

History of the Macedonian People
From
Ancient times to the Present



By

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PREFACE

Ever since their beginning the Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian States and to a lesser extent the Albanian State have systematically used every means possible, including waging propaganda campaigns, to negate the existence of the Macedonian nation. They have done this not because Macedonians do not exist but purely to usurp Macedonian territories and the rich Macedonian heritage.

Until recently there were no organized Macedonian voices to speak for the Macedonian people and their rights as citizens of this world, so Macedonia's adversaries, the Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbians and more recently the Albanians, spoke for them.

The time has now come when Macedonians are taking matters into their own hands and challenging old beliefs and the illegitimacy of those who have been speaking for them.

Only Macedonians are the rightful heirs of the Macedonian heritage and the composers of Macedonia's history.

The Macedonians are not Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbians or Albanians. Neither can they simultaneously be Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbians and Albanians as their adversaries claim.

The Greeks claim that "Macedonia is Greek" and has been for four thousand years. Contrary to ancient and modern evidence, they continue to insist that the ancient Macedonians were Greek. Again contrary to evidence and without proof, the modern Greeks claim that they are the direct descendants of the ancient Greeks and as such are the rightful owners of the ancient heritage. Furthermore, and without a shred of evidence, they claim that "all" the ancient Macedonians were killed off during the so called "Slav invasions" of the fifth and sixth centuries AD and there is no one left but the Greeks to claim Macedonia's heritage. The Greeks, again without any evidence, claim that the modern Macedonians are Slavs who invaded Macedonia during the fifth and sixth centuries AD and have nothing in common with the ancient Macedonians and therefore have no rights to the Macedonian heritage.

This book challenges all Greek claims and without any doubt will prove that they are no more than a "Greek myth".

Firstly, it is well known that a "Greek State" never existed before 1829. The ancient City States were conquered by Philip II, king of Macedonia in 338 BC and were never united into a single nation until the creation of the Greek Kingdom in 1832. Was it not the Macedonians who conquered the ancient City States? How then can ancient Macedonia be Greek?

The Great Powers created the modern Greek Kingdom for the first time in 1832 as an attempt to partition the Ottoman Empire and prevent the formation of a single Slavic State in the Balkans. The Great Powers, Britain and France, created modern Greece purely for the purpose of blocking Russian access to the Mediterranean Sea.

As for the purity of the modern Greek nation there is ample evidence, both historical and scientific, that contradicts modern Greek claims. For example

there is no modern pure Greek race that directly descended from the ancient City States. Today's modern Greeks, like other nations in the Balkans, are made up of Slavs, Macedonians, Turks, Albanians, Roma, Vlachs, etc. A modern Greek person is only Greek by education or by assimilation and has no roots beyond 1832 when the Greek State and the Greek Nation were created for the first time. The modern Greek not only has a mythical past but sadly has abandoned and forsaken his or her own real roots and heritage.

There are many examples of how the Greek State achieved nationhood at the expense of other races. For example, when Greece occupied Macedonian territories for the first time in 1912 there were no Greeks living in Macedonia. Yet a few years later the Greek State produced statistics that showed that the vast majority of the Macedonian population was Greek. How was that possible? In reality it was not. The Greek State shamelessly assimilated the Macedonian population by forcibly changing the people's Macedonian names and toponyms into Greek ones.

During the 1920's, in its population exchanges with Turkey, Greece imported one million Christian Turks, about one fifth of its entire population, from Asia Minor and settled most of them in Macedonia. These people too became Greeks by force.

The real flaw in the Greek State's genealogical claim to the ancients is that, after eighty years of living on Macedonian soil, it convinced the Asian newcomers that they are the rightful owners of the Macedonian lands and heritage because they were told that they were the real direct descendants of the ancient Macedonians and not the indigenous Macedonian population they replaced.

The Greek State is not above deception and lies, even to its own people, to convince the world that Greeks and Greeks alone are the rightful heirs of Macedonia's lands and heritage. This is all done at the expense of the real Macedonians who had lived on those lands for hundreds of generations and have now been displaced.

The Bulgarians too have claims on Macedonian territories and are using every means possible to convince the world that Macedonia rightfully belongs to them.

The Bulgarian claim is that "Macedonia is Bulgarian" because the Macedonian people are Bulgarian. They are Bulgarian because they speak a "dialect" of the Bulgarian language.

This book also challenges Bulgarian claims and will prove that they too are flawed and contradictory.

It is well known that the Macedonians were already living in the Balkans and speaking the Slav language long before the first Bulgar Khans with their Turk and Tartar hoards arrived. Evidence shows that the numerically inferior Bulgars became assimilated into the larger indigenous Slav speaking population and adopted the Slav language and culture. More correctly, the Bulgarians speak a dialect of the Macedonian language, not the other way around. After all, was it

not the Macedonian brothers Kiril and Metodi from Solun who enlightened the Bulgarians?

Without going into too much detail at this point, I want to mention that the aim of this book is to present the reader with a Macedonian perspective of Macedonia's history.

It is time the world heard the Macedonian point of view. Contrary to what Macedonia's adversaries profess, the truth is on the Macedonian side. There is ample evidence that shows that the ancient Macedonians not only survived the many calamities from ancient times to now but their descendants do exist in Greece, Bulgaria, the Republic of Macedonia, Albania, Canada, Australia, the United States of America, Europe and the world over. They are now in the process of regrouping and are using the tools of the information age to fight back and retake what is theirs.

This book is a chronological outline of historical events involving Macedonia and the Macedonian people from prehistoric times to the present. It is not complete in detail by any means but will give the reader a general analysis of Macedonia's history.

The book is written in the English language specifically for the younger generations in the Diaspora who want to learn Macedonian history but do not necessarily have the time or resources to do long and extensive research. Besides providing a comprehensive historical analysis, this book contains valuable information collected from interviews and personal experiences that cannot be found anywhere else. Also, since this book represents the Macedonian point of view, on occasion it will use Macedonian words to describe some of the more familiar place names like Solun (Salonica), Tsari Grad (Constantinople) and the Byzantines (Byzantines).

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Introduction

All people that have existed on this planet have left their mark in some form or another. The Macedonians are no exception and will be the subject of this book.

To properly reconstruct history, corroborating information from at least two sources must be obtained. One such source might be data collected from analyzing material finds like tombs, artifacts, relics and inscriptions, the type of information that can be derived from archeological research. Another source might be a body of literature derived from stories, legends, myths, folklore, poems, songs, etc. passed down from generation to generation. Other sources include linguistic analysis, anthropology and the study of genetics.

Unfortunately, for obvious reasons upon which I will expand, the reconstruction of Macedonian history has been neglected and as a result has not achieved the desired maturity to be considered adequate.

Scientific interest in the southern Balkan region in general began for the first time in the early 1800's alongside political and economic interests. While German and British scholars were studying findings from the Bronze Age in the Peloponnesus and Crete, Macedonia was still in the grip of the Ottoman Empire. Later, after 1912 and 1913, at the hands of the Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian States anything to do with Macedonia became politically sensitive. Since the time that Greece annexed a large part of Macedonia the Greek authorities have concealed all archeological materials which didn't agree with their political agenda. Only materials that strengthened their claims to Macedonia and attracted tourists were made public.

Without sound archeological data, reconstruction of history is scant at best. "Early twentieth-century historians continued occasionally to write political biographies of the pre-eminent fourth-century BC kings, and when they did consider Macedonian affairs they viewed them only as part of general Greek history. What was required for a deeper understanding of Macedon and its kings were serious source studies and archeology, but archeological interest remained dormant for decades because twentieth-century interest in Macedonia sprang from modern politics rather than from a study of antiquity." (Page 8, Eugene N. Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus, The Emergence of Macedon*)

As for using literature to reconstruct Macedonia's history, 19th century western scholars relied heavily on City State and Roman sources and neglected to reference eastern, Macedonian and other literary sources. Eastern scholars, on the other hand, by political motivation or by nonchalance continued to stagnate.

Unfortunately, to this day Greek and Bulgarian opposition still remains the biggest obstacle to reconstructing Macedonia's history. Both states occupy Macedonian territory and refuse to cooperate on matters of Macedonian interests, especially archeology. Greece, which occupies the largest and archeologically richest part of Macedonia, will only cooperate if Macedonian history remains peripheral to mainstream Greek events and if it is presented from the Greek point of view.

Bulgaria still refuses to recognize a Macedonian nation and is in agreement with Greece on matters of ancient history.

The academic community to date has been hesitant to become involved in the reconstruction of mainstream Macedonian history (outside of the 4th century BC) partly due to the difficulties in obtaining information from non-Greek sources but mostly due to Greek pressure to keep Macedonia under the Greek periphery. Whatever evidence exists today is fragmented and derived mainly from biased sources. "What we know about the Macedonians are primarily from Greek sources or from translations derived from the Greek sources and therefore we have a skewed view of them depending upon the views of people who were largely their enemies in antiquity." These are the words of Dr. Eugene Borza, the "world authority" on ancient Macedonia. Dr. Borza clearly summarizes the conditions under which mainstream Macedonian history has been presented.

I want to emphasize that the ancient Macedonian history taught in schools today was written during the 19th and early 20th centuries mostly by western authors who relied mainly on politically motivated Greek sources for their research. Even though the ancient Macedonian people were a unique and separate nation, the history presented to us always places them together with the people of the ancient City States. There is no western text where the Macedonian identity is treated separately from the Greek identities of the city-states. Also, the same mainstream history which is taught to our children today personifies the ancient Macedonian people as a mere vehicle that united the city-states and did nothing more than do their bidding in spreading Hellenic culture throughout the ancient world. Also, modern Greek historians made sure that the negativity of orators like Demosthenes, referring to the Macedonians as "barbarians" and "culturally backwards", was well portrayed in the minds of western writers.

The fact that some modern authors ascribe Hellenic affinity to the ancient Macedonians should come as no great surprise, given the impact of Johan Gustav Droysen on early nineteenth-century historians where Macedonia is depicted as a natural "unifier" of the Greek city-states. The same role was played by Prussia and Savoy in German and Italian unification in the nineteenth century. "On this false analogy the whole of Greek history was now boldly reconstructed as a necessary process of development leading quite naturally to a single goal: unification of the Greek nation under Macedonian leadership". (Werner Jaeger)

To paraphrase Eugene Borza, it was a dynamic idea in the minds of 19th century German intellectuals and politicians to see something of themselves, of the German State unification, conquests, creativity and culture in the Greeks and Philip as the embodiment of national will and the unifier of Greece.

In other words, the ancient history written for the modern Greeks by 19th century German scholars was nothing more than a German vision of the "Glorious" German unification superimposed on the Greek model.

To Demosthenes and others like him, the Macedonians were an enemy that conquered and subdued them, embodying everything that was vile and despicable. Ignoring all signs of a rich and civilized culture beyond imagination,

modern Greek scholars hid the real face of ancient Macedonia under a veil of contemptible words spoken by enemies and bitter politicians.

Modern day Greeks would like to pass off Demosthenes's castigations of Philip II as political rhetoric, and yet Demosthenes was twice appointed to lead the war effort of Athens against Macedonia. He, Demosthenes, said of Philip that, "Philip was not Greek, nor related to Greeks but comes from Macedonia where a person could not even buy a decent slave." Soon after his death the people of Athens paid him fitting honours by erecting his statue in bronze and by decreeing that the eldest member of his family should be maintained in the prytaneum at public expense. On the base of his statue was carved his famous inscription: "If only your strength had been equal, Demosthenes, to your wisdom Never would Greece have been ruled by a Macedonian Ares." (J.T. Griffith) Greece "ruled" not "united" by a Macedonian Ares. Also, was it not the Greek philosopher Lycurgus who said, "With the death of Chaeronea was buried the freedom of Greece?"

The reader should be aware that the word "Greek" is a Latin term that originated during Roman times and should not be used to refer to a people that existed hundreds of years earlier. To correct this historical error I shall use the terms "City States" in place of "Greece" where appropriate.

The people of the ancient City States could not possibly have been called "Greek" before the word was actually invented. Also, modern Greek academics are more than willing to interpret ambiguous evidence when it serves their political interests and, at the same time, to dismiss the obvious when it doesn't. If you want to learn more about the differences between the "ancient Greeks" and "ancient Macedonians" please read Josef S. G. Gandeto's book, *Ancient Macedonians, Differences Between the Ancient Macedonians and the Ancient Greeks*.

"There is not a single word or fact written by the ancient authors that shows that the Macedonians are Greek. There is not a single word or fact written where the Macedonians thought of themselves as Greeks. There is not a single book written by the ancient authors, including the ancient Greek authors, that has mixed the lineage and has not shown diverse differences between Macedonians and Greeks." (Joseph Gandeto)

Since the emergence of the Republic of Macedonia in the 1990's, research in the field of archeology has increased dramatically but mainly inside the Republic of Macedonia. Also, new Macedonian literature and publications are slowly emerging and in time should provide an alternative to the vast, biased Greek sources.

On the subject of language, it would be evident from the text of Arrian, Plutarch, and Curtius Rufus that Alexander's army spoke Macedonian not Greek. Any other interpretation would be intolerably difficult, if not impossible, to accept.

"The main evidence for ancient Macedonian existing as a separate language comes from a handful of late sources describing events in the train of Alexander the Great, where the Macedonian tongue is mentioned specifically. The evidence

suggests that Macedonian was distinct from ordinary Attic (ancient Athenian) used as a language of the court and of diplomacy. The handful of surviving genuine Macedonian words - not loan words from Greek - do not show the changes expected from a Greek dialect.” (Eugene Borza)

There are many scholars who will argue that there is ample evidence to place the ancient Macedonians as a distinct nation with a unique culture and language, separate from the ancient City States. Unfortunately, until recently there was little interest and not much incentive to carry the argument beyond discussion.

If the ancient Macedonians were a distinct nation, then where did they come from? What language did they speak? Has any part of their language survived? What was their culture like?

To answer these questions we need to avoid being bogged down by conflicting arguments. We need to get away from the well-trod mainstream path, free ourselves from the biased modern Greek sources and take a fresh look at the old and new evidence, especially the evidence that has been omitted or intentionally bypassed in the past.

It has been my belief that the arguments presented by Greek historians are not only biased and politically motivated, but are designed to bog down the academic world and keep it on the defensive thus stifling any chance for real progress.

On the topic of new archeological and linguistic evidence, there have been numerous projects undertaken since the 1960's.

A major archeological discovery was made in 1977 in Kutlesh (Vergina) about 30 miles north of Mount Olympus. Archeologists uncovered what appeared to be the royal tomb (Golemata Tumba) of Philip II. In addition to yielding much information about the Macedonians, the find also unearthed much controversy. Some of the artifacts found, according to Eugene Borza, belonged to a later period of the 4th century BC, which cast some doubt as to whether it was truly Philip II's tomb. What is more important, however, is the type of treasure found in the tomb.

The treasure is physical evidence which “proves unmistakably” that the Macedonians were not a barbarian tribe whose only accomplishment was making war. Archeologists are finding increasing evidence that the Macedonians were a far more sophisticated culture than previously thought.

What was most impressive in this find, besides the solid gold casket with the symbol of the starburst, was the exquisite gold foiled wreath made from 313 gold oak leaves. It is the heaviest and most elegant gold wreath ever discovered.

Since the emergence of the Republic of Macedonia new and exciting archeological discoveries have been made. Rocks with inscriptions never before deciphered were found in several sites inside the Republic of Macedonia. Similar inscriptions have also been found in Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania and even Crete, Pil and Knosos. Unfortunately up until now archeologists have consistently failed to decipher them. Thanks to dedicated archeologists like Vasil Ilyov some inscriptions have now been deciphered.

According to Ilyov's paleographic and paleolinguistic research, the signs on the rocks are actual letters of an old pre-Slavic phonetic alphabet that belongs to the Macedonian language of Aegean Macedonia. In other words, the language of the Pelazgian and other Macedonian tribes, like the Paeonian, Piertian, Brygian or Phrygian, Venets or Enets, etc., is in fact the language of the ancient Macedonians which dates back to prehistoric times.

Symbols found on Prevedic solar and cosmographic artifacts that belong to the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Eneolithic cultures, place the inscriptions somewhere between 7,000 to 3,000 BC (Page 37, October 15, 1999, number 560, Makedonija magazine).

What is more interesting is that Vasil Ilyov and his team have translated almost every inscription discovered and so far have identified and tabulated 35 characters of the ancient alphabet. (Pages 60 and 61, July 1, 2000, number 577, Makedonija magazine). There is finally proof that a Macedonian written language existed in prehistoric times. In fact, according to Vasil Ilyov, not one but two phonetic alphabets have been discovered. One was known as the common alphabet used by the general public and the other was known as the "secret" alphabet used for religious and ceremonial purposes. To date, the texts of more than 150 artifacts have been translated and about 6,000 ancient Macedonian words have been identified.

According to Ilyov, apart from giving us the oldest phonetic alphabet found to date, the prehistoric Macedonians have also given us clues that they were gazing at the skies. The word "cosmos" which the Hellenes borrowed from the Macedonians, and the modern Greeks without offering adequate etymology pass off as their own, comes from the Macedonians Ilyov says.

In the ancient Macedonian language the base of the noun cosmos comes from the adjective KOS (winding slanted) and the noun MOS (bridge). "Kosmos" was the winding bridge that the ancient Macedonian astronomers called the cluster of stars in the Milky Way galaxy looking like a winding bridge when viewed from the earth.

Even before Irodot (Herodotus 484-424 BC) gave the world the idea of history as we know it today, the ancient Macedonians were already familiar with the notion. The West considers Herodotus to be the father of history. As for the word "history", its roots are found in the ancient Macedonian noun "TR" which is the oldest name given to the god of thunder. In time, the word evolved from "TR" to "TOR", "TORI" and in the past tense, "STORI" which in Macedonian means "happened". If we apply this action to events that involve people we then come up with the Macedonian words "TIE I STORIA" which in English translates to "they did". So, when Herodotus published his work under the title "HISTORY" by Herodotus of Halicarnassus, he in fact used a Macedonian word for his title.

If Herodotus, using a similar analogy derived his title from the Attican dialect, as modern Greeks claim, he would have had to produce a noun from the verb "KANO" or "EKANA" and the actions "they did" would translate to

“AVTI EKANAN” which is a far cry from the word HISTORY. (Pages 56 and 57, June 15, 2000, number 576, Makedonija magazine).

I want to mention here that in spite of Greek claims otherwise, Irodot (Herodotus) was not Greek and was not from Athens. Herodotus was Karian, born in the city of Halicarnassus in Asia Minor.

More evidence that gives credence to the existence of an ancient prehistoric Macedonian civilization comes to us from ancient literature. One such source that greatly influenced our impression of the ancients and inspired Alexander the Great to seek adventure was Homer’s epic poems. About five hundred years after the Trojan Wars, Homer wrote the Iliad and the Odyssey. Homer’s work captivated his audience with events that, according to Tashko Belchev, began and ended in Macedonia. Homer was born in the 8th century BC and created true literary masterpieces that are enjoyed as much today, as they were in the days of Alexander the Great. Originally, Homer’s stories were folktales told and retold for centuries until they were immortalized in print in the 6th century BC.

What is most interesting about Homer’s stories, especially the Iliad, is that they were originally written in the prehistoric Macedonian language. The first paleolinguist to openly proclaim the similarities between the words of the Iliad and those of the modern Slavic languages was the German Homerologist, Pasov. Inspired by Pasov and others, researcher Odisej Belchevsky has furthered the study by clearly illustrating the fundamental relationship between the modern Macedonian language and the language of Homer.

“ In the Iliad and Odyssey, attributed to Homer, the great multitude of non-Greek people living around Olympus and further north in Europe were described as being as, ‘Numerous as the leaves in the forests... with chariots and weapons decorated with gleaming gold and silver...like gods.’

Unless destroyed by natural disaster, large nations and their languages do not simply disappear but rather change and evolve over time. This evolution is influenced by the conditions of life and interaction with other nations, called ‘symbiosis’ by Lidija Slaveska in The Ethnological Genesis of the Macedonian People.

A tremendous number of words from everyday life as well as the names of a number of places, rivers, mountains, kings, gods, common people, and numerous tribes can be found in the Homeric poems. The majority of these words have survived until today. This is not a strange phenomenon. What attracts our attention is that these words have retained their basic meaning and can be easily recognized especially by the speakers of the contemporary Slavic languages. This linguistic material clearly shows the existence and strong influence of a language, which surely was neither Greek nor Latin.

After extensive research taking over twelve years, I (Odisej Belchevski) have studied, analyzed and resolved a large number of linguistic problems through the evidence of that archaic language which profoundly influenced the Greek, Latin, and Germanic languages in their historic development since ancient times.

The question of what constituted ancient Macedonian has been studied by many scholars over many centuries. There have been many attempts to reconstruct it as a “Greek dialect.” My research indicates the following:

1 Not a single linguist nor scholar in any other field has ever conducted a comparative study of this ancient language with the largest linguistic group in Europe and Asia--the Slavic languages--in use today! The question is: Why? It seems that the truth has been hidden in darkness and altered by western

- scholars and politicians for almost two hundred years. It is easy to suppose that this has been done for nationalistic, political interests and gains.*
- 2 *The Macedonian words identified in Homer (1000-800 BC) are a part of the basic everyday life of the Macedonian people today. When compared to the contemporary Macedonian language, there is an incredible similarity and in many cases there are complete cognates.*
 - 3 *Moreover, those Homeric words which belong to that base are found in the roots of many words in the modern Macedonian language. They form huge families of words--a series of words that are interrelated on a functional basis or are simply built according to the Law Of Functional Etymology.*
 - 4 *Some of these words have been adopted in the Greek language, but have been assimilated beyond recognition. Others again "stand alone" in the Greek language, without Greek roots or functional relationships. But most of these words are absolutely not related to modern Greek.*

Many western scholars think that kinship terms from 1500-1000 BC disappeared long ago. My research proves that they exist today in the largest language group of nations in Europe and Asia, including the modern Macedonian nation. These specific terms were of utmost importance as they were the basis for preserving large family units --clans, tribes, and the prevention of marriages between family members. All this resulted in forming of great nations.

The Pelazgian people are clearly described in Homeric poems as non-Greek, with their own language and traditions totally different from Greek. They inhabited the Balkan Peninsula (known by the names Macedonians, Thracians, Illyrians, etc.) and they spread throughout south-eastern Europe (under the common name Scythians). Later, they migrated to the east in Asia Minor (Lydians, Brigians-Frigians etc.) and to the west into central and northern Italy (Etruscans, Veneti etc).

Their name, Pelazgians, most logically could be interpreted as the 'dwellers of the flat lands'. They cultivated the fertile valleys and became a part of the landscape their fecundity only paralleled by the far Eastern nations. In the Iliad, they are identified as Trojans and as the inhabitants of Crete. According to Greek writers, they are credited with building the Acropolis and as those natives that the 'Greek' tribes met when they arrived in Southern Europe. How could it have happened that so great a number of Pelazgian tribes disappeared without leaving traces of their language? It should be pointed out that there is forgotten evidence revealed in the linguistic inscriptions on stones in Delphi (Greece) and Asia Minor (Turkey). These are written in Greek and in 'another language', which western scholars identify as Etruscan. In his study 'The Language of the Etruscans', L. Bonafonte identifies the 'other language' as Etruscan. My study of the Etruscan and Lydian languages reveals that these languages were closely related to the ancient and modern Macedonian language. Other apparent lexical correspondences between the Homeric and modern Macedonian are, for example: paimiti(s)-pamti; veido, veiden-vide; ishare-izgara, skara; idri-itar; kotule-katle; okkos-oko; steno-stenka; pliscios-seli, preseli; oditis-odi od odenje. There are a great many examples like this in the 1800 dictionary compiled by the German linguist Ludwig Franz Passoff on the basis of the most ancient extant manuscripts of Homer's Iliad. The English edition was prepared by Henry George (New York, 1850). Not knowing the Macedonian language, Passoff concentrated on the most contrasting preserved words, unknown in Greek and Latin with the Czech and Slovak languages of that time. So these words were identified, in fact, as Slavic words. Hence, in my opinion the golden rule for analyzing a language is the aforementioned Functional Etymology. Since the functional

relations of words are the fundamental building blocks of word forms, I name this rule the 'GOLDEN RULE OF FUNCTIONAL ETYMOLOGY.'

In studies of the ancient and modern Macedonian language at the Canadian-Macedonian Historical Society in Toronto the priority project based on an earlier understanding is the question of 'Studying The Macedonian Language--Ancient and Modern'. Another interesting topic is the problem of the 'Lost Words in the Indo-European Language Exist Today in the Modern Macedonian Language'. In order to illustrate my argument in this respect, I focus on some examples of the genetic relationships between ancient and modern Macedonian language, through the Macedonian word daver, dever 'brother in law'.

When a young woman marries, the brother of her husband (usually the youngest) becomes a 'dever'. This is an ancient tradition done to ensure that the young male is entrusted with the care of the family in case the husband dies or is killed.

In such circumstances the youngest brother becomes the new husband and takes over the family. This was necessary to protect the children and keep accrued wealth and property within the same family. The meaning of the word in Macedonian, according to functional etymology could be extracted as follows: vera-verba-doverba-doveri-dever 'to be entrusted'. This word belongs to a large cluster of Macedonian words containing the root (-verba-).

In ancient Macedonian (1000 BC), according to Homer (p.305 L.L.) there is da-DAVER; dao(s), where the digama stands for/v/ and the word means 'brother in law'. In the word daver-daer we note the missing consonant /v/ in inter vocalic position. This indicates that the rule of the speech economy has been in force for a long time in the language. Dropping consonants has been a rule quite often occurring in Macedonian as in the examples: to private >to praoite; covekot ojde > coekon ojde, etc. Yet in Greek 'brother in law' ginaika delfos 'ginaika delfoos', could obviously not be related to the Homeric daver-davero(s).” (Odisej K. Belchevski, Pages 29 - 32, Number 503, III 1995, Makedonija magazine)

If you didn't know who Homer was and happened to be reading his stories about the customs of the Trojans, you would think that he was talking about modern Macedonia. After three millennium, we find the same customs, crafts, hunting techniques, agricultural methods, etc. being practiced today. Be it spinning, weaving, dowry, hospitality, nature, or house design, everything else described in Homer's epics, says Angelina Markus, is unchanged and present all around us today. (Pages 56 - 57, July 1, 2000, number 575, Makedonija magazine)

Another archeological source that provides evidence for the Macedonians is the work of German Toponymist Max Fasmer. Fasmer in his book "The Slavs in Greece" examines the origins of 334 prehistoric Phoenician toponyms in Epirus and concludes that they are of Slavic origin. Through his studies, Fasmer has discovered that there is a relationship between the ancient Phoenicians and the medieval Slavs. He also clearly emphasizes that the "Slavs" inhabited Epirus. What is also interesting is that in German, the words "Slaven" and "Vinden" are synonymous. Tashko Belchev furthers the idea that the Slavs inhabited the Balkans long before previously thought by connecting the Vindi, Veneti and Phoenicians to a single family of people with common origins. (Page 68, February 1, 2001, number 591, Makedonija magazine)

According to the writings of G. S. Grinevich, dealing with the subject of pre-Slavic literacy, the decoding and linguistic coding results show that pre-Slavic literacy existed much before the creation of the letters and coding of the Slavic language by the brothers St. Cyril and St. Metodi. This is more evidence that the proto-Slavs originated in Macedonia and according to Grinevich, the language spoken by the Aegean Pelasgi is the same as that spoken by the pre-Slavs (p. 175). Grinevich has also stated that the pre-Slavic written language is very close to the old Slavic written literary language of all Slavs. (Genadij Stanistavlovich Grinevich, World History Department, Russian Physical Society, Moscow, 1994)

According to Alexander Donski, "There are many indications that the ancient Macedonians were of Venetic origin (the term "Slavic" came into use much later), and there is evidence in favor of this.

Historical Evidence. We can see from several ancient documentary sources that Macedonians and Hellenes were two different peoples. Some Greek, as well as Roman historians, have explored this view, and have left evidence collected from earlier periods, clearly showing that ancient Macedonians were of Venetic origin.

Linguistic Evidence. Although the surviving vocabulary of the ancient Macedonians is relatively small, it gives a good indication in favor of our thesis; which is, that the modern Macedonian language is at least in part the continuation of the language spoken by Alexander the Great and his contemporaries.

Onomastic Evidence. There is considerable heritage from the area of burial customs and archaeological remains. They contain many examples of sameness or similarity between the ancient and modern Macedonian, and other Slavic languages. There are also some narrative, oral testimonies pointing in the same direction."

Alexander Donski has recently published a book on this subject, which is now available in English.

A recently published book "Veneti: First Builders of European Community", considered to be one of the most comprehensive works on the early history of Slovenes, presents the Proto-Slavic Veneti as the first known nation of central Europe and the Slovenes as their most direct descendants. The Veneti (not to be confused with Venetians) settled in the alpine area in Slovenia, northern Italy, eastern Switzerland and Austria during the Bronze Age around 1200 BC. In their original settlement area there are to this day countless Slovene place-names.

These facts presented in the book are not new and have already been studied and reported by earlier researchers but, for unknown reasons, have not been taken seriously.

Besides important historical data, the authors of this book have presented numerous Slovene toponyms in the alpine region and to the west and north where the Veneti once lived. Also, the book reveals many similarities between the modern Slovene and the Venetic languages. Research done on the Venetic inscriptions has proven that not only was the ancient Venetic language (contrary

to official linguistics) Proto-Slavic, but also that the modern Slovene language is a continuation of it.

The first known nation of central Europe, according to the authors of this book, were the Proto-Slavic Veneti and the original language of central Europe before the arrival of the Indo-Europeans around 2,000 BC was Slavic.

The book "Veneti: First Builders of European Community" is a first step towards the gradual correction of the "distorted history" which was "written for us" by foreigners.

Until recently, no one had been able to decipher the Venetic script on the urns unearthed from archeological digs because no one ever thought of using the ancient Slavic language as a basis to try and solve this ancient mystery. So they say!

Matej Bor, a Slovenian linguist, seems to have cracked the Venetic script using the Slovenian language. (Jozko Šavli, Matej Bor, Ivan Tomazic, "VENETI: First Builders of European Community")

Soon perhaps, Macedonian researchers will compare notes with Slovenian researchers and shed some new light on this ancient mystery.

In the article "Who is Afraid of Ancient Macedonian Culture, and Why?" Tashko Belchev talks about Deyan Medakovic, President of the Serbian Academy of Science and his attempts to cover up certain archeological facts that do not agree with mainstream Serbian history.

On March 4, 1987 Academic Vladimir Dediyer, President of the research board of the Serbian Academy, sent a letter to Deyan Medakovic complaining about his involvement in stopping the symposium devoted to the Vincha world which existed 6,000 – 3,000 years BC. The symposium was organized by the Serbian Academy of Science and Art, the Historical Science Department and the Center for Scientific Research at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade. Among other things, the letter chastised Medakovic with the words, "Damn you Deyan Medakovic, for your petty ambitions to be President of the Serbian Academy of Science. You are a sycophant to the authorities, breaking all human principles of behaviour. (L.Klyakic, 'Beginning of the Road', p. 56.)" (Page 69, August 1, 2000, number 579, Makedonija magazine)

On the subject of the Vincha Group, Vasil Ilyov, in an article in the Makedonija Magazine, talks about a discovery of a rather imposing monument containing an ancient script found in Sitovo cave, located near the city of Plovdiv in Bulgaria. The monument has two lines of inscriptions about 3.4 meters long and the text is about 40 centimeters high, written from right to left. According to Ilyov, the text can be dated back to 4,500 BC and is written in the ancient, prehistoric Macedonian phonetic language. The text, although not deciphered at the time, was published in 1950 and again in 1971. With Ilyov's assistance, the text was finally deciphered in 1995. In a crude attempt here is what it says in English "and the father-in-law ran in (flew in) and in the flight horrors have haunted him and there the house psalms (in the house they sing psalms) and in roast you are a guest of the ducks-go dream!" (Page 71, December 15, 1999, number 564-565, Makedonija magazine) You can decide for

yourself what the ancient scribe wants to say. More importantly, it is not what the message says but rather that it has been deciphered and translated. Perhaps it is not a message meant for us. In any case here is Ilyov's interpretation. The duck in this message refers to an ancient swamp bird, which rises from a deceased person and carries his/her spirit to the blue sky. Ilyov has based his interpretation on an artifact in the shape of an anthropomorphic figure standing on a chariot drawn by harnessed swamp birds. The central figure is decorated with symbols of the sun and planets.

Yet another source of archeological data in support of a Macedonian civilization comes from Bronze Age research. According to Vangel Bozhinovski (Page 61, June 1, 2000, number 575, Makedonija magazine) the Neolithic civilization in Macedonia appeared 3,000 years before it appeared in western Europe. Similarly the Bronze Age appeared in Macedonia 1,200 years earlier and the Iron Age 200 years earlier. The tragedy of the Bronze Age is reflected in the death and destruction it brought to Macedonia after it was introduced to western Europe. In the hands of the Europeans to the north and west, the metal that once shaped art in Macedonia became a weapon of death and destruction. Was it mankind's nature to crave war above peace? If we examine our behaviour by the amount of money we spend on our military budgets today, I would say yes.

Almost all of the valuable artifacts made between 1,200 and 800 BC were discovered in cemeteries. Macedonia dubbed "the culture of the fields of urns" has an abundance of cemeteries. It seems that no matter how many are unearthed or destroyed there are plenty more to be found. It is in mankind's nature to be this way says Vangel Bozhinovski, just look at the textbooks from which our children learn in school today and you will realize that civilization is nothing but an endless war. War is a western invention which was imported to Macedonia during the Bronze Age and has become our way of life ever since.

Chapter 1 - The Beginning

It has been said that thousands of years ago many small tribal kingdoms occupied the region where the three continents meet (Europe, Asia and Africa). They lived off the land, traded and peacefully co-existed with each other for many centuries. Even though they were known by many names, the people had a common ancestry and spoke dialects of the same language.

For a thousand years the masters of the crafts possessed the secret of the metals with which they made sculptures and decorations, beautifying their cities. It was foretold that if the secret of the metal (bronze) was allowed to escape, the gods of peace would curse the people and allow disaster to befall them for a thousand years. Unfortunately, after a thousand years or so of contentment, ignoring the ancient warnings, the old masters became arrogant and careless and let the secret of the metal escape. No one could have predicted the outcome of what was about to happen, especially the gentle tribes who knew nothing of evil, violence, or bloodshed.

When the gods of war who lived to the north and west of the gentle tribes learned the secret of the metal, they forged mighty weapons. With promises of power and glory, they bewitched the tribesmen's leaders to use the weapons against their enemies. Greed and lust for power soon blinded the tribesmen who unleashed bloodshed, death and destruction. When the cities of light turned to dust, the wars ended and the dead were buried in cities of tombs below the surface of the earth where their bones lay in peace, undisturbed for all eternity or until archeology unearthed them.

In 800 BC when the catastrophic wars were finally over, the survivors of the small tribal kingdoms were left weak, devastated and vulnerable. One of those small kingdoms was Macedonia. But Macedonia's story does not end with the tribal wars; it only begins.

There are those who believe that the name "Macedonia" was first spoken by the child warriors who longed to return home during the tribal wars. What they affectionately called "Makedon" was not their kingdom but their wish to return to "mother's home". "Make" (mother) and "don" (home) or Makedon as it came to be known to the outside world, was "mother's home" to the children of Macedonia. There are other stories that make reference to the meaning of the name "Makedon" but this, I believe, is the most realistic meaning.

One of the oldest sources of evidence written on stone in the ancient Macedonian phonetic language dates back to the Neolithic period, to the time of the "Zets". I want to mention here that a "Zet" is a "son in law". From the deciphered inscriptions it appears that the Zets of various tribes seemed to be involved in some sort of conflict with each other.

Perhaps one of the most characteristic documents ever found was the text engraved on a stone in the shape of a long fish found in Osinchani, near Skopje. Here the inscription describes a battle between Zets expressing how one Zet subdued another.

Another description that dates between 2,100 BC and 1,200 BC tells a boastful story of how the Zet Ig'Lal destroyed the Ege kingdom. (Vasil Ilyov, page 51, August 15, 2000, number 580, Makedonija magazine)

Yet another Neolithic inscription from the Tsrna Loma or Ilina Gora locality, near the village Osinchani, conveys the following message: “taa, rechta, zasega e uteha na majkite, koishto loshoto voinata, niv gi oshteti”, which in English translates roughly to, “the word for now is consolation for the mothers, whom the wicked war damaged”.

Outside of Homer's epics, nothing has captured the young imagination more than the adventures of the ancient mythological gods and heroes. Were these gods and heroes exclusively Egyptian, Greek and Roman? That is exactly what the modern Greeks want us to believe.

Contrary to modern Greek claims, Professor Tashko Belchev believes that the mythology as we know it today originated from the life experiences of much older people than the ancient City States, and these were the ancient Macedonians. The ancient City States simply took the mythology and adopted it for themselves. Even the word “mythology” comes from the ancient Macedonian words “mit” and “log”. In modern Macedonian the word “mit” means “telling” or “bribing” (potmiti go, bribe him) and the word “log” (logika) means “logic” or “science”. Putting the two words together we come up with “Mitlog” or, in modern Macedonian, “Mitologija” the science of telling or the science of “bribing” the young imagination. (Page 58, June 15, 2000, number 576, Makedonija magazine)

Taking all evidence into consideration, it is not difficult to piece together a theory of what the pre-Macedonian world looked like. We already know a lot about the ancient City States and how they dealt with overpopulation and expansion. For example, as each of the ancient City States grew beyond the city's ability to support its population, people were driven out or left voluntarily to start a new city. New settlements followed the coastline, indicative of the peoples' desire to pursue a familiar means of livelihood. The same principle can be applied to the pre-Macedonian inland dwellers who lived in what we today call geographical Macedonia.

For personal protection and companionship, the ancient people built their homes in close proximity, similar to those of today's modern villages. As the community grew in population beyond the land's ability to support it, people moved and started new communities. This practice continued uninterrupted as long as there was space to expand. In time, the entire region of Macedonia became dotted with settlements. Unchecked by war, disease and pestilence, the populations grew and expanded outwards. Since the people of the various towns were related to each other, they maintained close contact through visits, celebrations, etc. which kept their traditions and language from diverging.

The maximum population an ancient town could hold was dependent upon the land's ability to support it. If a family could no longer make a living because it was too large for its land holdings, it either moved away in whole or split up. Some family members moved away to a smaller town or started a new

community elsewhere. Newly founded towns usually took the name of the founding family.

Keeping track of genealogy was very important for several reasons. Family size usually dictated social status in the community. The family clan protected its family members and expected certain loyalties from them in return. Marriages between family members were avoided by knowing who belonged to which family. It was common practice in those days for a young man to leave his own family, marry and become a Zet (son in law) in another family. Based on the ancient scripts being a Zet had its privileges, including those of waging war on other Zets for control over the family.

Because the Balkan terrain could not support uniform population growth, clusters of settlements developed usually with the larger towns in the fertile lowlands, surrounded by smaller towns in the highlands. As the older settlements grew and matured they began to trade with other settlements and developed transportation routes, commerce and a written language. They also developed a central administration, security force and appointed central tribal leaders, who in time evolved into tribal kings. With the expansion of trade beyond the boundaries of the local community, the ancient people came into contact with other people who had new ideas and innovations.

With the discovery of metal, powerful weapons were built and bloodshed and destruction was not too far behind. Even family squabbles over small matters turned violent and ugly. A society that valued kinship and family above all else had the tendency to stick together and interact freely and peacefully. Unfortunately, at around 1,200 BC something went terribly wrong and war erupted between the various groups (families?), bringing four centuries of death and devastation to the peace loving people of prehistoric Macedonia.

Documented but not well understood are ancient “kinship and family ties”. Kinship was very important to the ancient people of Macedonia who ranked it at the top of their value system. A good example of this is Philip II’s marriages to various women from his annexed worlds. Marriages were a powerful symbol for bonding family ties and for forging powerful alliances. This custom may seem bizarre today but it was common practice in ancient Macedonia.

From a cultural and linguistic standpoint, the close relationship between the ancient societies allowed free interaction between the various peoples and kept their language and culture from diverging. This could account for the widespread Slav language commonality we are witnessing today.

Thus far, I have given you a glimpse of the remnants of an old prehistoric world with a rich culture and language. The sources of information that I have referenced provide valuable evidence of the existence of a world never before acknowledged. Also, the deciphered inscriptions and translated texts not only suggest that a prehistoric civilization existed, but also that the people of this old world are the ancestors of the modern Macedonians.

Some of the artifacts like the stone writings and the “Iliad” translations have been discovered and deciphered since the 1990’s but to this day have not attracted the attention of mainstream archeology and paleolinguistics. Why?

I believe there are several reasons for this:

1. There are some who think the work is not serious enough to warrant their consideration.
2. Others, especially the highly paid administrators, are satisfied with the status quo and don't want to rock the boat.
3. Yet others believe that any involvement on their part could undermine the entire foundation of ancient history, as we now know it.
4. Unfortunately there are also those, myself included, who believe that mainstream ancient history as we know it today was fabricated to support the political objectives of the 19th century Great Powers and their allies.

As George Orwell once pointed out, "Who controls the past controls the future; who controls the present controls the past." History is written by the victors.

As mentioned earlier, when the foundation of ancient history was laid down by the 19th century revisionists, it was done in aid of political objectives. Modern Greece was created by the Western Powers expressly to curtail Slavic expansionism. Moreover, Greece was created to divide the Slavs and stop Imperial Russia from achieving her ambition of sailing the waters of the Mediterranean Sea.

In their zeal to satisfy their own ambitions the 19th century Powers, perhaps unbeknownst to them at the time, unleashed a "Balkan turmoil" that would have long lasting consequences for the Balkan people.

People who existed together, united for centuries by a common faith, were divided without their consent and thrown into disarray by artificially imposed values and ideals. A century has passed and peace has not been achieved. Why?

When the western Powers superficially created Greece in 1829, they launched her on a polemic course, her survival to be made possible only at the expense of the Macedonian nation. The problems experienced between Greece and Macedonia today are nothing new but another stage in a continuous and timeless struggle.

Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia have generated more literature to disprove the existence of a Macedonian nation than they have written books about their own histories. This is truly sad and such a waste of effort.

Chapter 2 - The Rise of Macedonia

"History has often been referred to as a record of the winners. A more accurate definition might be, 'a record of how the winners wish to be seen.' Many governments, in a reptilian effort to justify their conduct, have distorted the past in order that it serve the present." (Michael Dimitri)

Weakened by the tribal wars, the small kingdom of Macedonia was vulnerable to outside attacks. The people, who for thousands of years knew nothing of war, after four centuries of it, had grown weary and apprehensive. Their long time kin, friends and allies were now the enemies who had them

surrounded. Too weak to stave them off by force, the Macedonians of the 10th century BC devoted their energies to diplomacy.

In chapter 1 I provided some archeological and linguistic evidence which hints to the idea that the ancient Macedonian people, including those of the 4th century BC, were of non-Greek origins. As much as it is contrary to official history, this evidence can no longer be ignored.

Macedonians are not alone in their arduous task of setting the historical record straight. There are also Slovenes, Poles, Russians and even Italians and Americans who believe the European continent was settled by different groups of people than official history would have us believe.

My intention in this chapter is to provide more evidence that will dispute modern Greek claims on ancient Macedonia, proving that not only were the ancient Macedonians not “Greek”, but that they were an ethnically unique people with prehistoric origins. My main focus will be to analyze the factors and events from the 10th century BC onwards, which created the conditions that elevated Macedonia from a tribal kingdom to a Super Power.

Four centuries of war not only brought death and destruction to the prehistoric tribal kingdoms, but also isolated them from each other. Forced to look for trade elsewhere away from their traditional trading routes, the warring tribes were brought into contact with and exposed to new and different people. With new exploration came external influences and exposure to new ideas and new blood. Tribes closest to the sea began to traverse the waterways, crossing the Mediterranean which brought them into contact with much more advanced civilizations than they had ever encountered before. Besides trade, the primitive seafaring people began to acquire new skills and knowledge, never before encountered.

Isolated from each other and influenced by external factors, in time, the warring tribes began to diverge ethnically and acquired varying linguistic and cultural characteristics. Even though they may have shared a common ancestry in the past, isolation and cultural evolution made them unique and different from one another. The tribes closest to the Mediterranean Sea influenced by the more advanced middle-Eastern civilizations evolved into democratic City States with unique languages and cultures. The mainland people, on the other hand, influenced by their northern neighbours took on a different character, which will be the subject of this study.

For the sake of the modern Macedonian Nation, which for political reasons has been exploited by the Great Powers and its allies, my interest here is to show that the Macedonian people living in geographical Macedonia today, contrary to official history, are the descendants of the ancient and prehistoric Macedonians. The Macedonian lineage has survived and remained intact from prehistoric times to today. My arguments do not imply racial purity but rather cultural and linguistic continuity. It is well known that many outsiders have invaded Macedonia and there is no doubt that many have left their mark as well. However, in spite of all attempts to subdue it, the Macedonian character over the ages has survived.

Aided by the rough and impenetrable terrain the Macedonian village has become the bastion and saviour of the Macedonian language and culture. Invaders of cities and fertile lands rarely showed interest in villages that were poor, arid, secluded and impossible to reach. Ironically, Macedonia's ethnic strength, in numbers, lies in its villages. Anyone wishing to conduct business in Macedonia has to learn "the ways of the village" including the village language and culture. This is as true today as it was in Homer's time.

In spite of great efforts by the Greek authorities in the last century to eradicate the Macedonian consciousness in the villages, the Macedonian language and culture have survived and in time, will flourish again.

Why do people still live in virtually inhospitable places? This is human behaviour that defies logic. Those, myself included, who were born in such places, have an unexplainable "deep love" for them. In spite of all hardships we demonstrate great admiration for "our piece of rock" but provide no logical explanation for this.

My point here is that the preservation of the Macedonian language and culture over long periods of time has been due to the stubborn and unyielding nature of the Macedonian peasant whose way of life over the long years has been bound to the land by age-old traditions.

Once the threat of the invader was gone, the Macedonian language and culture seemed to percolate right back, even from virtual extinction. This has certainly been proven true through the century old Greek occupation and the five-century old Ottoman occupation. The villages managed to survive because they posed no threat and offered no great benefits to the invaders. For the invaders to influence any change in the lifestyle of the self-supporting, soil dependent peasant was simply a waste of time.

Mainstream history, outside of the exploits of the great Macedonian Empire, offers very little in terms of Macedonian prehistory. In fact, Eugene Borza, the leading expert on ancient Macedonian history, is the first to admit that the construct of Macedonian prehistory does not exist. "Anyone interested in this early period would do well to remember Geyer's comment, made nearly half a century ago, that the 'time for Macedonian prehistory has not yet come'." (Page 283, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus, The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990)

There are many historical sources, including Josef Gandeto's well-documented claims that the ancient Macedonians were non-Greeks. Unfortunately, as of yet, I don't know of anyone who has made any attempt to explain who the ancient Macedonians were and from where they came. In order to explain the origin of the ancient Macedonians, one has to widen the scope of research and not "just endlessly analyze the Greeks".

There should be no doubt in anyone's mind that the majority of today's modern Macedonians speak a variation of the Slav language, enjoy a variation of the old Slav culture and practice the Byzantine (Eastern Orthodox) religion. Also, there should be no doubt in anyone's mind that Macedonia today is a multicultural nation with unique customs and social characteristics.

The identity, origins and time of the arrival of the minorities living in Macedonia today can be easily traced back to past events. Five centuries of Ottoman occupation produced the Turkish and Albanian minority, four centuries of Roman occupation produced the Vlach minority, etc. As for the identity, origins and time of arrival of the Macedonian majority, there are no straightforward answers. Most Macedonians, including archeologists and linguists, today do not trust the politically motivated mainstream history for answers and are thus dissatisfied with its explanations.

“The study of history developed a strongly nationalistic trend in the latter half of the last (19th) century. The goal of the field was no longer to document the development of culture and history through new and improved methods, but rather to create history that would assure cultural prestige and even superiority. Uncovering historical truths was of secondary importance.

These ideological foundations remain to the present day in the minds of many scholars and even entire schools of thought and method. Most studies on history and linguistics in Central Europe have been suffused with these nationalistic attitudes, with historians guided by predetermined aims. Their primary concern has often been to maintain the belief that the Slavs are not indigenous to Central Europe. With the tragic events in the region (Yugoslavia) since 1990, the debate has become increasingly polarized, with little hope of real progress in developing a true history of Central Europe that serves no agenda.

The principle aim of this work (the book *Veneti, First Builders of European Community*) is to draw attention to the need for a new attitude and a new vision of the early history of Central Europe, and hopefully to promote unbiased research methods. It is a plea for more openness and honesty, as well as recognition of the common heritage of the peoples of Central Europe regardless of nationality, language, and religion.” (Page xi, Foreword by Professor Dr. Tareq Y. Ismael, University of Calgary Alberta, Canada, May 1996, Jozko Savli, Matej Bor, Ivan Tomazic, *Veneti, First Builders of European Community, Tracing the History and Language of Early Ancestors of Slovenes*)

Fortunately, today there is evidence emerging that promises to cast a new light on Macedonia’s past as part of a new understanding of European prehistory.

At this point I will digress for a while in order to acquaint you with some of the new discoveries that not only provide hints as to who the prehistoric Macedonians were, but also challenge mainstream history on its accuracy in presenting the identity of the first Europeans.

The following is an essay written by Anthony Ambrozic, author of several books including the “*Gordian Knot Unbound*”, “*Journey Back to the Garumna*” and “*Adieu to Brittany*”, that deals with the translation of stone inscriptions found throughout Europe and dating back to prehistory. Here is what Anthony Ambrozic has to say.

[Widely accepted since the 19th century, the Kurgan Theory of Indo-European origins has since the 1970’s come under severe attack and calls for reexamination. Its basic proposition has been that Indo-European beginnings were on the north shores of the Black Sea in what today is southern Ukraine.

From there, the Indo-Europeans, primarily shepherding nomads, were to have expanded and, in the 4th millennium BC, to have subjugated, if not exterminated, the then peaceful agricultural society of Europe. As a result, the Indo-European Kurgan culture and language were imposed on the agricultural remnants of a subjugated continent.

What had persuaded archeologists and historians to adoption of this theory for such a long time were the artifacts found in excavated Kurgans since the 19th century. A Kurgan is a circular burial mound constructed over a pit grave and containing grave vessels, weapons, bodies of horses, and a single human body. The earliest Kurgans were found to have been in use in the Russian Steppes, but in the 3rd millennium BC spread into eastern, central, and northern Europe.

Supported by evolving research into linguistic similarity among the extant Indo-European languages, excavation of these Kurgans led scholars to presuppose a common origin for the Indo-European shepherding horsemen, all speaking a mutually-understood, undifferentiated language still in the 4th millennium BC.

As a regrettable ideological adjunct, the Kurgan Theory also spawned the hybrid myth of Aryan superiority, still quite widely acclaimed and practiced with unfortunate consequences into the first half of the 20th century.

From accumulating scrutiny and new developments in the last 30 years, however, the Kurgan Theory has been subjected with every passing year to more and more stress. As a result, it has lost much of its former credibility.

The main thrusts of this discomfiture come from three sources. The chief among them is the scientific advance in the C 14 carbon-dating measuring. Not far behind are the newest findings in the field of genetics. But of major significance is the discovery in the Near East during the last 30 years of over 10,000 inscription-bearing clay tablets.

Instigated by this new information, claims of archeologist Colin Renfrew already in the decade of the 1980's seriously cast doubt on the Kurgan Theory. The gist of Renfrew's assertions is that archeology simply does not support the conclusions of conflict and suppression of the pre-Indo-Europeans in the 4th millennium BC theretofore postulated by the Kurgan Theory. By extension, therefore, the hypothesis of a common Indo-European protolanguage still having been in existence as late as the 4th millennium BC was also put in doubt.

According to Renfrew, the Indo-Europeans were only the first agriculturalists in Europe. What we are witnessing, he states, is a latter Stone-Age revolution during which farming-cattleraising succeeded in replacing the economy based on hunting and gathering. And based on the evidence of the new clay-tablet discoveries, this revolution expanded from Anatolia to western Europe. And further, what is most significant for the quest of Indo-European origins, he asserts that such expansion took place 3,000 years earlier than claimed by the Kurgan Theory.

So, what we are faced by are two fundamental departures from the Kurgan Theory. One, the Indo-European expansion into western Europe had been

peaceful and not accompanied by genocidal invasions; and two, it took place 3,000 years earlier.

Foremost in espousing the compelling force of these reasonings today is Mario Alinei. Now dean emeritus of the University of Utrecht, he is director of several linguistic reviews and president of the Advisory Council in related matters to UNESCO. As author of an 1,800-page examination of the historical aspects of the Indo-European beginnings, he concludes that Indo-Europeans have lived in Europe basically in the same territories they occupy today ever since the Stone Age. As the linchpin to his theory, Alinei deals especially with the Slavs (and specifically mentions the Slovenes) and concludes that they had since antiquity lived in the area of southeastern Europe and, further, that they had from there expanded northward and northeastward.

Arguing for an Indo-European dispersion to have taken place even a few millennia earlier than claimed by Renfrew, Alinei provides evidence for a continuity of settlement ever since then. Appropriately, his theory became known as the Theory of Continuity.

As evidence for the foregoing, Alinei reminds us that in Anatolia 4,000 years ago we already have three distinct Indo-European languages spoken by three different peoples (Hitites, Luwians, and Palaiks). And since we know that the speakers of these languages had come into Anatolia already 5,000 years ago, it is difficult to imagine that during the 4th millennium BC a common Indo-European language could still have existed. Such a hypothesis would necessitate the Indo-European to have so rapidly diffused itself into three separate languages in such a limited area in just a few centuries. This would run counter to every established linguistic observation.

The Theory of Continuity has shaken the foundation of the Kurgan Theory and exposed the sandy underpinning on which it rests. Mired with it in inextricable quicksand is the Aryan myth of an ancestral superwarrior horseman's elan vital bursting with godlike energy upon a primitive pre-Indo-European and supplanting his genes, language, and culture on all who submit and eradicating those who do not.

The Theory of Continuity is in full alignment with the recent advance in the field of genetics. According to Joseph Skulj of Toronto, genetics points to the Balkans having been a place of refuge during the Ice Age and having had a relatively undisturbed history of indigenous settlement since then.

The Theory of Continuity is also a challenge especially to the Slovenes, the inheritors of a linguistic telescope into the misty past. It is a timely prod for them to cast aside the postulates of the dated Kurgan Theory and join the quest for a new perspective.

To this end, research has been undertaken on the Old Phrygian and Early Thracian inscriptions from Anatolia and Thrace. By placing Old Phrygian and Slovene words side by side, it has been demonstrated in my book "Gordian Knot Unbound" how very little the two have departed from each other in close to 3,000 years. In half the interval allotted by the Kurgan Theory for diffusion of the bedrock Indo-European into separate languages, the Old Slovene (i.e. Old

Phrygian) has changed hardly at all. Especially in the dialectal forms, it still reverberates across 26 centuries, little altered in the speech, morphology or meaning, the syntax or sentence structure of the contemporary Slovene. It yet echoes in the diction of the Alpine redoubt of Slovenia 2,700 years after the empire of the legendary kings Midas and Gordius had crumbled under the Cimmerian onslaught.

The unyielding granite of the Slovene clinging stubbornly to its linguistic salient, buffeted through centuries by gales from the north and south, by itself is proof positive that Indo-European origins are shrouded in the recesses of a much more distant past than the 6,000 years the Kurgan Theory presumes to accord them.

In this respect, to fix a definitive focus on the Slavic perspective of the issue, a few poignant excerpts from Mario Alinei's Theory of Continuity are being quoted:

"I have to commence by clearing away one of the most absurd consequences of the traditional chronology, namely, that of the 'arrival' of the Slavs into the immense area in which they now live. The only logical conclusion can be that the southern branch of the Slavs is the oldest and that from it developed the Slavic western and eastern branches in a differing manner and perhaps at different times."

"Today only a minority of experts support the theory of a late migration for the Slavs... because none of the variant versions of such late settlement answers the question of what crucial factor could possibly have enabled the Slavs to have left their Bronze-Age firesides to become the dominant peoples of Europe. The southwestern portion of the Slavs had always bordered on the Italic people in Dalmatia, as well as in the areas of the eastern Alps and in the Po lowlands."

"The surmised 'Slavic migration' is full of inconsistencies. There is no 'northern Slavic language', it is rather only a variant of the southern Slavic... The first metallurgic cultures in the Balkans are Slavic... and connected with Anatolia... Slavic presence in the territory, nearly identical to the one occupied by them today, exists ever since the Stone Age... The Slavs have (together with the Greeks and other Balkan peoples developed agriculture... agriculturally mixed economy, typically European, which later enabled the birth of the Greek, Etruscan, and Latin urbanism. Germanic peoples adopted agriculture from the Slavs... The Balkans is one of the rare regions in which a real and true settlement of human groups coming from Anatolia is proven...]. This was a sobering analysis by Anthony Ambrozić.

I realize that I am taking you deeper and deeper into academia but I believe it is necessary in order to build a solid foundation for my arguments.

The following is an English translation of the last part of a talk given by Charles Bryant-Abram, PhD, FSO at the World Slovenian Congress at Ptuj Castle, near Maribor, Slovenia, on the 20/21 September 2001.

"But indeed I do suspect that history is about to be written, or rather rewritten. We stand on the threshold of a new world of insight into the prehistory of Europe and of the Mediterranean.

Parallel to the ongoing analysis of the Venetic inscriptions, a thorough search must be undertaken throughout the Balkan Peninsula for all extant lapidary evidence of its former presence there. Foremost - and I have called attention to this elsewhere - an investigation must be made of all inscriptions associated with the age of Philip of Macedon preceding the Hellenization of his son, Alexander, under the tutelage of Aristotle. The close collaboration of Macedonian and Greek scholars must be solicited and sustained for this effort. We are encouraged in this direction by the findings of Anton Ambrozic who has successfully demonstrated Venetic presence in the Hellenistic city, Dura-Europos, founded by one of Alexander's officers in the Syrian desert and destroyed by the Sassanids in AD 256, some 400 years before the supposed first penetration of Slavs into the Balkan Peninsula. These Venetic inscriptions from Dura-Europos lend weighty if still circumstantial evidence to my original conjecture that Alexander and his Macedonian people may very well have been Veneti. If this does prove to be the case, then the Macedonian people today will have every justifiable reason to reclaim their own linguistic patrimony." (Charles Bryant-Abram, PhD, FSO Linguistics, Medieval Castilian philology, Université de Montréal). The article in its entirety can be found at

"http://www.niagara.com/~jezovnik/anthony_ambrozic.htm" under the sub-heading "Refinement and Future Directions in Venetic Scholarship".

I included the three quotations (above) to highlight the fact that:

1. Mainstream scholars are beginning to admit that mainstream ancient European history, including that of Macedonia, is politically motivated and does not provide a realistic interpretation of past events.
2. Mainstream theories of prehistory are being challenged and are losing ground to new and revolutionary ideas backed by archeological and linguistic evidence and by science.
3. Finally, there is archeological and linguistic evidence that provide clues to the true identity of the prehistoric and ancient Macedonians.

As indicated in Ambrozic's essay (above), mainstream history is not only being challenged over the identity of the prehistoric Balkan people but also over the identity of all Indo-European nations that occupied all of Central Europe during prehistoric times. Traditional thinking is that the ancestors of the present day Germans were the first people to settle Central Europe. With archeological, scientific and linguistic evidence, however, that thinking is being challenged and is losing ground. Supported by DNA, genetic and archeological evidence, more and more scientists are convinced that the prehistoric Indo-European people of Central Europe, known by many names, were not proto-Germans but proto-Slavs. Contrary to mainstream beliefs that the Slavs migrated to the Balkans around the 6th century AD, this "new evidence" seems to lead us to the conclusion that the Slavs were always there and have always lived where they live today.

If you wish to learn more about the prehistoric identity of the Central Europeans or if you wish to study the translations of the various prehistoric

inscriptions, please consult the works of Anthony Ambrozic, Jozko Savli, Matej Bor and Ivan Tomazic (see reference section for book names).

If you wish to learn more about Vasil Ilyov's work, Macedonian artifacts, ancient inscriptions and translations please go to the "Macedonian Civilization" website <http://www.unet.com.mk/ancient-macedonians-part2/index.html>.

With the emergence of more new evidence, there will be proof that the Macedonian continuity from prehistoric times to the present has never been broken. This will vindicate the Macedonian nation and expose all Greek falsifications for what they truly are. The Macedonian people have always known where their roots lay but never had the evidence to prove it. Now for the first time there is tangible evidence that will prove, without any doubt, that the modern Macedonians are the descendants of the ancient Macedonians and that the ancient Macedonians were never Greek.

We are on the verge of an historical revolution, poised to cast away the shackles of the 19th century's politically motivated and nationalistically energized, historical mentality. For the first time we have evidence to set the record straight.

During the fall of 2002 when I was thinking about writing this chapter, I mentioned my idea to Vasil Bogov, the author of *Macedonian Revelations, Historical Documents Rock and Shatter Modern Political Ideology*. Thinking that I would be writing conventional "Classical History", his immediate reaction was to plead with me not to do it because it would promote the falsehood of classical history and further legitimize Greek claims to ancient Macedonia. To make a long story short, something that Vasil told me during that conversation stuck with me.

While doing research for his book, Vasil visited northern Italy to have a look around. On one of his guided trips, the tour guide took them on a diversion to a remote village. This was the tour guide's ancestral village where her family was still living. In typical Italian fashion, the young woman's mother came out of her house and loudly greeted the tourists in Italian. But when she spoke to her daughter, she used a different language, a language that did not seem to belong to that region. To Vasil's surprise, he understood most of the words, which to him sounded like Macedonian words from the Kostur/Lerin region. Dying to find out, Vasil immediately inquired. Expecting the family to be Macedonian, to his surprise, the young woman told Vasil that the language they spoke was an old Italian dialect that existed before the Roman period and that many remote villages still used it.

I knew Vasil well enough and trusted him not to be telling me stories, so I found myself puzzling over this "anomaly" for a long time. How could people so far back in time be speaking Macedonian? There had to be some mistake? We were led to believe that the Slavs came from north-eastern Europe during the 6th, 7th and 8th centuries AD, so what was a Slavic speaking people doing in northern Italy before 100 BC? I had never heard anything like this before. I could find no answers. In fact I could find no documentation to indicate that Slavs had ever settled northern Italy. Then, around the beginning of March 2003, after reading

Anton Skerbinc's English translation of the Slovenian texts on the Veneti, it all started to make sense.

Macedonians are not alone in their quest for the truth. Other Slavic speaking people who have been shackled and bound by the same politically motivated historical ideologies are also looking for answers. Leading the search are the Slovenes who have dared to challenge the old mindset and are now in the process of setting the record straight.

There are those who believe that the Slovenes are the closest relations and have the least disturbed links to the prehistoric Indo-Europeans. Nestled in the Alps, the Slovenes have survived many invasions and many attempts at assimilation. The Slovenes also believe, with ample evidence to prove it, that Central Europe, including Italy, were settled by the Proto-Slav Veneti long before the so-called 6th century AD Slav migrations. This agrees with independent findings in the Republic of Macedonia, which not only confirm, but reinforce the idea that the prehistoric Macedonians belonged to the same group of Slavic Veneti.

At this point, irrespective of exactly who the prehistoric Macedonians were (more on this later), there are two important facts that seem to emerge:

1. The prehistoric Macedonians were not Greek.
2. Like the modern Macedonians of today, the prehistoric Macedonians also spoke a Slavic language.

And now for the skeptics! Since I am a skeptic myself, there is no doubt that there are those who may find this a bit unbelievable.

That which was taught to us from youth and re-enforced by repeated exposure becomes familiar and comforting. Sometimes however, in view of new evidence, we must dispense with our comforts and start facing facts. I want to tell you that I carefully examined Anthony Ambrozic's translations and I must admit they are brilliantly well done. Ambrozic is a master of simplicity who uses a sound methodology to achieve his translation. I am convinced his work is genuine and I invite all skeptics to examine it for themselves. While they are at it, they should also examine the works of Vasil Ilyov, Jozko Savli, Matej Bor, Ivan Tomazic and Anton Skerbinc to judge for themselves. (See the reference section for book titles and URLs).

By the 10th century BC, there was a small group of people living in the region between present day Kostur and Lerin who identified themselves as Macedonians. The great wars of the Bronze Age had devastated the region and the Macedonians felt themselves surrounded and squeezed by the larger tribes. Large disturbances in the East caused population shifts in the region, thus pushing invaders into Macedonian lands.

It would appear that the Macedonians became a nation after the great wars when they collectively began to work together for unity and for the defense of their small kingdom. Intimidated by the constant invasions, the small group of people collectively fought to repel their neighbours whom they no longer considered kin.

Who were the Macedonians before they became a nation? Here is what conventional mainstream history has to offer. “As an ethnic question it is best avoided, since the mainly modern political overtones tend to obscure the fact that it really is not a very important issue. That they may or may not have been Greek in whole or in part-while an interesting anthropological sidelight-is really not crucial to our understanding of their history.” (Page 96, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus, The Emergence of Macedon*.) I have great respect for Eugene Borza’s work, but I do not agree with his assessment.

Current theory is that the prehistoric Macedonians came from a mixture of people that occupied the small Macedonian prehistoric kingdom. Among these people were the Pelazgian, Illyrian, Thracian, and Phrygian tribes. The people that constituted the 10th century BC Macedonians, in earlier times, belonged to the Central European family of the proto-Slav Veneti. I could not find much information about the Pelazgi beyond old sources like Herodotus who claims that they occupied parts of Macedonia and parts of the ancient City States even before the Athenians came into existence. The Pelazgi were one of the indigenous groups of people from the Indo-European era that Herodotus called barbarians who spoke a barbarian language. Later, even though some Pelazgi lived among the Athenians, they were considered by the Athenians, to be non-Athenian, a barbaric race indigenous to the region. (Herodotus: from *The History*, c. 430 BC, I.56-59). Given that they were non-Athenian speakers, and the fact that they were seen as barbarians even though some lived in Athens, it is conceivable that the Pelazgi belonged to the larger family of Indo-Europeans, the proto-Slav Veneti.

Legend has it that the first Phrygians settled geographical Macedonia a long time ago (3rd millennium BC). The Phrygians (or Bryges as they were known to the Macedonians), lived and mingled with the Macedonian people for centuries before their migrations to Anatolia. While living in Macedonia, it is believed that they established their capital at Voden (Edessa) and mixed culturally and linguistically with the local populations of the region.

By the 9th century BC, the Phrygians became a kingdom in Anatolia with its centers located at Gordium and Midas City.

“Old Phrygian comes to us from a small number of unfragmented rock inscriptions in a script which in several characters resembles those found also in the Pelazgic, Etruscan, and Venetic alphabets.

Even though the Old Phrygian and Greek alphabets share most of the letters, Old Phrygian contains half-a-dozen letter symbols not used by the Greek alphabet. It would appear, therefore, that the two alphabets drew their writing from a common source, each adapting the relevant symbols to the dictates of their phonetic needs.” (Page 23, Anthony Ambrozic, *Gordian Knot Unbound*, Toronto: Cythera Press, 2002) In his analysis, Ambrozic, without much difficulty, manages to translate Old Phrygian scripts using the same methodology employed to translate proto-Slav Venetic scripts found in present day France. “Even though the language of the Old Phrygian appears to be of a somewhat earlier cast in the Old Early Slavic mold than the Slavenetic of Gaul, there are

many words they have in common.” (Page 4, Anthony Ambrozic, Gordian Knot Unbound)

“The Greek tradition that the Phrygian migration into Anatolia in the 12th century BC having originated in Macedonia and Thrace was based on another often-encountered claim, namely, that both of their northern neighbors spoke the same language.” (Page 58, Anthony Ambrozic, Gordian Knot Unbound) In other words, according to the ancient Greeks, both the Phrygians and the Thracians spoke the same language, which today is proving to have Slavic origins.

In his conclusion of the Gordian Knot Unbound, with regards to his findings on the Phrygians, Ambrozic leaves us (in part) with the following words. “They are enough to give us insight into the ethos of their culture and the spirituality which guided it. Above all, cast in stone, the passages give us an unadulterated imprint of an Old Early Slavic spoken on the Anatolian plateau 3,200 years ago. (Page 118, Anthony Ambrozic, Gordian Knot Unbound)

The Illyrians to the west and to the north of Macedonia were a tribal people governed by tribal chieftains. It is believed that they settled the Balkan Peninsula at the end of the Bronze Age around the middle to late second millennium BC.

The Illyrians were bearers of the Hallstatt culture - a period in history that denotes the transition from bronze to iron in Central and Western Europe.

Of the many explanations I encountered regarding the origins of the Illyrian name, I found this one most interesting; that they were named Illyrians because they worshiped Iliy, their sun god. (Page 56, July 15, 2000, number 578, Macedonian magazine)

“The ancient western movement of the Slavs (Veneti) and the later eastern movement of South Slavs met on the Balkan peninsula, resulting in the development of a new Slavic language group. Did this process include borrowing from the Illyrian and Thracian? If so, can we determine the extent of these borrowings? If the ancient Illyrians and Thracians had been Latinized and Grecized, there would have been preserved in South Slavic (Macedonian) languages some of the Latin and Greek vocabulary; also, we cannot imagine that, as the Slavs advanced, both (Illyrian and Thracian) established ethnic groups collectively ran and took refuge behind the walls of the coastal (Greek) cities or disappeared in the ‘sea’ of Slavs. On the contrary, the native inhabitants remained in their places and merged with the newly-arrived Slavs. The fact that Thracian and Illyrian vocabularies are not clearly distinguishable in present South Slavic languages can be explained by the probability that Proto-Slavic as well as Thracian and Illyrian were still very close to Indo-European, which means they were related to each other.” (Page 92, Anton Skerbinc, taken from the book “Veneti, First Builders of European Community” by Jazko Savli, Matej Bor and Ivan Tomazic)

Falmerayer’s assertions seem to agree with Skerbinc’s idea, which extends the hypothesis that the Slavs were a major presence in the Greek peninsula before and after the so-called Slav migrations to the south. Falmerayer wrote his assertions about 170 years ago, unfortunately, due to Greek protests his work has never been widely publicized.

“Falmerayer’s work deals with proving that the ancient Greek races had totally vanished from the lands where they had once achieved great things. Falmerayer writes that these peoples underwent a natural extermination by consecutive waves of nomadic peoples and that, at the end of a 10-century period, what has come to be present-day Greece was inhabited by Slavs, Albanians and Greek-speaking Byzantine populations that had moved there from Asia Minor. This substantive racial repudiation has always been difficult to doubt and is becoming more and more so. Falmerayer’s fundamental adversaries, Zinkeisen, Kopitar and Paparrigopoloulos, attempt to refute him mainly by interpreting the scant historical documents available from that dark period of the Greek Middle Ages. However, they have never been capable of making a convincing response to his most crucial, most concrete argument - the almost exclusively Slavic and Albanian toponymy or place-names, especially the microtoponymy or names of uninhabited places such as fields and small places in the geographic region of Greece. To solve this problem, the Greek State developed a “science” of para-etymology. That is, it corrupted linguistic history and, to make it more effective, recruited ethnologists to change the entire main toponymy of the country. But these devices assuage only the average, parochial conscience – not that of the scholar. So official Greek ideology had to seek its last hideout in the continuity of culture, at the core of which stands the argument of the continuity of the Greek language.

According to Falmerayer, the modern Greek language is what the Byzantine administration taught its new populations through the Orthodox Church and through the transferred Greek-speaking Byzantine populations. The Orthodox Church also continued to play a hegemonic role in matters of culture during the years of Ottoman rule. However, Falmerayer has demonstrated that, in each period, Byzantine culture and the Byzantine Orthodox Church was not the continuation of ancient Greek culture – but its complete negation. In fact, this rejection was its most energetic enterprise for it meant the use of flame and sword and untold violence and coercion to uproot any surviving vestiges of ancient Greek culture on the peninsula.” (The above quotation was taken in part from Info Zora - The Rainbow/Vinozhito Newsletter December 2002/January 2003 - No.9. The article in its entirety can be found at <http://www.mhrmc.ca/reports/info9.html>)

While analyzing his discoveries, here is what Ambrozic has to say. “A tangible connection between the Old Phrygian and the Early Thracian on one side and the Pelazgic, Etruscan and Venetic on the other is established. This confluence brings into question the conventional wisdom that the source of early writing had its origins only in the Middle East. It insinuates the need for reexamining assumptions heretofore regrettably far too often taken for granted. If the Pelazgi, the ancient pre-Hellenic people, who occupied Greece before the 12th century BC, and who were said to have inhabited Thrace, Argos, Crete, and Chalcidice, had their own alphabet, it unquestionably predated the alleged import of the Greek from the Phoenician. And again to quote the Encyclopedia Britannica (Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 1, p. 624), if the Etruscan alphabet

had been the prototype for the Greek, we can not look upon the Greek as having been the precursor of either the Early Thracian nor the Old Phrygian. Both of these appear to have too many home-grown elements.

Concrete evidence for such reevaluation comes from excavations of the Vincha culture sites in the Balkans itself. The archeological site at Banjica (near Belgrade), in particular, is of significance. According to the C-14 method, its artifacts have been assessed as dating no later than 3473 BC. This makes the script found there 373 years older than the Proto-Sumarian pictographic script. (See Radivoje and Vesna Pesic, Proceedings of the First International Conference, 'The Veneti within the Ethnogenesis of the Central-European Population,' Ljubljana, 2001, p. 66)

According to Pesic, it has been the sea-faring, merchant rivermen, the Veneti, who had disseminated the Vincha script to the Etruscans as early as the end of the second millenium BC. The Veneti at the time are attested to have existed not only on the great bend of the Danube, but also in the Morava, Timok, and Vardar (69). In fact, the etymology of several toponyms in the area points directly to them. They join a host of others named after them. Invariably found along the waterway turnpikes of the ancient world, these range from as far afield as Vannes on the Atlantic to Banassac on the Lot, and Venice on the Adriatic. We find them on the lower Tisza in Banat, down the Morava to the river banks of northern Thrace, where Herodotus records them in the 5th century BC (I,196).” (Pages 85-87, Anthony Ambrozic, Gordian Knot Unbound)

We have to give Vasil Ilyov and Anthony Ambrozic a lot of credit for the fantastic works they have done in translating the many prehistoric inscriptions found in Macedonia and all over Europe. While Ilyov has concentrated in the lower Balkans, Ambrozic's work includes translations from inscriptions found in Turkey, Serbia, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Italy and France but unfortunately, not from Macedonia. By Macedonia, I mean the Greek occupied part of Macedonia. “I (Ambrozic) have been trying to find non-Greek, pre-Hellenic-Age inscriptions from Macedonia. So far, unfortunately, in vain.” (Page ii, Anthony Ambrozic, Gordian Knot Unbound) I wonder why that is?

Macedonia, the tiny tribal kingdom that exploded into a superpower in a matter of a century and swallowed up the entire known world in a couple of decades has, according to the modern Greeks, no past. In spite of thousands of prehistoric relics and tens of thousands of inscriptions found and translated in the Republic of Macedonia in the last decade, “there are no non-Hellenic prehistoric inscriptions found in Greece.” If we are to believe Greek sources, then I suppose we should also believe the Greek propaganda that the Macedonians had no alphabet, no writing ability and not even a language, and that they learned “everything” from the ancient City States. I suppose the old Macedonians “grunted” their way around before they met and learned everything from the ancient City States.

Now that evidence is piling up against them, which in time will undoubtedly expose all Greek historical fabrications, I wonder what explanations the Greeks will have for this moral misconduct? How will they explain themselves to the

world and to their own people, from whom they kept the truth and have lied to for so many years?

There is one more piece of prehistoric evidence I would like to introduce before I continue with the main presentation. It has been said that about fifty thousand years ago Europe was covered by a thick sheet of ice. It has also been said that the Balkans were one of the first places in Europe to gradually thaw out from the prehistoric freeze and to harbour the first life on the European continent. It only makes sense then, at least in the last fifty millenium, that life started from the Balkans and progressed inward into Europe as the ice sheet melted. It also makes sense then to say that the Balkans were one of the first places in Europe to be settled by humans.

Even before humans were capable of writing or communicating by using written words, they had an uncanny ability to draw. On the rocks in caves they drew symbols of everyday objects like people, animals, etc. or they drew phenomena which represented major events in their lives.

What is most interesting about these rock carvings (petroglyphs) or “rock art”, is that they are far more numerous and prevalent in Macedonia than anywhere else in the world. Macedonia seems to be a major source of rock art with over one million pieces found in just over 10% of the Macedonian territory which has been explored. Some of the pieces seem to be over 40 thousand years old and hold a myriad of carvings from fertility symbols to stars in the sky. For a long time the meaning of these symbols seemed to be a riddle for science but Dr. Dusko Aleksovski, a Macedonian scientist, unraveled their mystery.

Aleksovski published his finding in an article, which he presented at the Rock Symposium in Capo de Ponte, Northern Italy in 1977. Since then, Dr. Aleksovski has made his petroglyph presentation to Canadian and American audiences. By examining petroglyphs from the Paleolithic period through the ages, scientists were able to record the evolution of the development of the written language from simple schematic forms to symbolic shapes and finally to geometric drawings and letters we use today. If you wish to learn more about Rock Art click on <http://www.unet.com.mk/rockart/angliski/prva.htm>.

Just recently a World Rock Art Congress was held in Macedonia during which the World Rock Art Academy was launched to which Dr. Dushko Aleksovski, its founder, was elected President.

One thousand BC seems to be a crucial period in the development of the Macedonian nation. While still in its tribal stages, the Macedonian kingdom began to gain military strength and political influence in the region. Their desire to free themselves from their invading neighbours fostered unity and organization among the first Macedonians. Then, as the Phrygians began to retreat to Anatolia, a power vacuum was created which in time the Macedonian kingdom began to fill. Also, the fertile lands abandoned by the retreating Phrygians were too much for the mountain dwelling Macedonians to resist, so in time the Macedonians too began to migrate eastward and occupy those lands. It took the Macedonian people about a century to build up their populations but by the 9th century BC they made their presence felt in Central Macedonia.

It is believed that the first known Macedonian center before the eastward migrations, was Rupishcha (Argos), located about eight kilometers south of Kostur. Over the years, as the Macedonian kingdom expanded, its center was moved to a new place called Aegae located near present day Voden. "Herodotus (8.183) wrote that '[Perdicus] came to another part of Macedonia and settled near the gardens named after Midas, son of Gordias...above the garden rises the mountain called Bermion, unassailable in winter'." (Page 65, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990)

Chapter 3 - The Early Macedonian Kingdom

"Although the darker side of modern politics has cast its shadow in Macedonia and its people for decades, new light is beginning to shine in this area. Some of that incandescence derives from continuity in the past. The ancient Macedonians did not vanish, but continue to provide the world with endowments in education, religion, art, and architecture. They also provided their inheritors with ideals of world unity, religious freedom, and the invincibility of the human spirit. The brightness of the ancient Macedonians, therefore, shines into the present like the sunburst which best represents the radiance of ancient Macedonia." (Michael Dimitri)

In chapters 1 and 2 I introduced various independent discoveries relating to petroglyphs, translations of prehistoric inscriptions, translations of words from ancient texts and a number of prehistoric linguistic assessments.

In this chapter I will summarize the findings from chapters 1 and 2 and provide my own assessment. For the remainder of this chapter my main focus will be to present Macedonian events and actions, from the time of Perdiccas I to the time of Perdiccas II, which have been recorded in the annals of history.

It has been estimated that approximately fifty thousand years ago a glacier covered Europe. It is also known that the glacier's retreat began from the south and advanced northward. It is therefore safe to assume that the Balkans were the first lands in Europe to be thawed and to support life. It is also safe to assume that the first humans to resettle Europe came through the Balkans making it the oldest hospitable place in Europe since the latest ice age.

From analyzing cave drawings and rocks in Macedonia, we can deduce that the earliest petroglyphs or "rock art" came into existence about forty thousand years ago. Rock art represents the earliest and most primitive form of written communication.

It is my belief that rock art began with the drawing of stick objects depicting simple messages. Over time rock art evolved into sophisticated shapes and patterns depicting more and more complicated messages. Once the artists realized the power of their "written message" there was no stopping them. Over time pictographs evolved into symbols, not only of objects like the Egyptian hieroglyphics but also of sounds which made words. From the evidence discovered, Neolithic Macedonians, if I can call them Macedonians, may have been the inventors of the "phonetic language".

Because of the great number of petroglyphs found, scientists are becoming convinced that the first phonetic alphabet may have originated in Macedonia. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of people like Dr. Dusko Aleksovski, the Republic of Macedonia is becoming the leader in petroglyph research.

Many prehistoric inscriptions and artifacts discovered in the southern Balkans, in the past thirty years or so, were deemed to be of unknown origin. Scientists were unable to decipher them because they did not fit any of the “known” ancient or prehistoric languages. Thousands of these inscriptions have now been translated thanks to the efforts of dedicated scholars Vasil Ilyov, Anthony Ambrozic, Matej Bor and many others. What was deemed an “impossibility” for mainstream scientists proved to be a simple task for the scholars of the Slavic languages. “Even an ordinary Slovene at a simple glance can tell you what they mean”, says Anthony Ambrozic.

What is most interesting about these inscriptions, which puzzled scientists for many years, is that they are of “Slavic” origin. “No one ever thought of looking at them from a Slavic perspective because it was thought that Slavs did not exist in that region during this period.” At least that is what mainstream science claims.

Archeologists and linguists are now in the process of collecting evidence that will not only prove that prehistoric Macedonians spoke a proto-Slav language but that they have Venetic roots which originated in Macedonia.

In chapter 2 I mentioned that inscriptions of Venetic origins have been found in Dura-Europos, a city in the Syrian desert founded by Alexander the Great, or more correctly by Alexander’s lieutenant, Seleucus Nicator, of the post-Alexander Seleucid Empire.

“The Macedonians built Dura as a frontier town to control the river trade. Goods including silks, jade, spices, ebony, ivory, and precious stones were brought from the east and transferred onto camels for the desert leg of the journey, via Palmyra, to the Mediterranean.

Dura was an outpost bordering a clutch of kingdoms in unsettled times. It became an ethnic melting pot. Greeks [Macedonians], Byzantines, Persians, Christians and Diaspora Jews lived and worked side by side. In 140 BC the nomads of Parthia in the east captured the city, which was then passed backwards and forwards between the Romans and the Sassanians, another Persian people. It was the Sassanians who finally destroyed Dura Europos in AD 256, possibly because of a revolt by the inhabitants.”

(<http://pages.cthome.net/hirsch/dura.htm>)

I have seen all the Dura-Europos inscriptions and translations but for the sake of saving space, I will only show one of them. (See Appendix A) Here is what Anthony Ambrozic, the translator of the inscriptions, has to say:

“... passages were found in different places of the Roman fortress of Dura-Europos on the Euphrates River. In view of the fact that the commander of the archers makes his dedication to Mithras in the Venetic language, as can be seen in the passage that follows, it is highly likely that there are other Venetic inscriptions at this site. Further research will undoubtedly reveal them. The

passages that follow are only representative samples and by no means exhaustive.” (Page 74, Anthony Ambrozic, Adieu to Brittany, a transcription and translation of Venetic passages and toponyms)

After translating the passage here is what Ambrozic had to say. “Since scholars ascribe passage XXXXIV to 170 AD, ... we can safely conclude that the Venetic speaking presence at Dura-Europos preceded the Roman annexation of 165 AD.

Throughout the Seleucid (Macedonian) ascendancy between 300 BC and 100 BC, the position of the commander (strategos) had been the privileged preserve of the scions of the original Macedonian conquerors. Upon the annexation of the site, the Romans adhered to this practice, if for no other reason than the lack of other sources of leadership in the far-flung border zone. Accordingly, we see a descendant of the erstwhile Macedonian rulers make a dedication to his god in the still extant Venetic language of his ancestors some four-and-a-half centuries after the conquest. The survival of the language may be attributed to the closed-circle, tight-knit Macedonian plutocracy reigning over the indigenous peoples in an hegemonic desert bailiwick.

Founded by Seleucus I Nicator, one of Alexander’s Macedonian generals (whose father had been a general of Philip of Macedon’s), Dura-Europos, having languished buried mute on the banks of the Euphrates all these many centuries, now speaks to us about a people on another river, in another time, on another continent. In the fifth century BC, Herodotus (I, 196), having found them on the lower Danube, called them Enetoi (Veneti).” (Page 86, Anthony Ambrozic, Adieu to Brittany, a transcription and translation of Venetic passages and toponyms)

Coincidental to the inscription research, linguistic research has also been conducted independently on various ancient texts. Hundreds of Macedonian words of Slavic origin have been found and translated from Homer’s books. Macedonian inscriptions from Alexander’s time have also been translated and proven to contain words of Slavic origin. Thanks to the efforts of Alexander Donski, Tashko Belchev, Odisej Belchevski and others these discoveries have been brought out into the open.

Let’s not forget that there are also vast regions in southern, central and eastern Europe, including the Peloponnesus, which to this day still bear many Slav toponyms, some of which date back to prehistoric times.

On a different subject, it is my belief that a number of great wars took place in Macedonia between 1,200BC and 800BC which may have been responsible for the destruction of Macedonia’s proto-Slav civilization. Based on Bronze Age evidence, found in the many urn-filled tombs in Macedonia, these wars may also have been responsible for decimating the Macedonian population.

Independent evidence of these wars can be found in Homer’s epic stories, which places them before the 8th century BC.

I have not been able to find information about the scope and duration of these wars, however advancements in metal weapons made them lethal and devastating to Macedonians and surrounding populations.

Traumatized by the devastation, the war survivors lost their modern ways, became isolated and sank back into tribal life. Defenseless and devoid of population the small Macedonian kingdom was now vulnerable to invasions.

After the wars, the sparsely populated war-torn regions experienced population influx from neighbouring tribes. At the most southern tip of the Balkans, near the Mediterranean coast, the influx was predominantly from the Middle East. Further inland the influx was predominantly from the north and east.

It is believed that the prolonged isolation and unusual population influx caused great changes in some places in a relatively short period of time and almost none in others. The coastal people to the south, influenced by the more advanced Middle Eastern civilizations, developed a democratic political system and advanced agriculture, capable of sustaining large cities. The inlanders, on the other hand, influenced by their more primitive northern neighbours advanced very little.

I have not found any information that would show whether or not a Macedonian civilization existed before the great wars. If it did, we can say that by 800BC Macedonia was on its way back to recovery, again re-asserting herself as a major force in the region and again headed on a collision course with her neighbours. It was now only a matter of time before another great war would take place and again engulf the entire region. Fortunately, however, it would not be for another five hundred years.

Mainstream historians have attributed much to the ancient City States and almost nothing to the ancient Macedonians. The ancient City States for example were civilized, "spirited and intelligent, were able to govern themselves. But the barbarians, being 'servile by nature', or spirited but stupid, or both servile and stupid could not govern themselves." (Pages 7-8, Nicholas G. L. Hammond, *The Miracle that was Macedonia*) If that were the case shouldn't the ancient City States have won the battle at Chaeronea?

If the ancient City States were the most civilized and dominant people in ancient times as Hammond puts it, why don't they dominate the world today? Why did their superior civilization die off? It has been scientifically proven that civilized people have greater influence over uncivilized ones. Conversely, uncivilized people have very little influence over civilized ones regardless of which ones are more dominant. Egypt is an excellent example of this.

Why are there so many people in such a vast territory today speaking Slav, a derivative of the prehistoric Macedonian language if the Attic language was supposedly the most dominant language? Why is there not a single pre 1912 village in Macedonia that bears a Greek name or speaks the Greek language? If the primitive Slavs conquered and assimilated the so-called Hellenized and civilized Macedonians, why did they not adopt their more advanced language, culture and toponomy?

The answer is very simple. The Macedonians were never Hellenized and thus retained their Slav language and culture from the time of the Veneti. Recent and independent DNA and genetic studies confirm that the modern Macedonians are

one of the oldest people living in the Balkans today. To think that an intellectually inferior race would replace a superior one is not only remote but also unscientific.

There is no doubt that today's Slavic languages are literary derivatives of Slavic dialects that existed in the various regions before the Slavic States were formed. Nevertheless, in order for dialects to exist, there had to be a common root or mother language at some earlier point in time. It is impossible for dialects to form without a root language. Also, the divergence in language and the formation of dialects is directly proportional to the age of the root language. The more divergent the dialects, the older the root language. Divergence in a language can be attributed to two factors, prolonged isolation and external influence. We know that the brothers Kiril and Metodi instituted a revision of the Macedonian language during the 8th and 9th centuries AD. We also know that the brothers did not invent but rather updated the Macedonian script to properly represent the natural evolution of the spoken language. The Macedonian oral language always existed and naturally evolved. Unfortunately, due to prolonged Roman influence, the written form of the Macedonian language was neglected. The brothers updated the written part of the Macedonian language in order to take advantage of its natural evolution and keep it phonetic. This is something the English language desperately needs. With a phonetic language no one would ever need years of lessons to learn how to spell.

Unlike the Macedonian language, which was spoken by all Macedonians through the ages, the Attic language was lost to a point of extinction, only to be resurrected and artificially imposed as the "katharevusa" in the late 19th century.

During the 8th and 9th centuries AD, free from Roman oppression and positively influenced by Christianity, the Macedonian civilization flourished and again rose to its former glory. The ancient City States on the other hand, lost their ways and remained subordinate to the Byzantine (Byzantine) and later to the Ottoman up until the 19th century.

According to Mario Alinei's theory of continuity, the Slavs have always existed where they exist today. With much certainty, I can make the same claim about the Macedonians. Supported by the theory of continuity and by recent independent DNA and genetic studies, the Macedonians are one of the oldest groups of people to exist in the southern Balkans. I have to also emphasize that this negates old beliefs that the modern Macedonians migrated to the Balkans during the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries AD during the so-called Slav invasions. These politically motivated assertions are purely concoctions of 19th century Greek and Western scholars, fabricated to allow Greece to lay claim to Macedonian territory. Serbian and later Yugoslavian authorities went along with this idea for the sake of keeping the south Slav people unified under the slogan "one Slav people, one Slav nation". This, however, is not true. As it has been shown, the Macedonians are a unique nation, different from other Slav nations, and they have been this way for at least 3000 years. The Slovenians too are making similar claims in that their roots also may run back to the prehistoric Proto-Slav Veneti.

There is evidence that shows “people moving” during the 6th, 7th and 8th centuries AD but these were not invasions as described by modern scholars, but rather refugee movements. Pressure and terror tactics from the invading proto-Turk and Tartar tribes from the north pushed the indigenous people off their lands sending them deeper and deeper into the Balkans.

The fact that there are so many Macedonians today who have retained their Macedonian language and culture without institutionalized support and have endured much oppression and many attempts at assimilation by other nations, shows that they have an immense desire and great determination to remain Macedonian. What is true today was probably true three thousand years ago when the small Macedonian kingdom was re-awakening in the aftermath of the horrible wars.

It is unknown who the first tribal kings of Macedonia were and how far back their line extended. Mainstream history places the birth of Aegae (the Argead Macedonian Royal House) around the start of the 7th century BC, with Perdiccas I as its first ruler. (Page 98, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990)

Before the Macedonians expanded their territory beyond the Kostur/Lerin mountainous regions, their center was located at Rupishcha (Argos). Legend has it that the first ruler to establish the Argead house in Rupishcha was Caranus. He is believed to have been the first king to rule the Macedonian kingdom from approximately 808BC to 778BC.

(<http://www.historyofmacedonia.org/ConciseMacedonia/timeline.html>)

It is my belief that Caranus was not a ruler at all but the name of a starting point used by the Macedonians to establish the beginning of their royal lineage. We can derive a more appropriate meaning for Caranus if we strip the Latin “us” to form Caran. Now if we convert Caran to its Macedonian equivalent we have Koren. The English meaning of the Macedonian word “koren” translates to “root” or “beginning”. In other words, it is estimated that the lineage of the Argead Macedonian royal house began in approximately 800BC. Alexandar Donski has a different interpretation for Caran(us). “This name might be connected to the present day Macedonian noun ‘kruna’ (a crown). The name ‘Karanche’ is present in today’s Macedonian onomasticon.”

It took the small Macedonian kingdom about 200 years to build up its population before it was able to fully occupy the lush and fertile, abandoned Phrygian lands of Voden.

We know from Herodotus that Perdiccas and his brothers moved the Macedonian center but no date for the move was given. “Herodotus (8.183) wrote that ‘[Perdiccas] came to another part of Macedonia and settled near the gardens named after Midas, son of Gordias...above the garden rises the mountain called Bermion, unassailable in winter.’” (Page 65, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990) I believe this other part of Macedonia, to which Herodotus is referring, is located near the city of present day Voden. Being capable of living in mountainous terrain, I believe the Macedonians descended to Voden via a more direct route

over the mountains rather than following the Bistritsa River, as some historians have argued. Unconfirmed, is my belief that Aegae was established near Voden during the 7th century BC and became the second Macedonian capital. Hammond estimates that Perdiccas came to the throne in 650BC. (Page 11, Hammond, *The Miracle that was Macedonia*)

Beyond some stories about his younger days, there is little information written about Perdiccas and his accomplishments as the first king of Aegae. Translated by George Rawlinson, here is what Herodotus has to say about Perdiccas. "Three brothers, descendants of Temenus, fled from Argos to the Illyrians; their names were Gauanes, Aeropus, and Perdiccas. From Illyria they went across to Upper Macedonia, where they came to a certain town called Lebaea. There they hired themselves out to serve the king in different employes; one tended the horses; another looked after the cows; while Perdiccas, who was the youngest, took charge of the smaller cattle. In those early times poverty was not confined to the people: kings themselves were poor, and so here it was the king's wife who cooked the victuals. Now, whenever she baked the bread, she always observed that the loaf of the labouring boy Perdiccas swelled to double its natural size. So the queen, finding this never failed, spoke of it to her husband. Directly that it came to his ears, the thought struck him that it was a miracle, and boded something of no small moment. He therefore sent for the three labourers, and told them to begone out of his dominions. They answered, 'they had a right to their wages; if he would pay them what was due, they were quite willing to go.' Now it happened that the sun was shining down the chimney into the room where they were; and the king, hearing them talk of wages, lost his wits, and said, 'There are the wages which you deserve; take that- I give it you!' and pointed, as he spoke, to the sunshine. The two elder brothers, Gauanes and Aeropus, stood aghast at the reply, and did nothing; but the boy, who had a knife in his hand, made a mark with it round the sunshine on the floor of the room, and said, 'O king! we accept your payment.' Then he received the light of the sun three times into his bosom, and so went away; and his brothers went with him. When they were gone, one of those who sat by told the king what the youngest of the three had done, and hinted that he must have had some meaning in accepting the wages given. Then the king, when he heard what had happened, was angry, and sent horsemen after the youths to slay them. Now there is a river in Macedonia to which the descendants of these Argives offer sacrifice as their saviour. This stream swelled so much, as soon as the sons of Temenus were safe across, that the horsemen found it impossible to follow. So the brothers escaped into another part of Macedonia, and took up their abode near the place called 'the Gardens of Midas, son of Gordias.' In these gardens there are roses which grow of themselves, so sweet that no others can come near them, and with blossoms that have as many as sixty petals apiece. It was here, according to the Macedonians, that Silenus was made a prisoner. Above the gardens stands a mountain called Bermius, which is so cold that none can reach the top. Here the brothers made their abode; and from this place by, degrees they conquered all

Macedonia.” (From the first Book of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, ~440 BC THE HISTORY OF HERODOTUS, translated by George Rawlinson).

I will not, at this point, get into the details of the family makeup of the Macedonian Royal House because it is very vague and conjecture at best. If you wish to learn more about it consult page 31, Hammond, The Miracle that was Macedonia or page 80, Eugene Borza, In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon.

Herodotus continues “From the Perdiccas of whom we have here spoken, Alexander was descended in the following way Alexander was the son of Amyntas, Amyntas of Alcetas; the father of Alcetas was Aeropus; of Aeropus, Philip; of Philip, Argaeus; of Argaeus, Perdiccas, the first sovereign”. In other words, the known kings of Macedonia before Herodotus’s time reigned as follows: Perdiccas I, Argaeus, Philip I, Aeropus I, Alcetas, Amyntas I and Alexander I.

Again, I have not been able to find much about the Macedonian Royal lineage and the accomplishments of the reigning kings up to Alexander I’s reign (498-454).

Borza, in the beginning of chapter 5, in his book, “In the Shadow of Olympus, The Emergence of Macedon” describes the Macedonian kingdom during the reign of Amyntas I as weak, thinly populated and surviving in the absence of external threat. Amyntas’s territory of control during his reign included the central Macedonian plain and peripheral foothills, the Pierian coastal plain (Katerini) beneath Mt. Olympus, and perhaps the fertile, mountain-encircled plain of Almopia (Meglen). To the south lay the people of Thessaly and on the western mountains were the Molossians or people of western Epirus, tribes of non-Argaed Macedonians. Beyond lay the fierce Illyrians and east of the river Bistritsa lay the Paeonian and Thracian tribes.

As the Macedonian kingdom expanded and made its way to the lowlands and to the shores of the Aegean Sea, it was no longer isolated and began to enjoy the economic and cultural currents of the Aegean world as well as tangling in its politics.

After moving their capital to Aegae the Macedonians were no longer seen as tribal but rather as a monarchic kingdom. Then, just as Alexander I was about to be crowned, the Macedonian kingdom was seen as a power of influence. Unfortunately, it was still too weak to hold its own, militarily, against its powerful neighbours.

Unlike his father, Alexander I was born into a world of social turbulence and political change. With the rise of the Persian Empire and its westward movement, new conflicts were about to take place that would forever alter the balance of power in the Balkans.

In an attempt to encircle the Black Sea, Persian forces crossed over the Bosphorus Strait around 513 BC, defeated eastern Thrace, and marched westward up to the Struma basin. Victorious over the Thracians, King Darius left Megabazus, one of his commanders, in charge of his forces and returned to Persia. After making peace with the rest of the Thracian tribes, Magabazus

deported some of the captured population to Asia, presumably for slave labour, and sent envoys to Macedonia to offer the Macedonians an opportunity for a peaceful settlement. Fearing the Persian wrath, king Amyntas offered no resistance and graciously accepted the envoys. As the story goes, everything went well until the Persians demanded that Macedonian women entertain them for the night. That demand did not sit well with the Macedonians and the Persian envoys disappeared, never to be found.

Here is what Herodotus had to say. {As for Megabazus, he no sooner brought the Paeonians under, than he sent into Macedonia an embassy of Persians, choosing for the purpose the seven men of most note in all the army after himself. These persons were to go to Amyntas, and require him to give earth and water to King Darius. Now there is a very short cut from the Lake Prasias across to Macedonia. Quite close to the lake is the mine which yielded afterwards a talent of silver a day to Alexander; and from this mine you have only to cross the mountain called Dysorum to find yourself in the Macedonian territory. So the Persians sent upon this errand, when they reached the court, and were brought into the presence of Amyntas, required him to give earth and water to King Darius. And Amyntas not only gave them what they asked, but also invited them to come and feast with him; after which he made ready the board with great magnificence, and entertained the Persians in right friendly fashion. Now when the meal was over, and they were all set to the drinking, the Persians said- "Dear Macedonian, we Persians have a custom when we make a great feast to bring with us to the board our wives and concubines, and make them sit beside us. Now then, as thou hast received us so kindly, and feasted us so handsomely, and givest moreover earth and water to King Darius, do also after our custom in this matter." Then Amyntas answered- "O, Persians! We have no such custom as this; but with us men and women are kept apart. Nevertheless, since you, who are our lords, wish it, this also shall be granted to you." When Amyntas had thus spoken, he bade some go and fetch the women. And the women came at his call and took their seats in a row over against the Persians. Then, when the Persians saw that the women were fair and comely, they spoke again to Amyntas and said, that "what had been done was not wise; for it had been better for the women not to have come at all, than to come in this way, and not sit by their sides, but remain over against them, the torment of their eyes." So Amyntas was forced to bid the women sit side by side with the Persians. The women did as he ordered; and then the Persians, who had drunk more than they ought, began to put their hands on them, and one even tried to give the woman next him a kiss. King Amyntas saw, but he kept silence, although sorely grieved, for he greatly feared the power of the Persians. Alexander, however, Amyntas' son, who was likewise there and witnessed the whole, being a young man and unacquainted with suffering, could not any longer restrain himself. He therefore, full of wrath, spake thus to Amyntas:- "Dear father, thou art old and shouldst spare thyself. Rise up from table and go take thy rest; do not stay out the drinking. I will remain with the guests and give them all that is fitting." Amyntas, who guessed that Alexander would play some wild prank, made answer:- "Dear son, thy words sound to me

as those of one who is well nigh on fire, and I perceive thou sendest me away that thou mayest do some wild deed. I beseech thee make no commotion about these men, lest thou bring us all to ruin, but bear to look calmly on what they do. For myself, I will e'en withdraw as thou biddest me." Amyntas, when he had thus besought his son, went out; and Alexander said to the Persians, "Look on these ladies as your own, dear strangers, all or any of them- only tell us your wishes. But now, as the evening wears, and I see you have all had wine enough, let them, if you please, retire, and when they have bathed they shall come back again." To this the Persians agreed, and Alexander, having got the women away, sent them off to the harem, and made ready in their room an equal number of beardless youths, whom he dressed in the garments of the women, and then, arming them with daggers, brought them in to the Persians, saying as he introduced them, "Methinks, dear Persians, that your entertainment has fallen short in nothing. We have set before you all that we had ourselves in store, and all that we could anywhere find to give you- and now, to crown the whole, we make over to you our sisters and our mothers, that you may perceive yourselves to be entirely honoured by us, even as you deserve to be- and also that you may take back word to the king who sent you here, that there was one man, the satrap of Macedonia, by whom you were both feasted and lodged handsomely." So speaking, Alexander set by the side of each Persian one of those whom he had called Macedonian women, but who were in truth men. And these men, when the Persians began to be rude, despatched them with their daggers. So the ambassadors perished by this death, both they and also their followers. For the Persians had brought a great train with them, carriages, and attendants, and baggage of every kind- all of which disappeared at the same time as the men themselves. Not very long afterwards the Persians made strict search for their lost embassy; but Alexander, with much wisdom, hushed up the business, bribing those sent on the errand, partly with money, and partly with the gift of his own sister Gygaea, whom he gave in marriage to Bubares, a Persian, the chief leader of the expedition which came in search of the lost men. Thus the death of these Persians was hushed up, and no more was said of it.} (From the first Book of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, ~440 BC THE HISTORY OF HERODOTUS, translated by George Rawlinson).

Borza does not quite agree with Herodotus's story but does agree that Gygaea's marriage to Burbares was real. Borza believes that it was Amyntas, not Alexander, who arranged the marriage as part of negotiating the Macedonian-Persian alliance. (Page 102-103, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990)

Outside of the tall tales surrounding Alexander, I couldn't find any more information about Amyntas's reign. It is believed that Amyntas died in 498 or 497 BC and was succeeded by Alexander I the same year.

Life in Macedonia was relatively peaceful until 492 BC when a Persian expeditionary force, under the command of Mardonius, crossed over into Europe with orders to attack Athens. But before marching into Athens and with total disregard for the Macedonian-Persian alliance, Mardonius decided to attack local

towns, captured Thracian and Macedonian civilians and made them slaves. The Persian action provoked the local people and prompted a counter attack. The Persian fleet was attacked and sunk by the Bryges (Phrygians) of Thrace as it attempted to navigate around Athos (Sv. Gora). Weakened by the attack, Mardonius could not fulfill his mission so he returned to Persia. Seeing his people enslaved by an ally did not sit well with Alexander.

The loss of the Persian fleet in 492 BC was only a minor setback for the Persian plans. The next scene to be played out would be two years later on the Athenian plains of Marathon.

With the accession of Xerxes to the throne in 486 BC, an enormous Persian force was prepared and led into Europe in 480 BC. The force was allowed to pass through Macedonia unchallenged.

As a Persian envoy, Alexander's diplomatic skills were tested in the winter of 480/479 BC, when the Persian commander Mardonius dispatched him to Athens to negotiate an Athenian surrender. In spite of his accomplished skills, no peaceful settlement could be reached and war broke out. The Macedonians fought on the Persian side against the Athenians. Although there is no reason given for his motives, Alexander seemed helpful to the Athenians. Some say that he was a double agent and played both sides against each other. There is evidence, however, that suggests that Alexander warned the Athenians of Persian plans on several occasions.

The Persian invasion of Athens proved unsuccessful. After Mardonius's death the invasion collapsed and the Persian expeditionary force abandoned its plans and made a hasty retreat back to Persia. With the Persians gone, Alexander was left with a couple of problems. On the one hand, he was facing the powerful Athenians to whom he had to answer for his involvement with the Persians. On the other hand, the Persian devastation in Thrace weakened the Thracian strongholds and made them easy prey for adventurers. The Thracian lands, rich in mineral deposits, were very valuable and attractive to possess.

From what Herodotus tells us, Alexander played his part convincingly well with the Athenians. He was quick to point out the great deeds he did for them and the good will he had towards all City States. His pleading must have worked because the Athenians brought him no harm and most importantly, they continued to purchase lumber from his kingdom.

As for the eastward expansion, the Macedonians were not the only ones with desires to possess the mineral rich Thracian lands. After the Persians withdrew, Alexander's neighbours to the south also made it clear that they too wanted a piece of the action. But Alexander was first to make his move and occupied the abandoned Crestonian territory, the hilly region between the Vardar plain and the Strumitsa valley. The Thracians, who disliked the Persians, chose to abandon their homes rather than submit to Persian rule, leaving their land unprotected. With the newly acquired territory came the rich Dysoron silver mines that would yield much needed silver for the Macedonian mint.

Athens, unfortunately, was not pleased with Alexander's move. In 476 BC an Athenian expedition was sent to seize the lower Strumitsa valley, an area that

was once a vital Persian supply base. After defeating and expelling the remnant Persians and local Thracians, Athens settled the area with some 10,000 Athenians. This was indeed troublesome for Alexander and by 460 BC conflict between Macedonia and Athens was imminent. It appears that the Athenians were preparing to invade Macedonia. But before they got their chance, rebellious Thracians, who did not appreciate Athenian presence on their lands, especially the settlers, attacked them and annihilated their armies. This latest encounter not only saved Macedonia but also indirectly created a new Thracian-Macedonian alliance. As for the Athenians, for the next ten years or so they redirected their interests to the south and west leaving Macedonia and Thrace alone.

Herodotus seems to be silent about the last years of Alexander's reign, perhaps nothing happened which was of significance or worthy of reporting. It is believed that Alexander I died of old age in 454 BC, at age 80.

Alexander's reign lasted 43 years from 497 to 454 BC. Alexander fathered at least six children. Three were male and legitimate heirs to the Macedonian throne but it was his son Perdiccas who rose above all and became ruler and king.

What began as Athenian interests in the Aegean coastline to protect the Balkans from Persian invasions, over time, turned into an Athenian empire. By late 450 BC, Athens was exploiting the region for her own economic and military interests.

Coincidental with Alexander's death, Athens resumed her interests in the north and began to import more settlers. Her plans were to settle the northern and eastern coasts of the Thermaic Gulf near the Vardar-Galik delta. This was indeed a bold move but her crowning achievement did not materialize until the establishment of Amphipolis in 437 BC. I could not find any information about the Macedonian reaction to this but I am certain that Perdiccas was not too happy. It is unknown whether Perdiccas was a friend of Athens before this, but now for certain he had become an enemy. To make matters worse, Athens started an anti-Perdiccas campaign by openly supporting his enemies, including the rebellious factions within his own family. The stakes for Macedonia were high. Athens was a powerful empire, too powerful to challenge militarily. Also, she was a good customer of Macedonia's timber and pitch, which Perdiccas could not afford to lose. If he did nothing Perdiccas could risk losing the Dysoron mines, something he could not afford to do either. Athens, on the other hand, could profit from gaining the mines and could set up her own lumber industry on Macedonian land if Perdiccas did nothing to stop her.

