

In 1912, when I was asked by my fellow villagers what should be done if our village remained under Greek control, I answered: no matter under whose control this village may remain, you will stay where you are, you shall not move anywhere.

Maybe from the great-Bulgarian point of view my advice was not sufficiently patriotic, but from the Macedonian point of view this was the only proper advice.

But when the Greeks forced many Macedonians to flee to Bulgaria I should, as a Bulgarian, have been glad that the Bulgarian people had lost their land just as long as they had been spared from Hellenization.

But I am not glad that they were forced to move. Nor can I look at this question through the eyes of Mr. Mih. Madzharov (one of the editors of *Mir B.K.*) who says that the underground and the city industry of Bulgaria benefited from the arrival of the refugees.

Here my Macedonian patriotism overcomes my Bulgarian patriotism. The Macedonians are necessary to Macedonia; it is only with the Macedonians that Macedonia can belong to the Macedonians, never without them.

The Macedonians should either remain where they are and let the devil take care of them if he likes or, if it is their fate to be forced to move, they should move from one part of Macedonia to another, but this should still be Macedonia and not Bulgaria, Serbia, or Greece. If they are driven out of the Greek part of Macedonia, the Macedonians should move into the Serbian part of Macedonia and form military settlements to await the day when they might return to their homes.

You may say that a Bulgarian cannot reason like this. Yes, but a Macedonian can and should reason like this.

I hope it will not be held against me that I, as a Macedonian, place the interests of my country before all... I am a Macedonian, I have a Macedonian's consciousness, and so I have my own Macedonian view of the past, present, and future of my country and of all the South Slavs; and so I should like them to consult us, the Macedonians, about all the questions concerning us and our neighbors, and not have everything end merely with agreements between Bulgaria and Serbia about us — but without us ...

Note: This article was written after an agreement signed between Greece and Bulgaria in 1923, according to which a great number of Aegean Macedonians would be turned out of their homes and driven into Bulgaria during winter, under the worst possible conditions, when the Bulgarians had not made even the most rudimentary preparations for receiving, housing, and feeding tens and even hundreds of thousands of Macedonian refugees. (B. K.).

SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE MACEDONIANS

My article Macedonian Nationalism, which appeared in Mir on 17 March this year, aroused the ire of the paper Svobodna rech, which described me as “a man who still does not even know his own nationality”, a “simple-minded thinker who is capable of writing nonsense, of sinking even lower”, and who is “well-known for having once served in the Serbian propaganda service” and for lending his support to the theories of the Belgrade professor Cvyitch concerning the existence of a separate Macedonian nationality”. As a result of these slanders against me in Svobodna rech many of my own townsfolk turned in fury upon me, and there were even some people who thoughtlessly claimed that they knew that in my student days I had attended assemblies of both the Bulgarian and the Serbian students and that this was why I had been driven out of the Bulgarian assemblies.

Similar senseless accusations were made in Svobodna rech and, as was only to be expected, these false rumors spread around Karlovo. This, however, did not greatly disturb me, as would have been clear to anyone who had read my article in Mir and who knew anything about my past...

I knew full well that I would be attacked for my Macedonian Nationalism and that my article could certainly not be published in Ilinden. Nevertheless, although I was far from sure that it would be printed in Mir, I wrote out the article and sent it to this journal. And

two days after it had appeared, Svobodna rech made me out to be a man who does not know his own nationality.

[Note. Missirkov then goes on to say that he is not going to bother much about the “simple-mindedness” of Svobodna rech, and so he continues by speaking out against the expulsion of the Macedonians from Aegean Macedonia, and in favor of cooperation among the South Slav nations as being the one salvation for all. And the most important condition for this cooperation is, he says, is that the Macedonians should have absolute freedom of self-determination. (B.K.)]

Since it is we, the Macedonians, who will suffer on account of the disagreement between Serbia and Bulgaria, it is our duty to seek and find the ways and means of bringing about a reconciliation. This means that we will have to “know nothing” of our nationality up to this day and that we will have to tell the Serbs and the Bulgarians: forget your great-Serb and great-Bulgarian ideals and stop burdening us with your nationalism and patriotism, for they are fundamentally designed to promote your interests above ours. Let us decide for ourselves how we will regard our relations towards you and how we will look upon your disagreement over us and our country. Let us be free to have our own opinion of the best way to promote the good of all South Slavs; let us have our own national feelings and create our own Macedonian culture.