As it turned out Athens had no intention of starting a war with Macedonia. Instead she believed that by supporting rebellious factions within the Argead house she could keep Perdiccas busy at home, too busy to notice Athenian incursions into the Struma basin where she was hoping to set up her own timber industry. Because of this Athenian treachery, Perdiccas faced two decades of rebellions and unrest. Too weak to do anything, he allowed the Athenians to further settle the region uninterrupted.

“By 432 BC Perdiccas and Athens were at odds, and their hostility produced the opening northern volleys of the Peloponnesian war. To counter an Athenian policy directed against his throne, Perdiccas, sensitive to events building in Greece, attempted to start a general war by involving Athens in hostilities against the Peloponnesians, Sparta in particular. He encouraged the Corinthians to support a revolt of their loyal Chalcidic colony at Potidaea, which had been tributary to Athens since at least 446/5, and he stirred up rebellion against Athens among the Chalcidians and Bottiaecans. It was an aggressive foreign policy, and one wonders how Perdiccas hoped to support it with force.” (Page 141-142, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990)

Predictably, the Athenian reaction was quick and decisive. In early summer of 432 BC, Athens sent a strike force to attack Perdiccas and quell the uprising. When they arrived, the Athenians realized that their force was too weak to do the job. They remembered what had happened to them the last time they clashed with the Thracians. Prudently, no engagement took place.

The Athenian commander sent for reinforcements and when they did arrive, they joined with the Macedonian rebels hoping to cut off Perdiccas from Chalcidice. Knowing he could not successfully engage them, Perdiccas convinced his allies to abandon their defenses and flee to the mountains. Even in the safety of the mountains the Macedonia-Chalcidice coalition was still no match for the reinforced Athenian army, but as luck would have it, time was on their side.

Concerned for their own interests, the Corinthians intervened by sending an army to counter Athens. In view of this counter-check, Athens abandoned her plans and instead of attacking Perdiccas, she turned to him for assistance. But this was another treacherous Athenian ploy to break up the Macedonian-Thracian alliance. In the end, Athens did prevail, but just barely.

Athens then turned her attention to suppressing the rebellions in Chalcidice and left the Macedonian king alone. The uneasy peace unfortunately had its price. Perdiccas was forced to abandon his allies and withdraw his support from Chalcidice. For his cooperation and for his promise to protect Athenian interests in the north, Athens returned the occupied lands at Therme and withdrew her support from the rebellious factions in Perdiccas's family.

This uneasy relationship between Macedonia and Athens didn't last too long. In 429 BC, Athens was again preparing to invade Macedonia, this time with Thracian help. At the same time Athens was squeezing Perdiccas for concessions, she was befriendng the Thracian tribal chiefs with handsome tributes and gifts. Athens planned to have the Thracians attack Macedonia from the north while her fleet attacked from the south. The Thracians did as expected and emerged from behind the Rhodopi mountains, invaded Macedonia, and moved into the lower Vardar valley. Outnumbered, the Macedonians fled up the mountains and regrouped in their traditional strongholds. Borza believes that this latest Athenian change of heart towards Macedonia was provoked by Perdiccas's secret dealings with Athens enemies, the Peloponnesians. (Page 146-147,

Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990)

This time Athens was determined to destroy Macedonia and rid herself of those meddlesome Argeads once and for all, but circumstances would rob her of this victory as well.

While the Thracians were advancing on Aegae, a sizable cavalry force from western Macedonia arrived just in time to repel them. The force was not strong enough to subdue the Thracians, but it was intimidating enough to stop their advance. Even though no engagement took place, the Thracian attack was averted.

Problems at home prevented Athens from sending the fleet so the attack from the south never materialized.

With the Thracians roaming the Macedonian lowlands, Perdiccas knew there would be no easy solution so he turned to diplomacy and offered the Thracians a peaceful way out. To show that he was sincere, he offered the marriage of his own sister Stratonice to the nephew of one of the Thracian chiefs.

Perdiccas's problems unfortunately, were not over. A new threat was beginning to surface, this time from within Macedonia. I couldn't find any information detailing the problem but in 424 BC, king Arrhabaeus of Lyncestia (Bitola/Ohrid region) became hostile to Perdiccas.

Unable to quell him on his own, Perdiccas turned to the Spartans who themselves were desperately looking for allies in the north. By acquiring the assistance of a Thessalian friend, Perdiccas was able to provide passage for 1,700 Spartan hoplites through Thessaly. When Athens got wind of this, she immediately reacted by breaking relations with Macedonia and sent reinforcements to her colonies in Chalcidice. Still desperate to make allies, when the Spartans arrived in Lyncestia, instead of attacking Arrhabaeus as they had agreed with Perdiccas, they asked him to become a Peloponnesian ally. Given the choice between fighting the Spartans or joining them, Arrhabaeus chose the latter and agreed to finance part of the Spartan campaign. Arrhabaeus was spared for now but Perdiccas was unhappy with the outcome.

Loose on the northern frontiers, the Spartans wreaked havoc on the Athenian towns and outposts. As a result of these encounters, Athens, in the future, would be re-considering policies regarding venturing to the north.

Unhappy with the Spartan outcome, Perdiccas turned to the Illyrians who were more than happy to subdue Arrhabaeus. After arriving in Lyncestia however, the Illyrians had a change of heart. Instead of attacking Arrhabaeus, they decided to join him and attack Perdiccas instead. When Perdiccas's army got wind of this they broke ranks and fled to the mountains in panic.

Perdiccas was now in serious trouble. Besides the Athenians, Perdiccas now had three more enemies closing in on his kingdom, Arrhabaeus from the north, the Spartans from the south and the fierce Illyrian fighters on the loose. What was Perdiccas to do?

Chapter 4 - Rise of the Macedonian Empire

Perdiccas considered his situation carefully and decided to go to the Athenians for help. He was certain that Athens would welcome his alliance just to counter the meddlesome Spartans. Sure enough, the Athenian generals in Chalcidice accepted Perdiccas's offer but not without conditions. To secure an alliance, Perdiccas had to provide Athens exclusive rights to his timber industry and join her in fighting the Peloponnesians. Perdiccas hesitantly accepted and honoured the agreements.

As for Arrhabaeus, Athens offered him a friendship agreement and a chance to reconcile his differences with Perdiccas. The Spartans on the other hand, after losing financial backing from Perdiccas and Arrhabaeus, scaled down their campaigns. Additionally, Perdiccas used his influence and persuaded Thessaly not to allow any more Spartan reinforcements to pass through.

The deal Perdiccas received from Athens may seem skewed in Athens favour, but it had its advantages for the Macedonian king. Athenian presence maintained peace and stability in the region and with the loss of Amphipolis, Macedonia became the main supplier of timber for the large Athenian market. I couldn't find any information as to what happened to the Illyrian mercenaries, but I am certain that after losing Arrhabaeus's support, they went back to Illyria.

All through the first phase of the Peloponnesian war, Perdiccas kept his alliance with Athens and tried not to become embroiled in Athenian affairs. But in 421 BC Athens reached a peace agreement with the Peloponnesians and regained control of parts of her northern empire. Although the Peloponnesians sanctioned the agreement, the Chalcidicians, who preferred autonomy to occupation, did not. Refusal of the agreement brought the war back and the region was again engulfed in hostilities. The war lasted until Amphipolis gained her independence. Perdiccas, meanwhile, managed to stay aloof and avoided becoming involved in the conflict.

With peace in place, Athenian power was again on the rise, which troubled the Macedonians. But Perdiccas was not the only one troubled. Sensing Athenian assertiveness in the north, Sparta, in 418 BC, attempted to counter Athens by recruiting Perdiccas into a Macedonian-Peloponnesian alliance. Athens, on the other hand, had hoped for an Athenian- Macedonian alliance. The prospect of losing Perdiccas, especially to the enemy, infuriated the Athenians. Athens was counting on Macedonian help to aid her fleet in challenging the Chalcidice coalition.

In view of the Spartan offer, Perdiccas considered his options carefully and decided to join the Peloponnesian alliance. As punishment, in the winter of 417 BC, Athens blockaded the southern Macedonian coast and stopped all shipments of lumber. The blockade didn't hurt Macedonia as much as it did Athens, so in 414 BC a new arrangement was reached and Macedonia and Athens once again became allies.

Perdiccas died a year later and was succeeded by his son Archelaus in 413 BC. Archelaus's reign, which lasted approximately fourteen years from 413 BC

to 399 BC, was a little more stable than that of his father. Unlike his father, Archelaus remained loyal to Athens, which gave him a firm market for his timber industry and the security he needed to take care of business at home. Archelaus maintained his father's policy with regard to the Lyncestians and Illyrians along the western frontier and managed to keep them at bay. Along the eastern frontier, the absence of Athenian influence and the decline of Thracian power granted Archelaus an opportunity to gain control of Basaltia and its valuable mines.

Due to political and social changes in Thessaly, Archelaus was given the opportunity to intervene on behalf of the ruling faction for which he was awarded Larissan citizenship and the lands of Perrhaebia, an important strategic location to the west of Olympus which connects Macedonia to Thessaly.

As for internal changes, Archelaus made improvements to roads, built fortresses in the countryside, fortified entry points into Macedonia and modernized his army. But most importantly, Archelaus is credited for moving the Macedonian principal city from Aegae to Pella. Aegae still remained a royal city but Pella became a royal residence for Archelaus and an administrative and military centre for his kingdom.

The main reason for making Pella the principle city was its strategic location within the Macedonian kingdom. "The largest of the Macedonian towns in classical times, Pella, was constructed on a low plateau where Mt. Paiko merges with the marshland of the central plain, and where the route of the Via Egnatia hugged the northern edge of the swamps. Pella might have been (or had) a seaport, as the head of the Thermaic Gulf extended some distance into the plain in those days. Pella's strategic position lying across the main east-west route near the west bank of the Axios (Vardar) gave it an importance surpassed only by Salonica (Solun) at a later time." (Pages 41-42, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990)

Archelaus chose Pella to be his principle city because it gave him easy access to the many waterways which would provide him passage to a wider area than just the central Macedonian plain. Pella was built by design, laid out on a grid plan using blocks approximately 100 meters by 50 meters. Archeological excavations of the site have revealed "a series of elaborate private houses, in which were discovered the well-wrought floor mosaics... These large pebble mosaics, which formed the floors of rooms and passageways of Pella's villas, depict a variety of scenes, including Dionysus riding a panther, a lion hunt, an Amazonomachy, and a magnificent stag hunt..." (Page 170, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990)

The move to Pella was the first step on the road to greatness for Macedonia. Pella was becoming an impressive Macedonian political, military and cultural showcase, which in time would become the birthplace of Alexander III, the greatest conqueror that ever lived to earn the title "Great".

I would like to mention at this point that Archelaus is also credited with establishing the uniquely Macedonian Olympic festival that took place at Dion in honour of Zeus and the muses. Dion was an important place where Macedonians

participated in their own Olympic games, dramatic contests and celebrated many of their religious rites.

Archelaus was accidentally shot during a hunt in 399 BC and died of his wounds. His premature death cast the Argaed house into chaos for almost six years after which Amyntas III surfaced as the leading figure who would rule Macedonia next. Amyntas III was the great grandson of Alexander I.

The shakeup of the Macedonian kingdom due to the early and unexpected departure of Archelaus, was a signal for Macedonia's enemies to make their move. Just barely on the throne in 394 BC, Amyntas found himself at odds with the Illyrians. Ever since the incident between Perdiccas II and Arrhabeus of Lyncestia, Illyrian-Macedonian animosities had been on the rise. The situation climaxed in 394/93 BC when a powerful Illyrian force attacked and invaded Macedonia, driving Amyntas off his throne and out of his kingdom. Only with a great deal of diplomacy, land concessions and Thessalian help did Amyntas appease the Illyrians, allowing him to regain his throne. As it turned out, the Illyrians raided Macedonia for her booty not political gain, which was common practice in those days.

Amyntas was lucky this time but his enemies were too numerous to allow chance to guide his fate so he worked hard to establish an alliance with his immediate neighbours to the southeast, the Chalcidic cities. The treaty, signed in desperation, seemed one-sided favouring the Chalcidic cities. It was, however, necessary for Amyntas, if Macedonia were to survive. Free to help themselves to Macedonian timber and pitch, the Chalcidic cities grew wealthy and powerful with each passing year. Feeling uncomfortable by this unfair alliance and by the steady buildup of Illyrian power, Amyntas was not happy with the Chalcidians and felt compelled to seek new allies.

In 386 BC, he made his move and through his adopted son, who was married to the daughter of a prominent Thracian chief, Amyntas established contact with the Thracians. Sensing the Macedonian-Thracian alliance, the Illyrians bypassed Macedonia and made their move against Epirus. In 385 BC the Illyrians attacked Epirus, unaware that they would provoke a Spartan counterattack. Sparta was quick to react and invaded the region. This bold move became worrisome not only to the Macedonians but also to the Thessalians who soon would become willing partners to a Macedonian-Thessalian league.

Having secured his western boundaries, Amyntas now turned his attention to the greedy Chalcidic cities. Having greatly benefited from this unfair alliance, the Chalcidites were not enthusiastic about breaking it off. When Amyntas turned to the Spartans for help he found them to be willing partners. An allied Spartan force, under Spartan leadership, was dispatched from Sparta and arrived in the vicinity in the spring of 382 BC. With some Macedonian and Thracian assistance, the Spartans attacked the Chalcidic League but were unable to subdue it. The Spartan commander called for reinforcements and in 381 BC the attack was renewed and by 379 BC the Chalcidic League was dissolved.

Athens and her allies did not approve of the Spartan presence in Chalcidice, so within a year or so a new and more powerful anti-Spartan alliance was

formed. Being clever enough not to be caught on the losing side, Amyntas slowly withdrew from the Spartan alliance and began to draw closer to Athens. The new relationship not only strengthened Macedonian security but also brought back an old and dependable timber and pitch customer. Unfortunately, there was never a “good” relationship with the “southern neighbours” without a catch. Soon after establishing ties with Macedonia, Athens demanded that Amyntas support her claims for control of Amphipolis. This called for a total reversal on the long-standing Macedonian position, which had always been in support of an independent Amphipolis. Giving Athens control of Amphipolis was a disaster waiting to happen for Macedonia’s economic and political interests.

Having left his kingdom’s affairs unsettled, Amyntas III died in 370 BC (perhaps assassinated by his former wife?) leaving his throne to his eldest son Alexander II. “The decade of the 360s plunged the kingdom of Macedon into a new dynastic crisis, intensified by continuing external threats. Early in his reign, Alexander was forced to buy off the Illyrians, although it is problematic whether he also gave his younger brother, Philip (the future Philip II), over as a hostage.” (Page 189, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990)

Hammond believes that Philip was an Illyrian hostage before he was turned over to the Thebans. Borza, however, believes that the chronology of events does not support this occurrence.

The new Illyrian campaign against Macedonia did not start until after the winter of 370/69 BC. “Within a year (368, by Hammond’s own chronology) Philip had been shipped off as a hostage to Thebes. It seems unlikely that Prince Philip would have been shunted around so (what prompted the Illyrians to give him up?), the chronology is too tight, and our best sources for Philip, Diodorus, gives mixed signals to the matter of an Illyrian hostageship. Griffith (HM 2: 204 n. 5) also has some doubts about Philip in Illyris.” (Page n 189, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990)

Young Alexander did not have enough experience to maintain a strong and stable kingdom or to secure any permanent alliances. He was given a chance in Thessaly but he couldn’t make it work.

Experiencing internal problems, the feuding royal families of Thessaly turned to Macedonia for help. Alexander intervened, occupied Larissa and restored one of his former allies to the throne. This, unfortunately, disappointed another ally to whom Alexander had also promised the throne. While unable to secure peace by diplomacy, Alexander continued to occupy Thessaly by force. Discontent with Alexander’s inability to resolve the impasse, the faction in power abandoned Alexander and turned to the Thebans for help. The Thebans accepted without hesitation and brought a force to drive Alexander out. Unable to resist, Alexander withdrew from all Thessalian territory.

Dissatisfied with his inability to rule and especially with the way he handled the Thessalians, Alexander’s position as ruler was challenged at home by Ptolemy. Being unable to resolve the challenge, Alexander agreed to bring in an

outside arbitrator. At Ptolemy's request, the arbitrator chosen was a Theban commander, the same Theban commander who drove Alexander out of Larissa.

The dispute was eventually resolved in Alexander's favour but not without a price. To ensure Alexander would not take action against his rivals or renew activities in Thessaly, prominent members of his family, including his younger brother Philip II, were taken to Thebes to be held hostage. Philip at the time was only thirteen years old.

Even though he was secure back on his throne, Alexander's problems unfortunately were not yet over. He was assassinated while taking part in a festival. Ptolemy of course was suspected since he had the most to gain. Alexander II died in the spring of 367 BC and the rule of Macedonia was passed on to Ptolemy.

A woman named Eurydice, it is believed, was allegedly involved in plotting Alexander's assassination. During the investigation it was noted that before Alexander's death, Ptolemy and Eurydice closely collaborated and may have planned Alexander's deposition. When that failed, they conspired to have him assassinated.

Just to give you an idea of who this woman was, her mother was the daughter of the Lyncestian king Arrhabeus and her father was Sirthas, an Illyrian tribal chief. Eurydice was the wife of Amyntas III from an arranged marriage. Her relationship to Ptolemy is unknown (perhaps a lover?) but she was instrumental in his rise to power. Eurydice's deeds, even though disreputable, have been etched in the history of the Macedonian royal court as the acts of a strong willed woman who wished to rule.

It goes to show that unlike their neighbours to the south, the Macedonians showed respect and admiration for their women both as leaders and as equals. In fact the Macedonians were vastly different from those to the south when it came to customs, culture and mannerisms. "The Macedonians were a thoroughly healthy people, trained not by Greek athletics, but, like the Romans, by military service. But alongside much that was good, they had many rougher habits, ... which tended to make them appear as barbarians in Greek eyes. The dislike was reciprocal, for the Macedonians had grown into a proud masterful nation, which with highly developed national consciousness looked down upon the Hellenes with contempt." (Page 26, Ulrich Wilcken, Alexander the Great)

Alexander's death seemed like an easy victory for Ptolemy but in actual fact it was not. Ptolemy's relations with Eurydice, a known troublemaker and a suspect in the plotting of her own husband's assassination, landed him in hot water. Even though Ptolemy was a legitimate heir to the throne, the way he achieved his appointment upset many Macedonians. New challengers rose to the task and for the next three years the kingdom was in turmoil.

One of the more serious challengers was an exiled Macedonian named Pausanias. He put together a small army and occupied parts of central Macedonia. Unable to drive him out, Ptolemy and Eurydice called on Athens for support. Eager to regain influence in the north and hoping to regain access to

Amphipolis, Athens accepted the challenge and helped Ptolemy drive Pausanias out of Macedonia.

Another challenge came from a faction loyal to the dead Alexander who called on the Thebans for support. Losing no time, the powerful Thebans invaded Macedonia and forced Ptolemy into an undesirable alliance imposing more conditions on his kingdom and taking more hostages. One good thing that came out of this alliance was the breakup of Macedonian relations with Athens, putting an end to Athenian ambitions in Amphipolis and the north.

Ptolemy died in 365 BC, probably assassinated by Perdikkas, Amyntas III's second son who became the next ruler of Macedonia. Soon after Perdikkas III was installed ruler of Macedonia, he brought back his younger brother Philip from Thebes. Philip was sixteen years old at the time.

Since the Spartan defeat in 371 BC, Theban power was on the rise and by 365 BC it was formidable enough to challenge the Athenian navy at sea. Being a Theban ally under these conditions had its advantages. In exchange for Macedonian timber, Thebes was willing to provide long-term guarantees of security for Macedonia as well as protection of her frontier interests, especially against Athenian interference in Amphipolis.

Athens, however, wasn't at all phased by this Theban generosity and had some plans of her own. When a formidable Athenian naval force made its presence in the Thermaic Gulf and began to seize Macedonian ports and threaten the sovereignty of Macedonia, Perdikkas quickly gave in to the Athenian will. When informed that Thebes was about to attack the Athenian fleet, Perdikkas reconsidered and withdrew his support for Athens. Furthermore he reverted back to opposing Athenian desires for Amphipolis. The expected Theban naval attack unfortunately never materialized but that didn't stop Perdikkas from continuing to oppose the Athenians anyway.

Just as the war started to stabilize in the southern frontier, a serious Illyrian attack materialized from the north drawing Perdikkas's army into a second conflict. With his forces divided Perdikkas bore the full brunt of two fronts. His army, well trained and equipped, could have met the challenge. Unfortunately, Perdikkas's luck ran out and he was killed in one of the battles. Perdikkas III died in 360 BC defending his homeland. Like his father before him he left his kingdom in disarray. It was now up to his younger brother Philip to make things right.

Philip II replaced his brother Perdikkas III as ruler of Macedonia in 360 BC. Philip was well aware that in order for Macedonia to achieve peace and economic prosperity she needed to free herself from outside interference and from the constant bickering and infighting. Philip was also aware that this was only possible through a strong defense.

It is my belief that historians misunderstood Philip II. Given the weakness of his kingdom and his experience in a world of turmoil, Philip's only desire was for the security of his kingdom. By his actions and not by the words of others, we can see that Philip's early ambitions were not of conquest but of defense. His idea of achieving security and peace was through building a protective zone or

buffer all around his kingdom. What made Philip truly great was the fact that he achieved this economically, in a relatively short period of time.

By his actions alone one can see that Philip had no ambition to “unite” the City States but rather to extinguish their desire to interfere in his affairs. Philip knew that by destroying his enemy’s ability to wage war, his enemy would no longer be a threat to him.

From what the ancient authors (Diodorus Liculus) tell us, Philip was no ordinary man. When he was taken hostage to Thebes he was only thirteen years old and yet at that young age he was more interested in the affairs of the Theban government and military than playing with his peers. At age fourteen, Philip studied the equipment and tactics of the Theban army including those of the elite Sacred Band. At age eighteen, in 364 BC, he was given a force of Macedonians to command.

After Perdiccas’s death, Philip was recalled to the Macedonian court where he was given the position of leader of the military. “Philip knew the Macedonians as soldiers and they knew him, when they elected him not as king (that office having been given to Amyntas IV, the infant son of Perdiccas) but as guardian and deputy of the king as commander-in-chief.” (Page 58, Nikolai G.L. Hammond, *The Miracle that was Macedonia*)

There is some disagreement between Hammond and Borza with regard to Philip’s appointment. Borza (and others) believe that Philip may have been appointed king, not guardian of Amyntas.

In any case, it was Philip who took over the reign from Perdiccas and who prepared his army to defend his kingdom. With the Illyrians, Paeonians, Thracians and Athenians poised to invade, no one would have predicted what was going to happen. But as Diodorus tells us, Philip dealt with all issues directly. Philip’s first act as ruler was to buy off the Paeonians and Thracians. To deal with the Athenians, however, Philip had to learn to use his famous diplomatic charm. Athens had a long-standing ambition to possess Amphipolis; her motives were made very clear. By reassuring that he would not interfere in her affairs, Philip bought himself some time to continue reorganizing his military and building his power base.

After some success in his reorganization, Philip got the chance to test his troops in action. During the spring of 358 BC the Paeonian king died and an opportunity to secure the northern frontier presented itself. A short campaign gave Philip a decisive victory and a secure northern frontier.

The invading Illyrians were next on his list as he approached them with a warning to vacate western Macedonia or else. Perched atop the western mountains of Lynceus, the fierce Illyrians were confident they could hold their own and ignored Philip’s warnings. In fact they were so confident of a victory that they made Philip a counteroffer “peace for status quo”. Philip was not amused and a battle ensued. Equally matched, the Macedonians fought bravely and decimated the Illyrian army giving Philip another victory. “The antagonists were equally matched, each side fielding about 10,000 foot, with the Macedonians maintaining a slight edge in cavalry, 600 to 500. More than 7,000

Illyrians lay dead on the field, according to our source, Diodorus.” (Page 202, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990)

Was this overwhelming victory a result of Philip’s superior military training, his tactics, or simply Illyrian overconfidence? In my estimation, at this point in time, it was a combination of all three. This victory against a feared opponent not only saved Macedonia but also gave Philip and his military the needed confidence to take on more formidable foes.

Philip wasted no time and began his reorganization the day he took over running his kingdom. Despite what historians may claim, I believe Philip’s main motivation for rebuilding his military was to create a formidable and lasting defense barrier around his kingdom. The Macedonia Philip inherited was surrounded by warlike, aggressive tribes who desired conflict. Philip’s vision was to achieve peace through strong defense. To do that he had to subdue the aggressive elements all around his kingdom and ensure that they were kept down. There was also the matter of the greater powers who would not agree to a strong and large Macedonia and would challenge him just to safeguard their own interests and survival.

As problems presented themselves, Philip used his extraordinary talents to seek solutions. To fight a mightier opponent, Philip had to invent better military strategies and superior weapons. To keep a lasting peace Philip needed a well-trained, professional, full time army. To keep his opponents down, he needed to crush their military abilities and hinder them from rebuilding. All these factors were combined to produce the greatest military might the ancient world had even seen.

Up to Philip’s time, soldiers were selected from the nobility and usually lived and trained at home only to be called to duty before battle. Philip, on the other hand, raised and rigorously trained a full time professional army. Additionally, Philip combined the use of infantry and cavalry in coordinated tactics in ways never before applied. In terms of weapons, Philip used his experience from Thebes to enhance his military techniques and created modern weapons for his army. The most effective weapon was the Macedonian Phalanx which employed sixteen to twenty foot spears or pikes known as sarissas. The body of the pike was made of dogwood (Dren) while the tip was made of a foot long, sharp metal blade. The Phalanx was employed in a rectangular or oblique battle array of soldiers each holding a pike underhand tipped at an angle. The first row held the pikes parallel to the ground while succeeding rows elevated them slightly. The twenty-foot long sarissas extended five rows beyond the first row of soldiers making the Phalanx an impenetrable fortress of very sharp pikes. The front and rear rows of soldiers wore body armour and heavy shields while all inside rows wore no armour and carried only light shields.

Despite popular beliefs otherwise, it took Philip a long time to transform his army into an efficient fighting machine. Much time was needed to recruit men, develop the administration, build up finances, train soldiers and gain field experience before his army would be ready for serious engagements.

“The new Macedonian army was marked by its great speed in movement, by versatility in tactics and weapons, and by the coordination of cavalry with infantry. Finally, there can be no doubt that unusual skills in personal and military leadership created, reflected, and depended upon excellence in the Macedonian army, as kings and men complemented one another”. (Page 205, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990)

Let's not forget the contributions of the Macedonian corps of engineers who designed the magnificent machines and built the siege engines that made Alexander famous.

Again I must emphasize that there is no evidence to indicate that Philip possessed consistent policies for empire building or plans for conquest beyond his own needs to secure his kingdom. Philip simply reacted to events as they unfolded and, judging from his actions, he preferred to use diplomacy over force. I believe it was the hatred and mistrust of the City States that gave Philip a bad wrap. “...it was Philip's ill fortune to be opposed by the most skilled orator of his era, and most nineteenth- and twentieth-century classical scholarship, impressed by the power of Demosthenes's oratory, has seen Philip as a barbarian determined to end the liberty of Greek city-states.” (Page 198, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990)

“At this most critical moment in Macedonian history, Philip, who was then twenty-four, acted with astounding energy and skill. By brilliant feats of arms and by most subtle and cunning diplomatic skill, he promptly succeeded in removing perils from without and within, and was soon acclaimed king by the Macedonian army.

In the first year of his reign Philip has reached the height of his powers. His extraordinary capabilities as general, statesman and diplomat, which made possible this rapid and thorough salvation of the state, explain to us also the extraordinary success of his career. Yet the greatness of this man was not understood till the nineteenth century. Not merely was his fame obscured by the glittering achievements of his son Alexander. His memory has suffered from this disadvantage too: the greatest orator produced by Greece, Demosthenes, was his political opponent, passionately attacked him in his incomparable speeches, and, in the interest of his policy, presented to the Athenians a picture-distorted by hatred-of Philip ‘the barbarian’. In the age of classicism especially, everyone was dazzled by the fine periods of Demosthenes, and accepting them literally, judged the life work of Philip purely from the Athenian standpoint-and that too from the standpoint of Demosthenes. This was accentuated by the political tendencies of the period. Barthold Georg Niebuhr had a passionate hatred for Philip, in whom, with his vivid conception of history, he saw a parallel to Napoleon, and before Austerlitz published a translation of the first Philippic of Demosthenes, to produce a political effect against the Gallus rebellis, as is shown by the motto he affixed to it. To reach a just estimate of Philip, historical science had first to be liberated from the Athenian-Demosthenic point of view. It is modern research alone that, following the lead of J. G. Droysen, has tended more and more to set

out from the one correct point of view; the Macedonian King Philip must be judged by the standard of Macedonian interests only.

If we do this, Philip stands before us as one of the great rulers of the world's history, not only because he laid the foundations for the exploits of his still greater son Alexander, on which Alexander, in conformity with his own genius, erected a new world, but also as a man in himself of far-seeing aims and achievements". (Pages 27-29, Ulrich Wilcken, Alexander the Great)

The drive to secure his kingdom took Philip west to Orestis and Lynceus where he erected defensive barriers and created new frontiers which to this day mark the western borders of geographical Macedonia. To the south in 357 BC, Philip sought and secured the alliance of Epirus sealed in part by his marriage to Olympias, a very important figure in Macedonia's future and the Epirian Chieftan's niece, and in part by taking Olympias's brother, Alexander into the Macedonian court. Being Philip's protégé, in the long term, Alexander proved himself a good ally to Macedonia.

Macedonia's neighbours to the north and to the south viewed all these good things that were happening in Macedonia with great suspicion. What happened so far was only a prelude of things to come and the major battles for Philip were yet to be fought.

Chapter 5 - Philip II - The Greatest of the Kings of Europe

Philip II was born in 382 BC in Pella, the capital of ancient Macedonia, and ruled Macedonia from 359 to 336 BC. Philip was the youngest son of king Amyntas III and Eurydice.

After the death of Amyntas III, Macedonia's stability began to decline as Alexander II and later Perdiccas III unsuccessfully fought to keep it intact. The instability was triggered mainly by external attacks from the neighbouring Thracians, Illyrians and southern City States. The Thracians occupied parts of eastern Macedonia while the Illyrians were making their threats from beyond northwestern Macedonia. Thebes, the mightiest military power at that time, often interfered in Macedonia's affairs while the colonies in Chalcidice posed obstacles to Macedonia's economic prosperity and were often a threat to Macedonia's security.

From what Diodorus Siculus tells us, while the Thebans held him hostage between 368 and 365 BC, Philip showed extraordinary interest in studying their military techniques and weapons. Philip was especially interested in understanding the fighting style of the elite Theban Sacred Band, which would become important to him later in his career while reforming his own military. After Philip was released from Thebes, at his brother's (Perdiccas III) request, he immediately began to implement his reforms and reorganize the Macedonian military.

Unfortunately before Philip was finished, he lost his brother. While fighting the Illyrians in northwestern Macedonia, Perdiccas III was mortally wounded and died in battle. Worse yet, during the same battle, the Macedonians suffered a

demoralizing defeat losing about 4,000 soldiers, which constituted most of the Macedonian army.

Victorious, the Illyrians moved in and occupied northwestern Macedonia. Perched on the mountains of Lynceus they became a threat to the very existence of the Macedonian kingdom.

Appointed by the Macedonian army, after his brother's death, Philip ascended to the Macedonian throne in the most difficult times. His kingdom was virtually on the brink of collapse and his neighbours, hovering like vultures, were poised to put an end to his existence. Besides the usual threats from outside, Macedonia was further weakened by internal strife. There were pretenders from inside who wanted to usurp the Macedonian throne for themselves. Some of them were encouraged and supported by foreign powers. Despite tremendous pressure, the 21-year-old king was not discouraged and soon demonstrated his abilities, not only as a competent ruler but also as a skilful diplomat.

Soon after taking control of his kingdom he bribed the Thracian king with gifts and convinced him to execute the first Macedonian pretender who, at the time, was hiding in the Thracian court. The second pretender, supported by Athens, he defeated in battle. Careful not to upset the Athenians, he appeased them by signing a treaty ceding Amphipolis to them. In a little more than a year he had removed all internal threats and secured his kingdom by firmly establishing himself on the throne.

Determined to free northwestern Macedonia, in 358 BC Philip put his reformed army to the test and fought the Illyrians face to face in a fierce battle. Setting aside all fears from the previous battle, the mighty Macedonian army faced the legendary Illyrians and won an overwhelming victory. The Illyrians fled in panic leaving behind 7,000 dead, almost three-quarters of their entire army.

“Without delay he (Philip) convened an assembly, raised the war-spirit of his men by suitable words, and led them into the territory held by the Illyrians, his army numbering not less than 10,000 infantry and 600 cavalry. Bardylis (the Illyrian chief) had not yet mustered the huge forces he had intended to lead into lower Macedonia. He therefore offered peace on the basis of the status quo. Philip replied that peace was acceptable only if Bardylis would evacuate his troops from all the Macedonian cities. This Bardylis was not prepared to do. Confident in the marvelous record and the numerous victories of his elite Illyrian troops, numbering 10,000 infantry and 500 cavalry, he advanced to engage in the open plain of Lynceus. The battle-cries of 20,000 voiced resounded from the hills.

Whether there was a preliminary cavalry engagement or not, Bardylis realized that he was outclassed in cavalry. In order to protect the flank and rear of his spearmen-phalanx from attacks by the enemy cavalry, he made his infantry form a hollow rectangle, of which the front facing the enemy was held by his best men and the other sides by less skilled troops, all facing outwards. The disadvantage of this formation was its immobility. The initiative lay now with Philip, who saw at once the merit of an attack on the enemy's leftmost front and

left-hand side. He marched his phalanx forward at an oblique angle to the enemy's front, his right being advanced and his left retarded, and he massed his cavalry on his right. The king and the Royal Guardsmen were the leading infantrymen of the Macedonian right. As they approached the stationary Illyrians, they charged the enemy's left front with their massed pikes lowered (pikes never before seen by the Illyrians), smashed the corner of the square completely and let the cavalry in to attack the disrupted formation in flank and rear. The Illyrians broke and fled. The pursuit by the cavalry over the plain caused huge casualties: 7,000 out of 10,500. Bardylis sent envoys to sue for peace. Philip buried his dead on the battlefield in accordance with Macedonian custom, and made terms for peace, which included not only the recovery of all Macedonian cities but also the cession of territory up to the north-east shore of Lake Lychnitis. The peace with Bardylis was cemented by the marriage of Philip to an Illyrian princess, Audata." (Page 62, Nicholas G. L. Hammond, *The Miracle That Was Macedonia*)

Northwestern Macedonia was now free, all the Upper Macedonia cantons, including Lyncestia, the birthplace of Philip's mother, were now firmly under Macedonian control and loyal to their liberator Philip II.

Philip was aware that with a small army of 10,000 he could not defend his kingdom, not even against the defeated Illyrian chief who had even more reserve troops at his disposal. To secure his kingdom and create a pool of new recruits, Philip convinced the chiefs of the smaller kingdoms to join him. To those who did, he offered honourable positions in his court.

With his western frontier secure, Philip moved on to the east to secure the Struma basin north of Chalcidice. His presence there alarmed the colonies, especially Amphipolis, and sent them in panic complaining to Athens. But Athens, having problems of her own, was powerless to act and allowed Philip to conduct his operations unabated.

After unsuccessfully trying to secure an alliance by peaceful means, Philip amassed a larger army and attacked Amphipolis. By using his improved siege-train he was able to quickly break through the city's heavily fortified barriers. "In 357, after breaking through the walls with his siege engines (Diod. 16.8.2), he took Amphipolis, thereby accomplishing in a few weeks what the Athenians failed to achieve in more than sixty years." (Page 213, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*)

As promised before the siege and true to his word, Philip, after occupying her, gave Amphipolis her independence under the supervision of Macedonian overseers.

During the same year (357 BC), Philip, in spite of Athenian opposition, acquired the city of Potidaea in Chalcidice. Turning northward Philip also conquered Pydna, another City State colony on the Macedonian coast.

A couple of years later, Philip acquired the city of Methone, a long time Athenian base located near Pydna. Unfortunately, this particular victory was bittersweet as Philip, during the siege, lost his sight in one eye to an arrow. In the same year, the Macedonian army advanced eastward into Thracian territory and

took the town of Crenides (located near modern day Drama) which its residents later renamed Philippi. Crenides was not just an ordinary outpost; it was also the processing headquarters for the hinterland and mountain gold mines, which Philip added to his Macedonian possessions. Some of the revenues derived from gold mining were reinvested to drain the nearby marshlands making the region around Philippi a showcase for new development. The Macedonian eastern frontier extending to the River Mesta was now secure.

Before I continue with Philip's exploits to the south, I want to digress for a moment and talk about Philip's many marriages. The Macedonian tradition of securing alliances by marriage was practiced long before Philip's time. It was probably invented during the Stone Age to strengthen family ties. According to Borza, the best source to explain Philip's complicated marriages is the biographer Satyrus. I doubt however, if Satyrus ever understood the true meaning of this tradition. I also want to make it clear that ancient behaviour towards marriages has nothing to do with our modern perception and values of marriage. Here is what Borza has to say:

"He married Audata the Illyrian and had from her a daughter, Cynna. And then he married Phila, the sister of Derdas and Machatas. Then, as he wanted to appropriate the Thessalian people as well, on grounds of kinship, he fathered children by two Thessalian women, one of whom was Nikesipolis of Pherae, who bore him Thessalonike, and the other, Philinna of Larisa, by whom he fathered Arrhidaeus. Then he acquired the kingdom of the Molossians as well, by marrying Olympias. From her he had Alexander and Cleopatra. And then, when he conquered Thrace, Cothelas, the King of the Thracians, came over to him bringing his daughter Meda and many gifts. Having married her too, he brought her into his household besides Olympias. Then, in addition to all these, he married Cleopatra, the sister of Hippostratus and niece of Attalus, having fallen in love with her. And when he brought her into his household beside Olympias, he threw his whole life into confusion. For immediately, during the actual wedding celebration, Attalus said, 'Now surely there will be born for us legitimate kings and not bastards.' Now Alexander, when he heard this, threw the cup, which he was holding in his hands, at Attalus; thereupon he too threw his goblet at Alexander. After this Olympias fled to the Molossians and Alexander to the Illyrians. And Cleopatra bore Philip the daughter named Europa." (Page 206-207, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*)

From the union of Philip and Polyxena (nicknamed Olympias by Philip), in 356 BC, was born Alexander who in a few short years would become king Alexander III.

Early in his career Philip realized that in order to defend against ongoing aggression he needed a full time army. He built his army by making the military a way of life for the ordinary Macedonian. Soldiering became a professional occupation that paid well enough to make a living, year-round. Unlike before when soldiering was a part time job, something that men would do during their free time, Philip's soldiers could be counted on at all times. The new

Macedonian soldier was given the opportunity to develop team skills, unity, cohesion and trust in his peers, the kind of qualities a part time soldier would lack.

The Macedonian soldiers were not the only ones to benefit from Philip's reforms. A full time army required arms, shelter, food and clothing. To support it, a whole new industry had to be developed employing a variety of people and skills.

I also want to point out that we must not forget the general contribution of the Macedonian population who not only supplied their king with soldiers but also provided the labour to cultivate his lands and feed his army, build his roads, weapons, siege engines and ships. Philip would have been powerless without the support and loyalty of the Macedonian people.

With his army reorganized, full of confidence and equipped with modern weapons, Philip turned his attention south. He first went to Thessaly where he won an easy victory. By 352 BC he was in firm control of a region extending as far south as the pass of Thermopylae. As part of the peace treaty with the Thessalians, Philip married Nicesipolis, a local woman of prominence. Nicesipolis bore Philip a daughter whom he named Thessalonika to commemorate his victory over Thessaly.

With Thessaly on his side Philip was now staring down at the northern gate of the City States, which at the time, was well guarded by powerful Athenian, Spartan and Achaean forces.

With his southern frontier secured, Philip returned to Macedonia to take care of business closer to home. In 348 BC he sent his Macedonian army to the Chalcidice peninsula and cleared out some of the colonial encroachments, starting with the City State of Olynthus. Olynthus was the grand city of the northern City States, a symbol of power that stood in Macedonia's way. Philip sacked Olynthus and sold its population into slavery, a practice which at that time was expected of City States but not of Macedonians. Like Methone before, Olynthus and some 31 other Chalcidician cities were cleared of intrusions and their lands were redistributed to the Macedonians. One of the cities sacked was Stageira, the birthplace of Aristotle. When Philip was finished, he ended foreign encroachment and reclaimed the entire Chalcidice peninsula for his Macedonians.

Up until 348 BC, even though Philip controlled virtually everything north of the Lamian Gulf, he was never a real threat to the powerful City States in the south. He may have annexed their colonies and cut off access to some of their markets but he was never a threat to their way of life or existence.

In 348 BC, however, things started to change. It began with Philip's intervention, on Thessaly's behalf, to free Delphi from rebel elements. Delphi was a religious center whose neutrality was guarded by the Amphictyonic League, an ancient and mainly religious association of the central City States. When a rebellious splinter faction of the Amphictyonic League broke away and threatened the center's neutrality, Philip was called in to sort things out.

Philip was more than willing to oblige his Thessalian allies but at the same time he had to be cautious not to upset the Athenians and Thebans who opposed each other but also had vested interests in Delphi. At this stage, an Athenian-Theban alliance would have been catastrophic for Macedonia and had to be avoided at all costs.

Being already allied with Thebes, Philip considered a diplomatic move with Athens by offering the Athenians joint participation in removing the rebels. Unfortunately, the Athenians in Athens, being suspicious of Philip's motives, declined and among themselves proposed to take countermeasures to stop Philip from intervening altogether, even by force if necessary. Fortunately, before any damage was done, wisdom prevailed and the Athenians decided to talk to Philip before attacking him. Being a master of diplomacy, the wily Philip convinced his elder Athenians that he meant no harm and only wished to see this matter solved peacefully. To appease the Athenians he went a step further and personally offered guarantees of Athenian hegemony over several regions near Attica, something the Athenians had desired for a long time. Philip's latest proposal was a success and gained full Athenian acceptance. It even gained support from Demosthenes, Philip's staunchest critic.

Unfortunately, what was viewed as fair by Athens was obviously viewed as unfair by Thebes and problems began to arise. To get himself out of this, Philip turned to the Amphictyonic Council and asked the council members to disbar the rebel group by vote and replace it with the Macedonian king. In a stroke of genius Philip evaded an impending war with Athens, ended the rebellion at Delphi, saved the Amphictyony, averted a war with Thebes, made an alliance with Athens and made himself a voting member of the Amphictyonic League. This indeed was a diplomatic victory, worthy of the Macedonian king himself.

Philip's antagonists unfortunately viewed what was good for Macedonia with suspicion. This included the great Athenian orator, Demosthenes. In 351 BC Demosthenes delivered his first Philippic, a series of speeches warning the City States about the Macedonian threat to their liberty. His second Philippic was delivered in 344 BC, his third in 341 BC and his three Olynthiacs in 349 BC, all directed to arouse Athens and the others against Philip.

Demosthenes's most famous oration was the third Philippic which speaks of Philip as being "not only not Greek, nor related to the Greeks, but not even a barbarian from any place that can be named with honors, but a pestilent knave from Macedonia, whence it was never yet possible to buy a decent slave" (Third Philippic, 31). Words which echo the fact that the ancient City States regarded the ancient Macedonians as "dangerous neighbors" but never as kinsmen.

Despite Demosthenes's castigation, peace held, at least for now, and having an equal seat in the council of power, Philip was free to return to Macedonia. Most of 345 BC, Philip spent leading his army against the Illyrians, Dardanians and the Thracians and generally quelling rebellions. In 344 BC the Thessalians rebelled but were put down swiftly. In 342 BC, Philip marched into Epirus and replaced King Arybbas with his young protégé and brother-in-law Alexander (Amaxis).

Sensing growing discontentment in the Athenians, Philip estimated that it would be a matter of time before war would break out between Macedonia and Athens, especially since Athens amended the Macedonian-Athenian peace agreement hoping it would be unacceptable to Philip.

Determined to attract as many City States as possible to his side, Philip continued to make alliances with the smaller cities. He was determined to attract the cities that were hostile to the more powerful states in hopes of dividing and weakening them.

By 340 BC, a point of no return was reached with Athens when Philip could no longer accommodate Athenian demands to sustain the peace treaty, especially after Athens sponsored anti-Macedonian uprisings in the northern Aegean. In retaliation for this latest Athenian treachery, in 340 BC while campaigning against internal rebellions in the east, Philip captured the Athenian grain fleet. This was the last straw for Athens and under the personal leadership of Demosthenes, the Athenians persuaded the Thebans to jointly declare war on Macedonia. The weaker states, having little choice in the matter, also joined the declaration. What Philip tried to avoid at all costs was now unavoidable.

Before Philip could accommodate his neighbours to the south, he had some unfinished business to take care of in the north. He quickly assembled a large army and marched deep into Thracian territory and by 339 BC conquered most of Thrace. Unfortunately, he was unable to subdue the eastern coastal cities of Byzantium and Perinthus, which withstood even his most severe sieges. It was certain that neither city would have survived had it not been for the assistance received from the southern City States and the Persians. Ironically, even though Persia, for more than a century, had been the most hated nation, still the City States sided with the Persians against the Macedonians.

Responding to a Scythian challenge Philip abandoned the eastern city sieges and, in the spring of 339 BC, led his Macedonians beyond Thrace. There, near the Danube River, he clashed with the Scythians and won a stunning victory crowned only by the death of Areas, the Scythian king. Unfortunately, on his return trip home Philip's convoy was attacked and his booty was lost to Thracian Triballians. During the skirmish, Philip suffered a severe leg injury, which left him lame for life. After returning home he spent several months recovering.

While Philip was recovering, the City States to the south were making alliances and amassing a great army to invade Macedonia. On hearing this, Philip decided it was time to meet this aggression head on and end the treachery once and for all. On August 2nd, 338 BC, in the shallow Cephissus River valley near the village of Chaeronea on the road to Thebes, the two opposing armies met face to face. On the north side stood Philip's Macedonians with 30,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry, the largest Macedonian army ever assembled. Among Philip's commanding generals was his 18 year-old son, Alexander, in charge of the cavalry. On the south side, stood the allied Athenians, Thebans and Achaeans who assembled 35,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry, the largest army ever assembled since the Persian invasion.

Closely matched, the armies clashed and while the battle ensued the Macedonian right flank fell back and began to retreat. Seeing the Macedonians weakening, the allied general gave orders to push on and drive the Macedonians back to Macedonia. As the Macedonians retreated, the allied flanks broke rank and began the pursuit. Not realizing it was a trick, the allies found themselves surrounded and slaughtered by Alexander's cavalry. When it was over, the majority of the allied army, including the elite Theban Sacred Band lay dead in the fields of Chaeronea. Philip erected a statue of a lion to commemorate the sacrifice of the Theban Sacred Band who upheld their tradition and fought to the last man.

Ancient City State and Roman historians consider the battle of Chaeronea as the end of City State liberty, history and civilization.

Victorious, soon after the battle, Philip proceeded to secure his newest conquests by strategically placing Macedonian garrisons in Thebes, Chalcis, Ambracia, Corinth and the Peloponnesus. He then summoned the representatives of all City States to a grand peace conference at Corinth where he made peace with each one. Sparta was the only one that abstained. Being no threat to him, Philip decided to leave Sparta alone.

Philip organized the City States into an alliance known as the "League of Corinth". It was an alliance among the City States and an alliance between the City States and the king of Macedonia. The league formed a separate alliance with Macedonia, but Macedonia itself was not a member of the City State league. This was an alliance that treated all nations, great and small, as equals. Conversely, the lesser states looked up to Macedonia, as a great power, to guarantee their rights and existence among the greater states.

Living in peace with his neighbours is what Philip had envisioned ten years earlier. It could have been achieved through diplomacy. Even at this stage I believe Philip wanted to secure his kingdom by peaceful means and only resorted to war when all other means were exhausted. If there is any blame to be placed, it should be placed on the Athenians for their suspicions and mistrust.

Having secured peace with the City States, Philip was now looking at neutralizing the next major threat, Persia. The idea of subduing Persia appealed to some but not all City States. Those who favoured the idea, especially those who belonged to the League of Corinth, elected Philip as the commander-in-chief of the Asian expeditionary force. Those who opposed the idea, especially the City State military and their commanders who were now out of work, made their way to Persia to swell the ranks of the Persian mercenary and fight for pay against the Macedonians. According to the Roman historian Curtius, by the time the Macedonian army set foot in Asia, a force of 50,000 City State soldiers had joined the Persian king's army and lay in wait to face the Macedonians.

Philip, being more or less satisfied with the conclusion of City State affairs, returned home to prepare for the Asian campaign.

It has been said that if Philip ever made a mistake, it was in "marrying for love", a rare luxury for any monarch let alone one that had been married not once but six times before. The woman of his desire was Cleopatra, a Macedonian

girl of nobility. Blinded by his love for young Cleopatra, Philip neglected to see that his marriage to her would lead to his break-up with Olympias and the estrangement of his son Alexander. Olympias was a proud woman and very protective of her son. Philip's marriage to a younger woman and a Macedonian at that, made her feel both unwanted and an outsider in her own home. To her, Philip's latest marriage was a dishonour to her reputation as a wife and a threat to her son's legitimacy as heir to the Macedonian throne.

Not knowing what else to do, Olympias and Alexander left for Epirus. Immediately after taking his mother home, Alexander left Epirus and went to the Illyrians. From there he negotiated his way back to Pella where his father forgave him for his misdeeds. Unfortunately for Olympias, Philip's marriage to Cleopatra lasted longer than expected and she bore him a child.

During the following spring (336 BC), in preparation for the Persian offensive, Philip decided to send ahead an advance force. Commanded by generals Attalus and Parmenio, 10,000 Macedonian soldiers were prepared and sent across to Asia Minor to pave the way for the next spring's offensive. While the soldiers were making their way across the Hellespont, the Macedonians in Aegae were preparing for a grand celebration. Philip's daughter Cleopatra was about to be wed to Prince Alexander (Amaxis) of Epirus. It was indeed going to be a lavish festival with much entertainment and games. Philip had invited various guests from all over his kingdom to partake in the festivities and witness the marriage of his daughter. Among the invited was Olympias. Being the sister of the groom, Olympias was obliged to attend. At first, she was apprehensive, but after being assured that Philip would welcome her, she accepted the invitation. True to his word, Philip was courteous and made up with her the same day she arrived.

It has been said that after the first day's festivities, Philip visited with Olympias and among other things discussed Olympias's concern about Alexander's chances for the throne. Philip promised her that she had nothing to fear and reassured her that Alexander was his first choice to replace him, when the time came. The first day's festivities concluded without incident but disaster struck on the second day. During a procession in the theater at Aegae, while standing between his son Alexander and his new son-in-law Alexander, a member of the royal guard named Pausanias, stabbed Philip with a dagger and killed him. Pausanias then ran to escape, towards some waiting horses, but tripped and fell down. His pursuers caught up to him and speared him to death.

The "Greatest of the Kings of Europe" who liberated Macedonia from foreign occupation, brought her back from the edge of extinction and made her into a world power, now lay dead in his own palace, killed by his own body guard. Philip II king of Macedonia from 360 BC to 336 BC died a senseless death and was succeeded by his son Alexander.

Many historians have laboured looking for reasons to explain why Philip was murdered. Was it a foreign plot, a conspiracy premeditated by his son Alexander? Was it an act of rage by a demented soldier? Or was it Olympias's

revenge for embarrassing her by marrying Cleopatra? I guess we will never know for sure.

Philip's plans for Persia now lay in the hands of his successor. He did whatever he could to make Macedonia great but even he couldn't have imagined how great she would become.

Chapter 6 - Alexander III - The Greatest of the Great Conquerors

Alexander, son of Philip II and Polyxena (Olympias) was born in Pella on July 22nd, 356 BC. Alexander's father Philip was the son of the Macedonian king Amyntas III and of Eurydice, an Illyrian princess. His mother Polyxena, or Olympias as she became known in Macedonia, was the daughter of the Molossian king Neoptolemus.

Alexander was born into a dynamic world where violence was a way of life. He enjoyed war stories told around the palace and no doubt relished in his father's victories. Philip was very fond of his son and spent a great deal of time giving him affection and telling him stories. Alexander's earliest education was entrusted to Leonidas, a relative of Olympias. But as Leonidas found out, Alexander was no ordinary student and his defiance could not be influenced by the usual methods. So in 343 BC when Alexander was thirteen, Philip summoned Aristotle to tutor him. Aristotle, at the time, was not the famous man we know today but simply a teacher with a good reputation. Philip chose him on the recommendation of others.

Aristotle was born in Stagira (a city in Chalcidice, conquered by Philip), the son of Nicomachus (once physician to Amyntas III). At age 40 (or more) Aristotle left his newly opened school in Mytiline, Lesbos and went to Pella where he was given residence in the quiet little village of Mieza. There, near the sanctuary of the Nymphs, away from the hustle and bustle and constant disruptions of Pella, Aristotle spent the next three years educating Alexander, along with a few other children. One of those children was Hephæstion, whom Alexander befriended for life.

Aristotle, in addition to teaching Alexander of life's wonders, inspired in him a passionate love for culture and intellect that profoundly affected his life and the way he viewed the world. But it was Homer's books that inspired Alexander the most. The Iliad, the best book ever written, and his two heroes Heracles and Achilles were the driving forces that championed Alexander's desires for conquest and seeking the unknown. In addition to teaching him how to be king, Aristotle also inspired in Alexander a keen interest in the natural sciences.

In 340 BC at age sixteen, while his father Philip campaigned against Byzantium, Alexander was made regent of Pella. It was then that Alexander got a taste of what it was like to be in command, especially to command a battle and put down a rebellion. It was an insignificant rebellion instigated by the Thracian Madoi but none-the-less it was a joy for the young prince to command. After defeating the enemy, Alexander took the town, resettled it with Macedonians and

renamed it Alexandropolis, after himself. This would be the first in a line of many cities to be named after the young conqueror.

Two years later in 338 BC, at age eighteen, Alexander had gained his father's confidence to be given command of the Macedonian cavalry during the most important battle of Philip's career. This was a pivotal battle that not only thrashed the allied City States but also ushered in a new age of warfare. At eighteen years old Alexander was part of it in every respect.

Unfortunately, on that dreaded day in 337 BC when Philip decided to marry Cleopatra, the niece of general Attalus, Alexander's pleasant relation with his father came to an abrupt end. Some say that at the marriage feast Alexander exchanged bitter words with Attalus and then caused a scene with his own father. Be it as it may, Alexander's feelings were badly hurt. Feeling let down by his own father, Alexander, along with his mother, left Macedonia for Epirus. After taking his mother home Alexander left and went to live with the Illyrians, with a Macedonian client king. There, through the work of a mediator, he reconciled his differences with his father and soon after returned home to Pella.

Even though his father forgave him, Alexander still felt insecure and his insecurity surfaced when Philip offered the marriage of the daughter of a Carian ruler to his illegitimate son Arrhidaeus, instead of to Alexander. The Carian ruler happened to be a vassal to the Great King of Persia. Philip felt it was unsuitable for his son Alexander, heir to the Macedonian throne, to marry the daughter of a Persian vassal. Alexander, feeling insecure, unfortunately did not believe his father and listened to some bad advice given to him by his friends. Ignoring his father, Alexander secretly offered himself as the son-in-law to the Carian ruler. When Philip found out, one would expect him to be furious but he wasn't. He consoled his son and explained to him his real motives behind the marriage, then pardoned him for his misdeeds. As for Alexander's advisors Nearchus, Harpalus and Ptolemy, they did not get off that easily. For their misdeeds and bad advice to the prince, Philip had them exiled from the Pellan court.

The next year, in mid-summer 336 BC, Alexander's life was changed forever as tragedy struck and his father was assassinated. The incident took place in the theater of Aegae at the worst possible time for Alexander's sister Cleopatra. Expecting to be soon going away on the Asian campaign, Philip took the opportunity to marry off his daughter Cleopatra to his protégé Alexander, king of Molossia. No one expected that during the procession, the crazed bodyguard Pausanias would lunge at Philip and stab him to death right in the middle of Cleopatra's wedding. Fortunately for Alexander, Philip and Olympias had resolved their differences and Olympias was back in the Macedonian court at Philip's side when it happened so Alexander had his mother's support when he needed it the most.

Philip was forty-six years old, at the height of his power and fortune, when his life was taken. There were many rumours as to why he was assassinated but none were proven since his killer was also slain before he was interrogated. It was now up to Alexander to set things right.

When a king or head of state is assassinated, the state and its foreign relations are shaken to the very foundation. Macedonia, after Philip's death, was no exception. The question on everyone's mind, especially his enemies, was who would succeed him?

In Philip's case a group of Macedonian soldiers and ex-soldiers loyal to the king, mostly from the near vicinity, were quickly assembled in Aegae. Without hesitation they chose Alexander as Philip's successor, the new king to lead them. The following day, one by one, his soldiers took an oath of loyalty as was required by Macedonian custom. Alexander chose his own bodyguards and was given his personal Royal Infantry Guard. His first task as king was to investigate his father's murder.

The fact that there were horses involved for Pausanias's getaway suggests that Philip's murder was premeditated and accomplices were involved. But who would have had the audacity to murder a powerful king and at his daughter's wedding at that? That, we will never know for sure! What is important, however, is to examine how Alexander used this tragedy to secure his own position in the Macedonian kingdom and rid himself of some undesirable elements.

For killing Pausanias before he could be interrogated, Alexander placed blame on the bodyguards and had them executed. For Pausanias's act as a traitor, his three sons were also executed. Many of the people present in the theater that day were suspects and found guilty of conspiring to murder both father and son. Of those found guilty, Alexander pardoned few while most he condemned to death. Later that same year new evidence came to light and general Attalus became a suspect. It was Alexander's belief that Attalus had something to do with Demosthenes's secret communication conspiring to prevent Alexander from becoming heir to the Macedonian throne. Alexander dispatched an officer to Asia to arrest Attalus or kill him if he resisted. As mentioned earlier, Attalus and Parmenio were leading an expeditionary force into Asia. As expected, Attalus resisted and was killed. After his death an assembly of soldiers tried and found him guilty of treason and, in accordance with Macedonian custom, his relations were condemned to death. Among his relatives were his niece Cleopatra and Philip's newborn infant.

Over the course of the winter, Amyntas, son of Perdiccas III, was also found guilty and condemned to death. In fact, before contemplating crossing into Asia, Alexander had killed all the male members of his family who could potentially threaten his position.

The news of Philip's murder attracted the attention of the whole world; especially the City States who rejoiced in knowing that he was gone. Alexander was quick to let them know that he expected from them the same loyalty as they had for his father. He reminded the City States that the treaty of the League of Corinth was perpetual and gave him a legal claim to be Hegemon, the same as his father. But Alexander's words did not phase the City States in the least, for in Athens they were dancing in the streets with joy. Demosthenes, intoxicated with the prospect of liberty, appeared in council dressed in white with a wreath on his head making offerings to the gods for the joyful news. The call to freedom from

Athens spread like wildfire to the rest of the City States. The Aetolians recalled all those exiled by Philip, the Ambraciots expelled the Macedonian garrison, the Thebans took up arms to liberate Cadmeia and there were signs of rebellions in Peloponnesus, Argos, Elis and Arcadia.

When news was received that Alexander was to take Philip's place, Demosthenes became enraged, immediately sending a secret communication begging Parmenio and Attalus to intervene. Fortunately, Attalus and Parmenio were loyal to their new king and allowed Alexander to be seated on the throne without interruption. So in the end, like his father before him, Alexander became Demosthenes's mortal foe and worst nightmare. Failing to enlist help from Macedonians inside Alexander's circle, Demosthenes entered into strange relations with the Persian King and continued to work against Macedonia.

The revolts after Philip's death were not exclusive to the City States. Reports were also coming in from the north with claims that there were disturbances and rebellions there also. On hearing this Alexander moved quickly, put a strong force together and with lightning speed descended upon his enemies. The City States were first on his agenda to subdue as he force-marched his army in a surprise visit to Thessaly. Upon seeing Alexander, the Thessalians not only submitted but they showed an eager willingness to recognize him as their Hegemon. They even offered to help him punish Athens and the other City States for their misdeeds.

After subduing Thessaly, Alexander pushed southward, overrunning all who stood in his way, including Thermopylae. After quelling Thermopylae, he summoned a meeting with the Amphictyonic Council who, without hesitation, also gave him recognition as Hegemon. He then quietly slipped out, marched to Boeotia and set up camp near Cadmeia. His sudden appearance in Thebes frightened the wits out of the Thebans and sent shock waves of chilling terror to Athens, especially after delivering an ultimatum demanding to be recognized as Hegemon or prepare for war. The Athenians, expecting the worst, were prepared for war but were relieved by the alternative. Through their ambassadors they asked for pardon for not having his hegemony recognized sooner.

At the conclusion of his campaign, Alexander summoned all members of the League of Corinth for a meeting. Here he asked the City States to give him recognition as Hegemon of the League in accordance with the agreement made with Philip. The Spartans, whose response was, "It was their custom to follow themselves and not others who wish to lead them." did not attend.

When his business with the City States was finished, Alexander turned his attention to the troublemakers in the north. First on his list were the Thracian Triballian tribe, living between the Balkans and the Danube, who Philip fought but did not subjugate. This was Alexander's first campaign carried out without the tactical brilliance of general Parmenio or the trusted help of friend and advisor general Antipater. The success of this particular campaign has to be attributed singularly to Alexander's own genius. Before setting off to meet the Triballians, Alexander sent his war ships from Byzantium via the Black Sea into

the Danube and ordered them to sail upriver and hold their position at a pre-designated location.

In the spring of 335 BC, Alexander marched his army northward until he found the Thracians. The Thracians had occupied the Shipka Pass and had secured their position atop a hill behind a fort made of wagons. Perched on top of this hill they waited until Alexander's army attempted the climb. Before the Macedonians reached the top the Thracians released a barrage of wagons hoping to run them down. Alexander, however, anticipated their plan and ordered his men at the top to form columns with alleys for the wagons to hurtle down and the men further down the hill to lie down flat in close formation with their shields over their heads.

As the wagons hurtled downhill, they were guided into the alleys by the formation and as they gained momentum, the wagons rode over a roof of shields without doing any damage to the men. With superb discipline exercised, not a single man was lost.

Alexander stormed the Shipka Pass and descended upon the northern plains in pursuit of the Triballian king who sought refuge on an island in the Danube. The Triballian army, which withdrew southwards, suffered an annihilating defeat. Three days later, when Alexander reached the Danube, he found his fleet waiting. He ordered his ships to pursue the Triballian king but the banks of the island were so steep that they couldn't land. Although frustrated, Alexander was not about to give up and came up with a new plan, which at the time may have seemed irrational to his officers but they gave him their support anyway. Alexander's plan was to "frighten the king into submission". He figured that by a surprising demonstration of force he would break the enemy's inclination to resist him. The idea was to cross the Danube undetected and force the Getae, who lived on the opposite bank, into flight and, by this demonstration, startle the king to surrender. An irrational plan indeed! Having earned the loyalty and trust of his Macedonians, they did as he ordered and made silent preparations to cross the river. They collected as many local fishing boats as they could find, filled their canvas tents with hay and under the cloak of darkness put as many troops as possible across the river. Before dawn 1,500 cavalry and 4,000 infantry were on the opposite side of the bank. Before they could be seen the troops hid in the cornfields, which masked their approach. Then, like wild animals, the cavalry burst out and charged the Getae who were encamped in front of their town. Completely surprised, the Getae, far superior in numbers, rushed back into town, grabbed their wives and children and ran north to safety in the steppes. The town was taken and not a single man was lost.

Alexander's bluff not only worked with the Triballian king who made his submission to Alexander but, when word spread, neighbouring tribes send their envoys to pay Alexander homage. Even the Celts, who had ventured eastward from the Adriatic, asked Alexander for his friendship.

When his northern campaign was over, Alexander was preparing to return home when he received news of an Illyrian revolt. Alexander marched his army at great speed to western Macedonia and, just beyond his frontier, found a very

large Dardanian army assembled and waiting. A battle ensued and the Illyrians were driven back into a fortified town. Alexander set camp for the night intending to besiege the town the next day. Unfortunately, by morning another enemy army had arrived. A large Taulantian army had joined the Dardanians and cut off Alexander's retreat and supply line. The Macedonian army of some 25,000 men and 5,000 horses were quickly running out of supplies. Alexander had to do something and soon, but what? He was completely surrounded. Leave it to Alexander to come up with another uncanny plan. He ordered his men to put on a show. Ignoring the enemy, he ordered his phalanx into formation to quietly march back and forth as he motioned their maneuvers with his arm. The show attracted onlookers around his camp who were not only surprised but also mesmerized by this action.

When the time was right, Alexander motioned and the soldiers, in unison, slapped their shields hard with their javelins. The sudden thundering roar, after the mesmerizing silence, startled the enemy causing some of the horses to bolt in fright. At lightning speed Alexander's best cavalry, supported by his archers, bolted through the pass, making an opening for the army to escape through. The army, with catapult, archers and cavalry support, then punched a hole right through the middle of the enemy forces and landed on home territory in the meadows around little Lake Prespa. Not a single man was lost.

Three days later, in a surprise attack at night, Alexander led an assault force through the pass and inflicted a decisive defeat on his enemy. As the enemy bolted the Macedonian cavalry pursued, chasing them for over one hundred kilometers, instilling fear and causing them severe damage. Both kings submitted to Alexander's will and instead of being punished for their misdeeds they were made client-kings with thrones of their own.

No sooner were the Illyrian revolts put down than Alexander received news of a dangerous uprising in the south requiring his immediate intervention. It appears that the Thebans were in revolt and had killed Macedonian officers stationed in a local garrison. Alexander quickly assembled his army and set out on a fast paced march, living off the land as he traversed south through the mountainous terrain. After crossing the Pass of Thermopylae he headed for Thebes. Alexander arrived just in time to prevent his garrison from being attacked so no serious damage was done. But to his surprise, it was not just Thebes that was causing trouble. Athens too had become involved when she entered into an alliance with Thebes and sent arms and her citizen army to support the Theban rebellion. Encouraged by Demosthenes and supported by Persian gold, other City States also joined the rebellion. The whole thing was started by rumours, no doubt spread by Demosthenes himself, claiming that Alexander had been killed and his army defeated in Illyria. But when Alexander arrived alive and well with an intact Macedonian army a chill must have run down their spines. Being the rightful Hegemon of the City State League, Alexander asserted his rights and demanded that the rebels disband. In the presence of Alexander, some of the City State armies obeyed and turned away. Some, like Athens, remained stationary and made no attempt to engage him. The

Thebans decided to break away and fight, hoping that an engagement would draw others into the war. They relied mostly on their own forces and the strong fortifications of their city to defend them.

After hearing rumours of his supposed death, Alexander endeavoured to give the rebels a chance to end the impasse peacefully and gave them three days to surrender. Unfortunately, instead of submitting peacefully their cavalry charged his outposts.

The next day Alexander marched his army all around the city and stopped in front of the south gate. Angered by the reply of the previous day, Alexander ordered an attack. In no time the Theban defenses were breached and the Macedonian and League armies penetrated the city. The Thebans fought fiercely but were no match for the well trained, battle experienced Macedonian army. The battle turned tragically when League soldiers turned on the general population massacring everyone in sight.

After sacking it, Alexander left the final fate of Thebes to the League to decide. Those in the League who for many generations suffered under the supremacy of Thebes finally found an outlet to vent their anger. Without hesitation they found Thebes guilty of treason for their current misdeeds as well as those in the past. In a resolution backed by the entire League, Alexander ordered the city to be leveled to the ground. Women and children were sold into slavery. Alexander allowed the resolution to pass so that an example could be made to remind the rest that this kind of behavior would no longer be tolerated. As for the Athenians, the real instigators of the rebellions, Alexander left them unpunished. Alexander was careful not to drive them further into the Persian King's arms. But, as fate would have it, those who were unhappy with the League's resolution left for Persia anyway.

After restoring peace in the City States, Alexander and his army returned to Macedonia. By the time he arrived it was already October (335 BC) and still much preparation was needed before he could depart for the Asian spring offensive. Alexander also needed time to secure the route to Asia and strengthen Macedonia's defenses. Being mistrustful of the City States, Alexander, in his absence, left Antipater, a competent soldier, a man of strong character and a trustworthy friend, in charge as regent of Macedonia. He gave Antipater special powers to represent him as deputy-Hegemon of the League of Corinth. To keep the peace, Antipater was given 12,000 infantry and 1,500 cavalry from Alexander's best Macedonian troops.

During the winter of 335 BC, Alexander convened a meeting with his officers and advisors and discussed his plans and general strategy regarding the Asian campaign. In addition to his own troops, who formed the core of his army, it was decided that Alexander would appeal to the League to supply him with infantry, cavalry and a fleet of ships and sailors. The League approved Alexander's request and supplied him with approximately 160 war ships and 29,000 crewmen, 7,000 infantry and 2,400 cavalry. Some believe that Alexander only took these men so that he could hold them hostage to prevent the City States from attacking Macedonia while he was campaigning in Asia. If we take into

consideration that Alexander was always suspicious and never trusted the City States, and the fact that he relied solely on the Macedonian soldiers to do his fighting, then I would agree that the League forces were redundant, with no other purpose. By solving one problem Alexander created another. The League soldiers taken as hostages could possibly, in a moment of weakness, be a danger to him. Alexander trusted his Macedonians with his life and he knew that they would never intentionally let him down, however, there was always the possibility that they could be overwhelmed in battle. If that were to happen, Alexander was certain the League soldiers would turn on him. So after crossing into Asia, Alexander separated his forces. He took an all Macedonian infantry and a mixed Macedonian Thessalian cavalry force and placed the League forces in Parmenio's command.

Even though Antipater was a trusted friend, Alexander was always cautious and well aware that in his prolonged absence anything could happen. To counterbalance Antipater's power, Alexander appointed his mother Olympias to be in charge of religious, ceremonial and financial matters in Pella.

Alexander selected and took with him the best and most battle hardened troops in his army consisting of 12,000 infantrymen and 2,700 cavalrymen. Philip himself had trained and campaigned with most of these men in all hazards of war.

While Alexander was preparing his Asian force, Parmenio's vanguard in Asia was struggling to regain control of the Hellespont. In 336 BC Parmenio had won control of the Dardanelles bridgehead but lost it again in 335 BC when he was driven back by City State mercenaries, commanded by general Memnon. The City State mercenaries had taken control of an area near the crossing, killed off and expelled the Persian juntas and had taken over the local cities. It didn't take long, however, before the pro-Persian factions rebelled. Parmenio sought his chance and again took control of the crossing. The Macedonians now controlled the waters of the Hellespont and held them until Alexander arrived.

In early spring of 334 BC, with the help of some 160 ships, the main body of the Macedonian expedition force was ferried across the strait. While the army was helped across, Alexander took a diversion to explore the various sacred sites of the Iliad. While visiting the Ilium he dedicated his armour to Athena and in exchange took back an old, sacred shield supposedly dating back to the Trojan War.

Soon after rejoining his army, Alexander set out to find the enemy. As mentioned earlier, Alexander separated his forces and took with him only Macedonians and some Thessalians, leaving the league soldiers behind with Parmenio. In all 13,000 infantry and 5,100 cavalry set off in search of the Persian army. Another reason for not taking the League army was that Alexander had no money for provisions. When he crossed the Hellespont he was almost broke. Some say he only had 70 talents in cash and that was hardly enough to feed his army for more than a couple of weeks. But that did not stop Alexander because he had confidence in his Macedonians to give him victories and then his enemies would be obliged to feed his army.

Besides his military, Alexander also enlisted the services of historians, philosophers, poets, engineers, surveyors, doctors, botanists and natural scientists to accompany him on his Asian expedition. His official historian was Callisthenes of Olynthus, nephew and pupil of Aristotle. The surveyors were there to measure distances traveled by the army as well as make notes of peculiarities in the terrain traversed. The engineers were engaged in building bridges, rafts, ladders, siege engines and equipment to scale steep slopes and cliffs. The botanists and natural scientists were there to investigate the flora, fauna and mineral wealth of the newly discovered lands. Right from the start the Asian expedition was not just a military campaign but a great scientific research and discovery mission.

As luck would have it, on the third day of his search, Alexander's scouts spotted the Persian army holding its position on the far bank of the river Granicus. As Alexander made his advance, he noticed a much superior cavalry force holding its position on the level ground. Beyond the steep riverbank he could see a large City State mercenary infantry force holding the ridge behind the level ground. He estimated the enemy to be about 20,000 cavalry and 20,000 infantry. Alexander immediately formulated his battle plans and took the offensive. The Macedonian infantry phalanx took the center while the cavalry formed the wings with the archers posted on the extreme right. Alexander's battle line now matched the three-kilometer wide enemy line. According to Peter Green, Alexander badly needed a victory in order to secure booty to pay off his loans and to finance future campaigns. At the moment, Alexander was badly in debt.

Among the Persian commanders was general Memnon. Memnon was well aware of Alexander's financial predicament and wanted to starve him out. During an earlier meeting with the Persians, Memnon opposed a direct confrontation and proposed to deprive Alexander of all provisions. This would have required burning all the crops in the vicinity and withdrawing the Persian army. Having no provisions to sustain him, Alexander would have had to turn back and return to Macedonia. When he did, Memnon proposed to go after him by means of the huge Persian fleet. The Persians, however, due to their army's numerical superiority felt confident that a battle with Alexander would give them victory.

After surveying the situation, Alexander noticed that the best Persian cavalry stood atop the steep, eight-foot riverbank. From that position a cavalry charge would have been difficult to execute. In spite of Parmenio's advice to retire for the evening and attack the next morning, Alexander exploited the situation and ordered a surprise attack.

The battle of Granicus started with a blare of trumpets and the terrifying battle cry of Alexander and his Macedonians. His men quickly took their positions as Alexander's horsemen rushed across the swollen river and swooped up the steep bank, violently engaging the Persian cavalry. His infantry phalanx, which by now was used to forming a battle line on the fly, maneuvered into an oblique battle-array and positioned itself to follow suit. As the army frontlines

clashed, Alexander and his companions rode back and forth behind the lines looking for weaknesses and to confuse the enemy. Moments after the engagement started, most of the Persian cavalry was pinned down by the Macedonian phalanx as both armies desperately tried to push forward. The Persians were expecting Alexander to attack at the extreme left where the terrain was easiest to navigate. Memnon's most experienced mercenaries were placed there in thick columns in close proximity and ordered to lay in wait. But instead of doing what was expected Alexander took a defensive stand and attacked the position with a light force of infantry and some cavalry, with just enough men to hold the mercenaries back.

As the battle raged on Alexander himself became engaged and fought several Persian nobles, among them the son-in-law of Darius the Great King. While Alexander was dealing a deathblow to the King's son-in-law he nearly became a casualty himself. The world would not have been the same had it not been for Cleitus who came to his rescue.

As the phalanx succeeded in pushing back the Persian cavalry, Alexander's horsemen charged the center and punched a whole right through the enemy formation. The enemy took flight and the Macedonian cavalry went in pursuit leaving many dead in their wake. No sooner had the Macedonians moved in for the kill than they were confronted from the rear by the City State mercenaries who had laid in wait throughout the entire battle. Alexander turned his phalanx around and ordered a frontal attack while his cavalry took on the flanks. In a matter of minutes the elite City State mercenary force was annihilated leaving only 2,000 survivors out of a force of 20,000. By sacrificing themselves, the City State mercenaries saved the Persian cavalry. Before the evening was over, in a few short hours on a bright day in May 334 BC, the Macedonians won a great victory.

The day after the battle all the dead, including the Persians, were buried with honour. Special attention and care was given to the wounded, each receiving a visit from Alexander himself. Compared to the enemy, Macedonian losses were insignificant, totaling about a couple hundred.

Soon after the battle of Granicus, Alexander organized an administration to manage his lands "won by his spear". Instead of incorporating these lands as part of a Greater Macedonian kingdom, Alexander did the unexpected and appointed a Macedonian "satrap". By that I mean Alexander left the old Persian government and way of governing intact. He only replaced the top Persian official (satrap) with a Macedonian. His only demands were that the Persians now pay him what was owed to the Great King. In addition to taking taxes, Alexander also took possession of the Great King's crown lands.

Alexander's idea of replacing the Great King with himself instead of incorporating the conquered lands into a "Greater Macedonia" had its merits. After seeing that no harm had come to their neighbours, other parts of Asia Minor began to surrender peacefully. When Alexander reached Sardis, the Lydian city, the people surrendered without a fight entrusting Alexander with the city's treasures, satrapy and citadel. In return, Alexander freed the Lydians from

Persian rule and gave them back their old culture, laws and way of life. He also replaced the Persian satrap with a Macedonian. Here again Alexander demonstrated his respect for other cultures, choosing to liberate instead of enslave.

After looking at the vastness of Asia, Alexander quickly realized that he could never hold a world that size with a spear. This foresight, along with the Macedonian values instilled in him (to respect people of all classes and cultures), Alexander became a liberator and a champion of the oppressed nations. His conquests became a mission of liberation not enslavement.

If Alexander is to be judged for his deeds let it be for all his deeds and not just for his conquests and military genius. Alexander was a seasoned politician with a vision of uniting all the world's nations together as equals in a democratic system (in the modern sense). Besides his political qualities, Alexander also had a great interest in culture and the natural sciences. Wherever he went he built cities, libraries, cultural centers, museums and many other wonders. He listened to poetry and comedy and took part in debates. He met many people with varying interests and the people whose accomplishments he admired most, he sent to Macedonia for the Macedonians to enjoy. He had his natural scientists study and document the flora, fauna and mineral wealth of this new world. Techniques and knowledge learned then still apply today. He adorned all the gardens of Macedonia, including those in Pella, with plants bearing the best fruits and flowers that Asia had to offer. Wherever he went, he taught the local people culture, artistic skills and natural medicine. As Michael Wood found out, "In the footsteps of Alexander the Great", these gifts that Alexander gave the Asian people are still remembered to this day. As he proceeded to free the Asian people from Persian dominion, Alexander was greeted with enthusiasm and celebrated as a liberator.

With the victory of Granicus under his belt, Alexander turned southward encountering little or no resistance until he reached Miletus and Halicarnassus where City State mercenaries were found in large numbers. The Persian commander in Miletus was ready to surrender his city but convinced that the Persian fleet was on its way he resisted. Before the Persian fleet has a chance to enter the bay, Alexander's navy intervened and closed off the mouth of the harbour. Without the help of the Persian fleet, the city defenses were no match for Alexander's siege engines. Alexander stormed the city but did not harm its population.

In an unexpected turn of events, after the battle of Miletus, Alexander disbanded his fleet. Even though his ships were of help to him during the battle, Alexander decided to disband them anyway, retaining only twenty Athenian ships as hostages. At that time there was no obvious reason given but, as we later learned, he did it to save them. He did not have the naval strength to take on the powerful Persian fleet and win, so why waste his ships? Also, he did not trust the City State navies behind him, for they too in a moment of weakness could have turned on him and cut off his retreat and supply lines. As for destroying the powerful Persian fleet, Alexander had a different plan.

At the city of Halicarnassus, the capital of Caria, Alexander met with his old adversary Memnon, who at the time was supreme commander of the Asian coast and the Persian fleet. With a division of Persian ships guarding the waters, the fortified city gave Alexander much resistance. But it could not hold out indefinitely and fell to his superior siege-craft. When it was over Alexander appointed an old woman, a princess named Ada of the Carian dynastic house, to the satrapy. Ada met Alexander earlier when he entered Caria. She offered him her city of Alinda and a proposal to adopt him as her son. Alexander was so impressed that he accepted her adoption proposal and gave her back her city. After that Alexander was known in Caria as the son of the ruler. Caria was liberated and free of foreign dominion and her satrapy granted to a native woman. Here for the first time Alexander separated civil from military responsibilities. Ada was given charge of civic functions while a Macedonian officer was responsible for the military.

During the winter of 334 BC, before heading south, Alexander sent his newly wed soldiers home on leave to visit their families and wives. Parmenio, who earlier was given command of the League troops, was dispatched to occupy Phrygia. Alexander, with the Macedonian army, spent late fall securing the western coast of Asia Minor before heading for Gordius. Alexander's plan was to paralyze the enemy fleet by occupying all the ports of the western Asia Minor seaboard. Alexander's coastal trek was mostly trouble free except when he passed through Pisidia. There he encountered stiff resistance and severe fighting from the mountain men whom he subdued. After his victory, Alexander went to Gordium, the Phrygian capital, to spend the winter.

While Alexander was making his way to Gordium, Memnon, his old adversary, was convincing his Persian lords to allow him to resurrect the old idea of bringing the war to Europe. Using the Persian fleet he began to invade the Aegean islands one by one, starting with Chios then Lesbos, hoping to get Alexander turned around. News of this brought excitement to the City States who had hoped that Memnon's intervention would turn the tide of the war in their favour. Unfortunately, their enthusiasm was cut short when Memnon suddenly fell ill and died. I can't say that Alexander was not relieved. The next spring, the soldiers on leave and reinforcements arrived from Macedonia, joining Alexander at Gordium as he prepared for departure.

In April 333 BC Alexander came across the famous Gordian Knot, which many tried but failed to untie. Legend has it that he who untied the knot would become King of Asia. Alexander tried his luck but found the tangle too complicated and impossible to untie. But Alexander was not about to give up so he did the next best thing; he drew his sword and hacked it to pieces. The end result was the same, the knot was removed and the yoke-pole of King Gordius's chariot was now bare. That night thunder and lightning followed which was interpreted as a good sign that the gods were pleased.

With his army ready to march, Alexander passed by Ancyra before turning south to continue to occupy more Persian ports. His intention was to quickly march south through Cappadocia and occupy the passes of the Taurus mountain

range on the southern coast of Cilicia. Having no time to conquer all of Cappadocia, he appointed a native satrap instead of a Macedonian.

When Alexander arrived in Cilicia he took the Persian garrison by surprise when his men climbed up the strongholds in the night. Surprised by the sudden appearance of Macedonians in their midst, the guards ran off and left the pass unguarded. The pass was taken without a fight. Alexander then marched down the mountain to seize the city of Tarsus but at the mere sight of the approaching Macedonian cavalry, its defenders also ran off. His victory at Tarsus was bittersweet as Alexander contracted an illness from swimming in icy cold waters. He would have died had he not been so physically fit. His recovery unfortunately was long and arduous.

As soon as he was well enough, Alexander and his troops were on the move. To recover lost time, he divided his army and sent Parmenio east to secure the Cilicia to Syria pass. Alexander, meanwhile, went west to secure the western coastline as well as reinforce his supply line. On his way back he took time off near Tarsus to rest and celebrate his eventual victory at Halicarnassus. As mentioned earlier Alexander conquered the city of Halicarnassus but not all the citadels. After he left, a couple of citadels were still intact so he left that job to his officers to finish.

Soon after departing Tarsus, Alexander got word from Parmenio that the Great King Darius, with a large army, was encamped on the plains of Northern Syria, about two days journey from the pass that Parmenio was now holding. After finding out what Alexander did to his army at Granicus, the Great King was furious with him and wanted to squash him like a bug. Who was this insolent man who dared challenge the Great King and prance in his backyard?

After finding out that Alexander was in Cilicia in the fall of 333 BC with plans to head south, the Great King amassed a great army and prepared a trap. Expecting Alexander to come after him, Darius picked a suitable place with battle advantage and lay in wait. Because of his numerical superiority, Darius was convinced he could crush Alexander's little army in battle. When Alexander didn't show up as expected, the Great King became anxious. Thinking Alexander was afraid to face him, Darius decided it was time to pursue him instead. Alexander did not show up because he had fallen ill. But now that he learned Darius was out there, he mustered his forces and went after him. Unfortunately, as Alexander moved south quickly through the Cilician Gates along the Syrian coast, Darius moved north towards Cilicia on the opposite side of the same mountain range.

Unbeknownst to Alexander, Darius had broken camp. Alexander left his sick and wounded at Issus and continued to travel south, hugging the coastline. Camped overnight and weathering a storm, Alexander expected to do battle the next day, but to his surprise he learned that Darius had already broken camp and was now after him. Without any knowledge of each other's positions the two armies passed one another over the mountain range of Amanus. Darius was first to learn of this from Alexander's wounded at Issus. It has been said that Darius

was so frustrated that he took his anger out on Alexander's sick and wounded by ordering his soldiers to cut off their hands so that they could never fight again.

By cutting off his retreat and supply lines, Darius was now resolved to follow Alexander into the plains of Syria and trample him and his little army to death with his cavalry. Unfortunately for Darius, Alexander had different ideas. On finding out that Darius was behind him and pursuing him, Alexander expediently turned his army around. Determined to meet Darius on his (Alexander's) terms, Alexander ordered a battle plan for the next day. After allowing his troops to have a quick meal, he mobilized the entire army and marched through the night until he arrived at the battlefield of his choice. The battle was going to take place not in the broad open plain of Syria, but in the narrow plain of Pinarus, encircled by the mountains and sea. Hidden from view, Alexander's army spent the rest of the night laying in wait. At the crack of dawn, Alexander ordered their descent to the plain, infantry first in long narrow columns followed by the cavalry. In the face of a large enemy, Alexander formed the battle lines with ease as if performing a routine exercise. The Macedonian troops displayed great discipline and courage as they took their positions, knowing that they were about to face the largest army they have ever seen. With only about 16,000 Macedonian infantry and 5,600 cavalry troops, Alexander was facing a huge Persian cavalry force of 450,000, a City State mercenary infantry force of 30,000, a light infantry force of 20,000 and 60,000 Persians armed as hoplites.

The Persian battle line (this time) had the City State mercenaries placed front and center, while right and left of them stood the hoplites with the bulk of the cavalry stationed to the right of the City State mercenaries. The remaining troops stood behind the lines in column formations. Darius, sitting on his magnificent chariot, stood in the center behind the City State mercenaries.

Before the battle started, Alexander secretly rearranged his cavalry formation moving some of it behind and to the left of the frontline. Alexander was in command of the right wing while Parmenio was in command of the left wing with strict orders not to break contact with the sea. Alexander charged first in an oblique formation, the right wing cavalry followed closely by the phalanx. As (bad) luck would have it, soon after the charge, Alexander received a leg wound. At the same time the phalanx had become dislocated and had broken line while attempting to climb the steep bank of the river. While Alexander seemed to have regained his composure, the City State mercenaries sought the opportunity and entered the gap in the open phalanx formation. The City State mercenaries fought like demons displaying their hatred for the Macedonians. But soon after overwhelming the enemy's left wing Alexander turned inward and attacked the center. The moment Darius saw Alexander coming for him, he turned his chariot around and fled. Choosing not to pursue him, Alexander first turned on the City State mercenaries and then on the numerically superior cavalry which had engaged Parmenio in a fierce battle across the Pinarus River.

Darius's flight left his army in disarray and confusion, running in all directions. As soon as the Persians began fleeing the Macedonians gave chase. Alexander, hoping to catch up to Darius, went after him. Anticipating a chase,

Darius gave up his chariot for a horse and was nowhere to be found. The pursuit inflicted catastrophic losses on the Persian army especially since it had to exit through a narrow pass. The pursuit finally ended when darkness fell.

When it was over, only 8,000 of the City State mercenary force was left intact. It is unclear how many Persians died but, according to Ptolemy who was there at the time, the pursuit at the narrow pass alone yielded a ravine full of enemy corpses. So before the year 333 BC was over the Great King's army was beaten and the Great King himself became a fugitive, leaving his royal family and great wealth to Alexander.

After the long pursuit, Alexander returned to the Pinarus and took a stroll through Darius's camp to find Darius's mother, wife and three children weeping for him. They presumed he was dead and were worried about their own fate. Here too Alexander showed compassion by not harming the royal family and treating them with utmost respect. He informed them that Darius was still alive.

Alexander's victory at Issus was welcome news in Macedonia and a crushing disappointment for Persia and her City State allies. I can just imagine the thoughts that went through the minds of the various City State members of the Corinthian League at the 332 BC Isthmian Games, when it was suggested that a golden wreath be sent to Alexander to congratulate him on his victory.

The worst disappointment, however, goes to the Persian admirals in the Aegean who by now were fed up with the poor performance of the so called "superior City State fighting skills" and opted out of their strange partnerships.

Chapter 7 - Alexander III - Lord of Asia

The victory at Issus ushered in a new era for Macedonia. Alexander's thinking was no longer "if" but "when" was he going to become the new master and lord of Asia. He was tempted to go after Darius immediately to make it happen but it was too risky, especially with the Persian fleet still intact at his rear and in control of the Aegean waters.

Alexander possessed almost no ships or navy to speak of, let alone a powerful one to subdue the Persian fleet. He wanted to win his battles so he always chose the terms of engagement. His thinking was that if he couldn't engage his enemy and win in the water then he would have to bring the fight to shore where he had the advantage. The only way to do that was by cutting off the Persian navy from its ports. His plan, therefore, was to eventually occupy all cities around the eastern Mediterranean coastline and starve the Persian fleet of its supplies.

Soon after the battle of Issus, Alexander marched his Macedonians south in an effort to secure the coastline by occupying the various port cities. In the meantime Parmenio was dispatched to Damascus to seize the city and recover Darius's treasure, which had been sent there along with the Persian baggage train before the battle of Issus. Parmenio seized the city with ease (some say by treachery) and took possession of the treasury. He also captured many City State

traitors including City State ambassadors to Persia who had previously conspired against Macedonia.

With Darius's treasury in his possession, Alexander secured the finances he needed to pay his debts and continue with his campaign. In comparison to Alexander, Darius was a very rich man, rich enough to carry 2,600 talents of coins, 500 pounds of silver, 4,500 pounds of gold and 3,400 pounds of precious stones. This however was not all of Darius's money. Compared to his total wealth this was only pocket change, which he carried with him during his travels.

Alexander journeyed through Syria taking port after port, until he reached the Phoenician port city of Tyre. Tyre was an independent city, the most powerful naval and commercial port in the region. Most of the sailors in the Persian fleet were either from Cyprus or Tyre. Being independent (not under Persian rule) the citizens of Tyre wished to remain neutral (neither under Persian nor Macedonian rule). This however was not an option for Alexander. He needed to control all ports, especially Tyre, if he were to close off the Persian fleet. Being unable to negotiate a peaceful surrender Alexander declared war on Tyre and began a siege around January 332 BC.

Tyre stood on an island about a kilometer offshore. The city was fortified on all sides by high stone walls and defended by the powerful Tyrian fleet. At the time, both Alexander and the Tyrians felt confident that they could outlast one other and neither was willing to relent. The Tyrians, trusting their city to be impregnable, found the very idea of Alexander thinking of attempting a siege absurd. How could he seize an island when he didn't even have a fleet? Alexander, on the other hand, could not afford to allow the powerful Phoenician city to exist free behind his lines, especially since he was planning to venture deeper into Asia. He had no choice but to seize it by force. When the siege began, no one had any idea of the enormity of the task.

While Alexander's military strength lay on land, the city he wanted to besiege lay in water. The only way he could turn the situation to his advantage was by building a bridge and linking the island to the shore. His army could then rush in with its siege engines, knock down the walls and seize the city. While the army drafted labour from the local vicinity and neighbouring towns to build the bridge, Alexander's craftsmen and engineers began the construction of the colossal siege towers. Building the bridge proved a lot more difficult than expected. Even though the water was shallow, the bottom was all mud and stakes had to be driven deep down, supported by stone before the sixty-meter wide road could be constructed. As the building of the causeway progressed, every stone found in the vicinity was carried and deposited into the water.

The Tyrians taunted and mocked the workers telling them that Alexander was crazy and wasting his time. But as the road began to materialize and approach the island the Tyrians began to panic. Physical attacks and countermeasures began to replace mocking and taunting. At the outset, Tyrian commandos attacked Alexander's supply lines on land hoping to slow down the building effort. Later, the Tyrian fleet began raiding by sea, sending ships with

archers, slingers and catapults to attack the workers. Alexander, in the meantime, took every precaution possible to protect his men as well as maintain his schedule. When it became obvious that Alexander was not going to give up and his chances of actually besieging Tyre improved, many of the local cities, including Sidon a former enemy of Tyre, offered him assistance, including ships. Alexander quickly assembled a strong sea force to bottle the Tyrian fleet in its own harbour and to repel Tyrian raids at the causeway.

There was one major incident that could have turned the tide on Alexander but his confidence in his army's abilities and his unwavering persistence paid off. The Tyrians put together a large floating craft, set it on fire and by using the wind managed to burn most of the causeway. Alexander was away at the time on an expedition to find more lumber. When he returned he was shocked to find that his road had been destroyed. Instead of giving up, Alexander built a new causeway north of the old one. As the artificial harbour approached the island shore the Tyrians became desperate. They tried everything to stop the progress including pouring boiling sand on the soldiers. But, in spite of their gallant effort, nothing worked and the Macedonians eventually besieged the city.

Tyre fell in August 332 BC. It was a grueling seven-month effort on both sides but in the end the most determined won. The Tyrians, on several occasions, were given a chance to surrender. Unfortunately wisdom gave way to stubbornness and they fought bravely to the end. When it was over, about six to eight thousand were killed and about thirty thousand were taken prisoner and sold into slavery. The Tyrian leaders along with about two thousand of their fighting men were executed. The city itself was spared and resettled, continuing to function as an important naval and commercial port but under Macedonian rule.

I want to mention at this point that Tyre was the Sister City to Carthage. Carthage is located on the other side of the Mediterranean Sea south of Rome and played a key role in Rome's development as a super power. Had Alexander sacked Carthage as he intended to, our world would have been a different world today.

After his gallant struggle and long delay in Tyre, Alexander resumed his trek southward through Palestine, heading for Egypt. His voyage, expectedly, was interrupted as he ran into resistance at the city of Gaza. Gaza was well fortified and defended by Persian soldiers, supplemented by a strong force of Arab mercenaries. Unable to break through the city's fortification by conventional means, Alexander employed his siege engines and within two months reduced Gaza's fortification to rubble. During the course of the siege Alexander received a wound to his shoulder which put him out of action for a couple of weeks. Being physically fit, however, he recovered quickly and joined the final assault on the city. After breaking through the fortification, a vicious struggle ensued spilling into the streets where Alexander was again wounded, this time in the leg. When the battle was over, ten thousand were killed and the civilian population was rounded up and sold into slavery. Gaza too was resettled with people from the local region, converted into a fortress and placed under Macedonian control.

From Gaza, Alexander's army marched along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea and then turned south into Egypt where huge crowds greeted him as a liberator. Having conquered all the port cities around the eastern Mediterranean coast, the threat from the Persian fleet was finally removed. Before penetrating the interior of Asia, Alexander planned to occupy Egypt by force but it fell without a fight. The Egyptian people hailed Alexander as a liberator, giving him the citadel of Memphis along with its treasury amounting to 800 talents. Egypt was a strategic location for Alexander's Asian campaign and it was now secure.

Something else happened to Alexander in Egypt, something unexpected. Having defeated the Persian King who ruled in place of the Pharaoh of Egypt, in the eyes of the Egyptian priests, Alexander now became Egypt's new ruler but not a Pharaoh. For the priests, unfortunately, it was impossible to accept a foreigner as a true Pharaoh. If Alexander were to continue on his campaign deep into Asia he had to pacify Egypt and gain its loyalty. Egypt was a large, rich country with a huge population capable of supplying his army with all the necessities for the entire campaign. He had to do whatever was necessary to secure it, which meant that Alexander had to become Egypt's undisputed ruler. The only way to do that was by becoming an Egyptian Pharaoh. Unfortunately, a foreigner could only become a Pharaoh by divine intervention.

Accepting this challenge Alexander took a trip to Siwa to visit the religious order. When he arrived at the temple of the oracle, the high priest greeted him as the "son of Zeus-Ammon and master of all lands". Why the priest greeted him this way is unknown, perhaps an error in translation? Alexander was delighted with the pronouncement and humbly accepted his proclamation as the "Son of God".

After returning to Memphis during the winter of 332-331BC, Alexander took a small division from his army and went down the Nile River. Just before reaching the Mediterranean coast he saw a perfect strip of land upon which to lay the foundation of a great city which would bear his name, Alexandria of Egypt. Alexandria, in time, would bring about change in intellectual and economic life as never before experienced and for the next one thousand years would become the center of civilization. With the founding of Alexandria, a port city facing the Mediterranean, Alexander transformed his military efforts into business opportunities not just for the Macedonians but for the entire known world. Alexandria was to become the leading multinational, multicultural, commercial trade centre of the world.

The closing of the entire Eastern Mediterranean coast forced the Persian navy to move on and opened the way for the Macedonian fleet to dominate the waters.

After returning to Memphis, Alexander met the reinforcements sent to him by Antipater and ordered the army to prepare to march. Before leaving, however, he sent a scientific expedition up the Nile River on a discovery mission and also appointed a couple of native satraps and Macedonian overseers to govern Egypt. Alexander did not want to entrust the governing of such a large country to a single person.

In early spring of 331BC Alexander left Memphis and headed for Phoenicia. He stopped at Tyre for a while and made some changes to the government there before proceeding north towards Damascus.

The Great King Darius, in the meantime, having received Alexander's answer to his peace offer began to amass a great army. Darius offered Alexander the marriage of his daughter, 10,000 talents and the lands east of the Euphrates in exchange for peace. Parmenio and his older officers encouraged Alexander to accept the offer but Alexander declined wanting it all: Darius's lands, money and his crown. Having no alternative the Great King began preparations for another battle.

The Persian Empire was vast and Darius had no problem raising an army. Besides the Persians there were many other races that offered assistance. The Indians even sent him fifteen elephants. Besides raising a great army Darius was also careful to find open space for his choice of battleground, the kind that would give him advantage over Alexander. This time Darius was determined to get things his way and made sure everything was done correctly.

While Darius was raising an army, Alexander was marching northward preparing to cross the Euphrates River. As expected during war, his advance force, which was sent to build a bridge over the mighty river, faced opposition from the satrap of Syria and Mesopotamia. But the moment Alexander arrived with his army the Satrap fled and the bridge was built with relative ease. Then as Alexander advanced towards the Tigris River the local spies led him to believe that Darius was on the other side waiting to prevent his passage. Assuming the reports were accurate, Alexander force-marched his army to catch up but Darius was nowhere to be found. Alexander's army crossed the Tigris on September 20th, 331 BC and marched on in a southeasterly direction until it reached the village of Guagamela. There he found Darius's army clearing and leveling the land to give his chariots advantage over the Macedonian phalanx.

In battle formation, Darius stood on his chariot at the center. By his sides stood the mounted guard and Persian infantry. To the right and to the left stood the City State mercenaries. At both wings stood a combined force of cavalry and infantry. In front of the wings stood the allied cavalries and front and center stood fifteen elephants. In front of the battle line stood 200 Scythian chariots ready to roll along the cleared, smoothed out ground.

Alexander was initially planning to deploy the usual oblique formation with the offensive right wing commanded by himself and the defensive left wing commanded by Parmenio. Due to the overwhelming numerical superiority of his opponent, however, Alexander decided to add a second battle line capable of fighting a second front behind him, in case he was surrounded. In other words, if Alexander's forces were to be surrounded their formation would take the shape of a flexible square and push the enemy outwards on all four fronts.

Expecting to be immediately attacked, Darius ordered his battle line to form and waited. After sizing up the situation, Alexander decided not to attack and camped his troops about four kilometers away from Darius's camp. That evening

Alexander ordered his men to rest for the night. Darius's men, expecting an attack at any time, stood ready all night.

The morning after, October 1st, 331 BC, Alexander, with a well-rested army, approached from the north but found his right wing too short to match the opponent's. To compensate he continued to stretch his line but his opponent continued to match his moves. Darius, however, feared that if he moved too far off the cleared ground he would compromise the mobility of his chariots and ordered the attack. The chariots rushed to outflank Alexander but Alexander's men were prepared. The archers struck first and took out most of the charioteers while Alexander's front line quickly formed into columns, allowing the rushing chariots to pass. Trapped by columns of men and unable to maneuver, the horses were overpowered by Alexander's grooms, effectively disabling the chariots. Now, as the two lines of battle were drawing close, Alexander noticed a gap in the Persian left and sought the opportunity to take the offensive. Leading his companions he swerved and rushed into the gap and began to roll towards the center. The phalanx also pushed hard towards the center squeezing the battle towards Darius. Frightened by this sudden fierce attack, Darius turned his chariot around and fled. His guards formed a protective circle around him and they too fled. In his absence, his troops in the center and left wings followed suit. It was Issus all over again. Darius left the battlefield before the battle was decided.

The rapid movement of the phalanx in the center of Alexander's formation caused a gap in the Macedonian line, which could have been exploited by the enemy. But instead of closing in on the line, the undisciplined Persians and their allies rushed in to plunder Alexander's camp. The moment the enemy disengaged, Alexander's second front line went into effect and chased the looters back.

In the meantime, Parmenio was having trouble and had sent for Alexander to help him. By now Alexander's companions had broken through the enemy lines and were just about to pursue Darius. As much as he wanted to catch him, Alexander could not leave the battle unattended. Disappointed as he was, he turned his companions around and made his way towards Parmenio, only to run into the fleeing looters. A bloody cavalry engagement ensued as the trapped enemy soldiers now desperately fought for their lives. By the time Alexander reached Parmenio, the battle was over. Parmenio had overwhelmed his attackers and was now free. Unfortunately, so was Darius. This was the second time Alexander was robbed of his chance at gaining a total victory, complete with the capture of Darius.

Even before the battle of Guagamela was over Alexander acted quickly and sent an advanced force to Susa to take possession of the treasury before it was looted.

With the battle won, Alexander went in search of Darius and rode through the night. Unable to find him, the next day he returned to Guagamela (Arbela) to harvest the fruits of his victory and bury his dead. It is estimated that enemy losses were between fifty and sixty thousand while Macedonian losses were estimated at less than one thousand. When the dust settled, Alexander's victory

was celebrated with the burial of the fallen soldiers, with gift giving ceremonies and with Alexander's acclamation as King of Asia.

Confident that the Persian threat was over, to ease the tension back home, Alexander loosened his tight grip on the City States by giving them autonomy. With the Persians defeated, Alexander no longer feared a City State-Persian alliance but he could not completely discount the Spartan threats in the potentially explosive Peloponnesus.

Soon after his victory Alexander left Arbela and continued to journey southwards to Babylon, expecting to run into resistance from the surviving Persian army. To his surprise, however, the same Persian satrap who fiercely fought Parmenio in Guagamela now came out with his sons to peacefully greet Alexander and surrender the city. What was more surprising was that not only the city leaders but also the entire general population came out en masse to greet their new King. They decorated the streets with wreaths and flowers to welcome the Macedonians. Like the Egyptians, the Babylonians too saw Alexander not as a conqueror but as a liberator. Alexander was more than happy to accept sovereignty over Babylon when the Babylonians offered it to him. He even took a step further and made the great city into a separate kingdom with its own religion, traditions and civil government. As in Egypt, Alexander appointed a native satrap as the head of the civil government while military, financial and taxation responsibilities remained in the hands of the Macedonians.

The Babylon story unfortunately was not entirely a happy one. According to Michael Wood there are newly discovered Babylonian texts which tell us that not everyone in Babylon was happy with Alexander and his plundering of their world.

After spending about a month in Babylon, on November 25th, 331 BC, Alexander set off for Susa. On his way there he received word that his advance force, previously sent to secure the city and take possession of the treasures, had successfully completed its mission. Like Babylon, Susa surrendered without a fight with the great treasure depot of the Persian King intact. In spite of spending great sums of money to finance his campaigns, Darius still had enough treasure left to purchase a small country or as Michael Wood puts it, equivalent to the national income of the fifth century Athenian empire for 150 years. It is estimated that apart from the precious stones, 40,000 silver talents and 9,000 gold darics (coins) were also discovered and fell into Alexander's hands. Alexander was a happy man indeed.

Alexander arrived in Susa on December 15th, 331 BC, and was greeted by the governor and a delegation of important people bearing rich gifts including a dozen Indian elephants. Some of the money received was sent to Macedonia to finance Antipater's campaign against the Spartans. In the spring of 331 BC, the Spartans formed a Peloponnesian coalition and were preparing to fight Macedonia. Antipater unfortunately had his hands full putting down Thracian uprisings and was unable to immediately respond to this Spartan provocation. The Spartans took this as a sign of weakness and began to attack cities loyal to Macedonia. Antipater quickly finished off the northern campaign and

expediently marched south. When he arrived he found the Spartans and their allies besieging the city of Megalopolis in Arcadia which had remained loyal to Macedonia and would not surrender. There was a great battle and Antipater won a decisive victory. The mighty Spartans were vanquished and begged for peace. Antipater took most of the nobles as hostages and referred their fate to the League as Alexander had previously done with the Thebans. Unfortunately, the League of Corinth, seeing this as another blow to their freedom, did not have the stomach to pass judgement and left the fate of the captured undecided. It was now up to Alexander to determine their punishment. When they arrived in Asia, Alexander held a trial where it was decided that the troublemakers would be executed and the rest freed. Sparta, however, was forced to join the League of Corinth.

With the defeat of Sparta, the legacy, culture and way of life of the ancient City States ended forever. From then forward, Macedonia ruled over them for centuries until the Roman wars.

After collecting his treasure, Alexander appointed a Persian satrap in charge of civil duties and two Macedonian commanders in charge of the troops and citadels. While still in Susa, he also received several thousand fresh Macedonian troops for his next campaign.

After a bit of rest and relaxation, Alexander was on the move again, this time headed for Parsa (Persepolis) but first he had to cross the land of the Uxii. While the people of the plains submitted without a fight, the highlanders, bound by old traditions, demanded tribute as payment for passage through their lands. Everyone had to pay, including the Persian King as many had done before him. Alexander unfortunately was not the sort who would easily yield to bandits and marauders. Instead of paying tribute he unleashed his army upon them. He sent a strong detachment behind their lines to cut off their retreat while his main army attacked from below. After a short battle the Uxians were overpowered and fled, only to be annihilated by the Macedonians waiting at their rear. It was now Alexander's turn to impose a penalty demanding from them annual tributes of 100 horses, 500 draught animals and 30,000 sheep.

At this point Alexander decided to split his army in two. Parmenio went with the allied forces to Parsa via the main southern road while Alexander with the second force took a shortcut to the Persian Gates through the treacherous mountains. After five days of forced march, Alexander arrived at the pass only to run into serious resistance. In anticipation, the Persians had built a wall across the pass. A sizable force was waiting for the Macedonians to arrive. Upon contact, Alexander initiated a direct siege but was unable to penetrate the barriers. The Persians had artillery and archers mounted above the wall. From there they rolled great boulders and rained arrows and javelins down upon the Macedonians below. Alexander suffered heavy casualties and had to retreat. Discouraged by the heavy losses, Alexander's officers were about to give up the siege claiming that it would be easier to go around than lose more men attempting the impossible. "Impossible? It is not impossible." Alexander exclaimed. "It is so simple that even that old shepherd over there can show you

how it is done. Bring me the old man here and I will prove it to you.” When the old man arrived, Alexander had him questioned about the local terrain. Being a shepherd all his life the old man was familiar with the local landscape, especially the passes that led through the treacherous terrain. With relative ease the old shepherd was able to lead Alexander’s army behind the Persian position.

Alexander left a strong cavalry force and two battalions of the phalanx at the entrance to the gorge. To deceive the enemy about his numbers, Alexander ordered his men to burn the normal number of campfires at night. Then when the signal was given, they were to assault the wall. Alexander in the meantime took a commando force and assault troops through the long and winding twenty-kilometer path and after a day and two nights travel, reached his destination. He gave the signal to attack at dawn and after a bloody clash the Persian force was totally annihilated.

Victorious, Alexander resumed his journey towards Parsa only to be bogged down by heavy snowdrifts, ravines and watercourses. Part way he received incentive to get moving again when a messenger arrived with news that Parsa was ready to surrender. If, however, Alexander didn’t hurry to get there in good time the inhabitants would plunder its treasures.

Alexander acted at once ordering the infantry to follow as best as it could while the cavalry dashed all night at breakneck speeds until it reached the Araxes River at dawn. There was no bridge so his engineers hurriedly built one from timbers and stones in record time, allowing the cavalry to cross and ride on. Alexander arrived in time to marvel at the splendor of Persian culture and to secure his treasure. His gaze at the city’s magnificence reinforced the reality that Persian rule was over. Alexander was now the new lord and master of Asia as he planted his feet in Parsa and sat himself at the throne of Xerxes. Soon after taking control of the city, Alexander ordered his troops to burn down Xerxes’s building as a symbolic act to show that he had now accomplished what he had set out to do. It was an act that he would later regret.

While in Parsa, Alexander received news of the final Macedonian victory over the Spartan coalition. Alexander must have been ecstatic at the knowledge that the once feared and mighty Spartans had folded not before him but before Antipater, a mere general. There was nothing that could stand in Alexander’s way now. His army proved itself invincible against any foe and amply demonstrated its cunning and might in all kinds of battles and under all conceivable circumstances.

With the Spartan threat out of the way, the last bastion of City State resistance was over and Alexander no longer needed to hold the City State armies hostage. With much fanfare, gift giving and bonus pay he dismissed the entire League troops from their duty. The Thessalian cavalry, which proved itself worthy in battle, he rewarded handsomely and sent home. Those who preferred to stay in Alexander’s commission were accepted as paid mercenaries, not as allied soldiers. With the fall of Sparta the so-called “alliance” also ended and Alexander’s campaigns from here on forward were waged by Macedonians only.

Alexander and his army took a long deserved rest during the winter months before setting out to occupy Ecbatana, the last of the Persian capitals.

The treasures Alexander found in Parsa were even greater than those found in Susa. It is estimated that he collected 120,000 Persian talents from Parsa alone and another 6,000 talents from Pasargadae, a nearby town that also surrendered without a fight.

In May 330 BC, after about four months rest, Alexander left Parsa and headed northwards. It seemed unusual that Alexander would remain still for this long but Peter Green believes that he was waiting for the Persian New Year festival to commence so that he could participate in it. That unfortunately did not happen and Alexander left for Ecbatana to again look for Darius. Darius, in the meantime, hoped that Alexander would be so intoxicated by the overwhelming treasures and the decadent life in Parsa that he would retire in the luxurious quarters of the western palaces and forget about pursuing him. Just to be on the safe side however, Darius began to amass a new army in case Alexander dared to attack. Darius would then quickly escape into Bactria, destroying the countryside and leaving nothing behind.

When Alexander found out that Darius was in Ecbatana he went after him. Anticipating Alexander's move Darius quickly sent his baggage train and harem to the Caspian Gates while he prepared a trap for Alexander in Ecbatana. Counting on the assistance of his allies, the Scythians and Cadusians to provide him with massive reinforcements, Darius challenged Alexander to a battle. When Alexander heard of Darius's challenge, he instructed his baggage train to follow behind while he force-marched his Macedonians in pursuit. But before reaching Ecbatana, Alexander learned that Darius had not received the reinforcements he expected and had resolved to flee. When Alexander arrived at Ecbatana he was a week too late. His 500-kilometer break neck march was for nothing. Darius had cleared the city treasury of its 7,000 talents and had slipped away eastwards with 6,000 infantry and 3,000 cavalry troops. This was a great disappointment for Alexander making him even more determined to hunt Darius down.

Before leaving on his journey deep into Asia, Alexander built a treasury house at the citadel of Ecbatana to safeguard the 180,000 or so talents that he had amassed from Susa and Parsa. Parmenio was put in charge of guarding it. After dismissing the allied forces, his loyal Macedonian general Parmenio, having no army to command, was reduced in rank to military area commander. He was then placed in charge of guarding Alexander's treasury house at Ecbatana and securing his communication lines to the rear. Parmenio was seventy years old when Alexander diplomatically coaxed him into retiring from the front lines.

With his treasury secured and Parmenio in charge of local affairs in Persia proper, Alexander was free to pursue Darius in present day Iran, by way of the Caspian Gates. It is a shame that such great effort was expended in the pursuit of a single man in such a reckless manner during July in the heat of the desert.

Alexander force-marched his army northward and covered 320 kilometers in eleven days, moving relentlessly in an attempt to overtake the Persians before they crossed the Caspian Gates. When they reached Rhagae, about eighty

kilometers from the Caspian Gates, Alexander discovered that Darius had already passed through. Alexander at that point decided to stop the pursuit and allowed his army rest for five days before continuing on through the Gates. When they crossed the Gates, Alexander was informed that Darius had been deposed by his own satraps and was now their prisoner. Alexander quickly deployed his fastest cavalry on an all night pursuit and in the morning when they reached Darius's camp they discovered that Darius had been arrested and taken away.

Alexander continued his search and when his Macedonians finally caught up to him they found Darius in chains and weakened from stab wounds. After a wild all night chase, the next day Alexander's men discovered Darius mortally stabbed by javelins. Darius's own satraps murdered him to prevent him from falling into Alexander's hands, alive. Darius was around fifty years old when he met his tragic end in July of 330 BC.

After learning of the agonizing circumstances under which Darius had died, Alexander took his body back to Parsa and gave him a kingly burial in one of the Archaemenid royal cemeteries. Alexander, to the surprise of his Macedonians and especially the citizens of the City States, did something unusual by declaring his desire to avenge the murdered Darius. He declared that the rebels who had murdered their royal master would be punished severely while those faithful to him would be held in high honour.

With the death of Darius, the impression was that the war was over. A rumour was started around the camp that the crusade might be over and everyone would soon be allowed to go home. After all, the allied forces had been dismissed and Darius was dead, what other purpose would there be to go on? This was obvious to everyone of course except Alexander who now wanted to avenge Darius's death by going after his murderers. It was obvious that Alexander had motives different from his Macedonians. Alexander was not out to avenge anyone but rather to continue the conquests that would satisfy his own desires. His loyal soldiers, unfortunately, were becoming weary and wondered when, if ever, they would be able to go home to enjoy their hard-earned earnings in peace?

Alexander convened a meeting of his officers and soldiers and put an end to the rumours about going home and then ordered the army to prepare to move again. Even though Alexander got his way (again), this time unfortunately a rift began to develop between his own desires and those of his men. Alexander was well aware of the problems he was about to face and began to look at non-Macedonians as possible candidates for his civil as well as military administration. To lessen their loneliness, he even encouraged his men to take wives from the captive women and bring them along on the campaign. As he was moving away from Macedonia, Alexander knew all too well that receiving new recruits and maintaining a long distance communication link with home would become more and more difficult, especially since he was planning to make "conquering" a way of life.

After a few days rest the army was on the move again and headed east towards Hyrcania. On his way through Iraq, Alexander encountered wild tribes that had never before been conquered and fierce battles broke out. After subduing some he made them pay tributes of horses and livestock. Some, especially the very skilled horsemen and archers he drafted into his service.

While crossing Iran, Alexander found a new enemy with different fighting skills that offered him no great battles. It was an enemy in small numbers that hid during the day and attacked at night. It appeared in the rear and hit at several places simultaneously and quickly disappeared. When Alexander went in pursuit, it entrenched itself in inaccessible terrain or dispersed itself and vanished into the woodlands. Alexander, in response to these terror attacks, reorganized his army into small mixed units that could fight many independent battles simultaneously or come together as one large unit if necessary. Alexander also, for the first time, employed riding archers and javelin throwers who could attack on the move. With the new fighting methods and the conscription of foreigners into his military, Alexander's army was no longer the same army as when he had started out.

After spending two weeks of summer in Hyrcania, Alexander moved eastward to the northern side of Areia. There he received news that Bessus, one of Darius's satraps who was also a suspect in Darius's murder, had been recognized in the province of Bactria as King of Asia. Alexander was about to set out for Bactra, the capital city of Bactria, in pursuit of Bessus when he received news that the satrap of Areia was in support of Bessus's recognition and himself was planning an insurrection in Areia. Without losing any time, Alexander, with part of his army in a fast paced two-day march, showed up unexpectedly in Artacoana, the capital of Areia. His presence brought great fear among the rebels and the insurrection collapsed.

Unfortunately, during the forced march Alexander lost Nicator, Parmenio's son and commander of his Guards Brigade. Nicator fell ill and died on his way to Artacoana. Alexander was too much in a hurry pursuing Bessus to stay and honour his fallen soldier himself as he did with so many others, so he gave that task to Philotus, Nicator's brother which in the long term proved to be a mistake. Alexander was determined to put down Bessus as soon as possible and after arriving in Artacoana, went on the move again. He had learned that Bessus was raising a large army recruiting from Bactria and from the wild nomadic tribes beyond the Oxus.

Alexander was now entering uncharted territory and did not know what to expect. To avoid further trouble he founded a Macedonian settlement, which he named Alexandria-of-the-Areians, the first of many military garrisons positioned at strategic points throughout the eastern provinces.

For some reason Alexander abandoned his haste to reach Bactra by direct route and decided to travel south, perhaps to tame the rest of the provinces before heading north for the Hindu Kush. He secured these regions too by founding several new Macedonian settlements such as Alexandria-in-Arachosia, present-

day Kandahar and Alexandria-at-the-Caucasus. To build his cities, Alexander's army laboured all through the winter without rest.

In the spring of 329 BC, after a short rest, Alexander led his army over the snowy Hindu Kush. Despite the opposition Bessus offered him, Alexander emerged victorious and entered Bactria. Bessus fled and disappeared in Sogdiana. Alexander occupied Bactria including the capital Bactra and then advanced northward across the Oxus River. It has been said that there was no wood to build a bridge so it took the army five days to cross the Oxus River. They swam across the river using inflated leather skins, which had been sewn together from their tent coverings.

As soon as Alexander entered Sogdiana, Bessus fell out of favour with his supporters for not putting up a fight. Then gradually his own troops deserted him. Bessus's fall from grace did not mean that the rebellion was over. In time a new and much more dangerous antagonist would take his place and carry on the national resistance.

After capturing Bessus, Alexander continued his trek northward past Maracanda until he came upon the Jaxartes River where he reached the extreme northeast limit of the Persian Empire. Beyond there, in the broad steppes, lived nomads who were always a danger to the empire. To defend against attack and keep watch on the river, Alexander founded a frontier Macedonian settlement and named it Alexandria-Eschate or Khojend.

While Alexander was occupied with the preparations for the founding of his new city, a Persian rebellion was festering and erupted into violent revolts in a number of localities. Alexander did not waste time before unleashing his army and crushing the insurrection with much bloodshed. All the towns that participated were destroyed and their inhabitants executed. But instead of crushing their spirits, Alexander's actions inflamed the rebels and soon afterwards even more uprisings took place, on a greater scale. At one point the rebels managed to defeat the Macedonian expeditionary force and besiege Maracanda. Their action, however, angered Alexander to a point where he himself took a contingent of light troops and force-marched 300 kilometers in three days in pursuit of the rebels until they were subdued and severely punished. When he was finished, he headed south into Bactra where he spent the winter of 329-328 BC resting.

During the following spring, Alexander split his army in two and left Craterus behind in Bactria to protect the city while he moved north into Sogdiana to put down more rebellions. While Alexander was rounding up rebels, he instructed Hephaestion to plan out several cities in Sogdiana. A new city named Alexandria-the-furthestmost emerged which was later populated by Macedonian immigrants.

Victorious over the rebels, Alexander gave command of Sogdiana to Coenus while he and his army moved on to Nautaca to spend the winter.

Of all the rebellions that erupted between 329 and 327 BC, only one remained undefeated. The rebels here were perched high upon an inaccessible rocky citadel in the mountains of Sogdiana. In the spring of 327 BC, Alexander

marched his army from the wintering grounds of Nautaca to the high fortress of Sogdiana and summoned the rebels to surrender. Unfortunately, the only answer he received was laughter and ridicule. They said that the only way they would surrender was if Alexander's soldiers suddenly developed wings.

Alexander turned to his men and asked for volunteers, offering high rewards to those who would scale the highest peak. As it turned out, among the Macedonian soldiers were mountain climbers and some 300 of the bravest and boldest volunteered. They undertook the climb in the dark of night using ropes and iron tent pegs for spikes, which they drove into the icy cold rock. Thirty of them fell to their death during the climb but the rest made it to the top. Then early the next morning, in the dawn of first light, the rebels saw, to their astonishment, these Macedonian supermen high above them and immediately capitulated, surrendering their fortress. Among the rebels captured was the Bactrian prince, Oxyartes, who had with him his beautiful daughter Roxane. In the judgement of Alexander's companions, Roxane was the most beautiful woman they had ever seen, second only to Stateira, the wife of Darius. Alexander fell passionately in love with her and soon afterwards made her his wife.

Soon after this campaign was over, Alexander marched eastwards towards Paraetacene to put down another citadel of resistance. Here too Alexander found the fortress perched high on a steep rock surrounded by deep ravines and very rough terrain. It seemed that the more impregnable the fortress looked the more Alexander was determined to penetrate it. He loved challenges and so did his Macedonians because they too seemed eager to do the impossible.

With a bit of Macedonian ingenuity, a lot of determination and with whatever nature had to offer, the Macedonian engineers constructed long ladders from the surrounding tall pine trees descending into the ravines. From the bottom they raised a causeway over the ravine to the citadel walls. They then built a penthouse above the causeway to protect the soldiers from falling artillery and began to bombard the citadel walls. It did not take too long before the shaken rebels offered to surrender.

This being the last bastion of resistance, Alexander had put down all resistance in the Far East and was free to return to Bactra. Alexander was hesitant to leave Sogdiana unresolved before continuing on his trek to India. Here he met a fighting people with great determination much like his own. He needed to pacify them but not by just defeating them in battle. He needed to show them that he had earned their respect but not just by employing them into his services. He needed to make them partners the old fashioned way, by marrying one of their kind, the way Philip would have done.

Before returning to Bactra Alexander married Roxane at the top of the citadel in the castle he had just conquered. His marriage to Roxane was a symbol of reconciliation with his former enemies and was meant to have great political importance. The marriage ceremony was conducted according to Iranian customs, which was meant to flatter the Iranian national pride. Unfortunately,

what was good for the Persians and non-Macedonians was certainly viewed with contempt by some Macedonians, so we are told.

A great deal of this information comes to us from ancient City State sources and personally I believe it is biased. There may have been differences of opinion between Alexander and his officers but not to the extent emphasized. Alexander always showed interest in foreign cultures because he knew that he could benefit from their diversity. Alexander also knew that he could not rule a vast empire such as this by spear alone. He needed to elevate the feeling of belonging among all people. What better example than for Alexander himself to show everyone that even a king was not beneath participating in other peoples' customs. There was bound to be some friction between his more conservative officers and himself but I don't believe it was mutinous. Philotas may have had good reason to despise Alexander's fraternization with the enemy. His brother died for Alexander and yet Alexander was too busy to give him a proper burial. There were also those who were tired of fighting a war without end and who were bound to complain. What good is wealth if one can't enjoy it?

History should judge the Macedonians not by what other people, especially those from the City States, have said but by what the Macedonians did. Despite the negative comments from ancient authors, there is one overriding truth that can't be denied. The Macedonian army remained loyal to Alexander to the end. No army can remain intact or win battles the way the Macedonians did if there is dissension between its leaders. Alexander was unquestionably loyal to the Macedonians and the Macedonians were in turn unquestionably loyal to Alexander. The rest is nothing but rumours. Outside of these rumours, no ancient author has left any record of a real mutiny or conspiracy that may have allegedly taken place within the Macedonian army. There is not a single record of one Macedonian raising arms against another Macedonian. By this I am referring to Philotas's trial and Parmenio's execution. There are claims that Philotas was aware of a conspiracy to murder Alexander and Parmenio may have been part of the same conspiracy. It seems to me that in their preoccupation with their tabloid style denigration of Alexander, the ancient authors "simply forgot" to mention his more important accomplishments. They simply forgot to mention Alexander's desire to unite all cultures of the world as equals, which has been a Macedonian quality passed on from generation to generation and has survived in the hearts of many Macedonian revolutionaries.

Those who had contempt for Alexander have left us with the impression that Alexander and his officers were disgusting drunkards and petty, suspicious little men spying and exacting revenge on one other. Is this the making of a great army? Are we to believe that Alexander and his officers who, at all odds, won every single battle they fought and made possible out of the impossible because they were a bunch of drunk paranoid megalomaniacs?

It is truly a shame that we know practically nothing of Alexander's vision of a future world. His desire to create a truly democratic and pluralistic society has been clouded and coloured by those too small to see beyond themselves and their own prejudices. Alexander's vision, be it out of necessity or by design, was so

far ahead of its time that we today are grasping to comprehend it. Alexander may have conquered the world by force but there is no doubt that he had desires to turn it into a modern “United Nations”.

Chapter 8 - Alexander III - To the Ends of the Earth, the Trek to India

By 328 BC, Alexander had conquered the entire Persian Empire, at least the empire that belonged to Darius III. The ancient authors gave no account as to why Alexander wanted to go beyond the Persian realm but as soon as he completed his conquests of eastern Iran, Alexander began preparations to invade India. I believe Alexander acted not so much on his desire for conquest but on his overwhelming curiosity to see what was beyond the eastern realm of the known world then. No doubt, while dealing with the mountain Indians of eastern Iran, he had heard stories about India that did not fit with his previous knowledge of that part of the world.

Before leaving Bactra, Alexander parted with tradition and appointed Amyntas, a Macedonian, instead of a foreign satrap to secure the important satrapy of Bactria. Amyntas was left well armed with 10,000 infantry and 3,500 cavalry, more soldiers than Alexander had started with seven years before.

In the spring of 327 BC, while his army stood at the Hindu Kush contemplating the sight of the eastern edge of the world, Alexander meticulously planned the next step of his campaign. For the Indians, Alexander’s approach through the Hindu Kush was a reminder of the Aryan invasion long ago. Nomadic Aryans invaded India around 1500 BC, destroyed the Indus valley civilization and exterminated the Indus inhabitants, thus ending the most brilliant civilization of the ancient world.

On his journey to India, Alexander brought with him his young queen Roxane, who a year later bore him a son. Unfortunately the child died soon after birth.

In early summer of 327 BC, Alexander divided his army into two. The main column, commanded by Hephaestion and Perdikkas, went down the Kabul River and over the Khyber Pass to build bridges and prepare for the invasion. Alexander meanwhile, with his lightly armed units, took a different path along the Kunar Valley in east Afghanistan and from there he crossed into northwestern Pakistan.

Along his journey Alexander encountered stiff opposition, which required severe fighting. The fearless Indian tribes along the mountainous terrain had numerous warriors and presented difficulties for Alexander’s advance. The fighting was so severe that during the first contact both Alexander and Ptolemy were wounded.

After crossing the Swat River, Alexander encountered more formidable tribes and the fighting became even more intense. The Indians fought bravely but eventually relented. After losing Massaga, their chief fortress, the Indians left for Aornos (Pir-Sar), another fortress. Situated at the bend of the Indus River, this 1,500-meter high fortress was impossible to scale. Sensing the limits of his

army's capability, Alexander, for the time being, decided not to pursue the enemy any further. He turned his army around and marched southward down the Indus River.

Later, using different strategies, Alexander attempted to besiege the Aornos fortress several times without success. Alexander could not enter Punjab with Aornos intact. He had to break its resistance. If conventional means did not work then he had to invent new methods of attack. Of all the new methods attempted, the most successful proved to be the flooding of the ravines surrounding the fortress. As soon as the water rose high enough in the ravine to bridge the army's position with the rock, Alexander's siege-engines moved in for the kill. The resistance soon broke and the army was able to rush in and subdue their opponents. Alexander was the first to reach the top, completing the conquest of Aornos. This was one of the most brilliant feats of strategy and tactics in his career. With Aornos out of the way Alexander was now free to pursue his journey to Punjab. The downing of Aornos gave birth to the legend of the Macedonian supermen. The Indians regarded the fortress impregnable and believed that the god Heracles once tried to conquer it without success.

In March 326 BC, Alexander turned southward on a journey to catch up with Hephaestion and Perdikkas. When he reached them he gave his army a month of well-deserved rest. After crossing the Indus River, over the pontoon bridge previously built by Hephaestion's engineers, Alexander entered into the land of his ally Ambhi. Alexander, trusting no one, marched into Taxila battle ready but none materialized. Ambhi welcomed Alexander with many gifts and received him as his guest in the capital Taxila.

In Taxila the Macedonians, for the first time, encountered many wonders, strange manners and customs. To the scientists' delight they also discovered flora they had never seen before. It was here too that Alexander met those "naked philosophers" (Buddhist monks) and came in contact with the doctrine of Buddha. For the next three days the Macedonians were treated royally with lavish gifts. Not to be outdone, Alexander reinstated Ambhi as rajah of Taxila and showered him with gifts of his own, which included thirty horses and no less than 1,000 talents. This generosity was motivated by Alexander's wish to have Ambhi on his side, as he was receiving intelligence reports of large concentrations of enemy troops ahead. In spite of making him rajah, Ambhi was still a vassal king. A Macedonian military governor, with a strong garrison at his disposal actually governed Taxila.

Alexander invested a great deal of time and considerable effort negotiating peaceful terms with the other two Indian rajahs in that region but it seemed that peace was not possible before war. Porus, one of the rajahs negotiating with Alexander, made his terms very clear. If Alexander wanted his kingdom, he had to earn it in battle.

Porus's army was already amassing at the banks on the other side of the Jhelum River as more reinforcements began to arrive. Alexander could not afford to waste much time so he ordered his engineers to build a bridge. Since there were no building materials available in the vicinity, Alexander sent Coenus

to dismantle the pontoon bridge from the Indus River, cut it into small sections and transport it over land on oxcarts. While Coenus was looking after the bridge, Alexander reinforced his army by adding elephants and Indian recruits to his infantry.

As he was getting ready to meet Porus, Alexander did not count on a monsoon. Perhaps unaware of the Indian climate in June, Alexander led his army during continuous, steaming, torrential rain. The skies had opened up and pounded the unknowing Macedonians for over two months without a break. Alexander traveled over the Salt Range covering about 180 kilometers in a little over two days before reaching the Jhelum River. A great achievement under monsoon conditions.

Unfortunately, the Jhelum was so swollen from the monsoon rains that it was impossible to cross. Besides, even if crossing was possible, Porus was waiting on the other side with archers, chariots and elephants. To a casual observer it would have appeared that the opposing armies had reached a stalemate. Neither could act without severe consequences.

To reinforce the idea that he was going to wait for more favourable conditions before attacking, Alexander ordered continuous supplies to be delivered to his camp in full view of his enemy. While doing that he sent surveyors up and down the river in search of a good place to cross. In the meantime, the troops were kept on full alert with activities suggesting the possibility of an imminent attack. When nothing happened for a long time, the enemy tired of Alexander's antics and began to ignore the distracting maneuvers. As luck would have it, the surveyors did find a good place to cross. It was on a large wooded island where the channels at both sides were narrow. The spot was located about 25 kilometers upstream from camp and was ideal since there was a ravine on the near side of the bank, a good place to hide troops.

To ensure a successful crossing, Alexander had to thoroughly confuse the enemy about his real intentions so he ordered his troops to light fires over a wide area every night. At the same time Ptolemy would take a large cavalry force and run up and down the riverbank making as much noise as possible while making false attempts to cross. Initially, all these demonstrations were taken seriously and every move and maneuver was counteracted with opposing forces on the other side. After some time, however, when it became obvious that these were only tricks to agitate the opposing troops and lower their morale, Porus began to relax his vigilance. Porus must have thought that Alexander's real aim was to break his army's morale and attack him when he was at his weakest. Unfortunately for Porus, Alexander was much cleverer than that.

Alexander had to make his move in less than two days because the other rajah, Abisares of Kashmir, was about 80 kilometers to the north and coming his way. Even though Porus was at ease with Alexander's exercises, his patrols kept constant watch. Any attempt at crossing, even undetected, would be overwhelmed by Porus's forces as soon as it was spotted. To maximize his chances, Alexander divided his army and directed simultaneous but separate attacks at different points on the river. Not knowing where the attack was going

to come from, Porus had to divide his forces in order to counter the Macedonians. In the meantime, the pontoon bridge was assembled in secrecy and ready to be deployed.

In the dark of night, Alexander, with a force of 10,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry, slipped away up the banks to make the 25-kilometer trek to attempt the crossing at dawn. The baggage train and a large part of the army remained at the base camp. Alexander had given orders to openly start making preparations for an attack at the crack of dawn. He even saw someone who looked like him come out of his royal tent wearing the royal cloak, barking out orders.

A second group, consisting of three battalions of the phalanx, the mercenary cavalry and infantry, was dispatched from the main camp to the halfway point between the main camp and Alexander's crossing, with orders to wait and cross only after Alexander was engaged in battle. Craterus, in command of the forces at the main camp, was also given orders to wait and not cross until Porus had moved from his current position in pursuit of Alexander.

This was indeed a brilliant plan and certainly posed a dilemma for Porus. What was Porus to do? He did what any skilled commander would have done. He dispatched a strong force to stop Alexander from crossing. Alexander, however, anticipating his move, countered it by depending on his best Macedonian troops to make the crossing at lightning speed and put up a great fight on the other side; a move that to this day remains unparalleled.

Alexander did receive some help from his gods who provided him with deafening thunderclaps and torrential rain, which masked the noise of the embarkation. Even though the crossing was made successfully, all was not well. It seemed that Alexander's surveyors had made an error. The bank Alexander landed on was not the expected shore, but another elongated island. It was a long and arduous struggle to get across the fast flowing torrents of the mighty Jhelum River. Exhausted and drenched in mud the Macedonians finally made it across. Porus still did not know where the main attack was going to take place. This exhausting and pointless exercise of Alexander's he suspected was another deception to lure his forces away from the main attack. After some hesitation, however, and to be on the safe side, Porus eventually did dispatch his son with 2,000 cavalry and 120 chariots, but by then it was too late. Most of Alexander's assault force had made it across and easily subdued the Indians.

After a brief clash the Indians fled leaving behind about four hundred dead, including Porus's son. While pursuing the fleeing Indians Alexander was joined by the second group of his army, which by now had also made it across. Alexander again divided up his forces and took command of the cavalry, which ran ahead at galloping speed while the foot soldiers followed behind at a fast marching pace.

When Porus received news that his son was dead and that Alexander had crossed the river, he decided it was time to face him and marched his forces upstream to do battle. Only a small force, consisting mostly of elephants, was left behind to hold back Craterus. It is estimated that Porus had at his disposal approximately 2,000 cavalry, 20,000 infantry, 130 elephants and 180 chariots.

Porus chose a level, sandy plain for the battleground and positioned his infantry in a wide central front reinforced with elephants about 30 meters apart. At the wings he positioned his chariots and cavalry along with a flanking body of infantry.

Alexander's cavalry arrived first but stayed back and would not engage the enemy until the infantry arrived. Alexander had about 11,000 Macedonian infantrymen and 6,000 cavalrymen. While waiting, Alexander kept his forces out of sight and carried out detailed reconnaissance of Porus's dispositions. A frontal attack using his cavalry would be difficult, pitting horse against elephant. The phalanx might do the trick but not while Porus's cavalry was still active. The cavalry would have to be disabled first so that there was no chance that it would outflank the phalanx.

To knock out the Indian cavalry Alexander decided to attack Porus's left wing. The idea was to keep two cavalry divisions hidden from the enemy while carrying out the attack with his entire visible cavalry, which numbered a little less than the enemy's total mounted force. A force that size was sure to overwhelm Porus's left wing and he would have to draw reinforcements from his right wing. The commander of the hidden divisions was given specific orders to circle around Porus's right wing and stay out of sight until the left wing was engaged. If Porus transferred troops from the right wing to feed the engagement, he was to charge across behind the enemy lines and attack from the rear. Otherwise he would engage the enemy normally. The phalanx was ordered to delay engagement until there was evidence that the enemy was thrown into confusion.

The mounted archers attacked first and almost immediately disabled the chariots. Alexander's cavalry charged next and, as expected, Porus committed his right wing to deliver a striking blow. The two hidden divisions, under the command of Coenus and Demetrius, broke cover and engaged the Indians from the rear. Instead of striking a blow at Alexander, Porus's cavalry received a blow and the Indians fell back to the protection of the elephants.

With the enemy cavalry put out of action, the Macedonian phalanx and heavy infantry advanced on Porus's center. But attacking angry elephants was not an easy task. Each elephant had to be encircled, its driver picked off by the archers and while the elephant fought back it had to be speared and slashed until it was brought down. The infantrymen had to resort to slashing the elephant's trunk with swords and chop at its feet with axes before the animal could be brought down. Many of those doing the hacking and chopping did not fare well either since the elephants fought back smashing, impaling, stamping and crushing their tormentors to a bloody pulp.

As Porus's battle line was pressed back the elephants squeezed together and began to trample their own troops, causing further casualties. As Alexander drew his cavalry ring tighter around Porus's army, he ordered his phalanx to lock shields and move in for the kill. By now Craterus had crossed the river and was in pursuit of those who had broken through Alexander's ring. The Macedonians

had just had a traumatic experience and were in no mood for forgiveness as the battle soon turned into a massacre.

The elephants became frantic and trampled more Indians than enemies. The Indians, including Porus, fought and resisted to the bitter end. Wounded by a javelin, Porus saw no point in resisting any further and rode off on his elephant. Alexander pursued him and with diplomacy convinced him to surrender. Alexander showed great admiration for Porus and gave him the respect a king deserved. This was the last great battle the Macedonians would fight. Considering that it took place under monsoon conditions, something the Macedonians had never before experienced, this may have been the most difficult battle of their entire campaign.

When it was all over, Alexander appointed Porus king of his own dominions and later extended his kingdom to the Hyphasis. Porus in turn remained loyal to Alexander until he died. To secure his position in Punjab, Alexander commissioned two new cities, Nicaea and Bucephala, to be built on the Jhelum. Nicaea was built where Alexander crossed the mighty Jhelum River in honour of his success. Bucephala was built where the battle took place and was dedicated to Alexander's horse Bucephalus, which was said to have died of old age.

After a month long, well-deserved rest Alexander summoned his army and headed eastward. He crossed the Chenab River which was three kilometers wide due to excessive rain. By the Chenab he founded another city which of course he named Alexandria (Sohadra). Somewhere east of the Chenab, near a city called Sangala, the Macedonians ran into stiff resistance and a horrific battle ensued where 17,000 Indians were slaughtered and 70,000 more were taken captive.

Alexander continued his eastern journey traveling below the high mountain ranges and making his way through water drenched fields in stifling heat and dripping monsoon skies. Long lines of dirty, tattered Indian refugees followed as the Macedonian army snaked its way across the countryside. After crossing the Ravi and the Beas Rivers into modern Punjab, the army camped for a short rest only to be frustrated by Alexander's future campaign plans. It must have been some time ago that Alexander had realized that his original assumption about the geography of this region was in error. He also must have found out from the Indians that the Indus River did not empty into the Nile, as he had earlier informed his troops. Why he kept this information a secret from his troops is unknown.

Alexander waited for an opportune time to inform his troops that his maps were in error and that they were nowhere near the end of the world. In fact he informed his troops that they had to march twelve more days in the desert and cross another great river, the Ganges, before they might reach the end of the world. This information was not well received by his troops.

It appears that Alexander wanted to continue his campaign eastward and venture towards the Ganges but his giant plan was met with refusal. His army was getting tired to the point of exhaustion and would no longer follow him. They had traveled 18,000 kilometers in eight and a half years and they were tired. The sweltering weather and continuous torrential rain, which they had

endured for seventy days, did not help the situation. Alexander found the predicament he was in hard to accept. Even after making many speeches and doing much sulking, his men would not relent and stood their ground. Alexander was powerless to act. After spending three days in his tent contemplating his predicament, he came to the realization that his men were right, it was time to turn back.

To commemorate his great advances and honour the gods who gave him his victories, Alexander ordered the construction of twelve tower altars on the east side of the Beas River, one for each Macedonian god. He had his army construct the towers from square stones, which stood seventeen meters square and twenty-five meters high.

With a heavy heart Alexander turned his army around and sometime in mid September 326 BC started his march back towards his newly founded city near the Jhelum River. The next major task he would undertake would be to build a fleet of ships that would carry his army down the Indus River and into the ocean to the south. Approximately 800 vessels were constructed to transport horses, grain, men and cargo. About 80 thirty-oar warships were built for defense. Alexander did not intend to command the fleet so he appointed Nearchus, his intimate friend from youth, as admiral.

In November 326 BC Alexander divided his army into two columns, boarded the ships and began his voyage down the Jhelum River. A blast of trumpets gave the signal to start rowing as each column took its position at opposite banks. Craterus commanded the column on the right and Hephaestion commanded the one on the left. There was a great commotion as the pilots called out rowing commands and the oars splashed in unison, attracting onlookers who came to see the spectacle and serenade the soldiers on their voyage. Unfortunately, all was not well and before the fleet reached the Chenab, Alexander received information that a couple of tribes, the largest and most warlike, were preparing to do battle with him down river. Alexander, at the time, was not certain where the battle was going to take place so he hastened his pace down the Jhelum in hopes of passing the junction of turbulent waters where the Jhelum met the Chenab.

As it turned out, there was no sign of the enemy at the river junction but the turbulence did cause a great deal of damage and many ships were in need of repair. While repairs were made the army set camp near the banks, giving Alexander time to formulate a battle plan. The enemy territory was located between the Chenab and Ravi Rivers and a waterless desert protected their settlements. The most logical and efficient method to reach them was by water up the Chenab River. Alexander expected that the enemy too would think along the same lines so his plan included a bit of a surprise.

After his repairs were completed Alexander divided his army into three columns. He took the first column by land through the desert into the heart of enemy territory. The second column, commanded by Hephaestion, was sent up the Chenab River. The third column, commanded by Craterus, was ordered to hold the territory near the mouth of the Ravi River. Alexander's land column

encountered much resistance and a bloody battle ensued when he stormed and took several towns. Many attempted to escape but were intercepted by Hephaestion and Craterus. During the storming of one of the towns Alexander was wounded. While climbing a castle wall he fell victim to an enemy arrow which penetrated his chest. Believing him to be slain, his troops vented their fury on the enemy who fought back with equal ferocity.

Alexander was laid on his sacred shield and carried out on a stretcher to his ship. News of his alleged demise traveled like wildfire bringing grief to his troops. But Alexander was not dead and quickly regained consciousness after the arrow was extracted. In spite of all assurances, however, his men were not convinced until he himself rose to his feet, walked out of his tent and mounted a horse so that everyone could see him from the distance. Seeing their king alive brought joy to the troops whose shouts echoed throughout the land. His soldiers, from all sides, came to gaze upon him, shake his hand and show their affection. But most surprising of all was his enemy's reaction. Alexander's sudden rise from the dead spread terror and panic among the enemy ranks, causing mass surrenders. Even the enemy tribal kings voluntarily and humbly submitted themselves to Alexander's will.

After Alexander recovered from his wound, the fleet resumed its course down river until it reached the Indus where Alexander founded another city, which he named Alexandria (at the confluence). By now it was February 325 BC and Alexander had reached the halfway point of his river voyage. The second part of the voyage was just as turbulent as the first and even more fighting was needed before the region was conquered. Fortunately, Alexander had developed a reputation as a fierce fighter and many tribes were reluctant to fight him and acquiesced. There were others further south, however, who were influenced by the Brahmins and fought back fiercely. After achieving victory, Alexander severely punished the Brahmins by having some of them hung for inciting riots and influencing the population to take up arms against him.

It was July 325 BC, when Alexander arrived at the Indus delta and camped for a rest at the city of Patala. Here Alexander reflected on the journey that took him from Kashmir through the entire Punjab down to the Indian Ocean. India was a great, rich and fruitful country and now she belonged to Macedonia.

While Alexander was busy conquering new land, his scientists and explorers were busy examining the country's exotic plants and animals, studying the Indian political and religious systems and cataloging the mineral wealth of this vast territory. Besides learning about India, much knowledge was imparted the other way. Being more advanced in metallurgy, the Macedonians taught the Indians how to smelt their silver and gold. The Macedonians also shared their knowledge of medicine and art, especially sculpting. Having been misled before by geography, Alexander was determined to correct that problem as well.

During his rest at Patala, Alexander and his advisors busied themselves looking for a sea passage from the Indus into the Tigris and the Euphrates. Alexander sent expeditions to explore the western and eastern branches of the Indus River delta in hopes of finding a safe passage. It was during these

expeditions that the Macedonians experienced, for the first time, the sudden and frightening ebb tide of the ocean. After determining that the eastern branch of the Indus delta was easiest to navigate, Alexander dug wells and set up grain depots for his fleet all along the coast before returning to Patala.

By now it was nearing the end of August 325 BC and Alexander was anxious to get going. While admiral Nearchus and the fleet were ordered to wait until the end of the monsoon season, Alexander left Patala to make preparations for provisioning the fleet along the way. On his way, Alexander ran into resistance again and had to subdue more tribes before turning westward. After appointing a Macedonian satrap to keep the region secure, Alexander left Hephæstion behind with orders to build another Alexandria city. At the coast before turning westward, Alexander left Leonnatus behind with orders to wait for the fleet and to build a second Alexandria city.

To further secure a supply line for his fleet, Alexander and his army turned westward into the Gedrosian Desert. This may have been one of the most difficult journeys Alexander and his army had ever encountered. There were no enemies to speak of only the scorching sun. Provisions, especially water, were in short supply and the army suffered immensely. Discipline, however, did not break down because the officers and Alexander himself suffered along with the men. Alexander even refused to drink water if there was not enough for everyone. His soldiers respected that and would not let him down. They traveled by night because it was too hot during the day and many perished from exhaustion, dehydration and starvation. They resorted to slaughtering their animals, including their horses, to survive. The desert was completely barren and dry and the local population subsisted strictly on seafood, consisting mostly of mussels.

It took Alexander sixty days to cross the desert before reaching Pura, the capital of Gedrosia. He marched on foot with his soldiers and shared with them his provisions as well as his courage and perseverance. He showed great respect for his men and treated them not like common soldiers but as comrades. This is the kind of man Alexander was. He always came through for his men, even in the worst of circumstances, which exemplified his true character as a person and his feelings for his Macedonians. It is unknown how many of Alexander's people the desert took, but according to ancient sources (Arrian) a great many were lost. Even at times such as these, Alexander's scientists paused to observe and note the desert plant life. Pura was like heaven for the survivors who, with plenty of food and drink, quickly recovered from their ordeal.

By the conquest of Gedrosia, Alexander's full subjection of Asia was complete. It was now the beginning of December 325 BC, and Alexander was on the move again headed westward to Carmania where he had made prior arrangements to meet with Craterus. Before its departure the army was split and Craterus was sent via a different route to Carmania where he was expected to rendezvous with the main army. Craterus took the north road via the Bolan Pass and turned westward past Kandahar (Alexandria in Arachosia) where he did some fighting, before turning to Carmania. Here the field armies were again

recombined and supplied with animals and provisions by the local satrap. Before leaving, Alexander held a festival of thanksgiving for his successes in India and for his passage through the deserts of Gedrosia. Here too Alexander received news that the fleet had to depart a month earlier than expected due to the change in mood of the Indian population which had started to become hostile after Alexander's departure. According to reports, the sea voyage seemed to have had more success than the land trek with no crew losses, except for some suffering due to bad food and water. With the exception of one minor skirmish the sailors faced no armed resistance.

Like Alexander, Admiral Nearchus never bypassed an opportunity to have the scientists study the local flora and fauna, as well as record the customs of the native Indian coast dwellers. It was here too that the Macedonians saw whales for the first time. The sea voyage unfortunately was no pleasure cruise and the prolonged exposure to the hazards of the sea and lack of proper diet took its toll on the men. When they finally landed on shore and met their comrades, they were weakened, scruffy and unrecognizable. Nearchus and a few others came ahead of the fleet to report their arrival. When Alexander met them, even before a single word was exchanged, he was gripped by despair and devastated at the sight of their condition. Thinking that they were the only survivors of the fleet he wept uncontrollably. When finally Alexander gained his composure and Nearchus informed him that the fleet was safe, Alexander wept even more with joy and held a festival with offerings of thanks for its safe return. Soon afterwards, Nearchus joined the fleet for its final voyage to Susa. Hephaestion was sent by the south road to Persia to acquire provisions while Alexander, with the light troops, took the north road on a direct course to Pasargadae.

It was January 324 BC and this would be Alexander's second visit to Pasargadae. More than five years had passed since he had last visited the city but to Alexander it seemed like an eternity. The last time he entered Pasargadae he was a mere Macedonian general but this time he was a Great King who had outdone not just mere mortals but legendary gods. Unfortunately his accomplishments alone could not keep the peace in his empire. His prolonged absence gave the impression that he was either dead or not going to return. Thinking along the same line many of his Persian satraps became rebellious, attacking Macedonian garrisons, plundering Macedonian temples and generally mistreating Alexander's subjects.

Alexander was now back and needed to make an example of those who had turned against him. By stern punishment he hoped to warn all others that such behavior would not be tolerated.

In one instance he executed a satrap along with his followers for usurping the title of Great King. In another, he tortured the priests in charge of a tomb that was plundered. At Persepolis Alexander had a man hanged for usurping the satrapy of a previously appointed satrap who had since died. Peucestas, a Macedonian who was comfortable with Persian customs and had learned to speak the Persian language, replaced the hanged Persian satrap.

According to Arrian, upon his return to Persepolis Alexander was saddened to tears after he gazed at the destruction he had caused the last time he was there. He was stricken with grief as he realized the symbolic value of the age-old buildings and temples that he had torched, now lost forever. He had done this for the sake of the City States to take vengeance for the crimes of Xerxes. Seeing the rubble and charred remains of what was once a great civilization and realizing what he had done made him feel great remorse. The City States were now but a distant thought for which he cared not at all. In the last years he spent in Asia, Alexander had come to the realization that here too many rich civilizations existed far beyond what he had previously imagined. The City State idea that Asia was populated with uncultured and unworthy barbarians was only a narrow concept that reflected more on the City States than on the Asians. The effects of his conquests did not change Alexander's character as many have claimed. What had changed was Alexander's perception of the new worlds, which he came to understand and respect.

In February 324 BC, Alexander left Persepolis and went to Susa where he was reunited with Nearchus and the fleet. Here too he had to deal with unruly satraps. Alexander had appointed Harpalus, his boyhood friend, as treasurer of Ecbatana in 330 BC. Harpalus escaped with much of Alexander's treasure and squandered it away on his own extravagant lifestyle.

During his stay in Susa, which lasted the spring and summer of 324 BC, Alexander encouraged the idea of mixed marriages. To show that he was sincere he married Stateira, Darius's daughter. He convinced some of his officers and soldiers to marry foreigners and rewarded them with gifts and dowries.

During this time Alexander also amnestied all exiles (about 20,000) in his empire, except those who were criminals, and allowed them to return to their homes. This order was begrudgingly obeyed by the City States. Athens especially disliked it since the majority of the 20,000 were political exiles and displaced persons from that region.

During the summer of 324 BC, Alexander left Susa for Ecbatana. He sent the bulk of his army ahead with Hephaestion on a march to the Tigris River, while he and his light armed units sailed down the Eulaeus River to the Persian Gulf. After observing the scenery and satisfying his longing to sail, Alexander went up the Tigris and joined Hephaestion at Opis. Just before reaching Opis near Babylon, Alexander decided to reveal his future plans for his army's reorganization. One of his objectives, which became a bone of contention with the Macedonians, called for the retirement of the old Macedonian veterans who Alexander believed could no longer fight because of old age or debilitating wounds. His army did not take the news well, especially the idea of losing its respected veterans. Alexander had a mutiny on his hands. Alexander's intentions may have been noble but his men did not see it that way. To some it appeared that Alexander was phasing out the conservative Macedonians only to replace them with foreigners. For some time now Alexander had been building his army with foreign recruits, mostly from Persia. The Macedonians had fought them in the past and were not happy having them among their ranks. To the conservative

Macedonians it appeared that Alexander wanted to make the Persians partners and equals and that did not sit well with them.

During the mutiny harsh words were exchanged. Alexander was infuriated to the point of rounding up thirteen of the ringleaders and executing them immediately. He then dismissed the entire Macedonian army and stormed away shutting himself in his royal castle for three days, entertaining only Persians and refusing to speak to any Macedonian. On the third day some Macedonians requested an audience with him. After pleading for his time they were granted permission to see him. It was an emotional reconciliation as Alexander greeted his comrades speechless and in tears. When it was over, Alexander threw a great festival in honour of this reconciliation. As it turned out, it was not a reconciliation between himself and his troops but, in the interest of the empire, it was a reconciliation between the Macedonians and Persians.

At the great festival, Alexander had his Macedonians sit next to him and next to them sat the Persians and other nationalities from the empire. It was said that in all about 9,000 people of various nationalities attended. Religious ceremonies were conducted in both the Macedonian and Persian traditions without incident. This reinforces the idea that even then, as today, many cultures could live together in peace and harmony.

Alexander knew that without peace and harmony between the various people he had little or no hope of holding on to such a vast empire for any reasonable length of time. Peace and harmony, however, could not be achieved without freedom and equality of all races. This feast was a great moment for Alexander, not only because he attempted to bring reconciliation between the races but more importantly because he gave birth to multiculturalism, a concept that was well ahead of its time.

Following the festival, Alexander went ahead with his original plans and dismissed about 10,000 of his veteran soldiers. Each man, in addition to his pay, also received an extra talent. The task of leading the veterans back to Macedonia was given to Craterus. Upon arriving in Macedonia he was also instructed to replace Antipater. Antipater in turn was to be given orders to lead fresh troops back to Alexander. Alexander felt that Antipater and Olympias could use a break away from each other and he himself could also use a break from their incessant complaining and bickering.

When the great festival was over, Alexander left Opis and resumed his trip to Ecbatana. After spending a few months there, he went to Babylon where he began to unfold his grand plans for the future.

From a commercial aspect Alexander revealed, via the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, a connection between the Indus, the Euphrates and the Tigris Rivers. This connection, in the future, could be exploited for trade for the benefit of the empire. Alexander was also curious as to what was on the opposite side of the Persian Gulf, in Arabia. To find out he began to organize an exploratory expedition. He was also interested in finding a quick route through Arabia to Egypt. Another curiosity of Alexander's, that had its roots back at school in Pella was whether the Caspian Sea was an island sea or the gulf of another sea. Now

that he had the means he wanted that verified as well and began to organize another discovery expedition. Yet another plan in the works was the building of 1,000 warships to be constructed in Phoenicia, Syria, Sicily and Cyprus for future campaigns against the Carthaginians and other coastal people of the western Mediterranean. Carthage, at that time, was the most important naval and commercial power in the west. Had Alexander lived long enough to carry out his campaigns against her, the world would be a different place today.

Alexander's campaign plans against the west were based on intelligence information he had obtained beforehand about the strength of the various states and their political ties to one another. Besides military plans, Alexander had made plans for scientific exploration, constructing geographical maps, plotting ocean routes between Alexandria and Susa and developing trade routes between the various regions of his empire. Planning for world conquest was never too far from his mind but that plan he only shared with his most trusted companions like Hephaestion. Unfortunately he was no longer alive. Not too long ago, while at Ecbatana during a festival, Hephaestion contracted a fatal fever and died. It was a terrible loss for Alexander and for the Macedonians. Alexander took the loss with great difficulty and mourned him for days without food or drink. Hephaestion's corpse was taken to Babylon where a great monument was erected in his honour. Also, to preserve his memory, he was never replaced as second in command next to the king. That position forever remained vacant.

As mentioned earlier, Alexander left Ecbatana and went to Babylon. On his way, in the middle of the winter on Mt. Zagros, he ran into resistance from a warlike tribe known as the Cossaeans who preferred to fight for their independence rather than give it up. It took Alexander forty days to subdue them and they too became part of his empire. When it was over, he marched to Babylon and on his way he was met by Libyans, Ethiopians, Carthaginians, Lucanians, Etruscans, Romans, Iberians, Celts, dignitaries and ambassadors from all over the world. It seemed that the entire world was impressed with Alexander's achievements and wanted his friendship. Little did they know of Alexander's plans for world conquest, especially the Carthaginians who had already suffered the loss of their sister city Tyre. I still can't help but wonder what the world would have been like today had Alexander lived long enough to conquer the west.

After arriving in Babylon, Alexander's first priority was to prepare an expedition to explore Arabia. For the time being his interests in Arabia were to explore the region and gain information. He had no intention of invading the mainland. He only wanted the coastline and islands, which offered good harbours for his trading ships. Alexander's greatest ambition was to establish a connection by sea between Alexandria and Babylon. He was so certain his dream would become reality that he ordered the excavation of a huge harbour at Babylon. It was large enough to hold over 1,000 ships, which included his entire Asian navy and all the merchant ships in the region.

After initiating that project, Alexander became involved in building canals to regulate the flow of the Euphrates and the Tigris. Alexander wanted the region to

prosper so he made arrangements to settle the north coast of the Persian Gulf. To promote trade on the Gulf between the mouths of the Tigris and the Euphrates he founded Alexandria Charax, a town suited by its geographical position to become a great harbour for Babylon.

While stationed at Babylon, Alexander received new recruits from various regions of his Asian Empire as well as cavalry reinforcements from Macedonia. Here for the first time Alexander started to reorganize his army to include mixed nationalities among his ranks, entrusting command positions to Macedonians. Unfortunately, Alexander's attempts to reorganize his army, along with his many other plans would not come to fruition. It has been said that on June 2, 323 BC, after participating in several festivities that lasted through the night, Alexander began to show symptoms of a fever. Some say that he may have contracted malaria, which is common during the hot summer months in the marshy areas of Babylon. Alexander was physically fit but his personal involvement in so many activities and the stress he subjected himself to during the planning and preparation of the various expeditions had weakened his immune system and his ability to resist the disease. Alexander himself believed that he would recover because on June 3rd he ordered his generals to make plans to set sail on June 7th.

On the evening of June 3rd, Alexander was taken to the royal gardens on the west bank of the Euphrates for some fresh air and a speedy recovery. The next day he was feeling better and sent word for his generals to come and meet with him on June 5th. That night unfortunately his fever came back and did not leave him. On June 7th when the fleet was ready to move he ordered it to stand by, hoping that he would soon be well and able to join it. Instead of getting better he became sicker as the day progressed and by the next day he was so ill he could hardly speak.

On June 9th he called for his generals to assemble overnight in the court. The other officers waited outside in front of the gates. The next day his condition worsened and he was moved back into the palace. When his generals came to him he could recognize them but was so weak he was not able to speak a word to them. During the night and the next day his fever worsened and he was no longer able to see visitors. His troops, fearing the worst, demanded an audience with their king but the officers would not allow it. Disobeying their officers they forced the doors open and filed past Alexander's bed in a long procession only to witness his weakened condition. Alexander with difficulty could only nod slightly and greet his companions in arms with his eyes as they filed past him in silence and deep emotion.

During the evening of June 13th, 323 BC, Alexander passed away. He was not yet thirty-three when his life was snatched away, not in a glorious battle by the enemy's sword, but by malaria, a mere microscopic parasite, a terrible way for the greatest conqueror of conquerors to die.

No one expected Alexander would die, let alone this quickly. With Hephaestion dead, there was no single leader who could step in and take charge of the empire. The leaders of the army at Babylon were suddenly faced with difficult problems. The only one who now had any authority to act was Perdiccas

to whom the dying Alexander had handed his signet ring. Once more the assembly of the Macedonian army was summoned to the forefront to do its duty and elect a new king. Unfortunately, new problems arose as old traditions clashed with new ones. The wishes of the infantry, in whom the old Macedonian spirit was entrenched, could not reconcile its differences with the wishes of the more modern cavalry which was loyal to Alexander's modern ideas. Arguments came to blows before an uneasy compromise was reached where Arrhidaeus, the candidate of the infantry, was to conjointly rule with the cavalry's choice, the unborn son of Alexander and Roxane. These were indeed unfortunate choices since Arrhidaeus, Philip II's son was epileptic and dimwitted, and Alexander's child had not yet been born. Additionally, it was decided that each general was to assume responsibility for designated satrapies in accordance with the decisions reached in Babylon. Ptolemy of Lagus went to Egypt, Lysimachus went to Thrace, Antigonus went to Greater Phrygia and Perdicas remained in Babylon. There was one more issue placed before the assembly and that was what to do about Alexander's latest plans. Not surprisingly, the assembly unanimously decided to cancel them.

The news of Alexander's death traveled like wildfire throughout the empire but hardly caused a stir in Asia. In the City States, on the other hand, it was welcome news causing an explosion of emotions that resulted in the dissolution of the Corinthian League. Athens was the first to rise and summon the City States to fight against Macedonia. A new League, headed by Athens, was formed and rose up against Macedonia in what was termed the "Lamian War". The City States could not contain their hatred for Macedonia and unleashed their fury with all their might. Unfortunately, the entire City State might was not enough to overwhelm Antipater's Macedonians. Victorious, Antipater stripped Athens of her position as a power at sea and restored Samos to the Samians. He then forced a change of constitution on the Athenians, stripping them of their democratic powers. Additionally, a Macedonian garrison was installed on Athenian soil to remind the Athenians of who was in control. Antipater made peace with the rest of the insurgent states individually and dissolved their newly formed League.

Unlike the City States, with the exception of a few minor disturbances, caused mostly by disgruntled City State citizens, Asia remained peaceful for a relatively long period. Unfortunately without Alexander's persuasive politics, peace slowly gave way to conflict. Even though our ancient sources fail to reveal the real motive for the conflict, I suspect it was greed for wealth and the desire to rule.

Initially it was the more ambitious satraps in Asia who fought each other for a bigger piece of their empire. Later it involved Alexander's generals who each ruled a piece of his empire but were not content with what they had and wanted more. The most powerful of these successors were Antigonus and his son Demetrius who gradually acquired most of Asia. Against them were a coalition of Ptolemy of Egypt, Seleucus of Babylon, Lysimachus of Thrace and Cassander, son of Antipater, of Macedonia.

About six years after Alexander's death, in 317 BC, a chain of events took place in Macedonia that would forever change its course in history. It began when Olympias murdered King Philip Arrhidaeus, which gave Cassander reason to vanquish her. Without Olympias's protection Cassander murdered the unhappy Roxane and young Alexander. With Alexander's family dead and no king to rule, the fate of the empire remained in the hands of his generals who were now fighting each other.

Chapter 9 - The Aftermath of Alexander's Empire

Alexander's sudden death in Babylon in June 323 BC came as an unexpected surprise and threw the empire into upheaval. Alexander had made himself irreplaceable but had never considered the idea of appointing a qualified successor should the tragically unexpected ever happen. After all, he was a soldier and soldiers do get killed. If Alexander had a weakness, this was it. There are those who say that it was Alexander himself who brought this tragedy upon his empire. Had he appointed a successor, his empire may have survived to endure the Roman onslaught. Better yet, had he not ventured into Asia and followed in his father's footsteps he could have made Macedonia even greater. By not choosing a successor Alexander allowed his empire to be split, thus weakening Macedonia and letting her fall prey to the Romans.

The stage was set for the Great Macedonian Empire to decline when the army failed to appoint a single strong leader. It was apparent from the start that Arrhidaeus, Philip II's epileptic and dimwitted son and Alexander III's unborn child were not chosen for their leadership skills but rather for their non-interference. Who then was truly going to rule the empire? Obviously Alexander had surrounded himself with men who were more interested in their own careers than the fate of the empire. For the next fifty years or so, the most powerful and influential military leaders fought each other for control of the empire. After fifty years of struggle and strife they partitioned the empire into three pieces. In the end, the Antigonids took Macedonia and the City States, the Ptolemies took Egypt and the Seleucids took Asia. Many died senselessly before the conflicts reached equilibrium and the partitioned lands assumed a sense of normalcy (see Arrian). There was one positive result from all this. Even though the empire was partitioned and ruled by different dynasties, it was always ruled by Macedonians. For centuries Macedonians ruled the empire and traveled freely throughout their world, which stretched from the Adriatic to the Punjab and from Tadzhikistan to Libya. They maintained contact with each other and with their homeland as many traveled back and forth to seek employment and visit family and friends.

On their way back to Macedonia, Craterus and the discharged veterans received news of Alexander's death and the army's order for Antipater to remain general of Europe. Craterus in the meantime was to assume the position of protector of the kingdom of Arrhidaeus. Roxane gave birth to a boy who was named Alexander IV and both he and Arrhidaeus were summoned to Asia in the care of Perdiccas.

According to Diodorus, the most influential players remaining in Babylon after Alexander's death were Perdiccas, the most senior cavalry officer, bearer of Alexander's ring and guardian of the two kings, Meleager, the most senior phalanx leader, Ptolemy, Leonnatus, Lysimachus and Peucestas, all of whom held relatively important positions in the empire. Less important at the time but who later rose to the ranks of important players were Seleucus, commander of the crack guards' regiment, Eumenes, Alexander's secretary and only foreigner among the leading Macedonians, Antipater's son Cassander and Antigonos the one-eyed, the influential satrap of Phrygia. Absent were Craterus and Antipater who were still in Macedonia.

The struggle for control of the empire began right after Alexander's death and lasted for more than fifty years. During the first few years Perdiccas was the first to make a serious attempt at gaining control of the empire. By offering a compromise settlement to the others he hoped to gain power for himself. Unfortunately he made too many diplomatic errors and his scheming got him into trouble. He was assassinated by his own men the day before he was planning to attack Ptolemy at the Nile Delta.

Before continuing with Perdiccas's story, I want to mention that Leonnatus had also met his demise. In the spring of 322 BC, while Antipater and Craterus were busy putting down City State rebellions, Leonnatus brought his army across the Hellespont hoping to lay claim to Macedonia by marriage. Alexander's sister Cleopatra had written him with an offer of marriage. Unfortunately, Leonnatus was killed in battle and did not achieve his ambitions.

Perdiccas's decline began back in the palace of Babylon when he attempted to assert his own authority above the others by announcing a purification of the army after Alexander's death. This was in response to Meleager who was attempting to assert Arrhidaeus's authority over Perdiccas by force. A squabble broke out and Meleager's supporters were rounded up and executed, on Perdiccas's orders. Meleager was spared at the time only to be murdered later, no doubt by Perdiccas's assassins. It was also at Perdiccas's insistence that Antipater was left in charge of Europe and Craterus was given the administrative role of guardian of the kings. Perdiccas was well aware of Craterus's popularity with the infantry and wanted him as far away from it as possible. Perdiccas was also secretly plotting to overthrow Antipater through intrigues and by attempts to marry into power. When all this was revealed, Antipater as well as Craterus, Lysimachus and Antigonos lined up against him. His problems did not end there. Macedonian custom decreed that to be king one had to bury the predecessor and Alexander was not yet buried. In fact, Perdiccas no longer had possession of Alexander's body. To curb Perdiccas's chances of becoming king, Ptolemy had bribed the commander of the funeral cortege to hide the body. It is still unknown where Alexander was buried. His body was neither taken home to the royal tombs at Aigai nor was it conveyed to the Siwah oasis. According to Peter Green, Ptolemy took the body first to Memphis for a pharaoh's burial and then to Alexandria where it was put on permanent display in a gold coffin.

In the spring of 320 BC Perdiccas left Asia for Egypt to attack Ptolemy. However, Ptolemy was ready for him and sabotaged his chances of victory. A few days after Perdiccas's death, word came that Eumenes fought a great battle against Craterus near the border of Cappadocia and won an overwhelming victory, which unfortunately left Craterus dead. Before leaving for Egypt, Perdiccas had appointed Eumenes in charge of Asia and now that Perdiccas was dead, Eumenes made a bid for Perdiccas's portion of the empire. The army did not agree with Eumenes's actions and, during an assembly in Egypt, formally condemned Eumenes and his supporters to death. It was now a matter of time before they were hunted down and executed.

The power vacuum left by the loss of Craterus and Perdiccas created some concern for Alexander's successors who in 320 BC again assembled the army, this time in Syria. After some deliberation the assembly decided to appoint Antipater guardian of the kings, with full powers. Antigonus was given command of the troops in Asia with a specific assignment to hunt down Eumenes.

For the next twenty or so years, it was Antigonus who dominated the Asian front. He made a great effort to bring as much of the whole empire as possible under his control but he too unfortunately paid for his ventures with his life.

Before his appointment, Antigonus had shown himself to be very ambitious and Antipater did not trust him with all that power. Antipater's son Cassander, however, was comfortable with the choice and convinced his father to allow the appointment. To safeguard Antigonus's loyalty Antipater married off his daughter Phila, Craterus's widow, to Antigonus's son Demetrius. As a further safeguard, Cassander attached himself to Antigonus's staff as cavalry commander and remained in Asia. Antipater returned to Macedonia to resume his former duties and to bring the two kings back to their homeland.

It took Antigonus about five years to catch up to Eumenes. It was not Antigonus who caused the death of Eumenes but his own soldiers who let him down in battle. Here is what Peter Green has to say. "He was destroyed in the end only by repeated betrayals (the price of reliance on over-independent and quasi-mercenary commanders), and by the fundamental greed-cum-xenophobia of Macedonian troops, who at heart resented being led by a smooth Greek intellectual, especially one who failed to bring them loot as well as victories. They may on one occasion have greeted him in Macedonian, as a kind of backhanded compliment, but they let him down badly during their first campaign against Antigonus in Cappadocia." (Page 17, Peter Green, *Alexander to Actium The Historical Evolution of the Hellenistic Age*)

Being humiliated by his defeat, Eumenes and about six hundred of his followers fled to the fortress of Nora in the northern Taurus range. Antigonus at once took over both of Eumenes's satrapies and his army and laid siege to Nora. Antigonus did not stop with Eumenes but continued to pursue his enemies with much success. It was during these campaigns that Antigonus began to seriously consider taking over the entire empire.

Late in 319 BC, Antipater, in his seventies, died of old age. His death gave Antigonus encouragement to pursue his dream but unfortunately, like Perdiccas before him, he began to make diplomatic blunders.

During his last hours of life, Antipater passed on his authority to a loyal Macedonian officer named Polyperchon who was a good soldier but had very little experience in diplomatic matters. The new appointee's first mistake was to bring back Alexander III's mother Olympias from Epirus and appoint her royal guardian of young Alexander. The first to react to this appointment with outrage was Antipater's son Cassander. Cassander was furious not only because Olympias was brought back but also because he believed his father's position should have been given to him and not Polyperchon. Cassander immediately formed a coalition with Ptolemy of Egypt, Antigonus of Asia and Lysimachus of Thrace against Polyperchon.

The alliance with Cassander had possibilities for Antigonus but first he had to conclude the siege of Nora. Not being able to take the impregnable fortress by force, Antigonus turned to diplomacy and offered Eumenes an alliance. Anxious to get out of his current predicament, Eumenes agreed to the terms of the alliance and swore allegiance to Antigonus. In early summer of 318 BC the siege was lifted. A few months later Eumenes received an offer of alliance from Polyperchon and Olympias, who at the time were enemies of Antigonus and Cassander. Eumenes accepted their offer and switched sides. Antigonus made a counter offer but it was rejected. Not long afterwards war broke out in Asia between Antigonus and Eumenes which lasted two years. In the fall of 316 BC, during the battle of Paraetacene, Eumenes was again betrayed by his men which resulted in Antigonus capturing and executing him.

In Macedonia, meanwhile, Polyperchon made attempts to gain support of the City States against Cassander but without much success. Olympias, on the other hand, made matters worse for Polyperchon by invading Macedonia from Epirus. Bent on seeing her grandson on the throne, Olympias, in early 317 BC, invaded Macedonia with a small force. She was provoked by Philip Arrhidaeus's wife, Eurydice, who had openly declared her support of Cassander as regent of Macedonia. With the threat of invasion, Eurydice came out in full armour at the head of her troops to meet Olympias at the Macedonian-Epirot frontier. However, seeing Alexander's mother she backed off and laid down her arms. Unfortunately Olympias was not the forgiving type and got back at her by executing her husband Philip Arrhidaeus. Without her husband's support Eurydice could not bear the pain of being a widow and committed suicide in the fall of 317 BC.

Olympias's revenge did not stop with the murder of Philip Arrhidaeus. Believing that her son Alexander III was poisoned by the cupbearer, Iolus (Antipater's son), she had his corpse exhumed from the grave and his ashes scattered. She also executed hundreds of supporters of Philip Arrhidaeus and Eurydice. Fortunately, her killing spree was short lived. After making amends with Athens, Cassander invaded Macedonia and had the Macedonian army pronounce a death sentence on Olympias, which drove her back to Pydna.

Starved of support she surrendered in the spring of 315 BC and was executed by stoning. Young Alexander was now left in Cassander's custody, which itself may just as well have been a death sentence. In time Cassander began to act as king of Macedonia and had no intention of stepping down for anyone. He made his intentions clear by giving Philip Arrhidaeus and Eurydice a royal burial at Aigai and by marrying Philip II's daughter Salonica.

As mentioned earlier, Antigonus's pursuit of Eumenes allowed him to exercise his influence over the vastness of Asia. With Eumenes out of the way, Antigonus was now in charge of all the lands from Asia Minor to the uplands of Iran. He exercised his powers like an independent monarch, appointing satraps at his own discretion and even taking money from the empire's treasuries to shore up support and hire mercenaries for his army. He used bribery and favouritism to dispose of his enemies and those who did not agree with his policies. He even ordered an audit of Seleucus's accounting, hoping to find indiscretions so he could get rid of him. Seleucus at the time was satrap of Babylonia. Sensing that his life was in danger he fled to Egypt leaving Antigonus in control of almost all of Alexander's Asian Empire.

Antigonus's actions did not go unnoticed. In fact they created great alarm in his rivals. His pursuit of Alexander's old officers was enough cause for concern prompting not only Seleucus, who lost his lucrative position, but also Ptolemy, Cassander and Lysimachus to serve him an ultimatum. While making his rounds raiding treasuries and collecting tributes, the envoys sent by Ptolemy, Cassander and Lysimachus met up with Antigonus in Syria. They served him notice ordering him to restore Seleucus to his former satrapy in Babylon, to surrender Syria to Ptolemy, Hellespontine Phrygia to Lysimachus and Lycia and Cappadocia to Cassander. Of course these were outrageous demands which Antigonus flatly rejected. But they were serious enough that if ignored would lead to war which Antigonus felt confident he could win. Antigonus had one weakness, he did not have a fleet but that could easily be remedied in the future because he had the money to build one.

To bolster his power at sea, Antigonus built shipyards at various port cities including Tripolis, Byblos and Sidon. He also secured alliances with Cyprus and sent troops to guard the Hellespont against a possible crossing by Cassander. He even tried to buy help from Polyperchon in the Peloponnesus encouraging him to start a war with Cassander. To rally their support, Antigonus even made a pitch to his troops accusing Cassander of the murder of Olympias, of marrying Salonica by force and of trying to make a bid for the Macedonian throne. In his propaganda communiqué, in a bid to gain more support, Antigonus offered the City States a number of concessions including freedom, autonomy and the removal of the Macedonian garrisons. The actual communiqué that was handed down to the City States by Polyperchon, however, was revised and the words "freedom" and "autonomy" were removed.

In 311 BC war did break out and Antigonus found himself fighting on two fronts, one in Syria and the other at the Hellespont. A war also broke out in Susa, which involved Antigonus's son Demetrius and his army on one side against

Ptolemy's superior forces reinforced with elephants, on the other. In battle Demetrius was no match for Ptolemy and was easily defeated. Ptolemy's victory opened the door for Seleucus to regain his satrapy. With borrowed troops (from Ptolemy), Seleucus marched in and recaptured Babylon, Media and Susiana, thus restoring himself to his former position.

The conflict with Ptolemy drew Antigonos to Syria but in view of Ptolemy's victory Antigonos decided now was not the right time to pursue matters further. Antigonos's withdrawal signaled an end to the aggressions. Terms of a peace agreement were renegotiated and each of the players was reconfirmed. Cassander was to remain general of Europe until young Alexander came of age, Lycimachus was to remain in Thrace, Ptolemy in Egypt and Antigonos was to be first in rank in Asia. Seleucus and Polyperchon were not present at the peace talks and therefore were not included in any of the agreements. So, technically, Antigonos was still at war with Seleucus. Of all the promises made to the City States, even though a great deal of discussion took place about them, nothing concrete materialized.

In 311 BC, after the conclusion of the peace treaty, Alexander's empire still remained intact but was now controlled by Ptolemy, Antigonos, Lycimachus, Seleucus and Cassander, all of them Macedonians. As it turned out, however, the 311 BC peace agreement was nothing more than a temporary truce, a break in the never-ending struggle for power. Antigonos, Lycimachus and Seleucus each still possessed ambitions to unite Alexander's empire but under their own rule.

Just as the details of the peace agreement were worked out, each of the protagonists wasted no time in preparing for the next round of conflict. Ptolemy's wish was to recover the satrapy of Syria and Phoenicia. Demetrius busied himself rebuilding his base of power and Antigonos could not wait to deal with Seleucus.

By 310 BC a new round of conflict was about to erupt, propagated by Ptolemy's accusations of Antigonos's infringements on the freedom of the Cilicians. Not to be outdone, rumours were coming out of Macedonia that young Alexander and his mother Roxane were dead, executed by Cassander. It is unknown whether Cassander carried out the executions immediately or later but their deaths were confirmed in 306 BC.

While this was going on Antigonos and Polyperchon were spreading rumours that Alexander III had an illegitimate son named Heracles, born to a woman named Barsine. Heracles at the time was sixteen years old. Armed with this new information, Polyperchon was ready to march on Macedonia and claim the throne for Heracles. When confronted by Cassander, however, all Polyperchon wanted was to be re-confirmed general of Peloponnesus. Cassander was more than willing to oblige him in return for the murder of Heracles. After that nothing more was heard of Polyperchon until his death in 302 BC.

With Heracles out of the way, the only remaining living descendant of the Argead line was Alexander III's sister Cleopatra, who at the time was living in Sardis looking for a husband. Unfortunately she too was murdered around 309

BC, no doubt by Antigonus's henchmen, which brought the Argead line of Philip II and Alexander III to an end.

Having lost his chances at making gains in Macedonia, Antigonus turned his attention to Seleucus. Around 309 BC he sent general Nicanor to attack Seleucus at his home base but instead of victory Nicanor met with defeat and soon afterwards Antigonus agreed to sign a non-aggression pact with Seleucus. The struggle between Antigonus and Ptolemy over control of the Mediterranean waters continued until around 308 BC when Ptolemy invaded a small region of coastal Peloponnesus. Demetrius, in 307 BC, was dispatched by Antigonus to free Athens from Cassander. Conflict between Antigonus and Ptolemy broke out in Cyprus and the victorious Demetrius was once again dispatched, pushing Ptolemy back to Egypt in 306 BC. To celebrate his victory in Cyprus, Antigonus took the title of king for himself and his son Demetrius. Antigonus was the first of Alexander's old marshals to declare himself king and establish the idea of forming a new dynasty. By 305/304 BC, both Ptolemy and Seleucus followed suit and they too bestowed the title king upon themselves and began their own dynasties. Not to be outdone Lysimachus and Cassander did the same.

With Demetrius delivering victory after victory, Antigonus was growing stronger and bolder. In 302 BC, he refused Cassander's peace offer and dispatched Demetrius to finish him off. Facing a call for an unconditional surrender or all out war, Cassander turned to the other Macedonian marshals Ptolemy, Seleucus and Lysimachus for assistance. By now just about everyone had had enough of Antigonus and welcomed the idea of forming a coalition against him. They developed a plan together and put it into action. They needed to draw both Antigonus and Demetrius to Asia Minor. Ptolemy struck first with a diversionary invasion of Syria. This prompted Antigonus to abandon his campaign in Europe and quickly dispatch Demetrius to Syria. But soon after Demetrius arrived in Asia he and his father were drawn into a battle in Phrygia. Lysimachus, Seleucus and Cassander were waiting for them at Ipsus. Sensing a victory, Demetrius charged with his cavalry and broke through the enemy battle lines. His immediate success gave him confidence to pursue his fleeing opponents beyond the battleground. Seleucus then sought the chance to plug up the gap with his Indian elephants, virtually cutting off Demetrius's chances of returning to the battle. Antigonus fought vigorously but, without Demetrius, was no match for his opponents. To make matters worse, Antigonus himself was mortally wounded and died while the battle raged on. Without Antigonus or Demetrius to lead, Antigonus's army was easily defeated. Demetrius, with about 9,000 of his troops, managed to escape and flee to Ephesus but the humiliating defeat left him without much of an army. Demetrius did not lose everything however. He had his father's navy and was still in control of Cyprus and some scattered coastal cities nearby. The victorious allies, on the other hand, now possessed the vastness of Asia and all its wealth.

In 301 BC, at the dawn of the 2nd century, after twenty years of struggling to rebuild Alexander's empire, another great Macedonian marshal came to pass. Antigonus was dead and his share of the empire went to his surviving colleagues

who showed no hesitation in carving it up for themselves. Lysimachus, with the exception of parts of Lycia, Pamphylia and Pisidia, took most of Asia Minor up to the Taurus Mountains. Ptolemy's diversionary invasion won him all of Syria and Phoenicia. Seleucus received the eastern portion of Asia but was not quite satisfied and also asked for Coele-Syria. Ptolemy who was in control of it at the time refused to give it up. Cassander made no claims in Asia but expected to be given full concessions in Europe.

Before continuing with the main story, I would like to take a small diversion and talk a little bit about one of the Seven Wonders of the World. It has been said that the so-called Colossus of Rhodes, which stood at the entrance of the harbour, was a statue of Helios built by the people of Rhodes.

The story begins with Antigonos's desire to control and dominate the seelanes in the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean waters. In order to achieve this, Antigonos had to take control of all ports including the neutral and fiercely independent port of Rhodes Island. The traders of Rhodes, who at the time were allowed to do business throughout the Mediterranean waters, were exceptionally wealthy and even though they were neutral had leanings towards Ptolemy because most of their business was done in places under his control. Knowing the situation that they would be in, at first, the Rhodians refused to surrender. But the threat of war caused them to reconsider and surrender without a fight. Unfortunately, Antigonos did not trust them and wanted one hundred of their noblest citizens as hostages. The Rhodians refused to part with their noblest citizens and thus rescinded the offer to surrender. Antigonos immediately began the siege by dispatching Demetrius with a strong force of four hundred ships and great siege engines. After fighting for a year with no result a compromise was reached. The hostages were surrendered and in return the Rhodians received autonomy and were allowed possession of their own revenues. The agreement forced the Rhodians to ally themselves with Antigonos except in campaigns against Ptolemy. In gratitude for Ptolemy's unwavering military and economic support during the siege, the Rhodians established the cult of Ptolemy the Saviour. To commemorate their struggles during the siege they commissioned a giant 105 foot high statue of Helios which took 12 years to complete and which was later recognized as one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world.

What is remarkable is that with the exception of some minor battles between Seleucus and the Indians, in the twenty years after Alexander's death, no power rose to challenge the Macedonians.

The battle of Ipsus was a turning point for the Macedonian protagonists who by their rivalry had pushed away any real chance of reuniting the empire. What was even worse is that with each new generation assuming power, the chances of reuniting the empire became more remote. In the next twenty-five years the protagonists would be facing different challenges but their rivalries would be a constant. The old guard would pass on but the empire would still remain in Macedonian hands.

Demetrius may have been down but he was not out. In the next fourteen years or so between 301 and 286 BC, he tried to restore his power but without

success. He still possessed the strongest fleet in the Aegean and held Cyprus, Tyre and Sidon. After establishing himself in Corinth around 295 BC he managed to take Athens. His gains, however, did not go unnoticed. If Demetrius were to take the City States and Macedonia he could build his power base in Europe and then invade Asia; at least that was the idea. Unfortunately, Demetrius's rivals did not agree with his ideas so while he was busy playing politics in Athens, they stripped him of most of his few possessions. Lysimachus took the Ionian ports, Seleucus took Cilicia and Ptolemy took Cyprus.

In Macedonia Cassander died in 298/297 BC, succeeded by his eldest son Philip IV who also died soon afterwards. Cassander had two younger sons named Antipater and Alexander who, under Salonica's (their mother, Philip II's daughter) guidance, became rivals. Salonica favoured her younger son Alexander and insisted that her sons equally divide up their father's empire so that each could have his own place to rule. Antipater, however, insisted that, according to Macedonian law, being the oldest male he had priority over all others and it was his right alone to rule his father's empire. His disagreements with his mother caused him to resent her so much that he had her murdered. He then appealed to Lysimachus for assistance against his brother. The younger Alexander did not take the situation well and decided to oppose his brother by forming alliances with their two closest neighbours, Demetrius and Pyrrhus. Pyrrhus was a new player in the Macedonian games, installed by Ptolemy as king of Epirus. Before his installation as king, young Pyrrhus was Ptolemy's hostage, given to him by Demetrius. Ptolemy took a liking to Pyrrhus and made him his protégé. After Cassander's death, Ptolemy supplied Pyrrhus with an army and restored him to the Epirot throne.

While Demetrius was busy in Athens, Pyrrhus quickly acted on Alexander's appeal and began to acquire lands on his western frontiers. Demetrius, who at the time was fighting battles in the Peloponnesus, abandoned his immediate plans and began to move northward. Demetrius came to Alexander's aid too late. Pyrrhus had already done the job and convinced Alexander to inform Demetrius that his services were no longer required. Demetrius did not take Alexander's high and mighty attitude lightly and had him murdered when the opportunity arose.

Demetrius lost no time in having his supporters in the Macedonian army proclaim him king of Macedonia. In 293 BC he turned southwards and conquered Thessaly, establishing a new port city which he named Demetrias, today's Volos. Around 292/291 BC he made some gains in the City States and destroyed Thebes twice. By 291 BC he again came into contact with Pyrrhus and a new round of conflicts were about to erupt.

All the while Demetrius was campaigning, Pyrrhus was not sitting idle. Sensing Demetrius's growing strength and influence, Pyrrhus decided to bolster himself by forming his own alliances. By 290 BC he had allied himself with the Aetolians, seized the Phocis and banned Demetrius and his allies, including Athens, from participating in the Pythian games at Delphi. It was now a matter of time before another conflict would break out. Pyrrhus was not the only threat

to Demetrius. Ptolemy, Seleucus and Lysimachus were also unhappy with Demetrius's gains and wanted him out of the way.

Less than two years later in the spring of 288 BC Lysimachus and Pyrrhus launched an attack from the east and west catching Demetrius off guard. Even though Demetrius possessed the strongest fleet and had in excess of 100,000 soldiers, his support quickly crumbled and by mid-summer of the same year he lost everything. When it was over, Macedonia went to Pyrrhus while the region around the Strumitsa Valley, including Amphipolis, went to Lysimachus. Demetrius himself escaped and went into hiding at Cassandra in the Chalcidic Peninsula.

Once again Demetrius was down but not out. While in hiding he continued to campaign for support and got it. It was not too long before he whipped up enough support to build an army to invade the Peloponnesus. His appearance at the gates of Athens prompted the Athenians to act but they were no match for Demetrius's formidable army so they called Pyrrhus for help. When Pyrrhus arrived, along with Ptolemy's powerful fleet, neither Pyrrhus nor Demetrius wanted war so a settlement was reached. By mid 287 BC a peace agreement was signed removing Demetrius from Athens but allowing him to keep the fortress of Corinth, Chalcis and a few other regions around Attica. With the loss of Athens, Demetrius for the moment had lost his appetite for conquests in the City States and left for Asia Minor, leaving his son Antigonus Gonatas in charge. Demetrius unfortunately could not sit still and started causing trouble for Lysimachus. By the spring of 286 BC, Demetrius built an army and was attacking cities in Asia Minor and taking them by force. After capturing Sardis he got Lysimachus's attention. Lysimachus then sent his son Agathocles in pursuit of Demetrius. In the meantime, Lysimachus invaded Demetrius's rear, cut him off from his fleet and blocked his communication lines. Demetrius was literally trapped but instead of turning back he decided to go deeper into Asia past the Taurus Range and into the hands of Seleucus. Unable to take on Seleucus, Demetrius, in the spring of 285 BC, surrendered and was taken to Apamea on the Orontes and left there to live in luxury. Unfortunately confined in luxury did not agree with Demetrius's lifestyle and by late summer 283 BC, at age fifty-four he died of drunkenness and boredom.

Without his father Demetrius, Antigonus Gonatas was not a threat to anyone and for the time being kept to himself. Unfortunately, that was not the case with Lysimachus who, in the power vacuum left by Demetrius, sought the opportunity to enlarge his own domain but at the expense of Pyrrhus. In 285 BC Lysimachus proceeded to seize both western Macedonia and Thessaly. Pyrrhus, the weaker of the two rivals, retreated to Epirus.

With Pyrrhus out of the way, Cassander's son Antipater had great expectations of finally being restored to his father's throne. That unfortunately did not happen since Lysimachus, who was now in control of Macedonia, convinced his loyal supporters in the Macedonian army to proclaim him king instead of Antipater. As king of Macedonia Lysimachus's first act was to execute

young Antipater for opposing him. Antipater's death literally ended Cassander's dynasty.

Being in possession of meager assets, Antigonus Gonatas did not have the funds to support his father's navy so along with his western port cities, he surrendered it to Ptolemy.

With Pyrrhus and Antigonus Gonatus out of the way, the winners of this bout, at least for the moment, were Ptolemy, Lysimachus and Seleucus.

Ptolemy was a clever man who knew that too much ambition was dangerous. He practiced what he preached and managed to stay out of trouble gaining just as much from sitting on the sidelines as the others did from being in the limelight. Ptolemy was getting old and, unlike his rivals, he appointed an heir to replace him. Two years before his death, in 285 BC, Ptolemy appointed Ptolemy II as his co-ruler and successor. Unfortunately his appointment did not go well with another son named Ptolemy Keraunos, from a different wife. Immediately after Ptolemy II's appointment, Keraunos took his grievance to Seleucus. Seleucus recommended that he wait until Ptolemy senior died before taking any action. Unfortunately that was not what Keraunos wanted to hear so he left Seleucus and went to Lysimachus for help. Lysimachus did offer him advice but advice was not what Keraunos wanted. After Ptolemy's death in 283 BC, Lysimachus abandoned Keraunos and sought an alliance with his rival, Ptolemy II by offering him one of his daughters in marriage. Even though he was disappointed by Lysimachus's move, having no other options for the moment, Keraunos decided to stay with him as one of his lieutenants and carry on his agitation from there.

Lysimachus was now over eighty years old and it was a matter of time before he died but he had yet to appoint an heir. So before things could be settled, Seleucus, in 282 BC, decided to attack him and strip him of his domain. The attack was not only successful, but it encouraged some of Lysimachus's governors to switch alliances voluntarily. By 281 BC most of Anatolia was surrendering to Seleucus. Lysimachus retaliated with a counter attack giving everything he had, gambling that he would win a decisive victory in a single battle. A great battle was fought at Curapedion. Like his old rival Antigonus before him, Lysimachus lost everything including his life. Keraunos was captured but was not harmed and Seleucus continued to ignore his pleas for assistance to regain the Egyptian throne.

Victorious, Seleucus set out for Europe so he could lay claim to his homeland, Macedonia. But on his way, during a heated argument with Ptolemy Keraunos, he was stabbed to death. Raging with anger Keraunos instantly killed the old Seleucus.

With Seleucus's demise so ended the line of all of Alexander III's marshals. Unfortunately their legacy and rivalry continued to live on in their offspring.

From the cheerful reception Ptolemy Keraunos received in Macedonia, it would have appeared that either Lysimachus was missed by the Macedonians or Seleucus was not at all popular.

Soon after his arrival, Lysimachus's veteran soldiers acclaimed Keraunos king of Macedonia. Keraunos's first act as king was to marry Lysimachus's wife

and adopt his children as his own. Ptolemy, one of those children refused to be part of the marriage and fled to Illyria and with good reason. Soon after the wedding his siblings were murdered and his mother barely escaped Keraunos's henchmen with her life and fled into hiding in Samothrace.

Not being satisfied with Macedonia alone, Keraunos attacked Antigonus Gonatas and, except for Demetrias (port of Volos), took all his possessions. But as luck would have it, being the miserable man he was, Keraunos was attacked by the Gauls. Earlier, when Lysimachus was defeated by Seleucus the frontier defenses were abandoned and left undefended. The undefended border allowed the Gauls an opportunity to invade and sack Macedonia, killing Keraunos in the process. It has been said that the Gauls cut off Keraunos's head, impaled it on a stake and carried it wherever they went.

The Gauls continued to plunder Macedonia, especially the countryside, until there was no more left to plunder. After that they moved on to the south until it was plundered and eventually invaded Asia Minor.

After Keraunos's death, Cassander's young nephew Antipater made another attempt to retake the Macedonian crown but without success.

To fill the power vacuum in Macedonia two new rivals appeared. The first was Seleucus's son and successor, Antiochus I. Opposing him was Antigonus Gonatas. Both wanted the Macedonian crown and could not reach a peaceful agreement so their personal rivalries eventually escalated into a full-scale war.

While Seleucus and Antigonus were fighting each other, a general who won a victory against the Gauls invaded Macedonia, deposed young Antipater and took the crown but not for himself.

Antigonus's popularity began to rise after he defeated the Gauls in a single decisive battle. It was only by accident that his forces ran into a vast column of over eighteen thousand Gauls marching through Thrace towards the coastal city of Chersonese. By a clever move, Antigonus outmaneuvered, trapped and massacred the Gauls, winning a bloody but decisive victory. This gave him the recognition he needed to reassert himself in the power game and win the Macedonian throne he so desired. It didn't take him too long to drive young Antipater and the other rivals out. But before he could sit contentedly on the Macedonian throne he had yet to face Pyrrhus.

By 276 BC the old rivalries of who was going to replace Alexander III as supreme ruler of the whole Macedonian empire no longer mattered and the Antigonids, Seleucids and Ptolemies had reached a balance of power.

While Antigonus was basking in his glory in Macedonia, Pyrrhus had some matters to attend to in Italy, but by late 275 BC he was back again. It took him a good part of the winter to prepare and by early spring he invaded Macedonia. His reasons for the invasion were personal and a matter of necessity. Pyrrhus wanted to pay back Antigonus for refusing him assistance during his war with Rome. His campaigns in Italy had reduced Pyrrhus to a pauper and he needed loot to pay his soldiers and what better place to get it than from his old rival Antigonus. Most importantly, however, Pyrrhus wanted Macedonia for himself.

Antigonus Gonatas's forces were attacked and defeated. Antigonus himself fled with some of his cavalry to Solun. The rest of his army surrendered to Pyrrhus. Like his father before him, Antigonus was down but not out. He still had some coastal cities and a powerful fleet in his possession. And most importantly he was still a king.

Pyrrhus managed to recover Macedonia and Thessaly but was not popular with the Macedonian people, especially since he allied himself with the Gauls and let them plunder the Royal tombs at Aigai. When Pyrrhus completely lost his popularity with the Macedonians he left Macedonia to do some campaigning in the City States. While away his son Ptolemaeus was left in charge.

In his preoccupation campaigning against the City States, Pyrrhus failed to notice Antigonus's return and occupation of Macedonia. With Macedonia firmly in his hands, Antigonus, during the summer of 272 BC, dispatched his fleet to the City States and went in pursuit of Pyrrhus. When the opposing armies met a battle ensued and Pyrrhus was knocked unconscious. While lying down an enemy soldier recognized him, lopped his head off and took it to Antigonus.

Soon after Pyrrhus's death, the battle was over and there was no further resistance from Pyrrhus's allies. With Pyrrhus out of the way, Antigonus had an opportunity to retake all of the City States and bring them under his control. Like Ptolemy before him, he exercised caution and did not allow his ambitions to get hold of him.

From here on, with minor clashes at the frontiers, Alexander's empire was to be ruled by three dynasties, the Antigonids, the Seleucids and the Ptolemies. Fifty years after his death, Alexander's empire remained intact and was still ruled by Macedonians.

By 268 BC, things were stirring up again as Ptolemy II incited the Athenians into ejecting the Macedonians and declaring war on Antigonus. Antigonus was planning to bolster his naval power in the Aegean, which would have become a direct threat to Ptolemy's naval trade. Ptolemy had no intention of helping the City States but their desire to free themselves from Macedonian rule was so great that many of them, including Sparta, ignored the risks and began preparations for war. The situation escalated and Antigonus decided to take action. He met the Spartan army outside Corinth where a battle ensued and the Spartans lost. To quell the situation completely Antigonus put Athens, the main instigator, under siege. Ptolemy's promise of naval assistance never materialized and Athens was left to starve into surrender. After its surrender, Athens lost its autonomy and Macedonians were once again put in control of its affairs.

With the City States put down, Antigonus, in 261 BC, attacked Ptolemy's navy in the Aegean and scored a major victory. To reinforce his positions, Antigonus also placed strategic defensive posts along the Attic coastline.

In Asia, meanwhile, Antiochus I of the Seleucid Dynasty was having problems of his own. Unable, sometimes unwilling to hold his empire together Antiochus I began to lose some of his frontiers to secession. He had lost Cappadocia, Pontus and Bithynia and the satrapies of Bactria and Sogdiana were about to become independent. Then in 261BC as things began to slide Antiochus

I died, at the age sixty-four, and was succeeded by his son Antiochus II. Antiochus II quickly formed a welcomed alliance with Antigonus Gonatas. Together they were now able to check Ptolemy and keep him at bay. Unfortunately this alliance gave Antigonus and Antiochus an advantage over Ptolemy and prompted them to take action in recovering some of their lost possessions. While Antigonus continued to build his naval power, Antiochus began his own campaigns against Ptolemy, prompting the so-called second Syrian war. Sensing that he was about to lose ground, Ptolemy II, in 253 BC, made his peace with Antiochus II. To seal the dynastic alliance, Antiochus married Ptolemy's daughter Berenice Syra who brought him a vast dowry. Unfortunately Antiochus was already married to Laodice whom he had to repudiate with a sizable payoff, however she refused to consent.

While playing good politics with Antiochus, Ptolemy II was playing bad politics with Antigonus by backing a revolt against him in Corinth. In 253/252 BC, Antigonus's nephew Alexander, the governor of Corinth, revolted against Antigonus and proclaimed himself king. As it turned out, however, before any of these matters could be fully settled both Ptolemy and Antiochus died. Ptolemy II died in January 246 BC, and Antiochus II died in August of the same year. While Ptolemy II was replaced by his son Ptolemy III, Antiochus did not leave an heir. It has been said that Antiochus died prematurely, probably from poison. His ex-wife, Laodice, who at the time of his death was visiting the palace, may have poisoned him. In any event, after Antiochus's death hostilities broke out between his new wife Berenice, who had just born him a son, and his ex-wife Laodice, who claimed that on his deathbed Antiochus had appointed her son Seleucus as his heir. Berenice, feeling the pressure from Laodice, made an appeal for help to her brother Ptolemy III in Alexandria who quickly came to her aid only to find her and her child dead. As a result of the assassinations, hostilities broke out between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies. It escalated to a full-scale war, termed the Third Syrian War, which lasted until about 241 BC, with Seleucus II as victor. His victory however did not save his empire, especially from his own brother who, encouraged by his mother Laodice, wanted co-regency. When Seleucus II refused him, the young Antiochus Hierax set himself up as an independent sovereign. With all the rebellions and dynastic rivalries going on, the future of the Seleucid empire did not look very bright.

Also in 241 BC there was a turn of events in Europe where Antigonus Gonatas had to make amends with the Achaean League which was gaining strength year after year. His rebellious nephew Alexander died in 246 BC and by 245 BC Antigonus recovered his losses in Corinth. Satisfied with his accomplishments in one lifetime, Antigonus Gonatas died early in 239 BC, at age eighty. His tough and ambitious son Demetrius II, another Macedonian, succeeded him.

Before continuing with the main story, I want to take a small diversion here and explore development in the west, with Rome in particular.

As mentioned earlier, had Alexander lived longer he would have attacked Carthage and the Carthagean-Roman conflict and Punic Wars would have not

taken place. Carthage was sister-city to Tyre and helped Tyre defend herself against Alexander's prolonged siege. Tyre's prolonged resistance cost Alexander, men, resources, money and time. Alexander was not the forgiving type and would have made Carthage pay dearly for her meddling in his affairs. Unfortunately, Alexander died, his plans were abandoned and none of his successors had the foresight to see the impending dangers lurking in the west.

During and after Alexander's time there was very little interaction between the Macedonian rulers and those of the west. There were City State cities along the coastline, Sicily in particular but for the most part, they were left alone to fend for themselves.

The first major encroachment by Rome on the east was in Sicily during the first Punic War which started in 264 BC and ended in 241 BC. After that Rome occupied Sicily and in 212 BC made it a Roman province, an ideal staging ground for carrying out campaigns against the Great Commercial Empire of Carthage.

Sicily, at the time, was a region full of barbaric states where violence, mass executions, torture, rapes, pillaging and enslavement were commonplace most of which were perpetrated by the Romans. Before the Roman encroachment, Sicily served as a barrier or neutral zone between the major powers and both east and west tended to interfere in its affairs. Sicily was also the staging ground for much of the piracy taking place in the Mediterranean waters. The city of Syracuse played an important role during these times because it was a place where the exiled, deposed and tyrants usually ended up after being evicted from their homelands. For those with power and influence, rule was in easy grasp and the Sicilians had their share of good times and bad, but mostly bad. After the Romans made Sicily their province, life for the ordinary Sicilian took a turn for the worse. Romans cared not for the Sicilians or for human values for that matter. They only cared for profit and pillaged Sicily no end. But this was only the beginning. The Romans were just acquiring a small taste for what was about to come.

As mentioned earlier, one of the power players from the Macedonian world to venture westward and make a significant impact on Rome was Pyrrhus. Pyrrhus was summoned to Italy in 280 BC, by a plea for help from the Tarentines who had problems of their own with the Romans. Pyrrhus answered their call and was even given assistance by other Macedonian rulers who were happy to see him go and stay out of their affairs. Pyrrhus, using the elephants given to him by the Macedonian rulers, scored a number of victories in Sicily but caused a chain of events to occur that would have repercussions in the future. His presence and series of victories caused much concern for Carthage to a point where she was willing to set aside her differences with Rome and form a temporary alliance against Pyrrhus. To prevent him from carrying out campaigns in Africa, Pyrrhus's fleet was attacked and sunk by the Carthagians. Then after crossing into Italy, Pyrrhus spent the winter in Taras, with plans for a north offensive in the fall, which never materialized. During the summer of 275 BC he was attacked and beaten by the Romans who by now had learned how to deal

with elephants. During the same year the Romans invaded and took Taras, which brought them yet another step closer to Macedonia. With Pyrrhus beaten and out of the way there was no formidable force outside of Carthage to stand against Rome in the west or to challenge her at her home base.

After Alexander's death and the conclusion of the Lamian Wars, most of what we refer to today as City States lost the privileges granted to them by Philip II and Alexander III. For fifty or so years after Alexander's death, they were ruled by Macedonians and were used as pawns in a power struggle for dominance. During the later years, however, some of the states organized themselves into leagues but unfortunately they were never able to hold alliances for too long. This was partly due to the characteristic politics they played internally and mainly due to outside influence from the rich and powerful Macedonian rulers. The Ptolemies never hesitated to supply Athens with grain just to stir trouble for the Antigonids. Almost every conflict was initiated in the name of restoring the rights of the City States and ended with more rights lost than gained.

While the southern City States were unsuccessfully attempting to shore up alliances among themselves, Antigonus Gonatas's son and successor Demetrius II was busily shoring up his own alliances. In 239 BC, to shore up support against the Illyrians on his western frontiers, he married an Epirot princess named Phthia. In 238 BC Phthia bore Demetrius a son whom he appropriately named Philip, who in the future would become Philip V of Macedonia. Right about this time the City State leagues were beginning to gain ground in the development of their alliances and with strength came anti-Macedonian sentiment.

Determined to intervene, Demetrius, due to internal conflicts, lost his support from Epirus and was unable to do it alone. If that was not enough, the Leagues were now threatening his former allies with severe punishments should they intervene. Determined to turn the tide, Demetrius sought help from the Illyrians who were eager to assist only to help themselves. Paid by Demetrius, the Illyrians first invaded Epirus then the Adriatic coast and looted everything in their path. They managed to invade some of the League's territories and looted them as well. By 229 BC they crossed over and invaded the Italian coastline and by now had attracted Rome's attention. In the Peloponnesus in the meantime, the Illyrians started to form alliances with some of the City State Leagues and were considering invading all of the City States. In the meantime complaints were being generated from both sides of the Adriatic. Italian traders feeling the pinch from the constant raids took their complaints to Rome. Rome in turn sent envoys to investigate with recommendations to make a move. They attacked violently with devastating speed and crushing numerical superiority. The Illyrians, whose true aim in all this was to make profit not war, quickly collapsed and in 228 BC consented to a treaty. Demetrius's messy problems were solved without him having to lift a finger but his inaction allowed Rome to gain a foothold in Illyrian affairs. Even though Rome, at the time, had no ambitions of expanding her

sphere of influence east of Italy she did demonstrate her military might and will to fight.

Chapter 10 - Prelude to War with Rome

Macedonia's decline began with Demetrius's death in 229 BC. Demetrius lost his life during a valiant battle defending Macedonia against Dardanian invasions. After his death, his kingdom was left to his nine year-old son Philip. Philip unfortunately was too young to rule so guardianship was awarded to Demetrius's cousin, Antigonus Doseon, who agreed to look after the kingdom until Philip came of age. Antigonus Doseon, sometimes referred to as Antigonus III, did his best to maintain peace and stability in keeping Philip's kingdom intact.

After Demetrius's death, while Macedonia was preoccupied with domestic affairs, Athens took the opportunity to liberate the port of Piraeus, removing the Macedonian garrison stationed there. Athens did this not by battle but by bribery. After that, Athens declared her neutrality and prudently refused to join any alliances. Sparta on the other hand, under the leadership of Cleomenes III who was unable to sit still, initiated a number of social reforms. Sparta's northern neighbours, the Achaean League, however, feared that a reformed Sparta would pose a threat to the League's dominance and took action against it. Unable to negotiate a suitable settlement, the League turned to Antigonus for help. To entice him to intervene, the League offered him Acrocorinth, a strategically valuable place. Antigonus graciously accepted and with twenty thousand troops confronted Cleomenes. The mere sight of the Macedonian army marching down the Peloponnesus must have given Cleomenes's allies cold feet because they quickly withdrew leaving Cleomenes on his own.

As it turned out, Cleomenes's soldiers were mostly hired mercenaries paid for with Ptolemy's money. Ptolemy, as usual, was the instigator of these intrigues never missing an opportunity to expand his own influence. When Antigonus found this out he quickly gave Ptolemy what he wanted, territorial concessions in Asia Minor. In exchange Ptolemy removed his support for Cleomenes. Without Ptolemy's financial support, Cleomenes lost his influence and decided to stake everything on the outcome of a single battle. In 222 BC, in Sellasia about 120 kilometers north of Sparta, Cleomenes engaged the Macedonians and lost. From there he fled to Egypt. Antigonus, meanwhile, triumphantly walked on Spartan soil as the first foreign conqueror to do so in a long time.

Victorious, Antigonus reconstituted the Hellenic League of Philip II with himself as hegemon and placed Macedonian garrisons in Acrocorinth and Orchomenos. He also left a senior Macedonian officer in charge of Peloponnesian affairs. Sparta's bid for freedom was not only lost but Sparta herself was now forced into a new confederacy with her former enemies; the Achaeans, Thessalians, Epirotes, Acarnanians, Boeotians, Phocians and worst of all, she came under Macedonian control.

Geographically, the new alliance literally encircled Aetolia, which was now an enemy of the entire confederation. The Aetolian league was not at all pleased with the new circumstances and retaliated by waging war on confederation allies.

Antigonus, hardly given any time to enjoy his victory had to return home to deal with another barbarian invasion. While in battle, unfortunately, he received a fatal wound from which he later died. Antigonus Doseon, barely in his forties, died in the early summer of 221 BC after he made arrangements to place his young nephew Philip V on the Macedonian throne.

Macedonia was not the only kingdom to have established a young king on the throne in 221 BC. Antiochus III of Asia and Ptolemy IV of Egypt were also crowned the same year.

In Asia Seleucus II, coaxed by his mother Laodice, ceded Asia Minor to his brother Antiochus Hierax, something he soon came to regret. Unfortunately, neither brother was happy with the outcome and it did not take long before conflict broke out between them lasting from 239 to 236 BC.

Preoccupied with this brotherly struggle, Seleucus neglected his eastern satrapies and almost lost them. Antiochus, backed by Ptolemy III, was able to maintain pressure on his brother until Seleucus realized that this fratricidal struggle was unproductive. In 236 BC Seleucus made peace with Antiochus and gave him all of Asia Minor north of the Taurus Mountains. Unfortunately, Antiochus was not happy with his gains and with the help of the Galatians conspired to extort money from the cities in Asia Minor. He even conspired to overthrow Attalus I of Pergamon.

Attalus was the son of Eumenes of Pergamon and had previous encounters with the Galatians. In fact he had won a great victory against them in 237 BC after which he proclaimed himself king. Having had experience in dealing with Galatians, Attalus was not afraid of them and went in pursuit of Antiochus chasing him through Phrygia, Lydia, Caria and beyond. During his four year pursuit from 231 to 228 BC, Attalus beat Antiochus in three major battles and took over his territories in Asia Minor. Driven out of his own domain, Antiochus, with the help of his aunt Stratonice, made a move to overthrow his brother Seleucus. While Stratonice organized an insurrection in Antioch, Antiochus made a move against Babylonia. While this was happening Seleucus was campaigning in Parthia, which he had to abandon in order to deal with his brother. When Seleucus caught up with him he drove him out of Asia. Antiochus at this point fled to Egypt where Ptolemy imprisoned him. Soon afterwards he escaped to Thrace where he was murdered by the Galatians in 227 BC.

After driving Antiochus out of Asia, Seleucus captured and executed Stratonice and was about to turn on Attalus. Before he had the chance though he died from an accidental fall from his horse. In 226 BC, Seleucus II was succeeded by his first son, Seleucus III Soter who held the throne for the next three years before being murdered by his own officers, while campaigning against Attalus. Upon his death, his cousin Achaëus was nominated governor of Asia Minor. He in turn, in 223 BC, had Seleucus III's younger brother Antiochus III, proclaimed king. As governor of Asia Minor, Achaëus went after Attalus and

by 222 BC pushed him back to Pergamon, thus recovering all the lost Seleucid territories in Asia Minor.

In Egypt Ptolemy III dropped his support for Sparta and made amends with Macedonia. But in Asia, he continued to harass the Seleucids and took from them parts of the eastern Mediterranean, Thrace and the Hellespont. After his death in 221 BC, Ptolemy III was succeeded by Ptolemy IV Philopator.

In Europe, by forming the federation, Antigonus Doseon had surrounded the Aetolians. Unhappy about their predicament, they began to fight back by carrying out raids against their neighbours, the Achaean League. By now Philip V was of age and succeeded Antigonus, assuming the title hegemon. As the new hegemon he felt it was his duty to appropriately respond to the Aetolian aggression so he declared war on them. To make matters worse, news of Cleomenes's death in 219 BC inspired a Royalist coup in Sparta and an unfriendly king was appointed to the throne. The anti-federation king quickly broke off relations with Macedonia and allied himself with the Aetolians. Philip responded conclusively with speed and energy.

In the campaigns that followed, reminiscent of Alexander III, Philip V and his well trained and disciplined Macedonian army consistently outmaneuvered and outfought his opponents. In 217 BC, however, Philip was needed elsewhere and had to wind down his campaigns so an armistice was concluded on the basis of the status quo.

In Asia, soon after his crowning, the ambitious Antiochus III revealed a grand plan to recover lost Seleucid territories and restore his great grandfather's (Seleucus I Nicator) empire. His plan included the re-acquisition of Coele-Syria down to the Egyptian Gates, the recovery of the great eastern satrapies, recovery of the Asia Minor seaports, the Hellespont and eastern Thrace on the European side. He even mounted an expedition worthy of Alexander III, which took him to Bactria and India.

Claiming that Syria and Phoenicia once belonged to Seleucus I, Antiochus launched a major offensive against Syria, thus initiating the Fourth Syrian War which lasted from 219 to 217 BC. In his effort to recapture his great grandfather's empire he repossessed his old capital Seleucia, the port cities of Tyre and Ptolemais-Ake and opened the road from Palestine to Egypt. Unlike Alexander III however, the more cautious Antiochus did not go conquering Egypt and instead focussed his energies on consolidating his position in Galilee and Samaria. There he spent a great deal of time negotiating peace with Ptolemy who was secretly gathering a large army for a counter attack.

Ptolemy's intentions became very clear in the summer of 217 BC, when he and his younger sister Arsione came prepared for battle with an army of fifty-five thousand soldiers. They took to the fields of Raphia in Palestine and came face to face with Antiochus and his army of sixty-eight thousand. This was not only the biggest battle since Ipsus, but it took shape in a similar manner. Antiochus, like Demetrius before him, struck the battle line with his cavalry at lightning speed, receiving a quick victory. Unable to resist the urge to pursue his opponent, Antiochus left the battlefield, allowing Ptolemy's commanders to

regroup and launch a counter attack. Without Antiochus's leadership and in the absence of cavalry support, the Seleucid phalanx broke up and was defeated. Victorious, the Ptolemies saved Egypt and cut Antiochus's ambitions short. With the exception of giving back the naval base in Seleucia, Ptolemy was happy to settle for the status quo with Coele-Syria safely back in his hands. But all was not well in Egypt. The Egyptian troops had tasted victory and wanted more, not for Ptolemy but for themselves.

A shortage of silver in Egypt forced the Ptolemies to use bronze coins, which were not very popular with the foreign mercenaries. Without foreign mercenaries, the Ptolemies had no choice but to recruit locally from the less expensive native pool of soldiers. The concentration of Egyptians in the military unfortunately stimulated a strong nationalistic sentiment, which had negative consequences for the Ptolemies. At the onset the discontentment manifested itself as sporadic outbursts of guerilla campaigns but with time it grew into an outright rebellion. In a bloody coup against the central government, the Egyptians managed to free Upper Egypt from Ptolemaic control. Without the resources of Upper Egypt, the Ptolemies were forced to raise more taxes in order to maintain their state's security, thus further aggravating the situation.

While Antiochus was busy fighting the Ptolemies in Syria, his uncle Achaeus, was busy re-conquering Asia Minor for himself. After Antiochus lost to Ptolemy at Raphia, Achaeus made a bold move and proclaimed himself king of Asia Minor. His army did not agree with his proclamation and refused to support him. In 216 BC Antiochus returned to Asia Minor, cornered his uncle in Sardis and in 213 BC caught him trying to escape. He had him mutilated and then crucified.

For the next seven years, from 212 BC to 205 BC, Antiochus turned his attention eastward in an attempt to recover the eastern satrapies. Having first conquered Armenia he turned his attention to Media Atropatene. He invaded Media and spent two years organizing his army and raising funds to pay for his campaign. Most of the money came from the treasures of the great temple of Ecbatana. In 209 BC Antiochus III, like Alexander III before him, marched with his army eastward conquering territory after territory. Parthia fell to him without a fight and after campaigning in Bactria for two years she too fell into his hands. He crossed the Hindu Kush and signed a treaty with the Indians, after which he began his journey back via Arachosia, Drangiana and the Persian Gulf. He also sent an expedition to conquer the Gerrhaean Arabs and won tributes of money and spices. In 205 BC Antiochus reached Seleucia on the Tigris. There he was welcomed as a champion who had regained most of his great grandfather's empire and had restored Seleucid imperial hopes. Yet still he was not happy as Coele-Syria, the Anatolian coastal cities and the Hellespontine regions were still beyond his grasp.

The loss of Upper Egypt to the native pharaohs not only deprived the Ptolemies of substantial resources, but also brought poverty and oppression to the region. Events turned from bad to worse after Ptolemy's death in 205 BC when the Egyptian priests began to revolt against his rule. Things were no better

in Alexandria either. Ptolemy V Epiphanes was still a child when Ptolemy IV died and his regency was fought over with bloody consequences. While Ptolemy IV ruled women dominated the palace, especially Ptolemy IV's wife and sister. Now that he was gone, they too made a pitch for the throne. Arsinoe, Ptolemy IV's sister was most eager to rule but soon ran into trouble with Ptolemy's, ministers who themselves were interested in his throne. To keep her from taking control, Arsinoe was murdered by two of the most powerful ministers. They in turn were later killed by an Alexandrian lynch mob. The five year-old king, meanwhile, was passed on from one ambitious advisor to another. To make matters worse, Antiochus III was eyeing Egypt and, in its weakness, was preparing to invade Coele-Syria in what was later to be called the Fifth Syrian War.

In Macedonia young Philip V, anxious to prove himself, became entangled in all kinds of Balkan intrigues. He was involved with an Illyrian pirate called Demetrius of Pharos who, at the moment, was seeking refuge in his court. Demetrius was expelled from Sicily by the Romans in 219 BC for raiding and being a nuisance to the Rhodians and Romans in both the Aegean and Adriatic Seas. Demetrius, however, was welcomed in Philip's court because he contributed troops to Antigonos Doso's Sellasian campaign. Philip also valued his so-called "sound advice".

When Rome was defeated by Hannibal in 217 BC, at Lake Trisamene, Demetrius convinced Philip to reinstall him on the Adriatic coast. Philip took his advice, moved into southern Illyria, drove out Scerdilaidas, his rival pirate, and enabled Demetrius to recover his former place. Unfortunately, Scerdilaidas was not happy about being pushed out and quickly appealed to Rome for help. Rome lost no time in sending a patrol to investigate. Anxious to avoid a showdown Philip retreated at once. He burned 120 of his own ships to avoid capture and fled with his army over the mountains. Although nothing came of this, suspicions were raised in Rome about Philip's real motives. After reaching its destination, the Roman patrol remained in Illyria to safeguard against any future raids.

Another mistake young Philip made, again acting on the advice of Demetrius, was to sign a treaty with Hannibal the Carthaginian. Drafted by the Carthaginians, this treaty required Philip to become an ally of Carthage in the event of a war with Rome. In return, should Carthage win the war, she would ensure that the Romans would be forced to abandon their sphere of influence in Illyria. The only reason I believe Philip agreed to this was to humour his confidant, Demetrius. Philip at the time did not believe that Rome would risk going to war with a powerful Macedonia over a trivial document. Rome also, at the time, had no plans for any serious eastward interventions. What Philip failed to realize, however, is that his trivial actions would have serious consequences for Macedonia in the future. For the moment, however, Rome remained content and Philip continued to look for ways to gain influence in Illyria.

Still under Demetrius's influence, Philip began to look southward for adventure, always keeping one eye open for conquest. Unfortunately he

continued to make mistakes. By inciting various factions in the Peloponnesus to fight against one another he caused torment and senseless bloodshed. His bad influence came to an abrupt end when Demetrius of Pharos was killed in 215 BC during an unsuccessful assault on Ithome. Unfortunately, by now Philip's conquered subjects didn't see him as a reasonable ruler but as a somewhat wild, cruel and politically motivated adventurer. His ravaging of Messenia ended with Demetrius's death.

For the next two years, 213 to 212 BC, Philip turned his attention to Illyria. He replaced the ships he lost during his last contact with the Romans and, being careful not to be detected, marched his army north into Scerdilaidas's territory. When the time was right he descended upon Lissos on the Adriatic and established his western base of power.

It is not known why Philip turned his attention westward at this time. His rationale may have been to put a barrier between himself and Rome or perhaps, as some believe, to gain control of the lucrative western maritime markets and trade routes in the Adriatic. In any event, his appearance in the Adriatic caused panic and hysteria in Rome. Fearing an invasion of Italy, Rome was determined to stop him and quickly sought allies among his enemies. As it turned out, the Aetolians were having problems with Philip and were also looking for allies among Philip's enemies. A Roman-Aetolian coalition not only distracted Philip from his western campaigns but also caused him to strengthen his alliance with the Achaean League. The Aetolians and Romans proved to be brutal in their habits and wreaked havoc in Illyria, Thrace, Thessaly and Acarnania. To make matters worse, Attalus of Pergamon joined the Roman-Aetolian coalition and in 209 BC was appointed general of the Aetolians.

Philip, with his disciplined Macedonian army, quickly retaliated and did well against the Aetolians on land but hesitated to challenge the Romans at sea. The Achaeans also had some success and were able to crush the Spartans at Mantinea. Before things could be settled, however, both Philip and Attalus were recalled to their homeland to deal with yet another large Dardanian invasion.

After Philip left for home and was no longer a threat, the Romans lost interest in the Aetolians and abandoned them altogether. Without Rome's support, the Aetolians were no match for Philip and they quickly capitulated after his return. In 206 BC they broke their treaty with Rome and made peace with Philip, giving him back all that they had previously taken. The Romans unfortunately did not take this breakup well and were anxious for a renewed alliance.

Their chance came when Rhodes and Chios started accusing the locals of disrupting international commerce with their petty wars. In the spring of 205 BC the Romans came back with thirty-five ships and eleven thousand troops. They landed in Epidamnus where Philip met them and offered them battle but the Romans refused to fight. Their real objective was to break up the Macedonian-Aetolian treaty. They figured that with their massive support they could spur the Aetolians back into action, break off relations with Macedonia and wage war on Philip. When the Aetolians refused, the Romans reconsidered and negotiated

separate peace agreements with the various parties involved. The result was the treaty of Phoenice which was concluded in the summer of 205 BC, thus ending the First Macedonian War.

On the surface it appeared that Macedonia was the biggest winner. Philip was allowed to keep his gains in inland Illyria. Even though the status of Lissos remained uncertain, Lissos was still under Macedonian control. Rome, on the other hand, appeared to be the loser because all she received were words of assurance that Macedonia would not interfere in Adriatic affairs. Beneath the surface, however, Rome was the real winner because she managed to prevent an active alliance between Macedonia and Carthage.

The conclusion of the First Macedonian War was a crossroad for both Macedonia and Rome. Philip was content with his treaty with Rome, reassured that his problems with the Romans were over. He no longer had reason to fear the west. Similarly, Philip's word of non-interference in Roman affairs was good enough for the hysterical Roman Senators who now felt they could freely devote their full attention to dealing with Carthage. Had Philip paid heed to the growing menace west of him, he would have sided with Carthage just to maintain a balance of power. Unfortunately he allowed Rome to grow powerful. Instead of striking a crippling blow, while he still could, Philip closed his eyes and for the next five years left Rome to ravage Carthage unabated.

In Asia, at about the same time as Philip was concluding his peace with the Romans, Antiochus III was moving towards the Hellespont by way of Asia Minor and the Aegean Sea. Philip by now must have known about Antiochus's exploits and his ambition to expand his great grandfather's empire and was probably anticipating an invasion. As it turned out, however, Antiochus's preoccupation was not with Europe but with Coele-Syria. So, instead of attacking Philip, he made a secret pact with him to attack Ptolemy and divide up his possessions. Surprisingly Philip went along with the plan and while Antiochus prepared to invade Coele-Syria, he went after Ptolemy's Aegean possessions.

Antiochus wasted no time and in 202 BC swept through Coele-Syria and Phoenicia, inflicting a crushing defeat on Ptolemy's forces. By the time he was done, he had reclaimed the port of Sidon and all coastal strongholds from Caria down to Cilicia. In 197 BC, he invaded the territories of Pergamon which sent Attalus running to the Romans. Egypt must have gone crying to the Romans as well, because around 199 BC Rome sent a stern warning to Philip asking him to inform Antiochus not to invade Egypt. Antiochus promptly complied since he had no intention of invading Egypt in the first place.

Here again the Macedonian monarchs underestimated Rome's importance and missed another important clue. Rome didn't care about Egypt or Ptolemy's survival. What she did care about was a healthy competition between Ptolemy and Antiochus. Put another way, Rome did not want one large consolidated Asian Empire under one ruler at her doorstep and was making sure it didn't happen.

I believe the shortsighted Macedonian monarchs preoccupied with their own petty squabbling missed the real threat lurking in the west that eventually not only destroyed their homeland but also changed the course of history forever.

In 196 BC, blinded by his rash of victories, Antiochus crossed over the Hellespont from Asia into Europe and began to rebuild the abandoned city of Lysimacheia. It was going to be a military base and a home for his son Seleucus. Unfortunately, his well-deserved reputation as a conqueror was too much for the hysterical Roman Senators. They issued him an ultimatum to stop his hostilities, relinquish the territory he had won in Asia Minor, refrain from further attacks on cities and above all keep out of Europe. Antiochus took very little notice of the ultimatum and continued his business as usual. When a Roman mission arrived in Lysimacheia, delivering the Senate's earlier demands for a second time, Antiochus exclaimed that his presence in Asia Minor and Thrace was well justified because the territory was won by Seleucus I's defeat of Lysimachus in 281 BC. By rite of inheritance the territory belonged to him. Antiochus must have suspected that the ultimatum was a bluff and the Romans were in no mood to fight so he continued to rebuild Lysimacheia which served as his outpost until at least 190 BC.

In 195 BC, Antiochus concluded his seven year war (Fifth Syrian War) with Egypt with a peace agreement that included his daughter's engagement to Ptolemy. Soon afterwards, in 194 BC, Ptolemy married (Antiochus's daughter) Cleopatra, sealing the deal.

In Macedonia meanwhile, after the treaty of Phoenice, Philip decided it was time to strengthen his navy and went to work building a powerful fleet. By 201 BC his fleet was ready and operational. After his secret pact with Antiochus, Philip captured the island of Thasos, a strategic post for keeping an eye on the Bosphorus and Black Sea trade routes. In 201 BC he captured Ptolemy's naval base at Samos and added the large number of ships there to his own fleet. He later attacked and defeated the Rhodian fleet and invaded Ionia and Pergamon.

Unfortunately, the Macedonians were never good at fighting at sea but still it took the combination of Rhodes, Chios, Pergamon and Byzantium to stop the Macedonian navy. At a naval engagement near Chios, the Macedonian fleet suffered a crippling defeat, losing almost half the ships in the navy. What was most alarming about this battle was that more Macedonians were lost here than in any previous engagement on land or at sea.

Broken up by his defeat, Philip quickly withdrew to Miletus and later regrouped his forces in an enclave in Caria where he rested until 196 BC. Unfortunately his remaining fleet had to stay at sea and during the winter of 201-200 BC it was blockaded in Bargylia by the Rhodians and the Pergamenes who quickly ran to Rome to denounce Philip's actions.

During the spring of 200 BC the Macedonian fleet broke free from the blockage and was back in Europe in good time to become involved in yet another war, this time between Athens and Acarnania. Being allies with the Acarnanians, Philip sent an expeditionary force to attack Athens and a squadron to capture four Athenian triremes at the port of Piraeus. The triremes however

were just as easily lost as they were captured. Unbeknownst to the Macedonians, Rhodian and Pergamene squadrons were pursuing them across the Aegean and suddenly appeared from their base in Aigina, recovering the stolen ships. The Athenians were happy to have their ships back and, more importantly, were thrilled to have such friends who would come to their aid, risking the wrath of Philip. But as it turned out it was all done for political gains not for friendship. The Athenians, behind Macedonia's back, were entertaining a Roman delegation, which at the time happened to be visiting their fair city. When seventy year-old Attalus found out he couldn't wait to invite himself. Besides the prestige of being with the delegation, the Athenians bestowed great honours on the old man. Athenian excitement reached its peak when Rome, Rhodes and Pergamon all pledged their support for Athens against Macedonia.

This indeed was a moment of glory for Athens that was jubilantly celebrated with a declaration of war on Macedonia. It was an impulsive move, which unfortunately backfired. At the sight of the Macedonian army Athens lost her new friends. They had better things to do so they left her alone to take the full brunt of the Macedonian army. Philip's reaction to the Athenian move was prompt, vigorous and characteristic of a Macedonian king, to say the least. The Macedonians did not tolerate insubordination especially from Athens. Philip dispatched general Nicanor with orders to decimate Attica, including the Academy in Athens where the Roman mission was staying. Even though no Romans were killed in the attack, in retrospect, this was a mistake. News of the savage attacks quickly reached the Roman Senate, persuading even the optimists that Philip's contemptuous behaviour could not be tolerated and something had to be done. The Romans felt that they had no choice but to deliver an ultimatum ordering Philip to stop his aggressions against Attica and to settle his differences with Attalus by arbitration.

Philip knew that Rome, so soon after the war with Hannibal, was in no shape to take on Macedonia. He was not in the least perturbed by the prospect of war and completely ignored the ultimatum. He ordered more attacks on Attica and also attacked the cities around the Hellespont hoping to disrupt the Athenian Black Sea grain route.

The Romans dispatched a second ultimatum, which repeated the first and added two more clauses. In the second ultimatum Philip was required to compensate Rhodes for losses as well as refrain from attacking Egypt and Egyptian possessions. My guess is that the Romans found out about the secret pact between Philip and Antiochus.

Who were these Romans anyway and how did they dare dictate terms to a superpower? Philip stood his ground and refused to be intimidated. It should have been obvious to him by now that Rome was not going to go away. In fact, after her victory in Carthage, Rome was getting bolder by the day. Philip's response to the ultimatum was very simple, if there was going to be war then the Macedonians would fight it. Still unperturbed, Philip continued with his attacks until he was satisfied and then returned to Macedonia. His arrogance had finally caught up with him. His non-compliance with Roman demands and his continual

harassment of his neighbours not only robbed him of his dignity as a good statesman, but also convinced the Roman Senate that he was dangerous and should be dealt with as soon as possible.

In spite of their weakened condition, due to the Roman-Carthaginian Punic Wars, the Romans actually accepted Philip's war challenge. It was fall, 200 BC, when news reached Macedonia that the Roman army had already landed at Apollonia and a Roman fleet was wintering in Corcyra.

What was worse than having Rome at Macedonia's gates was the state of Philip's affairs with his neighbours. His recent rash of unwarranted attacks on his Aegean neighbours had left him with very few allies. In fact he now had more enemies eager to defect to Rome than he had allies. The Achaean League, which at the time was preoccupied fighting a war with Sparta, figured it had a better chance of winning with Rome than with Macedonia on its side. In 199 BC, the Aetolians also made their choice and joined Rome because they believed Rome would win if a war broke out. Athens too made her choice and cast her Macedonian shackles in favour of Rome. Also, as Livy puts it, "the priests, whenever they prayed for Athens and her allies, were also bidden to curse and execrate Philip, his children and kingdom, his sea and land forces, and the entire race and name of the Macedonians." (Page 309, Peter Green, *Alexander to Actium The Historical Evolution of the Hellenistic Age*) None of these actions mattered to Philip. He was confident that he could meet any challenge and win just as his ancestors had done for centuries before.

For the next two years Philip continued his campaigns and crushed the Dardanian invasion, blockaded the Romans in Illyria and showed no mercy to the troublesome Aetolians. Unfortunately even with all this efforts, Philip could not turn the tide and was about to meet the Romans head on.

Philip's troubles started with the arrival of the young Roman consul, Flaminius, who was sent by the Roman Senate to meet with him and deliver Rome's conditions for peace. Philip agreed to a meeting, which took place at the Aous River in Illyria, but disagreed with the Roman terms. According to Roman demands, Macedonia was to evacuate and remove all its garrisons from the cities in Thessaly, Euboea and Corinth and give the cities autonomy. In other words, Macedonia was expected to surrender its most important defensive positions and for what? Philip was insulted by the offer and quickly stormed out of the meeting. Flaminius wasted no time and immediately ordered his forces to invade the City States and start driving the Macedonians out.

By late summer 198 BC, the Roman legions had reached the Gulf of Corinth and a battle with Philip seemed imminent. Roman presence in the region convinced all but a few Achaean League members to abandon Macedonia and ally themselves with Rome. Philip weighed the situation carefully and, in November of 198 BC, returned to the negotiating table with a counter offer. He was willing to evacuate the City States voluntarily provided that he retain control of a few defensive positions and if the Romans guaranteed him that they would not invade Macedonia. The offer was neither accepted nor rejected as the Romans kept stalling for time. It was an election year and Flaminius had to

leave for Rome. Philip was told that if he wanted to continue the negotiations he would have to send an embassy to Rome.

While in Rome, negotiations went from bad to worse. The main points of contention were Philip's insistence on retaining control of Demetrias, Chalcis and Corinth, better known as the shackles of the City States. When Flaminius was re-elected the negotiations came to an abrupt end and the legions were ordered to resume their campaign.

Philip was now desperate and turned to the Spartans for help. He offered them Argos, one of the Achaean allies who remained loyal to Macedonia, and the marriage of Philip's daughter to the Spartan king's son. The treasonous Spartans unfortunately were not trustworthy. They took Philip's offer and then stabbed him in the back by making a separate deal with Flaminius. What was worse, there was now an armistice between Sparta and the Achaean league and the Spartans were obliged to provide Flaminius with troops to fight against Macedonia.

While the Romans and their allies were gaining strength, fighting had reduced Macedonia's army to about twenty-five thousand troops. Philip realized that his strength was slowly eroding and action was needed now. Like many of his predecessors he decided to stake everything on a single battle.

In June 197 BC, at Cynoscephalae in Thessaly, the unbeaten Macedonian army came face to face with the Roman legions. With a massed charge the Macedonian phalanx gave the Romans a terrifying battle which they would never forget. During the first charge the Macedonians were successful and won. It was a horrific spectacle for the battle hardened Romans who for the first time had made serious contact with the Macedonian phalanx. During the second charge, unfortunately, the phalanx overreached the Roman battle line and lost formation. The Romans quickly took advantage by outflanking the phalanx and cutting it to pieces. Each individual Roman soldier was equipped with tools to fight in formation and in single-handed combat, something the Macedonians had never experienced before. Unable to regroup, the phalanx fell back and was destroyed. Without the phalanx, the Romans made short work of the rest of the Macedonian army. The Romans were not only more disciplined than Philip had anticipated, but they were also fast learners and able to quickly adapt to their opponent's fighting techniques. Even though the armies were equally disciplined, the Romans proved to be more flexible, giving them the advantage they needed to win.

Victorious, Rome took control of the region, restricting Philip to Macedonia. The terms of the agreement were far stiffer than those proposed earlier. Now Philip was required to evacuate all previously held regions in Asia and Europe, with the exception of Macedonia. In addition, Macedonia was required to pay Rome a one thousand talent war indemnity. It was a hard pill to swallow for Philip but what other choice did he have?

Before continuing with the main story, I would like to divert and examine what other contributions, besides conquests, the Macedonians bestowed upon the world. Again I want to emphasize that even though Alexander's empire was split

into three kingdoms, the Antigonids, Seleucids and Ptolemies, it was still ruled by Macedonians and was very much under Macedonian control. In spite of Alexander's attempts to integrate his Macedonian soldiers into the cultures he conquered, they resisted. After Alexander's death they cast off their foreign robes and divorced their foreign wives, thus abandoning his concept of "fusion between races in a universal empire". For a Macedonian, especially a Macedonian soldier, there was no greater honour than being Macedonian. So why would they want to be any less?

With regard to spreading the Hellenic language and culture, I am in complete agreement with Peter Green when he says, "Hellenization, the diffusion of Greek language and culture that has been defined, ever since Droysen's *Geschichte der Diadochen* (1836), as the essence of Hellenistic civilization, is a phenomenon calling for careful scrutiny. Its civilizing, even its missionary aspects have been greatly exaggerated, not least by those anxious to find some moral justification for imperialism." (Page 312, Peter Green, *Alexander to Actium, The Historical Evolution of the Hellenic Age*)

It has never been the mission of any empire, ancient or modern, to spread its language and culture to the conquered. The cold truth is that empires seek conquest for profit and land so that they can better themselves, not those they conquer. The Macedonian imperialists were no different. Their propaganda may have claimed many things but, as history has shown, what they did was indeed very different from what they said.

The greatest contribution the Macedonians made to the world, especially Europe, was the opening of Asia and Africa to European trade. The Macedonians made sure trade routes were created wherever they went and afterwards guaranteed their safety. Trade routes were not confined to the sea-lanes alone. Much trade was done over land and stretched from Europe to as far as the Hindu Kush. The area of trade, connected by a large grid of trade routes, was a huge rectangle that stretched from the Hellespont east to the Hindu Kush, south to the bottom of the Persian Gulf, west through Arabia to the Nile Valley and north back to the Hellespont. Trade was heavily concentrated on the Aegean side of Asia Minor and down the Nile valley. The western part of Asia Minor was the hub of economic activities both on shore and at sea.

Second to trade, the Macedonians during this period contributed a wealth of information to natural sciences, navigation, geography, biology, botany, astronomy, history and literature. It has been said that the city of Alexandria in Egypt, in her glory days, possessed the greatest collection of books and knowledge ever assembled in a single library. Built by Ptolemy Soter, the magnificent library of Alexandria was in possession of nearly half a million scrolls. Most of these scrolls were written in Koine and were self-serving. There was very little for or about the common Egyptian, which is a contradiction to Droysen's claims regarding the Diadochoi's mission to disseminate the so-called "Hellenic Culture" to foreigners.

If anything was disseminated or shared between cultures it was technical skills. The most striking example of effective adaptation of skill was in the

evolutionary techniques of warfare. Both Macedonians and foreigners learned from each other and quickly adapted to each other's fighting styles and techniques. Alexander learned about mounted archers from the nomads, a technique he adapted and employed against guerrilla attacks.

Exchange of skills was not limited to warfare. One example of effectively passing on knowledge from one culture to another was in the field of medicine. There are many examples where Macedonians taught other cultures to prepare and apply medicines to cure various illnesses.

With regard to their language, the Macedonians did spread the international Koine or lingua franca, but solely for commercial, administrative and religious purposes, leaving the common man out. Back then anyone important, particularly a businessperson had to learn Koine in order to interact and communicate at an international level, especially in Egypt where the Ptolemies insisted on using Koine. These were exceptions, however, since the majority of the conquered populations were excluded.

It has been said that Macedonians employed local slaves, as domestics, who were taken with them to foreign lands. While living in isolation these slaves often became accustomed to the language and culture of their masters, the Macedonians, and passed them on to their descendants. One example of this is the Jews of Alexandria in Egypt. It is believed that the first Jews to arrive in Alexandria were prisoners of war brought there by Ptolemy I. Their prolonged isolation from their own communities and the continual contact with a large Macedonian population influenced them to learn to speak the language of the Macedonians.

The cities the Macedonians built in foreign lands served multiple purposes. The port cities were gateways to maritime commerce and support centers for the Macedonian military. Other cities, such as the many Alexandrias that Alexander III commissioned and built during his conquests were there to support military needs. Whenever Alexander encountered a hostile people he built a city and populated it with Macedonian settlers to support the needs of the Macedonian military. In time, and through further conquest, a network of Macedonian cities were built and settled with Macedonians throughout Asia and Egypt. These settlers came directly from Macedonia and brought with them their native Macedonian language, customs, skills and culture. The settlements served as military colonies and were concentrated around Lydia and Phrygia. Some were large cities serving the trade sector while others were garrison outposts spread throughout the empire serving the needs of the Macedonian troops.

Unlike any other cities, the new Macedonian cities were built on axial-grid patterns and were far larger and cosmopolitan than any previously built cities. Pergamon, Antioch, Seleucia-on-Tigris and certainly Alexandria of Egypt were vast cities and major focal points for international trade and cultural development. They were far greater than Athens ever was even at the height of her glory. That being said, one wonders why modern Europe has bestowed such great honours on Athens and almost none on Alexandria? After all Alexandria was the most important city of the so-called "Hellenistic period". Poised

between Africa and Europe, Alexandria was the meeting place of all races and creeds. Still flourishing to this day, she has endured two and a half millennia of violence and survived. She is a tribute to the greatness of her builders, the Macedonians.

While on the subject of ancient Macedonian cities, I want to mention that Alexandria did not stand alone in magnificence. There were dozens of magnificent cities built after Alexander's conquests but only a few stood out. One of those few was Antioch. Antioch was built on the fertile coastal plain linking southern Anatolia with Palestine, on the left bank of the Orontes River under the towering peak of Mount Silpius. It was a site where Alexander III had previously passed by and drank water from the plentiful, cool springs. But it was Seleucus, in 300 BC, who chose it for its access to the inland caravan routes, its cool breezes off the sea and for its rich surrounding lands that offered wine, grains, vegetables and oil. Like Alexandria, Antioch was an ethnically mixed city; a community of many races including retired soldiers. Antioch gained importance when it became the capital of the Seleucid Empire under Antiochus I's rule. The Ptolemy's annexed Antioch, for a brief period, but it was during Antiochus IV's rule that the city was re-developed and expanded. From 175 BC onwards its luxury began to rival that of Alexandria.

The ancient Macedonians of this period, especially those living in the Diaspora, were cosmopolitan people and freely traveled throughout their world from city to city to fight for their king, seek work or make their fortunes in trade. It was not beneath them to exchange ideas and to pass on to other cultures, their skills, customs and knowledge. Macedonian scientists, architects, engineers, artists, craftsmen and physicians traveled with the Macedonian armies wherever they went and no doubt left their mark.

With regard to education, in those days, there were no public institutions to serve the needs of the masses. Education was strictly a private affair, managed by professional tutors and only available to those who could afford it. Theater and games were also privately owned and restricted to club members only, rarely attended by foreigners. Even the uneducated Macedonian settlers and soldiers kept to themselves and rarely socialized with those of other cultures. The people who wrote the Dura-Europos inscriptions, mentioned earlier, are good examples of Macedonians keeping to themselves. After nearly three centuries of living in the Diaspora, the Macedonians of Dura-Europos did not forget and still used their native Macedonian language.

If there was any Macedonian language and culture dissemination in the post-Alexandrian era it was to the Macedonian Diaspora of Asia and Egypt. As mentioned earlier, Macedonians often traveled between Europe, Asia and Egypt. With them they brought news, gossip, art, music, inventions, etc., which only appealed and made sense to other Macedonians.

It has been said that a great many Macedonian settlers from Asia Minor to India, who were initially brought there to serve the military, in time, became rich landowners and built Macedonian style estates and villas, decorating them with all kinds of Macedonian art. Many of these landowners and their families

remained there and practiced their customs and culture for years after the Macedonian empires collapsed. An example of this is the ancient settlement of Ai Khanum in northern Afghanistan. There, French excavator Paul Bernard and his team found a so-called “Hellenistic type” mausoleum and a villa decorated with a beautiful fountain that has carved gargoyles and water spouts in the form of lion and dolphin heads. The art and architecture is identical to that found in Macedonia. History cites many examples where ancient Macedonian cultures had survived for centuries after Macedonia proper had succumbed to Roman rule.

In terms of literature, the Macedonians were more interested in learning from the conquered than in teaching the conquered. Being uninterested in learning the languages of the conquered, the Macedonian elite often commissioned translations of their works. Ptolemy Soter commissioned Egyptian priest Manetho to write the history of Egypt in Koine. Similarly, Seleucus Nicator commissioned priest Berossos to write a digest of Babylonian wisdom, again in Koine.

In terms of government, a monarch who in theory was a triumphant warrior, honoured truth and was accessible to his subjects was allowed to rule the Macedonians of Macedonia proper. This was true for Macedonia but not necessarily for Asia and Egypt, the lands won by the spear and held down by the right of conquest. The Asian and Egyptian dynasties were ruled by autocratic monarchies supported by centralized bureaucracies. There was no national power base or local ethnic support. Both Asian and Egyptian dynasties employed paid armies to maintain the status quo. Both dynasties imported Macedonians from Macedonia to administer their bureaucracies. Furthermore, the Macedonian elite maintained its rule by force and bureaucracy over a native labour force. The crown owned all lands and everything in Asia and Egypt was done in support of the king.

The difference between Macedonia proper and the other two Macedonian empires was that Macedonia proper had a national power base and Macedonians ruled Macedonians.

Chapter 11 - War with Rome, the Decline of the Macedonian Empires

After the second Macedonian-Roman war, Philip V's influence and movements in Europe were restricted to Macedonia proper. Rome, still fearing Macedonia's wrath, made Philip an ally ignoring Aetolian demands for his removal from the Macedonian throne. Control of strategic military points such as Demetrias, Acrocorinth and Chalcis (the Fetters) was taken over by Roman garrisons. The Aetolian and Achaean leagues, expecting to be liberated, exchanged one tyrant for another and now found themselves under Roman control. Before they were complaining about the Macedonians taking their freedom but later they were complaining about the Romans, who not only took their freedom but also robbed them of their material possessions.

Soon after Philip's defeat world attention was beginning to focus on Antiochus III who, at the time, was aggressively campaigning in Asia Minor.

First to react to Antiochus's activities was Eumenes II, king of Pergamon. Eumenes was Attalus I's son and successor to the kingdom of Pergamon. Eumenes had much to complain about since his kingdom had suffered the most at the hands of the ambitious Antiochus. Fed up with Antiochus's aggression, Eumenes turned his attention to Rome and found many Roman ears willing to listen to his complaints. Antiochus, on the other hand, made attempts to appease Eumenes by offering him the marriage of his daughter, but Eumenes refused.

Eumenes was hard at work portraying Antiochus as an ambitious imperialist, dangerous not only to his kingdom but also to Rome. He even encouraged and coached other cities in Asia Minor to also go to Rome and complain. His unrelenting complaining finally paid off in 196 BC when Flamininus, through an envoy, sent word to Antiochus to leave the autonomous cities in Asia Minor alone, stay out of Europe and return Ptolemy's towns that were taken by force.

Like Philip V, Antiochus III was not afraid of Roman threats and told Flamininus that Rome had no authority to speak for the cities in Asia Minor. Furthermore, Antiochus reiterated his claim to Asia Minor by right of prior conquest and possession. He told the Romans that he was simply recovering his ancestral domains. As for Ptolemy's towns, Antiochus made reference to a forthcoming treaty with Ptolemy V.

Being unable to persuade Antiochus by any other means, Rome offered to act as arbitrator between him and the complainants. That offer was also snubbed and the Romans broke off the talks and left.

By the winter of 195 BC the Roman Senators were getting nervous again. They learned that the exiled Hannibal of Carthage had found asylum with the Seleucids at Ephesus and was urging Antiochus to invade Italy. The Senators feared that Antiochus was planning to invade Europe. To safeguard against such an invasion Scipio Africanus, a leading Roman, along with a group of Senators recommended to the Senate that it approve the re-enforcement of the garrisons in Aetolia and Achaia. The Senate, however, voted against the request and in 194 BC evacuated the entire Roman force, including the garrison at Acrocorinth.

The fact that Flamininus did not organize any sort of federal defense league among the Aetolians, Achaeans and Spartans nor arrange for any Roman liaison to oversee the transition suggests that Antiochus was given an easy target for invasion. Was this cleverly done to divert his attention away from Italy? It would appear so. Even Philip was encouraged to go after the Aetolians to recover some of the lands he had lost earlier, perhaps to bait Antiochus?

It has been said that, to adorn his triumph, when he left for Rome Flamininus took with him many pieces of art and treasures that he had looted from the Aetolians. He also took one of Philip's sons, Demetrius, as his hostage.

The Aetolians, unhappy with the Roman experience, celebrated the Roman evacuation. Fully aware, however, that the Romans would soon return they went in search of new allies. The most obvious ones besides the Spartans were the Macedonians, Philip and Antiochus. Philip flatly refused the Aetolian offer,

remembering that not too long ago they were calling for his removal from the Macedonian throne. The Spartans, on the other hand, were quick to accept and immediately launched an attack on the newly autonomous cities in Laconia. No sooner had the aggressions begun than the Romans intervened and drove the Spartans back. Sparta itself was spared, as the Romans needed the Spartans to keep the balance of power in the Peloponnesus.

After the Spartan debacle the Aetolians turned to Antiochus. Antiochus unfortunately had mixed feelings about getting involved in someone else's mess. On one hand he was encouraged by Hannibal to attack Italy and on the other he was openly invited to invade the Peloponnesus. Facing a dilemma, Antiochus decided to secure his position with Rome first. In 193 BC he made another attempt at negotiations with Flamininus in Rome. Flamininus, acting on behalf of the Senate, made Antiochus an offer he could not refuse. In exchange for abandoning his claims in Thrace and allowing Rome to act as diplomatic arbiter in Europe, Rome was prepared to give Antiochus a free hand in Asia Minor. He was warned that, should he refuse the offer, Rome would continue to pursue alliances in Asia.

Antiochus's heart was set on recovering all of his ancestral claims and decided to hold out for Thrace, thus breaking off the negotiations. Antiochus did not want to antagonize the Romans so he took his time deciding what to do.

During the fall of 192 BC Antiochus accepted the Aetolian invitation and prepared to invade the Peloponnesus. He crossed the Aegean Sea and landed in the port of Demetrias (present day Volos). In the meantime, the Aetolians attacked and began to loot Sparta, which immediately drew in the Achaean league. The Achaeans drove the Aetolians out of Sparta and encouraged the Spartans to join their league, which they did. As the Achaeans grew in strength, they drew in more and more Aetolian allies. By the fall of 191 BC almost everyone had defected from the Aetolians and the Peloponnesus was in Achaean hands.

By the time Antiochus was ready to make his move, the Aetolians had no allies to support him. It was now too late for him to turn back so, with no more than ten thousand men and only six elephants at his disposal, he invaded Chalcis. To strengthen his position he married a Chalcidian bride and re-named her Euboea to impress the Euboeans.

Antiochus's actions were viewed with suspicion not only in Rome but in Macedonia as well. His presence in Europe was a threat to both Macedonia and Rome so a combined Macedonian-Roman force was assembled and dispatched to drive him out. The armies met at Thermopylae and Antiochus's forces were defeated. The Romans, however, were not content with just driving him out of the Peloponnesus. They wanted him out of the Hellespont as well.

After forgiving the Aetolians for their deeds, the Romans went off in pursuit of Antiochus. This was the first time ever that a Roman force crossed into Asia, a sign of things to come. Before venturing into Asia, the Romans shored up alliances with Rhodes and Pergamon and set up a naval base in Tenos.

Displeased with its shift in loyalties, Antiochus, with his Galatian mercenaries, attacked and besieged Pergamon. The threat of a combined Roman-Rhodian navy at his doorstep, however, was cause enough to re-consider and he decided to pursue a peaceful settlement instead. A peaceful settlement would have been just fine for the Romans and the Rhodians but, unfortunately, the Pergamenes wanted revenge. Eumenes insisted on exacting his revenge.

With help from the Achaeans, the siege of Pergamon was lifted and the Roman-Rhodian fleet attacked and destroyed Antiochus's naval bases. Antiochus, determined to maintain influence in the waters, rebuilt his fleet and was ready for action again. He even inducted Hannibal in his navy and gave him command of one of his squadrons, but was again beaten.

If losing at sea was not enough, Antiochus was now facing threats on land. News came that Roman legions were crossing the Hellespont and invading Asia Minor. Lucius Scipio and his brother Scipio Africanus led the Roman legions. The Scipios were aided by Philip who allowed them passage through Macedonia in exchange for canceling his war indemnity and returning his son Demetrius, who was earlier taken hostage to Rome.

Antiochus had a formidable army of seventy-five thousand while the Roman force numbered no more than thirty thousand. The Seleucid soldiers, however, were not Macedonians and Antiochus was well aware of the fighting potential of the Roman legions. So instead of offering battle, Antiochus invited the Scipios to negotiate peace. To avoid war, he offered to pay Rome a partial war indemnity and return most of the towns he occupied in Europe and Asia Minor. The Scipios, however, rejected his offer and made him a counter offer demanding that he completely evacuate Asia Minor to the Taurus Range and pay full indemnity for the campaign. Of course this enraged Antiochus who politely turned down the Roman offer and, like Philip before him, decided it was better to fight than surrender.

In late 190 BC, at Magnesia-by-Sipylos near the confluence of the Phrygios and Hermos Rivers, Antiochus, like many of his Macedonian predecessors, staked everything on a single battle. A massive cavalry charge was led by his right wing smashing the enemy line to pieces. Unfortunately, the cavalry failed to disengage their pursuit in time to return to the battleground. The phalanx fought hard and stood its ground but, in spite of all efforts, without cavalry support at its flanks, it broke up and the Romans hacked it to pieces. It has been said that this was the bloodiest slaughter since the Roman defeat at Cannae. Antiochus III, the greatest conqueror since Alexander the Great, was unable to stop the Romans. The battle of Magnesia not only brought Rome victory and new alliances but it also opened up new opportunities for Roman conquest in the east. Soon after the battle was over, the Scipios marched eastward into Sardis and occupied it without a fight

Antiochus's penalty for losing to the Romans was a war indemnity of fifteen thousand talents, the highest fine ever recorded. Antiochus was expected to pay five hundred talents immediately then twenty-five hundred after the treaty ratification. After that he was required to pay twelve annual installments of a

thousand talents each. Additionally, he was required to supply Rome with large quantities of wheat and pay off his four hundred silver talent debt to Eumenes. If that was not enough, the Seleucids were required to renounce all claims to Thrace and evacuate Asia Minor to the Taurus Range. Antiochus was literally barred from Europe and Asia Minor but was allowed to keep Cilicia, Phoenicia and Coele-Syria. The territories of Asia Minor taken from the Seleucids were awarded to Rome's allies the Rhodesians and the Pergamenes. Lycia and much of Caria were given to Rhodes while most of western Asia Minor, including Lydia and Hellespontine Phrygia, was given to Pergamon. The rest of the cities were made autonomous. The Romans made it clear, however, that these were gifts that could be revoked at Rome's discretion at any time.

To make sure that he did not forfeit his commitments, Antiochus was required to provide the Romans with hostages, including his son the future Antiochus IV. There was also a request to surrender Hannibal but he was aware of the Roman plan and fled before he could be captured.

To ensure that he wouldn't wage war again, Antiochus's army, navy and elephants were disbanded, leaving only ten vessels at his disposal. Additionally, Antiochus was banned from either recruiting or campaigning in Roman controlled territories.

After they were finished with the Seleucids, the Romans, with the assistance of the Pergamenes, turned their attention to the Galatians. In 189 BC, Scipio was replaced by Gnaeus Vulso who, together with Eumenes's brother Attalus, conducted a successful and profitable campaign against the Galatians of Asia Minor. When the campaign was over, the Romans evacuated Asia leaving Pergamon and Rhodes in charge of keeping the peace. A treaty was negotiated with the assistance of the Roman Senate and was ratified at Apamea in 188 BC. The treaty literally removed Seleucid control from Asia Minor but left the rest of the Seleucid Empire intact.

The terms of the treaty left the Seleucids short of cash and with many obligations. Antiochus never lost hope and felt confident that he would eventually regain his lost territories if only he could stay ahead of his financial obligations. To rebuild his fortune and pay off his indemnity, he went off campaigning in the east. Before he left he appointed his son, the future Seleucus IV, co-regent. Unfortunately, as luck would have it, in midsummer 187 BC Antiochus was killed. Soon after his death, Seleucus IV inherited the Seleucid Empire along with all responsibility for observing the terms of the treaty of Apamea.

Antiochus's death brought an end to Seleucid ambitions of recovering the ancestral empire. This was a relief for the Romans who no longer needed to fear a westward Seleucid expansion. Antiochus's death was also a relief for Eumenes and his Rhodian partners who had suffered badly at his hands. Most relieved were the Ptolemies of Egypt who no longer feared losing their empire.

With Antiochus out of the way, Roman attention was now turned to Macedonia. The trouble started when Philip refused to evacuate some Thracian and Thessalian towns which the Romans had promised to Eumenes. Unable to

push Philip out by himself, Eumenes complained to the Romans. Rome dispatched Quintus Metellus with a Senatorial commission ordering Philip to evacuate the towns. Stubbornly, Philip refused and not only retained the existing towns but also occupied two neutral towns close to Pergamon. As the complaints continued to pile against him, Philip decided it was time to do something. He sent his younger son Demetrius, who earlier had been a Roman hostage, back to Rome to lobby on his behalf. Demetrius was very popular in Rome and had made friends with important people. With their help he was hoping to change Rome's impression of Macedonia. Unfortunately, Eumenes's ambassador was also a good diplomat with equally important Roman friends and became an obstacle for Demetrius.

In the spring of 183 BC, another Senatorial commission was sent and Philip was evicted from the neutral towns. But Roman treachery did not end there. Soon afterwards, Demetrius was sent home decorated with diplomatic laurels and promises to the Macedonian throne. It was a ploy to create trouble for Philip and it worked like a charm sending Perseus, Demetrius's half brother and heir to the Macedonian throne, into a jealous fit. Rivalry between the two brothers continued for some time until Perseus produced a Roman letter, perhaps a forgery, proving that Demetrius had treasonable aspirations to the throne. Having no other choice, Philip was forced to exercise judgment against his own son and enforce the full extent of the law. Demetrius was executed in 180 BC. No sooner had the deed been done than Philip discovered that Perseus's testimony was a fabrication. Being unable to accept the tragedy, Philip died of remorse. Philip V died in 179 BC and was succeeded by his eldest son Perseus.

Perseus was not a popular king, especially with the Romans, who had discovered that he was responsible for Demetrius's execution. Perseus, well aware of his weak popularity outside Macedonia, tried to improve his position by making alliances with his neighbours. He first tried to convince the Roman Senate to ratify him as king with all the privileges granted to his father. He then married Seleucus IV's sister Laodice while he married off his own half-sister to Prusias II of Bithynia.

His attempt at forming mass alliances with his neighbours, unfortunately, did not bolster his popularity as expected. In fact it did the opposite, raising the suspicions of his enemy Eumenes who kept a vigilant eye on him, reporting his every move to the Romans, interpreting it as an anti Roman act.

During his first years as king, Perseus strengthened his northern frontiers in an attempt to stop tribal invasions, amnestied exiles, wrote off taxes and cancelled debts. Although these acts were a considerable cause for public enthusiasm inside Macedonia, they caused Perseus problems outside. Among other things, Perseus was blamed for Aetolia's troubles with the pro-Roman landowners. This alone was cause to send yet another Roman embassy to investigate him. The embassy arrived in 173 BC but instead of investigating him, it completely ignored his explanations and reported back that he was preparing for war. Dissatisfied with the report, Perseus sent his own Macedonian envoys to Rome to plead his case but once again his attempts were thwarted. To strengthen

the validity of its report, the Roman embassy called on Eumenes to testify before a Senate committee hearing. Eumenes arrived in Rome in 172 BC convincing the Senate with his rhetoric, that indeed Perseus was preparing for war. The Senatorial audience was predisposed to believing Eumenes, even though he was known to exaggerate. The Macedonian plea was rejected and the Senatorial commission made its recommendation to go to war.

Eumenes and certainly some of his Roman supporters went to a lot of trouble, even committing perjury, to convince the Senate to go to war with Macedonia. Perseus may not have been a saint but some of the charges against him were ridiculous at best. In one instance he was accused of conspiring to poison the Roman Senate. In another, Eumenes was nearly killed by a rockslide and that too was blamed on Perseus as an attempt at murder. Outrageous charges such as these speak more of the character of the Romans who believed Eumenes, than of Perseus and the Macedonians. It would seem that the Senators would believe someone because they knew him and couldn't care less if he was telling the truth or not. This was indeed Roman justice.

The Senate decided to trust Eumenes who purposely and falsely placed Macedonia in peril. No single person ever worked so hard as Eumenes to start a war between Macedonia and Rome. Why? Some say that he feared an alliance being formed between the Seleucids and the Antigonids. Such an alliance would have been a threat to his ambitions of expanding Pergamon.

Perseus, from the outset, tried very hard to stay out of trouble but the Romans were determined to deal with him one way or another. In 171 BC a new Senate was elected and a conditional war was declared on Macedonia. A strong Roman expedition was put together and dispatched to Macedonia. The Romans had high expectations that, in the face of a strong Roman force, Perseus would capitulate. Perseus, however, did not wish for war and made it abundantly clear through the three embassies he sent to Rome. Perseus was prepared to make concessions but there were limits to the terms he would accept. The Senate, unfortunately, was unwilling to compromise and continued to push further and further.

By mid 171 BC, after a failed attempt to negotiate a settlement, it became clear that Perseus had no intention of giving in. It was then that the Romans unleashed their expeditionary force. It was clear from the start that Rome underestimated Macedonia's military strength. But after they crossed the Adriatic it was too late and would have been humiliating for them to turn back.

After the catastrophic battle at Cynoscephalae, Philip had rebuilt his military and replenished his losses but Perseus was still unwilling to go to war. From 171 to 168 BC he remained on the defensive and committed only to minor engagements, all the while hoping that a peaceful settlement could be reached.

The four year war (Third Macedonian War) came to a climax on June 22nd, 168 BC when the Romans marched en masse northward and met the Macedonian army at Pydna in southern Macedonia.

In the style of his predecessors, Perseus struck first by unleashing the full might of the Macedonian phalanx. This was not the usual phalanx. It was

reinforced with spears all round like a hedgehog, especially at the flanks. “Aemilius Paullus, a veteran commander, declared afterwards that this advance was the most terrifying thing he had ever witnessed.” (Page 430, Peter Green, *Alexander to Actium The Historical Evolution of the Hellenistic Age*)

The Macedonians did their best and fought bravely to the last soldier but the disciplined Roman military machine and its fighting style, once again, proved to be superior and the battle was lost. It was the end of Macedonia and Macedonian independence. Perseus was taken to Rome as a prisoner of war, or as Peter Green puts it, “to adorn Paullus’s treasure rich triumph”. The Macedonian monarchy was abolished and Macedonia was demilitarized and partitioned into cantons so that she would never again be able to fight back. As further insurance of her passivity, Macedonian leaders were rounded up and taken to Rome.

The real horror of the Macedonian defeat was not Pydna but what the Roman army did afterwards. Before leaving Macedonia, the Roman army was unleashed on the civilian population and allowed to loot, pillage and rape uncontrollably. It has been said that an unimaginable amount of treasure, including gold, jewels and art, was carried off to Rome. A large segment of the population was taken into slavery. Severe restrictions were placed on trading commodities including lumber, and most of the state taxes were now diverted to Rome. According to Livy, Macedonia was divided into four regions, each with its own Roman council, and was forced to pay half the tribute to Rome. This would have otherwise been paid to the Macedonian king. If that was not enough, Paullus lent the Aetolians five hundred soldiers so that they too could exact their own brand of revenge on the Macedonians. What happened next is a tragedy of great proportion that not even the old authors dare describe. The Romans indeed proved themselves to be ruthless, the “true barbarians” that they were, but this was only the beginning.

Athens participated in the anti-Macedonian campaign by supplying the Romans with grain and by fighting side by side with the Romans at Pydna. To the end the Athenians remained anti-Macedonian

With Macedonia subdued, the Romans turned their attention to Asia. After Antiochus III’s death, the Ptolemies restored law and order in Egypt and managed to stabilize Coele-Syria. Unfortunately, after a long struggle to put down the last of the insurgents in the Nile Delta, in 181 BC Ptolemy V died at age twenty-eight. He left Cleopatra I, Antiochus’s daughter, as regent for their young son but she too died prematurely in 176 BC, leaving Ptolemy VI Philometor in the guardianship of strangers.

In Asia meanwhile, Seleucus IV was assassinated in 175 BC by one of his ministers and was succeeded by Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Unlike Seleucus IV, Antiochus was interested in stabilizing his kingdom and wanted the rich, fertile region of Coele-Syria back. Another confrontation broke out (the Sixth Syrian war) and lasted from 171 to 168 BC. Ptolemy VI was no more than sixteen years old when war broke out and was still under the advice of strangers who urged him to fight on. While Rome was busy fighting Macedonia, Antiochus attacked Ptolemy’s Egyptian expeditionary forces and captured virtually all of Egypt

except for Alexandria. After this catastrophic defeat Ptolemy replaced his advisors and decided it was time to negotiate with his uncle. During the negotiations some of Antiochus's troops invaded Alexandria and began to loot the temples. These events sparked an uprising and the Alexandrians decided it was time for Ptolemy VI to go. After his ousting they proclaimed his younger brother Ptolemy VIII Euergetes joint ruler with his sister Cleopatra II. Upset about the whole incident, Antiochus attempted to besiege Alexandria but was unsuccessful and withdrew in 169 BC leaving the two rivals to fight it out on their own. Instead of fighting, the siblings patched up their differences and joined forces against him. By 168 BC Antiochus was back, this time with his fleet. He attacked and defeated Cyprus, a Ptolemaic stronghold.

Antiochus's illusions of grandeur were shattered when an official order from Rome arrived ordering him to leave Egypt and evacuate Cyprus. The Roman envoy Popillius Laenas met him in Alexandria and read him the dispatch. When Antiochus asked for time to consider the order Laenas pushed him for an immediate answer, yes or no. The Macedonian king swallowed his pride, bowed to the arrogant Roman and answered yes. He then surrendered his new possessions and left for home.

Humiliated as he was, Antiochus set his own pride aside and sent an envoy to Rome proclaiming that peace with the Roman people was preferable to any victory over Egypt. In the meantime Antiochus, in spite of the Roman ban, began to rebuild his military. He added a corps of elephants to his already growing army of fifty thousand soldiers. When a Roman commission showed up at his doorstep to investigate his activities, he made sure they were all well looked after and personally reassured them that the army was being prepared for an eastern campaign. Antiochus went out of his way to ease all Roman fears and it seemed to have worked. The restrictions on his military buildup were ignored and Antiochus was allowed to function unabated.

For years the eastern satrapies were left unattended and things were beginning to slide. There was also a Jewish revolt building up in Jerusalem which required attention.

In 165 BC, Antiochus was ready for his eastern campaign but first he had to deal with the Jews in Jerusalem. In his absence, he left his nine-year old son and heir designate, the future Antiochus V, in the guardianship of his chief minister Lysias. Unfortunately, before Antiochus was able to complete his eastern campaign, he fell ill and died. He died in his early forties in Persia, in 164 BC, while on route to Jerusalem.

On his deathbed Antiochus rescinded the decree of persecution against the Jews and dispatched Philip, one of his trusted military commanders, with orders to replace Lysias as chief minister and take over the guardianship of his son. Lysias well aware of his predicament, instead of bringing victory he made peace with the Jews (with Senatorial approval), granting them the first step towards independence.

Lysias did not want to give up his position as chief minister and did everything he could to avoid being removed. He even helped Demetrius, the son

of the murdered Seleucus IV to lay claim to the Seleucid throne. Demetrius at the time was a hostage of Rome. Demetrius was twenty-four years old when he found out his uncle had died and went straight to the Senate to lay claim to the throne. Unfortunately, he was turned down and his claim was rejected.

In the meantime a Roman commission, under the leadership of Gnaeus Octavius, was sent to Antioch to check on Seleucid military resources and Seleucid compliance with the treaty of Apamea. The commission arrived in 163 BC and found a large concentration of troops, a large fleet and numerous royal war elephants. What was most amazing is that the arrogant Romans took it upon themselves, without permission from the Senate or the Macedonian king, to burn the fleet and kill the elephants. At this horrific sight, an observer became so upset that he assassinated Octavius.

Frustrated with official channels, Demetrius escaped from Rome and went straight for Antioch where he was welcomed as the legitimate heir to the throne. Opposition quickly evaporated and Lysias and the young Antiochus V, as well as other pretenders, were rounded up and executed.

The news of Demetrius's arrival in Antioch was cause for the Romans to dispatch yet another embassy. Tiberius Gracchus was dispatched to observe and report on Demetrius's activities. When the Romans arrived, Demetrius received them well and gave them full cooperation. He even gave them Octavius's murderer along with a gold crown to show respect. In return he received an excellent report. His crown was accepted and the murderer released, agreeing that his actions were well justified. When the report was filed with the Senate, Demetrius was recognized as king on condition that he maintain his good conduct.

In 161 BC Rome concluded a treaty with the Jews effectively recognizing Judea as an independent state. Demetrius unfortunately was not happy with the Roman resolution and reversed it by crushing the Jewish rebellion. The Romans did not react to the Macedonian king's actions because they never agreed to guaranty the Judean independence. So much for treaties with super powers!

From here on forward things went downhill for Demetrius. First he was in trouble with the Cappadocian dynasty for interfering in their internal affairs. He then violently crushed an uprising in Antioch, which made him very unpopular with his own people. He got into worse trouble in 160 BC with Attalus II, after Eumenes's death, when Attalus produced a pretender, named Balas, to the Seleucid throne. Balas, who claimed to be the son of Antiochus IV, was certainly an imposter but was backed by Attalus II of Pergamon (Eumenes's successor) who, like Eumenes, was very popular with the Romans. Balas was sent to Rome and with Attalus's help was validated as a Seleucid king. Upon his return, in 152 BC, Balas landed at the city of Ptolemais-Ake where he challenged Demetrius. After gaining local support he defeated him in battle. Demetrius died fighting and the imposter Balas usurped his crown in 151 BC.

It was one thing to have a Macedonian on the Seleucid throne but another to knowingly allow an imposter to usurp it, especially since Coele-Syria was at stake. The Ptolemies were definitely not content with the situation and

something had to be done. War was out of the question so Ptolemy VI came up with a devious plan. While offering Balas peace by marriage to his daughter Cleopatra Thea, Ptolemy offered Demetrius's son, Demetrius II who had escaped Balas's massacre, assistance to return and re-claim his father's throne. With Ptolemy's help, young Demetrius raised an army of mercenaries and returned to Syria. Ptolemy, under the pretense of coming to his son-in-law's aid, swept into Palestine and was pressing for Antioch before his plans were discovered. Being unable to stop Ptolemy, Balas made an attempt to assassinate him. After his failure, Balas fled Antioch and was killed later while fighting in northern Syria. Cleopatra in the meantime had her marriage declared void.

The people of Antioch, having transferred their allegiance from Balas to young Demetrius, acclaimed Ptolemy as their new Seleucid monarch. Like his predecessors before him Ptolemy had enough sense not to tempt fate and gratefully declined, allowing Demetrius II to take his rightful place. But all was not lost, by offering Demetrius the marriage of his daughter Cleopatra, Ptolemy was able to gain a foothold in Coele-Syria. Unfortunately, not too long afterwards, Ptolemy VI Philometor was wounded in battle and died. The way was now open for his rival brother, Ptolemy VIII Euergetes, to make a comeback.

I want to backtrack a bit at this point to Egypt 169 BC. As mentioned earlier, the rival siblings Ptolemy VI Philometor and Ptolemy VIII Euergetes, along with their sister Cleopatra II, had patched up their differences but not for long. After the Romans ordered Antiochus out of Egypt and the danger of an invasion diminished, rivalries between the siblings resurfaced. Being unable to take sides Cleopatra II resigned her position. During all this the Ptolemies were also facing discontentment from the Egyptians and minor revolts were erupting everywhere. Being unable to break the impasse the brothers finally decided, with Roman approval, to split Egypt into two kingdoms. In May 163 BC the older Ptolemy Philometor took Egypt and gave his younger brother Ptolemy Euergetes the western province of Cyrenaica. Even though the arrangement was agreed upon by both, Euergetes was reduced to a crown prince and was not completely satisfied with his share. The rivalries continued until Philometor's death in 145 BC. Still in Cyrene, Euergetes sought the chance to recover the entire kingdom after his brother's death. He arrived in Alexandria and drummed up support for a coup but was unsuccessful. Cleopatra II, Philometor's widow, along with her sixteen-year old son, Ptolemy VII Neos Philopator, opposed him.

Unable to gain control by force, Euergetes offered to marry Cleopatra and jointly rule Egypt. Cleopatra agreed and a wedding ensued. During the wedding celebrations Euergetes had the young Ptolemy assassinated. With Ptolemy VII's elimination there were no other legitimate claimants to the throne but Euergetes.

Euergetes proved himself a terrible ruler. A year after becoming king he had himself enthroned as Pharaoh at Memphis. When he came back to Alexandria, he celebrated his return by purging and expelling, en masse, all those who opposed him during Ptolemy VII's brief reign. Among those expelled were many teachers, scholars, artists and intellectuals, including the chief librarian and the

geographer. In spite of his brutal ways, however, Euergetes managed to survive many years and ruled Egypt with an iron fist until 116 BC.

Back in Macedonia meanwhile, Roman rule was harsh and much tension developed between the Macedonians and their new masters. The economic situation was particularly distressful and at times unbearable. Relief, however, did arrive in the form of a pretender named Andriscus. Andriscus claimed to be Philip VI, son of Perseus by Laodice, Seleucus IV's daughter who was also Demetrius I's sister. In 153 BC, with Demetrius I's help, Andriscus went to Rome to plead his case for the Macedonians but the Senate was not interested in a hearing. Frustrated, Andriscus returned and sought help from the Macedonian people who gave him what he needed including royal robes, a diadem, recognition and troops. He received recognition from Byzantium and troops from various Thracian chieftains.

Given the circumstances in Macedonia, rule by a pretender was preferable to being divided and ruled by Romans. When he was ready Andriscus advanced on Macedonia from Thrace and, after two battles in 149 BC, took control of Macedonia. Unfortunately, Macedonia's freedom was short lived. Two Roman legions, under the leadership of Quintus Macedonicus, were dispatched and ironically ended Andriscus's career at Pydna in 148 BC.

After this unsuccessful revolt, Macedonia lost her independence entirely and became a Roman province. Macedonia's total demise and the witness of Roman brutality brought fear into the hearts of the leaders of the Achaean League. Roman atrocities in Macedonia turned the Achaeans from Roman allies to Roman enemies. In 146 BC, in a desperate last ditch effort, the Achaeans engaged the Romans and lost. Roman reprisal was decisive and brutal, involving looting, burning, raping and taking civilians into slavery. Corinth was reduced to rubble and remained a heap of ruins until 44 BC when it was again rebuilt by Caesar.

Back in Egypt, the Alexandrians were fed up with Ptolemy VIII Euergetes's misrule and in 132 BC riots broke out. The people of Alexandria, backed by Cleopatra II who was sympathetic to their plight, wanted Euergetes out. Daily violence escalated and reached a peak when the mobs, in frustration, set fire to the royal palace. In panic Euergetes and his family, wife Cleopatra III and children, fled to Cyprus leaving Cleopatra II as sole sovereign. According to Macedonian law, Cleopatra, as a woman, could not rule alone. The only possible male she would agree to replace Euergetes with was her twelve-year old son Ptolemy Memphitis, who at the time was not in Alexandria. In any case Cleopatra had Ptolemy acclaimed co-ruler in absentia, which unfortunately was a mistake. The moment Euergetes found out he searched for the boy and had him executed.

In 130 BC, Euergetes snuck back into Egypt and hid in Memphis where he made preparations to restore himself. He rallied the support of Cleopatra II's opponents and revolted against her. While blockaded in Alexandria, Cleopatra II sought the assistance of her Seleucid son-in-law Demetrius II Nicator. She offered him the Egyptian throne in exchange for his assistance to overthrow her

brother Euergetes. Demetrius accepted but found Euergetes a tougher opponent than expected. While fighting Euergetes, Demetrius was recalled to Syria to deal with more personal matters. Cleopatra, foreseeing her own demise, also decided to leave Alexandria and joined him. Leaderless, the Alexandrians fought back and held out for another year, but unrelenting Euergetes continued to press on until he was back in power in 126 BC.

Upon his return to Syria, Demetrius was attacked by a rebellious mob led by his wife Cleopatra Thea, Cleopatra II's daughter. Cleopatra Thea, like her mother, was sympathetic to the plight of her people and rallied behind them in ousting Demetrius. Demetrius, like Euergetes, was not a well liked ruler and the Antiochenes had had enough of him.

The trouble started when Euergetes, to pay Demetrius back for his meddling in Egypt, sent a pretender named Zabinas to challenge him for his throne. Zabinas claimed to be the son of pretender Balas, mentioned earlier. Unlike Demetrius, Zabinas was a kind and generous person, well liked by the Antiochenes.

Zabinas challenged Demetrius to a battle and scored a major victory against him. Demetrius fled to Ptolemais-Ake but found that there too he was unwelcome. His wife refused to even give him shelter for the night. From there Demetrius fled to Tyre where he was captured and tortured until he died in 126 BC.

In Demetrius's absence, Cleopatra II reconciled her differences with her brother Ptolemy VIII Euergetes and by 124 BC was back in Alexandria. After exacting his revenge on Demetrius, Euergetes dropped his support for Zabinas and placed it behind his niece Cleopatra Thea.

Thea's eldest son who ruled as Seleucus V for a brief time was murdered, probably by Thea. In his absence, Thea made her sixteen-year old son, Antiochus VIII Grypos, her co-regent. A year or so later Grypos married one of Euergetes's daughters, named Cleopatra Tryphaena, and kept the Seleucid-Ptolemaic alliance strong.

Zabinas, without Euergetes's support, resorted to raising funds by robbing temples. This unfortunately caused him to fall out of favour with his supporters and the law. In 123 BC, after being pursued by Antiochus VIII, Zabinas was captured and executed.

Antiochus VIII, on the other hand, did not turn out to be as amenable as his mother would have liked so in 121 BC she attempted to poison him. Aware of her plans, however, Antiochus forced her to drink the poison. After her death Antiochus became sole ruler of Syria, at least until 114 BC.

In Egypt, meanwhile, Euergetes's misrule continued to cause unrest. Faced with a dilemma in 118 BC he was forced to make long overdue concessions. Amnesties were decried, taxes written off, official abuses were condemned and punitive penalties were cancelled. Unfortunately, by this time the Egyptian bureaucracy was so corrupt that without effectively enforcing the law none of the concessions were worth the papyrus they were written on. As a result the status quo was maintained until Euergetes's death in 116 BC.

Ptolemy VIII Euergetes died at age sixty-five and left his wealth and power to his young wife Cleopatra III. The choice of which of her sons was to rule was also left up to her. Cleopatra III had two sons and three daughters. Her oldest son Ptolemy IX Philometor was born in 142 BC and, at the time of Euergetes's death, was governor of Cyprus. Her younger son born in 139 BC was named Ptolemy X Alexander and her daughters were Cleopatra IV, Cleopatra Tryphaena, mentioned earlier, and Cleopatra Selene. There was also a bastard son by Euergetes's mistress named Ptolemy Apion who at the time was governor of Cyrenaica.

Cleopatra was not very fond of her older son. Perhaps she could not manipulate him as easily as she would have wanted and preferred to co-rule with her younger son Alexander. The Alexandrians, however, preferred the company of Philometor and would not support her choice. Stubbornly, Cleopatra ignored her subjects and attempted the appointment anyway. In a fury of opposition she recanted and settled for Philometor.

Philometor was brought to Alexandria and Alexander was sent to Cyprus to replace him. Discontent in her position as co-ruler with Philometor, Cleopatra continued to cause friction and in 115 BC launched a full campaign of attrition against him. She broke Philometor's marriage to his sister Cleopatra IV and forced him to marry Selene, his other sister. She then attempted to oust him from his throne but was unsuccessful. Her daughter Cleopatra IV, after her break up with Philometor, fled to Cyprus and after raising an army challenged Alexander for his position. It was a ploy to convince him to marry her but he was not interested. Unsuccessful, she fled to Syria and after offering her army as dowry to Antiochus IX Cyzicenus, son of Antiochus Sidetes and Cleopatra Thea, he accepted and married her. Not content with just being a princess, Cleopatra IV pushed her husband into challenging his cousin Antiochus VIII Grypos, mentioned earlier, for the Seleucid throne. Family rivalries broke out and escalated into a full scale war.

The Seleucid conflict attracted the Ptolemies and pitted mother against son. Philometor sent six thousand soldiers to help Cyzicenus, which infuriated Cleopatra III. Unfortunately, this little tiff between siblings ended in disaster. In 112 BC Cleopatra IV was captured and executed by her sister Tryphaena. A year later Tryphaena was captured and made a sacrificial offering to her sister's vengeful ghost. In the end Grypos won and took back his kingdom while Cyzicenus was driven out and left with only a couple of coastal cities in his possession.

Meanwhile, in Egypt in 107 BC Cleopatra III tried again to oust her son from his throne. This time she succeeded. She convinced her supporters in Alexandria that Philometor was attempting to murder her and that she was in mortal danger. The Alexandrians whipped up a mob and stormed the palace to rescue her. Philometor fled in panic leaving his second wife Cleopatra Selene with her two young sons in the palace.

Philometor's departure was good news for Ptolemy X Alexander who promptly returned from Cyprus and took his place as king. Ptolemy IX

Philometor, meanwhile, fled to Syria and from there re-established himself in Cyprus.

By 103 BC the Ptolemaic Empire was split into three independent principalities. Cleopatra and Alexander ruled Egypt, Philometor ruled Cyprus and Ptolemy Apion ruled Cyrenaica. Rivalries between mother and son continued and spilled over into Syria where Cleopatra III continued to support Grypos, while Philometor gave his support to Cyzicenus.

Cleopatra III's intrigues abroad did not seem to satisfy her appetite for excitement so she turned against her son Alexander at home and had him ousted. Pleading with his mother for his return, in 101 BC, under the pretense of reconciliation, Alexander stormed the palace and assassinated her. With Cleopatra III's death so ended the sibling rivalries between Alexander and Philometor. They made peace and strengthened their alliance through Alexander's marriage to Cleopatra Berenice, Philometor's daughter.

Ptolemy Apion, on the other hand, being unwelcome by Cleopatra III, remained an outsider and on his deathbed in 96 BC bequeathed Cyrenaica to Rome. Also in 196 BC during a coup instigated by his rival Antiochus Cyzicenus, Antiochus VIII Grypos was assassinated by one of his generals. In 95 BC Cyzicenus was defeated in battle and killed by Grypos's eldest son, Seleucus VI Epiphanes. Cyzicenus's reign was passed on to his son Antiochus the Pious.

Between 96 and 80 BC the Ptolemaic dynasty experienced great changes. In the spring of 87 BC Ptolemy X Alexander was driven out of Egypt for selling Alexander the Great's gold coffin. He later was killed during a naval battle near Cyprus. Before he died, however, he also willed his kingdom to Rome.

Ptolemy X Alexander's death opened the way for his older brother Ptolemy IX Philometor to return. Upon his return, however, he found himself unwelcome. With assistance from his daughter Berenice (Ptolemy X's wife) he was able to restore himself as co-ruler to Berenice.

Besides Philometor there were three other claimants to the Ptolemaic throne but at the time of Alexander's death they were hostages of the Parthians. Mithridates VI of Pontus had captured them in Cos in 88 BC. They were sent there by their grandmother Cleopatra III for their own safety. One of them, Alexander's son, escaped and surrendered to the Roman proconsul Sulla.

In Asia, meanwhile, an Armenian attack on Syria in 83 BC forced the Seleucids to flee Antioch. In their absence, the Antiochenes offered the Seleucid throne to Tigranes of Armenia. Cleopatra Selene resisted the Armenian takeover and fought back from Ptolemais-Ake.

In 69 BC Mithridates was attacked and defeated by the Romans and Seleucid rule was briefly restored. Antiochus XIII Asiaticus (son of Cleopatra Selene and Antiochus X Eusebes) was made a Roman client king.

From 83 BC onward Seleucid rule in Asia was never fully restored. Remnants of the former empire existed as kingdoms under various client kings until the entire region fell to Rome.

In 81 BC Ptolemy IX Philometor died at age sixty-two leaving no male heirs to replace him. He had two sons but both died very young. He did however have a daughter named Cleopatra Berenice who, for a while, ruled on her own.

With no available male to replace Philometor, the Romans resolved the problem by installing a puppet king. Ptolemy XI Alexander II, Alexander's son who had earlier surrendered to Sulla, by the will of his father who had earlier bequeathed Egypt to Rome, was now given the rule of Egypt. The new Ptolemy was not allowed to wear a crown and was forced to marry Cleopatra Berenice as part and parcel of his installment. Unhappy with his chosen bride, a few weeks after his marriage, young Ptolemy murdered his middle-aged wife and in turn was lynched by the Macedonian Alexandrian mobs loyal to Berenice.

After Ptolemy XI's death, the only live heirs to the Ptolemaic throne were two of Philometor's illegitimate sons (prisoners of the Parthians) living in Syria. The Romans, not yet ready to annex Egypt, asked the Parthians to have the boys released. Upon their arrival, the younger boy was made governor of Cyprus while the older boy was taken to Alexandria and given the title king. Although history referred to the older boy as Ptolemy XII Auletes, to his Alexandrian subjects he was always known as the Bastard or the Flute Player.

Ptolemy XII was a ruthless ruler. The only contribution he made worthy of mention was siring his famous daughter, Cleopatra VII. Ptolemy XII ruled undisturbed for thirty years until 59 BC when he was thrown out by the Alexandrians for allowing Rome to annex Cyprus and for willingly being a Roman puppet. In his absence, his eldest daughter Berenice IV was proclaimed co-regent with her mother. Ptolemy XII also had two infant sons but they were too young to rule.

When the queen mother died in 57 BC, Berenice IV married Seleucus Kybiosaktes, believed to be a descendent from the Seleucid dynasty. When it was revealed that usurpation of the Ptolemaic throne was the motive behind Kybiosaktes marrying Berenice, she had him strangled. She then married Archelaus, a non-Macedonian, who may have had Roman roots. Archelaus's rule lasted until 55 BC. He was defeated by the exiled Ptolemy XII, with Pompey's blessing, in an attempt to reclaim his throne.

During his return to the palace Ptolemy XII was accompanied by a young Roman cavalry commander named Mark Antony who found himself attracted to Ptolemy's fourteen year old daughter Cleopatra. Cleopatra, however, paid no attention. Being a princess and future heir to the Ptolemaic throne she had her sights set high and Antony was not yet there.

Still having no interest in annexing Egypt, the Romans allowed Ptolemy XII to rule until he died of old age in 51 BC. Upon his death, his kingdom was left in the joint care of his eighteen year old daughter Cleopatra VII and her twelve year old brother Ptolemy XIII.

Chapter 12 - Cleopatra VII the Last of the Great Macedonian Monarchs

Cleopatra VII, one of five siblings, was born in 69 BC. After her father Ptolemy XII Auletes died in 51 BC, she, along with her twelve-year old brother Ptolemy XIII, became co-regent of Egypt. By the time of her rule, the Ptolemais had lost Cyprus, Coele-Syria and Cyrenaica. All that was left now was an impoverished Egypt, economically strapped and choked by its own bureaucracy. Her ancestors had left her a crumbling world suffering from famine and anarchy. Cleopatra, however, was not discouraged and dreamed of great glories, the kind that would rival those of Alexander the Great.

This is the story of Cleopatra, the last of the Macedonian monarchs, not the Hollywood or Shakespearean version. Roman propaganda may have tarnished her reputation, Shakespeare may have brought her into the limelight and Hollywood may have made her world renowned but Cleopatra VII earned her own place in fame with her brilliance, wit and determination. As Plutarch puts it, “To know her was to be touched with an irresistible charm. Her form, coupled with the persuasiveness of her conversation, and her delightful style of behaviour – all these produced a blend of magic. Her delightful manner of speaking was such as to win the heart. Her voice was like a lyre...” (Pages 13-14, Ernle Bradford, *Cleopatra*, Hodder and Stoughton Ltd, London 1971)

The real Cleopatra was neither a raving beauty nor a voluptuary, as Hollywood would have us believe. She was passionate but never promiscuous and had the looks of a rather ordinary woman with a characteristic long Macedonian nose. She was good looking but not pretty. What she lacked in beauty she more than made up for in intelligence, wit and charm.

Cleopatra was brilliant, strong-willed, quick-witted and fluent in nine languages. She was also a mathematician and a shrewd businesswoman. She fought for her country and people, who in turn rose for her when all was lost. She had a charismatic personality, was a born leader and a very ambitious monarch. These traits, under better circumstances, would have placed her in the ranks equal to Alexander the Great. It has been said that Rome feared only two people, Hannibal and Cleopatra. She spoke Egyptian and was treated by her subjects like a living legend even after she passed on. For them she was the New Isis.

“Cleopatra was a queen. She was, as her handmaiden Charmion reminded the Romans who broke into the mausoleum where she lay dead ‘the descendant of so many kings’. The whole of her life was devoted to her country, Egypt, and to attempt to preserve its national sovereignty under the rule of the Ptolemaic dynasty to which she belonged. She was the seventh Egyptian queen of her name, but it is doubtful if she had any Egyptian blood in her veins. She was a Macedonian...” (Page 11, Ernle Bradford, *Cleopatra*, Hodder and Stoughton Ltd, London 1971)

Cleopatra’s reign could not have come at a worse time. Between 51 and 49 BC Egypt was suffering from drought and famine and civil war broke out in Italy. To make matters worse, in late summer of 51 BC Cleopatra pushed out her young brother as co-ruler and decided to rule alone. Unfortunately, some powerful court officials in Alexandria did not agree with her actions and ousted

her in favour of her brother. Deprived of her Egyptian supporters, Cleopatra went among the Arab tribes east of Pelusium and set about raising an army. At about the same time, 48 BC, Pompey was defeated by Caesar at Pharsalus and set course for Alexandria. Pompey was an ally and Senate appointed guardian of young Ptolemy XIII, relying on Egypt for support. With his defeat he was no longer held in high esteem and young Ptolemy's advisors were already warming up to Caesar. The moment Pompey set foot on the Alexandrian shore (September 28, 48 BC), Ptolemy's advisors had him murdered, his head pickled and presented to Caesar. Even though Caesar was glad to see Pompey dead, he was appalled at the sight and circumstances of his death.

Victorious, Caesar arrived in Alexandria on October 2, 48 BC with approximately three thousand legionaries and about eight hundred cavalry. He was accompanied by twelve lectors carrying the fasces, perhaps an indication of things to come. Ptolemy's guardians may have been eager to welcome Roman dominance but the Macedonians were not and instantly began to riot. Ptolemy XIII, not there at the time, was away at Pelusium defending his frontiers against Cleopatra. In his absence Caesar installed himself in the royal palace and began giving orders as if it was his own place. His victories against Pompey must have made him overconfident and coupled with his arrogance, made him careless. Faced with exorbitant demands for financial assistance, which the court was not prepared to meet, Ptolemy's guardians called on Ptolemy and his army to make a hasty return.

Desperate not be left out of the talks, Cleopatra was rolled up inside a carpet and smuggled into the palace past the hostile lines. She was delivered directly to Caesar at night by a Sicilian merchant. The following morning both Ptolemy and Cleopatra were summoned to attend a hearing before Caesar. Having spent the night with her, by morning Caesar was very much captivated by Cleopatra's charm, which was her plan all along. Ptolemy, on the other hand, grasping the situation, reacted by running out of the palace screaming about how he had been betrayed by his sister. Backed by his advisor guardians, Ptolemy called out to the Alexandrian mobs telling them that Caesar was planning to choose Cleopatra over him to make her sole ruler of Egypt and a puppet to Rome, words that were sure to inflame the situation. Before the mobs had a chance to react, however, Caesar's guards brought Ptolemy back and Caesar himself went out and made a conciliatory speech to the crowds. When the unpleasantness was over, Caesar provisionally recognized both Ptolemy and Cleopatra as co-regents of Egypt. Additionally, he recognized Ptolemy XIV and his sister Arsinoe joint co-rulers of Cyprus, even though Rome had annexed Cyprus ten years or so before. But all was not what it seemed.

No sooner had Caesar taken control of the situation than he reneged on most of his commitments. He even held Arsinoe in the palace under house arrest and would not allow her to depart for Cyprus. Meanwhile another high Roman official, Brutus from Rhodes (Caesar's future assassin), was vigorously exploiting Cyprus. Being considerably pressed by the situation, Pothinus, one of Ptolemy's guardians, decided to act. While Caesar enjoyed himself with lavish

parties at the expense of the Alexandrians, in November 48 BC Pothinus summoned Ptolemy XIII's twenty thousand veterans from Pelusium and had Alexandria blockaded. War soon broke out (Alexandrian War) and Caesar found himself in an embarrassing and lethal situation. In one instance, having to flee to avoid capture he had to swim across a moat and leave his purple general's cloak behind.

The war destroyed much of Alexandria including an important wing of the great Alexandrian library. Caesar fled and hid in the Pharos lighthouse and managed to secure access to the harbour. Arsinoe managed to escape from the palace and fled to general Achillas, one of Ptolemy XIII's guardians. The Macedonian army promptly proclaimed her queen, an act that greatly disappointed her sister Cleopatra VII. Fighting continued all through the winter until February 47 BC, when Caesar managed to extend his control to Pharos Island and recaptured the Heptastadion mole. This opened the way for re-enforcements to enter, who were reportedly on their way to rescue Caesar.

For his treasonous act, Caesar had Pothinus executed and Ptolemy XIII turned over to his opponents, hoping to stir up trouble in Arsinoe's camp.

On March 26th a mixed force of re-enforcements, led by Mithridates of Pergamon, arrived to rescue Caesar and his beleaguered legionaries. Ptolemy XIII fled in an attempt to escape but was captured and drowned in the Nile River. This opened the way for Cleopatra VII to return and take her rightful place as sole ruler of Egypt. To avoid complications she wisely chose to rule jointly with her eleven year-old brother, Ptolemy XIV. Arsinoe was captured, charged with high treason and placed under arrest.

After stabilizing Alexandria, Caesar did something unexpected. Instead of following the usual policy of making Egypt a province of Rome, he decided to make it his own kingdom. Perhaps he was thinking of starting his own dynasty when he sired a son with Cleopatra. This, however, could not have been strictly Caesar's idea. Caesar's plan, through his son, was to inherit the Ptolemaic throne and rule Egypt in the tradition of the Macedonians. Cleopatra's plan, however, was somewhat different. She wanted a son with Caesar so that, for the sake of his son, Caesar would safeguard Cleopatra's dynasty and protect Egypt from Rome. There was another added bonus in that Cleopatra's son, being the son of Caesar, would have access to Rome and with Cleopatra's help might even have a chance at inheriting the Roman Empire. There is no doubt this was Cleopatra's plan all along.

No sooner was the business at the palace concluded than Caesar and Cleopatra took a well-deserved vacation up the Nile River. Their vacation was briefly interrupted by pressing business in Syria but Caesar was back in good time to witness the birth of his son. Ptolemy Caesar known as Caesarion was born on June 23, 47 BC. A year after his son's birth, Caesar decided it was time for him to return to Rome. He left Egypt in July of 46 BC alone while Cleopatra and Caesarion followed later. Caesar's arrival was well celebrated in Rome and he was showered with honours for his African successes. A month or so later Cleopatra and her entourage arrived. Caesar set them up at one of his

townhouses. By giving Cleopatra his personal quarters, Caesar wanted to return the hospitality he received from her in Alexandria. But that was not how the Romans saw it. Caesar's compassion for these barbarians caused considerable offense among the conservative Republicans who looked down on them with disgust. The unpleasantness unfortunately turned to gossip when it was rumoured that Caesar was contemplating becoming a world emperor and a god, making Alexandria his second capital and Cleopatra his bigamous queen-goddess the New Isis.

In no time Rome was buzzing with gossip, private matters became public knowledge and all of it was filtering back to Cleopatra. Even Roman intellectuals could not help but make their chauvinistic feelings known. Her air of arrogance and marriage to her young brother was all disgusting and very un-Roman. To top it all, Caesar erected a golden statue of Cleopatra in the temple of Venus Genetrix and publicly claimed paternity to his son Caesarion. His actions were leading to one inescapable conclusion, "he was going to marry the wretch". Despite Roman laws against bigamy and marriages to foreigners, Caesar was actually going to marry Cleopatra. This, the Republicans found alarming but the Ides of March set their concerns to rest. In March of 44 BC Caesar was assassinated.

There are those who believe that Caesar, despite Roman disapproval, would have married Cleopatra if he had not been murdered. He would have made her empress of Rome and the Mediterranean world and would have established a Julian-Ptolemaic dynasty. Alexandria, not Rome, would have become the capital of the empire.

The Romans may have despised Cleopatra but there is no doubt that Cleopatra made a lasting impression on Caesar, who sired a son by her. He also adopted Egyptian irrigation schemes, the Egyptian solar calendar and even fashioned the Roman public libraries after the Alexandrian model. It was Cleopatra, among other things, who introduced the famous Alexandrian astronomer Sosigenes to Caesar and it was Sosigenes who reformed the Roman calendar which lasted until the sixteenth century when it was again reformed by Pope Gregory.

Two weeks after Caesar's death his will was read and there was nothing in it for Caesarion or Cleopatra. Fearing for her life, Cleopatra left Rome in haste and returned to Alexandria.

During Cleopatra's absence, life in Egypt had deteriorated even further. Public works projects were abandoned and the Nile canals were in need of repair. Famine and plagues were rampant due to poor harvests and neglect and social unrest was on the rise.

Upon her arrival in Alexandria, Cleopatra had her brother Ptolemy XIV assassinated and made her four-year old son Caesarion her co-regent. She had Caesarion recognized by Caesar's former lieutenant Dolabella. For his services Dolabella was given Caesar's four legions, which were stationed in Egypt. No doubt she was anxious to get rid of them and this gave her the chance to do it. Dolabella was grateful to her for giving him advantage over his opponents in the

Roman Civil war that raged on between the Caesarians and the Republicans. Unfortunately, Dolabella's legions were taken over by Cassius, his opponent, before they had a chance to reach him. Unable to accept his failure, Dolabella committed suicide in 43 BC.

While the Roman Civil war raged on, both sides were calling on Cleopatra for assistance but she kept pleading impoverishment through famine and plague. Clearly she was in favour of the Caesarians but would not commit for fear of choosing the losing side. After the two battles at Philippi in 42 BC, with the death of Brutus and Cassius, it became clear who would be the winners. Antony, Octavian and Lepidus were the men who came out triumphant and Cleopatra would now have to deal with them. Soon after the battle, Octavian became very ill and had to leave for Italy. After Octavian, it was clear that there was only one choice for Cleopatra and that would be Antony. All was not well with Antony and in 44 BC, during a brief period of supreme power, Antony had given Arsinoe, Cleopatra's ambitious sister, rule of Cyprus. In 43 BC Cleopatra had taken it back. Obviously, Antony had given Arsinoe control of Cyprus to keep the balance of power in the region but now it was uncertain how Antony would react to Cleopatra's move.

While awaiting Antony's fate, Cleopatra received news that Caesar's divinization was pronounced in Rome. On January 1st, 42 BC Caesar was officially made god and Octavian was proclaimed "Son of Divine Julius". In Cleopatra's estimation this was good news for her son Caesarion as well.

In 41 BC Antony finally summoned Cleopatra to meet him at Tarsus. By now Cleopatra had spent considerable time learning everything there was about the man and was ready for him. Before she even met Antony, Cleopatra became familiar with his military skills, his popularity with the troops, his drinking habits, ambitions, love affairs and scores of other characteristics. She wanted to grab his attention and by putting on a splendid show she managed to do just that. The gilded poop (stern of a vessel), purple sails, silver oars, all objects of wealth and power of a blue-blooded queen made an immense impression on the man. Whatever hostilities he may have had for her evaporated and he was captivated by her elegance. Antony spent the winter of 41-40 BC in Alexandria living in luxury, content being with Cleopatra. Rumours unfortunately were circulating, most likely by Republican propagandists, that while living in her palace Cleopatra could get anything she wanted from Antony, including the execution of her sister Arsinoe. Arsinoe was indeed executed by Antony in 41 BC not because Cleopatra wished it so but because she was financing the Republican cause. After her fallout with Cleopatra, Arsinoe fled to Ephesus and turned her support to the Republicans. If rumours were true about Antony and Cleopatra then Antony would not have taken Cyprus away from her. Not long after she drove her sister out, Antony removed Cyprus from Cleopatra's control. The real story is more likely that both Antony and Cleopatra cultivated each other in pursuit of their own ends.

Antony left Alexandria in early spring of 40 BC and did not return until four years later. While Antony was away Cleopatra bore his twins, a boy and girl.

There was a turn of events for Antony at home and his popularity was declining. His relationship with his second wife was rocky, especially since she bore him a daughter not a son, which drove him to look eastward towards Alexandria. Cleopatra after all was a wealthy blue-blooded Ptolemaic queen who did bear him a son.

Feeling it was best to leave Rome for a while Antony took an assignment and went east. After the birth of his second daughter by Octavia, his mind was made up that he was going to pursue a relationship with Cleopatra. Octavia followed him part way on his journey but fell ill and was sent back. The way was now clear for him to pursue Cleopatra and the moment he reached Antioch he sent for her. He must have had an elaborate plan because from the moment he saw her he lavished her with gifts including Cyprus, Coele-Syria, the Cilician coast, Phoenicia, Judea and Arabia. These were vast regions rich with timber, spices and other natural resources ideal for ship building and supporting an empire. Unfortunately, the Romans took offense at Antony's actions, not only because they despised Cleopatra, but also because most of the provinces Antony disposed of were not even under his authority.

Antony was about to embark on a Parthian campaign and he needed ships and supplies. With his declining popularity in Rome he could not entirely rely on the Senate to support his effort so he turned to Cleopatra. By providing Cleopatra with lands rich in timber he gave Egypt the lumber it needed to build a large fleet. Before he left for his campaign Antony acknowledged his twin children and gave them official names. The boy was named Alexander Helios and the girl Cleopatra Selene. No sooner had Antony departed than Cleopatra gave birth to another of Antony's children. But all was not well, the Parthians turned out to be a tougher opponent than expected and in 36 BC Antony suffered a humiliating defeat. Upon receiving the bad news Cleopatra rushed to his rescue. She met his army in Syria and brought them food, clothing and much needed cash. After his humiliating defeat Antony was in no mood to face Rome and in the spring of 35 BC he went to Egypt. Things turned out for the worse when Octavia attempted to assist him and he turned her down. Octavia too made an attempt to come to Antony's rescue but he ordered her not to come any further. Being rejected in favour of Cleopatra not only angered Octavia but insulted her brother Octavian, who by now was growing very powerful in Rome. Antony made no effort to reconcile his differences with Octavia or with her brother Octavian, who took every opportunity to criticize him. A showdown was inevitable.

Unable to stay still, Antony embarked on another, less dangerous but profitable campaign against the Armenians. Returning rich and triumphant, Antony was paraded through Alexandria as the New Dionysus while Cleopatra portrayed herself as the New Isis. Later during another elaborate ceremony in the great gymnasium of Alexandria, Antony, sitting on a throne with Cleopatra dressed as Isis, bestowed royal titles upon his children. To rule the new territories, Caesarion or Ptolemy XV Caesar was proclaimed King of Kings and made joint ruler of Egypt with his mother. Cleopatra was proclaimed Queen of Kings. Alexander Helios dressed in Macedonian royal robes was proclaimed

Great King of the entire Seleucid Empire including Parthia. Antony's daughter Cleopatra Selene was installed as Queen of Cyrenaica and Crete and the youngest son Ptolemy Philadelphus, at the age of two also dressed in Macedonian royal robes, was proclaimed King of Syria and Asia Minor.

It is unclear what the motive was for bestowing such titles but Antony's actions provoked the Romans to react. They did not approve of the unauthorized attack on the Armenians and Antony had no right to give away Roman territories that were not under his control. When Antony sought Senatorial approval for the lands he donated to the Macedonian monarchs, he was turned down. Egypt, in spite of its poor economic condition, was a rich country with a large population and formidable natural resources that could support an empire. As ridiculous as it may sound, with Cleopatra's help, Antony could have contemplated resurrecting Alexander's Asian Empire. After all, was there not an oracle that foretold that true harmony between East and West could be achieved under Cleopatra and Antony's biracial New Order? There is an inscription as well as minted coins issued in 34 BC that provide evidence that indeed there were plans to amalgamate the Seleucid and Ptolemaic royal houses.

Whatever his real plans may have been is uncertain but in 32 BC Antony divorced Octavia, thus forcing Rome to recognize Cleopatra as his wife. At about the same time Antony minted new Roman coins with Cleopatra's head on them, inscribed with the words "Queen Cleopatra the Younger Goddess". The new silver Dinarii coins soon became widespread and popular throughout eastern Mediterranean. These acts of Antony's did not bode well with Rome and were interpreted as anti-Roman. Octavian lost no time and declared war, not on Antony but on Cleopatra. Rome was convinced that Cleopatra was behind all this and somehow had bewitched Antony into doing her bidding. Cleopatra was misunderstood and undeservedly denigrated by Roman statesmen and poets alike. She was called every name in the book, even things that cannot be put in print. Antony did not escape Roman taunts and accusations either. The more serious charges included misuse of the Roman legions, acting without Senatorial authorization, giving away Roman territories that did not belong to him and so on.

There are some who believe that such behaviour was indicative of xenophobia, more specifically, some Romans feared Cleopatra and the potential danger she posed for Rome. There were many who believed that Cleopatra would triumph, giving birth to a new and universal empire which is precisely why Octavian had to intervene before it was too late.

On September 2nd, 31 BC at Actium, Octavian's ships, under Admiral Agrippa's leadership, engaged Antony's forces and defeated them. Determined to put an end to the Macedonian legacy, Octavian pushed for Alexandria. Humiliated by his defeat, less than a year later, Antony took his own life. Cleopatra could not bear the humiliation of being captured and dragged through the streets of Rome like a slave so she too took her own life. She had her maid smuggle a poisonous asp in a basket of figs. Death by snakebite, in the Egyptian religion, was believed to confer immortality and for Cleopatra, in a way it did.

Outside of Alexander the Great, also a Macedonian may I add, no one has eclipsed the fascination of Cleopatra through the centuries to this day.

Caesarion was not so fortunate and died a horrible and indignant death at the hands of his butchers. Cleopatra's children by Antony, surprisingly, were spared and adopted by Antony's second wife Octavia.

By Octavian's declaration the Ptolemaic dynasty came to an end on August 29th, 30 BC. The Romans plundered Alexandria, like every other conquered Macedonian city before her, and all its riches were taken to Rome. Cleopatra's accumulated Ptolemaic wealth alone was enough to cause a glut in the Roman market which brought the Empire's interest rates down from 12 to 4%. After Actium, all Macedonian held lands and territories were annexed by Rome.

Macedonia, meanwhile, after the last rebellion in 142 BC continued to exist as part of the Roman domain until antiquity. During this five-century long period Macedonia's boundaries were changed several times. The northern frontier was most vulnerable and prone to invasions. At one point, after an attack against a barbarian tribe, the northern boundary was extended to the Danube. In 27 BC Augustus declared Macedonia a Senatorial province and had its territory significantly reduced. With time, in the decades that followed, Macedonia was partitioned into territories. After Diocletian's reforms Macedonia became part of the Diocese of Moisia and at the time of Constantine it became part of the Illyrian Prefecture. At the end of the 4th century AD Macedonia was split into two provinces, Macedonia Prima with Solun (Salonika) as its capital and Macedonia Salutaris. Later during the 5th and 6th centuries another name appeared: Macedonia Secunda with Stobi as its capital.

When Macedonia came under Roman rule the number of Italian colonists increased and a variety of barbarian tribes penetrated the region. As a Roman province, Macedonia was heavily exploited and the population was plundered by heavy taxes. The support of the Roman administration, garrisons and military campaigns fell upon the shoulders of the local population. Macedonia, in addition to being enslaved, was also obliged to provide large numbers of soldiers for the Roman auxiliary brigades.

Urban life in Macedonia, during Roman rule, existed under three distinct settings, the free cities, the colonies and the municipalities. Included among the free cities were Aegeae, Pella, Beroea, Philippi, Heraclea, Salonika, Heraclea Lyncaestis and Stobi. During the Roman period both Heraclea Lyncaestis and Stobi were important large centers situated on well-traveled roads.

Another important fact is that most major stormy events in the history of the Roman period had their echoes in Macedonia. The Roman civil wars, the struggle between Caesar and Pompey and the war between Brutus and Cassius all took place on Macedonian soil. Similarly, the 3rd and 4th century Roman Empire crisis, colonial relations with Christianity and barbarian penetrations, also had their roots in Macedonia.

Before concluding with the ancient Macedonian dynasties, I want to go back in time to the era of the Seleucid Empire and examine what happened to the far-east satrapies. As mentioned earlier, after conquering new lands, Alexander III

built cities and populated them with settlers brought from Macedonia. The purpose of each city, in the short term, was to provide economic support and sustain the local military effort. In the long term these cities would fuel all military demands including the provision of soldiers for the war effort. What happened to the Macedonian settlers after the Macedonian empires collapsed?

This is a vast subject that should be tackled on its own and will not be part of this study. I will, however, examine the conditions of the eastern Seleucid Empire after its breakaway from the Seleucid dynasty. As mentioned earlier, Alexander III built a number of cities north of the Hindu Kush in Bactria and Sogdiana, which after breaking away from the Seleucid dynasty became the nucleus of a Macedonian civilization that lasted well into the Christian era. Contrary to popular belief that Alexander had very little impact on Indian life, there is evidence that suggests quite the opposite. For one, Alexander opened channels of communication between India and the rest of the Macedonian empires. For example, during a dig in the late 1930's the French archeologist Ghoshman, while doing archeological research at Begram the site of Alexandria of the Caucasus, discovered, among other things, imported Egyptian and Syrian objects. Included among them were glassware, bronze statuettes, bowls and other objects that could only have come from the western part of the Macedonian Empire. If the old generation of Macedonia felt confident on land and conquered by the spear, the new generation took to water and conquered by trade. The Ptolemies were masters of trade and continued to explore new markets until the Romans destroyed them. They sailed the Arabian Sea and explored the coasts of India as far as Bengal, and had traveled on to Burma, the Golden Chersonese of Malaya and beyond the Gulf of Tonkin and the southern coast of China. Even during and after Roman times, generations of the same merchants, under different flags or in the name of a different emperor, continued to trade with the Indians. According to Strabo who visited Egypt in 24 BC, when a shorter passage was found about one hundred and twenty ships sailed from Alexandria to India each year. They came with their beautiful big ships agitating the white foam of the Indian waters, bringing with them gold, silver and copper and returned with pepper, fine textiles, perfumes, incense, jewelry, indigo and ebony, ivory, tigers, monkeys, elephants, peacocks and spices of all kinds.

In time these Yavana (white European, predominantly Macedonian) traders were allowed to come and go freely. They intermingled with Indian high society bringing them not only goods made in the west but also art and culture. They were even allowed to settle and colonize parts of coastal India with trading posts that in time grew into very important trading centers.

There is also evidence that suggests that even Europe traded with India. Much of the gold that ended up in India came from the Roman coffers. During Nero's reign, the Roman economy was so disturbed by the drain of gold that the elder Pliny denounced the luxury of rich men's habits and the extravagance of Roman women that brought the empire into such financial peril. Not only did Europeans go to India to seek their fortunes, but Indians came to Europe to seek theirs. It is possible that many of these Indian traders, over time, became

stranded and never returned to their ancestral lands. This could explain the presence of the Roma populations in the Balkans.

It is widely believed that the Roma are migrants from India. "To begin, Alexander opened a channel of communication between India and the Hellenistic kingdoms that was not to be closed again. Along the roads which his surveyors measured traders, artisans and ambassadors found their way from the West into India very soon after his last garrison left, and the contact they established never ceased. The great trade route to Pataliputra has remained open with very brief intervals from then until now." (Page 44, George Woodcock, *The Greeks in India*, Faber and Faber Ltd, 1996)

Besides introducing stone and metal working techniques to the Indians, the Macedonians taught them to mint coins and issue them as a fixed standard for trade. The use of coins stimulated trade through the passes of the Hindu Kush and brought great prosperity to the undisturbed Macedonian cities of Bactria. For many years these cities served as centers of influence both politically and culturally, clinging stubbornly to their Macedonian ways. A century later, as their populations grew, they built armies and began a southward migration over the Hindu Kush and down into the Punjab. In Alexander's name, they marched into the unconquered regions and invaded India. Their economic, political and military strength gave them confidence to break away from the Seleucids, who saw Bactria as another province to pillage, and form their own kingdom. Diodotus, the governor of Bactria, a former Macedonian soldier with no links to any of the Macedonian dynasties, assumed kingship. Diodotus and his son, Diodotus II, ruled over a large kingdom that not only included the ancient provinces of Bactria and Sogdiana but stretched from the Hindu Kush over the Oxus valley to Bokhara, Samarkand, west to Margiana and south of the Kara Kum desert to the frontiers of Parthia. Although sketchy in detail it has been said that this kingdom, with minor interruptions from the Seleucids, existed from about 260 BC to the middle of the first century BC when it was overrun by nomad migrations. The story of the Macedonian kingdom of Bactria has yet to be told. Outside of minted coins and various religious Buddhist texts very little excavation and archeological work has been done.

Bactria's isolation from the rest of the Macedonian realm forced her to look eastward and develop trade with the eastern nations including China. Even though trade with China was done through middlemen, Macedonian made objects created from the natural nickel and copper alloy were found in the Chinese province of Yunnan. Nickel was unknown to Europeans until 1751 AD. The Macedonians of Bactria were using it in 200 BC.

Another famous personality worth mentioning here, who may be worthy of further study in the future, is Menander the great king of India. Menander too was a professional soldier, not of royal stock, who rose to become a fair king. He is famous for his fair treatment of his subjects and for introducing bilingual coins. Menander's kingdom was separate from that of the Bactrian and lasted for many decades, even past his death. Even though Menander's kingdom was

partitioned by his successors, it remained in Macedonian hands for a very long time afterwards.

The last king to rule parts of India was Hermaeus whose reign lasted until about 40 BC, about 10 years past the Kushana and Parthian invasions. Hermaeus held out until 30 BC when he and his wife Calliope were both killed. After Hermaeus's death no king of his race ever ruled again south of the Hindu Kush. The Macedonian rulers of India may have ceased to exist but the Macedonian populations continued to live on. There is no evidence of any general or local massacre of the ordinary population after the nomad invasions to suggest otherwise. In fact there is evidence that suggests that even two hundred years after Hermaeus's death, the Macedonians and other European races in India remained numerous and formed communities that continued to issue coins in their language. It is estimated that Macedonian communities existed up until the year 200 AD, as self identifiable minorities in India. The process of dispersion was long and slow and the impressions made on the Indians were considerable. The reputation of these "all-knowing Yavanas" was undiminished for a long time. Besides their miraculous abilities to heal, the Yavanas were in great demand for their engineering expertise in war machine design and in stone, wood and metal works. Demand for the skilled Macedonian artisan was not restricted to the Indians alone. Even the newcomer Parthians used them to build their commissioned works. Strange as it may sound, both the Kushana and Parthian kings used Macedonian as well as hybrid coins. Was this because they couldn't mint their own? Or was this because the Macedonian coins were more popular with the predominantly Macedonian merchant class? How far in time did the Macedonian cities, with their large merchant populations, continue their traditional activities into the period of Parthian and Kushana dominion? At this point it is hard to estimate. Only through further archeological research can these questions be answered.

The greatest recorded achievement of the old Macedonian masters was the magnificent pagoda, a 638 foot high multi-storied temple, celebrated throughout the Buddhist world. At that time, the pagoda was the tallest building in the world, from its five-storied stone base to the tip of its iron pillar, with its thirteen gilded circlets crowning the thirteen wooden tiers.

The Macedonian political power in Bactria was also extinguished at about the same time as that of India which coincided with the dramatic end of Macedonian rule in Asia and Africa. It is believed that the breakup of the strong Macedonian community in north-west India was largely due to its alliance with the ruling Parthian chieftains. After the Parthians were defeated in about 150 AD by the Andhra king, Gautamiputra, they were expelled, along with their allies. Having nowhere else to go, much of the population migrated to other parts of the country. Remnants of the military class became mercenaries and soldiers of fortune. Some of this information comes to us from an inscription found on the walls of the cave temples of Nasik to the north-east of Bombay. It is interesting to note that some of the Yavanas, Sakas and Parthians retreated into the mountains and deserts of Rajasthan. Four centuries later the Rajputs emerged

from this same region and played a dramatic part in the history of India. The Rajputs are believed to be a hybrid people, the ancestors of the Yavanas and their barbarian allies.

Of the mercenaries and general population that ventured deep into India, traces can be found in the furthest points in southern India. Some, including women, were recruited by the Tamil rajas. Yavana women served as bodyguards within the palaces while the men served outdoors as guards. I want to mention at this point that the Yavanas of India, most of whom were the descendents of Macedonian soldiers and settlers, in time adopted the Buddhist religion. Even Alexander himself was intrigued by the doctrines of Buddhism and often spent considerable time discussing its merits and virtues with the naked Buddhist philosophers. It was not too long after the Macedonian masters opened their first schools of sculpting in Taxila that statues of Buddha in Yavana (Macedonian) clothing began to appear. It is believed that the colossal statues of Buddha, in present day Afghanistan, were built by the ancient Macedonian sculptors.

According to Hardev Singh, even today one can find traces of the ancient Macedonian character in various remote places of India. Some still stubbornly cling on to old traditions and refuse to give them up. One can tell that they are not pure Indian from their mannerisms, expressions, the way they drink their wine, sing their songs and lament their departed. Hardev believes that the first Macedonians who became permanent residents of India were men who started their own settlements and married local women. Because of the mixed marriages (mothers being non-Macedonian), the Macedonian language was quickly forgotten but the Macedonian rituals were performed by men and were passed on from generation to generation. Some of these rituals are very unusual and bear no resemblance to Indian traditions but are closely related to the Yavana of old.

The first century BC brought profound change in the political structure of power from northern India to Egypt. It also brought the extinction of the centuries old Macedonian ruling dynasties. The end of Macedonian rule did not facilitate the end of Macedonian culture in these regions. Far from it, once established the Macedonians continued to live on among the native populations permanently naturalizing their customs and culture. In India at least, a great deal of the original political and administrative structure, established during ancient times, was adopted by the Indians and some remain unchanged to this day. If I may also add, it was the early Macedonians right after Alexander's time who introduced the Indians to their present day calendar, including the division of the week into seven days, one named after the sun and one after the moon. The Macedonian civilization exercised immense prestige not only in Asia and India but in Rome as well. Rome herself was very much infatuated with Macedonian art, architecture, sculpture, etc. that in time she too developed a Macedonian culture. Despite popular belief to the contrary, the Macedonian language and culture were never extinguished during the Roman period. Latin may have been the official language of the Roman Empire but Macedonian Koine remained the international language of trade and commerce throughout the world. Even the three gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke were written not in Latin but in the

Mediterranean Koine language. After the split of the Roman Empire, the Eastern Empire did not revert to using the Koine language, as some would have us believe, but simply ignored Latin.

Chapter 13 - The Rise of Christianity a New Beginning

Alexander's ventures into Asia and Africa created trade routes and shipping lanes, opening up a world of new wonders that not only tantalized the senses but also fascinated the mind.

The intellectual bridge connecting Europe, Asia and Africa gave birth to new sciences, astronomies and philosophies that are unparalleled to this day. Scientists in India were debating atomic theory even before any of the Athenians, credited with inventing the subject, were born. The astronomers in Babylon not only possessed astrological charts but they were also aware of the orbits and spherical shapes of our planets, including that of earth. The Egyptians were applying geometry in figuring out property lines after the Nile floods even before the Europeans had any notion of mathematics. After Alexander's conquests, all this knowledge became the possession of the Macedonians who centralized it in the libraries of Alexandria, Antioch, Solun (Thessalonika) and later in Tsari Grad (Istanbul), Ohrid and Sveta Gora (Athos).

In exploring the vast reaches of Asia, India and Egypt, the Macedonians discovered new gods and faiths, among other things. After studying them they not only enriched their own knowledge of the divine but also brought about a spiritual revolution that, with time, spread throughout the entire world.

After exploring the many deities and their cults, the Macedonians began to believe that the variously named gods might be different aspects of a single divine force. The newly discovered deities were in many ways similar to their own Olympian gods. For example, Astarte and Isis were very similar to Aphrodite and Jupiter, Ahura and Baal were similar to Zeus. The intermingling of various cultures, especially in cosmopolitan centers like Alexandria, Antioch and Solun, opened the door for deep philosophical debates questioning the nature, origin and purpose of the various gods. Fueled by revolutionary ideas, sophisticated theological theories began to emerge leading to the concept of a single divine being, a God who lives in heaven. Obviously there was enough evidence in the universe to warrant the existence of such a being, otherwise how would the universe work? However, there were some problems. How does a Supreme Being living in heaven communicate with his subjects on earth? The evolutionary mind, hard at work, managed to solve that problem as well by proposing the existence of a second God or Son of God, a concept to which most of the world subscribes to this day. The Son of God would be a living God who would descend from the heavens to earth to spread God's message among his people.

Here I have given a simplified explanation of a complex problem. My intention was to show that as a result of Macedonian conquests, the world was exposed to new and revolutionary ideas, which not only enriched our knowledge

of the world but also revolutionized our religious beliefs. Christianity was born as a direct result of Macedonian intervention. The old Macedonians in the new world knew far too much to remain static and cast their Olympian hypothesis aside for a new reality. The Macedonian world had matured and had come a long way from the Homeric days and the mythical gods. As the millennium turned, the time was right for a new beginning. The new world surged forward with much vigour, challenging old beliefs. Even the well established Jewish religion, which already prescribed to a single supreme being, came under attack. It was precisely the re-interpretation of the Jewish religion that sparked the Christian movement which not only splintered from its Jewish roots but grew larger and enveloped most of the world. Christianity was a new force that would dominate the world, born out of necessity due to the cruelty of Roman rule, which drove the subjugated to a life of despair. Women refused to bear children because they knew their future was hopeless. Life was painful and the world was full of evil. By the turn of the first millennium the familiar old gods were nothing more than instruments of cruelty designed to serve the rich and powerful and cast the poor into oblivion. No nation suffered more cruelty at the hands of the Romans than Macedonia. Was it jealousy of Macedonia's unsurpassed glory, or was it Rome's fear of her rebellious nature?

As mentioned earlier, after Perseus's defeat at Pydna in 168 BC Macedonia was partitioned into four regions and became Roman territory. It was particularly during this period that Macedonia was robbed of its cultural treasures including the many monuments of art located in Solun, Pella and other culturally rich cities. Macedonia's treasures were transferred to Rome and paraded as trophies of Roman victories on Roman streets during triumph festivals. After 148 BC the four regions of Macedonia were united again but made into a Roman province with Solun as its capital. What is also interesting is that all city states and jurisdictions south of Macedonia, including Athens and Sparta, were also annexed and added to this large Roman province called Macedonia. This merger lasted for about one hundred and twenty years until 27 BC. In 27 BC Augustus separated the region to form the province of Macedonia and the province of Achaia. For one hundred and twenty years Solun, not Athens, was the capital or "mother city" of this vast province called Macedonia.

Solun was the most important city in Macedonia not only because of its prosperous economy due to its busy harbour and its close proximity to "via Egnatia", but also because of its great cultural and intellectual growth. Solun was an industrial city that profited immensely from its marine trade and from its close proximity to the military highway, via Egnatia, which facilitated much of the goods destined to Europe. Besides being of economic and intellectual importance, Solun, because of its surrounding wall, was also a great military fortress. The Macedonian King Cassander chose its location well and fortified the city for good reason. Solun was about the only city in Macedonia to withstand and repel the barbarian invasions of the 50s and 60s BC. Even Roman dissidents like the orator Cicero fled to Solun for safety during darker times. Solun had the elements of success and was destined to become a powerful city.

During the Roman Civil War of 49 to 31 BC, Macedonia was turned into a battleground. At the time Solun backed the Imperial Army of Antony and Octavian turning the tide on the Republicans. After the Imperial victory at Philippi in 42 BC, the Macedonians of Solun erected a triumphant arch at the west gate of Vardar in honour of the victors. This show of loyalty not only saved Solun, but also allowed its citizens to earn their freedom and Solun to earn the status of a free city. A free city at the time enjoyed special privileges including the right to govern itself, hold free public meetings and to protect itself. This new found freedom allowed the city to grow and prosper, but more importantly, it attracted famous scholars, writers, philosophers, poets and teachers who made Solun their home and added to the city's intellectual wealth. By the turn of the new millennium, Solun was becoming an ethnically diverse cultural center that was beginning to rival Alexandria and Antioch.

When it came to philosophical debates about the nature of the gods, Solun was right up there with Alexandria and Antioch. Why was there such a preoccupation with the gods and why at this time?

There were two factors that influenced the creative thinking of the time. The first was the sophistication of an intellectually evolving society which, with the accumulation of knowledge, matured and grew out of its beliefs in the "mythical gods" of Homer. The second was the intellectual disgust in elevating mere humans, and cruel ones at that, to divinity. After Caesar was deified, deifications of emperors became common practice and even the cruelest men were made gods. Worse were expectations that people of various races, cultures, religions and intellect would pay homage to these cruel men as if they were gods.

Was it not burden enough to live under their harsh rule, let alone pray to them for spiritual guidance? This callous Roman behaviour led many to question their faith in such false gods. In time it became increasingly less likely that an educated man would support the cult of his parents, let alone his grandparents.

I want to mention here that outside of some mystical cults, no major religion except for Judaism was allowed to practice in the Roman Empire.

During the first century BC Jewish rival sects, called Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes competed for the attention of the Jews. While the Sadducees adhered strictly to the law of the Old Testament, the Pharisees were progressive thinkers, who produced many intellectual leaders. There was very little knowledge of the Essenes until 1947, when a set of manuscripts was discovered in a cave near the Dead Sea. The newly discovered scrolls, dating back to about 70 BC, were a record of some old pre Christian beliefs and practices that compared closely to those of the early Christians. Beliefs like the resurrection, rewards and punishments after death, etc., were already widely held before the birth of Jesus. So too was the notion of the coming of the Messiah to fulfill the destiny of God's chosen people.

The Jews were considered to be privileged citizens in the pre-Roman Macedonian kingdoms and were granted free practice of their faith. Later the Romans, for the sake of keeping the peace, followed suit and allowed the Jews to continue to freely practice their faith.

The Jews believed in monotheism, a single God, the kind of God that philosophers were debating about. The Jews, according to historic accounts, had been monotheists for at least two millennia. They were totally devoted and violently resisted change. Last we recall the Seleucid king Antiochus Epiphanes, in 168 BC, attempted to impose Macedonism on Jerusalem and provoked an armed revolt. With time the Macedonian culture and language did take hold and if not with the majority, many Jews accepted Macedonism. After the revolt, Jewish kings began to assume dual roles, those of king and high priest. Unfortunately, as client kings of foreign powers they were influenced more by politics and less by faith. Politics, especially during the Roman period, had more to do with interpreting the scriptures than faith. These differences of opinion over religious policies caused discontentment between the priesthood and regular rivalries broke out, fracturing Jewish society and leading it to irreconcilable disputes.

Rome refused to become entangled in Jewish affairs and entrusted Judea to the province of Syria, which at the time was ruled by a governor from Antioch. Local authority was entrusted to the Jewish client kings. These kings were hand picked by the Romans for their loyalty to Rome and for proving themselves sufficiently ruthless to their own people. One such “King of the Jews” was Herod who seized the Judean throne in 43 BC and was confirmed by Rome four years later. Herod himself was not a Jew. Some believe he was Macedonian or at least half-Macedonian. Herod had a good relationship with Rome and in some ways this benefited the Jews. The peace that Herod brought during his rule allowed the Jews to prosper. The Jewish diaspora grew and established itself in all the great cities of the Roman Empire including Rome. Solun was no exception and a Jewish community sprang up there also.

The Macedonian adaptation of the Old Testament, composed in Alexandria and written in Koine, was widely used by the Jewish communities in the diaspora. The new composition unfortunately had an expansionist and missionary flavour which was quite alien to the original Testament and represented a departure from tradition

I want to mention at this point that the Jews believed that history was a reflection of Gods’ activity and the Testament was a record of history. God guided man on his daily activities and therefore history was God’s doing.

Herod died in 4 BC and his kingdom was divided between his sons Archalaus, Herod Philip and Herod Antipus, as bequeathed in his will. The arrangement unfortunately was not successful and fell apart around 6 AD. Conflict between the various factions continued to escalate until 60 AD when a full-scale rebellion flared up. Roman intervention did stop the extreme violence but did not end the conflict which waged on well into the next century until the Romans razed Jerusalem to the ground.

Human cruelty was not singularly a Roman trait but was a factor that preoccupied the minds of the new breed of philosophers. Many dreamt of a peaceful world free of evil and some tried to put their dreams into practice but none so successfully as Jesus of Nazareth.

Historically, little is known about Jesus the person. Most of the information about Jesus comes to us from the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, which were written in the Mediterranean Koine language after his death. The new faith's destiny, however, was preordained by the writings in the Old Testament, which foretold the fall of empires through the agency of God, not man. One like the 'son of man' will come on the clouds of heaven, embodying the apocalyptic hope of the Jews, and accompanied by a resurrection of the dead. Simply put, this was the blueprint and code of instructions for shaping the future faith.

It is important to understand that before Jesus' time, Macedonians were not just part of the spiritual evolution but were the cause of it. In other words, they were the catalyst that accelerated the whole spiritual process and brought it to a boil. "Lightfoot finds in Alexander the Great the proof of the greatness of the step which Luke here records in Paul's work, and even says that 'each successive station at which he halted might have reminded the Apostle of the great services rendered by Macedonia as the pioneer of the Gospel!'" (Page 199, W. M. Ramsay, D.C.L., LL. D., *St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen*, Hodder and Stroughton, London. 1894)

After Jesus' death, the Jews were well established throughout the great cities of the Roman Empire and free, at least from the Romans, to pursue their faith. Through their services to the empire, many prospered and were granted Roman citizenship. It is estimated that by the time of Jesus about four and a half million Jews lived in the diaspora in contrast to one million living in their homeland.

I must emphasize here that before Christianity took hold, a large proportion of the people in the diaspora attending Jewish synagogues were not Jewish by race. They were not full Jews in a religious sense nor were they expected to obey all the Jewish laws. Most of them were God fearing people who accepted and worshipped the Jewish God and were tolerated and permitted to mingle with the Jews. These people, many of whom were Macedonian and communicated with the real Jews in the Koine language, were not expected to become full Jews but were tolerated and allowed to penetrate the Jewish social circles, a precursor to Christianity.

The Jews were admired for their stable family life, the relationships they sustained between children and parents and for the peculiar value they attached to human life. The Jews were also admired for something unusual for the time. During the Herodian period, mainly in the large cities in the diaspora, they developed elaborate welfare services for the indigent, poor, sick, widows, orphans, prisoners and the incurable.

All of these factors led to the development of the earliest Christian communities and were a principle reason for the spread of Christianity in the cities. The combination of God-fearing people and the destitute produced converts to Judaism from all races and classes of people, educated and ignorant alike.

Judaism had the potential to become the religion of the Roman Empire but in order to do that it had to evolve and adapt its teachings and organization to an alien world. It had to give up the idea that its priests were descendants of the

tribes of Aaron, temple-attendants of Levi, king and rulers of David, and so on and so forth.

For the true Jewish priests, heredity and the exact observance of the Jewish laws was very important. Unfortunately in the diaspora, religious rules were not always observed and exact heredity was a matter of guesswork, sometimes even fraudulent. This loose application of rules was resented by the conservative Jews and any corrective action taken was usually met with opposition, violence and schisms. The irreconcilable differences between the old conservative Jews and the new breed of liberal semi-Jews grew wider and eventually gave birth to Christianity, a totally new faith.

It was again the Macedonians, among this new breed of liberal Jews, who were the first to preach Jesus' message to the worshipers of Mitra (Mithra), Astart and Zeus as well as others outside the Jewish faith. It was among the Macedonians in Antioch in about 40 AD that the followers of Jesus came to be known as Christians for the first time.

In its refusal to allow Gentile Christianity, as it was then known, to flourish the conservative Jews employed every means, including persecution of its leaders, to stop its progression. Among the savage persecutors pursuing the Jewish Christians was Saul, from the tribe of Benjamin, born in Tarsus. Saul was a Jew and a Roman citizen headed for Damascus in pursuit of Christians when he had a vision of Christ which changed his life. After that he himself converted to Christianity, took the name Paul and began to spread the "Good News" of Jesus until his death in Rome in 64 AD.

It cannot be said that Paul created Gentile Christianity but he was responsible for giving it impetus. Paul became an important factor in the spread of Christianity to Macedonia when he had a vision of a man, a Macedonian, urging him to "come to Macedonia and help us". Paul interpreted this vision as God's will to take the "Good News" of Jesus into Macedonia. "And when they had come opposite My'sia, they attempted to go into Bithyn'ia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them; so, passing by My'sia, they went down to Tro'as. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedo'nia was standing beseeching him and saying, 'Come over to Macedo'nia and help us.' And when he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedo'nia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them." (Page 1044, The Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version, Holman, Philadelphia, 1952)

There are some who believe that the man in Paul's vision was the Apostle Luke. Luke was a Macedonian, a physician by trade, who Paul met for the first time in Troas. Luke may have had some connection to Philippi to have Paul sent there. It is unknown whether Luke was a Christian or not before he met Paul but he was certainly one afterwards. Luke was a great writer and composer of one of the gospels.

It was around 50 AD when Paul set foot on European soil for the first time. That was in the Macedonian towns of Philippi, Solun (Thessalonica) and Berroea where he preached the word of Jesus (Acta apos., XVI, id. XVII). Around 52 and 53 AD he sent epistles to the people of Solun (Epist. Thess); then in 57 AD he

came back to Macedonia to follow up on his progress. In 63 AD he again sent epistles to Macedonia but this time to the people of Philippi (Epist. Philipp).

Even before Paul went to Macedonia legend has it that Macedonia was visited by Jesus' mother Mary. "The Blessed Virgin excluded all other women from Holy Mountain, when she claimed it as 'Her Garden' after she was driven ashore by storms near the site of the present monastery of 'Ivion' USPENIE." (Page 41, Vasil Bogov, *Macedonian Revelation, Historical Documents Rock and Shatter Modern Political Ideology*, Western Australia, 1998) Holy Mountain, or Sveta Gora as it is known in Macedonia, is the holiest place in Europe and one of the greatest monastic centers of Christendom.

Initially, in his teachings, Paul had insurmountable problems trying to explain the nature of Jesus' doctrines through the Jewish faith and its laws to a Macedonian audience. However, by using well understood concepts of faith, which in themselves were somewhat of a departure from the original scriptures, the message was quickly understood. Paul was creative and by sticking to the most basic principles of Jesus' teachings and avoiding most of the six hundred and thirteen Jewish commands, he was able to convey his message. Surely no man could fulfill all six hundred and thirteen commands of the Jewish law? Was everyone then a sinner? In Paul's mind, this was not what Jesus was about. Jesus was about freedom and the liberation of law. Paul associated freedom with truth and in pursuit of truth he established the right to think. He accepted the bonds and obligations of love but not to the authority of scholarship and tradition.

If not by nationality then by spirit Paul was truly a Macedonian because he preached something familiar to the Macedonians. Paul spoke directly to the Macedonian people and they understood him without the use of interpreters. This means that he knew the Macedonian language well enough to captivate his audience. Paul's first mission to Macedonia took him to Philippi where he met a woman named Lydia, a fabric dealer. Lydia was a widow who sold cloth and textiles and was a rare example of a free woman who lived and worked in Macedonia. For some time, Lydia was exposed to Jewish religious practices which she had observed at a colony of Jews who had settled near her home in Thyatira. Lydia, along with her household, is believed to be the first Christian in Macedonia to be baptized by Paul. After Philippi, Paul's missionary journey took him to the beautiful Macedonian city of Solun where, in 50 BC, he established what later came to be known as the "Golden Gate" church, the first Christian church in Europe. According to the Bible, Paul, along with his friend Silas, spent about three weeks in Solun in a synagogue debating the "Good News" of Jesus with the Solun Jews. But much to his disappointment he could not sway them to see things his way. He persuaded some to join but the majority would not join and became hostile towards him. The real surprise, however, was that many non-Jewish Macedonians accepted the "Good News" of Jesus and embraced Christianity as their new faith.

I must mention at this point that the process of Christianization and the establishment of the Christian church was not that simple. The central and eastern Mediterranean, for the first and second centuries AD, swarmed with a

multitude of religious ideas struggling to be spread out. Jesus' message was being rapidly propagated over large geographical areas and his followers were divided right from the start over elements of faith and practice. The new faith may have had spirit but it lacked organization. Many Christian churches sprang up and practiced a kind of diverse Christian faith. Each church more or less had its own "Jesus Story" based on oral traditions and the personal biases of its founders. It would be a very long time indeed before the Christian faith would be amalgamated into a single religion and achieve unity. In the meantime, besides the competing Jews, the Christians had found a new enemy, the Romans.

The Romans were tolerant of all religions and had no problem with what people believed. There were some conditions however. It was mandatory that all people in the Roman Empire participate in Roman religious festivities, pay homage to the Roman emperor and make regular sacrifices as required. Unfortunately, for the more dedicated monotheistic Christians this was not possible because some Roman traditions conflicted with Jesus' teachings.

The Romans did not know what to make of the Christians. For the most part they were peaceful people with no criminal records. They wanted nothing from the Romans but to be left alone to pray in peace yet they were somehow a danger to the stability of the empire. Even though the Christians were peaceful in nature, their attitude towards Roman traditions was in direct violation of Roman law. Besides, if the Christians disrespected the Roman way, what was to stop others from doing the same? It was Pliny the Younger who first made an example of these disobedient Christians by sentencing them to death for simply being Christian. Others then followed suit. During their trials Christians were offered a chance to renounce their Christian faith and obey Roman law. If they did they were set free but those who refused were sentenced to a gruesome death.

Following the period after the death of Jesus, the Roman Empire began to experience its own problems, the least of which was Christianity. During the first century AD, Roman pursuit of wealth brought about social changes in the empire. Roman citizenship was no longer determined by one's nationality but rather by one's possession of wealth. Social status or position of power could also be achieved by wealth. One no longer needed to be Italian to become a Roman Senator or hold office in the Roman administration or be a high ranking officer in the Roman military. Successive Roman emperors aligned themselves more and more with the rich. Even some of the early Roman emperors like Trajan and Hadrian were not Italian but Spanish. Even the Roman soldiers were no longer Roman. Wherever there were problems in the empire, the armies sent to deal with them were raised from the local populations. Rome itself was also being challenged demographically. Besides the rich, the well off and the educated who were flocking to Rome to live the high life, Roman soldiers were bringing home brides from various places in the empire. As problems began to develop on the outskirts of the vast empire, central control became less and less effective. Military men were sometimes empowered with carrying on the responsibilities of the emperor and when the need arose, the army was empowered with appointing a new emperor general, a practice the Romans

adopted from the Macedonians. The frontiers were long and difficult to hold, stretching from Britain, along the Rhine and the Danube, across the Caucasus and Anatolia, along the Tigris and the Syrian desert to Aqaba and from Egypt to Morocco. Even before the close of the first century AD, Roman leaders came to the realization that one emperor could no longer rule such a vast empire. Unfortunately for a long time no emperor was prepared to willingly give up or share his rule with another.

Besides the change in demographics, the Italians in Rome were beginning to be outclassed by a new breed of middle class intellectuals who preferred the use of the Koine language over Latin. Even in Rome local culture was shifting from conservative to intellectual and Romans and foreigners alike, including most emperors, preferred literary works written in the universal romantic Koine language instead of the dry and brisk Latin. Like the 19th century French language of Europe, Koine, fueled by the literary works of the sophists, began to experience a revival. There was a certain ambiance about the language which gave life and expression to its subjects. Koine was utilized heavily by intellectuals and academics all throughout the vastness of the empire, especially in Asia Minor and Alexandria. Koine was very popular not only with the sophists but also with the philosophers who by now had dedicated themselves to defining the new faith. Jesus' message was spreading like wildfire, captivating the minds of a new breed of philosophers and they in turn recorded their experiences not in the Aramaic language of Palestine nor in Latin, but in international Koine, the language of the Macedonian elite. As evidenced by the inscriptions found in Dura Europos, mentioned earlier, the Macedonians also spoke another language, the language that today is referred to as Macedonian. Although history has no name for it, it is often mentioned as the native language spoken by the Macedonian soldiers. Koine may have been the language of the elite and of the institutions but it was useless when it came to bringing the word of Jesus to the uneducated masses living in the vast Roman Empire. It is well documented that, as Christianity spread from the cities to the towns and to the countryside, many of the scriptures written in Koine had to be translated to native languages. While neither the Macedonians before them nor the Romans saw any benefit in educating the peasants, the Christians did. This was happening as much in Egypt as it was in Macedonia. The word of Jesus was good for everyone including the village dwelling peasant. But how does one communicate it to the uneducated masses? This was indeed a problem for the early Christians, but through the written word Christianity translated the scriptures to the various native languages and began to educate the masses.

I want to make it clear here that the Koine language was the international language of commerce, introduced to the vastness of the Macedonian Empire by Alexander the Great. This was the language of the educated and elite, not of the masses of people throughout the empire. For the most part, the native people of all parts of the empire, who took part in the affairs of the empire, were educated in Koine. However that did not preclude them from speaking their native language. It is well documented that non Europeans in the ranks of the European

elite not only spoke a second language, their native language, but were also known by a different name, their local native name.

While the Macedonians and later the Romans had no interest in local affairs, other than harvesting taxes, Christianity showed great interest in everyone irrespective of social status. In Jesus' eyes all men were created equal, in the image of God. The common people could identify with the Christian God and this had appeal for them. In contrast, deities of the Roman faith imitated "the all-powerful" Roman emperor sitting on his throne, far removed from the common man.

By making contact directly with the native people of the empire, the Christians began to institutionalize the local languages by giving them life through the written scriptures and through educating the masses to read and write. Unfortunately at the turn of the new millennium, in Europe at least, there were only three scripts available upon which to base the written word and these were Aramaic, Koine and Latin. Most local languages had far richer sounds than the existing written scripts could accommodate and in time had to be refined. For the Macedonians, this would take a few centuries but eventually a single refined universal script would emerge and bring Macedonia back into her former intellectual glory.

It seems that around the 4th century BC, in the name of progress, Macedonia abandoned its ancient native Venetic script in favour of the international Koine. Unfortunately, half a millennium of neglect left her native spoken language without a script. As we have seen, again as evidenced by the Dura Europos inscription, the Macedonians utilized Koine and Latin scripts, sometimes in combination, to express themselves in their native language. This may have been good enough for scribbling graffiti and writing casual letters but not for compiling literary works.

With time Christianity introduced the gospel to every race in every corner of the Roman Empire and with it came the written word, formalization and later the institutionalization of the modern written languages. The Macedonian language, to which history refers as the language spoken by Alexander's soldiers, was no exception. The development of the modern Macedonian language will be discussed in greater detail in later chapters.

There are some who believe that the period between 27 BC and 180 AD was a period of wasted opportunity. It was a period of spending rather than of creating, an age of architecture and trade in which the rich grew richer and the poor poorer. It was an age when man's soul and spirit decayed. There were thousands of well built cities supplied by great aqueducts, connected to each other by splendid highways and each equipped with temples, theaters, amphitheaters and markets. The citizens of these great cities were well refined in attitude and mannerism, indicative of a civilized society. All this unfortunately was achieved on the backs of slaves who came from the vastness of the empire, including Macedonia. The slaves provided the manpower to build the cities, aqueducts, roads, temples and theaters. The slaves provided the labour to cultivate the soil and feed the masses. They also provided the bodies that fuelled

the blood sport that entertained the Roman citizenry so much. It is unknown how many slaves suffered cruel deaths to civilize the glorious Roman Empire, the pride of the west, but I am certain the numbers were horrendous.

It is often asked, “Who were the Roman gladiators, who were the Christians fed to the lions, and who were the slaves that gave their lives to build the Roman Empire and entertain the Roman citizen?” Although history provides us with no answers, all we need to do is look at the aftermath of every Roman victory and count the numbers enslaved.

Macedonia was the last nation in Europe to fall into Roman hands but the first en masse scale to fall into Roman slavery. While the middle class Macedonian, among others, supplied the Roman Empire with enlightenment, the Macedonian slave, among others, supplied her with the necessary labour to build her civilization. Even though Macedonia, more so than any other nation in the history of the Roman Empire, had contributed to its development, modern Roman history mentions nothing of the Macedonians. The Macedonian people have received no credit for their contribution and the willing and unwilling sacrifices they made for the success of the Romans.

Even though it is well known that the Roman Empire was built on the foundation of Alexander the Great’s Macedonian Empire, its modern inheritors refuse to give Macedonia and the Macedonian people the credit they deserve. Today’s modern westerner speaks of the Roman Empire’s accomplishments with great pride, forgetting that without Macedonia’s contributions their precious empire would be an empty shell.

Every historian knows that the only contribution that the lumbering Roman Empire should be credited with is the construction of roads, cities and aqueducts. In terms of government it had none. At its best it had a bureaucratic administration that kept the peace but failed to secure it. The typical Roman was so overly preoccupied with pursuing “the loot” that he forgot to implement any free thinking and apply knowledge. He had an abundance of books but very few were written by Romans. He respected wealth and despised science. He allowed the rich to rule and imagined that the wise men could be bought and bargained for in the slave markets. He made no effort to teach, train or bring the common people into any conscious participation of his life. He had made a tool of religion, literature, science and education and entrusted it to the care of slaves who were bred and traded like animals. His empire, “It was therefore, a colossally ignorant and unimaginative empire. It foresaw nothing. It had no strategic foresight, because it was blankly ignorant of geography and ethnology.” (Page 397, H.G. Wells, *The Outline of History*, Garden City Books, New York, 1961) This is only a tiny sample of what an eminent western scholar and author thinks of the contributions of the Roman Empire.

Ironically we refer to the Romans as civilized and to the Macedonians as barbarian, knowing full well that Macedonia employed no slaves and Rome built its empire on the backs of slaves.

“Civilize: bring out of barbarous or primitive stage of society; enlighten, refine and educate.” (Page 127, *The Oxford Dictionary of Current English*,

Oxford University Press, 1991) I guess 19th century modern historians forgot to consult the dictionary for the word “civilized” when they wrote the modern history of the Roman Empire.

Without getting into the grossness of the Roman excesses and coliseum blood lusts, I believe I made my point that “the Roman Empire was neither civilized nor did it contribute as much as its proponents would have us believe”.

Attacks mounted on Christianity apparently were not restricted to the Jews and Romans. As Christianity began to grow and make its way into Europe, it became a target for the intellectuals who had discovered it and identified it as the enemy.

The sophisticated Athenian intellectual found it difficult to accept Christianity especially since he was expected to abandon his long held beliefs. While the oppressed Macedonian found hope in Christianity, the freer Athenian was not content to leave behind what truly defined him and his culture.

For better or worse Macedonia gave in and embraced Christianity. Her neighbours to the south, however, were too sophisticated for this modern phenomenon and clung onto their old beliefs.

“Athens in Paul’s time was no longer the Athens of Socrates; but the Socratic method had its roots in the soil of Attica and the nature of the Athenian people. In Athens Socrates can never quite die...” “In this centre of the world’s education, amid the lecture-rooms where philosophers had taught for centuries that it was mere superstition to confuse the idol with the divine nature which is represented, the idols were probably in greater numbers than anywhere else in Paul’s experience.” (Pages 238-239, W. M. Ramsay, D.C.L., LL. D., *St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen*, Hodder and Stroughton, London. 1894)

Paul’s mission to Athens yielded no converts. There is, however, something interesting that came out of Paul’s discussions with the Athenians that gives us a glimpse of the Athenian attitude towards Paul and foreigners in general. In the University of Athens certain philosophers engaged Paul in discussion and some said, “What would this spermologos [ignorant plagiarist] say?” (Page 241, W. M. Ramsay, D.C.L., LL. D., *St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen*, Hodder and Stroughton, London. 1894)

Spermolos is an Athenian slang that means “a worthless fellow of low class and vulgar habits, with the insinuation that he lives at the expense of others, like those disreputable persons who hang round the markets and the quays in order to pick up anything that falls from the loads that are carried about. Hence as a term in social slang, it connotes absolute vulgarity and inability to rise above the most contemptible standard of life and conduct; it is often connected with slave life, for the Spermologos was near the type of the slave and below the level of the free man; and there clings to it the suggestion of picking up refuse and scraps, and in literature of plagiarism without the capacity to use correctly.” (Page 242, W. M. Ramsay, D.C.L., LL. D., *St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen*, Hodder and Stroughton, London. 1894)

Is this the superior race of men to whom our modern world owes its foundations?

After a short visit in Athens Paul was kicked out. From there he went to Corinth and after spending some time in Corinth he returned to Solun.

Christianity apparently retaliated against such intellectual attitudes by claiming that their philosophy had nothing to teach the Christians but folly and immorality. Even though Christianity was beginning to gain confidence and take a more relaxed attitude towards these attacks, its doctrine was still divergent. Gnosticism was particularly strong in many areas of the empire and, combined with pagan beliefs and myths, not only diverted from Jesus' simple teachings but also infuriated many Christian fundamentalists to advocate the return to "simple faith". The Gnostics, in their attempt to "purify" Jesus' teaching and free them from their earthly bounds, had injected new ideas into Christianity most of which were based on myth and fantasies and were bordering on heresy.

The call to return to the "simple faith" was easier said than done. In the end "simple faith" was universally restored but not without the help of an emperor.

The start of the new millennium witnessed the death of the Roman Republic and the birth of Imperial Rome. The Augustan emperors may have brought peace to the empire but with it they also brought neglect, decline and decay. As mentioned earlier, by 180 AD there were unmistakable signs of decay. Besides the agricultural and economic decline, the empire opened its doors to anarchy when the adoptive system of choosing emperors was abandoned in favour of personal appointments.

The first emperor to break with tradition was Marcus Aurelius who appointed his son, Commodus, as his successor. Unfortunately, Emperor Commodus instead of ruling spent twelve years (180 to 192 AD) drinking with the gladiators until he was strangled by his trainer.

After a year of civil war Septimius Severus, an African, rose to supreme power and in his eighteen years of rule did his best to restore peace and order. Severus and his relations kept the empire functioning until 235 AD when the last member of that family was assassinated.

The following fifty years witnessed bloodshed, misrule and civil war. The erosion of central power opened the doors for barbarian invasions. Besides attacks from the various Germanic tribes and Franks on the west, a more serious push came from the Goths in the east. The Goths were a maritime people who lived in southern Russia and controlled the waterways from the Baltic, across Russia to the Black and Caspian Seas.

Unable to withstand their advance, the Romans lost the eastern seas and allowed the Goths to enter the Aegean coastline and advance on Macedonia. Another group crossed the Danube in a great land raid in 247 AD, defeating and killing the Emperor Decius.

The Romans eventually did muster enough strength and in 270 AD Claudius defeated the Goths, driving them back to where they originated.

Further east, under the powerful Sassanid dynasty, the Persian Empire was revived and it too attacked the Romans, capturing the Roman Emperor Valerian in 260 AD. In 276 AD the Goths returned to raid the coasts of Asia Minor. Then

in 284 AD Diocletian, an Illyrian born general, seized power in Rome and ruled for the next twenty years.

It was Diocletian who first seized the opportunity and introduced the share of rule. The empire was too great a task for one man to rule so Diocletian established a Board of Four Emperors. This was an old idea whose time had finally come. Unfortunately, this idea only worked while Diocletian was in power and fell apart after his retirement in 305 AD. Fortunately, the concept of sharing rule survived and after another round of destructive conflicts in 313 AD, Constantine emerged victorious as co-Emperor with Licinius.

One of the main failures that led to the decline of the Roman Empire was poor communication. Rome's geographical position in relation to its empire made her unsuitable as a world capital. Every order and official document had to travel northward for half the length of Italy before it could turn east or west. Even though some of the more capable emperors set up their headquarters in the hub of activity this still did not solve the communication problem in its entirety.

One of Constantine's priorities after seizing power was to find a suitable location for his capital where communication would not be problem. Although Solun was contemplated for its cosmopolitan Macedonian culture, economy and defenses, Constantine opted for the city of Byzantium. After all was it not Byzantium that withstood Philip II's siege and survived? From a strategic point, Byzantium offered some advantages over Solun. Byzantium was located on the waters of the Bosphorus, linking the Mediterranean with the Black Sea. It was the center of the Roman world, linking east with west. From a military perspective, ships could easily be dispatched east or west up the rivers and outflank every barbarian advance. Even Mesopotamia, Egypt and the Aegean and Adriatic coastlines were within a reasonable striking distance from Byzantium. From a commercial perspective, Byzantium was a lot closer to the eastern trade routes than Rome or Solun. In other words, Constantine chose Byzantium by careful planning and design, which in the long term gave his empire the advantage it needed to survive for nearly a millennium and a half, until 1453 AD.

Flavius Valerius Constantinus, or Emperor Constantine as he was later known, was born in Naissus in the province of Moesia Superior, the modern day Nish in Serbia, on February 27th in 271, 272, or 273 AD. His father was a military officer named Constantius (later named Constantius Chlorus or Constantius I). His mother, a woman of humble background, was named Helena (later named St. Helena). It has been said that Constantius and Helena were not married. Having previously attained the rank of tribune, provincial governor and probably praetorian prefect, Constantius, on March 1st, 293AD, was promoted to the rank of Caesar in the First Tetrarchy organized by Diocletian. On this occasion he was required to put aside Helena and marry Theodora, the daughter of Maximian. Upon the retirement of Diocletian and Maximian on May 1st, 305 AD, Constantius succeeded to the rank of Augustus. Constantine, meanwhile, had served with distinction under both Diocletian and Galerius in the east. Kept initially at the court of Galerius as a pledge of good conduct on his father's part, he was later allowed to join his father in Britain and assisted him in a campaign

against the Picts. When Constantius died on July 25th, 306 at Eburacum (York), Constantine was at his side. The soldiers at once proclaimed him Augustus. Constantine henceforth observed this day as his dies imperii. Having settled affairs in Britain swiftly, he returned to the Continent where the city of Augusta Treverorum (Trier) served as his principal residence for the next six years. There too, in 307 AD, he married Maximian's daughter Fausta putting away his mistress Minervina, who had born his first son, Crispus.

At the same time Constantine was proclaimed Augustus, the Senate and the Praetorian Guard in Rome had allied themselves with Maxentius, the son of Maximian. On October 28th, 306 AD they initially proclaimed him emperor in the lower rank of princeps, although he later claimed the rank of Augustus. Constantine and Maxentius, although they were brothers-in-law, did not trust each other. Their relationship was further complicated by their scheming and eventually by the death of Maximian in 310 AD. Open hostilities between the two rivals broke out in 312 AD and Constantine won a decisive victory in the famous Battle of the Milvian Bridge. This made Constantine and Licinius (co-Emperor and brother in law) the sole rulers of the Roman Empire.

Chapter 14 - Constantine I and the Triumph of Christianity

During the year 313 AD, from the great imperial city of Milan, Emperor Constantine, together with his co-Emperor Licinius, dispatched a series of letters informing all provincial governors to stop persecuting the Christians, thus revoking all previous anti-Christian decrees. All properties, including Christian places of worship, seized from them in the past were to be restored. This so called "Edict of Milan", by which the Roman Empire reversed its policy of hostility towards Christians, was one of the most decisive events in human history. What brought on this sudden reversal?

Rational thinkers believed that Constantine had the foresight to realize that Christianity was a growing power and could be harnessed to work for the good of the empire. Christianity was a result of changing times and harnessing its power was of far greater benefit than following the current policy of attempting to destroy it.

Christianity at that time was disorganized and existed in cult form in sporadic pockets spread throughout the empire. Yet Constantine still had the foresight to see potential in it.

Christianity was a peripheral issue in Constantine's mind when he and his co-Emperor Licinius were about to face Maxentius and Maximin Daita in the greatest battle of their careers. It was at this decisive moment that Constantine experienced a vision which, not only changed his life but, was the turning point for Christianity.

In 312 AD, on the eve of the great battle, Constantine had an experience which swayed him towards Christianity. "A little after noon, as the sun began to decline...[Constantine] declared that he saw with his own eyes in the sky beneath the sun a trophy in the shape of a cross made of light with the

inscriptions 'by this conquer.' He was astounded by the spectacle, as were the soldiers who accompanied him on the march and saw the miraculous phenomenon...But when he fell asleep God's Christ appeared to him with the sign which he had seen in the sky and instructed him to fashion a likeness of the sign and use it as a protection in the encounters of war." (Page 167, D. Fishwick, *The Foundations of the West*, Clark, Irwin & Company, Toronto, 1963).

I want to mention at this point that even though Constantine was swayed towards Christianity, he himself was personally devoted to Mars, the god of war, and Apollo, the god of the sun.

Whatever vision Constantine may have experienced, he attributed his victory to the power of "the God of the Christians" and committed himself to the Christian faith from that day on forward.

Shortly after becoming involved with the Christians, Constantine discovered that there were many problems and a basic lack of unity within the Christian Church. Within the Christian realm there were those who took strict positions towards the behaviour of others because they had shown a lack of faith during the Christian persecutions. Yet others, like the Gnostics, had taken Jesus' message totally out of context. To work out these problems Constantine organized and chaired two synods, one in Rome in 313 AD and one in Arles, southern Gaul, in 314 AD. Even though much was accomplished there were still unresolved problems. Constantine could not get all parties to agree on a common Christian policy. Differences of opinion drove some factions to leave the main church and start separatist churches. One of these was the church of North Africa which possessed considerable power and resisted assimilation for over two centuries.

The Christian Church was not Constantine's only problem. There were difficulties with sharing power with his brother in law Licinius. The agreement of 313 AD, which had been born out of necessity not mutual good will, was beginning to unravel. Hostilities between the two emperors continued to build and conflict erupted in 316 AD, in what later came to be known as the first war. Two battles were fought, the first at Cibalae in Pannonia and the second on the campus Ardiensis in Thrace. During the first battle Licinius's army suffered heavy losses. In the second battle neither side won a clear victory. A settlement was eventually reached which allowed Licinius to remain Augustus but required him to cede all of his European provinces, except for Thrace, to Constantine.

As part of the agreement with Licinius, Constantine announced the appointment of three Caesars on March 1st, 317 AD in Serdica (modern Sofia). Among the appointees were Constantine's two sons, twelve year old Crispus and seven month old Constantine. Licinius's twenty month old son Licinius was also named Caesar. Unfortunately the new agreement was fragile and tensions between the emperors were again surfacing. This was partly due to Constantine and Licinius not being able to agree on a common policy regarding the Christian religion and partly due to the suspicious nature of the two men. Licinius was growing uneasy with Constantine's relationship with the Christian power base. He saw Christians being promoted above their pagan counterparts and Christian

soldiers getting the day off on Sunday. Furthermore a growing list of favours, powers and immunities were being granted to Christians, with which Licinius did not agree.

War erupted again in 324 AD and this time Constantine defeated Licinius twice, first at Adrianople in Thrace and then at Chrysopolis on the Bosphorus near the ancient city of Byzantium. Licinius was captured but not executed because Constantine's sister, Constantia, pleaded with him to spare her husband's life. Some months later however, still suspicious of Licinius, Constantine ordered his execution. Not too long afterwards, the younger Licinius too fell victim to Constantine's suspicions and was also executed. Constantine was now the sole and undisputed master of the Roman Empire.

Immediately after his victory over Licinius in 324 AD, Constantine began the construction of his new capital, the "City of Constantine". This would be a Christian city fit for Kings that would not only rival, but would surpass the glory of Rome.

Power was where the Emperor was, and the Emperor was now in his own city in the hub of activity just at the edge of Macedonia. Although this was not purely a Macedonian city, it had the elements of Macedonian culture and tradition. It was a very un-Roman city in language and culture and not only imitated the Macedonian cities of Alexandria and Antioch but with time surpassed their cultural and academic achievements. Constantinople or Tsari Grad ("City of Kings"), as it was known to the Macedonians, was going to be the power base of a new empire, a revival of Alexander the Great's old empire with a Christian twist. "This 'Eastern' or Byzantine empire is generally spoken of as if it were a continuation of the Roman tradition. It is really far more like a resumption of Alexander's." (Page 414, H.G. Wells, *The Outline of History*, Garden City Books, New York, 1961).

While Constantine was building his new city, his mother Helena undertook a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and was instrumental in the building of the Churches of the Nativity at Bethlehem and Eleona on Jerusalem's Mount of Olives.

On November 8th, 324 AD Constantine formally laid out the boundaries of his new city, roughly quadrupling the territory of old Byzantium. While his architects were designing his new city, Constantine and his army, numbering about 120,000 troops, were established in Solun. Even before moving to Solun in 324 AD, Constantine had the old Solun harbour renovated and expanded to fit his fleet of 200 triakondores galleons and about 2,000 merchant ships.

By 328 AD the walls of Tsari Grad were completed and the new city was formally ready for dedication in May 330 AD. Soon after the city was opened, Constantine ordered the construction of two major churches, Sveta Sophia (Holy Wisdom) and Sveta Eirena (Holy Peace) and began laying the foundation of a third church, the Church of the Holy Apostles.

Unlike Rome, which was filled with pagan monuments and institutions, Tsari Grad was essentially a Christian city with Christian churches and institutions. While Tsari Grad was shaping up to be a Christian city, the prevailing character

of Constantine's government was one of conservatism. His adoption of Christianity did not lead to a radical reordering of society or to a systematic revision of the legal system. Generally refraining from sweeping innovations, he retained and completed most of what Diocletian had set out to do, especially in provincial administration and army organization.

While implementing currency reforms, Constantine instituted a new type of coin, the gold solidus, which won wide acceptance and remained the standard currency for centuries to come. Some of Constantine's measures show a genuine concern for the welfare and morality of his subjects, even for the condition of slaves. By entrusting some government functions to the Christian clergy he actually made the church an agency of the imperial government. Constantine also showed great concern for the security of his empire, especially at the frontiers. Even though he made Tsari Grad his capital, Solun still remained a pole around which his empire was defended. Because of its secure harbour, Solun flourished economically and experienced much cultural growth.

Constantine campaigned successfully from 306 to 308 AD and again from 314 to 315 AD. He experienced action on the German frontier in 332 AD against the Goths and again in 334 AD against the Sarmatians. He even fought near his homeland in 336 AD on the Danube frontier. As he was getting of age, Constantine made arrangements for his succession and appointed to the position of Caesars, his three sons Constantine II, Constantius II and Constans, 317 AD, 324 AD, and 333 AD respectively. He then appointed his nephew Flavius Dalmatius, son of Constantius I and Theodora to Caesar in 335 AD. Unfortunately he never made it clear which of his successors was intended to take the leading role upon his death.

Between the years 325 and 337 AD, Constantine continued to support the Christian Church by donating generous gifts of money and by passing helpful legislation. His kindness to the Christians was not restricted to the city of Tsari Grad alone. He also founded the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem and the Golden Octagon in Antioch. Even with all his kindness Constantine was not spared misfortune and shortly after Easter on April 3rd, 337 AD Constantine began to feel ill. He traveled to Drepanum, later named Helenopolis in honour of his mother, and prayed at the tomb of his mother's favourite saint, the martyr Lucian. From there he went to the suburbs of Nicomedia where he was baptized by the Arian bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia. A few weeks later on May 22nd, the day of Pentecost, Constantine died. His body was escorted to Tsari Grad and lay in state in the imperial palace. His sarcophagus was then placed in the Church of the Holy Apostles, as he himself had instructed in his will. His sarcophagus was surrounded by the memorial steles of the Twelve Apostles, symbolically making him the thirteenth Apostle.

Constantine's failure to specifically appoint his successor sparked a conflict among the Caesars in the palace. After eliminating Flavius Dalmatius and other rivals in a bloody coup, Constantine II, Constantius II and Constans each assumed the rank of Augustus. Constantine's army, faithful from the day they crowned him until his death, vowed they would have no other but his sons to rule

them. The army, in a violent bloodbath, killed everyone who did not qualify, including two of Constantine's half brothers. The only ones to escape were two of his nephews, Gallus and Julian.

At this point I would like to take a short diversion and examine what was happening throughout the empire.

As I mentioned earlier, while the Roman Empire was decaying, Germanic tribes were growing in strength and pressing from the north. Around 236 AD the Franks were descending upon the lower Rhine and the Alamanni were overrunning Alsace in France. Earlier I mentioned the Goths from southern Russia were overrunning the Black Sea pouring into the Aegean and attacking the province of Ducia.

By late third century most barbarian invasions were repelled but not entirely destroyed. During 321 AD the Goths were again plundering what is now Serbia and Bulgaria but were soon driven back by Constantine I. Then in 337 AD, pressed by the Goths, the Vandals were permitted to cross the Danube and enter Pannonia, part of modern day Hungary (west of the Danube). By the mid-fourth century the Hunnish people to the east were again building up forces and pressing on the Visigoths. The Visigoths, following the Vandal example, also entered Roman territory. But before any agreements could be reached they attacked Andrianople and killed the Emperor Valens. In spite of their violent ways the Visigoths were allowed to settle in what is now Bulgaria. Their settlement was conditional however, requiring their armies to submit to Roman rule. Each army was allowed to remain in the command of its own chief.

The major players in the barbarian armies of the time were Alaric of the Visigoths, Stilicho of the Pannonian Vandals and a Frank who commanded the legions of Gaul. Emperor Theodosius, a Spaniard, was in command of the Gothic auxiliaries. The true power, however, was in the hands of Alaric and Stilicho the two barbarian competitors who wasted no time in splitting the empire between themselves. Alaric took control of the eastern Koine speaking half and Stilicho took the western Latin speaking half.

At about the same time the empire was being split in two, the Huns appeared on the scene and began to enlist in Stilicho's army. Frequent clashes between east and west began to weaken the empire and opened the door for more barbarian invasions. Fresh Vandals, more Goths, Alans and Suevi all began to penetrate the frontiers of the empire. In 410 AD, amidst the confusion, Alaric marched down Italy capturing Rome after a short siege. By 425 AD the Vandals, of present day East Germany, and the Alani, of present day southeast Russia, overran Gaul and the Pyrenees and had settled in the southern regions of modern day Spain. The Huns were in possession of Pannonia and the Goths of Dalmatia. Around 451 AD the Czechs settled in Moravia and Bohemia. The Visigoths and Suevi, in the meantime, pressed their way westwards and ended up north of the Vandals in present day Portugal. Gaul meanwhile was divided between the Visigoths, Franks and Burgundians.

By 449 AD present day Britain was invaded by the Jutes, a Germanic tribe, the Angles and the Saxons who in turn were pushing out the Keltic British to

what is now modern Brittany in France. The Vandals from south of Spain had crossed over into North Africa by 429 AD, occupied Carthage by 439 AD, and invaded, raided and pillaged Rome by 455 AD. After ransacking Italy they crossed into Sicily and set up a Vandal kingdom which lasted up to 534 AD. At its peak, which was around 477 AD, the Vandal kingdom occupied North Africa, Corsica, Sardinia, and the Balearic Isles. The Vandal kingdom was ruled by a handful of Vandals whose Vandal population numbered no more than eighty thousand men, women and children. The rest of the population consisted of passive non-Vandals who, under the Vandal occupation, found relief from the Roman burden of slavery and taxation. The Vandals had in effect exterminated the great landowners, wiped clean all debts to Roman moneylenders and abolished military service.

While the Vandals ruled the western Mediterranean, a great leader Attila was consolidating his power among the Huns east of the Danube. At its peak, Attila's empire of Hunnish and Germanic tribes stretched from the Rhine to central Asia. Attila was said to be the first westerner to negotiate on equal terms with the Chinese emperor.

For ten years, while he was passionately in love with Emperor Theodosius II's granddaughter Honoria, Attila bullied Ravenna and Tsari Grad. During his rule, Attila destroyed seventy cities, some of them in Macedonia, and came upon the walls of Tsari Grad forcing an uneasy peace on the emperor. The peace treaty however, in spite of her disappointment, did not include Honoria. Even though Honoria voluntarily offered to marry Attila, the emperor would not allow it. Attila was not disappointed.

In 451 AD Attila declared war on the Western Empire and invaded Gaul sacking most of the French cities down to south of Orleans. Just as Attila was ravaging Gaul, the Frank, Visigoth and imperial armies joined forces for a counter offensive. Before the year was over Attila's army was cut off at Troyes and the Mongolian overlord was forced out of France. Beaten but not destroyed Attila turned his attention southward, overrunning northern Italy, burning Aquileia and Padua, and looting Milan. Attila died in 453 AD and subsequently the Huns dissolved into the surrounding population and disappeared from history.

In 493 AD, after seventeen years without an emperor, Theodoric, a Goth, became King of Rome thus putting an end to the rule of god-Caesars and rich men. The Roman imperial system of western Europe and north Africa collapsed and ceased to exist. The Roman had come and gone but what remained was no longer Roman. The west, for almost five hundred years after its fall, experienced a period of decline, which later became known as the Dark Ages.

Out of the ashes of the Roman Empire rose a new empire known as the "Eastern" or "Byzantine" Empire known to the Macedonians as the "Byzantine" Empire. Many would agree that this was the revival or re-birth of Alexander the Great's old Macedonian empire. Some even called it the "stump" of Alexander the Great's empire.

Along with the re-birth of the Macedonian Empire, the Koine language resurfaced and took its rightful place not only as the language of the intellectuals but also as the language of administration. The Latin language had neither the intellectual vigour nor the literature or science necessary to captivate intelligent men and women. Ever since its humble beginning the new empire was Koine speaking, a continuation of the Macedonian tradition. It seems that Latin even lost its way in the west only to be replaced by the languages of the barbarians. While the Roman social and political structure was being smashed in the west, the east was embracing a renewed Macedonian tradition. Some say Constantine the Great may have been a Slav (page 450, H.G. Wells, *The Outline of History*, Garden City Books, New York, 1961) but it is more appropriate to say that he was a Macedonian, building a new empire and following in the footsteps of his ancestors.

As I mentioned earlier, after Constantine's death his three sons inherited the rule of the empire. The west was to be shared between the eldest and youngest sons, Constantine II and Constans, while the middle son Constantius was to rule the east. Unhappy with the arrangement, a conflict broke out in 340 AD between Constantine II and Constans, resulting in Constantine II's death. After that Constans assumed sole rule of the west until he was deposed and executed by his own troops in 350 AD.

After Constans's death the army recognized one of its own officers. But in 351 AD the usurper's authority was challenged in battle and he was defeated. After that Constantius remained the sole ruler of the entire empire.

While Constantius set out west to personally deal with the usurper, he appointed his young cousin, Gallus, guardian of the east. Gallus unfortunately turned out to be a terrible ruler and quickly fell out of favour. After three years of rule Constantius had him executed.

In 355 AD, before embarking on an eastern campaign, Constantius recalled his last surviving cousin Julian and appointed him guardian of the west to defend the western frontier against the Franks and Alamans. Before sending him off, however, he had him married off to his sister Helena.

Unlike his brother Gallus, Julian was good at his job and in his five years of service he cleansed the western provinces of intruders and improved the western economy. Unfortunately, Julian was exceeding expectations and made Constantius uneasy. To alleviate his concerns, Constantius made an attempt to remove Julian but his effort failed. Julian was a great leader and the army in Gaul refused to give him up. In February 360 AD, with total disregard for Constantius's orders, the army in Gaul proclaimed Julian, Augustus. After some hesitation Julian accepted the position. Fortunately Constantius died before he attempted to remove him.

Having no capable heir to replace himself with, on his deathbed in 361 AD, Constantius appointed Julian his successor. Julian accepted the position and reigned as sole Augustus until June 363 AD.

Constantius was anti-pagan and introduced policies to exterminate pagan cults. Julian, on the other hand, was tolerant of all religions, especially

Mithraism and encouraged all sorts of religious practices. In 356 AD, when Constantius was sole ruler of the empire, he decreed the death penalty for all those found sacrificing or worshipping idols. Julian, on the other hand, not only repealed the discriminatory decree but also removed Christians from office and discontinued the provision of subsidies for Christian projects including those for welfare. He even took a step further and proclaimed open and all-inclusive tolerance of all religions in the empire. Julian may have been a visionary but unfortunately he was ahead of his time. His policies of tolerance not only didn't work but conflicts between the various religions began to erupt.

One of Julian's accomplishments during his rule was the reformation of the Empire's educational system. He was responsible for widening the scope of subjects taught, made requirements that all teachers be licensed and forbade Christians to teach in state schools. Unfortunately for Julian, Christianity by now was so well rooted in his empire that many of his reforms were ignored. On the positive side, however, Julian initiated a number of great construction projects, including the massive fortification of the walls of Solun.

Julian died on June 26th, 363 AD from a spear wound during a campaign against the Persians in Asia. Julian was the last male of the house of Constantine. Due to his sudden death he had made no provisions for a successor. It was now up to the senior officers of his army to select the new ruler.

The man who accepted the call to duty was a young officer named Jovian, a Nicæan Christian. Flavius Jovianus (Jovian) was born in 331 AD at Singidunum, near modern day Belgrade. Jovian's first priority was to return Christianity to the empire, thus ending paganism and the religious rivalries introduced by Julian's reforms.

Nicaea was located in Bithynia in modern day northwestern Turkey and was an important city for Christianity. It was in Nicaea that Constantine I, in 325 AD, gathered a council to settle disputes caused by the "Arian views" of the Trinity.

Arius was an Alexandrian priest who believed that Christ was not of the same essence as God. After some deliberation the council disagreed with Arius's views. Instead they adopted what came to be known as the "Nicene Creed" which declared that "Christ and God were of the same essence". Among other things, the Nicæan council also decided when Easter was to be celebrated and summarized a number of important articles regarding the Christian faith.

Even under the powerful defense of the Constantine dynasty, which lasted approximately 70 years from 293 AD to 363 AD, the eastern empire was not immune to attacks. Earlier in this document I gave a preview of what happened in the western part of the empire, now let us turn our attention to the east.

Long before the Constantine dynasty came to power, while the Roman Empire was experiencing decay, the Persian Empire began to experience a revival. Iran became the Parthian center of culture, first under the Arsacids and later under the Sassanids. Around 241 AD Sassanian forces, under the leadership of Shapur, defeated the Kushan Empire. After a number of campaigns an Iranian dynasty once again came to rule the lands as far east as Indus. Not long after

seizing Iran, Shapur's armies crossed into the Caucasus and seized Armenia, Georgia and Albania (north of modern day Azerbaijan).

After his successes in Asia, Shapur turned his attention westward and attacked Antioch. The city defenses turned out to be more formidable than expected and a stalemate was reached. To end the stalemate, Shapur, in 244 AD, was bribed by the Romans to stop the siege. The prize for Shapur's withdrawal was accession of Armenia and Mesopotamia.

Dissatisfied with what he considered "small gains", Shapur tried again in 256 AD and this time snatched Antioch from the Romans. The city was taken by surprise and ransacked by Sassanian troops. Captives were carried off and resettled in various parts of Iran. Soon after the sacking, Emperor Valerian paid a visit to Antioch only to find the beautiful city in ruins, occupied by Iranian troops. The city was retaken by the Romans but before they had a chance to rebuild it, Shapur struck and took it again in 260 AD. In the process he shattered the Roman army of seventy thousand troops and captured Valerian. Luckily, Valerian had allies in Palmyra who came to his rescue. Even though they came too late to save Valerian, the Syrian and Arab troops attacked the Sassanian army inflicting on them considerable damage. After their defeat the Sassanians were kept in check by the Romans in the west and by the Palmyrans in the east.

While the Sassanians were kept down, the Romans slowly re-took Armenia through appointments of pro-Roman rulers to the Armenian throne. But that did not last long. After Shapur's death, his son Shapur II ceded the Sassanian throne and a new round of hostilities commenced that would last from 338 to 363 AD.

Trouble started when Shapur II, dethroned the Roman installed king of Armenia. Unhappy about the incident, Constantine reacted by making threatening statements about the power of his new Christian God, which provoked Shapur to take revenge on Christians in the Sassanian Empire.

Jovian finally brought the hostilities to an end after Julian's death. Unfortunately the price for peace was costly. Jovian had to give back the trans-Tigrine provinces which Diocletian seized earlier. He also had to concede a large portion of northern Mesopotamia, including the fortress of Nisibis, and the Roman claim to Armenia back to Shapur. If that was not enough, the cities of Singara and Nisibis were also surrendered to Shapur. For all these concessions all Shapur had to do was allow safe passage for the fleeing inhabitants of the cities and guarantee the neutrality of the pro-Roman king of Armenia.

Jovian died at the age of thirty-two on February 17th, 364 AD at Dadastana on the boundary between Bithynia and Galatia. His death was most probably due to natural causes. Some attributed it to overeating.

Was Jovian another Slav, or should I say Macedonian? Although official history does not record him as one, considering his name and where he was born, he could have easily been one.

At this point I would like to take another short diversion and present a famous figure of this era that is not only popular in Macedonia, but is famous worldwide.

To the Christians he is known by several names including Saint Nicholas, Sinter Klaus and Santa Claus. No one is certain when he was born but it was sometime in the middle of the fourth century. St. Nicholas was probably a native of Patara in Lycia, Asia Minor. There are far more legends about his miraculous good deeds than there are clear details about his life.

Nicholas, during his early career, was a monk in the monastery of Holy Zion near Myra and was eventually made Abbot by the founding Archbishop. When the See of Myra, the capital of Lycia, fell vacant Nicholas was appointed Archbishop. It is said that he suffered for his Christian Faith under Emperor Diocletian and was present at the Council of Nicaea as an opponent of Aryanism.

St. Nicholas is celebrated on December 6th the day he died and his soul entered Heaven. But most western countries today combine St. Nicholas's day with that of gift giving and celebrate both days together at Christmas.

The most famous story told about St. Nicholas has to do with three young sisters who were very poor. Their parents were so poor that they did not have enough money to provide for marriages. In those days, every young girl needed money for a dowry, to pay for her wedding and to set up house. Nicholas heard of this poor family and wanted to help but he did not want his involvement known. There are several versions to this story, but in one version, Nicholas climbed up the roof three nights in a row and threw gold coins down the chimney hoping that they would land in the girls' stockings, which had been hung by the fire to dry. As a result of the mysterious donations appearing in the stockings two nights in a row, two of the three girls had enough money to get married. Curious as to who the benefactor was, the next night the girls' father hid behind the chimney in wait. To his surprise, along came Bishop Nicholas with another bag of money. Nicholas did not want to be identified and begged the father not to tell anyone. But the father was so grateful for the good deeds that he could not hold back and told everyone what a good and generous man Bishop Nicholas was. This is how the story and later the tradition of gift giving and the stuffing of stockings started.

Nicholas, as a young man, studied in Alexandria, Egypt. While on one of his voyages during a storm, he saved the life of a sailor who fell from the ship's rigging. His actions earned him the title Patron Saint of Sailors. During another encounter he miraculously rescued some young boys from a vat of brine, thereby becoming the patron of schoolboys. The characteristic virtue of St. Nicholas, however, appears to have been for his love and charity to the poor. Because of this and the many legends surrounding his work, St. Nicholas is regarded as the special patron of seafarers, scholars, bankers, pawnbrokers, jurists, brewers, coopers, travelers, perfumers, unmarried girls, brides, and robbers. But most of all he is the very special saint of children.

Around 540 AD, Emperor Justinian built a church at Tsari Grad in the suburb of Blacharnae in St. Nicholas's honor. History and legend are intertwined in the story of Nicholas's life and he has been widely honoured as a saint since the sixth century. No less than 21 "miracles" have been attributed to him. Nicholas died at Myra in 342 AD.

After Jovian's sudden death in 364 AD a number of leading Imperial officials met in Nicaea to select a new emperor. After some deliberation a forty-three-year-old officer of the Imperial bodyguard named Valentinian was chosen. Valentinian, whose full name was Flavius Valentinianus, was a devout Christian born in 321 AD at Cibalis (modern Vinkovci) in southern Pannonia (perhaps another Slav?). Valentinian was not of noble blood and had risen through the ranks to become a great general. He had no great education but did have a bad temper and contempt for those with education. During his reign he was a competent soldier who took some interest in the administration but was overly trusting of his subordinates.

As soon as Valentinian was proclaimed emperor the army demanded that he select a co-emperor. By now it had become apparent that the empire could not be ruled by a single man. To help him rule his huge empire Valentinian appointed his younger brother Valens, emperor of the east. Although this was not the first time that co-emperors reigned over the empire, this would be the beginning of a permanent separation. Three decades later East and West would briefly be reunited under the leadership of Emperor Theodosius. Upon Theodosius's death, in 395 AD, the empire would again be divided between his sons Arcadius and Honorius. From this time forward the division would be permanent and East and West would be ruled separately.

In 367 AD Valentinian suffered a serious illness. After his recovery he learned that discussions had been taking place as to who might succeed him. To be safe Valentinian had his eight year-old son, Gratian, proclaimed Augustus.

Valentinian spent 365 to 375 AD in Trier where he conducted a number of campaigns against the Alamanni. In November 375 AD, enraged by offensive remarks made by some barbarian envoys, Valentinian died of a stroke. His associates, fearing mistreatment at the hands of Gratian's advisors, proclaimed Valentinian's four-year-old younger son Valentinian II, Augustus. Even though Gratian and Valens had no desire to see Valentinian II made Augustus, they agreed to allow him to rule Italy, Africa and Illyricum.

While Valens was occupied in Syria throughout the early 370s AD, keeping an eye on the Persians, a crisis was developing in the northern frontiers and war erupted. The Goths crossed the Danube in 376 AD, which I mentioned earlier, attacked Adrianople and killed Emperor Valens.

After Valens' disastrous defeat in 378 AD, Gratian appointed Theodosius emperor in the east. Theodosius' father was executed for having fallen out of favour with Valentinian I. In spite of that, Theodosius graciously accepted the job and immediately began to put his military talents to good use strengthening the East. Theodosius chose Solun as his base from which to wage war against the Goths.

On the western front in 383 AD, British troops, led by Magnus Maximus, rebelled and invaded Gaul. Unprepared to meet this threat Gratian's soldiers deserted him. Gratian was not very popular with his troops because he preferred to hunt and participate in sports over leading his men into battle. Unable to

escape, Gratian was caught by Maximus in Lugdunum (Lyons) on August 25th, 383 AD and was murdered by Maximus's troops.

After Gratian's death, Valentinian II (Gratian's half brother) should have inherited the entire western half of the empire. Unfortunately, he was no more than a nominal ruler and allowed Magnus Maximus to exist. Italy was all he had and even there the real power was held by his mother Justina.

In 387 AD Maximus invaded Italy, forcing Justina and Valentinian to flee. Mother and son sought refuge in Solun with Theodosius where a counter force was put together which attacked and defeated Maximus. Unfortunately Maximus's defeat cost Justina her life.

Valentinian II returned to Italy but quickly fell under the influence of his Frankish General, Arbogastes. Arbogastes was a treacherous man who slowly replaced all of Valentinian's important officers and government officials with his own loyal men. When Valentinian attempted to oust him, Arbogastes had him assassinated.

After Valentinian's death, Arbogastes placed Eugenius, a popular pagan philosopher, on the throne. His actions unfortunately did not sit well with Theodosius who, in 394 AD, sent his army to deal with Arbogastes. The two armies met in the passes of the Julian Alps near the river Frigidus. Theodosius decimated the army and captured and killed Eugenius. A few days later Arbogastes committed suicide.

With the removal of Eugenius and Arbogastes, Theodosius assumed control of the entire empire. Flavius Theodosius was born in Cauca, Spain in about 346 AD. As I mentioned earlier, Gratian appointed him emperor of the east in 378 AD.

Theodosius left his legacy in Macedonia in 390 AD when he massacred seven thousand Solunian civilians. As the story goes, while in Solun the local garrison, consisting mainly of Goths, was in bad favour with the Solunian citizens and during a riot a number of Goth officers were murdered and their bodies abused. Unhappy about the situation, Theodosius retaliated by sending yet another Gothic garrison to the city. During one of the chariot races the hippodrome gates were suddenly shut so no one could escape and the Goth soldiers took their revenge, murdering the spectators in cold blood.

When Ambrose, one of the high ranking bishops, found out about the massacre he was outraged and excommunicated the emperor, denying him access to the church for some months. Such a spectacle was unprecedented and for the first time an Emperor was under the control of a Bishop. After that Theodosius was totally under the thrall of Ambrose and ordered a full-scale assault on pagan practices. In 391AD the law banned all sacrifices, public and private, and all pagan temples were officially closed. Then in 392 AD all forms of pagan religious worship were formally prohibited everywhere in the empire.

Theodosius died on January 17, 395 AD leaving the empire to his two sons. The older son Arcadius was left in charge of the east and the younger, Honorius, was left in charge of the west. Unlike previous divisions where power was shared, this division was decisive and permanent. The accession of Arcadius and

Honorius is widely viewed as the final division of the empire into two completely separate parts. Thus 395 AD was the official birth of what later came to be known as the 'Byzantine Empire' or as the Macedonians came to call it, the 'Byzantine Empire' (Byzantinena Imberia).

When Arcadius was made Emperor he was too young to rule alone so Flavius Rufinus his guardian, a praetorian prefect of the east, held the reins of power. Similarly, at his accession Honorius was only twelve years old so Theodosius had appointed Stilicho, as guardian to watch over matters of state for him. While Rufinus was the strong man in the east and Stilicho effectively controlled the west, both men were highly ambitious and unscrupulous.

Rivalries between the two men began to surface when Stilicho made claims that he too was asked by the late Theodosius to guard, at least in part, over Arcadius's affairs. The conflicting claims most certainly implied that the possibility for cooperation between the two rivals was diminishing and the two powers behind the thrones were headed on a collision course.

The inevitable happened when the Visigoths, who were settled along the Danube under the leadership of Alaric, rebelled. The barbarians smashed their way through the Balkans into Macedonia devastating all that was in their path. Stilicho, under the pretext of wanting to help the eastern empire, intervened and marched his troops into Macedonia. He did back off and withdrew when ordered by Rufinus, but not before leaving him a present.

During his withdrawal Stilicho left behind a few legions, commanded by a Gothic general named Gainas, with orders to deliver the troops to the Eastern Empire. As the troops marched into Tsari Grad Rufinus came out to greet them. Instead of extending their hands, the soldiers extended their swords and stabbed Rufinus to death. This was a gift from Stilicho to Rufinus for meddling in Stilicho's affairs. Unfortunately, this incident did irreparable damage to the relations between east and west.

With Rufinus dead and the Visigoths still rampaging Macedonia, Tsari Grad formally requested assistance from Stilicho. But in 397 AD when Stilicho was making his way into Macedonia, Alaric and his Visigoths disappeared. Stilicho's failure to remove the troublesome Goths forced Tsari Grad to negotiate directly with the barbarians. Alaric agreed to stop his aggressions and for his cooperation was made 'Master of Soldiers' in Macedonia and the Balkans.

It was unclear whether Alaric evaded Stilicho or Stilicho intentionally allowed Alaric to escape but Stilicho's failure to capture him cast suspicions that would have future consequences.

The real champion of the east turned out to be a woman named Eudoxia (Arcadius's wife) who mustered enough strength and repelled the Visigoth hostilities away from Tsari Grad. After her success, the strong-minded Eudoxia appointed herself to the rank of Augusta and ruled until she died of a miscarriage in 404 AD. Before dying she made sure her one-year old son Theodosius II was elevated to the rank of Augustus.

Four years later in 408 AD Arcadius died of natural causes leaving his empire to his son Theodosius II.

Stilicho was accused of plotting with Alaric to depose Honorius and of elevating his own son, Eucherius, to emperor of the west. A staged mutiny by his troops in 408 AD forced Stilicho to surrender and Honorius had him executed.

With Stilicho out of the way, Alaric marched on Rome and on August 24th, 410 AD he and his Visigoths sacked the city for three days until there was nothing left. Alaric died at Consentia in 410 AD.

It is my intention from here on to focus only on events that are relevant to the Byzantine (Eastern) Empire and to Macedonia.

Even though Theodosius II succeeded his father without any violence, he was still an infant and the regency of Tsari Grad fell to a praetorian prefect named Anthemius. Anthemius was a competent leader and not only averted a food crisis in Tsari Grad but also established good relations with the west, repelled the Hun invasions from the north and confirmed peace with the Persians and with the cities along the Danube. Anthemius also made sure Macedonia and the Balkans were given enough aid to help them recover from the Goth devastations.

The sacking of Rome by the barbarians was a wakeup call for Anthemius who took extensive measures to make sure the same did not happen to Tsari Grad. So in 413 AD a major project was undertaken to build what was appropriately named the great 'Wall of Theodosius', which encircled the city beyond the original Wall of Constantine.

In 414 AD Theodosius II claimed his regency from Anthemius and proclaimed his fifteen-year-old sister Aelia Pulcheria, Augusta. Then in 416 AD when Theodosius II was fifteen years old, in his own right, he was declared ruler of Tsari Grad. Pulcheria continued to play a part in Theodosius's government but only as an administrator. Theodosius II was Augustus for forty-nine years and ruled the Byzantine Empire for forty-two years. This was the longest reign in the history of the empire. Theodosius II died in 450 AD from a spinal injury after falling off his horse while riding near the river Lycus.

The most memorable accomplishment in Theodosius's career was the 'Theodosian Code' which was published in 438 AD. The Code, made up of sixteen books which took eight years to put together, was a compilation of imperial edicts stretching back to over a century. After the Code's publication, a university was founded in Tsari Grad to teach philosophy, law and theology from a Christian perspective.

In 447 and 448 AD Tsari Grad experienced a number of earthquakes which destroyed most of the city, including large parts of the city walls and coastal defenses. Through the great efforts of its citizens repairs to the walls were made in haste and soon afterwards new walls with ninety-two towers were added between the repaired wall and the moat. The result was the famous 'triple defense' which repelled invaders and kept the city safe for another millennium.

After Theodosius II's death, the imperial succession was again thrown open to question for the first time in over sixty years. Theodosius left no heir except for his daughter Licinia Eudoxia who had married his cousin Valentinian III. There were, however, rumours that at his deathbed Theodosius willed Marcian,

one of his aids, to be his heir. Some believe this story was a product of after the fact propaganda. Whatever the case, Aspar, a high ranking general, engineered Marcian's appointment with the help of Theodosius's sister, Pulcheria Augusta. In any case, on August 25th, 450 AD Pulcheria was the one who gave Marcian the imperial diadem.

An Illyrian by birth, Marcian was born in 392 AD. He served as a tribune in 421 AD and fought against the Persians but due to illness he never took part in any actual battles. After this assignment, he served for fifteen years as a personal assistant to general Aspar.

Marcian's reign almost immediately began with a change in policy toward Attila and the Huns. In his last years, as I mentioned earlier, Theodosius II had given up fighting the Huns. To appease them and stop their attacks he had resorted to paying them huge indemnities. Shortly after his coronation, however, the new emperor refused to pay the Huns. Not surprisingly, Marcian's decision was supported by the city's aristocracy, which had been strongly opposed to paying indemnities. At the same time, Attila was too absorbed in imperial politics to deal with Marcian and before he could refocus his attention on the east, he died. Soon after his death his empire disintegrated. Marcian then quickly formed alliances with those peoples previously under Hun domination, including the Ostrogoths, and thwarted the Hun re-emergence. The remaining Huns were allowed to settle in Pannonia, Thrace and Illyricum and over time assimilated in the local populations.

Marcian, the last emperor of the House of Theodosius, died of gangrene in his feet in January 457 AD at age 65. He was buried in the Church of the Apostles next to his wife Pulcheria. He left no heirs to succeed him.

After Marcian's death, his son-in-law Anthemius was the most likely candidate for the throne, however, he did not have support from general Aspar. Aspar decreed that emperors should be chosen by the army, in the Macedonian tradition, and recommended Leo as the next candidate. Aspar's commanders dared not reject his choice and Leo was crowned emperor by Anatolius, the patriarch of Tsari Grad. Leo, born in 401 AD, was a Thracian by birth.

Even though Leo was emperor, the real power remained in the hands of Aspar, at least for the next six or seven years. Emperor Leo fond of his grandson, Leo, by his daughter Ariadne, had him raised to the rank of Augustus in October of 473 AD. Shortly afterwards Emperor Leo fell ill and died. He was succeeded by his six year old Grandson Leo II in January 474 AD. Leo II's father Zeno was regent at the time but about a month after Leo's death, Zeno raised himself to the rank of co-emperor. Then within a span of less than a year, young Leo II died. There were rumours that Zeno murdered his own son to take away his throne.

Zeno was a Rosoumbladian from the province of Isauria in southeastern Asia Minor. Not long after his son's death, Zeno's misdeeds caught up with him. When he was investigated as a suspect in the murder of his son, other misdeeds surfaced. He was implicated in the executions of general Aspar and Aspar's son.

To avoid being prosecuted, Zeno fled Tsari Grad and went back to Isauria. In Zeno's absence, the senate chose a new emperor by the name of Basiliscus.

Basiliscus was Emperor Leo's brother-in-law. Basiliscus, as it turned out, was even less popular than Zeno especially since he elevated his wife Aelia Zenonis to Augusta, his older son Marcus to Caesar and co-emperor, and his younger sons Leo and Zeno to Caesars. Another reason for his deep unpopularity was his open favouritism towards the Christian Monophysite creed. To the people of Tsari Grad this was heresy.

Basiliscus also fell out of favour with the powerful 'Master of Soldiers', Theodoric Strabo. Against Strabo's advice, Basiliscus promoted a notorious playboy named Armatus to the rank of Master of Soldier. Apparently Armatus was the empress's lover. As a result, one of his more powerful Isaurian generals named Illus, who had originally been party to the plot against Zeno, tired of Basiliscus's blunders left Tsari Grad to rejoin Zeno. Without the army's support, Basiliscus was virtually finished. At about the same time, Zeno felt the moment was right to leave exile and on August 476 AD marched on Tsari Grad unopposed. His first order of business was to exile Basiliscus, his wife and sons to Cucusus in Cappadocia, where they starved to death.

Zeno's reign lasted until 491 AD. During his rule, among other things, Tsari Grad experienced a four year Ostrogoth siege. The Balkans, including Macedonia, were ravaged repeatedly and depopulated by onslaughts of war upon war. Zeno left no obvious heir but Ariadne, Zeno's wife, recommended the position be given to Anastasius. Anastasius was an experienced official of the highest character and a credible man universally respected in the empire. He did his best to calm the theological animosities between the orthodox and the monophysite Christians. He built a great defensive wall fifty miles long along the Danube frontier to hold barbarian incursions in check. He also disbanded and sent home the troublesome Isaurian troops, who had made themselves very unpopular in his capital.

Anastasius died in 518 AD, well respected and with a full treasury. Anastasius did not leave an heir to the throne so once again it was up to the military to make the next choice. Being in the right place at the right time and having a lot of friends was all that Justin needed to get into politics. In spite of the fact that he was illiterate and probably more than 80 years old, Justin was elected emperor in 518 AD. Justin's reign is significant for the founding of a dynasty that included his eminent nephew Justinian I.

Justin was born in 435 AD, the son of an Illyrian farmer. Justin joined the army to escape poverty. Because of his military abilities he rose through the ranks to become a general and commander of the palace guard under the emperor Anastasius I. During Justin's later years, the empire came under attack from the Ostrogoths and the Persians. Unable to cope with the pressures of politics, Justin's health began to decline and on April 1st, 527 AD he formally named Justinian his co-emperor and successor. Justin died on August 1st, 527 AD and was succeeded by Justinian.

Chapter 15 - Justinian I the Greatest Ruler of Byzantium

“Once the government stopped forcing the use of the Latin language and Roman institutions upon its people, the Eastern empire rapidly became more Eastern in its customs and outlook”.

(<http://www.ukans.edu/kansas/medieval/108/lectures/justinian.html>)

Before they were known as the Byzantines or were called the Eastern Orthodox and even before they were barely a separate empire, they were known to the Macedonians as the Byzantines; an ancient people unified by a common (Eastern Christian) faith which has survived to this day and carries a strong meaning for the faithful.

By 500 AD Christianity had become the standard religion in Macedonia and the Macedonian language and culture re-emerged with it. As mentioned earlier, the Latin language began its decline about four hundred years earlier and the Koine language was the language of administration and commerce, far from the reach of the common Macedonian.

Christianity’s humble beginnings may have begun with the Koine language but in order for Jesus’ message to be understood by the masses it had to be spoken in the language they used. It is well known today that the language of Christianity in Macedonia was the Macedonian Church Slavonic, the language of enlightenment made world famous by Kiril and Metodi.

Before we continue with Justinian’s story I would like to take a short diversion and explore the Slav connection to the Macedonians. It is my intention here to show that the Macedonian language of the masses was in existence before Christ and as far back as pre-history.

It has been well documented that the ancient Macedonians, including Alexander’s army and Alexander himself, spoke a language known only to Macedonians. Today thanks to linguist Anthony Ambrozic who, through his translations of the Dura-Europos inscriptions, has identified that language to be the root of the same language spoken by modern Macedonians today.

It can easily be deduced that the language in the Dura-Europos inscriptions is of Macedonian origin. According to modern dating methods it has been dated to the first century BC, about 700 years before the supposed “Slav language”, according to mainstream history, had reached the Balkans. This new evidence, however, contradicts the old claims that modern Macedonians are the descendants of Slavs who invaded Macedonia in the sixth century AD.

Are modern Macedonians descendants of the Slavs who overran Macedonia during the 6th century AD, or are they descendants of the ancient Macedonians who lived in the Balkans in the first millennium BC? This is a controversial question that demands attention and it is imperative that we give it much consideration.

“Our present day knowledge of the origin of the Slavs is, to a large extent, a legacy of the 19th century. A scholarly endeavor inextricably linked with forging national identities....” (Page 6, Florin Curta, *The Making of the Slavs, History and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region c. 500 – 700*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)

“Instead of a great flood of Slavs coming out of the Pripet marshes, I envisage a form of group identity which could arguably be called ethnicity and emerged in response to Justinian’s implementation of a building project on the Danube frontier and in the Balkans. The Slavs, in other words, did not come from the north, but became Slavs only in contact with the Roman frontier.” (Page 3, Florin Curta, *The Making of the Slavs, History and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region c. 500 – 700*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)

The Slavs, as opposed to other hordes that invaded the Balkans in the first millennium AD, became very important during the 19th century, particularly in 1833 when Slavic languages were recognized as Indo-European. Like the English language of today, the Slav language of the 19th century linguistically linked many nations together. Some of the 19th century Slav academics, however, intentionally or unintentionally interpreted this linguistic commonality as an ethnic commonality, ethnically linking all Slavs together. In other words, if one spoke Slav then one must have belonged to the “Slav tribe”, which in modern terms is the same as believing that if one spoke English then one must belong to the “English tribe”.

The idea of searching for the origin of the Slavs was born out of the theory that “all nations must have ancestors in the ancient world”. Unfortunately, the study of the Slavs began as an almost exclusively linguistic and philological enterprise ignoring historiography and archeology as a means of identifying ethnicity. Based on linguistic evidence alone, it is estimated that the ancient homeland of the Slavs most probably lay between the rivers Visla, Dneiper, Desna and the western Dniva and the Carpathians or, perhaps, in Polesje, in the triangle formed by Brest – Litovsk and Mohilev – Kiev. If any archeology was used to derive these estimates, more often than not, it was used to illustrate conclusions already drawn from the analysis of linguistic material. The concept of a “Slav ethnicity” was a powerful tool for the nation builders and nationalists of the 19th century who used it to unite their people and the Slav language was the perfect instrument for exploring Slav history. However, Slav history began with the first mention of the Slavs, which happened to take place in Justinian’s time in the sixth century AD.

The invention of the “Slav tribe” unfortunately had negative consequences for the Macedonian people, which are still felt to this day. Assuming that Macedonians are Slavs only because their language belongs to the Slavic family of languages has unwittingly turned the Macedonian people into victims of modern politics. After being classified as Slavs the 19th century Macedonians were regarded as invaders in their own ancestral lands. Since there was no historic mention of Slavs living in Macedonia before the 6th century AD it was naturally assumed that the Slavs must have come to Macedonia from somewhere else.

Fortunately, for the last fifty years or so, historians have turned to archeology for answers and are beginning to discover new evidence that, more often than not, contradicts the old beliefs. Archeological evidence combined with DNA and genetic studies is slowly revealing that the modern Macedonians are not

newcomers but in fact are the descendants of the older races of people living in the Balkans.

As mentioned earlier, the Slavs came into being for the first time as a consequence of coming into contact with Justinian's administration during the 6th century AD. Unfortunately Justinian's administrators left very few clues as to the origins and language of these people. Again most attempts to identify the origin of the Slavs were made by linguistic and philological experts very much biased by 19th century nationalistic ambitions.

Many historians today believe that the widespread use of the Slav language began with the Veneti. During the first millennium BC, the Veneti occupied almost all of Europe including the Balkans. The Veneti are mentioned by Herodotus, Polibius, Strabo, Ptolemy, Livy, Pomponius Mela, Tacitus and Jordanes. Unfortunately, to most ancient historians the Veneti were just another barbarian tribe and very little was known about them. The Veneti were also mentioned in Caesar's book where he gives an account of the conquest of Gaul. Among other things, Caesar compliments the Veneti for offering him great resistance. "The Veneti are by far the strongest tribe on the coast" wrote Caesar. "They possess the most powerful fleet with which they sail as far as Britain". (Page 197, Jozko Šavli, Matej Bor, Ivan Tomazic, VENETI: First Builders of European Community, Boswell, B.C., 1966)

The earliest writer to mention the Veneti was Homer, some 800 years before Caesar. After Troy had fallen, the Enetoi (Veneti), who according to Livy fought on the side of Troy, drove out the Etruscans and the Eugeneis in Liburnia after a long sea voyage along the Illyrian coast and then settled beyond the Timara River. Livy also mentions that Paphlagonia, on the south coast of the Black Sea, was the homeland of the Veneti. According to Tacitus and Ptolemy however, the great nation of the Veneti lived in the area between the Vistula, the Danube and the central Dnieper.

There is a close parallel between Justinian's Slavs and the Veneti. It was most likely that Justinian encountered the Veneti in the Danube region and, not being familiar with them, classified them as Slavs, which was simply an arbitrary administrative label for the barbarian tribes he located beyond the Danube.

The real strength of the Venetic linguistic connection to the Slavs comes to us from Anthony Ambrozic's translations of Venetic inscriptions found throughout Europe. A great many of these inscriptions date back to the first millennium BC. More specifically, Ambrozic believes the Veneti were the proto-Slavs and their presence was felt in Dura-Europos through the Macedonians. (Page 86, Anthony Ambrozic, *Adieu to Brittany: a transcription and translation of Venetic passages and toponyms*. Toronto: Cythera Press 1999)

According to Ambrozic, the Veneti of the second millennium BC existed not only on the great bend of the Danube, but also on the Morava, Timok and Vardar. In fact the etymology of several toponyms in the area points directly to them. They join a host of others named after them. Invariably found along the waterway turnpikes of the ancient world, these range from as far afield as Vannes on the Atlantic to Banassac on the Lot, and Venice on the Adriatic. We

find them on the lower Tisza in Banat, down the Morava to the river banks of northern Thrace, where Herodotus recorded them in the 5th century BC. (Page 87, Anthony Ambrozic, *Gordian Knot Unbound*. Toronto: Cythera Press, 2002)

It is not my intention here to debate the origin of the Slavs outside of Macedonia, but rather to illustrate that they existed in the Balkans prior to the sixth century AD. There is enough evidence provided by Savli, Bor, Tomazic, Ambrozic and Curta to connect the sixth century Slavs to the prehistoric Veneti. The evidence presented by these authors, in my opinion, bridges the Slavs with the Veneti and provides linguistic continuity for the modern Macedonians from at least the early years of the first millennium BC.

Ambrozic, through his translations of ancient inscriptions, has also discovered that the ancient Pelasgi, who occupied the southern Balkans before the first millennium BC, and the Phrygians of Macedonia and Asia Minor, who occupied the Anatolian plateau 3, 200 years ago, also have linguistic ties to the Veneti. (Pages 85 to 87 and page 118, Anthony Ambrozic, *Gordian Knot Unbound*. Toronto: Cythera Press, 2002) This naturally implies that, at least linguistically, the Veneti left their mark on many races in the Balkan region.

Before finishing the analysis of the relationship between Macedonians and Slavs I want to dispel the modern myth that the 6th century Slavs invaded Macedonia and killed off all the Macedonians.

History offers no evidence of savage battles between Slavs and the 6th century descendants of ancient Macedonians nor does it show records of any massacres taking place. In fact history portrays the Slavs as peaceful people who, more often than not, were able to co-exist with other races in Macedonia. Outside of the unknown author of book II of the *Miracles of St. Demetrius*, who portrayed the Slavs as savage, brutish and heathen barbarians, there is little evidence of Slavs causing atrocities in Macedonia. "On the other hand, however, one gets the impression that the Slavs were a familiar presence. They are repeatedly called 'our Slavic neighbours'" by the people of Solun. (Page 61, Florin Curta, *The Making of the Slavs, History and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region c. 500 – 700*, Cambridge, New York, 2001) Slavs it seems, contrary to popular belief, were on good terms with the inhabitants of Solun, supplying them with grain and other goods.

Looking at the problem from a strategic point of view, it would have taken a numerically superior Slav army to cross the Danube, descend upon the Balkans, defeat the mighty Byzantine (Byzantine) army and then destroy the entire population. History has no record of a great Slav army ever crossing the Danube or of great Slav battles with the Byzantines. In fact records show that most Slavs were displaced refugees, victims of other peoples' wars, traveling peacefully in small numbers together with their families looking for land to farm.

There is no denying that the Roman occupation, barbarian invasions, population movements by the Byzantines and the Ottoman occupation have left their genetic markers on the modern Macedonians as they have on all other Balkan people. However, there is also strong evidence that suggests that a large

part of the modern Macedonian population is genetically linked to the ancient Macedonians.

On the issue of Macedonian ethnicity, like other nations in the Balkans, modern Macedonians over the years have developed a unique Macedonian national consciousness that no outsider has the right to challenge, especially on dubious historical issues.

And now back to Justinian's story. It has been said that Justinian spoke Koine with a heavy barbarian accent. Although they were not specific about which barbarian accent, being born in Taor (near Uskub), present day Skopje, Republic of Macedonia, one can assume that it was Slav, or perhaps Macedonian. There are no valid reasons to discount Justinian's Macedonian background. After all he was the son of a Slavonic peasant from Skopje.

Justinian, the son of Sabatius and Vigilantia, was born in May 483 AD and was originally named Petrus (Petre). Being the son of Emperor Justin's sister, Petre, sometimes called Uprauda (perhaps a pet name), was more privileged than most Macedonian peasants and was given the opportunity of a good education in Tsari Grad (Constantinople). Petre took the name Justinian after his uncle, Emperor Justin I who adopted him.

After his adoption, Justinian was proclaimed consul in 521 AD and sometime later he earned the title general-in-chief. But the real break in his career came in April 527 AD when he was made Augustus and co-emperor to Justin. After Justin's death in August 527 AD Justinian became the sole and undisputed ruler of the Byzantine (Byzantine) empire.

Before he became emperor, Justinian had the good fortune to marry a woman who, throughout her life, was an inspiration to his career and an asset to the empire. Justinian married Theodora in 523 AD.

Theodora was one of three daughters whose father was employed by the Green faction as a bear keeper at the Tsari Grad Hippodrome. Her mother was a professional dancer and actress. Theodora's father died when she was young and her mother remarried with hopes that the Greens would appoint her new husband bear keeper. The Greens unfortunately rejected him. Destitute, the family approached the Blue faction who had recently lost their own bear keeper and after some negotiating got the job. As soon as Theodora was old enough to work she became a mime actress and remained loyal to the Blue faction, which would play an important role in the future of her empire.

It has been said mostly by Procopius, that Justin's wife Euphemia objected to Justinian marrying Theodora on the grounds that she was not in pristine condition, for actresses and prostitutes were virtually synonymous. Soon after Euphemia's death Justin passed a constitution declaring that a contrite actress who is willing to abandon her profession should recover her pristine condition and marry whomsoever she wants, even a senator. After that the way for Justinian to marry Theodora was clear but unfortunately there was one more obstacle. Theodora was a converted Monophysite of the Coptic Church who believed that Christ had one nature, a composite nature of both the human and the divine. Justinian not only respected his wife's beliefs but he also protected the

Monophysites who were considered heretics by the Church in Tsari Grad. This grand gesture on Justinian's part made the Monophysites feel that they had a champion in Tsari Grad and their allegiance to the emperor and the empire remained secure.

The thirty-eight years of Justinian's reign were the most brilliant in the life of the empire and filled with great events, both in peace and war. Justinian was most famous for his legal reforms, administration of the empire and ecclesiastical and foreign policies.

Justinian is famous and most familiar to the modern world for his work as a legislator and codifier of the law. He was one of the first emperors to take serious action in modernizing the archaic and confusing law. Justinian believed that a great empire must have the strength of organized unity which rested on arms and on law. His process of modernization began by having the scattered decrees of his predecessors collected, ordered and logically organized into a complete codex so that every citizen could quickly learn the law on any subject. Besides the codification, Justinian himself also wrote some new laws.

The entire legislation was compiled by first appointing a commission of ten lawyers to reduce the bulky Theodosian Code, published in 438 AD, to an orderly and concise summary, with a means of inserting new laws into it. The "Codex" was completed in 529 AD. Next, answers given by authorities over the years, that formed acknowledged precedents, were reviewed, optimized and arranged in fifty books, thus reducing the law library of one hundred and six volumes to about one-fifth of its original size. This became known as the "Digest" or "Pandects" and was published in 530 AD. Finally a teaching manual known as the "Institutes" for teaching students law was compiled from the commentaries of the 2nd century Gaius and was published in 530 AD. In 534 AD the entire work was revised and a fourth part, the "Authentic" or "Novels", was added, which contained later decisions made by Justinian's courts. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the works of law produced at this time are still the basis of civil law in every civilized country in the modern world.

Justinian was also famous for his contributions to what we now call Byzantine art and architecture. The Byzantine style of architecture, at least in its perfect form, owes its origin to Justinian and the architects he employed. His activity in building was enormous and covered his empire from Ravenna to Damascus with superb monuments. All later buildings in both East and West were derived from his models. The two most famous of his buildings are the church of Our Lady (now the El-Aqsa mosque) in Jerusalem and, by far the most splendid of all, is the great church of the Holy Wisdom (Sveta Sophia) in Tsari Grad. This church built by Anthemius of Tralles and Isidore of Miletus was consecrated on December 27, 537 AD, and remains to this day one of the architectural marvels in our world.

Justinian's interests were not limited to church architecture alone. His administration was also involved in grand projects such as building quays, harbours, roads, aqueducts, castles and fortifying and repairing damaged city walls.

On matters of religion, Justinian's ecclesiastical policy was complex and varying. For many years even before Justin's time, the Eastern world had been plagued by the struggles of the Monophysites. Monophysites recognized only one nature in Christ, against the view which then and ever since has maintained itself as orthodox, that the divine and human natures coexisted together in Christ. The latter doctrine was adopted at the council of Chalcedon and was held by the whole Western Church, but Egypt, a great part of Syria and Asia Minor, and a considerable minority in Tsari Grad clung to Monophysitism.

At the start of Justinian's reign the Orthodox and the Monophysites resisted the idea of a split in Christendom. By the end of his reign there was a strong Monophysite organization in place and although the schism was not permanent it did exist.

One of Justinian's first public acts was to put an end to this schism. He began his campaign by convincing Justin to persuade the then patriarch to renounce this formula and declare his full adhesion to the creed of Chalcedon. Then when Justinian himself became emperor he attempted to persuade the Monophysites to join the mainstream church by summoning some of their leaders to a conference. Unfortunately, his attempts failed so he began to persecute them but not to the extent that he persecuted the heretic Monastists and Arians. After a long time, long disputes and endless negotiations the Church schism became worse and eventually permanent.

Justinian's problems were not limited to ecclesiastic schisms alone. In January 532 AD he was faced with street violence inside Tsari Grad which in time became known as the Nika revolt. Like every other large city worthy of any notice, Tsari Grad had its chariot-racing factions, which took their names from their red, white, blue and green colours. These were professional organizations responsible for fielding chariot-racing teams in the hippodromes. But by Justinian's time they were also in charge of shows and other activities. The Blues and the Greens were the dominant groups, but the Reds and Whites also enjoyed support from the crowds and even from important people. The emperor Anastasius, for example, was a fan of the Reds. The fans, as we call them today, of each faction were assigned their own blocks of seats in the Hippodrome.

Justinian and Theodora were Blue supporters and when street violence began to escalate under Justin's rule they encouraged it. After Justinian became emperor he began to crack down on the instigators.

The problem started on Saturday, January 10, 532 AD when the city prefect who had arrested some hooligans and found seven of them guilty of murder, had them hung outside the city at Sycae, across the Golden Horn. Before the prisoners were hung the scaffolding broke and two of them, a Blue and Green, escaped. Some monks from a nearby monastery gave them sanctuary at the church of St Lawrence. The following Tuesday while the two men were still hiding in the church, the Blue and Green factions organized a demonstration and pleaded with Justinian to show the prisoners mercy. Justinian unfortunately ignored their pleas and continued his pursuit of them. Unrelenting, the Blue and Greens continued their appeals until the twenty-second race when their

frustration boiled over and united they raised the banner “Nika” and took to the streets. When the riots started the court officials took refuge in the palace and watched the street mobs ransack the city.

Justinian tried to resume the games the next day but only provoked more riots, anger and arson. The rioting and destruction continued throughout the week. Even the arrival of imperial troops from Thrace failed to restore order. On Sunday before sunrise, Justinian appealed to the crowds in the Hippodrome by repenting publicly and promising amnesty. The crowds unfortunately turned even more hostile and forced Justinian to flee for his life.

The worst however was yet to come. The previous night Justinian had dismissed two of emperor Anastasius’s nephews, Hypatius and Pompey, from the palace and told them to go home. Instead of going home the pair went to the Hippodrome where they met up with some mobs. In their frenzy the mobs denounced Justinian as emperor and proclaimed Hypatius in his place. Fearing that the mobs would turn on his palace, Justinian was ready to flee Tsari Grad and perhaps would have done so if it were not for Theodora, who did not frighten so easily. Theodora along with Belisarius and Narses, his trusted commanders, convinced Justinian to stay and fight back. Almost immediately Belisarius and Mundo were dispatched with their troops and made their separate ways into the Hippodrome. Hypatius and his unruly supporters were surrounded and violently put down ending the 'Nika' riot with 35,000 rioters dead.

The 'Nika' revolt obviously left Justinian firmly in charge of Tsari Grad but it also gave him the opportunity to clean house not only of unruly mobs but of political opposition as well. All those opposing him, including the senators that surfaced during the revolt, were eliminated or went into hiding. The revolt left Tsari Grad damaged in more ways than one. The Nika revolt gave Justinian absolute power over Tsari Grad and at the same time cleared the way for implementing his own building program. Work on his new church, Sveta Sophia, to replace the one that was destroyed by the mobs, commenced only forty-five days after the riots were over.

On matters of foreign policy, Justinian’s empire was involved in three great wars, two of them initiated by Justinian and the third brought on by Persia. The Sassanid kings of Persia ruled a region extending from Syria to India and from the Strait of Oman to the Caucasus. The military character of the Sassanid people made them formidable enemies to the Byzantines (Byzantines), whose soldiers at the time were mainly of barbarian stock. When Justinian came to power his military strength on the Euphrates was slowly weakening against the constant Sassanid push. After some campaigning, however, the Byzantine military skills began to improve and Belisarius obtained considerable success and a peace treaty with the Sassanid’s was concluded in 533 AD. Unfortunately the treaty only lasted until 539 AD when the Sassanids declared war again alleging that Justinian had been secretly intriguing against them with the Huns. Justinian at that time was involved in a campaign in Italy and was unable to adequately defend his eastern frontier. So the Sassanids advanced on Syria with little resistance and by 540 AD had captured Antioch and enslaved its inhabitants.

While the war on the eastern frontier lingered on for four years, an even fiercer struggle erupted in the mountainous region in the southeastern corner of the Black Sea, lasting for twenty-two years without a clear victor. In 562 AD a truce was reached and the contested region was left to the Byzantines, under the agreement that Justinian pay the Persian king an annual tribute of thirty thousand gold pieces. This war was not only an embarrassment for Justinian but it greatly weakened his empire and slowed down his campaigning momentum in the west.

In the west the campaigns began in 533 AD with an attack on the Vandals who were then in control of Africa. Belisarius was dispatched from Tsari Grad with a large fleet and army. He landed without opposition and destroyed the barbarian power base in just two engagements. North Africa was again freed from beyond the Strait of Gibraltar to the Syrtes and came under the control of the Byzantines. In western Europe the Moors controlled most of Spain but the Byzantines managed to recover parts of the southern coast. Considering the strength of the enemy, Justinian's troops were gaining experience and delivering victories with ease.

The triumphs in Africa encouraged Justinian to declare war on the leaderless Ostrogoths of Italy. After the deaths of Theodoric and later his grandson Atbalaric, the Goth leadership deteriorated and they were left almost leaderless. The Goth kingdom was vast and included part of southeastern Gaul, Raetia, Dalmatia, part of Pannonia, Italy, Sicily, Sardinia and Corsica.

Justinian declared war on the Goths in 535 AD under the pretext of taking revenge for the murder of Queen Amalasantha, daughter of Theodoric, who was at the time under the protection of the Byzantines. Justinian also alleged that the Ostrogothic kingdom had always owed its allegiance to the emperor at Tsari Grad.

Belisarius, as commander of the Italian expedition, quickly invaded Sicily, overran southern Italy and occupied Rome in 536 AD. But his quick victories did not go unchallenged. Within a year the Goths chose a new king Vitiges, amassed a considerable fighting force and retaliated. The siege of Rome lasted over a year but Belisarius held his ground. However, it was not Belisarius's determination alone which held back and eventually repelled the Goths. During this period sicknesses were rampant, preying on the Gothic troops. With a diminished army Vitiges had no choice but to abandon the siege. When the siege was lifted Belisarius took the offensive and pushed the Goth army northwards into Ravenna where it eventually surrendered. Vitiges was captured and became Justinian's prisoner in Tsari Grad. Justinian treated him with much compassion, as he had previously treated the captive Vandal king.

The void created by the Goth fall was filled by the Byzantines through the establishment of an imperial administration in Italy. Unfortunately the defeat of Vitiges did not mean the end of the Goths. Much of the Goth nation had not submitted to Byzantine rule and the Goth crown was bestowed on another king. King Totila, or Baduila as he was known, was a warrior of distinguished abilities and managed to drive the Byzantine administration out of Italy.

Belisarius was again dispatched but his force turned out to be too small to do the job. During the next several years the Goths took back their cities one by one, with the exception of Ravenna, Otranto and Ancona.

Justinian at the time had problems at home. With the passing of his wife Theodora, who died of cancer in 548 AD, and the endless ecclesiastical controversies, he neither had the resources nor the funds to commit to a large campaign. In time, however, he did succumb to pressure from a number of Roman exiles who urged him to make a move on Italy. In 552 AD Justinian put together a powerful army and under the leadership of Narses, an old but experienced Armenian general, dispatched it to counter the Goths.

Narses marched his forces along the coast of the Gulf of Venice and faced Totila's army at Taginae, not far from Cesena. It was a catastrophic battle for the Goths. Totila lost his life in battle and his army was devastated. The Goths, however, refused to surrender and made another valiant attempt under the leadership of Teias, on the Lactarian Hill in Campania. Narses delivered another devastating blow and after that the Goths disappeared from history.

The Byzantines recovered Italy but by the time they did it was a terribly impoverished and depopulated region whose possession was of little value to the empire. As it turned out, both wars against the Vandals and the Goths were a great drain on the empire's resources, which could have been better spent defending the northern frontier against invading tribes.

Besides these three great wars, Justinian's empire was troubled by a series of invasions. On the northern frontier various Slavonic and Hunnish tribes, who were established along the lower Danube and the north coast of the Black Sea, made frequent marauding expeditions into Thrace and Macedonia. Sometimes they penetrated as far as the walls of Tsari Grad and as far south as the Isthmus of Corinth.

Even though he did his best to stabilize his empire, Justinian continued to face new challenges. In 556 AD he was faced with another revolt, the next year a great earthquake shook his capital city and the year after that the dome of the new Sveta Sophia church collapsed. If that was not enough, at about the same time the plague returned. Then in early 559 AD a horde of Huns, or proto-Bulgars, crossed the frozen Danube and advanced into the Balkans.

The Huns penetrated the Balkans in three columns. One column pushed south and went as far as Thermopylae. Another column advanced into the Gallipoli Peninsula but was stopped by the Long Wall, which was defended by a young officer from Justinian's native town. The last and most dangerous column made its way to Tsari Grad.

Faced with an imminent invasion and no suitable forces for defense, Justinian recalled Belisarius from retirement. Belisarius put together a small force of 300 of his best veterans and set a trap for the Huns. As soon as he ambushed the Huns, Justinian took charge of the battle and forced them into a treaty. The news that Justinian was reinforcing his Danube fleet made the Huns anxious and they agreed to a treaty which gave them safe passage back across

the river. But as soon as they were north of the Danube they were attacked by their rivals the Utigurs, who were incited by Justinian to steal their booty.

The Huns (Kutrigurs) may have been beaten but were not destroyed and came back in 562 AD to raid Thrace. The Huns and their rivals the Utigurs soon fell prey to a new horde of barbarians, the Avars, who swept out of the Asian steppes in the early 560s.

Justinian died in November 565 AD and was succeeded by his nephew Justin II. Undoubtedly, Justinian was one of the greatest if not the greatest emperor after Constantine to have ruled the Byzantine Empire.

In his quest to build a great empire, Justinian unfortunately also bankrupted his empire's economy. Some believe that was a contributing factor to the weakening of his frontier defenses in subsequent years, allowing barbarian invasions. "... the disintegration of the military system in the Balkans, which Justinian implemented in the mid-500s, was the result not so much of the destruction inflicted by barbarian invasions, as of serious economic and financial problems caused both by the emperor's policies elsewhere and by the impossibility of providing sufficient economic support to his gigantic building program of defense. This conclusion is substantiated by the analysis of sixth-century Byzantine coin hoards, which suggest that inflation, not barbarian raids, was responsible for high rates of non-retrieval." (Page 338, Florin Curta, *The Making of the Slavs, History and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region c. 500 – 700*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)

I am not interested at this point in debating the "Slav problem" other than to show that if indeed it was a problem, it must have been a universal problem for the entire Balkan region down to the Mediterranean Sea. If the Slavs indeed invaded the Balkans en masse and wiped out the indigenous populations, then they must have wiped out everyone as far south as they were able to reach. There were no walls, fortifications or armies to stop them. What is most interesting, however, is that even though mainstream history agrees with the claim that the Slavs invaded and overran the entire Balkan region including the peninsula south of Olympus, it contradicts itself on the modern populations' national origins. On one hand it allows claims of continuity connecting the modern nations south of Olympus to the ancient nations but at the same time denies continuity for the modern nations for the populations north of Olympus. Is this a historical truth or a political invention concocted to serve the interests of one while denying the interests of another? How can the modern Macedonians be Slavs while their neighbours to the immediate south are not? Didn't the Slavs supposedly overrun the entire region?

The modern Balkan historian today is faced with two contradictory problems. On one hand he or she is faced with the unsubstantiated claim that the Slavs invaded the Balkans en masse and killed off its "civilized and non aggressive" indigenous inhabitants and on the other hand is bombarded with contradictory claims of modern racial pre-Slav continuity.

As mentioned earlier, the "Slav phenomenon" is largely a political phenomenon with little historical significance. The reasons attributed to the

Slavs as opposed to the Goths, Huns, Bulgars, Avars, etc., as being the culprits for the invasions and devastation of the Balkans is to explain the wide use of the Slav language. In other words, the “Slav phenomenon” is a modern 19th century creation designed to explain the prevalent use of the modern Slav languages. It is most unfortunate, however, that modern scholars choose to ignore archeological evidence that links the 6th century Slavs to the ancient prehistoric Veneti. “Archeological research has already provided an enormous amount of evidence in support of the idea that the Venethi were Slavs.” (Page 13, Florin Curta, *The Making of the Slavs, History and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region c. 500 – 700*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) Accepting the hypothesis that the Veneti and the Slavs are connected not only provides linguistic continuity for the modern Macedonians to the ancient Macedonians but also identifies the so-called “elusive” Macedonian language of ancient times. With this in mind, we cannot ignore claims that the Slav language was most probably spoken by Alexander’s Macedonian soldiers and settlers and was spread throughout the vastness of the uncivilized regions of eastern Europe and northern Asia. Also, it would not be far fetched to hypothesize that Alexander’s Macedonians colonized parts of European Russia, which would attest to the many common toponyms that Macedonia and European Russia share.

And now back to Justinian’s story. Justinian had no children of his own when he died but there seemed to have been no shortage of heirs. Theodora died seventeen years before Justinian leaving him childless. Justinian had half a dozen or so nephews but it was Justin, the son of his sister Vigilantia, who rose to the occasion to take Justinian’s place. Justin or Justin II as he came to be known was married to Sophia, one of Theodora’s nieces. Justin first surfaced on the political scene in 552 AD when he was appointed to take charge of day to day business affairs in the palace. His dealings with important people including Tiberius, who would eventually succeed him, gave him the exposure he needed to gain the palace’s support. His only rival was Justin, son of Germanus, who at the time of Justinian’s death was the Master of the Soldiers in Illyria, guarding the Danube frontier.

When Justinian suddenly died the night of November 14, 565 AD, Justin was in the right place at the right time to receive his acclamation. A group of senators hurriedly went to Justin's palace to meet with Justin and Vigilantia to report Justinian's death. Justin and Sophia were then escorted to the Great Palace where Justin was crowned by the patriarch. The next morning Justin appeared in the imperial box at the Hippodrome wearing the crown and received the acclamations of the people. The day after his inauguration Justin crowned his wife Sophia as Augusta.

Justin II's first order of business was to pay off Justinian's debts. Justinian had accumulated them in his last years by raising money through forced loans. Also, Imperial unity depended upon theological peace. Justinian died and left the church in a crisis. The division between the Chalcedonian and Monophysite factions was wider than ever. Now that the Monophysites had priests and bishops of their own it was less likely that the schism would ever be healed. The empress

Sophia, like her aunt before her, had openly been a Monophysite. Justin II had possibly leaned in the same direction but realizing that Monophysite sympathies would be a political liability convinced his wife and they both became orthodox.

In the meantime Justin II wasted no time in assassinating his rival Justin, son of Germanus. With no challengers and confident in his own abilities, Justin quickly settled into the role as emperor and began to receive envoys. Within a week the Avars arrived looking for their subsidies which Justinian had promised, but Justin refused to pay. Soon afterwards Justin became involved in Avar, Gepid and Lombard affairs and as a result lost Italy. The Lombards invaded Italy in 568 AD and occupied it in a few short years. In 572 AD Justin's overtures to the Turks led to a war with Persia and after two disastrous campaigns, the Persians overran Syria. A one-year truce was reached with Persia at the loss of Armenia and at a cost of 45,000 solidi.

The Avars waited until the Byzantines were weakened by the Persians before they crossed the Danube in late 573 AD and attacked Tiberius's army. Justin was not prepared for more losses. Unable to cope he fell ill after receiving the bad news. With Justin unable to command the empire, the empress Sophia wasted no time and promoted Tiberius to co-ruler. Tiberius made peace with the Avars and saved the empire from collapse for now. Unfortunately the peace was not meant to last. Even though the Danube frontier still held, it was a matter of time before the Avars would sweep south again. The inevitable did happen around 582 AD, during Tiberius II's time, when a horde of Avars and Slavs swept south down to Athens.

Justin II never recovered from his illness and in December of 574 AD he appointed Tiberius Caesar with the name Tiberius Constantine.

Justin's wife Sophia was determined to maintain her own position as Augusta as long as Justin was alive. In the meantime she refused to let Tiberius bring his wife, Ino, into the palace. There are some who rumoured that Sophia herself wanted to marry Tiberius and that is why she forced his family to live in another palace. Whether or not the rumours were true, Sophia's tactics eventually succeeded in making Ino move away from Tsari Grad. Tiberius showed no inclination to abandon his wife so, even before Justin II was dead in 578 AD, Sophia was conspiring with Justinian, another son of Germanus, to replace him. Tiberius was much too clever and popular with the people to fall prey to Sophia's intrigues and after Justin's death he became sole ruler of the Byzantine Empire.

Once Tiberius became emperor, Sophia had to accept defeat. At his coronation in the Hippodrome Tiberius was asked to name his empress. At that point he proclaimed Ino, whom he named Anastasia, to be his empress and lawful wife. Her coronation as Augusta was a blow to Sophia, who moved on to another palace across the Bosphorus, which had been built by Justin.

Chapter 16 - The Period of Decline

Justinian I's grand projects and campaigns during his reign may have greatly contributed to the glory of Byzantineism (Christendom) but at the same time they bankrupted the empire's economy.

Justin II, overwhelmed by his failures, died in anguish. Tiberius had some success in achieving peace with the Persians but it did not last for too long. While Tiberius was campaigning in the west, the Avars, in the absence of Byzantine (Byzantine) troops, overran the Balkans and demanded that Tiberius relinquish control of the city of Sirmium (near modern day Mitrovica in Serbia). When Tiberius refused they attacked. Quick to take advantage of the Byzantine weakness, the Persians abandoned the peace treaty already in progress and resumed hostilities. Having been left without many choices, Tiberius dispatched Maurice, one of his commanders, to Persian controlled Armenia. Over the next few years he conducted a series of successful campaigns there. Forced to focus his military efforts on the Persians, Tiberius had no troops to repel the Avars and gave into their demands. In 582 AD Byzantine control of Sirmium was relinquished to the Avars. In order to be allowed to evacuate the city's residents safely, Tiberius agreed to pay the Avars 240,000 solidi. This was the total of unpaid subsidies that they were owed for the last 3 years.

In 582 AD Tiberius became very ill and appointed Maurice and Germanus as his heirs. To give them legitimacy he had each engaged to one of his daughters and elevated to the rank of Caesar. But when it was time Tiberius only crowned Maurice as Augustus. On August 14th, 582 AD Tiberius died and Maurice became sole emperor of the Byzantine Empire.

Maurice, or Matricius as he was then known, began his career as a soldier under the Emperor Tiberius. He was the commander of a new legion formed from the ranks of allied barbarians with whom he fought against the Persians. When he returned triumphant to Tsari Grad, Tiberius gave him his daughter Constantina in marriage.

After his accession Maurice discovered that, through the reckless extravagance of his predecessors, the empire's treasury was empty and the empire was bankrupt. To remedy the situation he cut court expenses, made him very unpopular with his administrators and eventually led to his fall. During the twenty years of his reign, Maurice witnessed his empire gradually decay. For the first ten years or so he was involved in a long drawn out war with the Persians which only ended because of internal problems in the Persian camp. The Avars and Slavs continued their invasion of the northern provinces unchecked and had penetrated the Balkan Peninsula down to the Peloponnese. The Lombards ravaged Italy only because the empire did not have the resources to protect it.

To turn the tide, Maurice asked the Franks for help in 584 AD. The Franks eagerly accepted Maurice's proposal and invaded Italy. With the Avars still being a problem, Maurice had to buy them off with a heavy bribe, which further strained his resources. By the time he was finished the emperor had become very unpopular with his people. He had depleted the empire's resources so badly that in 599 AD he could not even pay ransom for 12,000 of his soldiers taken prisoners by the Avars and allowed them all to be murdered.

The situation finally snapped when his own army turned on him. A revolt was started when, instead of giving his soldiers time off, he decided to send them into battle. The well-paid soldiers were usually sent home to rest during the winter. Unfortunately this particular winter emperor Maurice had different plans. Instead of a vacation he ordered his army to cross the frozen Danube and destroy the barbarian camps beyond. Winter was the safest time to cross the Danube, using its frozen surface as a bridge. What started out as an army revolt turned into a revolution when, in 602 AD, the soldiers kicked out their officers. They chose Phocas, a soldier from their own ranks, as their leader and marched on Tsari Grad. Unable to organize resistance, Maurice fled across the Bosphorus with his family. He was overtaken at Chalcedon and was murdered with his five sons.

Phocas, being chosen by the army in the Macedonian tradition, assumed the role of emperor and began his tyrannical reign which lasted from 602 to 610 AD.

It is important to mention at this point that the cohesion of the empire was held intact not because of the strong leadership exhibited by the Emperors but because of the will of the Christians and their loyalty to their Christian faith. Even at this point in time Christianity was a powerful force that bound people together. The empire was made up of a wide variety of ethnic and cultural groups bound together by their common faith. By this time paganism was viewed as a weakness and was on its way out. The sense that God and his saints would protect the Christians fighting the wicked pagans provided a common cause for soldiers of various ethnicities to fight together, especially against the non-Christian Syrians. It was not Christian might but a rebellion within the ranks of the Syrians that ended the Byzantine-Persian war. Even though they were enemies, the rebellious Syrians asked the Byzantines for help. The Byzantines agreed to provide it in exchange for their lost territories, which had been relinquished to the Persians over the years. After a deal was reached, the rebel leader Khusro, aided by the Byzantine army, returned to Persia and confronted the old order with a victorious and decisive battle. Khusro honoured the agreement and gave back Dara, Mytropolis, Arzanene, Iberia and most of Persian Armenia.

Unfortunately the long absence of the Byzantine army from the Balkans had its consequences for the region. undefended, the Balkans were left open to Avar invasions. The Avars were a well-organized nomadic group of people with Mongolian origins who were probably driven out of Mongolia during the 550's. The Avars, it seems, were remnants of refugees from the rise of Turkish power, which pushed them across Eurasia. When they first appeared in the Ukrainian steppe they were a welcome sight to the Byzantines who saw them as leverage to control the Katrigurs and Utigurs. Unfortunately, the Avars conquered the Katrigurs and Utigurs and went on to conquer all other groups in the Ukrainian steppe. In 567 AD they allied themselves with the Lombards, destroyed the Gepids and occupied the Hungarian plains.

Besides the Avars, history has also recorded Slav movements in the Balkans at about the same time. The Byzantine army did not regard the Slavs as very dangerous opponents, even though they were fierce fighters, because they were

not united and generally operated in small groups based on extended family units. In other words, the Slavs at this time were not soldiers but harmless farmers traveling together with their families looking for land to settle on and cultivate their crops.

According to historic accounts the Slavs were not conquerors or marauders. They were very happy to settle in forested lands and marshes, even in places that usually were not suitable for crop farming. The Slavs whose main preoccupation was farming would not have easily abandoned their ancestral lands unless they were in grave danger. There was no good reason for the Slavs to have abandoned their traditional homes and endanger their lives by crossing the very difficult Danube River unless they were pushed south by force.

In my opinion the Slavs did not cross the Danube at will but were forced to do so by the pressures of the invading barbarian tribes. The arrival of the Goths, Huns, Avars, etc., near the Danube forced the indigenous populations to flee south and seek refuge. A great number of the Slav migrations recorded by history, are actual refugee movements of displaced indigenous people from the Danube River region. My supporting evidence for this, in part, is based on Professor Curta's findings which are based on archeological data derived from settlement excavations. "First, there is already enough evidence to move away from the migrationist model which has dominated the discipline of Slavic archaeology ever since its inception. A retreat from migrationism is necessary simply because the available data do not fit any of the current models for the study of (pre)historic migration." "It has become increasingly evident that migrations across ecological or cultural boundaries would require considerable planning on the part of the migrants, and should leave substantial and clear archaeological evidence." "Furthermore, the archaeological evidence... does not match any long-distance migratory pattern." (Page 307, Florin Curta, *The Making of the Slavs, History and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region c. 500–700*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)

So, if the Slavs were not willing migrants as per Professor Curta's findings then what motivated them to travel south to the Balkans? The most logical and probable explanation, given the political situation of the time, is that the Slavs were war refugees forced out of their homes by the more aggressive invaders the Goths, Huns and Avars. There are those, including Falmerayer, who believe that the traveling Slavs were not allowed to settle in Macedonia and were driven to the south and west by the Byzantine army. This can be substantiated by the fact that with the exception of one, found north of Skopje, there are no archeological Slav burial finds in Macedonia but a great number of them are found to the west and south of geographical Macedonia. There are also unconfirmed claims that the original Slavs who made their way from north of the Danube region did not speak the "Slav language" that is attributed to them. They learned that language from the indigenous people living south of the Danube.

And now back to Phocas's story. With time it became clear that, in return for glory, Justinian had bestowed upon his successors the arduous burden of managing an over-extended empire whose resources he had drained and whose

institutions and infrastructure proved too weak to meet the future challenges. The empire's inability to cope with its problems ultimately led to the rise of a different breed of illegitimate emperors. According to historian George of Pisidia, Phocas was, and to a certain extent remains, one of the most maligned of all Byzantine emperors. Another Byzantine author Theophlact Simocatta, among other things, called Phocas a barbarian half-breed, a Cyclops and a Centaur. Phocas cannot be blamed entirely for his actions without understanding the state of the empire he inherited. As mentioned earlier, the imperial woes began around 565 AD, about the time of Justinian's death. By that time Justinian had expanded the empire to include Italy, Africa and part of Spain. Unfortunately, the empire benefited far less from these conquests than Justinian had hoped. The ambitious emperor had dangerously overestimated the empire's capabilities. Thirty-five years or so later, the empire had still not recovered from its financial smarting. In fact it was getting worse. Phocas marched into Tsari Grad a hero but soon found himself plagued with the same sorts of crises that had brought down his predecessor. With the situation in the provinces already shaky, Phocas was quickly faced with a major threat along the eastern frontier of the empire.

Relations between the Byzantines and Persia soured when Phocas overthrew Maurice and the Persian king now had an honourable pretext for an attack. Presenting himself as the avenger of Maurice's murder, the Persian king seized the opportunity to recover the areas that he had earlier ceded to Maurice. In 603AD he started a war that would last for over two decades, critically weakening both empires. In 609 AD Phocas was forced to withdraw most of the army from the Persian frontier in order to deal with a dangerous rebellion that had spread from the province of Africa to Egypt. The rebellion, it appears, was staged by a man named Heraclius who would eventually replace Phocas as emperor. No doubt encouraged by the commitment of the imperial army against the Persians, a Byzantine rebel army invaded Egypt in the summer of 608 AD. Heraclius was confident that his supporters could achieve a quick victory in Egypt and gain control of its riches as well as its navy.

Shortly after Heraclius's forces entered Egypt, riots broke out in cities throughout Egypt, Syria and Palestine. The people of these provinces had had enough of Phocas's rule and wanted change. To crush the rebellion in Egypt, Phocas withdrew his army from the Persian war and unleashed it on the rebels in Egypt. Unfortunately, in so doing he left a void in his defenses. Even with the aid of his army, Phocas was unable to stop the rebellion. The civil war in Egypt came to an end when Heraclius's supporters achieved victory. The end of the civil strife unfortunately came too late to salvage the situation with Persia.

In 609 AD all key Byzantine fortresses and defenses along the eastern borders were captured by the Persian armies and the Byzantines were driven out of Armenia. In the meantime, while his forces were finishing up in Egypt, Heraclius and his fleet made their way to Tsari Grad. Phocas tried to put up resistance but quickly found himself in the same losing position as his predecessor Maurice. Deserted by his supporters, Phocas was seized and brought before Heraclius, who in turn executed him.

Heraclius's revolt marked a crucial turning point in Byzantine history. In only slightly over two years his actions cost the empire thousands of lives, sapping the empire's manpower and finances and leaving the frontiers virtually undefended. His revolt cost the empire the loss of Syria, Palestine and Egypt.

Emperor Heraclius ruled the Byzantine Empire from 610 to 641 AD. His entry into Byzantine affairs was at a time when the Empire was threatened on all fronts by many enemies. Leading citizens had had enough of the corrupt Emperor Phocas and wanted him out. Heraclius's involvement with the Byzantines began when his father, General Heraclius of Carthage, was invited to oust Phocas. The general and his brother responded by sending their respective sons with well-equipped forces. By 610 AD Heraclius, the son, triumphantly entered Tsari Grad.

Heraclius, like his predecessors, found the empire's treasury empty. The empire actually worsened with his first few years of rule before it began to turn around. Heraclius's first order of business was to strengthen the empire's defenses. He did that by dividing the empire into four military districts, each ruled by a military governor. By giving prospective soldiers land grants (themes), he recruited a considerable number of natives, thus minimizing the need for costly foreign mercenaries. On the economic side, he turned to the church for contributions and at the same time introduced new taxes. It took him twelve years before he was confident to go on the offensive. In the spring of 622 AD he led a powerful army into battle.

There are some who say that Heraclius risked his own life by personally participating in many battles. After six years of fighting his new army was victorious and defeated the Persians. Unfortunately as soon as he arrived in Tsari Grad in 628 AD to celebrate his victories, the armies of Islam began to advance on Persia. By 633 AD all the territories gained were lost.

Heraclius did try to stop the Islamic onslaught in 636 AD when he raised an army of 80,000 soldiers and met the Muslims by the river Yarmuk. Unfortunately, the climatic conditions were not favourable for the Byzantines when a violent sandstorm struck them head-on giving the Muslims, who were used to this kind of weather, battle advantage. The stressful situation was exhausting mentally and physically for Heraclius and caused him to fall seriously ill. Feeling that he may no longer be able to rule, Heraclius performed the ceremony of succession and appointed his two sons Constantine and Heraclonas as his successors in 638 AD.

With the succession settled, Heraclius spent the last years of his life trying to settle the debate between the monophysites and the monotheleties, centering on the nature of Christ. His efforts were unfortunately in vain and no resolution was reached before his death in 641 AD. Heraclius is also known as the emperor who finally abolished the Latin language from his empire thus allowing the Macedonian language to begin its revival.

It is noteworthy to mention at this point that, while the Byzantines were fighting the Persians for dominion over the near east, a new power was growing in Arabia. By the late 620's the tribes of Arabia were uniting under the Prophet

Mohamed and were beginning to raid Palestine. By about 633 AD most of the empire's eastern provinces were conquered and after the fall of Damascus in 635 AD, a large Byzantine army was dispatched to stop the Muslim advance, but it failed. After Heraclius's death more territories exchanged hands and Caesaria, on the Palestinian coast, was also lost after the Byzantines lost Egypt.

By the late 640's the Byzantines had again lost the fortress Dara, Edessa in the near-east, Antioch and Alexandria. By the early 650's the Muslims had launched attacks over the Taurus Mountains, through Azerbaijan and made their way into Armenia. By late 653 AD they were at the shores of the Bosphorus on the other side of Tsari Grad.

The loss of the major cities and fortresses in the east was a major blow to the economy of the Byzantines, who for many years had become dependent on Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Palestine and the Caspian coastlands for their commerce. Although the economy did not entirely collapse, much of the progress experienced up to the seventh century ceased to exist. Grand projects including building new churches, repairs and renovations to aqueducts, walls, etc. were also abandoned. Many of the larger cities, excluding Solun and Tsari Grad, were emptied and their populations took on a rural village lifestyle, living off the land.

Being cut off from the rich eastern economies, the empire became poor and began to turn its attention inwards. The empire was no longer a superpower and would never again dominate the near-east. It was also during this period that the Byzantines chose to elevate Solun to a second capital city.

By the end of the seventh century AD, Islam, seated in Damascus, was becoming a superpower extending from the borders of India and Tibet to Spain and from southern Egypt and Arabia to Armenia. Islam, a powerful new religious force originating in Arabia, was taking over the near-east in rapid conquests following the Prophet Muhammad's death in 632 AD.

By this time both the Persian and Byzantine empires had been weakened by their mutual wars and were experiencing devastating defeats at the hands of the Muslims. While the Persian Empire quickly succumbed to the Muslim assault, the Byzantines were only saved because of Tsari Grad's strong triple wall fortifications. The defensive wall construction of Tsari Grad was commissioned around 410 AD and was completed by 500 AD. The inner wall was about twelve meters high and about five and a half meters wide, defended by ninety-six polygonal towers rising more than ten meters above the wall. The second wall was about ten meters high defended by another ninety-six towers. On the outside was a moat about twenty meters wide and about six meters deep. Beyond the moat was a third low wall designed to act as a retaining wall for the moat. Also, one had to cross ten gates before entering the city. The outer walls were approximately five and a half kilometers long and extended about a kilometer and a half beyond the original Constantinian wall. The large area between the walls was never built up and was used for farming and to supply the city with secure sources of water. The existence of open farmland inside the city walls was a vital factor in the city's ability to resist sieges. Used to grow crops and graze animals, the land provided the city with a limited but secure source of food.

Europe and Christianity were saved because the Byzantines were able to withstand many waves of Muslim onslaught. Had Tsari Grad not been built to withstand the greatest of sieges, Islam would have overrun Europe, as it did Asia. Christianity and the world as we know it today would not have existed in the same way.

Before his death Heraclius elevated both his 28-year-old son Constantine, from his first wife Fabia-Eudocia, and his 15-year-old son Heraclonas, from his second wife Martina, to co-emperors. Unfortunately 28-year-old Constantine, or Constantine III as he was then known, died three months later. In the absence of Constantine III, his brother Heraclonas crowned Constantine III's son, Constans II, as his co-emperor. But in September 641 AD the Senate deposed Heraclonas and his mother the Empress Martina. To make sure they would never rule again, Martina's tongue and Heraclonas's nose were cut off. As Constans II was only eleven years old, the Senate held power in the interim and served as the supreme court of the empire.

Like his predecessors, Constans II inherited an empire full of problems. Although he did his best to solve them, he was more unsuccessful than successful. His attempts to invade Asia Minor in 646 AD were met with difficulties. Not only did the Muslim Saracens repel his invasion, but in the end, the war was brought closer to Tsari Grad. Year after year Muslim troops continued to raid deeper and deeper into Asia Minor, pushing nearer to the western limit of Asia. In the water, heavy losses to the Saracens fleet near the eastern Mediterranean were putting Europe in peril. By 649 AD the Saracens fleet captured Cyprus and by 652 AD the Byzantine fleet was driven out of Alexandria. In 655 AD the Byzantine fleet faced its final defeat off Phoenix on the Lycian coast, in the heaviest sea-fight since Actium.

Constans, tired of watching his empire slowly erode, took his campaign north. In 658 AD he invaded the region north of the Danube which, at the time, was occupied by Slavs. He successfully defeated numerous tribes and forced them to resettle in Asia Minor. At the same time he began recruiting captive Slavs into his Anatolian forces. Soon afterwards, due to his unpopularity at home, he went west and in 662 AD set out on an expedition to campaign against the Lombards in Italy. On his way he took a southern route which landed him in Rome in 663 AD. Instead of continuing further north, he ended his campaign and retired in Syracuse on the island of Sicily. From there he directed his African campaigns against the attacking Saracens, who had assaulted and captured Carthage in 663 AD.

Even though his African campaigns were successful and his army was able to drive the Saracens as far back as Tripoli, Constans was not popular. Forcing the cost of the war on Syracuse and making the Sicilians pay for it made them very angry indeed. His unpopularity made him the victim of a conspiracy and in 668 AD he was murdered by a slave while bathing.

After Constans II's death, his son Constantine IV succeeded him as emperor. Before setting out on his campaigns in 654 AD, Constans II elevated his son Constantine IV to co-emperor and in 659 AD he did the same for his other two

sons, Heraclius and Tiberius. To ensure that there would be no problem with the dynastic succession, Constans had his younger brother Theodosius murdered. Theodosius, however, was popular with the court and raised public sentiment against Constans, causing him to go to Italy.

Constantine IV was only eighteen years old when he became emperor. His first task was to suppress the rebellion in Syracuse and bring his father's murderers to justice.

The first major threat that Constantine faced was the advance of the Arabs. By 673 AD the Muslims had attacked Sicily, North Africa and had advanced north into Asia Minor. While in possession of the Asiatic shore of the Sea of Marmora in 674 AD, the Muslims began their assault upon Tsari Grad. By about the same time the Byzantines had invented a new weapon, a primitive flame-thrower consisting of a mixture of flammable oils blown-ejected with huge bellows. Armed with this revolutionary weapon, the Byzantine fleet turned the tide on the Arab advance and recovered its mastery of the sea. The Saracens were driven off and their leader had no choice but to sue for peace. Constantine IV was able to negotiate a favourable treaty and the Arab leader agreed to pay an annual tribute of 3,000 pieces of gold.

The Byzantine victories in the east allowed Constantine to turn his attention to the west. It was at this time that the Byzantine army was dispatched to Solun to save the city from another barbarian siege. History has recorded this as a Slav siege but the leaderless Slavs never acted alone. It is most likely that the more aggressive Avars organized and conducted the siege with Slav help. After the siege was broken, the Avars sent ambassadors to Tsari Grad to acknowledge Byzantine control over them.

This was not the first siege that Solun experienced during this period. With the Byzantine army campaigning in far away lands, there were plenty of opportunities for organized barbarian hordes eager to take advantage of this fair city.

In the sixth century Solun was the second largest city in the Byzantine Empire and a very important commercial and cultural center. It was natural then that she would attract all kinds of loot seekers and adventurers. Solun, however, was a fortress protected by strong walls and by the spirit of St. Dimitrius. Armed with their Christian faith and self determination, the Macedonians of Solun succeeded in defending their city on their own, without armies.

Saint Dimitrias or Sveti Dimitria Solunski as he is known to the Macedonians was the city's protector and patron saint. Dimitrias, the son of a Solun mayor was born in Solun in the 3rd century AD. This was during Emperor Maximilian's reign when practicing Christianity was still unpopular. After his father's death Dimitrias was appointed mayor, not to replace his father, but for his ability to persecute the Christians. At least that's what the Emperor thought. What the emperor did not know is that secretly Dimitrias was a devoted Christian. Dimitrias did not persecute the Christians but taught them how to defend themselves from the pagans.

When Maximilian found this out he could not believe it and went to Solun to see for himself. Dimitrias knew he was going to be arrested as soon as the emperor arrived so he braced for the worst. First he sold all his assets and then he gave all his money to his friend Lupa, with instructions for him to donate it to the poor.

While he was in prison Dimitrias had a divine experience; an angel spoke to him and told him to be at peace. Dimitrias told his friend Nestor about his experience and Nestor asked him for his blessings. Nestor, also from Solun, was really disappointed with Roman injustices, especially with how the prisoners were treated by the gladiators. To get back at the emperor for his cruelty, Nestor killed Leo, one of Maximilian's favourite gladiators. Before he could escape the Romans caught and executed him. Knowing that Nestor was Dimitrias's friend, the guards went after Dimitrias thinking that he had something to do with Leo's murder. As they opened his cell door the guards saw Dimitrias praying peacefully while emitting a glow from his face. Dimitrias was killed on November 8, 306 AD.

Of the many attacks that took place against this majestic city only a few have been recorded in history. The first was a joint Avar-Slav attack that took place in October 584 AD, carried out by an army of nearly five thousand warriors. Two years later there was a second, more serious attack again led by the Avars. This time the enemy employed siege engines, catapults and other equipment. The siege lasted eight days before the Avars broke off the attack. This time it was not Solunian determination but the spirit of St. Dimitrius, which unleashed the plague on the eager invaders causing them to flee in panic.

The next attack took place in 616 AD, organized by a Slav alliance involving a fleet consisting of numerous boats fashioned from single tree-trunks. This time the Slavs came with their families and households intent upon an immediate settlement of the city. Unfortunately, when they came in contact with the Solunians, the Slavs suffered great losses and beat a hasty retreat. (It is most likely that this particular group of Slavs were refugees looking for a safe haven and were forcibly turned away. During campaigns soldiers do not bring families to battle. Families and belongings are usually left at camp, a safe distance away from the battle).

Two years later, in 618 AD, the Avars came back with Slav help. The allied armies appeared in front of the city walls and for thirty-three days attempted to forcibly enter the city, without success. Eventually they gave up and left.

The next wave of attacks came in 674 AD. The entire region nearby was looted for the next two years until the Byzantine army, freed from its eastern campaigns, put an end to it. Even though Solun itself was placed under siege, the assailants were unable to penetrate her defenses and again were forced out empty handed.

The next barbarian menaces to enter Byzantine affairs were the Bulgars. By 670 AD the Bulgars had consolidated their power under their leader Asparuch, who intended to eventually invade Byzantine lands. In time the Bulgars invaded the Danube delta intending to move further south into Byzantine territory. The

Bulgars were a pagan people whom the Khazars, another barbarian tribe, had forced down toward the Danube delta in the latter part of the 7th century.

The Danube delta was considered a Byzantine protectorate and in 680 AD Constantine mounted a joint naval and land force expedition to expel the Bulgars. After several attempts, the Byzantines were unable to engage the Bulgars in battle. When the Byzantines attempted to retreat the Bulgars mounted a counterattack and were able to inflict much damage upon them.

In the following year, because of his great losses, Constantine IV agreed to a Bulgar treaty. By virtue of this treaty signed in the same year, the Bulgars were recognized as an independent kingdom, occupying lands south of the Danube into the Thracian plain. Soon afterwards the Bulgars established their capital at Pliska and gained control of the Danube access. To offset this, Constantine established the land grants (theme) of Thrace and settled Avar fugitives there to act as a buffer zone against the Bulgars.

With the Bulgars in check, Constantine's next concern was ensuring the succession of his son Justinian to the throne. To do that, however, he had to remove his brothers Heraclius and Tiberius from their positions as co-emperors. His decision to do so unfortunately caused protests among his Anatolian troops. It has been said that the soldiers of the time felt that the division of imperial power should be three in nature, the same as the trinity. Constantine unfortunately disagreed and acting quickly, arrested and executed the leaders of the protest. He also rescinded his orders to remove his brothers and left them as co-emperors. Afterwards, however, Constantine changed his mind and removed the brothers from their positions. To ensure that they would never rule, again he had their noses slit. After that he proclaimed his son Justinian II as co-emperor.

In 685AD Constantine IV died at the age of thirty-five and was succeeded by his seventeen year old son Justinian II. Justinian's reign was unfortunately plagued with problems. He waged a successful campaign against the Bulgars in 690 AD which gave him a false sense of confidence to try his luck against the Muslims. In 693 AD he invaded Syria through the Taurus Mountains only to meet with an overwhelming defeat.

History has recorded Justinian II as a brilliant but tempestuous and vindictive emperor who dealt very harshly with his unsuccessful generals and drastically taxed his subjects by monstrous methods. No wonder Leontius, one of his more successful generals, revolted against him, deposed him, slit his nose and sent him off to prison in the Crimea.

After deposing Justinian II, Leontius became emperor in 695 AD only to be deposed himself. In 698 AD a number of Byzantine officers returned to Tsari Grad from Africa. Afraid of paying the ultimate penalty for losing Carthage to the Saracens, they struck first and captured Leontius, slit his nose, shut him up in a monastery and made Tiberius III emperor.

Tiberius III was made emperor by the army in the Macedonian tradition but did not fare well either. He at least did better than Justinian II against the Saracens by successfully penetrating into northern Syria. Unfortunately his luck ran out when Justinian II escaped from the Crimea in 705 AD. After his escape

Justinian got help from the Bulgar king and seized the Tsari Grad palace. After he restored himself to the throne he had Leontius and Tiberius III executed.

Justinian was a vindictive man who indulged in an orgy of indiscriminating cruelty, which was only ended by a military insurrection. Having been sent to crush a revolt in the Crimea, instead general Philippicus joined the rebels and sailed back to Tsari Grad. In 711 AD he swept to power on a wave of popular support and had Justinian II, his wife and children killed.

Philippicus, plagued by conspiracies, only lasted as emperor from 711 to 713 AD and was replaced by Anastasius II. Anastasius, unable to cope with the Saracen tide, only lasted from 713 to 715 AD. Anastasius II fell and made way for Theodosius III to take his place in 715 AD.

While the emperors were rising and falling in the palace of the capital city, the Saracens were preparing for a massive campaign against Tsari Grad. A Saracen strike force was being readied in Asia Minor to move on the city. Fortunately a capable army commander named Leo happened to be stationed in Asia Minor and took matters into his own hands. For a while he engaged the Saracens and kept them at bay. Then he made a truce with them, turned around and marched on Tsari Grad. Upon his arrival he deposed Theodosius III and installed himself as emperor.

No sooner had Leo III taken control of the empire in 716 AD, than thousands of Arab and Persian warriors arrived at the Hellespont and began their siege of Tsari Grad. The Saracen fleets filled the Bosphorus but were eventually beaten back by the Byzantine flame-throwers. After freeing the waterways, Leo dispatched troops to the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus and cut off the Saracen supply lines from the east. The besiegers now found themselves effectively besieged and in danger of starving. Another blow was delivered when news came that the Bulgar king was mobilizing a great force and was going to strike at the Saracens from the north.

With the aid of the Bulgars, Leo was able to turn back the Muslim assault. After receiving the bad news, the Saracens abandoned the siege and made their way back to Asia Minor. With the Moslem threat out of the way, at least for now, Leo had time to turn his attention to domestic affairs. Besides making reforms to the themes, he entered the great religious controversies giving them a new twist. Leo felt that the practice of using images and pictures or icons in worship, which at the time was common, tended to encourage idolatry. The practice was ridiculed and criticized by the Moslems which prompted Leo to put an end to it.

In 725 AD Leo banned idolatry and gave orders to remove all religious statues from the churches. All walls with icons and pictures of saints were to be whitewashed. Doing this was not as easy as Leo may have thought and caused a great deal of upset, which history has recorded as the famous iconoclastic controversy. No sooner had officials begun to enforce the edict than riots broke out, not just in Tsari Grad but throughout the entire empire. The Pope in Rome reacted strongly to Leo's initiatives by excommunicating all bishops who were in support of them. Even though Leo was unable to enforce his edict in the west, his

actions did alienate the western Church eventually contributing to the eleventh century schism. The worst opposition was yet to come and it was not going to be from outside the empire.

By Leo's time the empire's decline was leveling off, but in terms of territories much was lost. The Danube was no longer the empire's northern boundary. The interior of the Balkan Peninsula had seen its share of violence and occupations and now a Bulgar kingdom came into being where none existed before.

Leo III turned out to be an excellent administrator who revived prosperity and added prestige to his empire through the victories he delivered under his personal command. Leo III died in 741 AD and was succeeded by his son Constantine V.

By Leo's time, the themes (land grants) had taken root and, however dismal, the economic developments had permitted the empire to survive and provided a foundation for greater success in the centuries to come. Military service was a hereditary occupation where the eldest son assumed the burden of service and was supported primarily by revenues from the "granted lands" which were worked by other members of the family. The technological base of Byzantine society during the 7th and 8th centuries was more advanced than that of contemporary western Europe. The Byzantines possessed iron tools that could even be found in the villages. Water mills dotted the landscape and field-sown beans provided a diet rich in protein. None of these advances was to characterize western European agriculture until the 10th century AD.

Agriculture in the rural areas of Byzantine society was taken very seriously and a tradition of careful farming was developed and persisted even through the darkest days. Having lost first its Egyptian granary and later its north African and Sicilian resources, the Byzantines had to live from whatever they could produce on the remaining lands. The villages and small peasant holdings seem to have been the main form of rural organization and collective agricultural practices during that time. In trade and commerce, after the loss of Egypt and North Africa, the grain fleets manned by hereditary shipmasters disappeared. In their place emerged the independent merchants who in time developed new trade routes and began to trade with the Bulgars in Thrace and, through Cyprus, with the Arabs. In time, despite constant warfare, Byzantine society was becoming more vibrant and healthier.

Constantine V became emperor in 741 AD after Leo III, his father, died. Constantine's first order of business was to fight his way to the throne by suppressing a revolt initiated by his brother-in-law. In the next few years, internal strife in the Muslim world allowed Constantine opportunities to campaign in Armenia and beyond the Taurus Range.

Constantine was victorious in northern Syria and was able to transfer prisoners to Thrace in preparation for a new war against the Bulgars. He fortified the passes of the Balkan range in an attempt to curb Bulgar aggression. Unfortunately, the Bulgar kings reacted by attacking the Byzantine initiatives. Constantine in turn launched a counter attack and was able to repel the Bulgars.

The only thing that prevented him from crushing them was a disastrous storm which wrecked his fleet. In no fewer than nine campaigns, Constantine undermined Bulgar strength and permanently weakened it. By doing so he cleared the region of brigands allowing merchants to operate safely.

Constantine V was considered a good emperor by many but he did make mistakes. Being a true zealot he searched out and penalized those who continued to practice image worship, even in private, by instituting harsh religious persecution. He even embarked on a campaign against monks and monasticism which by most was thought to be somewhat extreme.

Constantine V's reign lasted until 775 AD when he was succeeded by his son Leo IV. Leo IV unfortunately died prematurely in 780 AD. His 10-year-old son, Constantine VI, was left to assume the throne. Being too young to make his own decisions, he was left in the regency of the empress Irene.

For the next ten years empress Irene reigned in her son's name. Being an image worshiper (iconodule) herself, she somewhat relaxed the measures against the image worshippers by dismissing iconoclast (anti-icon) officials from civil and ecclesiastic duties and replacing them by iconodules. She was an ambitious iconodule but her iconodule policies unfortunately alienated many of her troops, who were still loyal to the memory of the great warrior emperor, Constantine V. To counter the troop alienation and still maintain her popularity among the icon defenders, she rebated taxes to the themes and also reduced the customs duties levied at the ports of Tsari Grad. Unfortunately, the consequent loss of taxes weighed heavily on the treasury, especially after victories won by the Arabs in Asia Minor in 781 AD and by the Bulgars in 792 AD led the victors to demand tributes as the price of peace.

In 797 AD Irene instigated a revolt against her own son and had him seized. She ordered his eyes gouged out and had him imprisoned in a monastery. She then assumed the throne herself. A revolt in the palace in 802 AD led to Irene's deposition. She was exiled to the isle of Lesbos where she later died.

In the face of a Bulgar menace, Nicephorus I, the empire's finance minister, succeeded Irene to the throne in 802 AD. He re-imposed the taxes that the empress had remitted and also instituted some other money saving reforms. Then, in the tradition of Constantine V, Nicephorus strengthened the fortification of Thrace by settling more colonists from Asia Minor. He even led his troops in battle against the new Bulgar Khan, Krum. Unfortunately his career and life came to an abrupt end when his army was defeated in battle by the Bulgars. The Bulgar Khan Krum, after defeating Nicephorus, had his skull lined with silver (some say with gold) and used it as a drinking cup

Nicephorus I died in 811 AD and was succeeded by his son-in-law, Michael I. Nicephorus's son, Stauracius, was mortally wounded in battle during the Bulgar war and died on his way home. The succession was thus secured by his brother-in-law the incompetent Michael I.

Michael's lack of ability led his army into internal dissension just as he was about to face Krum in battle. His incapacity not only brought him defeat but also

cost him the throne. He was deposed in 813 AD by an Armenian soldier named Leo.

Leo V, as he was known, became emperor in 813 AD and faced another Bulgar attack from Krum. Luckily Krum died suddenly in 814 AD as he was preparing for the attack, which never materialized. Krum's son, Omurtag, in the meantime arranged a peace treaty with the Byzantines. Omurtag needed the Byzantines as allies to help him protect his western frontiers against Frankish expansion under Charlemagne and his successors.

With the Bulgars in check, Leo decided to delve into the iconoclastic controversy. Like most soldiers he ended up on the unpopular side. Leo V was assassinated in 820 AD and was replaced by Michael II who was also a soldier.

Michael II's reign began in 820 AD and was plagued by outbreaks of rebellion. His nine years of reign were mainly memorable for the loss of Crete to the Corsairs and the invasion of Sicily by the Aghlabids. Michael II established the Phrygian dynasty and his son Theophilus and grandson Michael III each occupied the Byzantine throne in turn.

Michael's son Theophilus reigned from 829 to 842 AD during which time hostilities between the Byzantines and Muslims were renewed. The Muslims invaded Cappadocia and Theophilus was forced to concentrate all his military efforts on the war against them. The consequence was that he could no longer support the campaign in Sicily and in 842 AD Sicily was lost to the Saracens. Meanwhile the war with the Muslims in the east raged on and neither side was able to gain advantage.

Theophilus died in 842 AD and the government was passed on to a council of regents on behalf of his four year old son, Michael III. At the head of the regency council was Michael's mother, the empress Theodora. Theodora was an image worshipper and did her best to reverse her late husband's iconoclast policies and soon began to persecute the iconoclasts.

When Michael reached the age of eighteen, in 856 AD, he removed his mother from active duty and ruled the empire with his disreputable drinking companion, Uncle Bardas, first as councilor than as colleague. When Michael became tired of Bardas he dropped him from council and promoted another drinking companion, Basil the Macedonian, to Caesar. About a year later, Basil the Macedonian became tired of Michael and murdered him after a heavy drinking bout.

Already being Caesar, Basil assumed the position of emperor in 867 AD without any opposition, thus inaugurating the Macedonian dynasty which reigned for nearly two centuries.

Chapter 17 - Revival of the Macedonian State, Language and Culture

It was Herbert George Wells who said that the barbarian invasion of Europe started with the rise of the Great Wall of China. Migrating tribes of Mongolian nomads, who spent their summers on the Siberian plains and their winters in east central China, could no longer do so because the Great Wall of China prevented

them. Unable to go to their traditional lands, the tribes were forced to change their wintering patterns. Unable to cross into eastern central China, the Mongolian tribes began a westward movement putting pressure on the people whose lands they invaded. By the time the great wall was finished in the 6th century AD, many of the Mongolian tribes had abandoned their traditional eastern migrating patterns and were moving westward.

It is my belief that the Slavs did not move willingly but were pushed out as a consequence of this great wave of tribal migration. Who the Slavs were and where they came from are still controversial questions, which will be answered in time and with diligent archeological research. In the meantime, there are two emerging theories.

The first and more popular theory is that the modern Slavs are the descendents of the first Europeans. They are identified by many names but are best known as the Veneti. The second theory is that the Slavs of Europe are the remnants of Alexander the Great's settlers and soldiers. It is well known that Alexander the Great established many cities and outposts wherever he campaigned in order to support his military needs. Settlers were brought from Macedonia and given lands to farm. When Alexander's empire collapsed, instead of returning home, many of his people remained at their outposts and permanently settled the new lands. Archeological digs in India have revealed that Macedonian estates were still in existence two centuries after Alexander's empire collapsed. It is conceivable then that the Macedonian settlers of Europe also remained on their estates, living undisturbed for centuries, and migrated northward as their populations expanded. Being already civilized, the Macedonians had a well-established language and culture, which they disseminated among the native populations from which they employed their workers.

These are, however, only theories and much archeological evidence is needed to validate them. On the other hand, what is certain and well documented is the 8th century revival of the Macedonian language and culture.

As for the language of the Slavs, there are some who believe that the Slavs north of the Danube spoke different languages and only learned the so-called Slav language after they crossed the Danube River. This was also the case with the Huns, Avars and Bulgars. Today's Bulgarians speak a Slavic language as a consequence of being assimilated by the indigenous Slavic speaking population that lived south of the Danube. "The Bulgarians had adopted Slavic language and culture. It is paradoxical that the Bulgarians, a Turkic people who adopted Slavic language and customs, took a significant role in standardizing Slavic writing." (Page 197, John Shea, Macedonia and Greece The Struggle to Define a New Balkan Nation, Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland, 1997) The reason the Bulgars adopted the Slavic language was due to the overwhelming numerical superiority of the Slavs, most of them being Macedonians. The true Bulgars and their Turko-Tartar rulers were only a small minority.

Relations between Tsari Grad and Bulgaria soured when Khan Presian became ruler of the Bulgars in 835 AD. While the Byzantines were busy fighting

the Muslims, the Bulgar king sought the opportunity and invaded Byzantine territory, bringing thirty years of peace to an end. A large Bulgar invasion force entered Byzantine territory and occupied several regions of northern Macedonia. Bulgar encroachment continued up until Boris's reign. By then the Bulgars had occupied a large part of the Strumitsa region and parts of central Macedonia to the Vardar valley. Finally in 864 AD the Byzantines intervened but instead of pushing the Bulgars out, they settled for peace. The peace treaty did not free Macedonia but it did put an end to Bulgar expansionism for a while. According to the terms of the treaty Boris was also obliged to accept Christianity as his state religion.

It was during the reign of the Byzantine emperor Michael III (842-867) that Solun had definitely established itself as the religious and philosophical center of the empire. This was the time when Kiril (Cyril) and Metodi (Methodius) set off on a series of missions to spread the doctrines of Christianity to various places in eastern Europe and Asia. (Solun up to this point had not been invaded by the Slavs, but the Solunians spoke Slavic).

I just want to mention here that, by the eighth century AD, the Macedonian eparchy was controlled by a Macedonian Archbishopric with its center located in Solun and bishoprics existed in eighteen towns including Lerin, Kostur, Voden and Serres.

The brothers Kiril and Metodi were Macedonians, natives of Solun, who were acclaimed as the apostles of the southern Slavs and the fathers of Slav literary culture. Kiril, the younger of the two, was given the name Constantine when he was baptized. It was much later that he received the name Kiril.

Kiril was very fortunate to have studied in Tsari Grad at a young age and received his education from Leo the Grammarian and Photius, a prominent educator at the imperial university. Kiril was an extraordinary student and earned himself the nickname "the Philosopher". After he finished his education he was ordained deacon and later became professor of philosophy at the imperial school in Tsari Grad, where he took over the chair from Photius. Soon afterwards, he retired to the quiet solitude of a monastery. From there, in 861 AD, he was summoned by the emperor, Michael III, and sent on a mission to Christianize the Khazars of southern Russia who lived between the Dnieper and Volga Rivers.

The older brother Metodi was a well-liked, intelligent man who started his career in his father's footsteps. At first he served in the military in Solun. Later, at age twenty, he became governor of one of the Slav colonies in the Opsikion province in Asia. Then he became a monk and, like his brother, took part in a mission to Christianize the Khazars.

Kiril and Metodi were two of seven siblings. Their father Lev was a prominent Macedonian who served as assistant to the Solun military commander of the Byzantine army.

The careers of the Solun brothers took a turn for the better in 862 AD when, Rostislav, the prince of Moravia sent his ambassador to Tsari Grad seeking missionaries capable of teaching his people to read and write in their own language. Rostislav, fearful of his powerful German neighbours, sought the

opportunity to strengthen his alliance with the Byzantines to counter-balance the German missionary influence in his kingdom. Rostislav preferred the ecclesiastical politics of Photius, now patriarch of Tsari Grad, over those of his western counterpart.

When word came that Emperor Michael was looking for capable missionaries, Photius decided that Kiril and Metodi were the most suitable candidates for the job. The Solun brothers, being Slav speakers themselves, knew the Solunian dialect of the Slav language well and accepted the task.

The old-Macedonian dialect was quite well understood by all the Slav tribes. Unfortunately, teaching the illiterate to read and write was easier said than done. Even though the Slavs had a written form of language described as “lines and incisions”, it was not an easy language to learn.

Kiril was familiar with the Glagolic script but that was also too complex a language for illiterate people to grasp quickly. According to Tsarnorizets Hrabar, an advocate of Macedonian literacy, Kiril and Metodi first tried to use the Koine and then Latin alphabets, but proper pronunciation could not be achieved. Slav speech was far too complex to record with just Koine or Latin letters. Kiril was an intelligent man and solved the problem by constructing a new alphabet based on old Macedonian traditions. The pattern and some letters he based on the Koine alphabet but he enriched it by adding new letters. He borrowed some from the Glagolic script and some he fashioned from ancient Macedonian symbols that had traditional Macedonian meaning. “Peter Hill argues that Old Church Slavonic was more than merely a written dialect. It is naïve, he says, to imagine that this construction of a written language was possible without established tradition. Therefore it can safely be assumed that there was at least some tradition on which Cyril and Methodius could build. Presumably their familiarity with this tradition derived from the fact that they were Slavic themselves.” (Page 198, John Shea, Macedonia and Greece The Struggle to Define a New Balkan Nation, Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Co., 1997)

When it was completed Kiril’s alphabet consisted of 38 letters, each accurately and exactly representing a unique sound in Slav speech. The phonetic nature of Kiril’s language made spelling words very simple. One only needed to learn the alphabet to have the ability to read and write. The same is true to this day.

I just want to mention that there are some references claiming that Kiril was the inventor of the Glagolic script, but they are incorrect. Kiril was familiar with the Glagolic script and had composed Glagolic texts but we now know from recent discoveries of ancient inscriptions that the Glagolic alphabet existed before Kiril’s time.

In 862 AD Kiril and Metodi, along with a number of followers, arrived in Moravia in Rostislav’s court. They immediately set out to work and to their surprise Kiril’s vernacular was not only well understood but also became popular with the Moravians. The Byzantine missionaries continued their work for a while, with much success, but were soon handicapped by the lack of Byzantine bishops to ordain their priests. Also, their popularity with the Moravians

displeased the German missionaries who saw them as competition and harshly objected to their presence.

German hostilities reached their peak when the German Emperor Louis forced Rostislav to take an oath of loyalty to him. The German prelate, the bishop of Passau, who had the power to ordain Byzantine priests refused to do so out of contempt. Unable to continue their work the missionaries were forced to return to Tsari Grad. On their way back the Macedonian brothers took a detour through Venice where they learned that the Pope had excommunicated Photius, the Byzantine Patriarch in Tsari Grad. Byzantine missionaries and their liturgical use of the Macedonian language were vehemently criticized.

In 858 AD Emperor Michael III, on his own authority, deposed Patriarch Ignatius and replaced him with the more progressive Photius. The Pope, however, did not agree with Michael's decision and proclaimed his deeds invalid. At the same time the Pope denounced both Photius and the emperor.

When Pope Nicholas I found out that the Byzantine missionaries were in Venice he summoned them to Rome. By the time they arrived, however, Nicholas had died and the political situation had changed for the better. In a turn of events Nicholas's successor, Adrian II, warmly welcomed the strangers, especially when he found out that they were bringing him an important gift. Kiril it seems had recovered some relics of Pope St. Clement when he was in the Crimea visiting the Khazars and offered them to Adrian as gifts.

When they arrived, Adrian conducted an investigation and found no misconduct on the part of the Byzantines. In his judgment he permitted Kiril and Metodi to receive Episcopal consecration and allowed their newly converted priests to be ordained. He also approved Slavonic to be used in liturgy.

Sadly, Kiril died on February 14, 869 AD in Rome and never made it back home. After Kiril's death Metodi pleaded with Pope Adrian to allow him to take his brother's body to Solun for burial but Adrian would not permit it. It was the wish of Kiril and Metodi's mother that if either son should die, the other would bring the body back for a decent burial in the family monastery. Unfortunately Adrian would not allow it claiming that it would not be fitting for the Pope to permit the body of so distinguished a Christian to be taken away. He declared that a man so famous should be buried in a famous place. Kiril was buried with great pomp in the church of San Clemente on the Coelian, where the relics of St. Clement had been enshrined.

After Kiril died Metodi took over the cause and leadership of the mission from his brother. Having been consecrated, he obtained a letter of recommendation from the Pope and the Holy See and quickly returned to his duties. At the request of Kozzel, prince of Pannonia, who at the time wanted to revive the ancient archdiocese of Sirmium (now Mitrovitsa), Metodi was made metropolitan (Archbishop). He was given a large area of responsibility with boundaries that extended to the borders of Bulgaria. Unfortunately as the political situation in Moravia was shifting Metodi's title and his papal approval did not mean much to the western missionaries, especially the Germans who began a smear campaign against him. To make matters worse Rostislav's

nephew, Svatopluk, allied himself with Carloman of Bavaria and had his uncle driven out. After that it did not take long before Metodi was in trouble again.

In 870 AD Metodi was summoned before a synod of German bishops. They found him guilty of misconduct, no doubt on trumped-up charges, and locked him up in a leaking jail cell. It took two years of pleading before Pope John VIII could get him out. Unfortunately, to avoid further controversies Pope John withdrew his permission to use Slavonic, a barbarous language as he called it, for any purpose other than preaching. At the same time he reminded the Germans that Pannonia was never German and since age immemorial it belonged to the Holy See.

After his release, Metodi continued his work in Moravia but there too he got into trouble. Metodi did not approve of Svatopluk's wicked lifestyle and made his displeasure public. In retaliation, Svatopluk reported Metodi to the Holy See. He accused him of conducting divine worship in Slavonic and of heresy, charging that he omitted the words "and the Son" from the creed. At that time these words were not yet introduced everywhere in the west.

In 878 AD, as a result of Svatopluk's accusations, Pope John VIII summoned Metodi to Rome and conducted an inquiry. Metodi, a serious man and a dedicated Christian, was able to convince the Pope both of his devotion to his religion and of the necessity to use Slavonic liturgy. Even though Pope John was in agreement with Metodi on most matters, he had certain reservations about the use of the Slavonic language. It seems that some of the western missionaries perceived the Slavonic language as a threat to their own mission and did everything in their power to condemn it. They alleged that, being created by mere men, the Slavonic language was not from God and that God had created the three principal languages, Hebrew, Koine and Latin. Metodi however fought back with equally persuasive arguments, counter-claiming that God did not create the Hebrew, Koine or Latin languages. God created the Syrian language which Adam and the people after him spoke until the flood. Then during the building of the Tower of Babel, God distributed the various languages among the people and created the written form of the languages. His arguments may have bought Metodi some time but he was still in trouble with the German missionaries.

Seeing that he could not easily get rid of him, Svatopluk used his influence as king and persuaded the Pope to appoint Wiching, a known adversary, to work with Metodi. The German (or French) priest Wiching was brought in to assist Metodi as one of his bishops. Wiching was an implacable opponent of Metodi who worked against him tirelessly. This unscrupulous prelate continued to persecute Metodi, even to the extent of forging pontifical documents.

After Metodi's death, Wiching obtained the archiepiscopal see, banished Metodi's followers, and undid as much as he could of Metodi's work in Moravia.

When Wiching was appointed as his assistant, Metodi must have realized that he was fighting a losing battle. In the last four years of his life he took a break from missionary work and translated most of the Bible from Koine to Slavonic. Metodi died in 885 AD, probably from exhaustion. His funeral service

was carried out in Koine, Slavonic and Latin. Metodi was very popular with the people and many came to his funeral to pay their last respects.

I just want to add here that Saints Kiril and Metodi were always celebrated in the lands of their missions and after 1880 they were also celebrated throughout the entire western world.

In Tsari Grad in the meantime, tired of his uncle Bardas, Emperor Michael III had him assassinated and replaced with Basil the Macedonian, whom he elevated to the position of Caesar. About a year later, Basil got tired of Michael and after a heavy drinking bout had him murdered.

Already being Caesar, Basil assumed the position of emperor unopposed in 867 AD. As an emperor, Basil the Macedonian reorganized the empire's finances and justly and fairly managed the empire's administration. He had some luck with his campaigns and recovered some long lost territories in the east from the Muslims. His fleet recovered control of the Mediterranean Sea, driving out the Corsairs. His army managed to drive the Saracens out of Calabria but had little success in Sicily. After his campaigns failed miserably in 886 AD, Basil died without any victories. Basil I was most memorable for starting a Macedonian Byzantine dynasty that lasted for over two centuries. Basil I was succeeded by his son Leo VI, also known as Leo the wise.

Metodi's death did not end the spread of the Macedonian language and culture as many of his enemies had hoped. In fact, many of Kiril and Metodi's disciples rose to the task and carried on in the tradition of their teachers, spreading Macedonian culture to the Slavs even under the worst of circumstances.

The most famous of the Byzantine disciples were Kliment (Clement), Naum, Angelarius Sava and Gorazd. Even though Gorazd was groomed to take over from Metodi, the first to rise to the occasion was Kliment, also known as Kliment of Ohrid.

Kliment was one of the brightest of Kiril and Metodi's students and played a pivotal role in their careers. After his banishment from Moravia and Pannonia however, Kliment returned to Ohrid to his place of birth (although some claim he was born in Solun). Kliment spent the next seven years, from 886 to 893 AD, in Ohrid doing God's work and teaching the Slavonic language. During his stay in Ohrid he was instrumental in founding the Ohrid Literary School and developing the first university in the Balkans and perhaps in all of Europe. It has been said that three thousand five hundred clergy and teachers were educated in the University of Ohrid. But that was not all, Kliment was also responsible for writing poetry and translating other works from Koine to Slavonic.

In 839 AD Kliment was joined by one of his life long friends, Naum. Kliment and Naum were responsible for refining Kiril's alphabet as well as re-writing many of Kiril's works from Glagolic to Slavonic (Cyrillic). Kiril, it seems, had written many works in the Glagolic script in anticipation of using them in his teaching but after finding out that Glagolic was too difficult for lay people to grasp, he opted for the simpler Slavonic which he himself created.

During Leo VI's rule the peace treaty between the Byzantines and Bulgars was once again breached. When the Bulgar ruler, Simeon came to power in 893 AD he resumed aggression in Macedonia. His armies continued to penetrate further west and south and came to within twenty-two kilometers of Solun. A new peace treaty was signed in 896 AD and Leo VI agreed to pay Simeon an annual subsidy of an undisclosed amount to cease his aggression.

After coming to power in 893 AD, Simeon invited Kliment to Preslav with an offer to make him his son's royal counselor and assistant. The offer did not materialize due to some demands Simeon had made that seemed unreasonable to Kliment. Simeon had some reservations about making the Slavic language official and requested that Kliment modify it. Kliment of course refused, wanting the work of Kiril and Metodi to stay as it was. Simeon himself was educated in Koine at Tsari Grad and had developed ambitions to take over the Byzantine Empire and become Emperor of a Byzantine-Bulgar Empire.

When the original offer did not work out, Kliment was given a new appointment in the Velika bishopric in a backward province. This was somewhat of a demotion for Kliment but at the same time it allowed him more time to work on his own projects. He continued to translate chants, psalms, festal fragments from the Bible, moralities and so on.

Towards the end of their careers, both Kliment and Naum built churches on opposite sides of Lake Ohrid. Closest to the city, Kliment dedicated a shrine to the holy healer Panteleimon. A little later, near the springs of the Crn Drim River, Naum built a monument in honour of Gabriel and Michael, the archangels.

Both Kliment and Naum were buried in the tombs they had built for themselves. Naum was buried in 910 AD and Kliment six years later in 916 AD.

Naum, like Kliment, was also an important contributor to the development of the Macedonian language and culture. It is believed that Naum was born in Macedonia in 835 AD and had been Kliment's inseparable companion since his earliest youth. As mentioned earlier, Naum was a student of Kiril and Metodi and was active among the Slavs in Moravia and Pannonia. Naum, also known as Naum of Ohrid, was inseparable from his teachers and fellow pupils and suffered the same humiliation and injustice they did. Their most difficult and fateful moments came after Metodi's death when, under the influence of German churchmen, the Franks attacked the Macedonian missionaries and tortured them. In the words of Kliment of Ohrid's biographer: "Soldiers, stern men because they were Germans and by nature fierce, their fierceness being increased by their orders, took the priests, led them out of the town, pulled off their clothes and began to drag them along naked. Thus by one act they did them two wrongs: dishonored them and tortured them in the icy fog, which had descended on the Danube banks. Besides this, they put their swords against their heads, ready to cut them, and their spears against their breasts, ready to make them bleed, so they would not die a sudden death..."

"Subjected to cruel torture, some of the pupils succumbed, while the others, among them particularly Gorazd, Clement, Naum, Sava and Angelarius, were

declared excommunicate by Bishop Vihing. Their books were seized and burnt. The younger pupils (about 200) were sold as slaves, while these five were driven out of the country."

On their way home to Macedonia, at the request of Boris the Bulgarian prince, Kliment, Naum and Angelarius (who died shortly afterwards) took a detour through Pliska, Bulgaria. After a short visit they felt it was time to return home and continued their work translating books from Koine to Slavonic. Prince Boris insisted that they remain in Pliska but when he couldn't convince Kliment he insisted that Naum must stay. Having no choice, Naum spent the next seven years, from 885 to 893 AD, in Pliska before returning home to join Kliment.

Leo VI became emperor in 886 AD and for a while busied himself writing a manual on military tactics. He was educated by the Byzantine patriarch Photius and had been co-emperor to his father, Basil I, since 870 AD. During his reign, the empire prospered and Leo managed to keep the Bulgars at bay, though eventually he had to make concessions in order to halt their slow advance. Besides the Bulgar nuisance there was one unfortunate incident that marred Leo's career, which was a monumental blow to Macedonia. It was the sacking of Solun.

In 904 AD, while unprotected and unprepared for military warfare, Solun was attacked by Saracen Arab pirates. The Solunians put up strong resistance but were overwhelmed and could not avoid defeat. After the city's defenses collapsed it was brutally attacked and mercilessly ravaged for days until it was literally laid to waste.

In 907 AD Leo signed a treaty with Russia to regulate trade between the two powers.

Leo was unfortunate not to have left a male heir. He married four times which got him into trouble with the Church, but in the end he died without an heir.

Leo VI was replaced by his younger brother Alexander, the third son of Basil I. Leo VI made Alexander his co-emperor in 879 AD but ruled by himself until his death in 912 AD.

No sooner had he become emperor than Alexander dismissed all of Leo's advisers and exiled Leo's widow Zoë to a nunnery. Alexander also refused to honour his brother's obligations and pay the Bulgars tribute. King Simeon was not at all pleased and resumed his hostilities against the Byzantines. One positive thing that Alexander did was to make his young nephew (Leo IV's son) Constantine VII his co-emperor.

Alexander ruled for only a year before five-year-old Constantine VII succeeded him. Being of young age, Constantine could not officially rule so from time to time relatives and court officials were appointed to act on his behalf. One such official was Romanus I, a soldier of some distinction, who co-ruled with Constantine from 920 to 944 AD.

Constantine VII was considered a good emperor because he brought prolonged stability to his empire. Commerce and the arts flourished during his reign and his world enjoyed prosperity and peace. It was during Constantine's

reign that Simeon's son, Petar, became ruler of the Bulgars in 927 AD. It was at Petar's insistence that the Byzantines relinquished a great part of Macedonia to the Bulgars. Constantine VII's relatively long reign ended in 959 AD and he was replaced by his son Romanus II. Constantine named his son Romanus to honour his trusted friend and co-emperor Romanus I.

Romanus II's reign was active but brief. Unlike his father who sought peace, Romanus wanted military adventures and initiated a period of military activities. He exploited a weakness in the Muslim Empire and attacked the Saracens. In 960 AD he recaptured Crete and invaded Cilicia. Romanus II died in 963 AD leaving two infants, Basil II and Constantine VIII, as heirs. They would share their rule with their mother, Theophano, as regent.

Soon after Romanus's death one of his victorious generals, General Nicephorus, who had campaigned against the Saracens, returned and married empress Theophano. Even though he recovered Cyprus and his armies overran most of Syria for the glory of the empire, his motives towards the throne made him extremely unpopular with the clergy and the court. As his unpopularity grew Theophano decided to be rid of him and annulled her marriage. She then had him murdered.

John (Ivan I) Tsimisce, the man who arranged for Nicephorus's murder forced himself onto the throne and proclaimed himself "associate ruler", to rule on behalf of the two children. He then expected Empress Theophano to marry him but when that did not happen, he had her exiled in a convent. In time John, like Basil the Macedonian, made amends for his crime and treated the boys and his colleagues with much respect which boosted his popularity in the court.

The relative peace in the Balkans was again disrupted in 969 AD when the Russian, Sviatoslav, decided to invade Bulgaria. The Russians had been active in the region for a while and were slowly encroaching on Bulgarian territory. The outright invasion was prompted by Petar's death in 969 AD. After Petar's death there was no heir present in his palace to replace him. Both of his sons, Boris and Roman, at the time were in Tsari Grad, held hostage by the Byzantines. Upon Petar's death they were quickly returned to safeguard the Bulgar crown but by then it was too late. The Russians were already in Preslav, the Bulgar capital, and they captured the boys.

In the absence of a Bulgar heir, the Comitopoloι brothers, David, Moses, Aaron and Samoιl sons of Duke-Comes Nikola, organized an uprising.

Finally in 971 AD the Byzantines organized a counter attack and defeated Sviatoslav in Silistria on the Danube, in two decisive battles. A peace treaty was reached, which not only ceased Russian aggression but also gave the Byzantines access into Russia. With Russia as an ally, Christianization of the Russian people was not far behind.

Feeling confident after his victories with Russia, John decided to move his campaign to Syria where the Saracens had been on the move recovering more ground. Unfortunately his career was cut short by his sudden death in 976 AD.

By now Basil II had reached age twenty. He was of age to rule alone, along with his younger brother Constantine VIII, without the need of associates.

Since Petar's rule in 927 AD, even though Bulgarian expansion in the region had halted, Macedonia was still occupied by both the Bulgars and the Byzantines. At the time, neither empire had access to resources outside of their own territories and both empires were dependent upon internal means to support their military and administrations. Macedonia's economy, at the time, was mostly rural agriculture consisting of communes operated independently and co-operatively by clan and tribal relationships. Tribal lords ruled over principalities who for the most part were leaders of the co-operatives. As the need for more resources increased in order to support both empires, so did Byzantine and Bulgar control over Macedonian principalities. The lords who once governed Macedonia independently or semi-independently soon became obedient tools of the occupiers. With time lords were appointed and dismissed at the will of their rulers and only existed to serve them. In addition to the appointed lords, the Bulgars brought their own judges, tax collectors and church officials to serve them.

With the strengthening of Byzantine and Bulgar rule in Macedonia the decline of tribal self-government among the Macedonians was accelerated. At that time both the Byzantine and Bulgar states had well-formed feudal social relations. More and more agricultural co-operative communes were transformed into territorial communes, which accelerated the division of co-operatively held property. As a result of the clan-link breakdown in Macedonia, new and numerous feudal lords began to appear taking over lands and people. Among them were foreigners and the church. Foreigners from other parts of the empire were granted Macedonian lands and privileges to use the Macedonian population to do their work. Church and monastery land holdings were formed and in time increased through gifts and by means of confiscations. Many Macedonian peasants lost their lands to the church due to defaulting on loans or when being accused of religious crimes.

The establishment of feudal social structures in Macedonia opened the way for mass exploitation not only of the feudal principalities but also of the free peasants who still lived in rural communities. The situation worsened around the middle of the tenth century when the profitable Bulgar wars of conquest came to an end. Having no other substantial sources of income to support the Bulgar military, administrative, court and church systems, the Bulgars turned to feudal exploitation. After everyone took their cut, the Macedonian peasant was left with nothing. Pushed beyond the brink of starvation, the Macedonian peasants revolted in what later became known as the Bogomil movement. Even though it was religious in nature, the Bogomil movement was predominantly a class struggle between the poor Macedonian peasant and his rich foreign rulers. The Bogomil movement was initiated in Macedonia by a Macedonian priest named Bogomil.

It is said that at the dawn of medieval Macedonia two great men arose, Kliment of Ohrid and a priest named Bogomil. The first was an educator and writer whose distinguished work is the pride of Macedonia. The second was an

idealist whose heretical theory became a rallying cry for the oppressed in Macedonia and later throughout Europe.

Bogomil was the first to teach religious elements adopted from the Paulician and Marsalian teachings. These beliefs, which forbade taking sacraments, worshipping images, including the cross, and refuted much of the Bible, were probably introduced to Macedonia by the Armenian colonists deposited in Thrace by past Byzantine emperors. Many of the dualistic, anti-ecclesiastical and anti-feudal characteristics of these movements found their expression in the Bogomil ideology.

The first Bogomil church was built underground, probably by Bogomil himself, to avoid detection and persecution. Bogomil churches served as houses of worship and as schools to disseminate Bogomil doctrines. The Bogomils believed in the existence of a struggle between good and evil and that good would conquer in the end. They maintained that the rich were the servants of the devil and anyone who submitted to them was going against God. According to them, the entire visible world with all its laws and systems had been created not by God but by the devil. They opposed the existence of churches and monasteries, were against the use of crosses, icons and feasts and propagated the belief that man could pray to God without the aid of a priest. Much of the energy attributed to the rise of the Bogomil movement came from the unbearable exploitation from foreign rulers and the Church.

The Bogomil movement, in reality, was a rebellion against secular feudal lords, the state body and the empires themselves. Foreign rule brought higher taxes, more violence and additional punishment for the common people. Villages grew poorer and peasants lost their properties and means of livelihood. Many were taken prisoner and became serfs and slaves, sometimes in their own lands.

Under feudal ownership the peasants were fully dependent upon their feudal lords. Some historians argue that Kliment of Ohrid's visit to the Bulgar capital and his resignation as bishop a few months before his death was in response to the violence and devastation the Bulgars inflicted on the territory of the Bishopric of Velika.

The swift spread of the Bogomil movement prompted Petar, the Bulgar king, to take measures for its suppression but he did not succeed. Bogomilism was strongest in the territory defined by the triangle of the Vardar River, Ohrid and Mt. Shar. His intervention, however, did cause the Bogomils much suffering. But even the cruelest of methods did not stop the insurrection, which in time spread and became a general people's movement. Petar's death and the Russian campaigns drastically reduced Bulgar control over Macedonia allowing the Bogomil movement to flourish, at least for a while.

In the meantime, eager to exploit the situation, a new force of power was emerging in Macedonia. In 976 AD, the year emperor John (Tsimisces) died, the four brothers, David, Moses, Aaron and Samoil raised a rebellion. With the collapse of Bulgar rule and in the absence of Byzantine forces, the rebellion was successful and the brothers decided to rule their newly established state jointly. Unfortunately, the joint rule did not last too long. Vlach shepherds killed David,

somewhere between Castra and Prespa, and Moses died during a siege in Serres. In the absence of David and Moses a struggle for the throne ensued between Aaron and Samoil. Samoil, being a much more talented leader and statesman, was victorious. To prevent further problems Samoil had Aaron and his family executed, with the exception of Aaron's son Ivan.

After consolidating his power Samoil started a westerly campaign penetrating Thrace, Macedonia and Thessaly right down to the Peloponnesus. Just recovering from its last sacking, Solun was about to be sacked again but Samoil decided to continue south and in so doing he took a large number of towns, including Larissa. Samoil resettled the inhabitants of Larissa in the interior of his state and incorporated the Larissan soldiers into his own army.

From Larissa he removed the remains of St. Achilles and brought them to Prespa, to the island of Ail. Protected by the waters of Lake Mala Prespa, Samoil made Ail his capital and built a magnificent palace on it.

It was no accident that Samoil received his strongest support from the territory defined by the triangle of the Vardar River, Ohrid and Mt. Shar. Samoil's success was fueled by the Bogomil movement and its distaste for foreign rule. In Macedonia the Bogomil movement was particularly influential in the creation of favourable conditions for a liberation uprising and the formation of an independent state. Samoil took full advantage of the situation and established a Macedonian state.

Although Samoil may not have been a Bogomil himself, he accepted Bogomilism and its right to exist in his new kingdom. In turn, the Bogomils ceased to verbally attack Samoil, his upper classes, royal officials and high ranking clergy. If anyone was not pleased with Samoil's successes it was the Byzantines. Samoil, in combination with the Bogomil movement, was perceived as a powerful force and the Byzantines wanted it checked.

For the last ten years or so Basil II was attempting to put down insurrections in Asia, ignoring what was happening in his own backyard. But when the threat became too great to ignore, he gathered an army together and crossed over the frontier regions of the Rhodopes and the River Maritsa. There in August 986 AD, at the hands of Samoil, Basil suffered a crushing defeat. Basil lost nearly his entire cavalry, a large section of his infantry and narrowly escaped death himself. A peace treaty was concluded giving Samoil free control of his new territory. Basil's defeat caused even more internal strife among the Byzantines, especially in Asia. The Byzantine quarrels took attention away from Samoil and opened opportunities to extend his rule to new territories.

In the summer of 989 AD Samoil resumed his campaign and took Berroea (Ber). After that he invaded Dalmatia and declared war on young king Vladimir. When Samoil reached Diocleia, Vladimir fled to the mountains but was persuaded by one of his tribal chieftains to surrender. Samoil took him prisoner and banished him to Prespa. In much need of resources, Samoil plundered the whole of Dalmatia and took whatever he could find. He then burned the cities of Kotor and Dubrovnik and razed many villages as far away as Zadar. Samoil had no navy and was not able to take any of the coastal towns.

Back in Prespa meanwhile, Samoil's daughter Kossara fell in love with the young captive king Vladimir and wanted to marry him. Not to disappoint her, Samoil gave in and gave her his blessings. Now that he was his son-in-law he gave Vladimir his former kingdom back. As a wedding gift he also gave the newlyweds Dyrrachium and all its territories. He even returned Trebinye to Vladimir's uncle, Dragomir. Samoil's good deeds not only earned him the respect of his son-in-law but Vladimir also became his ally and loyal vassal.

When the Byzantine civil war ended Basil decided it was time to terminate his three year treaty with Samoil, which lasted from 987 to 990 AD. War broke out in 990 AD and lasted until 994 AD during which time Basil captured and destroyed a number of Samoil's strongholds. In retaliation, in late 994 AD, Samoil prepared a siege against Solun during which Gregory Taronites, the city's Governor, was killed. Gregory died while attempting to rescue his son, Ashot, who had been ambushed during a reconnaissance mission. When Basil found out, he was furious and sent Uranus, his Supreme Commander from the west, to investigate. Uranus discovered that not only had Samoil besieged Solun, but he had been plundering the surrounding countryside. He had also been campaigning in Thessaly, Boeotia, Attica and the Peloponnesus. Upset by the situation, Basil ordered Uranus to attack Samoil and put an end to his free reign.

Uranus immediately went in pursuit of Samoil but found the River Spercheius swollen from a flash flood. Unable to cross he camped on the river's bank. As it happened, Samoil's army had also made camp nearby but on the opposite side of the river. Upon his discovery that Samoil was close by, Uranus went in search of and found a safe place to cross. During the night he made the crossing and attacked his sleeping adversary. Being unprepared, Samoil's army was devastated and both Samoil and his son were badly wounded and barely managed to escape.

Victorious, Basil demanded that Samoil surrender. Instead of surrendering Samoil fled to his capital. To convince Basil not to pursue him, Samoil agreed to sign a peace treaty and offered his surrender in writing. But instead of surrendering Samoil had himself proclaimed King. What Samoil really wanted was the crown of an emperor but the Pope of Rome, Gregory V, had no intention of creating another Emperor. Samoil could have taken the Bulgar crown, but unfortunately that crown was also in Tsari Grad and out of reach. So, all that Samoil could legally hope for was a mere king's crown. Even though Samoil's crown was not recognized by Tsari Grad, his coronation gave him international recognition. For the Pope of Rome, this was another chance to erode and weaken Byzantine rule.

When Basil found out that Samoil was crowned king he became furious and once again dispatched Uranus to destroy him. Unable to engage Samoil in battle, Uranus went on a looting spree burning everything in his path. After three months of mayhem and destruction Uranus failed his mission and returned to Tsari Grad empty handed.

Safe, at least for now, Samoil took the opportunity to marry another daughter, Miroslava, to Ashot, Gregory's son from Solun whom he had

previously captured. As a wedding gift he gave the newlyweds Governorship of Dyrrachium with king Vladimir's full approval. The ungrateful Ashot, however, fled to Tsari Grad and for his loyalty was awarded the title of Magistrate, by the Byzantines. In the meantime his wife, Miroslava, became a lady-in-waiting at the Tsari Grad court. Soon after Ashot fled, the city leaders of Dyrrachium broke off relations with Vladimir and surrendered their city to the Byzantines.

In retaliation and hoping to stir trouble for Basil in Tsari Grad, Samoil began a propaganda campaign promoting Vatatz, a family member from the Basil Glavas family as his ally. The Basil Glavas family and a number of other nobles had taken refuge with Samoil to avoid persecution from Basil.

Instead of creating trouble, Samoil's actions further infuriated Basil prompting him to initiate a new military offensive. Taking a route via Philippopolis, Basil destroyed most cities in the region of Serdica. In the year 1000 he dispatched a large army and attacked all fortified cities, capturing Great and Little Preslav and Pliska, near the River Maritsa. In 1001 Basil himself joined the offensive and marched his army by Solun in the direction of Berroea, where he captured Dobromir. Basil then captured Kolidron, near Berroea, and put Servia under siege. In spite of Servia's brave resistance, the city fell into Basil's hands anyway. Nikolitsa, Servia's Governor, was taken captive to Tsari Grad but instead of being thrown in jail, Basil conferred upon him the honour of a patrician. Nikolitsa, however, was not satisfied and fled to Samoil and together they attacked Servia. Basil retaliated and again captured Nikolitsa but this time he conferred upon him the honour of serving in chains in exile in his jail in Tsari Grad.

After subduing Servia, Basil took his campaign to Thessaly. He took back and made repairs to the damaged fortresses which Samoil's troops had held. He then refortified the fortresses with fresh Byzantine garrisons. After that he turned his attention to Voden and took the city by force from the aggressive Governor Drazhan. Drazhan was captured and sent to Solun as Basil's prisoner. Upon his arrival in Solun, Basil dispatched Uranus to Antioch to deal with the Arabs. Uranus was replaced with the patrician David Arijant as Solun's new military commander.

In 1002 Basil made his way to Vidin and after an eight-month siege he broke through the defenses and captured the town. On the same day Samoil forced marched his troops through Thrace, looting and trashing Endrene (Adrianople). If Samoil's intent was to get Basil's attention by trashing Endrene, he succeeded. Basil now moved his campaign to Skopje, where he caught up with Samoil. Unexpectedly Samoil fled without a fight and Skopje's governor surrendered the city to Basil. From Skopje, Basil took his campaign to the fortress of Pernik where he encountered heavy resistance from the great warrior Krakras. Basil failed to take the town and incurred great losses in the process and was forced to return to Tsari Grad.

As if Samoil did not have enough problems with the Byzantines he now made the Hungarians angry. His son, who was married to a Hungarian princess, decided to leave her thus bringing disgrace to his family and an end to the cordial

relations between Samoil and King Stephen I. After the embarrassing incident, King Stephen abandoned his alliance with Samoil and joined Basil who had offered him an alliance of his own.

In the recent past, Byzantine attacks and plundering of Samoil's territory were more frequent and of greater intensity. Samoil felt it was time do something and soon. His chance came in 1014 when Basil's forces were about to enter a gorge in the Rhodope Mountains. Samoil surrounded the gorge with a strong force in what was going to be a surprise attack. Unfortunately Basil must have anticipated Samoil's move and ordered one of David Arijant's generals to force march his troops around Samoil's forces. When a fierce battle broke out between Basil and Samoil, Samoil's army was attacked from the rear and trapped. Unable to withdraw, many of Samoil's soldiers were slain and even more were captured. Samoil himself was saved by his son who aided his escape to the fortress of Prilep.

After his victory Basil rounded up all his prisoners and had his soldiers gouge their eyes out. According to accounts there were fifteen thousand Macedonian soldiers captured that day. To lead the blind soldiers back to Samoil, Basil ordered that one out of every hundred men be left with one eye intact. This was indeed a gruesome act, a real tragedy not only for Samoil but for Macedonia as well. Shaken by the sight of this tragedy Samoil died of shock two days later. Samoil's son Gabriel Radomir succeeded him.

When Samoil died in 1014, his kingdom was vast and included the whole of Macedonia (except for Solun), Thessaly, Epirus, the coastal sclavenes of Oiocleia, Travunya and Zachlunia, the Neretva region (excluding the islands) as far as Cetina, Serbia, Bosnia and a considerable part of Bulgaria. For the most part, the majority of the population living in Samoil's empire was Macedonian with large Slav pockets south of Olympus down to the Peloponnesus. To a lesser extent there lived Bulgars, Serbs, Croats, Romani, Albanians and Vlachs. Additionally there lived migrants such as Vardariot Turks and Armenians who were recently settled there by former Byzantine emperors and some by Samoil. While many Armenians existed in Thrace, Samoil had also settled some in Pelagonia, Prespa and Ohrid. The Romani were known to exist mostly in coastal regions.

Samoil's kingdom was a newly created state with a completely different nucleus of people and with completely different domestic and foreign policies than any of his neighbours. The center of Samoil's state was in the far south of the Balkans, inside today's Republic of Macedonia. Samoil had a number of capitals, which he used from time to time. During his reign Samoil moved his capital to several places including Prespa, Ohrid, Prilep, Bitola, Pronishte and Setin, all of which were inside Macedonia.

According to ancient sources, very little is known about the socio-economic conditions and the organization of Samoil's state. It is likely that the majority of people in Samoil's kingdom were peasants, most of whom were freemen, but those working on the feudal estates were either serfs or churchmen. The serfs worked on both secular and church lands while churchmen worked exclusively

on church lands. Being of a slightly better social class, the churchmen were exempt from heavy taxes. However, the churchmen were obliged to donate extra labour, probably in community service, in lieu of taxes.

The noble class in Samoil's state was made up mostly of feudal lords and aristocrats who were allied behind Samoil and supported his policies. After his death the alliances began to erode and the nobles went their separate ways in pursuit of their own interests which led them closer and closer towards the Byzantines.

Slavery was rarely practiced but on occasion slaves were captured and sold, usually outside the kingdom. The main source of slaves was prisoners of war. It is well known, for example, that Samoil enslaved the population of Larissa after their city fell.

Most of Samoil's income came from imperial land-holdings, sale of livestock, judicial fines and military plunder. Samoil's treasury contained many valuables including gold and money. Having no coins of his own minted, the currency circulated in Samoil's kingdom was Byzantine.

As for his military makeup, Samoil was supreme commander and enlisted his forces almost exclusively from his own kingdom. He had an enormous army consisting of both infantry and cavalry. Samoil was an able strategist who personally took part not only in planning but also in executing battles. For the most part, Samoil's weaponry and military dress was similar to the Byzantine. His soldiers wore a short outer tunic, trousers and a shirt of steel. They also wore a helmet with a pivoting extension which could be lowered down to the chin to protect the warrior's face. Each soldier was armed with a defensive shield, long spear and sword. Other accessories included bugles and standards. Besides his regular army, Samoil also employed his own bodyguards. Samoil had no navy or any type of war vessel.

The official language of Samoil's kingdom was Macedonian (Slavonic) although Koine was also used occasionally as the language of diplomacy at the imperial palace.

Samoil built some of the most significant buildings in his kingdom including the Basilica of St. Achilles, his various palaces and a number of churches situated in the southern parts of his kingdom.

The famous and historic Archbishopric of Ohrid was created during Samoil's reign. Initially the Archbishopric was seated in Prespa but when Samoil moved to Ohrid, he brought it with him. Ohrid became his capital as well as his religious center. After its consolidation, the new archbishop was given authority over all bishops who fell under Samoil's jurisdiction. Unfortunately the Byzantines refused to recognize the Archbishop of Ohrid, probably because the Roman church which crowned Samoil had consecrated it. During Samoil's rule the Macedonian church was quite popular and the clergy, especially the bishops, enjoyed their privileged positions.

When Basil II found out that Samoil had died, he marched his army to Polog via Solun and razed Samoil's imperial palace in Bitola. His troops stormed Prilep and Shtip bringing devastation to everything that stood in their path.

In the spring of 1015 Basil set out for Voden and subdued an uprising. He then moved the town's inhabitants to Voler. He garrisoned Voden with Byzantine lancers (mounted soldiers armed with long spears) and dispatched two of his military commanders to the Meglen region to seize the town. The siege turned out to be more difficult than expected and the conflict drew in Basil himself. The town finally fell and was destroyed.

To draw the war away from his kingdom, Radomir, Samoil's son and heir, decided to attack the Byzantines on their own territory. He would have succeeded had it not been for Vladislav's treachery. It seems that Basil secretly promised Vladislav (Radomir's nephew) the Macedonian crown and convinced him to murder his uncle. Vladislav slew Radomir in 1015, somewhere near Ostrovo, during a hunting expedition.

On his accession, Vladislav took a vow of loyalty to Basil and became a vassal king of the Byzantines. After his accession, Vladislav went after Vladimir, Samoil's son-in-law, his only remaining opposition and with the help of the wretched Archbishop David, Vladislav enticed Vladimir to come to Prespa, where he was murdered.

With no internal opposition, Vladislav now consolidated his power and immediately broke off relations with Basil. Basil in turn declared war on the Macedonian kingdom and went in pursuit of Vladislav.

While his military commanders were devastating Pelagonia, Basil set out for Ohrid. On his way forces loyal to Vladislav engaged him. To minimize his losses and create fear among Vladislav's allies, Basil ordered the gauging of the eyes of all those caught fighting against him.

In spite of heavy opposition, Basil took Ohrid and set course for Dyrrachium. On his way news reached him that Ivets, one of Vladislav's military commanders, had completely routed Basil's army in Pelagonia. Basil abandoned his course for Dyrrachium and immediately went in pursuit of Ivets but was unable to engage him in battle. Basil then left for Solun and from there went to Mosynopolis on a totally different campaign.

For a while Basil was busy fighting a war against the Khazars in the Crimea and it was not until the middle of the following year, in 1016, that he was able to renew his Balkan offensive. This time he made his way via Philippopolis to the district of Serdica and surrounded the fortified town of Pernik for a second time in fourteen years. The siege was taking too long so Basil left again for Mosynopolis and then, in the spring of 1017, invaded southern Macedonia by way of Solun. He again dispatched his two commanders to Pelagonia while he himself set out for Kostur. On his way he received news that the great warrior Krakras had allied himself with Vladislav and that the two intended to invade Byzantine territories.

Basil immediately halted his advance and went in pursuit, razing and burning several fortresses on his way. When he arrived in the vicinity of Ostrovo, Basil captured Setina and immediately dispatched his elite detachments in pursuit of Vladislav. Basil followed with the main army. The sight of the huge Byzantine army struck panic among the ranks of Vladislav's soldiers, especially since Basil

threatened to gauge their eyes out. Defeat for Vladislav was inevitable but, for reasons unknown, Basil withdrew his pursuit and returned to Tsari Grad in January 1018.

Vladislav, in the meantime, regrouped his army and took the offensive with aims of occupying Dyrrachium and taking possession of Vladimir's lands. Unfortunately Vladislav was killed during the city's siege. As soon as Vladislav died his commanders sent Basil a letter offering him their allegiance and the surrender of the fortresses and towns in their possession. After taking possession of some sixty or so fortresses and towns, Basil went to Ohrid and took possession of Samoil's extremely rich treasury.

Even after Vladislav's fall, some of his loyal supporters like Fruzhin, Vladislav's eldest son, and the Dukes Ivets and Nikolitsa refused to surrender. Fruzhin took a diplomatic approach and eventually surrendered and was given a pardon and title. Ivets resisted and set camp in southern Prespa in an attempt to organize an insurrection. Unfortunately, through deception, the Byzantines captured Ivets, gauged out his eyes and cast him into prison.

Nikolitsa too refused to surrender but after being surrounded with no hope of escape, he yielded to the Byzantine emperor and received a prison sentence in Solun.

By August 1018, Basil II succeeded in destroying the last remnants of Samoil's forty-two year reign (976-1018) of his Macedonian kingdom. By now Basil II was an old man and after finishing with Samoil, he took his campaign to Armenia. Some historians believe this was a mistake. By destroying Armenia he destroyed an effective buffer zone between the Byzantines and the Islamic powers.

Basil II died in 1025 and so did the revived strength and energy of the Byzantine Empire. Basil was succeeded by his younger brother Constantine VIII, the last prince of the Macedonian dynasty. Constantine died in 1028 and for the next twenty-six years the Byzantine emperors were the successive husbands of Constantine VIII's daughter Zoe: Romanus III Argyrus (1028-1034), Michael IV (1034-1041), Michael V Calaphates (1041-1042) and Constantine IX Monomachus (1042-1054).

Chapter 18 - Decline and Fall of the Byzantine Empire

Once he conquered Macedonia, Basil II made her into a Byzantine province and sub-divided her into themes. He then installed a large army to keep the peace.

After Samoil's death, the Archbishopric of Ohrid was subordinated to Byzantine authority and incorporated into the Patriarchate of Tsari Grad. Macedonia was reorganized into thirty-two eparchies. The Bulgarian, Serbian and Albanian eparchies were also incorporated into the Ohrid Archbishopric. An Archbishop and the Church Synod were given supreme authority over the Ohrid Archbishopric. The Synod met in Ohrid once a year to elect new bishops and discipline clergy accused of various breaches and misconduct.

The Archbishop of Ohrid was no longer elected by the Synod, as it had been under Samoil's rule, but was appointed by Tsari Grad and confirmed by the Byzantine Emperor. The Archbishop remained autocephalous but was subject to the Byzantine state and church authorities. He was a member of the principal administration of the Patriarchate of Tsari Grad, attended its sittings, defended the interests and prestige of the Byzantine Church and participated in the resolution of disagreements with the western Church.

Basil II allowed the higher clergy of the Archbishopric to retain some privileges. By doing so he gained their support in strengthening Byzantine rule in Macedonia. To appear sympathetic he also appointed John of Debar, a Macedonian, head of the Archbishopric.

After Basil II's death in 1025 his successor Leo attempted to tighten control over the Macedonian church by replacing the Slavonic language with Koine. Having encountered opposition, in 1037 he removed John of Debar, one of the strongest supporters of the Macedonian language. Henceforth the Archbishops of Ohrid and the bishops of the churches in the Ohrid Archbishopric were regularly elected from the ranks of the Koine speaking clergy. The lower clergy remained Slavonic speakers because they were closer to the people.

When Ohrid came under Byzantine control the Koine speaking hierarchs began to eradicate all documents written in Slavonic. Many manuscripts which had been preserved in Ohrid were destroyed. In the churches Slavonic liturgy began to be preached in adaptations translated from Koine. The Slavonic names of rivers, towns, etc. were also replaced by either classical Koine or Latin names. The Archbishopric of Ohrid was slowly becoming a Koine speaking institution designed to destroy the Macedonian traditions, which had been nurtured over the years. Slavonic literacy could not, however, be totally destroyed. The adaptation of Koine did not succeed in taking any deep roots among the people who continued to communicate in their native Slavonic language.

As soon as Macedonia came under Byzantine control the development of feudal relations was again accelerated. Excessive recruitment of men from the ranks of the peasantry, for the Byzantine army, weakened communities and made them easier to fall into feudal hands. Also, for their security from pillaging invaders, peasants had no choice but to join feudal holdings and pay the feudal lords protection money. Remaining communities who held common lands such as meadows, woodlands, rivers, etc. also became feudal possessions.

Feudal lords were not the only ones after land grabs in Macedonia. The church, in attempting to increase its own holdings, also played its part in the dissolution of the free rural communities. Besides land gifts received from the Byzantine rulers, the church also established patronage over the free rural communities. Over time the church converted free peasants into feudally tied ones. This was done mostly through land confiscations where peasants were found guilty of heresy, polygamy, or unlawful marriage. In time the church too became a large-scale feudal property-owner.

Besides feudal holdings, the Byzantines also set aside lands in support of military needs. Entire villages or several village groupings were set aside purely for providing soldiers for the draft.

The majority of the Macedonian population after Samoil's death became subservient to the feudal lords. Serfs formed the basic category of the tied feudal population. Serfs were allowed to retain their hereditary holdings but under the authority of the feudal lords. Below the serfs were the landless people. They lived and worked on feudal estates or on land set aside for them by the community. Below the landless people were the servants of the feudal lords. Their property was part of the feudal lord's personal demesne and they were personally bound to their lords who had the authority to sell them together with their land.

Below the servants were the slaves. Unlike classical slaves who had no rights at all, with time and services rendered, these slaves gradually received small holdings as well as certain rights from their feudal lords. The slave class consisted almost exclusively of those who either could not pay-up the state taxes or those who had rebelled against their exploiters or the state.

The churchmen, on the other hand, were a separate class of people. The churchmen who owned land enjoyed certain privileges which had been granted to the church by the state.

Like the churchmen, the artisans who were employed on feudal estates were a distinct and more privileged class of the tied population.

With regard to taxation, the Byzantines had instituted three types of feudal rent known as work or corvee, kind and monetary. Unfortunately the Macedonian population was burdened with all three types. The work rent or corvee was applicable to the entire population tied to or obliged to work for a feudal lord. The proportion of this unpaid labour was not defined so in times of need, particularly in the summer months, several days of a person's workweek were devoted to it. The majority of this corvee was dedicated to repairing or building fortresses, constructing roads and bridges, building boats and baking bread for the army.

The rent in kind, which varied from individual to individual, was paid with a variety of "finished products" made for the state and for the feudal lords. The customary practice of giving gifts to officials was a particularly heavy burden on the population.

Taxes in kind were also exacted by the church. The Ohrid Church, according to its established canon, exacted taxes in kind from the entire population, including the Vlachs and others.

Monetary rent was also exacted on a large scale during this period. After the tax reforms of 1040, regular state taxes were required to be paid with money. With the growing need to pay monetary taxes, a strong stimulus was induced to trade goods for money. This, in many ways, was good for the economy and development of feudalism. Unfortunately the transition became another burden on the Macedonian peasant population. After the feudal lords were awarded rights to collect state taxes, abuse was not far behind. Many took advantage of

their position of authority and exacted extra taxes for themselves above and beyond those prescribed by law.

Besides regular taxes, Macedonians were also obliged to pay various supplementary taxes, like judicial fines, toll tax for crossing rivers, fishing tax, water-mill tax and marriage tax. As a marriage tax the groom was obliged to pay his bishop a gold piece and the bride twelve ells (15 meters) of linen.

By 1040, discontent with Byzantine rule, the situation in Macedonia reached a boiling point and the population began to rebel. Leading the rebellion was Peter Delyan, Gabriel Radomir's son by his first wife, the daughter of the Hungarian king, mentioned earlier. The rebellion, supported by the Hungarian king, began in the regions of Belgrade and Morava near the Hungarian border and soon spread south to Skopje. With popular support and assistance from the local Macedonian population, the rebel army invaded and took Skopje. Tsari Grad quickly reacted by dispatching an army in pursuit. But instead of attacking, the Byzantine soldiers defected and proclaimed Tihomir, one of their own soldiers, as their emperor. Tihomir unfortunately died in battle leaving his army under Delyan's command.

After a long period of secure prosperity, the Byzantine Empire of the 11th century began to experience new pressures, which aggravated the latent tensions in its society. A division in the Byzantine ruling class began to take place, creating conflict between the military aristocracy of the provinces and the civilian aristocracy and bureaucracy of Tsari Grad. Each faction at any opportune moment would not hesitate to proclaim its own emperor, who was a rival of the other faction. The sophisticated urban aristocracy favoured non-military rulers who would expand the civil service and supply them and their families with lucrative offices and decorative titles. The military families, whose wealth lay not in the capital but in the provinces and who had been penalized by Basil II's legislation, favoured emperors who were soldiers, not civil servants.

Towards the end of the 11th century it became clear that the empire's military strength was no longer sufficient to hold back its enemies. The landowners in the provinces appreciated the dangers more readily than the government in Tsari Grad. They made those dangers an excuse to enlarge their estates in defiance of all the laws passed in the 10th century.

The theme system in Anatolia, which had been the basis of the empire's military power, was rapidly breaking down. On the other hand, the urban aristocracy of Tsari Grad, reacting against the evils of war, strove to make their city a center of culture and sophistication. For example, in 1045 Constantine IX endowed Tsari Grad University with a new charter. The law school was revived under the brilliant jurist John Xiphilinus. Not to be outdone, the school of philosophy thrived under the chairmanship of Michael Psellus, whose research into every field of knowledge earned him a reputation as the great educator of brilliant pupils. Psellus as an aristocrat, statesman, philosopher and historian was an example of the vigour of 11th century Byzantine society. What he and others like him failed to see, however, was that their empire was depleting the resources and living off the reputation built up by former Macedonian emperors.

Back in Macedonia, Delyan began a military campaign to recover his grandfather's kingdom. He started by sending troops to Dyrrachium and, with the support of the local people, managed to take that theme. He then sent a large army to besiege Solun. At the sight of Delyan's immense army, Emperor Michael IV, who at the time was waiting for him, fled in terror to Tsari Grad leaving Manuel Ivets in command of the Byzantine army. But instead of fighting, Ivets defected to Delyan's side, joining forces with the rebels.

Exploiting the panic which had risen in the ranks of the Byzantine army, Delyan dispatched armies in several directions. One, led by Anthimus, made its way south reaching as deep as the town Tiva, spreading the revolt into Epirus and conquering the theme of Naupactos. Another army took Demetrias (Volos in Thessaly) and so on. Soon Delyan was in possession of a large territory encompassing the greater part of Samoil's kingdom.

Dissatisfied with the situation in Macedonia, the higher echelons of Tsari Grad demanded that the Emperor do something. Not to disappoint them, the Emperor prepared for war and set out to meet Delyan in Macedonia. Unfortunately Delyan was not the emperor's only problem. Aleutian, John Vladislav's second son who was a patrician and commander of Theodosiopolis in Armenia, had also joined the rebellion. Delyan not only accepted Aleutian's services, but also made him commander of his army of forty thousand soldiers and dispatched him to Solun.

Unbeknownst to Aleutian, however, the Byzantine army stationed in Solun must have been aware of his plans and surprised him. A battle ensued and Aleutian lost about fifteen thousand men. His defeat led to discord in the ranks of the rebels and Aleutian was suspected of treason. Suspicion turned to tragedy when Aleutian turned against Delyan, blinding him in a fit of rage. He then fled to the Byzantines. Stripped of their leaders, the rebels were thrown into confusion and the insurrection was condemned to fail.

In the spring of 1041 the Byzantine Emperor again prepared for war and set out for Ostrovo, the center of the revolt. There he captured Delyan and sent him to Solun. From Ostrovo the Emperor set out for the interior of Macedonia and met up with Manuel Ivets in Prilep. Ivets and his troops fought bravely but they were no match for the mighty Byzantine army. Ivets was captured and the rebellion was extinguished. After his successful campaign, the Byzantine Emperor triumphantly returned to Tsari Grad with Delyan and Ivets as his trophies.

Instead of bringing change for the better, the rebellion brought disaster to the Macedonian people. The Byzantine army, which consisted mainly of Norwegian mercenaries under the command of Harold Hardraga, devastated Macedonia. They enslaved most of the population and brought new state officials and feudal lords who, together with the army, introduced even more oppressive measures.

Unable to cope, the people rose again, this time in Thessaly. In 1066 the Vlach population in Thessaly rebelled under the leadership of Nikulitsa Delphin, the Governor of Larissa, whose grandfather had governed the town during Samuel's reign. Even though the rebellion was entrusted to Nikulitsa, a

descendent of rebels, he personally had no interest in a successful outcome. As a result, the revolt did not succeed in spreading as well as it could have and only extended to the towns of Larissa, Trikkala, Pharsala and the fortress of Cythros.

The Byzantine Emperor Constantine X was quick to react and stopped the rebellion from spreading into the interior of Macedonia. Then, even before the year was over, with Nikulitsa's help, Constantine successfully put down the rest of the rebellion.

In 1072, five years after the Thessalian rebellion, a new revolt broke out, this time inside Macedonia. The revolt, led by George Voyteh, took place in Skopje and was sparked by new and more oppressive financial policies introduced by the Byzantine authorities. The leaders of the revolt turned for help to Michael, the ruler of Zeta, who was related to Samuel. Michael sent his son Constantine Bodin along with three hundred of his elite troops. Voyteh and his rebels met Bodin at Prizren and immediately proclaimed him emperor under the name Peter, in honour of the fallen Peter Delyan.

On receiving news that the rebels were headed for Skopje, the former and current Byzantine governors of that city, along with their armies, came out to stop them. A battle ensued at Prizren and the Byzantines were defeated. After taking the governor of Skopje prisoner, Bodin divided his army in two columns. One column he dispatched to Naissus while the second column, with Petrilo in command, he sent into the interior of Macedonia. Voyteh remained in Skopje.

Petrilo's first stop was Ohrid where he was greeted by the town's people as a liberator. When Devol, the Byzantine governor, saw him coming he surrendered without a struggle. While the town's people were running out to greet the rebel army, the feudal lords, administrators and Byzantine soldiers slipped out the back and fled to the fortified town of Kostur. There, they convinced the Kostur governor to organize a strong defense. Soon enough Petrilo arrived and indeed was met with strong resistance. Soon after Petrilo arrived a battle ensued. Combined, the Byzantine Ohrid and Kostur armies inflicted great damage on the insurgents. Petrilo just barely managed to escape and fled to Zeta.

Bodin had a bit more luck and drove the Byzantines out of Naissus. However, hearing of Petrilo's defeat in Kostur, deflated his enthusiasm.

By now the main Byzantine army, led by Michael Saronit, was closing in on Skopje and the mere sight of its enormity frightened Voyteh. Outnumbered and outgunned, Voyteh agreed to surrender Skopje without a fight but secretly he sent for Bodin to come to his rescue. Unfortunately, once again the Byzantine spies did their job and Saronit set a trap for Bodin. Bodin's army was intercepted and defeated at Kossovo Polye. Bodin was captured and sent to Tsari Grad, along with Voyteh, as Saronit's prisoner. Voyteh unfortunately died on the way, probably from torture. Initially Bodin was imprisoned in Tsari Grad but later, at the intervention of Venetian mercenaries, he was returned to Zeta.

In 1073 the Byzantines stepped up their campaign in Macedonia and brought additional forces in to rout the remaining pockets of rebel resistance. Unfortunately that was not all that they did. In pursuit of the rebels, the Byzantine army destroyed Samoil's imperial palace in Prespa and looted the

churches in the vicinity. These acts further inflamed the situation and the rebels continued to resist, forcing the Byzantines to bring even more troops and take more drastic measures. Only by burning and razing everything, wherever opposition was offered, did the Byzantines succeed in putting down the rebellion. By the end of 1073 it was all over.

When all else failed the oppressed masses began to express their frustration by joining the Bogomil movement. They became particularly powerful at the end of the eleventh century and even more so during the course of the twelfth century. The struggle of the Bogomils was directed as equally against the feudal lords as it was against the Byzantine Emperor and his spiritual and ecclesiastical officials.

The Byzantine appointed Archbishop, Theophylact of Ohrid, waged a fierce war against the Bogomils of Ohrid yet, in spite of severe punishments, he did not succeed in stamping them out. Led by the priest Basil, the Bogomil apostles and women preachers spread Bogomilism throughout all the regions of the empire, even into Tsari Grad itself.

Confronted with this rapid spread of Bogomilism, the Byzantine Emperor Alexius I Comnenus decided to personally intervene. While making plans to eradicate the Bogomils he figured it was a good time to also attack the Paulician movement which existed on a large scale in the Balkans. His soldiers rounded up all the Bogomils they could catch, including their leader Basil, and brought them before a Synod in Tsari Grad. The Synod quickly condemned them to death and subsequently had them executed. The movements did not collapse as expected, however, but rather experienced a revival after Alexius I Comnenus's death in 1118.

During the 1070's, while Michael VII Parapinakes was emperor, many enemies began to descend upon Byzantine territory. The new enemies that appeared at this time seemed to emerge almost simultaneously on the northern, eastern and western frontiers. It was nothing new for the Byzantines to have to fight on multiple fronts simultaneously but that task required a soldier on the throne.

The Pechenegs, a Turkic tribe, had long been a northern neighbour and valuable ally against the Bulgars, Magyars and Russians. After the Bulgar Empire collapsed the Pechenegs began to raid across the Danube into Byzantine territory. As allies, Constantine IX allowed them to settle south of the river but by mid-11th century they were becoming a nuisance. They were threatening Thrace and Macedonia and encouraging the spirit of revolt among the Bogomils. Alexius I put their reign of terror to an end in 1091.

The next to arrive, this time on the eastern frontier, were the Seljuq Turks, whose conquests would change the shape of both the Muslim and Byzantine worlds. In 1055, having conquered Persia, they entered Baghdad and their prince assumed the title of sultan and protector of the Abbasid caliphate. Before long they asserted their authority up to the borders of Fatimid Egypt and through Byzantine Anatolia. They made their first appearance across the Byzantine

frontier in Armenia in the mid-1060's and went as far west as Caesarea in central Anatolia.

The appearance of the Turkish raiders frightened the military aristocracy in Anatolia who, in 1068, elected one of their own emperors, Romanus IV Diogenes. Romanus assembled an army consisting mainly of foreign mercenaries and went on a campaign against the Turks. In August 1071 the Byzantines lost the battle at Manzikert, near Lake Van in Armenia. Romanus was taken prisoner by the Seljuq sultan, Alp-Arslan. After signing a treaty with the sultan, Romanus was allowed to buy his freedom. Unfortunately Tsari Grad did not want him back and installed their candidate Michael VII. Subsequently Romanus's treaty with the Turks was rejected and Romanus himself was treacherously blinded. With their treaty rejected, the Seljuqs were justified in resuming their raids.

It did not take too long before an irreconcilable rift began to form between Tsari Grad and the eastern themes. Civil war broke out consuming all resources and leaving no troops to defend the eastern frontier. The Turks were quick to exploit the situation and by 1081 had penetrated Asia Minor and taken Nicaea. The heart of the empire's military and economic strength was now in Turkish hands.

The next enemy, the Normans, arrived from the west and began their conquest of southern Italy early in the 11th century. Ironically the Norman conquests were made possible by Basil II's project of recovering Sicily from the Arabs. Sicily was almost recovered in 1042 by the great general of the post-Macedonian era, George Maniaces. Unfortunately, being fearful of him and his military reputation, Constantine IX had him recalled and killed as a pretender to the throne. The Normans afterwards simply filled the political void and made steady progress conquering Italy.

In 1071 after a three-year siege, the Normans, led by Robert Guiscard, finally took Bari, the last remaining Byzantine stronghold in the west. After that Byzantine rule in Italy and the hope of re-conquering Sicily came to an end.

The simultaneous losses of Manzikert, to the Turks in the east, and Bari, to the Normans in the west were a disaster for the Byzantines. The final loss of Italy put a permanent physical barrier between the Byzantine east and the Latin west.

After conquering Bari, the Normans pressed on with their campaign into Byzantine territory. In 1072 they won a resounding victory in Dyrrachium and in the following year another in Ioannina. Then they turned to Macedonia and took Ohrid, the two Pologs and Skopje. After that they made their way to Berroea and Meglen and rebuilt the destroyed fortress. The Normans then followed the Vardar River and camped for three months in Beli Tsrkvi. Following their long rest they came back and took Pelagonia, Trikkala and Kostur. In January 1084, in an attempt to take Larissa, they suffered a devastating defeat. A year later Emperor Alexius I, making use of his victory, attacked and took back Kostur, forcing the Normans to retreat from the Balkans.

The Norman conquests had serious long term consequences for Macedonia. Outside of the Norman mayhem and looting, the Macedonians were once again subjected to new cruelties as the Byzantines returned and imposed law and order on the province.

The Norman expulsion unfortunately did not bring peace to Macedonia. As mentioned earlier, Bodin succeeded his father to the throne of Zeta in 1081 and immediately began campaigning in Byzantine territory. He seized Mokra, a part of the Ohrid district including Mt. Bagora, and then proceeded to take the district of Dyrrachium. At that time the Byzantine Emperor, Alexius I Comnenus, intervened and Bodin was forced to retreat. Later, from time to time, Bodin took the occasion to campaign in the Ohrid region but always withdrew at the presence of the Byzantine army.

Towards the end of the 1090's Vukan, the ruler of Rashka, decided to invade Macedonia and attack Skopje. Vukan's presence in Byzantine territory provoked a counter attack from the Emperor who this time personally took charge of the mission. Comnenus undertook three campaigns against Rashka in 1091, 1093, and 1094. His personal intervention not only gave the Byzantines an opportunity to take back all of Macedonia, but also sent a clear message to Bodin to keep out.

Even with all of Macedonia's possessions under Byzantine control, the empire could not replenish the military and economic resources it lost as a result of losing Asia Minor to the Turks. Its shrinking boundaries reduced the once mighty empire from the status of a world power to that of a small state fighting for survival. The loss of Anatolia forced the Byzantines to turn away from the east and start looking to the west.

The first sign of this westward interest was in 1082 after the Normans captured Dyrrachium and were about to advance overland to Solun. Alexius, the Byzantine emperor, having no resources to raise a sizable army, called on the Venetians to help him. However, even before the west had a chance to react, the Norman leader Robert Guiscard died, in 1085, thus temporarily easing the Norman problem. The following year the Seljuq Turk sultan died and the sultanate was engulfed with internal rivalries.

The Venetians eventually did come and were glad to help drive the Normans out of the Adriatic Sea but at the same time demanded large concessions for their services. In 1082 Alexius I granted them trading privileges in Tsari Grad with very lucrative terms. Unfortunately this created resentment for the westerners in Tsari Grad. The rich Byzantines, who otherwise might have invested in shipbuilding and trade, were pushed to invest in more familiar securities like land and property. In Alexius's estimation the loss of Anatolia was only temporary and he fully expected to win it back. He would have too had it not been for the first crusade of western Europe in 1096.

Alexius asked the west for help, not for the liberation of the Holy Land from the infidel but for the protection of Tsari Grad and the recovery of Anatolia. However, when Jerusalem was lost to the Turks in 1071 all the west could think of was revenge

The Holy War fervour finally peaked in 1095 when Pope Urban II appealed to the Christian world for recruits to go to war. The response in western Europe was overwhelming. Some came out of religious enthusiasm, others in the spirit of adventure and yet others with hopes of material gain. It was no comfort to Alexius to learn that four of the eight leaders of the First Crusade were Normans, among them Bohemond, the son of Robert Guiscard.

Failing to convince the Crusaders to help him re-take Anatolia, the next best thing the emperor could do was get the crusade leaders to swear that they would restore Byzantine towns or territories they might conquer from the Turks on their way to the Holy Land, back to the Byzantines. In return for this gesture of goodwill the emperor gave them guides, a military escort and food supplies.

One group of fearsome Crusaders, with Bohemond of Taranto at the helm, traveled along the Via Egnatia route and entered Macedonia in 1096. They had no qualms about using force and violence when it came to obtaining food and other necessities. While passing through they stopped in Kostur for several days, seizing oxen, mules and everything else they could pilfer. In the region between Prilep and Bitola they destroyed a fortified settlement and killed its inhabitants. While crossing the Vardar River the Crusaders were ambushed by a group of renegade Turkish and Pecheneg soldiers from the Byzantine army. Unscathed, the Crusaders continued on their journey to Serres where they were welcomed by Byzantine officials and given gifts collected from the local population. After a brief stop in Tsari Grad the Crusaders crossed into Asia Minor.

After a short siege the Crusaders, in 1097, took Nicaea and in accordance with their agreement gave it back to the Byzantines. In 1098 the Crusaders captured Antioch but this time they refused to honour the agreement. The trouble was started by Bohemond's refusal to turn it over on the grounds that he made the city his own principality. If other Crusaders could keep the lands they conquered for themselves, why shouldn't he? As precedence he used the establishment of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, which the crusaders had taken the year before. As further evidence, there were also the Latin conquered counties of Edessa and Tripoli which belonged to Crusaders as well. When the crusaders finished conquering they settled down and colonized their possessions, which stretched along the coast of Palestine and Syria. Then they began to quarrel among themselves.

While the crusaders were complacent and the Turks were busy fighting each other, Alexius established and secured a new boundary, extending his empire to the middle of Anatolia. Alexius was able to take advantage of prevailing rivalries between the Seljuq sultans at Konya, and the rival dynasty of the Danishmend emirs at Melitene.

The First Crusade may have brought some benefits to the Byzantines but it certainly created new problems. The small rivalries between Alexius and Bohemond soon erupted into full scale war when Bohemond invaded Byzantine territory. In the fall of 1107 Bohemond, with an army of forty-five thousand troops and two hundred transport ships, left Italy and disembarked near Avlona where he took the port without much difficulty. His army then set out for

Dyrrachium and took several neighbouring fortresses including Arbanon and Debar. By this time Alexius had built up his forces and immediately went in pursuit. He met Bohemond at Dyrrachium in 1108 and gave him a crushing defeat. Bohemond agreed to a peace treaty and withdrew to Italy where he died in 1111.

Alexius I's victory brought some prestige to the Byzantine Empire, but at a price. Alexius managed to rebuild his army and fleet only by sacrificing his economy. He devalued his gold coins to one-third their original value and imposed more supplementary taxes on his subjects. Alexius I's policies were continued after his death by his son John II Comnenus through the years 1118 to 1143 and by his grandson Manuel I Comnenus through the years 1143 to 1180.

With the dawn of the 12th century the increasingly complex political situation in Europe and the growing involvement of the western powers into Byzantine affairs could no longer be ignored. In Asia matters were also complicated by the conflict between the Seljuq and the Danishmend dynasties and by the activities of the crusader states. Foreign relations and skillful diplomacy became of paramount importance for the Byzantines as John II tried but failed to break the Venetian monopoly in Byzantine trade.

Manuel I came to the conclusion that the Byzantines could no longer ignore or afford to offend the growing powers in the west and went out of his way to understand and appease them. It was most unfortunate that the second Crusade in 1147 was during Manuel's reign. By trying hard to appease both sides, Manuel aggravated existing animosities between Byzantines and Latins pushing Tsari Grad deeper into the tangle of western politics.

While internal western rivalries kept the westerners busy fighting among themselves, Manuel started a campaign of recovery. His armies won back much of the northwest Balkans and almost conquered Hungary, reducing it to a Byzantine client kingdom. The Serbs too, under their leader Stephen Nemanja, were kept under control while Manuel's dramatic recovery of Antioch in 1159 gave the crusaders reason to treat him with respect. Unfortunately the Emperor went too far when he intervened in Anatolia to stop the formation of a single Turkish sultanate. After invading the Seljuq territory of Rum in 1176, his army was surrounded at Myriocephalon and annihilated. The loss of this battle marked the end of the counter-offensive against the Turks which was started by Alexius I. Manuel's failure in Asia Minor delighted the western emperor, Frederick I Barbarossa, who had supported the Seljuq sultan of Rum against the Byzantines and now openly threatened to take over the Byzantine Empire by force.

Manuel's personal relationships with the crusaders and with other westerners remained cordial to the end. But his policies antagonized the Holy Roman Empire, the papacy, the Normans and the Venetians. His effort to revive Byzantine prestige in Italy and the Balkans roused the suspicions of Venice. In 1171, following an anti-Latin demonstration in Tsari Grad, all Venetians in the empire were arrested and their properties confiscated. The Venetians did not forget this episode and soon began to think in terms of putting Tsari Grad under western control as the only means of securing their interest in Byzantine trade.

Manuel's policies antagonized many of his own people as well, especially his favouritism towards the Latins and the lavish granting of estates to them. Manuel's popularity soon plummeted. This prompted his cousin Andronicus I Comnenus to murder him in 1180 and take his throne. Andronicus, while posing as the champion of Byzantine patriotism and of the oppressed peasants, also murdered Manuel's widow and son Alexius II. Unfortunately when the time came to enforce his reforms he turned from a peoples' champion to a peoples' tyrant. By undermining the power of the aristocracy he weakened the empire's defenses and undid much of Manuel's work.

In the meantime, taking advantage of the internal Byzantine strife, the king of Hungary broke his treaty with them. Stephen Nemanja of Serbia also declared his independence from the Byzantines and founded a new Serbian kingdom. Dissent was not limited to outsiders alone. In 1185 Isaac Comnenus, governor of Cyprus, took advantage of the situation and set himself up as independent ruler of the island. In the same year the Normans again invaded Macedonia and captured Solun. The news prompted a counterrevolution in Tsari Grad resulting in Andronicus's murder.

In 1185 the Normans, armed with eighty thousand men and two hundred vessels, laid siege to Solun by land and by sea. The city, unable to obtain reinforcements from Tsari Grad, fell to the enemy and was looted and plundered to no end.

Andronicus I Comnenus was the last of the Comnenian family to wear the crown. Shortly after his death in 1185 Byzantine society weakened and the state found itself on the verge of collapse. Apart from increased feudal exploitation, lack of respect for the law and abuses perpetrated by the feudal lords and official bodies, the main danger to the empire's stability came from internal strife and mass defection of aristocrats from the central government. Usurpation of authority followed by armed clashes, banishment and harsh punishments became the norm. The imperial palace had become a hotbed of politics and intrigues.

After Andronicus I Comnenus died in 1185, Isaac II Angelus replaced him as emperor. It was during Isaac II's reign that the newly developed feudal powers in Serbia and Bulgaria were established and became a significant political factor in the Balkans. The sacking of Solun by the Normans weakened the Byzantines and that too created favourable conditions for the Slavonic feudal lords to gain some independence. Among the more successful of these was Dobromir Hrs. Hrs had accumulated an army of five hundred men and, for the most part, maintained peaceful relations with the court in Tsari Grad. He was, however, an opportunist and looked for ways to expand his authority. His chance came in 1189 during the third Crusade, led by Frederic I Barbarossa, when a number of Crusaders left the main route and invaded Macedonia. While passing through Gradets they killed people and set fire to several buildings, including the town's church. After descending to Vkahija (near Strumitsa) they clashed with a rebel group and took their possessions. It was here that Hrs made contact with the Crusaders and sent them on their way. Unfortunately no sooner had the Crusaders departed for Asia Minor than Byzantines rounded up these opportunistic feudal lords and sent them

to jail. Dobromir Hrs was imprisoned for a while but was then released and awarded the governorship of Strumitsa.

In 1195 Isaac II was deposed and blinded by his brother Alexius III Angelus. When unrest broke out during Alexius III's reign, Dobromir Hrs again declared his independence, first in Strumitsa and then in the naturally fortified town of Presok. After arming Presok with an elite garrison he transferred his seat and fortified the town with defensive weapons and adequate stores of food. By repealing the Byzantine laws he introduced his own brand of barbarian rule.

After consolidating his power, Hrs went on a campaign to Serres but in 1199 was met by the Byzantine Emperor and a battle ensued. Hrs's handpicked soldiers fought skillfully. By using catapults, operated by ex-Byzantine mercenaries, they inflicted severe losses on Alexius. In the course of battle Hrs's soldiers slipped out in the dark of night and destroyed Alexius's siege equipment causing him to lose the battle. Alexius's failure to defeat Hrs forced the Emperor to meet his demands, thus recognizing Hrs as the ruler of the towns of Strumitsa and Prosek.

It wasn't too long before relations between Prosek and Tsari Grad deteriorated. The cause of the deterioration was the Emperor's refusal to pay the agreed upon ransom for the release of Hrs's father-in-law, Kamits. Kamits was a prisoner in Bulgaria for some time and the Emperor had agreed to arrange for his release. But after Kamits was freed the Emperor refused to pay the ransom. The two hundred centenariis in gold were eventually paid by Hrs but left bad feelings and a breach in the treaty between the Emperor and Hrs.

Free from any obligations, Hrs, together with his father-in-law, renewed their military campaigns and took Pelagonia and Prilep, then entered Thessaly and sparked a massive uprising in the Peloponnesus.

While Hrs was wreaking havoc in the western provinces, the Emperor put an army together and went in pursuit. The Byzantines quickly re-took Pelagonia, Prilep and Thessaly, depriving Hrs of his latest gains. Through treachery in 1201 the Byzantines took Strumitsa, leaving Hrs isolated in Prosek.

The westerners, who had blamed the failure of their crusade on the Byzantines, were now looking for retribution. Their chance came when the western emperor Henry VI, who by now had united the Norman Kingdom of Sicily with the Holy Roman Empire, wanted to become master of Tsari Grad. Henry would have attacked the Byzantines had it not been for Alexius's steady bribes and payoffs. Unfortunately Henry died in 1197.

Henry's idea lived on and gained ground in the west. The conquest of Tsari Grad was seen as the ultimate solution to many of the west's problems that would be of benefit not only to trade but also to the future of the crusades and the church. Henry's idea came closer to fruition in 1198 when Innocent III was elected pope. It was through Innocent's inspiration that the Fourth Crusade was launched. It was by treachery and intrigue that the conquest and colonization of the Byzantine Empire by the west was realized.

In 1203 the crusaders, under the pretext of restoring Isaac II and his son to the Byzantine throne, drove Alexius III out of Tsari Grad. Instead of making

good on their promises however, the Venetians and crusaders attacked, conquered and divided Tsari Grad and the Byzantine provinces between themselves. Tsari Grad fell to the Latins in April 1204.

In the west's quest for trade, Venice was becoming the leader of commerce. Venice wanted to become a great merchant power; a middleman of consumerism, but Tsari Grad was always in the way. Far superior to Venice, Tsari Grad monopolized the silk trade and prohibited Venice from realizing her dream. Finally, as fate would have it, her moment of glory was near. When the Crusaders ran out of money and couldn't afford to pay for their voyage to the Holy Lands, they turned to Venice. Venice offered them a way out but the offer came at a price. It was Pope Innocent III who turned the crusaders first against the Christian town of Zara in the Adriatic in 1202 and then against Tsari Grad in 1204. Principles gave away to greed and Christian turned against Christian: all this to satisfy the greed and commercial appetites of Venice. It was not a war of armies but a war of betrayal, deceit and total annihilation. The unsuspecting and trusting citizens of Tsari Grad gladly opened the city doors for the Crusaders. Instead of bringing peace, however, the Latins killed the entire Tsari Grad population, military and civilian, then looted the city of its possessions. The city streets were flooded with the blood of the innocent. Warriors, women and children alike were all slaughtered like lambs by the Latin crusaders. This was an act of shame that the western Church will have to bear for all eternity.

After taking Tsari Grad, the Venetians, led by their doge Enrico Dandolo, appropriated the principal harbours and islands on the trade routes and dispatched the crusaders in the conquest of the European and Asiatic provinces. The first Latin emperor, Baldwin I, became the feudal overlord of the feudal principalities established in Thrace, Solun, Athens, and the Peloponnesus. Baldwin soon came into conflict with the ruler of Bulgaria and later faced serious opposition from the three provincial centers of Byzantine resistance.

At Trebizond (Trabzon) on the Black Sea, two brothers of the Comnenian family laid claim to the imperial title. In Epirus Michael Angelus Ducas, a relative of Alexius III, made his capital at Arta and harassed the crusader states in Thessaly. The third centre of resistance was based in the city of Nicaea in Anatolia. Theodore I Lascaris, another relative of Alexius III, was crowned there as emperor in 1208 by a patriarch of his own making.

Of the three new powers of resistance Nicaea lay nearest to Tsari Grad, between the Latin Empire and the Seljuq Turk sultanate of Rum. Theodore proved worthy of the Byzantine traditions by simultaneously fighting on two fronts and by being a skillful diplomat.

Theodore Lascaris and his son-in-law John III Vatatzes built up a small Byzantine Empire at Nicaea and established a Byzantine church in exile. The Latins were thus never able to gain a permanent foothold in Anatolia. Even in Europe their position was constantly threatened by the Byzantine rulers in the Balkans.

In 1204 the Latin Crusaders formed a Frankish kingdom, the Kingdom of Solun, on the eastern coast of the Aegean Sea with Solun as its capital. With

Boniface of Montferrat as its first king, the Solunian people went through twenty years of unprecedented oppression and subjugation. In their seizure of Macedonia, the Crusaders took over large quantities of grain supplies, livestock and other wealth, establishing their own garrisons in various towns.

After the 1205 defeat of the Latin Emperor Baldwin and the Adrianople Crusaders, the Bulgarian army attacked and destroyed the town of Serres and invaded the district of Solun. Bulgarian pressure on Solun increased in 1207, particularly after the death of Boniface of Montferrat. The Bulgarian emperor Kaloyan laid siege to the city but soon died and the siege was abandoned.

In the period after Kaloyan's death a power struggle ensued in Bulgaria and Strez. A descendant of the Bulgarian royal line was able to establish an independent kingdom in Macedonia. With the aid of Serbia he set himself up in Prosek and extended his rule from the Solun region to Ohrid. All Bulgarian governors within these territories swore loyalty to him. After a while, agitation from the Bulgarians subsided and Strez was able to establish good relations with the Bulgarian state.

Upon consolidating his rule in Macedonia, Strez began a campaign against the Kingdom of Solun which in 1212 sparked a massive conflict in Pelagonia. Even though the conflict was between Strez and the Latins, it had support from the more powerful Despot of Epirus on one side and the Bulgarian state on the other. After losing to the Latins, Strez broke off relations with the Serbians. In 1214 he initiated a campaign against them but died unexpectedly.

After Strez's death the Despot of Epirus conquered a large portion of Macedonia, including Skopje and Ohrid. In 1244 Solun too fell prey to the army of Epirus.

Immediately after conquering Ohrid, Demetrius Chomatianus, the Archbishop of Ohrid, crowned the Despot Theodore Angelus Ducas Comnenius, emperor. The despot had intentions of renewing the Byzantine Empire but his defeat by the Bulgarians in 1230, near Klokotnitsa, prematurely ended his great plans. Bulgaria, on the other hand, not only increased its reputation and prestige but also expanded its territory to Thrace, Macedonia and part of Albania. After it consolidated its hold on the new territories, Bulgarian governors were appointed and garrisons were stationed in various Macedonian towns. The Byzantine bishops in the eparchies were replaced by archpriests of the Trnovo Church, which in 1235 became a Patriarchate. The power of the Archbishopric of Ohrid, which was somewhat eroded by the Serbian Church becoming autocephalous in 1219, was now further eroded with the formation of the new Bulgarian Patriarchate.

The Latin Empire in Tsari Grad lost its ambitions to maintain control of its territories after the Latin, Henry of Flanders, died in 1216. This created new opportunities in 1224 for the despot Theodore Ducas of Epirus to expand his empire. Theodore had already extended his territories north into Bulgaria, taken Solun from the Latins and had been crowned emperor in spite of objections from the Emperor in Nicaea. Unfortunately his defeat in battle in 1230 against the Bulgars stopped him before reaching Tsari Grad.

Theodore's defeat opened new opportunities for John III Ducas Vatatzes of Nicaea to expand his empire. Being an ally of the Bulgarians, John played an important role in invading Europe, encircling Tsari Grad and getting Theodore's successor to surrender. The despot's successor finally surrendered in 1246 and was forced to renounce his imperial title and surrender to the empire of Nicaea. As luck would have it, at about the same time, the Mongols invaded Anatolia and started a campaign against the Seljuk Turks in the east, which greatly benefited the Nicaeans. The Mongol invasion weakened the Seljuq Turkish sultanate and isolated the rival empire of Trebizond.

Over time the Nicaean Empire became self-sufficient with a thriving economy based on agriculture and trade. It had no navy but it did have a well-disciplined, organized army. By slowly stretching its frontiers into Europe the empire had gained much strength, especially since it took the greater part of eastern Macedonia and Solun in 1246.

After the eviction of the Latins in 1261, the seat of the Nicaean government was moved from Nicaea to Tsari Grad. To the Byzantines, Tsari Grad was "the Jerusalem" and they were not about to leave it in foreign hands. Unfortunately, after the damages inflicted by the Fourth Crusade the city was no longer the focal point of an integrated empire. It was more like an immense city-state in the midst of a number of more or less independent provinces. Much of Peloponnesus and the islands remained in French or Italian hands and the Byzantine rulers of Epirus and Thessaly refused to recognize Michael VIII as their emperor.

The regime change in Tsari Grad was good for Macedonia. During its initial rule the Macedonian people experienced two decades of life without external harassment. Then in 1282 the Serbian feudal army of king Stephen Urosh II Milutin invaded northern Macedonia and took Lower and Upper Polog, Skopje, Ovche Pole, Zletovo and Piyanets. Shortly afterwards, the Serbs initiated a new campaign and invaded Poreche and the Kichevo and Debar regions. After that a Serbian detachment was dispatched along the lower course of the Struma River and penetrated as far as Krstopol.

About four decades later the Serbians, under the rule of the Serbian King Stephen Urosh III Dechanski, launched another campaign against the Byzantines. During their first wave of attacks they invaded and captured the towns of Shtip, Chreshche on the River Bragalnitsa, Veles and Prosek on the Vardar. Then in 1328 they took Prosek and the Serbian army invaded the regions of Demir Hisar and Debartsa, coming face to face with the Byzantines in Ohrid.

Ohrid was an important Byzantine stronghold and the threat did not go unnoticed in Tsari Grad. Emperor Andronicus III Palaeologus immediately prepared a counter-offensive and went in pursuit of the invaders. By 1330 the Emperor had recaptured the towns in the Demir Hisar and Debartsa regions, including Zheleznets.

Four years later, under the leadership of their new ruler Stephen Urosh IV Dushan, the Serbs renewed their offensive in Macedonia. With the capture of Serres in 1345, Serbian rule was extended over virtually all of Macedonia. The same year the Serbian ruler Stephen Urosh IV Dushan proclaimed himself

emperor and elevated the Serbian Archbishopric to a Patriarchate. The coronation took place in Skopje on April 16, 1346 but the Byzantines refused to recognize it along with Serbia's territorial gains and the Serbian Patriarchate.

During the course of the late 1340's Serbian rule was expanded to Thessaly and Epirus. But in 1350 the towns of Serres and Voden rebelled and severed links with the Serbs. After that opposition became common everywhere and the Serbs found it very difficult to hang on to their conquered territories.

After Stephen Urosh IV Dushan's death in 1355 the central government's authority quickly eroded, leaving the feudal lords to rule independently. The most notable of the feudal lords in Macedonia at the time were the brothers Volkashin and Uglesha. Volkashin proclaimed himself king in 1365 with Emperor Urosh as co-ruler.

In Tsari Grad, meanwhile, Michael's son, Andronicus II who reigned from 1282 to 1328, unwisely attempted to economize by cutting down the size of the army and disbanding the navy. This forced unemployed soldiers and sailors to seek service in foreign and enemy states. It has been said that many of Michael's sailors ended up in the service of the new Turkish emirs, raiding the Aegean islands.

Unable to afford his own, the emperor contracted the Genoese to provide him trade ships and a navy to defend Tsari Grad by sea. This unfortunately made the Venetians very jealous, to the point of declaring war, which in 1296 led to the first of a series of naval battles off Tsari Grad.

Michael's cost cutting measures weakened the empire's ability to adequately defend itself and the Turks did not hesitate to take advantage of it. The empire's downslide began in 1302 when a band of Turkish warriors, under the leadership of Osman I, defeated the Byzantine army near Nicomedia in northwestern Anatolia and, for the first time, penetrated Europe. Osman I was the founder of the Osmanli, or Ottomans as they would later be known by westerners.

Unable to beat the Ottomans back, a year later in 1303, Andronicus hired a professional army of mercenaries known as the Grand Catalan Company. The Catalans made one successful counterattack against the Turks in Anatolia but after that they became unruly and unpopular. After their leader was murdered they turned against their employers. Having failed to conquer Tsari Grad they headed for Macedonia and stopped in Solun, looting and plundering everything in sight. Even Sveta Gora (Mount Athos), Macedonia's Holy Mountain was not spared by the Catalan's ferocious greed. Solun, however, held out and succeeded in repelling the Catalan invaders who were forced to push further southwards.

For some years the Catalans used the Gallipoli Peninsula as a base from which to ravage Thrace, inviting thousands of Turks to come over and help them. The Catalans finally moved west and in 1311 conquered Athens from the French and established the Catalan Duchy of Athens and Thebes. The Turks who were left behind were not ejected from Gallipoli until 1312.

The Catalans were only a minor problem for the Byzantines in comparison to their own internal strife and civil wars. The trouble started around 1320 when Andronicus II disinherited his grandson Andronicus III. The cause of the young

emperor was taken up by his friends, who periodically fought against the old emperor. The civil strife lasted from 1321 to 1328 until the older Andronicus yielded the throne to the younger. Unfortunately this internal fighting took attention away from needed economic reforms and gave the enemy new opportunities to gain more ground.

In 1329 the Turks renewed their campaign against the Byzantines. A battle was fought and lost at Pelekanon (near Nicomedia) giving the Turks a needed victory. Victorious, Osman's son Orhan and his Turkish warriors went on to capture Nicaea in 1331 and Nicomedia in 1337. Northwestern Anatolia, once the heart of the empire, was now lost to the Turks.

Surprisingly the Byzantines accepted their defeat and came to terms with the Turks. By so doing Andronicus III now opened the door to an almost limitless number of Turkish soldiers to join his army and fight for pay against his enemies the Italians in the Aegean islands and the Serbs and Bulgars in Macedonia and Thrace. By allowing the Turks to aid them, the Byzantines taught them military skills and gave them combat experience, which helped them to form a base for future campaigns.

By the middle of the fourteenth century, the Ottoman Turks had consolidated their power in Asia Minor and were becoming a threat to the Balkan states. Their first serious campaign for the conquest of Europe began in 1352 when they took the fortress of Tzympe, on the Gallipoli Peninsula. Two years later, taking advantage of a devastating earthquake, they took the fortress of Gallipoli, thus creating a convenient bridgehead for their forthcoming penetration of the Balkans.

Among the first to be threatened by the Turkish forces was Uglesha's rule, the feudal lord in Macedonia mentioned earlier. Confronted with danger he persuaded his brother Volkashin to take joint actions. Hostilities broke out in September 1371 near Chernomen followed by a fierce battle on the River Maritsa. The river turned red as casualties mounted, among them the brothers Volkashin and Uglesha. It was a major victory for the Turks and a catastrophe for the Macedonians, not only for the loss of life but for the terrible change of fate.

Even though, this was an insignificant battle, its outcome had disastrous significance for Macedonia. The balance of power was destabilized and as a result the Despot Manuel Palaeologus captured the Serres region and Chalcidice. Volkashin's son Marko retained the title of King but recognized Turkish authority and began paying tribute and rendering military aid to them. The Dragash brothers, rulers of eastern Macedonia with their seat at Velbuzhd, became Turkish vassals while Vuk Brankovich extended his rule to include Skopje and the Grand Zhupan, Andrea Gropa, consolidated his position in Ohrid.

After winning the Battle of Maritsa the Turks continued to campaign throughout Macedonia. In 1383 they took the town of Serres and in 1385 took the towns of Shtip, Veles, Prilep and Bitola.

From 1382 to 1387 Emperor Manuel reigned from Solun and worked hard to make the city a rallying point for resistance. Unfortunately the city fell to Murad's army in April 1387.

When the Turks drove deeper into Macedonia, the Serbs organized a counteroffensive but were overwhelmed at Kossovo in 1389.

The loss of Solun and the Battle of Kossovo unfortunately cut off access to Tsari Grad by land. By 1393 the Turk Bayezid had completed his conquest of Bulgaria and returned to lay siege to Tsari Grad. His blockade lasted many years and Manuel II, like his father, pinned his hopes of rescue on the west.

The king of Hungary organized a great crusade against the Turks but was defeated at Nicopolis on the Danube in 1396. In 1399 the French marshal Boucicaut, who had fought the Turks at Nicopolis, returned to Tsari Grad with a small army. There he persuaded Manuel to take his appeal for help to the west in person. Leaving his nephew John VII in charge, Manuel went to Italy, France, and England. The westerners gave him audience and sympathy but little in the way of practical help. During Manuel's absence, in July 1402, the Ottomans were defeated at Ankara by the Mongols. Bayezid was captured and his empire in Asia was shattered. His four sons, however, individually secured control of European provinces, which had not been affected by the Mongol invasion, and began to compete against one another for total dominion.

During these unexpected circumstances the Byzantines found themselves holding the balance of power for the Turkish contenders. For their services, the Byzantines were able to negotiate the lifting of the blockade of Tsari Grad and the restoration of Byzantine rule in Solun, Sveta Gora (Mt. Athos) and so on. The payment of tribute to the sultan was also annulled.

Being in a position to hold the balance of power, unfortunately, did not last too long and in 1413 Mehmed I, with the help of Emperor Manuel, triumphed over his rivals and became sultan of the reintegrated Ottoman Empire. During Mehmed I's reign, from 1413 to 1421, the Byzantines enjoyed their last respite. Manuel II, aware that the lull would not last long, made the most of it by strengthening the defenses and administration of his fragmented empire.

The most flourishing province in the last years was the Despotate of Morea (Peloponnesus). Its prosperity had been built up first by the sons of John Cantacuzenus (who died there in 1383) and then by the son and grandson of John V, Theodore I and Theodore II Palaeologus. Its capital city Mistra became a haven for Byzantine scholars and artists and a center of the last revival of Byzantine culture, packed with churches, monasteries and palaces.

When Murad II became sultan in 1421 the days of Tsari Grad were numbered. In 1422 Murad revoked all the privileges accorded to the Byzantines by his father and laid siege to Tsari Grad. His armies invaded Macedonia and blockaded Solun. The city at the time was ruled by Manuel II's son Andronicus, who in 1423 handed it over to the Venetians. For seven years Solun was a Venetian colony. Then in March 1430 the Sultan assaulted and captured it.

The Byzantine collapse and the Ottoman triumph followed swiftly. Mehmed II laid siege to the walls of Tsari Grad in April 1453. His ships were obstructed

by a chain that the Byzantines had thrown across the mouth of the Golden Horn but the Turks dragged their ships overland to the harbour from the seaward side, bypassing the defenses. The Sultan's heavy artillery continually bombarded the land walls until, on May 29, some of his soldiers forced their way in.

As a final note, in the glory of the Byzantine Empire, I want to add that had it not been for the advent of the cannon the Byzantine Empire might still exist to this day. It was not the might of the Turk but the might of his new cannon that brought the walls of Tsari Grad tumbling down.

The Sultan allowed his victorious troops three days and nights of plunder before he took possession of his new capital. The Ottoman Empire had now superseded the Byzantine Empire. The material structure of the empire, which had long been crumbling, was now under the management of the Sultan. But the Byzantine faith was less susceptible to change. The Sultan acknowledged the fact that the church had proved to be the most enduring element in the Byzantine world and he gave the Patriarch of Tsari Grad an unprecedented measure of temporal authority by making him answerable for all Christians living under Ottoman rule. The last scattered pockets of Byzantine resistance were eliminated within a decade after 1453.

Before ending this story, I want to mention a few words about king Marko, affectionately known to Macedonians as Marko Krale. Marko Krale was a legendary folk hero in western Macedonia who was surrounded by tales and superhero stories. Marko was the son of the feudal lord Volkashin who was the head of a tribal state in Prilep and later became a high courtier and a despot. In about 1365 Volkashin proclaimed himself king (tsar) and became co-ruler with king Urosh. His brother, the despot Uglesha, ruled over the Struma region.

Both brothers were killed in 1371 at Chernomen, Thrace during the Marica battle against the Turks, as mentioned earlier. This unsuccessful battle was the last major attempt, by local rulers, to prevent further penetration of Turks into the Balkan Peninsula and to forestall the Turkish occupation of their territories.

After Volkashin's death, his eldest son Marko inherited his throne and title. Unfortunately, as part of the treaty with the Turks he had to recognize Turkish authority and pay tribute to the Turkish Sultan. It is believed that Marko was born in 1335. His name was discovered in a document establishing him as one of Volkashin's delegates to Dubrovnik. His name was also discovered in some chronicles of his time establishing him as the son of Volkashin and later as Marko the king. In another document dated 1370 Volkashin makes mention of his sons Marko and Andrew and of his wife Elena.

With its capital in Prilep, Marko inherited a state that lay between the Vardar River and Albania stretching from the Shar Mountain range down to Kostur excluding the cities of Skopje and Ohrid. After becoming king, Marko minted his own coins and placed the inscription: "King Marko faithful to Lord Jesus Christ" on them. Marko Krale was killed on May 17, 1395 in Craiova Romania, during a battle against the Vlach military leader Mircho. Marko was obliged to fight for the Turks as part of his treaty agreement with Sultan Bayazit. Marko Krale, it appears, left no heir. After his death his state reverted to the Turks.

Even though Marko Krale had been a Turkish vassal and fought on the side of Bayazit's army he was a devout Christian and just before he died he begged God for forgiveness and prayed out loud, asking God to help the Christians. And thus a legend was born. Marko Krale, the fearless legend, has been enshrined in the Towers of Prilep where he was born and by his frescoes and paintings in various churches and monasteries.

Chapter 19 - Ottoman Rule in Macedonia

The Ottomans crossed into Europe for the first time around the year 1345 as mercenaries hired by the Byzantines to defend the Byzantine Empire. Over the years as the Ottomans grew in number, they settled in Galipoly, west of the Dardanelles (Endrene), and later used the area as a staging ground for conquest.

In 1389 the Ottomans attacked Kosovo in a decisive battle and destroyed the Byzantine army, killing the nobility in the process. In 1392 they attacked and conquered geographical Macedonia including Solun but not Sveta Gora (Holy Mountain). In 1444 while attempting to drive north, through today's Bulgaria, they were met and crushed by the western Crusaders at Varna. Soon after their recovery they besieged and took Tsari Grad in 1453, looting all the wealth that had been accumulated for over two millennia.

Feeling the sting of the 1444 defeat, the Ottomans turned northwest and in 1526 attacked and destroyed the Hungarian army, killing 25,000 knights. After that they unsuccessfully tried twice to take Vienna, once in 1529 and then again in 1683. The failure to take Vienna halted the Ottoman expansion in Europe.

In a steady process of state building, the Ottoman Empire expanded in both easterly and westerly directions conquering the Byzantines and remnants of the Macedonian, Bulgarian and Serbian kingdoms to the west and the Turkish nomadic principalities in Anatolia as well as the Mamluk sultanate in Egypt to the east. By the 17th century the Ottoman Empire had grown and held vast lands in west Asia, north Africa and southeast Europe.

During the 16th century the Ottomans shared the world stage with Elizabethan England, Habsburg Spain, the Holy Roman Empire, Valois France and the Dutch Republic. Of greater significance to the Ottomans were the city states of Venice and Genoa which exerted enormous political and economic power with their fleets and commercial networks that linked India, the Middle East, the Mediterranean and west European worlds.

Initially the Turks may have been ethnically Turkish, perhaps originating from a single race but by the time they had conquered the Balkans, the Ottoman Empire had become multi-ethnic and multi-religious.

The Ottoman Empire built its power base on a heterogeneous mix of people who were added to its population with every conquest. What may have been Turkish at the start was soon lost and the term "Turk" came to mean "Muslim" as more and more people from the conquered worlds were Islamized. To be a Turk, one had to be a Muslim first. "The devsirme system offered extreme social mobility for males, allowing peasant boys to rise to the highest military and

administrative positions in the empire outside of the dynasty itself.” (Page 30, Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922*, Binghamton University, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000)

When the Ottomans crossed over to the Balkans and conquered Macedonia the basic state institutions and military organization of the empire were still in a state of development. Built on a basis of feudal social relations the empire was despotic with many elements of theocratic rule.

After sacking Tsari Grad the Ottomans adapted much of the Byzantine administration and feudal practices and began to settle the Balkans. The conquered people of the new Ottoman territories became subjects of the empire, to be ruled according to Muslim law. At the head of the Ottoman Empire sat the Sultan who was God’s representative on earth. The Sultan owned everything and everyone in the empire. Below the Sultan sat the ruling class and below them sat the *Rajak* (protected flock). Everyone worked for the Sultan and he in turn provided his subjects with all of life’s necessities.

The Sultan was the supreme head of the empire and his power was unrestricted. Initially his capital was in Bursa then it was moved to Endrene (Adrianople) and after Tsari Grad fell, in 1453, it became the permanent Ottoman capital. Even though their empire was spread throughout Asia and Africa, the European provinces were considered to be the Ottoman Empire’s heart and soul.

Initially at the head of the Ottoman state administration stood a single Vizier but by 1386 a second Vizier was appointed, elevating the first one to Grand Vizier. The number of viziers continued to increase with time and by the middle of the 16th century there were four.

After the Balkan conquests, the Ottoman Empire was divided into two large *Bejlerbejliks*, or administrative units. The rulers of these provinces, the *Bejlerbejs*, were appointed directly by the Sultan. The *Bejlerbejs* were the highest local military commanders in the *Bejlerbejliks* or *Pashaliks* as they later came to be known. The Rumelia or European *Bejlerbejlik* incorporated the territories of the Turkish provinces of Europe. This *Pashalik* was further divided into smaller units called *Sanjaks* or *Jivi*, which made up the basic military and territorial administrative components of the empire. Each *Pashalik* was also divided into *kazas* where each *kaza* represented a judicial district for which a *qadi* or judge was responsible. With time and with the extension of the empire’s frontiers the number of *Bejlerbejliks* grew and their nature began to change. *Bejlerbejliks* became *Elajets* or *Pashaliks* and during the 1470’s two *Kaziaskers*, or Supreme Military Judges, were appointed: one in Rumelia and the other in Anatolia in Asia Minor. There was also a *Nichandji*, or Keeper of the Imperial Seal, who sat at the head of the administration and, on behalf of the Sultan, placed the seal on all acts issued by the central government. Financial affairs were handled by the *Defterdars*.

The *Divan*, or State Council headed by the Grand Vizier consisted of the highest state officials, including viziers, *kaziaskers* and *defterdars*, who regularly met to discuss and resolve important state matters.

The Ottoman military was subdivided into land and naval forces. The land force, considered to be the strength of the empire consisted of the Sultan's guard and the provincial (Elajet) armies. The most powerful and numerous of the Elajet was the Spahis or cavalry. The striking force of the Sultan's guard was the Corps of Janissaries, which was formed around 1329. The Janissaries were initially recruited from the prisoners-of-war and, by means of the "Blood Tax", from the subordinated Christian population.

Muslim Turks always administered their government and the military. However, due to lack of manpower to rule an expanding empire, the Ottomans adopted the "devshirme" or child contribution program in the 1300's. This so called "Blood Tax" was harvested by rounding up healthy young Christian boys and converting them to Islam. After being educated, the bright ones were given administrative roles and the rest, the "Janissary", were given military responsibilities. The devshirme was abolished in 1637 when the Janissary proved to be a handful for the Sultan. In some regions this practice was continued up until the 19th century.

The navy started out very small but was intensively built up in the late 1390's by Sultan Bajazid I. Initially, and at times of war, the Grand Vizier was Commander-in-Chief of all the armed forces. The empire's feudal lords had no right to exert legal, administrative, financial, or military authority, even on their own estates.

The legal system was created around the Seriat which had its basis in Islam. The Koran and Hadith were the books from which the ideals and fundamental principles for the construction of the legal system were drawn. No law could be passed which in principle contradicted the Seriat. Only the supreme religious leader, the Sejh-ul-Islam, had the right to interpret and assess the legal norms and only from the point of view of Islamic law.

The Koran dictated Muslim conduct and behaviour, including punishment for crimes. In the Ottoman mind only religion and the word of God had sole authority over peoples' lives. Religion was the official government of the Ottoman State. Islam was the only recognized form of rule that suited Muslims but could not be directly applied to non-Muslims. So the next best thing was to allow another religion to rule the non-Muslims. The obvious choice of course was the Byzantine Christian religion, which was the foundation of the Byzantine Empire. There was a catch however. The official Muslim documents that would allow the "transfer of rule" were based on an ancient Islamic model, which denounced all Christianity as a corrupt invention of the "Evil one". The conservative Turks regarded the Christians as no more than unclean and perverted animals. Also, the ancient documents called for sacrifices to be made. A Christian religious leader, for being granted leadership by the Muslims, was expected to sacrifice his own flock on demand to prove his loyalty to the Sultan. It was under these conditions that the Patriarch accepted his installment as sole ruler of the Christian Orthodox faith and of the non-Muslim Millet.

The Sultans tolerated Christianity as the government of the non-Muslim Millet and sold the Patriarchate to an adventurer who could buy (bribe) his

nomination. Once nominated, the Patriarch in turn sold consecration rights to Bishops, who in turn regarded their gain as a “legitimate investment” of capital and proceeded to “farm their diocese”. Under Ottoman rule the Patriarchate in Tsari Grad became a corrupt business, having little to do with faith and more to do with making money. As more and more bishoprics fell into the hands of the new Patriarch, faith at the top began to fade away. This was also the beginning of the end for the Slavonic (Macedonian) Churches in the Ottoman Empire.

In addition to being a religious ruler, the Patriarch and his appointed Bishops became civil administrators of the Christian and non-Muslim people. Their authority included mediating with the Turks, administering Christian law (marriages, inheritance, divorce, etc.), running schools and hospitals and dealing with the large and small issues of life. There were no prescribed provisions on how to deal with criminal matters or the limit of authority on the part of the Bishops. In other words, there was no uniform manner by which Christian criminals could be punished or limits to how far a Bishop could exercise his authority. This opened the way for interpretation, neglect, abuse and activities of corruption such as nepotism, favouritism and bribery.

After conquering the Balkans, the Ottoman Turks immediately started to establish their own administration and, where possible, retained existing administrative and territorial divisions. Macedonia belonged to the Bejlerbeylik, or Elajet, of Rumelia. Solun was administered by the famous military commander Evrenos Beg and served as the oldest military center for the defense of the empire’s western frontier. When Skopje fell to the Ottomans in 1392 it became the center of a new region. The first Skopje regional commander was Pashaigut Beg.

In an attempt to create a stable political and social support system in conquered Macedonia, the Ottoman authorities introduced voluntary migration for Turks from Asia Minor. As a result, many Turkish settlements sprang up all over Macedonia and occupied strategic positions like valleys of navigable rivers and coastal plains. This increase in Muslim numbers, particularly in the larger towns, was at the expense of the Christian population. The nomads of Anatolia were best suited for such migration because of their nomadic way of life.

In time and as a result of Ottoman colonization policies, small Turkish livestock breeding settlements were established at Jurutsi and Konjari near Solun, and in the districts of Nevrokop, Strumitsa, Radovish, Kochani and Ovche Pole. Migration into Macedonia was not restricted to Turks. Late in the 15th century Jews fleeing the western European Inquisitions in Spain and Portugal also settled in Macedonia. These migrations were of particular significance to Macedonia's economic development. Jewish colonies sprang up and flourished in important urban centres like Solun, Bitola, Skopje, Berroea, Kostur, Serres, Shtip, Kratovo and Strumitsa. The Jewish colony in Solun was one of the largest and most significant of all colonies in the entire Ottoman Empire. By the middle of the 16th century Solun was home to more than three thousand Jewish families.

Besides the colonization of Macedonia by foreign elements, there was also the assimilation of Macedonians in the Islamic fold. The process of converting

Christians to Muslims began as soon as Macedonia was conquered. At the outset, a fair number of the old nobility converted to Islam in the hope of protecting and even increasing their landholdings. Gradually greater proportions of the population were converted, sometimes whole villages and districts at once. Macedonians living among the Turks, especially in the larger towns, gradually began to assimilate into the Turkish fold. Even though they became Turks, a great majority of the Macedonians retained their mother tongue and continued to speak Macedonian, practicing their traditions and even their religious customs.

In terms of taxation, the most fundamental and distinguishing feature of the feudal system introduced in the Balkans by the Ottomans was the Timar-Spahi system. In Ottoman terms, at the top was the Sultan and supreme owner of all lands. At the bottom were the peasants, or *Rajak*. Between the Sultan and the peasant were the feudal landlords (*Spahi*) who, in return for their military service, received a fief from the state. The *Spahi* had the right to work the land but could not dispose of it. The amount of income derived from the fief in the form of feudal rent from the *Rajaks* was standard and controlled by the state.

“One of the major evils for the people of our village, and for the rest of the enslaved Christians, was the imposed tax, the so-called ‘one tenth’, or as the people used to call it the ‘*spahiluk*’ after the *Spahi* or tax collectors. This tax was to be paid in produce since there was no money in circulation at the time. Great injustices were committed by the tax collectors in their arbitrary ways of getting the taxes from the people. It was to be one tenth of the produce, but only God knows how much more the *Spahi* took from the people. The trouble was not the amount of tax that had to be paid by each family, but the way in which it was collected. The Turkish government would put the collection of taxes on auction – the one who would offer the best price had the right to collect the tax from the population. The right of collecting taxes was usually purchased from the government either by the Turks or the ‘*Arnauti*’ (Mohammedan Albanians). The State took its due, but those who obtained the right to collect taxes charged the people what they wanted. These people went to each house in the village, to the fields, to the pastures and the vineyards, and collected these taxes without any control or scales or measures. These collectors were the masters of the population and no one dared to complain because the people feared the worst. And, if someone dared to complain his voice was a voice in the desert – no one would hear it. People used to say: ‘Whom to complain to? God is high and the Tsar is far away.’ The people endured and carried this heavy burden like mute animals. The burden of the yoke was increased by the arbitrary acts of the *Spahi*. Sometimes the *Spahi* would not come in time to collect the produce and the people silently waited for him; they waited without daring to speak. What followed was a sorrowful sight – the fields of grain ripened, and the sheaves were gathered, the rain fell, and everything rotted. The grapes, already spoiled by the rain were gathered, but to what avail? This pitiful situation did not disturb the *Spahi*. The *Spahi* were lords and they would get their dues by robbing the ‘*Rajak*’ (the slaves) anyway. The *Spahi* would bribe government officials to look the other way. All these people were corrupt – from the lowest to highest

officials in office. They conspired with each other and the population in silence carried the burden.” (Foto Tomev)

Initially, the Ottomans divided their land into four categories. The “meri” lands such as valleys, forests, mountains, rivers, roads, etc., belonged exclusively to the Sultan. The “timar” lands were meri lands loaned or granted to Ottoman civil and military officials. After the land reforms, timar estates converted to private property and became known as “chifliks”. The “vakof” lands were tax-exempt lands dedicated for pious purposes and to support public services such as fire fighting etc. The “molk” lands occupied by peoples’ houses, gardens, vineyards, orchards etc. were also private lands.

Even though the Sultan was considered to be God’s representative on earth, his real power was derived from his empire’s material holdings. Most of the income for his treasury was derived from the imperial fiefs, large complexes of state land. Other revenues were derived from mining, commerce and various other taxes. The highest state functionaries possessed their own fiefs. Each fief produced an annual income of no less than 100,000 akcas. The annual average income of the fief owned by Isa Beg, the Skopje regional commander, excluding that from Skopje itself, was 763,000 akcas. Feudal lords, depending on their contributions to the empire, were awarded lands known as zeamets and timars. The zeamets produced an annual income between 20,000 and 99,999 akcas and the smaller timars produced at most 19,999 akcas. The average timar produced an income from approximately 2,000 to 6,000 akcas. According to records, the greater part of Macedonia during the 15th and 16th centuries was subdivided mostly into Timars.

In the early period of Ottoman rule, due to labour shortages, Christians were employed to do the job of the Spahis. According to an incomplete census carried out in the mid-15th century, out of a total of one hundred timars and two zeamets in the territory of the Prilep and Kichevo nahije, twenty-seven timars and one zeamet were awarded to Christians. In the 1466/67 census of the Debar district, eighteen of the ninety-eight recorded timars were in Christian hands. In time, however, the number of Christian Spahi decreased and by the 16th century they all disappeared.

Muslims were trusted more by the authorities than Christians so many Christian Spahi converted to Islam and amalgamated their belongings with those of the Turkish feudal lords. This was the surest and most often the only way to permanently safeguard their positions.

The feudally dependent peasantry or Rajak, both Christian and Moslem, held limited amounts of state lands known as the bashtina or chiflik. A portion of this land was awarded to each family in the Rajak along with a paper deed or tapia giving the family rights of inheritance and disposal, provided there was prior approval by the Spahi.

Besides paying taxes, the new citizens of the Ottoman Empire were given special duties to serve their new empire. These included martolozes, vojniks, falconers, derbendkis, bridge-keepers, rice-growers and madenkis. The job of the martolozes was to protect various regions that were threatened by outlaws, or

haiduks, or to garrison certain fortresses and provincial towns. The job of the vojniks was to go into battle and serve as fighters or members of the supply corps or work in the imperial stables or meadows. The falconers job was to catch, train and look after falcons for hunting. The derbendkis, whose services were widespread throughout Macedonia, provided safe passage through gorges and other places where passage was difficult, especially along the more important military and trade routes. Linked with the services of the derbendkis were those of the bridge-keepers who were responsible for guarding and repairing bridges of strategic importance. The rice-growers were obliged to provide the state with a certain amount of rice, which was considered the basic food of the empire. The job of the madenkis included coal-mining, tar-making and ferrymen services. In return for their services these people were, wholly or in part, exempt from paying taxes and from other obligations to the empire.

Besides feudal exploitation the Macedonian population, especially throughout the 18th century, was also subjected to religious and national discrimination, which in time became so profound that the term “Rajak” became virtually synonymous with the term “slavery”.

Macedonia’s rural economy remained largely agricultural for centuries but its techniques remained stagnant and underdeveloped. The peasants produced a number of varieties of wheat, fruits, vegetables and wine. Tobacco, cotton, rice, sesame, opium poppies, maize, saffron, anise seeds, chick-peas and a number of green vegetables were also cultivated and became more popular during the Ottoman period.

Animal husbandry became one of the predominant branches of rural economy. All kinds of livestock were kept including large numbers of sheep and goats. The buffalo was introduced from Asia Minor as a yoke animal for tilling soil and pulling carts. Hunting and fishing in rivers, lakes and seas also played a part in Macedonia’s rural economy.

Given the significant immigration, Macedonian towns grew in population and gradually took on a visibly oriental character. With the coming of new populations, new skills and talents followed. Tanner and furrier crafts experienced a particularly strong growth. Jews who had business links in western Europe contributed greatly to this development.

In towns the craftsmen, called esnafs or rufekas, were organized in guilds and worked as private corporations. Each religion had its own guilds and Muslims, Christians and Jews alike competed with each other for work, thus keeping the price of goods and services down to a reasonable level.

The strong central government also played its role in the development of the domestic economy by providing security and safeguards for traders and travelers. Fairs and farmer’s markets were established and operated on a regular basis allowing goods to be bought and sold. Fairs were opened up in several places in Macedonia including Struga, the village of Doljani near Strumitsa and the village of Beshik near Siderokapsa.

As European and Turkish currency came into circulation, domestic and foreign trade flourished. Solun became one of the most important Ottoman

trading centers for trading with foreign merchants including the powerful merchants of Venice. While various metal and luxury products such as finely woven goods, silver and gold articles, salt and weapons were imported, items such as wheat, skins, furs, wool, silk and silver were exported.

Mining was also an important aspect of the Ottoman economy producing, among other things, coal and metals necessary for minting silver and gold coins.

The Islamic Ottomans belonged to the Sunni sect of the Muslim religion. The empire's subjects belonged to one of two religiously (not nationally) divided Millets. The Islam Millet was exclusively for Muslims and the non-Islam or Rوم (for Roman) Millet grouped all other religions together.

Islam was the dominant religion in the Ottoman Empire but Christianity and Judaism were also allowed to exist. In Macedonia, the powerful Ohrid Archbishopric was active right up to the year 1767 when it was abolished by the Ottoman Sultan Mustafa III.

Ever since its inception, the Ohrid Archbishopric extended its sphere of influence and dominated the neighbouring churches. In spite of Byzantine attempts to curb its power, the Ohrid Archbishopric survived and began its revitalization. By the start of the 15th century it subordinated the Sofia and Vidin eparchies and by the middle of the same century it was in control of the Vlach and Moldavian eparchies. Shortly afterwards it took control of parts of the Pech Patriarchate including Pech itself. Even the Orthodox districts of Italy (Apulia, Calabria and Sicily), Venice and Dalmatia were subordinated to the Ohrid Archbishopric for a while.

At the beginning of the 16th century the Vlach metropolitan diocese became subordinated to the Patriarchate of Tsari Grad. As a result, in 1530 Paul, the Metropolitan of Smederevo, rejected the authority of the Ohrid Archbishopric. In retaliation on March 13, 1532 a synod of archpriests was summoned in Ohrid which in turn excommunicated Paul and all the clergy he had ordained. Paul, however, continued to regard himself as an independent and elevated himself to the level of Patriarch. Then by using his influence and by bribing the Ottoman authorities he brought charges against Prohor, the Archbishop of Ohrid, landing him in jail. On June 20, 1541 another synod of archpriests, including Paul, was summoned in Ohrid and made its decision to remove Paul from his position as a church dignitary. The only opposition received was from the Metropolitan of Kostur.

Unfortunately all this infighting and Paul's involvement with the Ottoman authorities created a great deal of negative attention, prompting the Sultan to break up the Ohrid Church by establishing separate eparchies. In 1557 the Pech Patriarchate was reinstated and took Tetovo, Skopje, Shtip and Upper Ozumaya from the Ohrid Archbishopric. In 1575 the Orthodox Christians of Dalmatia and Venice were taken away from the Ohrid Church and moved under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate in Tsari Grad. At the start of the 17th century Ohrid lost all the eparchies from southern Italy. After that Ohrid's boundaries remained unaltered until its dissolution in 1767.

As mentioned earlier, the Archbishopric of Ohrid, since its inception, has been an autonomous church headed by an Archbishop who was elected by a Synod. The Synod consisted of archpriests from various eparchies and was summoned on various occasions to deal with the more important matters while the Church Convocation dealt with general matters. The majority of Archbishops who served the Ohrid Church were foreigners and most of them were greedy for money, succumbing to bribery. Some, however, worked hard to raise the standards of the Archbishopric and others including Prohor, Athanasius and Barlaam even worked secretly against the Ottoman yoke.

Even though the Ohrid Church had lost a great number of its possessions to the Ottomans it still remained a feudal institution and, apart from the returns it received from its church lands, it also received considerable income from various taxes, from performing services and settling disputes. The Ohrid lower clergy were all Macedonian and were scarcely distinguishable economically from the general population. Even though foreigners occupied the leading positions in the church, the church itself supported a unique Macedonian culture and an independent Macedonia.

During the second half of the 16th century there were obvious signs of a weakening Ottoman Empire. The successful campaigns that were waged earlier were coming to an end only to be replaced by a series of military defeats and territorial losses. Unable to expand or even hold onto existing territories, the Ottoman central government began to lose prestige and slowly fell into an economic crisis. The situation worsened when feudal lords decided to replace the Rajak's tax contributions in kind (finished products) with money, most of which they kept for themselves. In time, the feudal lords became less interested in taking part in unsuccessful campaigns and defied the weakening central government by refusing to supply the war effort with men or materials. The central government's inability to exercise authority over the feudal lords created a suitable environment for anarchy. More and more of the more powerful feudal lords began to take advantage of the situation and formed their own small military fiefs.

When the state treasury was completely depleted, the central government was forced to take measures which further undermined the military fief. The problem was solved by offering Spahi landholdings to people who could be trusted. The only people the central government could trust were the representatives of the court aristocracy who had absolutely no links with the ranks of the Spahi.

Instead of collecting taxes itself, the state government began to lease its lands to the highest bidders and collected rent. The lease holders in turn, behaving like true landlords and masters of their leased property, leased their land to a third party while exacting a profit for themselves. By this method landholding quickly began to move out of the control of the state and into the hands of the profiteers. Landholding became so profitable that even the Rajak's small holdings were in demand and could be bought and sold in the market. Soon outsiders began to purchase Rajak plots and transformed the purchased land into chifliks, swallowing up entire villages. The new lords of the Rajak lands, known as the

Chifliksajbia, continued to fulfill the obligations of the tied peasants but contractors now worked the land. The contractors were usually the same peasants (chiflikari) or former landowners who, after disposing of their lands, no longer had any share in their ownership. The contractors could be freely hired and fired which forced them to work even harder. Under the harsher conditions of not only meeting their existing obligations to the Spahi and the state, they now had to pay an additional rent to the chifliksajbia.

By the middle of the 17th century life in the chifliks became so harsh that peasants left their villages for larger towns, adding to the influx of Muslims and Jews. Many, who could no longer bear the burden and had nowhere to go, turned to marauding and robbing. Bands of peasants left their hearths and fled to either join outlaw organizations (ajdutska družina) or live in larger towns where some of them succeeded in becoming factors of significance in the urban economy.

During the 17th century western Europeans came to Macedonia and procured certain privileges from the Ottomans that allowed them to open consular agencies. In 1685 French merchants from Marseilles opened an agency in Solun and in 1700 they opened another one in Kavalla, through which they purchased cotton and wheat. Later Britain, Venice and the Netherlands also established consular agencies in Macedonia. At that time Solun was the gateway to the Ottoman Empire and the largest port for European goods destined for the Balkans.

With the ascendancy of the Atlantic trade routes, Dubrovnik (Ragusa) and the Italian towns began to decline, particularly during the 17th century when western traders were being replaced by local ones, especially in central Europe.

Catholic influence and propaganda, although somewhat disorganized, was present in Macedonia as early as the 16th century. In 1622 when the Papal Throne came under Jesuit control, a new organization called the Congregation for the Spreading of the Faith was established with aims at controlling all Catholic missionary activities throughout the world. It was not too long afterwards that the Catholic missions infiltrated Macedonia, including the Archbishopric of Ohrid. By the first half of the 17th century four of the Archbishops of Ohrid (Porphyry, Athanasius, Abraham and Meletius) were secretly working for the Catholics. Links were established by eparchies where Church Congregations were discretely approached to switch to Catholicism. The missionaries from Rome were cautious, tactful and did not impose the Latin language upon the population. By doing so and by showing respect for the dogma of the Eastern Church, Catholic propaganda in Ohrid became very effective in gaining ground. In fact it became so effective that in 1630 the Unites attempted to take over the archiepiscopal church of the Assumption of the Virgin but the Archbishop, by handsomely bribing the Ottoman authorities, was able to halt the takeover. That unfortunately did not stop the Catholics from trying and by the middle of the 17th century they created a Catholic Archbishopric inside Ohrid. But as soon as it was created, conditions turned unfavourable for them and it had to be dissolved and subordinated to the Diocese of Skopje.

In 1661 Archbishop Athanasius took a trip to Rome with a proposal to unify Rome and the Archbishopric of Ohrid. An agreement was reached and a missionary by the name of Onuphrius Constantine was elected as Bishop to serve at the Koine speaking College in Rome. The union, however, did not work out and Catholic propaganda in Macedonia began to lose its effect. A new hope was growing among the Balkan people that Russia, an Orthodox country, would some day liberate them from their bondage.

The Macedonian people were never content with being occupied and showed their displeasure at every opportunity. The first major incident occurred in the middle of the 15th century in the Debar region, where Macedonians, Albanians and Vlachs lived together. Led by George Castriot, the people rose up against the tyranny of the Turks.

George Castriot, who took the name Scanderbeg after Iskander, more commonly known as Alexander the Great, came from an illustrious feudal family which at the time ruled part of present day central Albania and the greater Debar region in the present day Republic of Macedonia. During the Ottoman conquests in the region, John Castriot, George's father, managed to retain his title and holdings by acknowledging the supreme authority of the Sultan and fulfilling certain obligations as his vassal. As proof of his loyalty, John Castriot surrendered his sons to the Sultan to be held as hostages. One of those sons was George who quickly became fascinated by the energy and vigour of the Ottoman military and could not wait to join them.

Having accepted Islam, George's first act was to change his name to Scanderbeg. Scanderbeg quickly built a reputation as an able commander and gained the confidence of the Ottoman supreme authorities. When his father died in 1437, Scanderbeg took his father's place as governor of the same district. Even though Scanderbeg was an ally of the Sultan, his real loyalties lay with his people.

When war broke out in the region in 1442 and Janos Hunjadi's armies penetrated the interior of the Ottoman Empire, Scanderbeg decided the time was right to renounce his allegiance to the Sultan and raise a rebellion. When a great battle broke out in 1443 near Nish and the Ottoman front was crushed, instead of attacking, Scanderbeg, his nephew Hamza and three hundred cavalymen deserted and fled with the panic stricken Ottoman soldiers.

On his way, Scanderbeg passed through the Debar region where he received much support and a hero's welcome. In Debar he was joined by local chieftains and a large number of rebel peasants. With his cavalry and new recruits he began the revolt by attacking Croia (Kruje), an important Ottoman military and administrative center. After sacking Croia with ease he returned to Debar where he began to organize a general rebellion. With Croia in his possession, Scanderbeg, on November 27, 1443, declared his principality independent. Using the Debar region as his base, Scanderbeg's rebels began a campaign against a large number of fortresses including the strategically significant fortress of Svetigrad (Kodzhadzhik). The siege of Svetigrad was led by Moses the Great, one of Scanderbeg's loyal supporters and his three thousand strong rebel force

from the Debar region. After a fierce battle the fortress fell and the entire Debar region became completely liberated.

For the time being the rebels ceased their easterly expansion and, as a result, the eastern border of the greater Debar region became the borderline between the Ottomans and the rebels which in the next three decades or so would become an area of continuous conflict.

The next great battle was fought on April 29, 1444 at Dolni Debar. A rebel strike force of insurgents from the Debar region led by Moses the Great decimated the Ottoman army leaving seven thousand dead and five hundred captured prisoners. Two years later on September 27, 1446 another battle took place near Debar in which the Ottomans again suffered heavy losses.

Scanderbeg was becoming a legend and a serious threat to Ottoman stability so in the summer of 1448 Sultan Murat II, together with his heir prince Mehmed, prepared a strike force and set out to find him. Their first encounter with the rebels was at the fortress of Svetigrad where a garrison of local rebels, led by Peter Perlat, offered them strong resistance. Unfortunately, after a long drawn out siege the fortress fell. All was not lost however, due to more pressing matters elsewhere the Sultan decided to abandon his pursuit and left, leaving a greater part of the Debar region still in the hands of the insurgents.

The next encounter came in 1452 when Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror amassed a large army in Ohrid. Upon finding out, Scanderbeg immediately concentrated his forces at the military camp of Oronic, the present day town of Debar and together with Moses the Great and his nephew Hamza, launched an attack. The opposing armies met near the fortress of Modrich and Scanderbeg's forces broke through the Turkish lines in a single battle giving him a decisive victory and forcing the Turkish army to retreat.

Dissatisfied with the outcome, the following spring Mehmed dispatched his general Ibrahim Pasha and launched another attack on the rebels. The armies met in Polog on April 22, 1453. Led by Scanderbeg and Moses the rebels fought fiercely and gained another victory over the Turks.

Unable to gain any ground against the rebels by battle, the Sultan turned to bribery. He paid Moses to look the other way while a large Ottoman force crossed the Debar frontier and approached Scanderbeg's forces in a surprise attack. During this catastrophic battle which took place in 1455 near Berat, six thousand men, nearly half of the rebel force, were lost. To save himself Moses fled the region and joined the Ottoman army. In spite of the heavy losses, the people of Debar did not give up and continued to support Scanderbeg. In no time at all, he was able to recoup his losses, rebuild his army and renew the conflict.

The next Ottoman attack came a year later. This time not only was Scanderbeg ready for it, but being aware that it was led by the traitor Moses the Great, he marched his army in person to meet him. On May 19, 1456 near Oronic, the rebels attacked and defeated the Ottoman army of fifteen thousand, giving Scanderbeg another victory. Pleased with the results, Scanderbeg forgave Moses for his treachery and welcomed him back to the rebel camp. Upon their

return home, Scanderbeg reinstated Moses to his former position entrusting him once again with the defense of the Debar region.

When it seemed like Scanderbeg's worries were over a new set of problems began to plague the uprising. The Sultan made a deal with a number of powerful feudal lords and they in turn began their personal attacks on rebels causing them to lose massive territories. One such territory was the fortress of Modrich which, like the fortress of Svetigrad, was of strategic importance.

By gaining Modrich the Ottomans gained a safe route to the rebel camps. Losing no time, an Ottoman army was dispatched and reached the town of Lesh in the summer of 1457. Feeling their vulnerability, instead of waiting for the attack the rebels took the offensive and met the marching Turkish army head on in a fierce battle. Surprised by the attack the Ottoman army broke up and gave Scanderbeg another decisive victory. With the success of this battle the rebels diplomatically regained all previously lost territories.

The prolonged struggle with the rebels convinced the Sultan that Scanderbeg could be subdued and the rebel territory freed only by a large-scale military campaign. Led by the battle hardened, experienced commander Balaban Pasha, from Mat, a massive campaign was organized and unleashed upon the rebels in 1465. A fierce battle ensued near Debar but the Turkish force was much too powerful to break. Besides losing much of his force, Scanderbeg also lost many of his experienced commanders, including Moses the Great, who was captured, sent to Tsari Grad and cruelly put to death. Both sides suffered heavy losses but Balaban succeeded in quelling the rebellion but only in the Debar region. The rebellion was moved to the interior of Albania and continued to flourish until a decade past Scanderbeg's death.

Scanderbeg died of illness on January 17, 1468. Ten years later after the fall of Croia, the last bastion of rebel strength, on January 16, 1478 the rebellion was over. This, however, was not the first or last rebellion. In time, and with the breakdown of Ottoman rule, more and more revolts would take place in the future.

As mentioned earlier, with the breakdown of the timar and Spahi systems and the decline of the Ottoman state, exploitation of the dependent population in Macedonia was at an incline. Violence, especially on the part of the Ottoman government, was reaching a record high. Life for the average Macedonian was unbearable and frustration began to express itself in various forms. Peasants who could no longer afford to pay their taxes were fleeing to the mountains and settling in less accessible places where the tax collectors could not easily find them. Without a peaceful means of relieving their anguish and exploitation from the Ottoman yoke, the Macedonian people had no choice but to turn to violence.

The next local uprising took place in 1564/65, in the Moriovo region and spread to the Prilep plains and from there to the town of Prilep. Dubbed as the Moriovo and Prilep revolt, it is unknown why this revolt began but it is clear that three peasants and two priests from the Moriovo district started it. No sooner had the trouble started than the Sultan, through a decree dated October 3, 1564, ordered that the leaders of the revolt be put to death while the followers were to

be sent to serve as oarsmen on Turkish galleys. Before the decree could be enforced, however, the perpetrators fled causing the Sultan to order another decree for their capture.

Prilep soon became a hotbed of demonstrations when the Ottoman court ruled in favour of a Pasha in a dispute with the peasants. According to a document dated December 1565 a revolt broke out inside the town of Prilep when the Prilep Court, in settling a dispute between the peasants and Mustapha Pasha, ruled in favour of the Pasha. When the news hit the streets more than a thousand rebels from the surrounding villages, armed with sticks and stones, assembled and stormed the court. It is unknown how this revolt ended.

Since Christians by law were not allowed to carry arms, they had no effective defense against maltreatment, especially from the corrupt legal system. The only recourse available to them was to become outlaws. Although unpopular, outlawry was one of the oldest forms of armed struggle expressed by the Macedonian people, which reached epidemic proportions over the course of the 17th century. The outlaws, or haiduks, lived secret lives known only to other outlaws or trusted friends. When it came to defending their homes and properties, they came together in bands or druzhini of twenty to thirty people. Occasionally, for defensive purposes a number of smaller bands combined together to form a large band usually numbering no more than three hundred people. The band leaders or vojvodi were elected members of their bands and were usually chosen for their military skills and leadership abilities. The ranks of the outlaws came mostly from the feudally tied peasants but it was not uncommon to find priests and monks among them. Women too were known to have joined outlaw bands. The oldest record of a woman outlaw dates back to 1636. Her name was Kira and she was from the village Chapari. Kira was a member of Petar Dundar's band from the village Berantsi, near Bitola. There were also recorded cases of women who led outlaw bands.

The main preoccupation of the outlaws was to defend the oppressed and in times of trouble come to their aid. In retaliation the outlaws were known to attack feudal estates and even burn down Spahi harvests. They also ambushed and robbed merchant caravans and tax collectors. Bands were known to have attacked some of the larger towns. On several occasions outlaws banded together and overran Bitola, Lerin, Ohrid and Resen. Twice they looted the bezesteen in Bitola, once in 1646 and again in 1661.

To curb outlaw activities, the Ottoman authorities frequently undertook extreme measures by organizing posses to hunt them down, burning down villages that were known to be sympathetic to outlaws and imprisoning and sometimes executing relatives of outlaws. When all these measures failed to stop them, the Ottomans introduced the services of the derbendkis, to provide safe passage through the countryside to important functionaries such as merchants, tax collectors and travelers.

Outlaws who were captured were tortured, sent to prison for life, or executed. The lucky ones were executed outright. Their dead bodies were then impaled on stakes or on iron hooks for everyone to see. Those less fortunate were skinned

alive, had their heads split open and were left to die a slow and painful death. Those sent to prison were usually chained to galleys and spent the rest of their lives as oarsmen.

Despite the extreme measures exercised against them, the outlaws were never stamped out and were always a part of every conflict. The outlaws were the nucleus of the armed forces and the experienced leaders and commanders of the revolts and uprisings. They were the first to raise the spirit of resistance and the first to stand up for the people. That is why the outlaws are so widely revered in Macedonian folklore.

Unwilling to yield, the Ottoman noose continued to tighten on the peasants, Christian and Muslim alike. Their moment to strike back, however, came when the Ottomans became entangled with the Austrians in a war during the Austrian invasion of Macedonia.

What came to be known as the Karposh Uprising, dubbed after its leader Karposh, was a Macedonian people's revolt against the economic, social and political injustices perpetrated by the Ottoman overlords.

As mentioned earlier, in 1683 the Ottomans, for the second time, tried to take Vienna but failed after a two-month siege. The city was saved with the assistance of the Polish army led by King John Sobiesky. The Ottoman army suffered a catastrophic defeat resulting in enormous losses of territory, material and manpower. To prevent further expansion and keep the Ottomans in check, the Holy League of Austria, Poland, Venice and later Russia was created.

Once they gained momentum the Austrians continued to drive the Ottomans southward reaching the northern boundaries of Macedonia. Led by General Piccolomini, the Austrians entered the Plain of Skopje on October 25, 1689 and were met by a jubilant crowd celebrating their triumphant arrival.

The Austrians continued to march southward and came upon the town of Skopje only to find it empty. Skopje had been evacuated and left with plenty of food and all kinds of merchandise. Feeling that it may have been a trap, Piccolomini withdrew his forces at once and set the town on fire. The fires raged for two whole days and consumed the greater part of Skopje.

The Austrians continued to move through the Macedonian interior and set camp in the village of Orizari, near Kumanovo. A detachment was sent to Shtip, which arrived there at dawn on November 10, 1689 only to be met with Ottoman resistance. A fierce battle broke out but the Austrians managed to force the Ottomans out, leaving about two thousand of their dead behind. After setting the town on fire, the Austrians left for camp but on their way ran into an Ottoman detachment of three hundred soldiers. Another battle ensued and the Ottomans disbursed.

During mid-November the Austrians organized a detachment of Albanian Catholic volunteers and sent them to Tetovo where they succeeded in putting down a garrison of more than six hundred Ottoman troops. On December 20 an Austrian detachment, with Serbs led by Captain Sanoski, was sent from Prishtina to Veles where it succeeded in capturing and burning down the town.

Unfortunately upon their retreat, the detachment was ambushed by Janissaries and Sanoski was mortally wounded.

The destruction and mayhem caused by the Austro-Turkish War brought a sudden deterioration in the economic and political situation in the region. The need for further military operations forced the Ottoman state to increase its purchases of grain, fodder, livestock, timber and other agricultural products, far below normal prices. Also, to pay for the military campaigns, a host of new taxes were introduced. During this difficult period the Rajak also suffered violence at the hands of deserters from the Ottoman army and from the defectors of the central government.

Among those who deserted their military duty was the notorious general Jegen Pasha, the former Bejlerbej of Rumelia. With ten thousand deserters among his ranks he ravaged the Balkan Peninsula until he was finally put to death in February of 1689.

The military catastrophe and the chaotic situation inside the Ottoman Empire again created suitable conditions for widespread outlawry in all parts of Macedonia, especially in the Moriovo, Bitola, Tikvesh, Veles, Shtip and Mt. Dospat regions which led up to the famous Karposh Uprising.

Sometime in the middle of October 1689 the famous outlaw Arambasha Karposh led an uprising which broke out in the region between Kustendil and Skopje. Immediately after declaring a revolt, Karposh attacked and captured Kriva Palanka. Kriva Palanka was an Ottoman stronghold built in 1636 to house Ottoman soldiers. After capturing the stronghold, Karposh declared it liberated rebel territory and made it his center of resistance. Among the items captured at the stronghold were six cannons, a real prize for the rebels. After securing Kriva Palanka the rebels built and secured a new stronghold near Kumanovo.

It is not known whether or not the rebels were assisted by the Austrians but it is possible. According to contemporary Ottoman chronicles and local legends, Karposh was known as the "King of Kumanovo". This could have been a title conferred upon him by the Austrian emperor Leopold I who sent him a Busby (a tall fur hat worn by hussars and guardsmen) as a gift and a sign of recognition.

Unfortunately for the rebels, the current situation did not last long and a reversal in military and political events played a decisive role in the fate of the uprising. The Ottomans had by now had enough time to take countermeasures to stop the economic and military decline of their state.

The first step taken in Macedonia was to put down the rebellion and drive the Austrian army out of Macedonian territory. To do that the Ottomans employed the services of the Crimean Khan, Selim Giray, along with his fierce detachment of Tartar warriors.

The council of war which met in Sofia on November 14, 1689 decided to attack the Karposh uprising through Kustendil. But before they could do that they had to secure Kriva Palanka. Upon finding that they were about to be attacked, the rebels set fire to Kriva Palanka and concentrated their forces in the new fortress in Kumanovo. No sooner had they prepared their defenses than the Ottoman and Tartar detachments arrived. The rebels stood their ground and

fought gallantly but were quickly overwhelmed by the numerically superior Ottoman force. A large number of rebels, including Karposh, were captured at the outset. When the battle was over, all rebels who resisted to the end were slaughtered. Karposh and the others were taken prisoner. After subduing Kumanovo, the Ottomans left for Skopje where they executed Karposh and the others.

Karposh was brought before Selim Giray who at the time was standing on the Stone Bridge over the River Vardar. Selim used him for target practice and impaled him with his Tartar lances. He then had his body hurled into the Vardar River. Karposh died early in December of 1689 and with him died the Karposh uprising.

For the rebels who survived the battles there was no salvation from the Ottoman backlash except to leave Macedonia. Many fled north beyond the Sava and Danube Rivers. Some even went as far north as Russia and joined the Russian military. There they formed the "Macedonian regiment" which became part of the regular Russian army. The failed Karposh uprising depleted the local population of northwestern Macedonia, opening the way for large scale Albanian immigration.

Just as the Karposh revolt was winding down in Macedonia, on April 6, 1690, Leopold I issued a manifesto inviting "all peoples of Albania, Serbia, Mysia, Bulgaria, Silistria, Illyria, Macedonia and Rashka to join the Austrians in taking up arms against the Turks." Then on April 26, 1690 he issued a letter making Macedonia and her people his protectorate. It has been said that Leopold acted on the advice of Macedonians Marko Krajda of Kozhani and Dimitri Georgija Popovich of Solun. Among other things the letter stated that "we graciously accept the Macedonian people, in its entirety in every respect, under our imperial and regal protection." Another letter was issued on May 31, 1690 extending Austria's protection to Bulgaria, Serbia and Albania. Unfortunately, all these good gestures were too little too late for Macedonia which by 1690 was back under tight Ottoman control.

Chapter 20 - Macedonia and the Ottoman Empire of the 18th Century

After the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699 the frontiers of the Ottoman Empire were retracted as far south as the Sava and Danube Rivers. By this treaty, the Ottoman Empire lost Hungary to the Habsburgs (Austria) and parts of the Ukraine to Russia. The Ottoman Empire began to lose its economic and political independence and became more and more dependent on the rapidly developing western European states.

After annexing Hungary, the Habsburg Empire became ruler of the Catholic part of eastern Europe while the Ottomans ruled the Orthodox part in the Balkans.

The 18th century witnessed renewed conflicts with several new wars breaking out, resulting in more negative consequences for the Macedonian people.

Internally, the Ottoman Empire was plagued with feudal anarchy, perpetrated by the powerful feudal lords. Some were so powerful that they openly defied the central government by not submitting taxes and by using state money to bolster their own private armies and maintain their own independence.

One such feudal lord was Mahmud Pasha Bushatlija who ruled the districts of Ohrid, Debar and Skopje. Another was Ali Pasha Tepelen of Ioannina who held sway over the southwestern districts of Macedonia. Yet another was Abdul Aga Shabanderoglou whose family estates were scattered throughout Dojran and fourteen other kazas. Shabanderoglou defeated Beg Hasan, a Sultan supporter, and took over his estates. With the wealth he accumulated he built an army, attacked and took over the estates of the feudal lords in Petrich, Melnik and Demir Hisar. Eventually however the central government caught up with Shabanderoglou and destroyed his power base but by then he was an old man.

Ali Aga and Ismail Beg of the Serres district also defied the central government when together they raised a combined army of six thousand Albanian recruits. The Tetovo Pashas took control of the Skopje, Tetovo, Gostivar and Kichevo districts and Keladin Beg took over Ohrid. All of these feudal lords built their military power base with Albanian mercenaries and terrorized the local population in their districts.

Besides the renegade begs, the 18th century also gave rise to a new breed of bandits who found it easier to rob innocent people than to work. At times these groups numbered as high as five hundred roaming the Macedonian countryside, robbing and looting entire villages at a time. Most of these marauding bandits were of Turkish and Albanian extraction. They often collaborated with the defiant feudal lords and corrupt state officials, doing their dirty work. There was one instance in 1709 when Kadizade Mustapha, the Tax Lessee of Prilep, hired a group of these bandits and through sheer terror exerted pressure on the peasants to pay their taxes. On several occasions in 1711, the Deputy Lieutenant Governor and Tax Collector from Ohrid hired a gang of one thousand bandits from Mat and attacked the town of Bitola.

By 1715 banditry had become a reputable profession and, for some, robbing and looting became a way of life. Some of these gangs were even bold enough to attack larger towns like Prilep and Veles. An Albanian gang desecrated the Slepche Monastery and robbed its furnishings and livestock. When complaints from Turkish merchants and businessmen began to arrive, however, the Ottoman State had no choice but to intervene. In 1779 the Bejlerbeg of Rumelia himself took action against Suljo Starova's gang.

At times even the martolozes, who were hired to protect the population, also contributed to the anarchy. Instead of upholding the law, they held up villages, taking food and materials without paying. Some even committed atrocities under the pretext of pursuing outlaws.

One of the more powerful gangs which, among others, employed the services of two hundred ex-martolozes, led by deserter Martolobasha Hibetulah, roamed, looted and pillaged the Lerin, Bitola, Kostur and Voden districts for half a century.

During the Ottoman war with Austria and Russia, which lasted from 1787 to 1792, a new group of bandits, known as the krcali, appeared in Macedonia. The krcali were a large group who used various mountains throughout Macedonia for cover. The krcali were organized in bands of about two thousand. Their ranks consisted of peasants, army deserters and women, people of all faiths and nationalities. They rode on horseback and were extremely mobile. They were known for their surprise attacks and lightning fast ability to loot whole villages and towns. Many districts were devastated by the krcali who were hunted down by the Sultan's army for a decade before they were eradicated.

The greatest victims of this anarchy were the defenseless Christians whose only way of getting justice was to become outlaws. As in the 17th century, outlawry exploded again in the 18th century forcing the Ottoman State into crisis. Unable to deal with outlawry on its own, the central government made it the responsibility of the general population. A special budget was set aside dedicated to the pursuit and extermination of outlaws. The money for this budget was raised from imposing additional taxes on the general population. In 1705 the surrounding villages of the Bitola kaza were taxed 103,800 akcis just for the pursuit of outlaws in their own region. For that period, this was an enormous amount of money.

Unable to stop the outlaws by conventional methods, the Ottoman authorities proposed various different schemes including the idea of employing them as martolozes (protectors) with a regular monthly income. The bands that agreed to the terms were pardoned for their past crimes. Unable to deal with the outlaws on its own was a clear signal that the Ottoman central government was weakening which prompted a further escalation in anarchic activities.

Attacks on the Macedonian peasant population in both villages and towns were carried out on a regular basis. The pressure of violence caused people to leave the dangerous countryside for the safety of larger towns. Macedonians left their rural homes for the urban setting thus opening up opportunities for foreign influx, mostly Albanians, to fill the void. With more Macedonians flooding the towns the economy began to shift from agriculture to craftsmanship and commerce. Also, coincidental with the movement of people, craftsman trades were gradually set free from small individual commissions for local consumption to the large production of goods for export.

With the majority of the trades operated by Macedonians, leadership in the guilds began to slowly change hands. Macedonian merchants began to venture further out to strengthen their links with the outside world. Ohrid merchants began to trade with those of Port Durazzo thus gaining access to cities in Italy. Also merchants from Kostur opened trade with Venice and Austria. Macedonian trading houses were opened in Solun, Kostur, Bansko, Serres, Voden and Ohrid with bureaus in Bucharest, Timisoara, Budapest, Vienna, Livorno, Venice, Odessa and Moscow.

The Vlach population also contributed to the growth of urban economy in Macedonia. There was a strong influx of Vlachs from Moscopolis into Macedonia, especially into the towns of Krushevo and Bitola. Ali Pasha burned

the town of Moscopolis in 1769 forcing a mass exodus. In no time the Vlachs were involved in making crafts and in intensive trading activities.

Christians were allowed to trade with the usual restriction both inside and outside of the Ottoman world but Muslims were prohibited to do so by law. According to Muslim law, ordinary Muslims were not allowed to handle money, speak foreign languages, or venture beyond Islamic held lands. Therefore, a select class of Christians known as Phanariots handled official trade, communication and contact with the outside world.

The Phanariots were a group of wealthy Christians who got their name from the “Phanar” or lighthouse district of Tsari Grad where they lived. After the Sultan installed the Patriarch in Tsari Grad, the Phanar became a thriving community of wealthy and educated Christians. As mentioned earlier, the Sultan placed the Phanariot Patriarch in charge of the Christian Millet because he found him more agreeable than his other (poor) Christian counterparts. The Patriarchy functioned like a state within a state with its own administration and services. Having the Sultan’s favour, the Patriarch took the opportunity to expand his dominion over the entire Eastern Christian Church by replacing whatever legitimate bishoprics he could with his own corrupt people. For example, the Old Serbian bishoprics were abolished as punishment for helping the Habsburgs. At about the same time the Macedonian bishopric, including the powerful Ohrid bishopric, was also abolished. After becoming *gospodars*, the Phanariots replaced all the Romanian bishoprics. As *gospodars* in Romania, the Phanariots abolished the Church Slavonic (Macedonian) liturgy and replaced Macedonian speaking clergy with Romanians. The Romanians didn’t care much for the Phanariots and pursued Romanian ways. Eventually as more and more bishoprics were shut down the Phanariots redefined the old culture, Christian faith and Christian education to suit themselves and their corrupt ways.

The Ottomans trusted the Phanariots well enough to give them a role in the central Ottoman administration. This included the office of the “Dragoman”, the head of the Sultan's interpreters’ service. Phanariots participated in diplomatic negotiations with outsiders and some even became ambassadors for the Ottoman Empire. Phanariots were put in charge of collecting taxes from the Christian Millet for the Ottomans and whatever they could pilfer from the peasants they kept for themselves. Many scholars believe that Romania’s peasants have never suffered more than they did during the Phanariot period. Phanariots also secured food and other services for the Ottoman court.

The Phanariots, through the Dragoman, were largely responsible for providing “all kinds” of information to the outside world about the Ottoman Empire, including their own desires to rule it some day. Some Phanariots were educated abroad in London and Paris and were responsible for bringing information into the Ottoman Empire. Towards the middle of the 18th century, the Phanariot dream was to replace the Ottoman Empire with a Christian Empire like the Russian model. In theory, they wanted to re-create a multi-cultural Byzantine Empire but with a Patriarch in charge. The Phanariots believed that with Russian or German help it was possible to achieve their goals.

The power and money hungry Phanariots were not content with only running the Ottoman administration but sought to possess all the eparchies of the Byzantine Churches. Pressured by the Phanariots, the Patriarchate of Tsari Grad increasingly began to interfere in the affairs of the various Archbishoprics including the Church of Ohrid. Using his influence with the Sultan, in May 1763, the Patriarch attempted to appoint a man of his choice, the monk Ananias, as head of Ohrid. Ananias, however, was rejected and the Archbishopric elected Arsenius, the Macedonian Metropolitan from Pelagonia. This unfortunately proved disastrous for the Archbishopric. The Patriarch retaliated and by means of bribery and intrigue, with the aid of the Ottoman authorities and his allies among the higher clergy in the Ohrid Church, he gradually did away with the Archbishopric. On January 16, 1767 Arsenius was forced to resign his office voluntarily, recognize the Patriarchate of Tsari Grad and personally request the abolition of the Ohrid Archbishopric. The Sultan issued a decree making the abolition legal and annexing its eparchies to the Patriarchate of Tsari Grad. The Ohrid Eparchy itself was abolished and the town came under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan of Durazzo. Aiming to eradicate every single trace of the once autocephalous Ohrid church, the Patriarchate even changed Ohrid's name to Lychnidos. The local bishops were replaced with Koine speakers throughout Macedonia and new ecclesiastical taxes were introduced.

After the unfortunate loss of the Ohrid Church to the Patriarchate, monasteries were virtually the only cultural centers left in Macedonia. Having a large number of Slavonic (Macedonian) manuscripts in their possession, the monasteries took over the tradition of copying and reproducing liturgical, philosophical, educational and other ecclesiastical documents. Included among the most important of these monasteries were the Lesnovo Monastery near Kratovo, Matejche and St. Prohor Pchinski near Kumanovo, Slepche near Demir Hisar, Treskavets near Prilep, Prechista near Kichevo, John Bigorski near Debar and Polog in the Tikvesh district. The desire to continue in the Macedonian tradition was provided by Sveta Gora (Holy mountain or Mt. Athos) where the Macedonian culture and Slavonic language continued to be cherished and heard in the monasteries of Chilandar, Zograph and Panteleimon.

Among the various documents kept by the clergy in Sveta Gora were monastic records of the names and donations of all visitors to the monasteries. Important documents of Slavonic literacy such as Clement's Charter, the Slepche Letters, the Macedonian Damascene of the 16th century, the Tikvesh Collection of the 16th and 17th centuries and the Treskavets Codicil of the 17th and 18th centuries were also preserved in Sveta Gora.

Monasteries provided shelter for teaching cleric students to read and write in the Macedonian language. During the 17th and more so during the 18th century, Macedonian monks began to open schools in the towns near their churches where they taught basic literacy to willing students. Such schools were operated in Veles, Skopje and Prilep.

Not to be outdone, the Vlachs also opened schools but in the Koine language. Most of the Vlach schools were founded and materially supported by Vlach

Metropolitans and by Vlach immigrants in Macedonia. Around the middle of the 18th century a Koine speaking school was opened in Ohrid and in 1753 Eugene Vulgaris opened his academy at Sveta Gora, which operated for five years and trained about a hundred and fifty pupils from different regions.

New churches, built mostly by villages in Macedonia during Ottoman rule, were far smaller and more modest than those built in the pre-Ottoman period. Architecturally their form was simple, to make them indistinguishable from the houses in the village. A fresco painting hanging on the interior wall and several icons mounted on wooden iconostases were the only things that distinguished churches from houses.

Icon paintings were still painted in the old style but the quality of the work gradually declined. Original works became a rarity and artistic creativity boiled down to nothing more than imitations and copying the great works from previous epochs. The number of painters, journeymen and apprentices also declined and so did their field work.

During the 18th century several painting studios existed, the most significant being located in the Ohrid and Prespa district, the Treskavets and Zrze monasteries in the Prilep district, Slepche, Lesnovo and the Skopje Tsrna Gora.

Some of the works produced during this and earlier periods were of considerable artistic value and of importance to the churches. Examples of these include the paintings in the Church of the Holy Virgin located in a cave at Peshtani. The snake cross in the Church of St. Demetrius in Ohrid was painted at the end of the 15th century. The monk Makarios, from the village of Zrze, painted the icon of the Virgin of Pelagonia in 1422, and the portrait of Kупen, painted in 1607, was in the Church of the Holy Virgin at Slivnitsa Monastery in the village of Slivnitsa in the Prespa district.

The influence of oriental elements in Macedonian woodcarving also increased during the same period. The double braid, carved in shallow and flat carvings, was a pure and exclusive motif right up until the 17th and early 18th centuries when more intricate carvings began to appear. Good examples of shallow carving are the doors of the old monastery, Church of St. John the Baptist at Slepche. Other exceptionally good pieces of woodcarving are the doors of the Treskavets Monastery, probably carved at the end of the 15th century.

Shallow woodcarvings can also be found on icon frames from the same period. The most interesting is that of the baptism of Christ found in the Church of the Holy Virgin at the Slivnitsa Monastery.

Deep incisions began to appear at the close of the 17th century, showing superior beauty in contrast to the shallow carvings. Good examples of deep carvings are the iconostases of St. Naum Church near Lake Ohrid (1711) and St. Demetrius Church in Bitola (1775).

On the subject of music, the necessary conditions for the development of professional music in Macedonia were not quite there during the Ottoman era. Folk music, however, flourished and was very popular with the Macedonian people, not only for its entertaining qualities but also for its manifestations of

soul, spirit, joy, suffering and pain. Most composers, unfortunately, chose to remain anonymous and cannot be credited for their work. Apart from church music, which continued to be sung in the Byzantine chant style, folk music dominated Macedonian melodies virtually up until the end of the 19th century.

Apart from being conquerors and tyrants the Ottomans also had positive qualities. Turkish literature in Macedonia started as far back as the second half of the 15th century. Skopje, Enidzhe Vardar, and Endrene (Adrianople) were the largest Turkish cultural centers in the European part of the Ottoman State. Literature and poetry were the most valued and cherished aspects of Turkish culture which flourished during the 15th and 16th centuries but began to decline in the second half of the 17th century. There was not a single town in Macedonia that did not produce a literary name of distinction. The earliest literary works can be traced back to the time of Sultan Bajazit II's rule which lasted from 1481 to 1512. Included among the literary artists are Ataj Oskubi, Zari, Feridi and Hakki, all of whom were from Skopje. Also from Skopje were the poets Muhiddi, Riyazi, Isaak Celebi and Valaahi. The best known among them and indeed of all the medieval Turkish poets was Isaak Celebi from Skopje. After completing his education, Celebi became a teacher in Isaak Beg's Medresa in Skopje. Celebi also authored a collection of poems including the poem about the town of Skopje.

Many of the most famous personalities throughout the cultural history of the Ottoman Empire were teachers and judges who worked and lived in Macedonia. Taskopruluzade, who justifiably qualifies to be called an Ottoman encyclopedic, was a lecturer at Isaak Beg's Medresa in Skopje in 1529. Isaak Celebi, a very important figure in the history of medieval Turkish literature, died in Skopje where he worked as a judge. The poet and scholar Vejsi Effendi, another great medieval Turkish prose writer, was a judge for seven terms in Skopje where he died. Islamic culture left obvious and lasting traces of art and architecture in Macedonia, some of which have survived to this day.

Wherever a sizable Muslim population lived in Macedonia, it left its mark in the form of Islamic temples, either as mosques or as mescids (smaller mosques). Among the oldest and most beautiful of these structures are Isaac Beg's mosques. The first, known as the Alaca or Painted Mosque was built in 1438. The second, built during the second half of the 15th century, stands to this day as the ornament of old Skopje. Several mosques were built in Bitola, among them the Jahdar Kadi Mosque, designed by the eminent Ottoman architect Koca Sinan and built in 1561/2. Another richly decorated mosque was the Painted Mosque of Tetovo, built during the 17th century.

Another form of Ottoman artistic expression was mausoleums, which also left their mark in Macedonia. Distinguished Ottomans were buried in mausoleums. One of the oldest that has been preserved is the mausoleum at Isaac Beg's mosque in Skopje.

Another group of Muslims who left their mark on Macedonian soil were the Dervishes. Wherever dervishes were found, so were their convents and hermitages. In Serres alone there were seven hermitages built by the first half of

the 16th century. In Skopje in 1660 there were twenty dervish convents, among them, and most outstanding, was the Sultan Emir Convent. The largest complex of ancillary buildings and most impressive was Arabatibaba's Convent in Tetovo.

More forms of Ottoman architectural expressions in Macedonia were the medresas, or religious schools which occupied a place of distinction among Macedonia's urban panorama. Isaac Beg built one of the first significant medresas in Skopje in 1445. Other prominent Ottoman buildings included large numbers of imarets, or free kitchens for the poor and travelers. Medresas and imarets usually existed as ancillary buildings in complexes among the larger mosques.

The Ottomans also owned numerous inns and caravanserais, which were built in the more important urban and commercial centers at various intervals along the main traffic routes in Macedonia. One of the finest was the Kurshumli Caravanserai in Skopje.

Covered markets or *bezsnes* were also popular in Macedonia, built to meet the needs of growing commerce in the various towns. One such place was the Mustapha Pasha covered marketplace in Skopje.

We must not forget the famous hamams or Turkish public baths, which were offered to the public both in towns and villages. Some, like the Daut Pasha Baths and the Cift Baths in Skopje, were immensely large and beautiful structures. Also of importance were the public systems of piped water, drinking fountains and wells.

Turkish educational institutions, which were emphatically religious in nature, in addition to teaching religion, offered students the opportunity to study Oriental languages, Islamic law, philosophy and mathematics. Education was conducted in the medresas (religious high schools) and the mektebs (religious elementary schools). By the 15th century two medresas were operating in Skopje. One of them, the Isaac Beg Medresa, was one of the oldest and most famous in the entire Balkans

Books were also important in the cultural life of the Islamic world. Oriental libraries, consisting mostly of religious books, were set up throughout the mosques, medresas and convents all over Macedonia. The oldest, richest and most important of these libraries was the library in Isaac Beg's mosque in Skopje.

Besides the Turks, the Albanians in Macedonia also possessed a rich culture. Life experiences were preserved in calendar songs, cradle songs, wedding and love songs. Some of the oldest and richest epics still exist in the Debar and Kichevo regions and are part of the Albanian mythological heritage. Albanian literature was also rich in folk tales.

Albanian architecture found its expression in religious buildings, churches and mosques, which closely resembled Byzantine and Islamic structures. Albanian Christian churches existed en masse until the 17th century when most of the Albanian population converted to Islam. After that many were destroyed along with adjacent Christian graveyards.

Albanian houses were not much different from Macedonian houses. Typical Albanian style houses could be found in the Debar and Kichevo regions. Macedonian builders from Dolna Reka probably built them.

With regard to dress, Albanian women wore clothes exceptionally rich in colour with a unique dress design. One could tell which village a woman belonged to by the colours and patterns on her dress. Men's clothing was fairly standard throughout Macedonia.

Unlike Muslim Turks and Albanians, who were free to enjoy their cultures, Christian Macedonians found the Turkish yoke increasingly unbearable, particularly from the Turkish troops who enjoyed abusing, humiliating and harassing them. With bases in Tsari Grad and Solun, troops constantly passed through Macedonia on their way to and from wars. Dissatisfied with their own condition, the soldiers often took their frustration out on the Macedonian population.

There were always Turkish soldiers in Solun so in spite of harsh living conditions no Solunian dared cause trouble unless living conditions became unbearable. In 1712 a plague broke out as a result of poor living conditions and by 1713 over 8,000 people had lost their lives. In 1720 the people of Solun had just about had enough of Turkish rule and took up arms when their wheat supplies were cut and there was no bread to eat. The same happened in 1753, 1758 and again in 1789. According to descriptions of 18th century Solun, the city had not grown beyond the confines of the Byzantine walls, parts of which still remained in good condition. Solun had four big towers, three of which were rectangular and one circular, (the White Tower still exists to this day) located at the southern part of the fortified walls.

The population of 18th century Solun numbered approximately 40,000 people, most of whom were Turks and Jews. The streets in the commercial district were covered over with boards forming a continuous roof, providing shade for the shoppers on the hot summer days.

On the international stage, the military balance continued to shift away from the Ottomans as they continued to lose their edge in technology and modern weaponry. While western economies continued to improve, Ottoman economic development remained stagnant. A century of military defeats suffered at the hands of the western Europeans devastated the Ottoman Empire. More recently, the emergence of Russia as another powerful Ottoman foe also added to the Ottoman misery.

Ottoman-Russian wars began as early as 1677. Russia attacked the Crimea in 1689 and in 1695 captured the crucial port of Azov. Russia, up to this point, had been completely cut off from the Black Sea and had suffered immensely both economically and politically at the hands of the Ottomans.

Faced with multiple fronts, the Ottoman Empire began to shrink and for the first time since its invasions of Europe it began to permanently lose conquered lands. By the year 1700 the Sultan had surrendered almost all of Hungary, as well as Transylvania, Croatia and Slovenia to the Habsburgs while yielding Dalmatia, the Morea and some Aegean islands to Venice and Padolia and the

South Ukraine to Poland. Russia had gained some territories north of the Dniester River, lost them for a while and regained them again later.

Another minor but crucial event for the south Balkans took place in 1711 when one of the Moldavian *gospodars* (prince) was accused of collaborating with the Russian army and was held responsible for the Russian invasion of Romania. As punishment the Ottomans replaced all Romanian and Moldavian *gospodars* with Phanariots from Tsari Grad.

Ottoman losses were not limited to Europe alone. On the eastern front, in a series of unsuccessful wars between 1723 and 1736, the Turks lost Azerbaijan and other lands to the Persians. A decade later in 1746, after two centuries of war, the Ottomans abandoned the conflict with Iran leaving their Iranian rivals to face political anarchy.

The agreement signed at Kuchuk Kainarji in 1774 with the Russian Romanovs, similar to the 1699 Karlowitz treaty with Austria, highlights the extent of the losses suffered by the Ottomans during the 18th century. The 1768 to 1774 war, the first with Tsaritsa Catherine the Great, included the annihilation of the Ottoman fleet in the Aegean near Chezme. Russian ships sailed from the Baltic Sea through Gibraltar, across the Mediterranean Sea and sank the Ottoman fleet at its home base. By this victorious engagement Russia forced the Sultan to break ties with the Crimean Khan. Without the Sultan's protection, the Khans were left at Russia's mercy. In a sense, the Sultan too lost out because he could no longer count on the Khans for help.

The 1774 Kuchuk Kainarji Treaty gave Russian ships access to the Black Sea, the Bosphorus and Endrene (the Dardanelles). By this treaty Russia built an Orthodox church in Tsari Grad and became the self appointed "protector of Orthodox Christians" inside the Ottoman domain including Wallachia (Romania) and Moldavia. Also, for the first time, the Ottomans allowed Russian (outside) consular agents inside their empire. Russia at the time did not have enough ships to fill the shipping demands so many of the shipping contracts went to Phanariot captains who were on friendly terms with both the Russians and Ottomans.

Russian gains at the expense of the Ottoman's began to raise suspicions with western States, particularly since Russia appointed herself protector of all Byzantine Christians.

The next event to shake the world was the French revolution and Napoleon Bonaparte's rise to power. Bonaparte invaded Egypt in 1798 which marked the end of Ottoman dominion in this vital and rich province along the Nile. The Ottoman central government never regained Egypt, which later emerged as a separate state under Muhammad Ali Pasha and his descendants. After Ali's death his successors kept close ties with the Ottomans in Tsari Grad but remained independent.

Among the many losses the Ottomans experienced also came some gains. In the 1714 to 1718 war with Venice the Turks took back the Morea.

Towards the end of the 18th century and in the early part of the 19th century, Macedonia, like other parts of European Turkey, was a hotbed of unrest. Trouble was stirred up by the military deserters and by local feudal lords who, in the

absence of the Ottoman military, had declared themselves independent and were fighting with one another for greater dominion. Ismail Beg of Serres, Ali Pasha of Ioannina, the Debar Pashas, Recep Pasha of the Skopje Pashalik and Celadin Beg in the Ohrid and Prespa district were but a few who had gained notoriety in this way.

The political and economic insecurity created by this anarchy and by the central government's inability to cope, forced another large migration of Macedonians from the villages into the towns. The sudden growth in the urban population caused an increase in the production of crafts and agricultural products, which became trading commodities for the central European and Russian markets. The fairs in Serres, Prilep, Doyran, Struga, Enidzhe Vardar, Petrich and Nevrokop became commercial trading posts for both domestic and foreign trade. The newly created market network enabled Macedonian businessmen to develop trading ties with the outside world. Businessmen from Veles, Bitola, Serres, Bansko and Ohrid set up their own agencies in Vienna, Leipzig, Trieste and Belgrade. Along with trade also came prosperity and exposure to the outside world. Macedonian merchants became the bearers of progressive ideas, education, culture and Macedonian national sentiment.

Chapter 21 - Wake of the 19th Century Balkans and the Negush Uprising

The Negush (Naussa) Uprising is a well kept secret even though it was the first Macedonian popular uprising of the 19th century. Macedonia's neighbour to the south does not want this known because it happened in what is now considered its territory.

For the oppressed peoples of the Balkans, the dawn of the nineteenth century marked the beginning of national struggles for liberation from the centuries-long domination of the Ottoman Empire. The first was the Serbian uprising of 1804 followed by the Phanariot uprising of 1821. Macedonians, in an effort to liberate their Christian brothers from the oppressive Muslim Turk, took part in both uprisings. In the first Serbian uprising a Macedonian named Volche was instrumental in building the Deligrad fortifications and distinguished himself as a great fighter in battle. Petar Chardaklija was another Macedonian who also distinguished himself as a great fighter in the Serbian resistance. Petar Ichko, another Macedonian, led a delegation that concluded the well-known Ichko Peace Treaty of 1806 with the Ottoman government. When news of the Serbian uprising reached Macedonia the Macedonian people were stirred to action. Unfortunately the Ottoman authorities were ready and concentrated large numbers of troops in Macedonia, quelling the rebellion even before it had a chance to start.

Macedonians also participated in the Phanariot uprising of 1821. Immediately after the outbreak of the Morea revolt Macedonians formed their own bands, particularly in the Voden district and joined up with the Morean rebels. Among the band leaders who fought side by side with the Moreans were

the brothers Ramadanovi, Dimche Minov, Dincho Drzhilovich and Demir Trajko.

Strongly influenced by the ideals of the Phanariot freedom fighters who were calling on the entire Balkan population to take up arms against the Ottoman yoke, many Macedonians, particularly those in the Voden and Negush districts, did take up arms. In early March 1822, under the leadership of Atanas Karatase and Angel Gacho, a revolt broke out in the town of Negush. In no time the rebels put down the Turks and declared Negush liberated. The revolt quickly spread towards Voden engulfing a large number of villages. Unfortunately, effort and determination alone were not enough to stop the numerically superior Ottoman army. Isolated and besieged from all sides the rebels were suppressed and dispersed. After a fierce battle the Turks recaptured the town of Negush and persecutions and pillaging followed. To avoid further problems, the population of Negush was either enslaved or resettled in other parts of Macedonia.

The following is part of a letter written by Gacho that reveals the existence of the Negush uprising.

“No sooner had I heard the sound of Ares's bugle and the weeping call of my beloved fatherland for the protection of its rights than I scorned my tranquility, wealth and glory, took arms against the tyrants and managed to stay near Negush during the whole war. There I fought long and blood-shedding battles until the destruction of Negush, where my beloved children and my wife were taken, prisoner, but, thank God, they are now alive, although in a hostile country (exposed) to the will of the barbarians.

Patriot, Angel Gacho, 16th September 1824”

(Page 183, The University of “Cyril and Methodius”, Documents on the Struggle of the Macedonian People for Independence and a Nation-State, Volume One, Skopje, 1985)

This next letter is from the Sultan to the Kapticibasi, the Solun Mutesellim Jusuff Beg, concerning the uprising in Negush

“...We have heard that the disloyal villains from Negush and the surrounding villages, who rose to arms and for whose destruction we undertook a campaign with a great number of soldiers starting from Solun, built up at the end of the town real and strong redoubts defending the town under the leadership of the repulsive and false captains Zafiraki, Iliamandi, Karatase and others. Although there were a few traveling representatives sent to them from our side who advised them to hand over their arms, promising that they would be pardoned, and that in case they did not do it, they should expect an inglorious end, thus showing them the way to their salvation, they unrepentantly replied with the following curses: ‘We do not believe the words of Moslems and shall continue our disobedience and uprising.’ Therefore, putting into effect the orders of the declared fetva against them, it was decided that in future their greasy bodies should be erased from the face of the earth. But as for the success of the aforementioned full pressure and complete surrounding of the neighbouring mountains is necessary, you are being ordered to mobilize from among the Moslems in the town (of Ber) 200 young men and distinguished fighters as

soldiers, who, having been put under the command of the carrier of his order, our lord privy seal, Abdul Baki-Aga, should form a detachment which should leave for the Negush camp at once. That is why this order is being issued by the Solun divan and the Nengus camp. See that this order will be carried out as soon as possible and avoid any action contrary to it.

Tsari Grad, 3rd recep 1217
(26th March 1822)”

(Page 185, The University of “Cyril and Methodius”, Documents on the Struggle of the Macedonian People for Independence and a Nation-State, Volume One, Skopje, 1985)

This next letter is from Naum Ichko to prince Milos Obrenovic.

“To the noble Master Milos Obrenovic, greeting him most kindly,
I have received your noble letter of the 17th instant and understood what you are writing to me concerning the horse I bought from your servant and which was put up for sale. The Turks wanted to buy it, and it was good I bought it so that it did not come into their hands. I am most yours and the horse is yours too. I am driving it to pasture in Savamala, in a field; in three days the pasture will be finished. I shall be sending it saddled with the first boy who leaves for your palace. Since you already know about the sufferings in Negush, now I am informing you about my misfortune. A cousin of mine with his whole family happened to be there, fleeing from Katranica to Negush for safety; almost at the time Negush was taken they were taken as slaves: his wife, four girls and three sons. Nobody knows if my cousin is alive or dead. The family was imprisoned there by a bolukbasi from Debar and driven to Bitola in order to sell them to the Christians, because the merchants and craftsmen there bought out many slaves; the bishop only bought 30 slaves. When nobody could buy any slaves any more, the woman said to the merchants that she had a relative in Belgrade; the merchants said this to the bolukbasi asking him not to take them to the Arnautluk, but to wait 25 days until they informed me. The bolukbasi consented but said that he will not sell them for less than 4,000 coins. Then the merchants wrote me to send the money as ransom for those 8 souls. We must, my dear Master, not only redeem our relatives but also every Christian soul should be saved from Turkish hands. But it is difficult for me to find 4,000 coins, since the eparchy is weak; therefore I could only spare 1,500 coins and for the rest to 4,000 I beseech you, kneeling before you, kissing your hands and feet, to help me to save those 8 souls for the souls of your parents and the health of noble Milan. It would be good, my dear Master, if you could intercede in favour and ask some of the voivodes or pig merchants whom God has given wealth to help with 100 or 200 coins, to raise small funds, so that the Christians here can also redeem a few Christian souls from Turkish hands. Do you remember how many Serbian slaves were redeemed from Turkish hands by the Christians down there during the first years? The time has now come for us to pay the debt back. Two or three years ago you made it possible for various people to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy City of Jerusalem; now the time has come for your face to see that

holy place. It is Jerusalem to save the slaves; this letter almost comes to you through commissioner Magus.

Please answer me so that Isaija can bring the answer to me by Friday evening, since the commissioner from Bitola is leaving on Saturday, and I may know what to write to the merchants in Bitola concerning those 8 souls.

I remain your obedient servant.

Naum Ichko

Belgrade, 23rd May 1822”

(Pages 185, 186 and 187, The University of “Cyril and Methodius”, Documents on the Struggle of the Macedonian People for Independence and a Nation-State, Volume One, Skopje, 1985.)

The above letters are proof of the Negush uprising which took place in early March 1822. This is another Macedonian historical event that can no longer be hidden to protect the interests of Macedonia’s southern neighbour.

The Kuchuk Kainarji Treaty bolstered Russian expansionism in the Balkans, which alarmed the western Powers and initiated the “Eastern Question”; “What will happen to the Balkans when the Ottoman Empire disappears?” The Eastern Question of the 1800’s later became the Macedonian Question of the 1900’s.

At about the same time as Russia was making her way into the Balkans, the west was experiencing changes of its own. The industrial revolution was in full swing, coming out of England and progressing towards the rest of the world. France was the economic superpower but was quickly losing ground to England. The French Revolution (1789) gave birth not only to new ideas and nationalism, but also to Napoleon Bonaparte. As Napoleon waged war in Europe and the Middle East, French shipping in the Mediterranean subsided only to be replaced by the Phanariot and British traders. French trade inside Ottoman territory also declined and never fully recovered. By land, due to the long border, Austria dominated trade with the Ottoman Empire exercising its own brand of influence on the Balkans, especially on the Serbian people.

As the turn of the 19th century brought economic change to Europe, the Balkans became the last frontier for capitalist expansion. By the 1800’s Europe’s political, economic and military institutions were rapidly changing. Western governments and exporters were aggressively pursuing Balkan markets on behalf of their western manufacturers. This aggressive pursuit smothered Balkan industries before they had a chance to develop and compete. As a result, Balkan economies began to decline causing civil unrest and nationalist uprisings. While western countries were left undisturbed to develop economically and socially, external forces prevented Balkan societies from achieving similar progress. Mostly regulated by guilds, Balkan trades could not compete with western mechanization and went out of business. Without jobs, most city folk became a burden on the already economically strained rural peasants. The economic situation in the Balkans deteriorated to intolerable levels and like in the previous two centuries, people began to rebel.

From the modern Balkan states Serbia was the first to rebel. The first revolt took place in Belgrade in 1804, the same year that Napoleon became Emperor.

The immediate causes of the armed uprising were oppression and a further deterioration of the Ottoman system. When Napoleon invaded Egypt in 1798 the Sultan took troops from the Balkans and sent them to fight the French in Egypt. Leaving the region unguarded, in 1801 Belgrade became a sanctuary for bandits and unruly Janissaries. Robbery and murder became commonplace. Then in February of 1804 a band of bandits murdered seventy prominent Serbian village leaders and priests. They did this to frighten the population and to stop their Serb leaders from complaining to the Sultan. Expecting more murders, to save themselves, some of the Serb leaders fled to the forests and organized the villagers into armed units. They attacked the Janissary in the countryside and fought them until they were pushed back to Belgrade. The war ended in a stalemate.

The stalemate was broken in 1806 when the Serbs decided to no longer expect help from the Sultan and took matters into their own hands. At about the same time the French and Turks became allies. Since France was already an enemy of Russia this alliance made Turkey an enemy also. Now being enemies of the Turks, the Russians intervened on behalf of the Serbs and in 1807 helped them take back Belgrade. The Sultan offered the Serbs full autonomy but the Russians advised against it. They insisted on negotiating for full independence instead. Unfortunately when the war between Russia and France ended, in 1807 Russia made peace with Napoleon and became allied with both France and Turkey. For selfish interests on Russia's part, the Serbs were left on their own. The Serbs lost Belgrade to a Turkish army attack in 1808 and many Serbs fled into exile while the rest continued their guerilla warfare from the forests.

The revolt began again in 1809, when Russia renewed its campaign with Turkey, and ended in 1813 with a Serb defeat. The Serbs failed to win because Russia was unsure about its commitment to Serbia. Russia had a lot more to gain by appeasing Turkey, especially when war with France became imminent. When Napoleon invaded Russia in 1812, the Russians abandoned the Serbs and in 1813 an Ottoman army invaded Serbia, forcing many of her people to flee as refugees into the Austrian Empire.

Relations between the Serbs and Turks turned from bad to worse when the Turks extorted provisions from the Serbs by force, tortured villagers while searching for hidden weapons and started raising taxes. A riot broke out at a Turkish estate in 1814 and the Turks massacred the local population and publicly impaled two hundred prisoners inside Belgrade. The Serbian leaders decided to revolt again and fighting resumed on Easter in 1815. This time Serb leaders made sure captured Turk soldiers were not killed and civilians were released unharmed. To ease Turkish fears, the Serbs also announced that this was a revolt to end abuses, not to gain independence.

After the Russians defeated Napoleon in 1815, the Turkish feared that Russia would again intervene on Serbia's behalf. To avoid this, the Sultan gave Serbia autonomy.

After the Russian-Turkish War of 1829-30, a new treaty was signed which put an end to most abuses in Serbia. All Muslims, except for a small garrison,

left Serbian territory. Serbs took control of the internal administration, postal system and courts. Individual taxes and dues paid directly to the Sultan were replaced by a single annual tribute payment from the Serbian State to the Sultan. Serbia remained autonomous until 1878 when she was granted independence.

Second to rebel against Ottoman rule were the Phanariots. The Phanariot uprising was not a true rebellion like the one in Serbia. Unlike the Serbs, most Phanariots were wealthy and already enjoyed substantial privileges in Ottoman society. To revolt was a poor choice for them because they had a lot to lose and little to gain.

When the Ottomans imposed the millet system the Phanariots began to gain economic and other advantages over the rest of the Balkan Christians. In time the Patriarch appointed his own clergy and took control of administering the entire Christian millet. Patriarch appointed clergy had religious, educational, administrative and legal power in the Ottoman Balkans. In other words, Phanariots were more or less running all political, civil and religious affairs in the Christian Millet.

The Phanariots were the upper class, or the blue blood of the Christian world. Even though they belonged to many nationalities they were distinguished for their position, material wealth and the power they wielded within the Ottoman administration. Also they were the speakers of the administrative Koine language, a long upheld tradition since the time of the Byzantines.

By the 1700s, Phanariot ship owners in the islands dominated Balkan commerce. As Christians, Phanariot traders were exempt from Muslim ethical and legal restraints (especially when dealing with money) and were permitted to make commercial contacts with non-Muslims. Westerners who did business in the region used local Jews, Armenians and Phanariots as agents. Different branches of the same Phanariot family often operated in different cities. Ties of kinship reduced the risks of trade.

Between 1529 and 1774 only Ottoman ships were allowed to navigate the isolated waters of the Black Sea. Phanariot trade grew without competition from the Venetians or other western traders. As mentioned earlier, the 1774 Treaty of Kuchuk Kainarji opened the Turkish straits to Russian commerce. There were not enough Russian ships to meet all shipping demands so Ottoman Phanariots filled the void. Also, the Napoleonic conflicts between England and France created new opportunities for the neutral Phanariot ships and by 1810 there were 600 Phanariot trading vessels conducting commerce.

For the Phanariots, especially the well to do, Ottoman rule provided many advantages in comparison to other Balkan groups. Rich ship owners, agents, prosperous merchants, high officials in the Christian Church, tax collectors, gospodars in Romania, primates in Morea and members of the interpreters' service all had much to lose and little to gain by rebelling.

How then can one explain the movement that led to the revolution in 1821? Poor peasants, poor village priests, poor sailors, etc. who lived in Morea had no investment in the Ottoman status quo. Without ideas or leadership these people

lived miserable lives and preyed on each other to survive. Outside interference started the rebellion.

The original instigators were members of the "Filiki Eteria" a secret society founded in 1814 in the Russian port of Odessa. The Filiki Eteria sent representatives into Morea to recruit fighters. A number of important klefts and district notables answered their call by organizing peasants and forming armed bands.

Because Morea was poor most of the countryside had no Turkish presence and Christian primates or "kodjabashii" virtually ruled themselves. Christian militia or "armatoli" kept the peace, while "klefts" or bandits roamed the hillsides, robbing and pillaging their neighbours.

The 1821 revolution began as a planned conspiracy involving only selected elements of the population. At that time the idea of "nationality" remained very elusive, even for the most enlightened revolutionaries. The intent of the uprising was to liberate all of the Balkan people from Turkish tyranny and unite them in one Christian State.

The Filiki Eteria planned to start the uprising in three places. The first was Morea where a core group of klefts and primates supported the idea. Second was Tsari Grad where the Phanariot community was expected to riot. Third, Phanariot forces were expected to cross the Russian border from Odessa to invade Moldavia and Romania. However, plans did not go as expected. When 4500 men of the "Sacred Battalion" entered Moldavia in March 1821 the Romanian peasants ignored the Turks and instead attacked the Phanariots. The Phanariot invasion of Romania was a complete failure. At the same time, "class divisions" in Phanariot society hampered the uprising in Tsari Grad. The Turks reacted by hanging the reigning Patriarch. The only success was in Morea and only because the primates feared the Turkish Pasha's retribution. Fearing arrest or even execution, the primates joined the klefts and massacred the Turkish population of Morea. Turkey was unable to quell the uprising and the conflict remained a stalemate until 1825. The stalemate, in part, was due to internal problems among the Phanariots, reflecting pre-existing class differences i.e. the armed peasants and klefts in Morea were loyal to Theodoros Kolokotronis, a kleft. Opposing them were the civilian leaders in the National Assembly which was made up mostly of primates and well-connected Phanariots. By 1823 the two sides were locked in a civil war. The stalemate was also due, in part, to interventions from Britain, France and Russia. Each of these states had strategic political and economic interests in Turkey and each wanted to make sure that the results of the war in Morea would be in their best interest. The British were sympathetic to the Phanariot cause but at the same time they wanted a strong Turkey to counter Russia. Initially, the British were prepared to support Turkey to prevent Russia from gaining control of the Turkish Straits and threatening the Mediterranean trade routes. Later as Britain gained control of Cyprus her plans changed. The Russian Czars, in turn, had sympathy for the Christians but feared the possibility of a Morean state becoming a British ally. French investors held large numbers of Turkish State bonds, which would be worthless if Turkey fell

apart. France was also anxious to re-enter world politics after her defeat by Russia in 1815.

The Great Powers, from the stalemate, could see that the Morean revolution would not go away and were prepared to intervene and make sure the final result was acceptable to their own interests. Foreign interference ran from 1825 until 1827. It began with the intervention to block the Egyptian navy from invading Morea in 1825 (Mehmet Ali's capture of the port of Navarino) and ended in 1827 when the British, French and Russians sank the Egyptian navy. The European Powers sent a combined fleet of 27 ships to Navarino Bay to observe the Egyptian navy but things got out of hand when musket shots were fired and the observation escalated into a battle. When it was over the European fleet had sunk 60 of the 89 Egyptian ships. The loss of the Egyptian navy left the Sultan without armed forces and the inability to reclaim Morea or resist the Great Powers. Turkey was squeezed into providing concessions for Morea but the Ottomans kept stalling. To end the stalling the Russians invaded Turkey in 1828 (Russian-Turkish War of 1828-1830) and almost reached Tsari Grad by 1829. The Sultan gave in to Russian demands. Russia too gave in to Western Power demands and agreed to British and French participation in the peace settlement of the London Protocol of 1830, which gave birth to a small, independent Greek kingdom. Prince Otto of Bavaria, a German prince, and a German administration were chosen by the Great Powers to rule the new Greek Kingdom. The choice was a compromise but acceptable to all three powers.

Two overwhelming "forces" came into being in the 19th century, which transformed the Balkans. The first was the 1848 "western economic revolution" which thrust the Balkans into social and economic upheaval. The second was "increased intervention" from non-Balkan political forces. As the century advanced these developments merged, working not for the interests of the Balkan people but for the benefit of Europe's Great Powers.

Before continuing with internal Balkan developments I want to digress a little and explore the "external forces" and their "political desires" in Balkan affairs.

Besides Turkey, there were six Great Powers during the nineteenth century. They were Russia, Great Britain, France, Austria-Hungary, Italy and Germany. From time to time the Great Powers expressed interest in the Balkan population but, in crisis situations, each followed their own interests. When the Great Powers made compromises, they did so to avoid war with each other and often failed to address the real issues that caused the crisis in the first place. This is similar to what the Great Powers are doing in the Balkans today.

Russia tended to be the most aggressive and was usually the cause of each new Turkish defeat. The 1774 Kuchuk Kainarji Treaty allowed Russia access to the north shore of the Black Sea, gave her "power to act" on behalf of the Orthodox millet and to conduct commerce within the Ottoman Empire. Russia's goals in the Balkans were (1) to gain exclusive navigation rights from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean Sea for both merchant and military ships and (2) to

annex Tsari Grad and Endrene (the Dardanelles) for herself, both of which were unacceptable to the Western Powers.

After the end of the Crimean war in 1856, by the Treaty of Paris, the Western Powers made sure Russia's desires for expansion were curbed. First, all Russian warships were barred from the Black Sea and second, the Black Sea was opened to merchant ships from all the states. After that, all the Great Powers, not just Russia, became the guarantors of the Balkan states.

From 1815 to 1878 Great Britain was Russia's strongest rival for Balkan influence. British interests led her to intervene against the Turks in the Morean revolution of the 1820s but went to war against Russia in 1853 (Crimean war) on Turkey's behalf.

The British goals in the Balkans were to maintain access to the eastern Mediterranean and to secure shipping lanes to India. Most of the trade routes passed through Turkish controlled waters. Turkey was too weak to be a threat, so Britain was inclined to oppose France, Russia and Germany when they became a threat to Turkey.

To bolster her claim to the Eastern waterways, in 1878 Britain took control of the island of Cyprus and in 1883 occupied Egypt and the Suez Canal. After that Britain kept a close watch on Morea and Russian access to the Straits, interfering less in Ottoman affairs.

Britain also had important commercial interests inside the Ottoman Empire, and later in the successor states. Investors in railroads and state bonds took as much profit as they could, as soon as they could, which in the long term contributed to the Ottoman Empire's instability.

France, like Britain, had both political and economic interests in the Balkans. During the Napoleonic wars, France was a direct threat to Ottoman rule (Napoleon invaded Egypt in 1798) but after her 1815 defeat she lost military and political clout. France had commercial rights in Turkey dating back to the Capitulation Treaties of the 1600s and relied heavily on trade with the Ottoman Empire.

In the 1820s France joined British and Russian intervention on behalf of the Moreans. France did this mostly to protect her commercial interests but also to counter-balance Russian-British domination in the region.

More so than the British, French investors played a key role in Balkan policy. During the Eastern Crisis and the war of 1875-78, the Turkish State went bankrupt and French bondholders were the biggest potential losers in case of default. So when the Ottoman Public Debt Administration was created to monitor Turkish State finances, French directors were right in the middle of managing Ottoman State finances. Like the British investors, French investors forced Turkey to maximize their returns and ignored the needs of the Ottoman people.

Austria had been the main threat to Ottoman rule at one time, but after 1699 Russia replaced her in that department. Austria retained a major interest in the Ottoman Empire mainly because it was neighbouring Hungary. In other words,

Vienna had no desire to replace a weak Ottoman neighbour with a strong Russia or Russian allies like Serbia or today's Bulgaria.

Austria's goals were aimed at creating a western Balkan economic resource and a potential market. Control of the Adriatic coast was key to Austria's foreign trade through the Adriatic Sea. Austria made sure she exerted enough influence to keep the hostile Great Powers away and to prevent the growing new Balkan nations from annexing it. Austria had no desire to annex the western Balkans for herself. The ruling German Austrians, or the Hungarians had no ethnic or religious ties to the Slavs in the region.

After 1866 Germany (not Austria) became the leader in central Europe. Austria now had only southeastern Europe where she could exert influence. Austria was too weak to absorb the Balkans by herself so she preferred to sustain a weak Ottoman Empire instead of "Russian controlled" states. This explains why Vienna took an anti-Russian position during the Crimean War and why she became allied with Germany later. Germany was an ally of both Russia and Austria, but Austria turned on Russia so Germany had to abandon the Russian-German alliance to please Austria.

Serbia and Romania created problems for Vienna, which she unsuccessfully tried to manage through political alliances and economic treaties. Romania feared Russian occupation and Bucharest generally accepted alliances with Austria. Serbia, however, had fewer enemies and less incentive to bend to Austrian wishes. The two states (Austria and Serbia) found themselves on a collision course which resulted in the war of 1914 (World War I).

Italy became a state in 1859 after fighting a successful war against Austria. In 1866 the Kingdom of Piedmont united the Italian peninsula and took its position as a new Great Power. Italy lacked economic and military might in comparison to the other Powers but made up for it in influence at the expense of the weaker Ottoman Empire.

Italy viewed the western Balkans, especially Albania, as her "natural zone of influence" and her leaders watched for opportunities to take the area away from the Turks. Italy's Balkan goals were not only a threat to Turkey but also to Serbia and Greece who both had aims at seizing the Adriatic. Italy was too weak to seize Balkan territory so she followed a policy of "lay and wait" until 1911 and 1912 when she took the Dodecanese Islands and Tripoli (Libya) from the Ottomans.

Germany, like Italy, became a Great Power at a later time after the German State unification of 1862 to 1870. Due to her strong military and economic might, Germany had more influence in Europe than Italy, but no direct interest in Balkan affairs. For the new German Empire the Balkans were only economic outlets.

After defeating Austria in 1866, Germany made Austria-Hungary an ally and to retain loyalty, Germany had to support Austria in Balkan matters. After 1878 Germany could no longer reconcile Russian and Austrian differences over the Balkans and by 1890 Germany and Austria strengthened their alliance and pushed Tsarist Russia into a conflicting partnership with republican France.

After that, German policies in the Balkans supported economic and military investments in Turkey. This made Germany a rival not only of Russia but also of Britain. The Great Power alignments of 1890-1914 established a pattern that dominated the two world wars.

Germany had no stake in the development of any of the successor states which left her free to support the Sultan (and later the Young Turk regime). German officers trained Turkish troops and German Marks built Turkish railways.

The Ottoman Empire of the 19th century was the weakest of the Great Powers, especially after the Crimean war. At the 1856 Treaty of Paris, Britain and France granted Turkey “legal status” in the Balkans that was far beyond her ability to control. The Western Powers desperately wanted the Ottoman Empire stable and intact.

The Ottomans, on the other hand, mistrusted the other Powers, partly because they were infidels and partly because of bad past experiences. Russia was clearly Turkey's greatest enemy, bent on dismantling her empire. To keep Russia at bay, Turkey cooperated with the other Powers but was always wary of falling under the influence of any single Power. From the 1820's to the 1870s, Britain was Turkey's guardian. After 1878 Germany replaced Britain as economic and military sponsor. Turkish relations with the new Balkan states were poor at best. Any gains for them usually meant losses for Turkey.

The western Great Powers believed that if corruption, crime and poverty could be eliminated, Balkan unrest would end and the Ottoman Empire could remain intact. After all, they didn't want anything to happen to their goose that laid golden eggs. So instead of kicking the “sick man” out of Europe, they pushed for reforms. However, it was one thing to draw up reforms and another to make them work. By examining Ottoman efforts in Macedonia it was obvious that the Turks lacked the resources and the will to carry out reforms. Also, Europeans failed to grasp that suggestions and wishes alone could not replace five hundred years of Ottoman rule. The Ottomans believed their way of life was justified.

In 1865 a group of educated Turks formed the secret Young Ottoman Society. Their aim was to revitalize old Islamic concepts and unite all the ethnic groups under Islamic law. Threatened with arrest, the Young Ottoman leaders went into exile in Paris.

In 1889 a group of four medical students formed another secret Young Turk Society. They rejected the “old Islamic aims” and embraced a new idea, “Turkish nationalism”. Turkish nationalism became the foundation for a secular Turkey in 1908 after the Young Turks came to power and again in 1920 after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in Turkey proper.

The next important event in Balkan history was the Crimean War of 1853 to 1856, which pitted Russia against Turkey, England and France. The crisis ignited over the issue of who was in control of Christian Holy Places in Turkish-ruled Jerusalem. Orthodox and Catholic monks quarreled over insignificant issues, like who should possess the keys to locked shrines. By old treaties Russia and France

were the international guarantors of Orthodox and Catholic rights respectively, but in 1852 Napoleon III tried to undo that. He needed to distract French Catholic public opinion away from his authoritarian government so he instigated the problem.

Because the issues of dispute involved the highest levels of the Turkish government, to the nations involved it became a symbolic struggle for influence. The Russians badly misjudged the other Powers and failed to see that Britain could not accept a Russian victory. Tensions rose as all sides prepared for conflict. A Russian army occupied two Romanian Principalities failing to see that this threatened Austria's Balkan interests. Russia expected help and gratitude from Vienna for her help against Hungary in 1849 but Austria refused her. With support from the western Powers, the Turks refused to negotiate and in 1853 declared war on Russia.

The Crimean War pulled in the Great Powers even though none of them wanted to go to war. In 1854 Austria forced the Russians to evacuate the Principalities and Austria took Russia's place as a neutral power. In 1856 the allied western Powers took Sevastopol, the chief Russian port on the Black Sea, by force. After that Russia agreed to their terms at the Treaty of Paris.

As a result of the Treaty of Paris, the Danube River was opened to shipping for all nations. Russia lost southern Bessarabia to Moldavia. She also lost her unilateral status as protector of Romanian rights. The two Romanian principalities remained under nominal Ottoman rule. However, a European commission was appointed and, together with elected assembly representatives from each province, was responsible for determining "the basis for administration" of the two Principalities. Also, all the European powers now shared responsibility as guarantors of the treaty.

On the surface it appears that Turkey won and Russia lost the Crimean war. In reality however, both Russia and Turkey lost immensely. The Crimean War financially bankrupted Turkey. As for Russia, she lost her shipping monopoly on the Black Sea and allowed capitalism to enter into eastern Europe. Russia not only lost influence in Romania and Moldavia but she was also humiliated in front of the entire world. This set the stage for future conflicts including the most recent "cold war".

As mentioned earlier, Turkey's financial collapse opened the door for western governments to manipulate internal Ottoman policies as well as divert needed revenues to pay foreign debts. On top of that the Ottoman Empire was forced into becoming a consumer of western European commodities. While western Europe prospered from these ventures, Ottoman trades and guilds paid the ultimate price of bankruptcy. Lack of work in the cities bore more pressure on the village peasants, who were now being taxed to starvation to feed unemployed city dwellers, as well as maintaining the status quo for the rich. The Ottoman Empire became totally dependent on European capital for survival, which put the state past the financial halfway point of no return and marked the beginning of the end of Ottoman rule in Europe.

By 1875 the Ottomans entered a crisis situation owing 200 million pounds sterling to foreign investors with an annual interest payment of 12 million pounds a year. The interest payments alone amounted to approximately half the state's annual revenues. In 1874, due to some agricultural failures, military expenses and worldwide economic depression, the Turkish government could not even pay the interest due on the loans. On the brink of bankruptcy, to preserve Ottoman stability and to make sure Turkey paid up western European debts, the Great Powers in 1875 took over the management of Turkish revenues. This was done through an international agency, called the Ottoman Public Debt Administration (OPDA). To continue to receive credit, the Sultan had to grant the OPDA control over state income. Therefore, control of the state budget and internal policies fell into foreign hands. The agents in control were representatives of the rich capitalists and were only interested in profit, and very little else. This was definitely not to the advantage of the local people.

Chapter 22 - Macedonia from 1878 to 1903

As well as paying heavy taxes to the Ottomans, the village peasants of the Balkans were now burdened with additional taxes to pay off western European loans. For some the burden was too great and it manifested itself in a number of independent uprisings. Discontentment with Turkish rule, economic plight and pure neglect of human life precipitated the "Eastern Crisis".

The first of these uprisings began in 1875 in Bosnia but soon spread to Montenegro and Serbia. About a year later the village peasants in Bulgaria showed their discontentment and staged a massive liberation struggle. To a lesser extent, the liberation struggle extended to Macedonia where an armed insurrection took place in Razlog in 1876.

The growing discontentment of the peasantry in the Balkans disturbed the Great Powers who now had a vested interest in protecting the Ottoman Empire from falling apart. A conference was convened in Tsari Grad in 1876 to discuss strategies on how to deal with the insurrections and the "Eastern Question" in general. Representatives of Russia, Austria-Hungary, Britain, Germany, France and Italy attended the conference and decided to place Macedonia and Bulgaria under the control of the Great Powers. Turkey rejected their demands and soon found herself at odds with Russia. By early 1877, war broke out in Serbia and Montenegro followed by a massive Russian invasion of Bulgaria. The Turkish armies were decimated and Turkey was forced to talk peace. Peace was negotiated between Russia and Turkey on March 3rd, 1878, (the San Stefano Treaty) without Western Power consent. Russia, as usual, was concerned more with self interests and less with the interest of the people she was trying to protect, so she sought the opportunity to realize a long held ambition in the Balkans, access to the Mediterranean Sea. The following agreements were reached:

1. Turkey was forced to recognize Greek sovereignty over Thessaly.
2. Montenegro was declared independent.

3. Turkey was forced to provide autonomy to an extended Bulgaria that included Macedonia, western Thrace, part of Albania and a district of Serbia.

The conclusion of this treaty sent shock waves not only through the Western Powers, who had a lot to lose (financial investments in the Ottoman Empire), but also to states like Greece and Serbia who had territorial ambitions of their own towards Ottoman territories.

Disturbed by the Russian tactics, the Western Powers re-convened the Eastern Question at Berlin in July 1878. At this point the San Stefano agreement was revised as follows:

1. Independence was granted to Serbia and Montenegro as well as Romania.
2. Bosnia was given to Austria-Hungary (“Britain did not want more Slavic states to form.” p. 379, Trevelyan, *British History in the 19th Century*)
3. The territory of present day Bulgaria was divided into two administrative districts. Bulgaria proper and eastern Rumelia. Eastern Rumelia was given back to the Ottomans.
4. Macedonia, Thrace, Kosovo and Albania were given back to the Ottomans.

On the verge of bankruptcy, Russia could not resist the Western Powers and gave in to their demands.

With the exception of clause 23 that required the Turks to provide a small degree of economic autonomy to Macedonia, Macedonia was once again committed to Ottoman oppression. The conditions of clause 23, unfortunately, were never enforced by the Great Powers or complied with by Turkey.

In the spring of 1878 Macedonia reached the crossroads of her destiny. She was one step away from overthrowing six hundred years of Ottoman tyranny when Western Powers stepped in to prevent it. Why? Was Macedonia less deserving than Greece, Serbia, or Bulgaria? Were the Macedonians less Christian than the Greeks, Serbians, or Bulgarians? Was the Macedonian struggle to free itself from Turkish tyranny not convincing enough? The real reason for throwing Macedonia back to the wolves had little to do with religion, nationalism, or human rights and a lot to do with economics, profit and access to the Mediterranean Sea. Russia desperately wanted to access the Mediterranean but the Western Powers desperately wanted to prevent it. Here is what Trevelyan has to say about that. “Throughout the 19th century Russia was striving to advance towards Tsari Grad over the ruins of the Turkish Empire. She was drawn forward by imperialist ambition, in the oppressed Christians of her own communion, many of whom were Slav by language and race, and by the instinct to seek a warm water port—a window whence the imprisoned giantess could look out upon the world. The world however, had no great wish to see her there.”

“Canning (a British politician, 1812-1862) had planned to head off Russia’s advance, not by direct opposition, but by associating her with England and France in a policy of emancipation, aimed at erecting national States out of the component parts of the Turkish Empire. Such States could be relied upon to withstand Russian encroachment on their independence, if once they were set free from the Turk. The creation of the Kingdom of Greece was the immediate

outcome of Canning's policy" (Page 372, Trevelyan, British History in the 19th Century)

Russia had no economic stake in the Ottoman Empire so she wanted the Turks out of the Balkans. The Western Powers invested heavily in the Turkish economy and infrastructure and were anxious to keep the Ottoman Empire alive and well in the Balkans. The success of the Crimean war (Turkey won), convinced the British to slow down their policy of creating new Balkan States in favour of exploiting the lucrative Ottoman markets and collecting returns on loans made to Turkey.

At the stroke of a pen Bulgaria was freed (autonomous) while Macedonia was sentenced to suffer further indignity and humiliation. Back in the hands of the Greek clergy and the Ottoman authorities, Macedonia now entered a new era of suffering and cruelty, destined to pay for the sins of all the other nations that rose up against the Ottomans.

Between the spring and summer of 1878, Macedonia's fate was decided not by Russia or the Western Powers, but by Britain alone. Britain who created Greece and introduced the curse of Hellenism into the Balkans, was now prepared to fight Russia, by military means if necessary, to keep her out of the Mediterranean Sea. To avoid war a compromise was reached. "The essentials of this compromise were agreed upon between England and Russia before the meeting of the European Congress, which took place at Berlin under the chairmanship of Bismarck, and formally substituted the Treaty of Berlin for the terms of San Stefano" (Page 377, Trevelyan, British History in the 19th Century)

"To our (British) eyes the real objection to the San Stefano lies not in its alleged increase in Russian power, but in the sacrifice of the fair claims of Greeks and Serbians, who would not have remained long quiet under the arrangements which ignored their racial rights and gave all the points to Bulgaria. Lord Salisbury felt this strongly, especially on behalf of Greece."

"Beaconsfield's success, as he himself saw it, consisted in restoring the European power of Turkey. It was done by handing back Macedonia to the Port (Turks), without guarantees for better government. This was the essence of the Treaty of Berlin as distinct from the Treaty of San Stefano. 'There is again a Turkey in Europe' Bismarck said. He congratulated the British Prime Minister – 'You have made a present to the Sultan of the richest province in the world; 4,000 square miles of the richest soil.' Unfortunately for themselves, the inhabitants went with the soil. Since Beaconsfield decided, perhaps rightly, that Macedonia should not be Bulgarian, some arrangements ought to have been made for its proper administration under a Christian governor. Apart of all questions of massacres, the deadening character of the Turkish rule is well known. Lord Salisbury seems to have wished for a Christian governor, but nothing was done in that direction. A golden opportunity was thus let slip." (Page 378, Trevelyan, British History in the 19th Century)

After gaining status as protector of the Suez Canal and the waterways to India, Britain was awarded Cyprus. Content with her gains, Britain became lax and agreed that Russia and Austria-Hungary should oversee Ottoman affairs in

Macedonia. “The British people, when left to themselves, neither knew or cared who massacred whom between the Danube and the Aegean. Byron’s Greece had appealed to their imagination and historical sense, but the Balkans were a battlefield of kites and crows” (Page 373, Treveleyan, British History in the 19th Century)

The Macedonian people were not at all happy about what went on in the Berlin Congress and showed their discontentment by demonstrating first in Kresna then in Razlog, but as usual their pleas were ignored. The Turkish army was dispatched and the demonstrations were violently put down.

Facing the possibility of becoming extinct in Europe, the Ottoman Empire began to re-organize and take demonstrations and rebellions seriously. After the Greek uprising the Sultan became distrustful of the Phanariots and expelled most of them from his services. He came close to ousting the Patriarch and his tyrannical Bishops but Russia stepped in and prevented it. Many of the Slav people were not happy with being ruled by a Greek Patriarch and after Russia’s show of solidarity to the Greeks and the Patriarch, they threatened to convert to Catholicism. This created a real concern for Russia. “In the days when Panslavism was a force in Russia and General Ignatieff ruled Constantinople. Russia naturally feared that if the Southern Slavs became Catholics she would lose her ascendancy over them.” (Page 73, Brailsford, Macedonia) In 1870 Russia convinced the Sultan to allow a new millet to be formed, thus creating the schismatic Bulgarian Exarchate Church which was immediately excommunicated by the Patriarch. Fracturing the Rum (Romeos) Millet into two opposing factions suited the Turks perfectly because now Christians, instead of rebelling against the Turks, would fight one another. Now, in addition to the Ottoman and Greek, a third government was created that would rule the same people in three conflicting ways. From a religious standpoint, minor differences distinguished the Greek from the Bulgarian Church. Both were Byzantine (Christian Orthodox), except that the Greeks acknowledged the authority of the Greek Patriarch while the Bulgarians obeyed the Bulgarian Exarch. The language of liturgy was about the only distinct difference between the churches. The Bulgarians used the Old Church Slavonic (Macedonian), familiar to Macedonians, while the Greeks used an ancient language no Macedonian could understand. The creation of the Exarch Church stepped up nationalistic activities inside Macedonia and increased the stakes for territorial claims.

From the day they were liberated, both Serbia and Greece were strengthening their economies and poisoning their people with nationalist propaganda. Serbia introduced education for the masses and was teaching her youth about her ancient exploits and past empires that ruled Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia and that the Slavs (except for the Bulgarians who were Serbia’s enemies) were truly Serbs.

The modern Greeks on the other hand, infatuated with the discovery of the Ancient City States, were going overboard promoting “Hellenism” and making territorial claims on Macedonia based on ancient rites. At the same time, the Greeks were making wild claims that all Orthodox Christians were Greeks. Their

argument was that if a person belonged to the Greek Orthodox Church they were Greek. Here is what Brailsford has to say about that. "Hellenism claims these peoples because they were civilized by the Greek Orthodox Church. That is a conception which the Western mind grasps with difficulty. It is much as though the Roman Catholic Church should claim the greater part of Europe as the inheritance of Italy. To make the parallel complete we should have to imagine not only an Italian Pope and a College of Cardinals which Italians predominate, but a complete Italian hierarchy. If every Bishop in France and Germany were an Italian, if the official language of the church were not Latin but Italian and if every priest were a political agent working for the annexation of France and Germany to Italy, we should have some analogy to the state of things which actually exist in Turkey." (Page 195, Brailsford, Macedonia) Here is what Brailsford has to say about how the Greeks received title to the Orthodox Church. "The Slavonic (Macedonian) Churches had disappeared from Macedonia, and everywhere the Greek Bishops, as intolerant as they were corrupt-'Blind mouths that scarce themselves know how to hold a sheephook'-crushed out the national consciousness, the language, and the intellectual life of their Slav (Macedonian) flocks. It is as a result of this process that the Eastern Church is a Greek Church. The sanctions of 'Hellenism' so far as they rest on the Church, are the wealth of the Phanariots and the venality of the Turks....the Slav libraries in the old monasteries were burned by the Greek Bishops." (Page 196, Brailsford, Macedonia)

After 1878, for a Macedonian to be Hellenized meant that he had to give up his name, his own language, his own culture, his history, his folklore and his heritage. Here is what Karakasidou has to say. "...The ideological content of notions of the Hellenic nation, which far from being ecumenical has shown itself to be intolerant of cultural or ethnic pluralism, has lead many inhabitants of Greek Macedonia to deny or hide those aspects of their own personal or family pasts..." (Page 125, Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood)

Hellenization was never made by choice, only by brute force. One was made to "feel Greek" when it suited the Greeks. The moment one wanted something from the Greeks or one crossed one of the Greeks, they were reminded of their "true identity" and quickly "put in their place". To be Hellenized meant to lose dignity and to suffer constant and unwarranted humiliation because no matter how hard one tried to be a Hellene, one could never measure up. A Hellenized person was neither Greek nor Macedonian but a soul in limbo.

To quote David Holden "To me, philhellenism is a love affair with a dream which envisions 'Greece' and the 'Greeks' not as an actual place or as real people but as symbols of some imagined perfection." (Page 12, Greece without Columns) What is Hellenism then?

Before I answer that question, I will once again quote David Holden. "Further back still beyond the War of Independence, when the modern nation-state of Greece came into being for the first time, the whole concept of Greece as a geographical entity that begins to blur before our eyes, so many and various were its shapes and meanings. But if geography can offer us no stable idea of

Greece, what can? Not race, certainly; for whatever the Greeks may once have been,..., they can hardly have had much blood-relationship with the Greeks of the peninsula of today, Serbs and Bulgars, Romans, Franks and Venetians, Turks, Albanians,...,in one invasion after another have made the modern Greeks a decidedly mongrel race. Not politics either; for in spite of that tenacious western legend about Greece as the birthplace and natural home of democracy, the political record of the Greeks is one of a singular instability and confusion in which, throughout history, the poles of anarchy modulated freedom has very rarely appeared. Not religion; for while Byzantium was Christian, ancient Hellas was pagan.” (Page 23, Greece without Columns) Unlike Macedonia and other Balkan nations who have natural and vibrant languages, Greece artificially created and used (up until the 1970’s) an imposed adaptation of the classical language called the Katharevousa. “Hellenizing” under these conditions not only rendered the Hellenized races mute but also imposed a meaningless and emotionless language on those doing the Hellenization. (If you want to learn more about the Greek language controversy read Peter Mackridge’s book “The Modern Greek Language”.)

When Greece was born for the first time in 1832 it was unclear what her national character was? To quote David Holden, “the Greek nation-state was a product of western political intervention-‘the fatal idea’ as Arnold Toynbee once called it, of exclusive western nationalism impinging upon the multi-national traditions of the eastern world. By extension, therefore, at any rate in theory, it was a child of the Renaissance and of western rationalism. (Page 28, Greece without Columns)

Officially, Greeks call their modern state Hellas, and are officially known as Hellenes, but at the same time they call themselves Romios (from the Turkish Rum millet) implying that they are descendents of the Romans. Greece, however, is a derivation of the Latin “Graecia” (Page 29, Holden, Greece without Columns) the province of the Western Roman Empire which extended from Mount Olympus to the Peloponnesus. Again, to quote David Holden, “its international use to describe the sovereign state that currently occupies that territory is merely a reflection of the fact that ‘Greece’ in this modern sense is literally a western invention. (Page 29, Greece without Columns)

If philhellenism is a love affair with a dream, then Hellenism is a dream of a few “evil geniuses” (Phanariots) who sought to destroy what was real in favour of creating something artificial, like a Frankenstein’s Monster. Hellenism may be a dream for a few (mad men) but it has been a nightmare for Macedonia. Here is what Karakasidou has to say. “Greek natural identity was not a ‘natural development’ or the extension of a ‘high culture’ over the region of Macedonia, although now it is frequently portrayed as so. The ideology of Hellenism imposed a homogeneity on the Macedonian region and its inhabitants.” (Page 94, Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood)

If modern Hellenism is a western invention propagated by the Phanariots, then who are modern Greeks? According to historical records, a large majority of the Greeks of Morea that fought during the Greek War of independence were

Slavs and Tosk Albanians that were Hellenized after the 1930's. The Slavs of Peloponnesus (what happened to them?), the Vlachs of Larissa, and the Albanian Tosks of Epirus (what happened to them?) were also Hellenized. In other words, the Greeks of today are a "forcibly Hellenized diverse collection of people". Even the Greek national dress, the fustanella, is not Greek. The fustanella is the national costume of the Albanian Tosks. (Page 230, Brailsford, Macedonia)

In addition to desperately trying to define an identity and a language for herself, after 1878 Greece stepped up Hellenization activities inside Macedonia through the Orthodox Church and by employing (bribing) the services of the Turkish authorities. Willing young Macedonian men were enrolled in Greek schools in Athens, with promises of education, only to be poisoned with Hellenization and Greek nationalist propaganda. Many of these young men came back (home) to Macedonia only to be used as agents of Hellenism.

After the creation of the Bulgarian Church, Bulgaria was not far behind in her attempts to instill Bulgarian nationalism in the Macedonian youth. This was most evident when young Macedonian men, like Gotse Delchev, were expelled from the Bulgarian schools for wanting to use the Macedonian language and to learn Macedonian history. Here is what Radin has to say about that. "In the 1870's, six Macedonian districts seceded from the Exarchate. Bulgarian schools were destroyed, with the Macedonian teaching intelligentsia organizing students against the Exarchate. Macedonian literary associations were discovered, to study Macedonian history and culture. The periodical 'Vine' was published to mobilize Macedonians against the vehement propaganda. In 1891, an attempt was made to re-establish the Macedonian Church. This national renaissance significantly produced a Macedonian intelligentsia that was to later prove instrumental in founding IMRO (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization). (Page 45, A. Michael Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

Russia's rash attempt to gain access to the Mediterranean, by creating a "Greater Bulgaria" (San Stefano Treaty), gave the Bulgarians rationale to make territorial claims on Macedonian territory. On top of the Greeks forcibly trying to Hellenize Macedonia, the Macedonian people now faced a new enemy, Bulgarian chauvinism. At the hands of the Turks, Greeks, Bulgarians, Albanians and Serbians, Macedonian misery seemed to flourish as if all the evil in the world was unleashed at once and struck Macedonia with all its fury. What makes Macedonia's misery even more tragic is that the entire world stood by and watched the horrors unfold and did nothing.

While the Greeks employed brutality, the Bulgarians adopted intrigue to sway Macedonians to their side. The Bulgarians were publicly calling for Macedonian autonomy while they were promoting a Bulgarian nationalist agenda. In the next decade after 1878, nationalist fever gripped the Balkans. The new nations (Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria) were making exclusive claims not only on Macedonian territory, but also on the Macedonian people, each claiming that Macedonians were Serbs, Greeks, or Bulgarians. Each new nation desperately tried to prove its claim by propaganda campaigns, coercion and

forcible assimilation. Here is what Brailsford has to say on the subject. "Are the Macedonians Serbs or Bulgars? The question is constantly asked and dogmatically answered in Belgrade and Sofia. But the lesson of history is obviously that there is no answer at all. They are not Serbs, ... On the other hand they could hardly be Bulgarians... They are probably what they were before a Bulgarian or Serbian Empire existed..." (Page 101, Macedonia Its Races and their Future) As for the Macedonian's being Greek, this is what Brailsford has to say. "The Greek colonies were never much more than trading centers along the coast, and what was Greek in ancient times is Greek today. There is no evidence that the interior was ever settled by a rural Greek population." (Page 91, Brailsford, Macedonia)

"The period immediately following the Berlin Congress demonstrated therefore, that Balkan chauvinist intent was not merely to occupy, govern and exploit Macedonia, but to eradicate the Macedonian culture, and superimpose its own culture upon a people alien to it. By guile, gun, religion and quasi-legal manipulation, the Balkan States attempted to divest the native Macedonians of their language, religion, folklore, literature, traditions and consciousness. The ultimate goal therefore, was to anaesthetize the Macedonian people, and then remold them into Bulgarians, Greeks and Serbians." (Page 45, A. Michael Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

Did it not once occur to westerners that in the heart of Macedonia, perhaps there was a unique Macedonian culture living there? Did it not once occur to them that perhaps the Macedonians with their multicultural and multiethnic character did not want to be molded to fit the western profile of what a nation should be? By throwing her back to the Greeks and the Turks was Macedonia punished for her stubborn ways, for refusing to be molded into a monolithic uni-cultural, pseudo-homogeneous nation? Only those who participated in the 1878 Berlin Congress and who forever committed Macedonia to suffer more cruelty and injustice can truly answer these questions. One thing is for certain, however, as the West is now growing old and gaining wisdom and experience it is realizing that the way to peace and prosperity on a small planet is tolerance of minorities, democratic freedom and cultural and national pluralism. Macedonia, as it turns out, always had those qualities. As for the rest of the new Balkan States, one day when they realize the error of their ways they will forever bear the shame of what they did to their neighbours, the Macedonians.

I know that words can do no justice to the suffering the Macedonian people endured since 1878. I will do my best to describe what life was like to be ruled by the Turks, governed by the Greeks, pillaged by the Albanians and robbed and beaten by the villains of society. It has been said that education was a curse in Macedonia. No educated Macedonian lived to a ripe old age. If a man was educated, he died at the hands of his enemies, not because he was educated but because he was feared. The Turks feared him because he might rise up against them. The Greeks feared him because he might oppose them. The Bulgarians feared him because he might expose them. (If you wish to learn more about the

horrors committed by the Turks in Macedonia, read Brailsford's book, Macedonia, Its races and their Future.)

The 1878 Treaty of Berlin awakened the Muslim Rulers (Turks and Albanians) in the Balkans to the reality that their Empire came close to disintegrating. But instead of searching for a rational solution, the Turks did what they always did best, turned to violence. They took counter measures to suppress the "troublemakers", by extinguishing their rebellious spirit. In practice this manifested itself into a variety of punishments that included the following:

- A) Taxes were raised to pay off western loans. The Turks and Muslim Albanians were a predatory (parasitic) race and produced nothing themselves. Instead they lived off the earning power of the Macedonians and other Christians.
- B) To prevent further uprisings and rebellions, the Turks stepped up espionage activities and searches for weapons. In reality however, the weapons searches were nothing more than an excuse to take revenge and further pillage the Macedonian peasants. Those who could afford to pay bribes paid off the Turks to avoid misfortune. Those who couldn't were tortured and usually beaten to death. If by any chance weapons were found, the entire village was burned to the ground, even if the weapons belonged to a thug. The Turks were not above shaming or kidnapping Macedonian women either. In fact it was common practice for Muslim soldiers to grab Christian women while conducting raids on villages. (For a Macedonian woman death was preferable over a lifetime of shame). The Macedonians of the Ottoman era were extremely moral people and conducts of this nature were not taken lightly. Unfortunately, there was nothing that could be done to avenge the women, so women carried the burden of shame alone, for the rest of their lives. No Christian was allowed to bear arms and defend his family. There was no one to complain to because in most cases the perpetrators and the villains were the law. No Muslim could be punished for doing harm to a Christian, no matter what the crime.
- C) In addition to contending with the Turkish authorities, Macedonians faced kidnappings and assaults from the Albanians. Any man, woman, or child that ventured too far from the village exposed themselves to the risks of being kidnapped (an old Albanian pastime) by Albanian marauders or by Turkish outlaws who demanded a hefty ransom for a safe return. It was certain death if no ransom was paid.
- D) There were also the roving Turkish patrols that traveled the highways and if someone happened to cross paths with them, they would be robbed, beaten and humiliated in a number of different ways, depending on the mood of the soldiers.
- E) The greatest threat to Macedonian life came from the Bashi-buzouks or armed civilian Muslims. Most of the Bashi-buzouks were Albanians who made a career of pillaging, burning Macedonian villages and torturing the inhabitants. After 1878, Bashi-buzouk raids escalated to a point where they became intolerable. The Christians had no legal recourse to fight back. Being

Muslims, the Bashi-buzouks were immune from legal prosecution. The only way Macedonians could fight back was to flee to the mountains and join the outlaws.

- F) Let's not forget the annual routine homage and tributes paid to the Albanian clans for not burning the villages and crops, the local policemen for not humiliating and beating family members and the local hoods for not assaulting and bullying the women and children.
- G) It would be an injustice if I didn't mention the way Turks treated women. No Macedonian woman was safe from the Turks. If a woman caught a Turk's eye there was no escape, she would be plucked kicking and screaming from her home and family, converted to Islam by force and thrown into a harem to become an object of lust. No woman was safe, not even a bride on her wedding day.

I want to mention here that after the Western Powers decided to do something about the Ottoman cruelty against the Macedonians, they began to record complaints from the people. Macedonians were encouraged to report acts of injustice and cruelty to the European consuls. All the complaints were recorded in what was referred to as "the blue books".

By the time taxes and bribes were paid to the authorities, warlords and town hoods, a Macedonian family was left with 25 to 40 percent of their meager annual earnings to live on. To make ends meet Macedonian men were accustomed to taking on additional jobs within the Ottoman Empire or abroad to make enough to survive the winter. It has been said that after twenty-five years of achieving autonomy, Bulgaria was thriving economically thanks to the cheap labour provided by the Macedonian migrant workers.

I want to mention here that Macedonians have always earned their living by sweat and blood and deserve more than they have been dealt in the past. The maestro's (maistori) of ancient Rome were skilled Macedonians, not Greeks as modern history claims them to be. Even the word "history" comes from the Macedonian saying "tie i storia" which translates to "they did that" or "they made that".

The West, including the USA and Canada were to some extent, also beneficiaries of cheap Macedonian labour. Western traders flooded Macedonia with cheaply manufactured goods and bankrupted the local (antiquated) industry (run by the guilds). Raw materials purchased from Macedonia were manufactured using cheap Macedonian labour and the finished products were sold back to the Macedonians at a profit.

A Macedonian could not rise above his tyrannical existence on his own because every time he did he was either killed for his education, robbed of his wealth, kicked out of his home for his lands, murdered for defending his family, or humiliated for his existence. This is not what Macedonians wanted for themselves, but those powerful enough refused to help them. The Greek clergy who were responsible for the well being of the Macedonian people were the first to condemn them. Their first priorities were to Hellenize them so that they could steal their lands. The Greeks, with their "superior attitude", despised the

Macedonians because of their race (the Slavs were the enemy) and because of their agrarian abilities (which the Greeks loathed).

The Great Powers, in their zeal to dominate the Balkans, found themselves at odds with each other and by 1878 were either content with “doing nothing” or stifled by frustration and “turned their backs” on the mess they created. Turkey, for the West was the goose that kept on laying golden eggs.

No excuses or apologies from the English and the French can make up for unleashing Turkey and Hellenism on Macedonia after 1878. No Macedonian, or any human being for that matter, should ever forgive the Western Powers for putting profit ahead of human life and intentionally turning their backs on the Macedonian people.

Labeling people “Slav” and “Barbarian” because they were not educated does not make them inhuman and certainly does not excuse the “civilized” western societies for tormenting them. Here is what Petrovska has to say. “It is erroneous to dismiss peasant culture as backwards, simply because they are not literate cultures. Indeed the opposite is the case. Children were educated by way of story telling and folklore, which contained morals and lessons about life, relationships and their places in the world.” (Page 167, *Children of the Bird Goddess*) (If you want to learn more about life in Macedonia read Kita Sapurma and Pandora Petrovska’s book entitled “*Children of the Bird Goddess*”, an oral history that spans over 100 years and explores the lives of four generations of Macedonian women.)

One has only to examine Macedonian traditions, customs, dress, folklore and attitude towards life to find an “old race” full of vigour, enduring hardships, living as it always lived close to nature, always craving everlasting peace. Macedonian songs are timeless records of sorrow and of hope that “someday this too will pass”. Macedonians have survived to this day because they have a caring quality and a capacity to give and forgive, never wanting anything in return. Anyone who has visited a Macedonian home or has lived among Macedonians can attest to that.

Macedonia had done no ill against any nation to deserve her punishment from the Turks and the Greeks. Macedonians did not desire to be labeled “barbarian Slavs” or choose to be illiterate. It was “pure prejudice” on the part of Western Societies that degraded the Macedonian people to barbarian status and created the conditions for the Turks and the Greeks to abuse them. The West’s artificial creation of Greece and Hellenism and the Greek quest for purity and national homogeneity is what upset the “natural balance” in the Balkans. Macedonia, since Alexander’s time, has been a “worldly” nation and has maintained her multi-ethnic, multi-cultural pluralistic character. If you take the Turks out of Macedonia in the 19th century you will find a society of many nations working and living together in peace, each doing what comes naturally. Anyone who has lived in Macedonia can attest to that. It has always been “outsiders” who shifted the balance and disturbed the peace in the Balkans. While western Europe slept through her “dark ages”, the people of the Balkans lived in relative harmony for over 1,100 years. Each race played an important

role in maintaining the social and political balance and the economic self-sufficiency of the region.

During the 19th century almost all Macedonians lived in village communities. There were no Greeks living in the Macedonian mainland and only a small minority lived in the coastal towns, islands and larger cities. The majority of the villages were Macedonian with the odd Vlach village nestled here and there in the mountains. Macedonians spoke the Macedonian language and lived an agrarian life working the lands. Among the Macedonians lived some Vlachs who spoke both Vlach and Macedonian. Their main occupation was retail trade, running the local grocery stores and retail businesses. In addition to the Vlachs, there were roving Romas (Gypsies) who traveled from village to village trading their wares. They traded pack animals like horses, mules and donkeys, repaired old and sold new flour sifters, loom reeds and other fine crafts. They bartered with the village women and traded beads, string and sewing needles for beans and walnuts. To those who could afford it, they sold silk kerchiefs, handmade baskets and purses. With those who couldn't afford them, they traded their wares for vegetables, eggs and a few bales of hay. Among themselves the Gypsies spoke their Gypsy dialect but with their customers they spoke Macedonian.

Another race that frequented the Macedonian landscape were the panhandlers from Epirus and Thessaly who performed magic on old copper pots and pans and made spoons and forks shine like mirrors. In addition to their own language, they too spoke Macedonian and were open to bartering for their wares and services.

Carpenters, stone masons, barrel makers and woodcutters came from far and wide. They came from as far as Albania or as close as the poorest Macedonian village. For a fair wage, some rakija (alcohol spiced with anise during distillation) and three meals a day, they built fences, porches, staircases and entire houses. For the Macedonians the soil provided most of life's necessities. For the rest they bought, traded, or bartered.

The only desire Macedonians had in the 19th century was to rid themselves of the tyranny of the oppressive Turks. This was most evident in the communiqués, appeals and manifestos of the legendary Macedonia Revolutionary Committee.

While Macedonia was being choked by the Turkish noose of oppression, tormented by Hellenism and frustrated by Bulgarian deception, the Greek army, in 1881, annexed Thessaly and in 1885 the Bulgarian army (with Russia's support) annexed eastern Rumelia. While the Ottoman Empire was crumbling at the edges, it was tightening its grip ever harder on Macedonia. Looting, burning homes and murders were on the rise. More and more Macedonians were made homeless and forced to become outlaws. The brave ones took up arms and fought back only to see that their actions caused more deaths and misery. The Turks and their Albanian allies didn't care who they killed. If one Turk or Albanian died in battle, the army took revenge on the next village they encountered. Thousands of innocent women and children were murdered in revenge killings, not to mention the assaults on countless young girls. Homes were burned down and the inhabitants were shot as target practice as they ran out

to save themselves from the fire. Those too old or sick to move died a horrible, fiery death. Many of the survivors from the burned out villages joined the outlaws in the mountains and as their ranks swelled they began to organize and fight back.

Western Europeans and Russians, on the other hand, were flooding the Ottoman Balkans on vacation, to do business or lend a helping hand as missionaries or relief workers. They enjoyed all the freedoms and privileges as honorary citizens of the Ottoman Empire, under the protection of their country's flag and paid nothing for the honour bestowed upon them, not even taxes.

It has been said that soon after the Turks conquered Albania, Albanians began to convert to Islam. As Muslims, the Albanians to a large extent enjoyed the same privileges and advantages as their conquerors. The advantages of becoming a Muslim as opposed to staying Christian were obvious. Those who wanted to retain title to their lands did not hesitate to convert. In fact many realized that by converting they could amass wealth and increase their own importance at the expense of their Christian neighbours.

By the 19th century about two-thirds of the Albanians embraced Islam and served in almost every capacity in the Ottoman administration including the Sultan's palace guard. Also by the 19th century a great deal of the Ottoman services became corrupt and self-serving. Being Muslims, the Albanians were protected from prosecution of crimes committed against the Christians. This encouraged them to perform predatory acts like kidnappings for ransom, illegal taxation, extortion and forceful possession of property.

There are two documented methods, that I have come across, which describe how Albanians of the 19th century came to live in Macedonia, among the Macedonians.

1. To keep the Macedonians in check, the Turks created and strategically positioned Albanian villages inside Macedonia among the Macedonian villages.
2. By expelling or killing a few families in a Macedonian village, Albanian bandits could claim squatters rights and move in. By the next generation, the children of the squatters would become the "begs" of the village which made them legitimate landowners. Being in charge of the village, they then appointed their own family members and trusted friends into positions of authority like tax farmers and policemen. In this manner they could rule unchallenged.

Forceful occupation of villages was most prevalent during campaigns in the absence of the Turkish army. When the Turks were sent to fight against Russia in the east or against Napoleon in Egypt, the Albanians sought their chance and moved in unabated. Here is an excerpt from Brailsford's book about the habits of some Albanians. "He will rob openly and with violence but he will not steal...He will murder you without remorse if he conceives that you have insulted him..." (Page 224, Macedonia, Its Races and their future)

To be fair, I want to mention that Albanians have their good qualities as well. Brailsford speaks very highly of them when it comes to loyalty and honesty. As mentioned earlier, under the right conditions Albanians can peacefully co-exist

with other nationalities and be a contributing factor to the wealth of a nation. The Macedonians have always co-existed side by side with Albanians. Also, the Albanians who fought to liberate Greece in Morea did not fight for Hellenism, they fought for the good of all the people of the Balkans, including the Macedonians. There was also that one-third of the Albanian population who remained faithful to Christianity that equally suffered the injustices of the Greek clergy and the Ottoman authorities that deserve mention.

Chapter 23 - Macedonia - Events Prior to the 1903 Uprising

The 1878 Treaty of Berlin set events in motion in the Balkans for the next forty years. The re-appearance of Ottoman soldiers, the worsening economy and the reign of terror imposed by the Greek clergy was crushing the spirits of the Macedonian people. In the meantime, the economic situation of the Great Powers and the new Balkan States was improving daily. In 1881 the Muhareem Decree gave Europeans complete control of Ottoman finances and trade markets. During the same year the Tsari Grad Conference of Great Powers agreed to the Greek annexation of Thessaly and Epirus. Later that same year Austria-Hungary agreed to allow Serbia to annex parts of Macedonia in some future time. Four years later Bulgaria, with some Russian help, annexed eastern Rumelia. While the Western Powers were contemplating the "Eastern Question" and collecting returns from Turkish loans, the new Balkan States were plotting Macedonia's demise. Here is what each of them had to say:

Bulgaria: "Bulgaria's whole future depends on Macedonia, without her our State will be without importance or authority. Solun must be the main port of this State, the grand window to illuminate the entire building. If Macedonia does not belong to us, Bulgaria will never be firmly based".

Greece: "Macedonia is the lung of Greece, without it the rest of Greece would be condemned to death. For Greece to become a greater power she must expand into Macedonia."

Serbia: "We are ready to enter into any combination if necessary in order to prevent the Macedonian Question being settled in any way that harms our vital interests, without which Serbia cannot survive".

In addition to being handed back to the Turks, the 1878 Treaty of Berlin now subjected Macedonia to three new tyrants. In time, Macedonia would be subjected to all kinds of evil but the most cunning would turn out to be Bulgarian chauvinism. The Macedonian people knew very well where they stood with the Greeks. Greek policies were straightforward, Hellenize everyone by any means possible, force and brutality included. The Bulgarian approach was very different. The Bulgarians were interested in educating the Macedonian masses into believing that they were Bulgarians. Anyone who showed any opposition didn't live to tell about it. And so became the legacy of so many educated Macedonian young men and women.

Earlier I explained, with ample evidence, that Greece was a "Western creation" for the purpose of achieving two objectives. One, to keep Russia out of

the Mediterranean Sea and two, to break up the Ottoman occupied Slav lands into small, nationally divergent, easily manageable, and loyal states (a solution to the "Eastern Question"). Created by the Western Powers, the new Balkan States would be loyal to their creator; British politicians were counting on it. The Western Powers introduced "nationalism" in the Balkans as a way of replacing the Ottoman Empire, not with a single state but with many "divergent", manageably sized states. Nationalism, however, was not a way with which Balkan people identified before the 19th century. For over 2,300 years the region was without borders and without a sense of national identity. For over 1,800 years the people in the region lived with "religion as the only unifying force" which brought them together and allowed them to live in peace. Lack of borders and freedom of movement allowed the diverse people to travel anywhere within the empire to settle and mix with other people. So, how does one create "national consciousness" where one does not exist? Ignoring the fact that the Ottoman Empire of the 19th century was a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural pluralistic society, the Western Powers initiated the nation building process anyway. To them, it didn't matter what kind of "nations" they were building, provided that the new nations were a "non-Slav" singular society that agreed to keep Russia out of the Mediterranean. While the Western Powers were trying to break up the Balkans into small and divergent states, Russia was promoting "Panslavism" to unite all the Slavs under Russian leadership.

The national awakening of Serbia was an accident that couldn't be helped, but Greece was created by design. Greece was the opposite of Serbia and a solution for keeping the balance of power in the Balkans. While Serbia was destined to become a Slav State, Greece would be destined to become the "opposite". The name "Greece" was chosen to denote a "Latin" lineage, to represent the Latin "Romaos" (Roman) character of the people. The name "Hellas" was later chosen by Hellenized Phanariots to denote a lineage from the old City States of antiquity. Both of these names were foreign to the 19th century Balkans, but ideal to reflect the character of the new State. The pre-19th century Phanariots had no notion of nationalism or knowledge of the ancient City States. Their aim was to drive the Turks out of the Empire and keep the Empire intact so that they could rule it themselves. But this was not what the Western Powers wanted. The process of Hellenization began by educating some Phanariots about the existence of the old City States and their exploits. Phanariots who studied abroad, London in particular, were seduced by the eloquently written, romantic stories about a people who lived at the bottom of the Balkans a long time ago. Phanariots were especially thrilled when they were received by westerners as the descendents of those ancient people. Not all Phanariots were Hellenized or convinced to take the Hellenic road, some still wanted to re-create the Byzantine Empire ("Megali Idea") but the West gave them no such choice.

It was one thing to "create a nation" and another to "give it life and a past". The idea of modeling the new Greece after the old City States was well received but lacked continuity. No one could explain how the Greeks progressed from the old City States to the present, pre-19th century history has no record of it. There

was no Greek culture or language that would tie the modern Greek to the old City State citizen. With some creative imagination and a lot of convincing, the problem was solved. Ancient history was "re-engineered" to fit the modern Greek model. Yes, read your (fake) classical history and learn how the mighty Macedonian Empire was "Hellenized", not by a powerful race or super intelligent beings, but by "the vanquished and subjugated" people of the old City-States. Alexander the Great, the most hated man of the old City-States, the man who wiped out Corinth and brutally crushed the spirits of the old City-State citizens is now the "Great King of the Greeks" whom they revere and hold in such high honour. What hypocrisy!!!

Altering classical history to say that the ancient Macedonians were Hellenized does not explain how and why there are "Slavs" all over the Balkans today. Thousands of years of Slav influence and culture could not be easily erased, but thanks to the ingenuity of the western mind that problem too was solved. When the westerners began to write the new "Greek" history, they quickly discovered that there was no continuity to tie the modern Greeks to the ancient City-States. Ancient Macedonia extinguished all the City-State cultures when she annexed them. The only continuity from the City-States to the Roman era was through ancient Macedonia. Only through a Hellenized ancient Macedonia could modern writers claim continuity for the Greeks. It was there and then that the "history revisionists" decided to KILL Macedonia in order to keep Greece alive. There is NO Greece without Macedonia! If Greece is to live then she must inherit everything that was Macedonian. Even after that, however, there was still the "Slav problem". The Slavs were always in the way of Greek Nationhood and for these reasons the "Real Macedonians" became and still are Greece's worst enemy. The Greek zeal to become "who they cannot be" was transformed into jealousy and hatred for Macedonia and her people. From the outset, the Greek State deliberately chose Macedonia and the Macedonian people as "the enemy", as is so often eloquently put and without hesitation announced for the world to hear. Again, thanks to the ingenuity and brilliance of the western mind, the Slav problem for Greece was solved with the creation of "Bulgaria". "What is not Greek must be Bulgarian, what is not Bulgarian must be Greek, there is no such thing as Macedonian", are words echoed to this day. This is what Macedonians faced and must face, lived and must live, every day of their lives both at home and abroad from the 19th century to this day.

The 19th century creation of Bulgaria was the "answer" to covering up all remaining evidence of the existence of a Macedonia outside of the "Hellenic model". Never scientifically proven, the so-called "Slav invasions" were concocted to cover up thousands of years of Macedonian culture and influence in the Balkans (and beyond). Modern history, without scientific proof, claims that the ancient Macedonians died off (mysteriously to the last one) and were replaced by the "newcomer Slavs". It was later declared that the Slavs living in Macedonia were actually Bulgarians of sorts.

To divide the Bulgarians from the Slav fold and to show that they were a distinct society, different from other Slavs (such as the Serbs), the non-Balkan

name "Bulgaria" was chosen to represent a Balkan State created for the first time in the 19th century. The name "Bulgaria" is derived from the river "Volga", allegedly where the Bulgarians came from. We are also led to believe that the Bulgarians were descendents of a small Tartar/Turkish tribe that invaded the region a long time ago and were assimilated by the Slavs. So according to western sources, Bulgarians are not exactly pure Slavs or pure Tartar/ Turk but a mix of both, enough to make them different from other Slavs and enough to divide them from the Slav fold. Being part Slav, Bulgarians could lay claim to the "Slav speaking residents of Macedonia" on account that they too were Slav. Being part Tartar/Turk and a descendent of the "Volga" made the Bulgarians newcomers in their own land. Thus being newcomers to the Balkans, the Bulgarians could not lay claim to the heritage of ancient Macedonia. Bulgarians, however, could lay claim to items that did not fit the Hellenic model like the modern Macedonian (Slav) culture and language. If you wish to learn more about the above you will find useful information in George Macaulay Trevelyan's book "British History in the Nineteenth Century (1782 - 1901)", Longmans 1927.

After 1878, while the Macedonian economy was crashing down by leaps and bounds, the Bulgarian economy was improving dramatically. This was partly due to the cheap labour provided by a large influx of Macedonian pechalbari (migrant workers). Experiencing a very different life in Sofia, in contrast to life in the village, many Macedonian pechalbari were seduced into believing the Bulgarian propaganda (Macedonians are Bulgarians).

After 1878, the first Macedonians to take up arms were those who were wronged and wanted to see justice done. Soon, however, they realized that their efforts were futile and their revenge only resulted in the loss of innocent lives (relatives and neighbours were punished for their crimes, sometimes by death). Macedonian leaders came to the conclusion that what they truly wanted could only be achieved if the Turks were expelled from Macedonia for good.

It was the charismatic humanitarian William Gladstone, a three time British Prime Minister, who uttered the words "Macedonia for the Macedonians" which rang out like loud church bells throughout Macedonia. "Macedonia for the Macedonians" was the signal that rallied the Macedonians into action and gave them hope that finally the West would support their cause. In spite of his great sympathy for the Macedonian people, unfortunately, Gladstone was not in a position to help. The best the Great Powers could offer were "reforms". A great number of reforms were drafted and agreed upon but never implemented. The Turkish Pashas continued to humour the westerners with reams of fictional statistics and accomplishments, while the Begs (feudal lords) continued to dominate the "Chiflik" (estates) and squeeze the village peasants out of their existence. The only visible reforms were rail and road improvements sponsored by western companies who were able to divert Ottoman finances from the state budgets. Peasants who owned land were taxed so excessively that they had to work on Sunday at road and bridge building to catch up on back taxes. To get such a job they had to resort to bribery. As if that was not enough, in 1889, re-

imposing a personal tax of seven shillings per year for each newborn son further increased the tax burden. This was only reduced when the boy was able to work, at age fifteen. Some of these taxes were raised to assist small-scale manufacturing, which was largely owned by foreign investors. Village peasants were forced to sell their most valued possessions, hand-made crafts, old coins and heirlooms, for next to nothing, to pay these taxes.

To further aggravate the situation, lawless acts by the Turkish authorities, without any avenue for appeal, contributed to the oppressive climate in the villages. In addition to pillaging, Turkish soldiers now plundered the farms and villages for their daily sustenance. The Turkish administration was in such disarray that suppliers of the military were not paid for long periods of time and in turn they were refusing to feed the army. To counter the plundering, peasant militias began to form but were soon outlawed by the Turkish authorities.

By late 1890, those Macedonians who had land couldn't afford to work it because of high taxes and frequent raids. Those who worked for the Begs were at the mercy of their landlord without rights or legal recourse. The courts were clearly working against the Macedonians and beyond "external intervention" there was no way to challenge their tyrannical authority. Though the land was fertile there was no incentive to work. Agrarian life became a burden, filling village life with hopelessness and crushing the spirit of the Macedonian peasant. Many Macedonian men left their families and turned to pechalbarstvo (migrant work), travelling to various foreign countries in search of work but often returning home poorer due to high travel and lodging expenses. It was during these times that large emigrant Macedonian communities began to form in cities like Sofia, Paris, London, etc. Besides migrant workers, young Macedonian men also traveled abroad to pursue a higher education. They too became involved in the growing Macedonian worker communities. By the late 1890's over 100,000 Macedonian men were working or studying outside of Macedonia. Cafe conversations dominated by discussions of "what to do to improve the situation at home" became commonplace. It was clear to many that the discontentment they were experiencing was not a local or village issue, but a matter that enveloped all of Macedonia. It was also clear that Turkey would not allow Macedonia to protect herself or Turkish courts to rule in Macedonia's favour. It became clear to all that the only option open to a Macedonian was outright rebellion, a rebellion that would have common purpose, tactical mobilization and central direction. There were many lessons to be learned from the great deeds and disasters of the American war of Independence, the French Revolution and others. By the late 1890's Turkish tyranny was not the only ill in Macedonia. There was also the process of Hellenization, Greek propaganda and the Greek clergy to contend with. Beyond that there was Bulgarian propaganda that was becoming more venomous by the day.

On another front, escalated Bulgarian activities in Macedonia prompted Greece and Serbia to reconsider an old alliance (1866-67) of restoring ecclesiastical unity under the Patriarch in order to take away from the Exarchate.

This alliance, due to Greek greed, for the time did not work out. This, however, would be a prelude to a future and deadlier alliance that would last to this day.

By 1890 the rebellion started to organize and gain momentum. The students were the first to take action. Student revolutionary organizations were formed in Switzerland and Bulgaria. Both used various tactics to combat anti-Macedonian chauvinist Balkan propaganda. Organized in 1891, the group in Bulgaria allied itself with the organization of Macedonian emigrant workers (Pechalbari) in Sofia and had much success. In time more organizations sprang up in Russia, Britain and Greece but none could match the achievements of the Sofia based "Young Macedonian Literary Society" under the tutelage of Petar Pop Arsov. This Society of young Macedonians formulated its own constitution and managed the revolutionary publication "Loza" (Vine). The first issue of Loza came out in January 1892 followed by six more publications before the Society was denounced by the Greek and Serbian press, and claimed as "its own" by the Bulgarian press. According to official Bulgarian State policy, "Macedonians were Bulgarians" and any worthwhile Macedonian creation belonged to Bulgaria.

While émigré Macedonian students were fighting Greek and Bulgarian propaganda and shoring up western support, an historic moment inside Macedonia was about to unfold. It was October 23rd, 1893 in Solun when two high school teachers, Damjan Gruev and Anton Dimitrov, together with Petar Pop Arsov, a former editor of Loza and Hristo Tatarchev, a doctor, got together in bookshop owner Ivan Nikolov's house for an informal meeting. The main point of discussion was the plight of the Macedonian people and what to do about it. As word got around a committee was formed, more Macedonians got involved and a second (formal) meeting was held on February 9th, 1894. The topic of discussion included the drafting of a constitution to guide the committee. By the end of the meeting the committee made the following resolutions:

1. The committee will be revolutionary in nature and will remain secret.
2. Its revolutionary activities will be confined to inside Macedonia's borders.
3. Irrespective of nationality or religion, any Macedonian can become a member of the committee.

The committee also set the following objectives for itself, which were later ratified at the first Revolutionary Congress held in Resen in August 1894:

1. Destroy the Ottoman social system.
2. Remain an "independent" organization.
3. Seek Macedonian autonomy.

The organization became known as Vnatrezhna (Internal) Makedonska (Macedonian) Revolutsionerna (Revolutionary) Organizatsia (Organization), VMRO (IMRO).

Being clandestine in nature, IMRO had some difficulty recruiting new members, but within a year or so its influence extended beyond Solun and into the rest of Macedonia. Initially the organization was more ideological and less practical, with the majority of its recruits being teachers, most of whom taught at the Exarchate schools inside Macedonia. To rally the masses the organization

needed to educate them and bring them in line with IMRO's objectives. For that it needed a charismatic leader who was able to talk to people at their own level and who was free to travel without too much interference from the authorities. The man who answered that call was Gotse Delchev, a man of vision matched by only a few, the father of the Macedonian Revolution and the soul of the movement. (If you want to learn more about the IMRO leadership, you must read Michael Radin's book, *IMRO and the Macedonian Question*).

Gotse was a realist and at the same time an idealist who loved people, hated tyranny and saw the world as a place of many cultures living together in peace. As a realist, Gotse knew that in order for a revolution to be successful it had to be a "moral revolution" of the mind, heart and soul of an enslaved people. People needed to feel like people with rights and freedoms and not like slaves. With that in mind Gotse set out to build up a revolutionary conscience in the Macedonian population and thus set the revolutionary wheels in motion. Gotse's installment as undisputed leader of IMRO was consolidated during the Solun Congress of 1896, after which IMRO began to massively organize. Gotse's abilities to "listen and learn" brought him close to the problems of ordinary people who wanted freedom but also wanted to preserve their religion, culture and way of life. With Gotse's field research in mind, IMRO's strategy was to "give the people what they want" and win them over. Initially the strategy worked well and won IMRO the support it needed.

By 1896 it was able to exert influence to a point where it acted like a state within a state, taking over administrative positions from the Ottomans, leading boycotts against Ottoman institutions and offering isolated villages protection from Greek and Bulgarian sponsored brigands. In time IMRO operatives were able to penetrate Ottoman economic, educational and even judicial functions. The downside of "giving the people what they want" was that it opened the doors for Bulgarian infiltration. By "attitude" and use of the Greek language it was easy to recognize Greek influence. However, Bulgarian influence was not as easily recognized. While the Greeks cared nothing about Macedonian affairs and loathed the Macedonian language, the Bulgarians were a part of Macedonian affairs and spoke the Macedonian language eloquently. By far the largest Bulgarian infiltration into Macedonian affairs took place in Sofia among the pechalbari.

As mentioned earlier, the cosmopolitan lifestyle in Sofia, a far cry from life in the village, seduced some Macedonians to succumb to Bulgarian propaganda, which resulted in the formation of the "External Macedonian Revolutionary Organization"; better known as the "Supreme Macedonian Committee". This organization was formed in Sofia in March of 1895; called the "Trojan Horse" of IMRO, by Gotse Delchev. The initial membership consisted of emigrant Macedonian nationalists but in time its leadership was infiltrated by officers from the Bulgarian State Army. The objective, on the surface of this "two faced" organization termed "Vrhovist" (Supremacist) by IMRO, was to fight for Macedonia's independence, by armed intervention in an aggressive revolutionary manner. It's true nature, however, (concealed from the people) was to undermine

IMRO by subordinating its central committee to its own "Supremacist directives". This, and the fact that Vrhovism masqueraded itself as "Macedonian patriotism" in the eyes of the Macedonian people, very much disturbed Gotse Delchev. True to his nature of keeping an open mind, Delchev, along with Gruev, took a trip to Sofia in hopes of reconciling their differences with the Vrhovists but came back more disillusioned. Instead of receiving a handshake on March 20th, 1896 Gotse was informed that Bulgaria would no longer support IMRO and all finances and arms would be cut off. From here on forward the Vrhovists would decide what actions IMRO would take inside Macedonia. This was indeed an attempt by the Vrhovists to usurp control of IMRO. Disappointed but not disillusioned Gotse turned to "Mother Russia" for assistance, but there too he found no welcome reception. Russia had no interest in helping IMRO because there were no advantages to gain from liberating Macedonia (given Russia's current relationship with the Western Powers).

Due to IMRO's popularity, strength and ability to recognize a "Trojan Horse", the Bulgarian led organization failed to achieve its true objectives. After that it resorted to violent attacks and assassination attempts with the aim of eliminating the entire IMRO structure and its leadership. It used armed interventions in order to provoke Ottoman reprisals against innocent village peasants and put the blame on IMRO. By selective propaganda and vilifying the Ottomans in the eyes of the world, the Bulgarian led organization was hoping for a Great Power intervention to weaken the Turk and at the same time create a climate for a Bulgarian invasion (disguised as a "liberation" of the oppressed Macedonians).

In the meantime both Delchev and Gruev were promoted to the rank of "District Inspector of Schools" in their employment, enabling them to travel unabated and without suspicion. Using inspection tours as cover, they were able to find ways to purchase and smuggle arms into Macedonia. They also took time to address Macedonian villages and made personal contacts with the village chiefs. Many people flocked to hear what these legendary figures of men, patriots and saviors had to say. Unfortunately, lecturing out in the open placed IMRO leaders at risk from spies. As a result, on one occasion Gotse was arrested by the Turkish authorities in May of 1896 and spent 26 days in jail. When the Turks couldn't find anything to charge him with, Gotse was released.

Bulgarian influence was not limited to Vrhovist actions alone. Bulgarian undercover agents were dispatched to Solun to spy on IMRO activities and report back to the Bulgarian State. The Exarchate also had policies of its own and continued to rally the Macedonian youth for its own cause. When it seemed like IMRO was unbreakable, the Vrhovists resorted to infiltrating the IMRO leadership itself, which in time brought them some success. Bulgarian interference in IMRO policies caused hardships and internal squabbling between executive committee members and eventually caused the organization to split into hostile factions. This undermined IMRO's credibility with the outside world. The Vrhovists badly wanted to provoke Turkey so that they could "liberate" Macedonia, but the Great Powers, especially Russia and Britain, "didn't buy it"

and saw their actions as provocative and dangerous. While the Vrhovist leadership agreed to curb its provocative actions, its armed wing of insurgents, however, had already penetrated and captured parts of eastern Macedonia. Even though the invasion lasted about two days, it became clear as to "who was who" and the true Vrhovist agenda was exposed. After that IMRO gave the Vrhovists a stern warning to "stay out of Macedonia". To use Delchev's words, "Whoever works for the unification with Greece or Bulgaria is a good Greek or Good Bulgarian but NOT a good Macedonian." After that, while IMRO worked for a "Macedonia for the Macedonians" the Bulgarian Supreme Committee openly worked for a "Macedonia for the Bulgarians". IMRO leadership strove to purify IMRO from the Vrhovist infiltration. In essence, the IMRO constitution was bolstered to exclude Vrhovist demands but was still able to give the Macedonian people what they wanted. The IMRO leadership, without much success, made attempts to infiltrate and sabotage the Vrhovist Supreme Committee by making frequent trips to Sofia and attempting to rally dissident emigrant forces inside Bulgaria.

While the Vrhovists were plotting against IMRO and the Macedonian people from the north, a new menace was brewing from the south. On April 9th, 1897 armed Greek bands began to aggressively cross into Macedonia. The Turks protested this action to the Great Powers but the Greeks denied responsibility, insisting that it was not Greek soldiers but the Macedonian Cheti. It wasn't long before the Turks took the offensive, drove the Greeks out and pursued them inside Greece. When the Turks were about to overtake the entire country the Great Powers intervened on Greece's behalf to once again save her. The Greek Government, in charge of the invasion, fell out of grace and, when a new Government was elected, agreed to pay a hefty fine, which consisted of four million Turkish pounds, as well as giving up Thessaly to the Turks. In addition to losing grace, Greece had to relinquish control of her own finances (to the Great Powers) to ensure prompt payment of the fine. The Great Powers, without German support, forced the Sultan to accept the offer and sign a peace deal. The Germans never forgave the Greeks for lying to them about their aggressive actions against the Turks. The Germans at that time were responsible for Turkey.

Outside of Greek brigand actions, for the moment at least, Greece was not a direct threat to IMRO.

IMRO demonstrated great leadership by its ability to organize Macedonia into seven revolutionary districts (Solun, Serres, Strumitsa, Shtip, Skopje, Bitola and Endrene {Dardanelles}). It also demonstrated its weaknesses. Having allied itself with the poor village peasants and striving to refrain from obligations and debts, IMRO found itself strapped for finances. The IMRO committee was unable to raise all the necessary funds to finance its campaigns. While the leadership turned a blind eye, the local commanders resorted to kidnapping rich landowners, merchants and foreign dignitaries for ransom. Kidnappings did not exclude foreign missionaries, like Miss Stone, who fell into the hands of Sandanski's Cheta (armed band). Taken by the plight of her captors, Miss Stone voluntarily made sure the ransom was paid in full. Short of finances, mostly due

to unfriendly terms with the Vrhovist Supreme Command in Sofia, IMRO found itself lacking the necessary arsenal to wage war. Subordination to Bulgarian demands was out of the question so Gotse had to look elsewhere to get his weapons. Efforts were made to purchase weapons from Greece, Albania and even from the Turks themselves, but without too much success. By 1897 the situation was getting desperate so the IMRO leadership resorted to purchasing from the black market, even stealing weapons. One such purchase was made from the Bulgarian Military. The military allowed the sale of outdated guns but later refused to sell cartridges, fearing the weapons might be turned against them. In October 1900 Chakalarov, a local chief in the Lerin/Kostur regions who spoke Greek dressed up as an Albanian pretending to be from Ianitsa, was successful in purchasing some arms from Athens. Later attempts by others, however, were not so successful. On one occasion a translator betrayed the purchasers to the Turkish consul on the advice of a Greek priest. After that the Turks trusted this translator and made him a sergeant in their gendarme. He served the Turks well and brought them much success in their "search and destroy" missions, until he discovered he could make even more money by taking bribes before turning people in. As a result of this man's actions many band members, from many villages, were killed.

The lack of sufficient arms brought home the realization that this "uprising" was going to be a long one. Here again, Gotse and the IMRO leadership proved their worth by adopting a policy of self-arming. With a little bit of skill on weapons manufacture, learned from the Armenian Revolutionaries, IMRO set up a number of munitions factories in remote and secluded areas, capable of producing homemade bombs and other explosives. Unfortunately, in 1900 during a raid at one of these factories, Dame Gruev was arrested by the Turkish authorities and imprisoned in Bitola. He came back to active duty in April 1903.

In spite of all efforts made to obtain them, the Macedonian "Cheti" lacked arms but had plenty of courage to make up for it, which in time put fear in the Turkish hearts. As IMRO grew beyond its ideological stage, it began to recruit, equip and train fighters. Volunteers were recruited mainly from the villages, young men who were willing to fight for their freedom. Those who were in trouble with the law (brigands) were armed and recruited into active duty. Those were men who flourished by attacking Turks and stealing from them. They were admired for their courage and ability to live free. They were men who practiced the art of war, knew how to live in the open, how to ambush and how to hide. They were the men who taught the young Macedonian recruits to fight and win. The rest were reservists and lived at home, only called to duty as required. Each reservist was expected to purchase and secure his own rifle and ammunition. Recruitment was carried out in utmost secrecy. Even women were enlisted in the Macedonian revolution, but their role was limited to cooking, washing, mending and nursing the wounded.

The primary role of a fighter was to defend the people from Turkish and brigand attacks. The Cheti consisted of about five to ten men, organized for rapid mobilization and quick response. The goal was to have one Cheta responsible for

one village (preferably their own) in all of Macedonia. The leader of each Cheta was chosen for his abilities to lead his men, and more so, for the peoples' confidence in him to protect their village. To respond quickly, the Cheta had to be familiar with the village's terrain and escape routes. To maintain secrecy, all orders were given by word of mouth.

The IMRO mobilization managed to elude the Turkish authorities for a long time. However an unfortunate discovery of some explosives accidentally uncovered the secret and led the Turkish militia on wide "search and destroy" missions. The militia's conduct, unfortunately, was less than honourable when the soldiers began torturing innocent people and burning properties in order to obtain confessions. The Cheta's responsibility was to ambush the militia, using guerrilla tactics, before they entered villages and prevent them from doing harm. This, however, did not always work so some of the Cheta Chiefs resorted to retaliations and reprisals for crimes already committed. Although poorly armed and vastly under-manned (sometimes as low as 1 Macedonian for 10 Turks), the Cheta fought fierce battles and gained legendary reputations among both the Turks and the Macedonians. Unfortunately, as the Ottoman authorities became aware of IMRO's intentions the Turkish militias began to swell up with soldiers. If that was not enough, at about the same time the Exarchate, suspecting IMRO affiliation, began to dismiss Macedonian teachers en masse. Even though most Macedonian teachers despised working for the Exarchate, they used the schools as a means of promoting IMRO's aims. They frequently gave lectures, taught Macedonian patriotic songs, canvassed house to house etc. This was a blow to IMRO. A more severe blow however, came in April of 1897 in what was termed the "Goluchowski-Muraviev Agreement". This was an agreement drawn up by Tsar Nikolas II of Russia and Emperor Franz Joseph of Austria regarding the future of the remainder of the Ottoman Empire. In part, the agreement stated that, at some future time the Macedonian territory would be divided equally between Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria. In other words, when the Great Powers got their fill of Turkey and abandoned her, Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria were welcome to take their turn. This indeed was bad news and, as history showed, was devastating for IMRO and disastrous for the Macedonian people.

In about 1898 the Bulgarian Exarchate, instructed by the Bulgarian Prime Minister, created a Vrhovist organization inside Macedonia. Based in Solun, known as the "Revolutionary Brotherhood", it in turn began to form its own Cheta. While pretending to be part of IMRO, the purpose of this organization was to carry out terrorist activities and, in the eyes of the world, discredit the real IMRO. By the year 1900 IMRO's enemies were growing in number and intensifying in ferocity. IMRO's woes were just beginning when they discovered that the Vrhovists had dispatched six assassins to murder Delchev and Sandanski (a legendary Cheta chief affectionately known as the "Tsar of Pirin"). The Vrhovist Cheta were raining terror on Macedonian villages provoking the Turks to act. Although never proven, it was alleged that the Vrhovist leaders were working with the Turks in successfully arresting members of IMRO, destroying munitions depots, and torturing, raping and murdering people. Even the Turks

themselves participated in sabotage tactics. Several Greek spies were killed at one time and IMRO was blamed. As a result of this many organizers were rounded up and arrested. In reality, however, it was Turkish Begs who committed the crimes as was later discovered. The same Begs were seen attacking Turkish tax collectors. Failing to assassinate Delchev and Sandanski, the six assassins, in frustration, turned to attacking people, burning down villages, stealing money and claimed it to be the work of IMRO. Several important leaders, including the famous "Marko Lerinski" (the "Tsar of Lerin"), Cheta leader of the Lerin and Kostur Regions, was killed in these attacks.

All was not lost, however, during the next attack. Sandanski was ready for the Vrhovists and in September 1902 sent them packing. The Turks did the rest by crushing the Vrhovist remnants in November of the same year. The disturbances and civil strife were enough to convince Turkey that yet another uprising may be imminent and that she should take action to prevent it. As usual, violence was answered with more violence. The Turks initiated a wide campaign of "search and destroy" missions, exacting serious retributions and terror on the village populations. In addition to regular Turkish troops, the Ottomans now enlisted reserves from the Albanian Muslim fold. Every bridge, railway cutting and railway tunnel was guarded. Also every village had a garrison of ten or more troops guarding it. While the Turkish troops were content with "fighting it out" with the Cheti then retiring to their barracks, the Albanian reservists avoided direct confrontations and preferred to join the Bashi-Bazouks (armed civilian Muslims) in pillaging and plundering the villages. These gendarmes, recruited from the Albanian Gheg Muslim community, had a vested interest in disorder. The gendarmes allowed law-breakers to exist so that they could keep their employment. They rarely engaged in combat and their meager pay was always in arrears so they readily accepted bribes to make their living. Both the Patriarchate and Exarchate were known to bribe the gendarmes in order to allow Greek and Bulgarian brigands to function freely.

To make a bad situation worse, at the end of August 1902, the Vrhovists showed up in Macedonia uninvited and began to issue orders directly to the local chiefs to start the rebellion. According to Vrhovist plans the rebellion was ordered to begin September 20th, 1902. This was news to IMRO. This latest bold Vrhovist action turned a lot of heads, including that of Vasil Chakalarov. Chakalarov was a respected chief and managed to sway the people away from the Vrhovists. But the Vrhovists were not finished and began to publicly accuse Chakalarov and others of being cowards and peasants for not wanting to fight. When that still didn't work, Chakalarov was personally called a thief, allegedly having stolen a fortune from the Vrhovist money, allocated for purchasing arms. Fortunately the Macedonian people knew that Chakalarov was a decent man. They also knew that the Vrhovists didn't contribute any funds for purchasing arms. Left alone, unable to start the rebellion, the Vrhovists tucked their tails and went elsewhere to cause trouble.

This latest Vrhovist action did not go unnoticed by the Turks and put IMRO in a difficult position. The Vrhovists had wanted to get IMRO into a fight with

the Turkish army for a long time, but so far were unsuccessful. This time unfortunately their wishes were about to come true. The Vrhovists believed that a fight with IMRO would weaken Turkey enough to make a Bulgarian invasion possible. They encouraged the Cheti Chiefs to "start the insurrection and Bulgaria would finish it" for them. "Bulgaria has hundreds of thousands of troops standing by and will come to your rescue as soon as the first shot is fired," is what the Vrhovists were preaching to the Macedonian chiefs.

IMRO knew that its fighters were not ready for a frontal attack with the Turkish militia. They also knew that, fight or not, the Turkish militia was going to destroy Macedonia village by village, one way or another. The Vrhovists on the other hand could not be trusted for their help because they had no intention of honouring their promises. Their actions had made that point very clear in the past. In either case, IMRO had no choice but to act soon. The "search and destroy" missions were putting many innocent people in jeopardy, including women and children. Local informants, Greek and Bulgarian brigands did not hesitate to inform on the villages, especially if they had an axe to grind. On many occasions Patriarchate and Exarchate brigands (hired goons) were put out of action by the Cheti and that made their benefactors angry, who in turn informed on the villages. Brigands were hired to harass and exact terror on villagers to sway them to change allegiance from one church to another. The Cheti were fierce fighters and fought gallantly when it came to protecting their villages but were undermanned and poorly armed. As much as they wanted to, they were not capable of always standing up to the large, well-equipped Turkish militia. The militia, on the other hand, did not always operate under the best of ethics and was open to bribes. The poor people who couldn't afford bribes fared the worst. Some say it was less of a punishment to produce a rifle than not to have one at all. Some resorted to purchasing rifles and turning them in just so that they received a lesser punishment. On many occasions the houses of those suspected of aiding the Cheti were burned to the ground. The Turks did not even hesitate to jail old women accused of that crime. Historical accounts show that during the height of the search and destroy activities; the jails in Macedonia were filled beyond capacity. In fact, a Solun jail, with a capacity for 500, was holding 900 prisoners (some were held in the White Tower). There is an old Macedonian saying: "There is nothing worse than being locked up in a Turkish jail."

On January 31st, 1903 the Turks declared IMRO illegal and sought ways to destroy it. This bad news for IMRO gave the Vrhovists the necessary momentum they needed to become a wedge between those in IMRO, who wanted an immediate uprising and those who believed that an uprising at this point in time was suicidal. Gotse Delchev was against this "willing sacrifice" and was hoping to find a better solution, but time was running out.

A second Solun Congress, dominated by the Vrhovists, was staged in February of 1903. Delchev and most of IMRO's loyal supporters did not attend. A resolution was reached, but not ratified by the regional committees, that an uprising would take place on Ilinden, on the 2nd of August 1903. To weaken the Turks, the Vrhovists staged a number of bombings and terrorist acts. The Solun

to Tsari Grad railway was bombed on March 18th, as was the Solun Ottoman bank a month later. This did not weaken the Turks as expected but instead brought more Turkish troops into Macedonia and further escalated the violence against innocent civilians. If that was not enough, the sudden rise in violence against Ottoman institutions was not well received by European investors and businessmen, who saw Ottoman Macedonia as a safe place to invest. The few lonely voices in London, calling for Macedonian support, were quickly drowned out by the many voices of discontent calling for the demise of the terrorists.

Tragically the Turks killed Gotse Delchev in Banitsa on May 4th, 1903, a day after the IMRO Smilevo Congress had started. Termed the Bitola Congress, the purpose of the Smilevo Congress was to review the resolutions from the Vrhovist dominated Solun Congress, held earlier the same year. Damjan Gruev (a native of Smilevo) chaired the Congress and tried hard to present the situation realistically by arguing for and against an early uprising. When the matter was put to a vote, however, the majority declared themselves in favour of an uprising. With these words, "better an end with horrors than horrors without end", Gruev also voted in support of the Ilinden rebellion. From here on there was no turning back. A general staff was elected with Gruev as the head and preparations for the uprising began. In due time plans were made, a military strategy prepared, weapons, medical supplies and food-stuffs were requisitioned and stock piled. Cheti were organized and training drills were performed. On July 26th, 1903, by a dispatch to the Great Powers via the British vice-consul in Bitola, the General Staff formally announced the uprising. Then on July 28th, 1903 IMRO dispatched mounted couriers to all the sub-districts with the message "let the uprising begin". On the same day the General Staff informed the Ottoman Director of Railways to warn travelers to choose a different mode of transportation in order to avoid being hurt. Despite the odds, the brave people of Macedonia heroically rose to the task with valour. They knew well that the fight they were forced to fight might not bring them what they wanted. They chose to fight anyway because it was a fight for freedom and freedom after centuries of slavery was valued above life itself. That, however, did not convince the Great Powers to lend a helping hand. Macedonia, for a second time within a quarter century, was exposed to treachery that would make the 1878 betrayal look like a picnic.

Chapter 24 - Events During and after the 1903 Ilinden Uprising

Before getting into the details of the uprising I would like to make a few points very clear. Many village civilians died in the aftermath of the 1903 uprising and they were ALL Macedonian. Brailsford in his book, *Macedonia Its Races and their Future*, and Dakin in his book, *The Greek Struggle in Macedonia 1897-1913*, as well as many other authors provide statistics that show Greek and Bulgarian civilian casualties. Let me assure you that beyond some high-ranking Greek and Bulgarian clergy (bishops) and consuls, most of whom lived in the larger cities, there were no Greek or Bulgarian civilians living in the Macedonian

villages at that time. Everyone who died in the villages was Macedonian. The people who were (forcibly) Hellenized and pledged allegiance to the Greek Orthodox Church were Macedonian. The people who were lured by Bulgarian propaganda and fooled into joining the Bulgarian Orthodox Church were Macedonian. The informants who were killed by the Cheti (Macedonian armed revolutionary bands) were Macedonian. The Greek informants who informed on the Exarchists were Macedonian. The Bulgarian informants who informed on the Patriarchists were Macedonian. The Patriarchate priests who preached in Greek in the Churches were mostly Macedonian. The teachers who taught Greek in the Patriarch sponsored schools were mostly Macedonian. The Exarchate priests who preached Old Church Slavonic in the Churches were Macedonian. The teachers who taught Bulgarian in the Exarchate sponsored schools were Macedonian. Even some of the Patriarchate and Exarchate sponsored hoodlums and brigands were mostly Macedonian.

What makes this sad affair bizarre is that while Macedonians were dying, at the hands of the Turk, Albanian, Greek and Bulgarian armed bands, the Greeks were falsifying statistics claiming the victims to be Greek and Bulgarian. Since there were no Greek or Bulgarian civilians living in the Macedonian villages then there could be no Greek or Bulgarian victims. Brailsford, Dakin and others obtained their information through "politically correct" official channels. Unfortunately, the politically correct official channels were quoting biased and unchallenged Greek propaganda sources, which supported Greek interests and the Greek political point of view. There were no official channels to represent Macedonian interests or the Macedonian point of view.

The Macedonian people were exploited by the Turks and Europeans and were despised for complaining. They were forcibly Hellenized then profaned for not being model Hellenes. They were punished by the Bulgarians for accepting Hellenism and then were forcibly Bulgarized. Those Bulgarized, were then violated and murdered by the Greeks for switching allegiance. Such was the fate of the Macedonians greeted by the 20th century. But this was only the beginning, for a new force, Serbian chauvinism was about to be unleashed.

It was dawn August 2nd, 1903 and the men could see their breath in the cool, still morning mountain air. Darkness was finally giving way to dawn. Not a soul had slept all night. The fervour and business of the night before had died down. There was only silence now as darkness slowly yielded to dawn and each man reconciled his thoughts and comforted his fears. The stillness was interrupted by what seemed like a thunderbolt, when the Cheta chief soberly announced, "It's time." Like Olympic sprinters, the men rose to their feet ignoring the stiffness of the long night's motionless rest. Hearts pounding, they picked up their gear and rifles and began the descent down the mountain towards the chiflicks (estates) below. It was still dark and there was no one in sight. The men crept up on the barracks in silence. The chief motioned with his hand and the men quickly scattered and took their positions. The barracks were now surrounded. When a guard inside the barracks stepped out, the crackle of rifle fire broke the silence of the new day. The black smoke of gunpowder greeted the first rays of the sun and

the cries of the wounded disturbed the serenity of the morning stillness. It was August 2nd, 1903, Ilinden, a new dawn for the Macedonian people.

By midday the western region of Macedonia was on fire as church bells rang, rifles crackled and bellowing smoke enveloped mountains and valleys alike. Five thousand strong had assembled to show their distaste for Turkish rule. They had no cavalry or artillery except for a few cannons made of cherry wood, which were more dangerous to them than to the enemy. But they had faith, spirit and trust in each other. They were the Macedonian Komiti (freedom fighters).

Following Damjan Gruev's orders from Smilevo, the village Cheti combined forces to form the following: the Smilevo and Gjavato Region Cheta (650), the Krushovo Region Cheta (400), the Kichevo Region Cheta (350), the Bitola Region Cheta (250), the Ohrid Region Cheta (880), the Resna Region Cheta (450), the Demir-Hisar Region Cheta (420), the Prespa Region Cheta (300), the Kostur Region Cheta (700) and the Lerin Region Cheta (450).

I am proud to say that my own great-grandfather Philip, at age 53, participated in the Ilinden uprising. He was issued a rifle, a single shell and was told to stand guard at Mount Preol at the entrance to Prespa. At the first sight of the Turkish militia he was required to fire a warning shot to let the Cheta know that the Turks were approaching. He survived his bout and lived to the ripe old age of 92 to tell about it.

The Cheti, under the command of capable leaders such as Damjan Gruev, Vasil Chakalarov, Petar Pop Arsov, Pitu Guli and others, fared well and enjoyed considerable success in the few weeks before the Turkish militia began to amass. The local villagers also joined the movement giving moral support to the fighters. Even men from other regions that had not yet risen left their homes and came to fight. All in all the Macedonian people possessed the will to fight but lacked the rifles and ammunition with which to do it.

When the rebellion began, as a precaution, most villages were evacuated. People who left the villages took up residence in secluded places up in the mountains. They took with them whatever they could carry and set up camp. Temporary shelters were constructed from tree branches and were covered with vegetation. They fenced their livestock, out of sight, in wooded areas. They even built underground ovens to cook food and bake bread in safety.

Some villages that didn't join the rebellion felt it was unnecessary to evacuate because they posed no threat to the Turks. Residents of one such village, Neokazi near Lerin, stayed home thinking they would be safe. When the Turkish militia passed by they razed the village and turned on the civilian population. Not being satisfied with just burning the village, the Turks summoned about 60 Macedonian men and placed them under arrest. On their way to Lerin the Turks, instead of taking the men to jail, tortured and massacred them in cold blood. Eyewitnesses reported observing the Turks lining the men up in rows and firing at them to see how many one bullet could kill. They had new rifles and wanted to test them.

Three days later it was Armensko's turn. After losing a skirmish to Chakalarov, Haireddin Bimbishi's (the butcher of Smrdesh) troops, defeated,

angry and embittered were heading for Lerin when they came across a welcoming committee at Armensko. The priest and other members of the village went out to greet and welcome the Turks. The Turks were not pleased and murdered the welcoming committee on the spot. Bambishi's men then turned on the defenseless village and pillaged, burned and satisfied their brutal lust undisturbed. Sixty-eight villagers were massacred and ten women and eight girls were violated. "Several women who managed to crawl out of their burning houses were afterwards caught as they lay dying, and violated repeatedly until they expired." (Page 160, Brailsford, Macedonia its Races and their Future, taken from Page 319 of the "Blue Book")

The Turkish soldiers had orders to burn down all empty villages, a sure sign that they belonged to the families of insurgents, and to spare the rest. As it turned out those who didn't join the rebellion and didn't want trouble not only lost their homes but some even lost their lives. It was a choice between having your village burned or having it burned and being massacred as well. It was a hard lesson learned but it didn't help the sick and bedridden who were burned alive where they lay.

As battles raged on throughout western Macedonia, the Cheti put down most of the local Turkish garrisons. They destroyed bridges, railway lines and communications centers, captured most chifliks and briefly liberated some regions such as Kichevo, Demir-Hisar, Kostur, Lerin, Klisoura and Neveska. The cities of Kostur and Lerin themselves were not liberated. The most successful and highly celebrated of all battles was the storming of the town of Krushevo. Nikola Karev led the Cheti in the attack and defeated the local Turkish garrison with ease. The Macedonians quickly took over the most strategic points like the Post Office, Town Hall and local Police Station and declared Krushevo liberated. True to their democratic commitments, the leaders of the liberating force constituted the Krushevo assembly which appointed a committee of sixty members, twenty from each of the community's Macedonian, Vlach and Albanian populations. The committee in turn elected an executive body of six delegates, two from each community, which operated as a provisional government. The government in turn established a financial, judiciary and police force. "At Krushevo, under the rays of temporary liberty, fraternity and equality, national hatreds were dispelled and peace and concord reigned. For eleven whole days Krushevo lived as a little independent state, and although in miniature, clothed with flesh and blood that idea which spurred Macedonians to fight, against tyranny up to the Ilinden rising." (Page 193, Vasil Bogov, Macedonian Revelation, Historical Documents Rock and Shatter Modern Political Ideology)

True to his socialist ideals Nikola Karev drew up the famous Krushevo manifesto, a document aimed at eliciting support from all the communities including the Muslim Turks and Albanians. (The full text of the Krushevo manifesto is in Michael Radin's book, IMRO and the Macedonian Question, appendix 3B, starting on Page 275. It is most inspiring to learn that in spite of what the Turks and Albanians had done to the Macedonian people, the Macedonian leaders still found it within their hearts to show compassion for

them.) I also want to add that Brailsford, in his book "Macedonia its Races and their Future", has nothing but praise for the Macedonian Cheti for their more than exemplary conduct during the uprising.

The "Krushevo Republic", unfortunately, only lasted two weeks but it was a glorious Republic that will forever remind the Macedonian people of their eternal struggle for independence and thirst for freedom. The liberation of Krushevo imprinted on the new Macedonian generations the legacy of a timeless and irreversible march towards self-determination. IMRO came a long way from a group of academics deliberating what to do in the face of repression to delivering, in true revolutionary fashion, a democratic Republic with all the socialist trimmings. Here again we see the Macedonian desire for multiculturalism and for a new multiethnic society waiting to resurface. The Republic was constituted on a multiracial basis in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the Macedonian people.

Next to Krushevo, Kostur faired second best in the tactical mobilization of the Cheti, under the command of Lazar Pop Trajkov and Vasil Chakalarov. These brigades staged successful raids, liberating Klisura and Neveska, then returned southward and, with the support of over three thousand villagers, attacked Kostur but without success. In the meantime other Cheti attacked and liberated Ohrid, which remained free for almost three months. The Ohrid attack was the most successful in terms of advance planning and administering the establishment of medical aid, underground workshops, secret bakeries and securing foodstuffs. Ohrid later became the center for establishing refugee camps for many displaced persons.

Uprisings outside of western Macedonia were limited to swift guerilla actions consisting mostly of attacks against Ottoman institutions, bombings of railway lines and the occasional skirmish with the Turkish militia. Many Cheti were successful in capturing important Turkish officials. They hoped to construct dialogue for prospective negotiations but, in actuality, met with little success.

Vrhovist involvement, as expected, was minimal during the uprising and brought to light, once again, the true nature of Vrhovism (Macedonia for the Bulgarians).

As the Cheti fought gallantly putting down garrison after garrison in the larger towns, many of the smaller villages were left unprotected and open to Bashi-bazouk and Turkish militia attacks. Keeping in mind the Neokrazi and Armensko incidents, many of the Cheta chiefs felt compelled to return home to repel such attacks. Due to this and the fact that the numerically superior Turkish militia overpowered the Cheti, in the short term, a large-scale operation against the Turks never materialized. Unfortunately, as time passed so did the opportunity for a decisive strike, as an even larger Turkish force was amassing.

The initial success of the rebellion was a surprise to the Turks especially since Turkish forces were numerically superior to those of the rebels. The Cheti, however, demonstrated their abilities in battle and more than matched the numbers with will. Turkey, unfortunately, was determined to put down the rebellion and amassed additional forces, deploying a total of 167,000 infantry,

3,700 cavalry and 440 pieces of artillery (all cannons). Krushevo alone was surrounded by 20,000 Turkish troops with 18 cannons against an encircled force of no more than 1,200 rebel fighters. The battle to retake Krushevo began on August 12th with the Macedonians crying out "Sloboda ili Smirt" (liberty or death) against the onslaught of Turkish cannon fire. Pitu Guli and his men fought gallantly. They provided stiff opposition to the Turkish advance but were no match for General Baktiar Pasha. Baktiar was a skilled war veteran who overwhelmed the Cheti by attacking the entire region simultaneously. The region was surrounded by soldiers, encircled by cannon fire and every Macedonian stronghold within was attacked simultaneously, cutting off all reinforcements and outside support.

After the mountains lit up with gunfire and smoke filled the skies, no Great Powers came to the rescue. Macedonia was left alone to feel the full fury of the Ottoman Empire's army and to pay for all of Europe's sins committed against the Turks. Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria were now free, their freedom guaranteed by the Great Powers. When Greece got into trouble the Great Powers wasted no time to come to her rescue. Where were the Great Powers when Macedonia needed their help? Why didn't they respond to the cries of the burning villagers? Why didn't they intervene to stop the killing, razing and pounding? Where was Britain when the European-made Turkish cannons pounded Krushevo to dust?

Once Krushevo fell, one by one other IMRO strongholds began to yield, winding down the ten-week-old rebellion. In Krushevo, Baktiar Pasha allowed his troops to kill, pillage and rape for three days. The town was permanently devastated with 117 civilians murdered, 150 women raped and 159 houses burned.

In the Ilinden aftermath, according to Radin, in total 4,694 civilians were murdered, 3,122 women raped, 12,440 houses burned, 201 villages razed, 75,835 people left homeless and about 30,000 people left the country for good, becoming permanent refugees. (Page 105, IMRO and the Macedonian Question) Besides the atrocities committed against the civilian population in Macedonia, the most significant impact of the uprising was the loss of so many great IMRO leaders.

Despite the negative attitudes of the European Governments, there was much press about the Ilinden rebellion. World opinion was generally sympathetic to the Macedonian cause and highly critical of the Ottoman atrocities. Emigrant Macedonians the world over bombarded the Western Press with scathing attacks on the British, French and Austrian governments for supporting Turkey, militarily and financially. Even emigrants as far as the United States staged large rallies in support of the rebellion. In New York alone more than 100,000 gathered to show support. A Chicago newspaper reported that a Macedonian regiment had formed in that city and was preparing to take part in the rebellion.

Closer to home, south Slav Nations such as Slovenia and Vojvodina held public meetings in support of the Macedonian Revolution. Even the European press featured sympathetic headlines when covering the rebellion. "It was a bitter struggle between the tortured slaves fighting en masse, often without weapons,

but on spirit alone, for life and liberty; and the sadistic Pasha and his cohorts, murdering and plundering with rabidity." (Giorgio Nurigiani) British official policy, however, was less than sympathetic. According to the Daily News September 14, 1903, Prime Minister Balfour told the House of Commons, "...the balance of criminality lies not with the Turks, but with the rebels." The paper was critical of this attitude and recorded the following editorial: "The balance of criminality is surely here in our own land. Britain had denied Macedonia freedom at Berlin, knowing that (continued) Ottoman rule was synonymous with cruelty and tyranny, and by adopting a laissez-faire attitude at the juncture, Britain is a consenting party to all the ghastly murders and massacres in Macedonia..." (Page 107, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

While there was public outcry in the streets regarding the treatment of Macedonians, the British Government cared less about Macedonia's suffering than about Bulgarian threats to their precious Ottoman Empire. Being weakened by the Macedonian rebellion, the thinking in London was that Turkey was now ripe for a Bulgarian invasion. Balfour used the Macedonian rebellion as a pretext to move Britain's Mediterranean Fleet into the Aegean Sea fearing that war between Bulgaria and Turkey was now inevitable.

At about the same time Greek-Turkish relations began to warm up. The souring relationship between Turkey and Bulgaria was seen as a new opportunity by Greece to accelerate her Hellenization activities inside Macedonia. Making her way to Turkey, Greece had to first prop up her cool relationship with Germany. Her first attempt was initiated by inviting German help to re-organize the Greek military. After that Greece began to grant industrial and commercial favours to German businessmen, including the re-organization of the Greek telegraph.

The Turks, on the other hand, were looking for allies. The loss of Ottoman Crete to the Greeks was only a bruise to the Turkish ego, so the Turks were willing to forgive and forget. Losing Macedonia, however, was serious and bolstering its friendship with Greece was one way of staving off Bulgarian advances.

To preserve whatever they could from a failing rebellion, IMRO turned its attention to diplomacy. In September 1903 Pere Toshev, of IMRO, took a trip to Tsari Grad to elicit some guarantees from official representatives of the Great Powers. Toshev's only request was that Macedonia be given a Christian governor. Unfortunately, his request was rejected in favour of the status quo. Later, however, when statistics of Turkish atrocities started pouring in, the Great Power attitude softened a little. In October the Great Powers reconsidered Toshev's request, but instead of appointing a Christian governor each nation agreed to send a small "peace-keeping" force. This did not help the Macedonian position at all. In fact it hindered IMRO from self-defense initiatives even against Bashi-bazouk attacks.

Turkish atrocities committed against the Macedonian villages, in the eyes of the world, created bad publicity for Turkey and for her allies, the Western Powers. As a result, Turkish popularity started to decline and so did Turkey's

favour with the Great Powers. Being financially strapped and having her hands tied, Turkey turned to her neighbours for assistance. By declaring Macedonia a "multi-interest zone" and inviting armed propaganda from Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia, to counter IMRO insurgency, Turkey was hoping to turn the tide of the rebellion in her favour. Again Great Power inaction put Macedonia and the Macedonian people in peril.

At the end of August, after the fall of Krushevo, Nasir Pasha was appointed to take over command from Omar Rushdi Pasha. Rushdi was blamed for the flare up of the rebellion and Nasir was chosen to put an end to it. Nasir Pasha was a favourite of the Sultan, who spoke German and was considered civilized by many who had high hopes for a quick end to the rebellion. Unfortunately, Nasir's plans involved the burning of ALL revolting villages and quickly cornering and rounding up all those doing the revolting. He certainly had the "right men" with the "right courage" to execute such a barbaric plan. Unfortunately, Nasir Pasha's plan did not involve pursuing the Cheti. "...The regiments which should have been pursuing the insurgents found it more agreeable and interesting to pillage the defenseless villagers and make war on the women and children." (Page 155, Brailsford, Macedonia its Races and their Future) Nasir Pasha's strategy forced IMRO and the Cheti to rethink their plans and change tactics. Henceforth, organized Cheti attacks on the Turks subsided and the Cheti regrouped to take up defensive positions. Concerned for their families and villages, some of the Cheti broke up and returned to defend their own homes. After that fighting became disorderly and on November 2nd, 1903 the insurrection was declared at an end.

According to Brailsford, the Cheti fought about 150 battles in total with 746 casualties, which amounted to about 15 % of the total fighting force. In most of these encounters the Cheti were outnumbered by at least 10 Turks to 1 Macedonian. (Page 155, Macedonia its Races and their Future) Before it was all over, the Turks were attacking everywhere, even in secluded areas that once were beyond militia reach. To save themselves, many civilians resorted to camping among the fighters and even following them in wild battles. Their only safety was to be with the Cheti. "...Sometimes the battle raged about the lair where the women and children lay, the men fighting with all their manhood to defend some shallow trench, knowing that behind them cowered wife and child expecting massacre if their courage failed or their bullets missed the mark." (Page 162, Brailsford, Macedonia its Races and their Future)

Before I finish with the Ilinden uprising, I want to mention that even though not much action was seen in eastern Macedonia, the Endrene (Dardanelles or Andrianople) region had also risen in 1903 to join the Macedonian rebellion. This forgotten region, that once ruled the world, belonged to Macedonia at one point in time because Macedonians to this day still live there. What the world calls Pomac (converts from Christianity to Islam) Bulgarians are in fact Macedonians who converted to Islam. It is believed that the Christians of Endrene initiated the revolt but could not sustain it for too long due to the

numerical superiority of the Muslim militia and the fact that the region was without mountains and places to hide.

There is no good time to wage war in any society, let alone inside a self-sufficient agrarian microcosm. The leaders of the Ilinden rebellion knew that. They also knew that they would be risking more than their own lives when they called for a revolt. The crops would not be harvested and people would starve to death. "Fleeing incessantly, they soon left behind them their stores of food and their herds of beasts. They were now shelterless under cold skies. There were villages which lived for days together on roots and salad grasses. The young children died in large numbers, and men and women graduated for the epidemics which were to decimate those whom the Turks had spared." (Page 162, Brailsford, Macedonia its Races and their Future) Those who came back from the mountains alive didn't fair well either. People from the burned villages crowded in towns where helpless masses of starving women begged for bread, door to door. They had lost everything; home, crops, cattle and handmade clothing that were to last them for half a lifetime. It was through the generosity and charity of neighbours that most of them managed to survive. Macedonians possess a unique compassion for all living things. Love and respect for life flourishes from generation to generation and is part of the Macedonian tradition.

IMRO leaders, who survived the rebellion, responded decisively to the new crisis by establishing temporary centers where urgently needed food and medical supplies were distributed to the displaced population. While doing that they were also fighting a political battle with the Vrhovists for control of IMRO itself. The Bulgarians had dispatched Komitadjis (assassins) to eliminate the "old guard" but the legendary Yane Sandanski and his Cheta remained active and fought back fearlessly. When word got out that Sandanski was still active, he gained a large following and was able to successfully repel all assassination attempts.

History, in a sterile sense, tends to remark on the numbers of casualties directly associated with the conflict but shies away from the true ugliness of a war's aftermath. The real casualties of a conflict are the innocents who, through no fault of their own, are left to bear the consequences of war. The most unfortunate are those in whose home war is waged. For them there is no escape. It is easy to show numbers and statistics of the dead, wounded, homeless, raped, orphaned, maimed, etc., but it is hard to imagine their horrific experience. History has a way of separating "us from them" and distancing our feelings from theirs. But that hardly does them justice if we can't even imagine their pain, anguish, frustration, fear, despair, hunger, humiliation and hopelessness. Many innocent children died a horrible death in the Ilinden aftermath and their sacrifices must not be forgotten.

"The young women fared the worst, for, when the troops (Turks) could catch them, they were often carried off to the Turkish camps and there kept for some days until the last brute who desired them had had his will." (Page 163, Brailsford, Macedonia its Races and their Future) Many of the young girls who survived returned to their village. Instead of finding a home they found

abandoned ruins and again fell prey to prowling soldiers or marauding Bashi-bazouks.

The story of the Macedonian fallen becomes more tragic when "history books", written by Macedonia's enemies or by those influenced by "politically correct propaganda", claim the Macedonian dead to be Greeks, Bulgarians and Serbians. It seems that the injustices committed against the Macedonian people do not end with the living but continue to haunt even the dead. Is it not enough that the living are robbed of their dignity? Must the dead also be robbed of theirs? As long as authors neglect to mention the "Macedonians" in the "Macedonian epic struggle for independence" there can be no rest for the living or the dead. Those fallen men and women were Macedonians and died in a courageous struggle to free Macedonia. They were NOT Greeks, they were NOT Bulgarians and they were NOT Serbians. Let's not allow their enemies who robbed their children of their future to also rob them of their dignity. It is imperative that historians understand that anyone who unwittingly or willingly is alleging Macedonians to be Greek, Bulgarian, or Serbian is propagating the "Greek lie" and committing a moral wrong against the Macedonian people.

The Ilinden rebellion had no happy ending for Macedonia. The Macedonian people lost their bid for freedom and paid the ultimate price. Henry Brailsford in his book, *Macedonia its Races and their Future*, describes the Ilinden aftermath in some detail by providing specific accounts of some of the worst horrors perpetrated. Brailsford was an aid worker inside Macedonia during the conflict and was witness to some of the accounts in his book. The book is worth reading, as long as you keep in mind that when he talks about Bulgarians and Greeks he means Macedonians who belonged to the Exarchate or Patriarchate Church.

I also ran into an article on the Internet by Blagoj Stoicoeski, Sixth International Congress on South-East Europe, Sofia, 1989 (MANU, Skopje 1991), "THE POST-ILINDEN EVENTS IN MACEDONIA DURING 1904 ACCORDING TO NORWEGIAN REPORTS" posted at www.makedonika.org/STOICOVSKI1.htm. The author of these reports is Karl Ingvar Nandrup who wrote on seven separate occasions to His Majesty Oscar II, King of the Norwegian-Swedish union, during his stay in Macedonia from the beginning of 1903 to December 30, 1904. In fact, this Norwegian officer had been sent to Macedonia under the sponsorship of Sweden and Norway to work as an inspector in the Turkish Gendarmerie (as a result of the "Padar's Reforms" of February 1903). The author of the above article has succeeded in finding two of Nandrup's reports, one from May 16th and the other from December 30th, 1904. The original reports were written in Norwegian and sent to the king in dispatches from Skopje. In addition to being documents of value, the reports are also worthwhile reading.

"Every village which joined the revolt did so with the knowledge that it might be burned to the ground, pillaged to the last blanket and the last chicken, and its population decimated in the process. That the Macedonians voluntarily faced these dangers is a proof of their desperation." (Page 159, Brailsford, *Macedonia its Races and their Future*)

The Macedonian rebellion did not succeed because there were too many factors working against it. The Macedonian people showed will and determination and rose to the task in spite of all odds. Compared to the Serbian, Greek and Bulgarian rebellions, the Macedonians were the most determined, well organized and most desperate, but they were not ready. The Serbians, Greeks and Bulgarians had only one enemy, the Turks, but received a lot of help from friends in high places (the Great Powers). In contrast, no one beyond the Macedonians wanted the Macedonians to succeed. The Greeks and especially the Bulgarians went out of their way to create obstacles. The Great Powers, believing that they had nothing to gain, also abstained from helping Macedonia. The Serbian, Greek and Bulgarian struggles for independence prepared the Turks and made them more determined to deal with the Macedonians. "The Turks had made war upon the women and children, and the men dared not prolong the unequal conflict with starvation." (Page 163, Brailsford, Macedonia its Races and their Future)

When the conflict was over, the people who returned to their villages were devastated to find their homes destroyed. Added to all their ills, winter was fast approaching and no food or shelter was to be found. "The villages were mere heaps of charred wood and blackened stone, buried beneath a red dust which the rain converted to mud. A few walls still stood upright, the only hope for the winter." (Page 164, Brailsford, Macedonia its Races and their Future) To make matters worse, a curfew was placed on travel and those away from home found themselves stranded. Those in need of work were no longer allowed to leave their vilayets. This was the first time in Macedonian history that Macedonians ever considered permanent emigration. Many early Macedonian emigrants to Canada, the USA and Australia were refugees from the Ilinden aftermath.

When reports of the uprising could no longer be contained and filtered out to the foreign media, it became clear that the Turks were not as successful as they had claimed, in keeping peace and maintaining the status quo in Macedonia. The Great Powers, Britain in particular, were disturbed by the atrocities committed by Turkish soldiers. On Britain's insistence the Great Powers recommended European officers take over command of the Turkish gendarmerie. Unfortunately, the European officers were Christians and the Turks refused to take orders from them. The German officers had some success because they had trained the Turks but not enough to make a difference. To prevent the situation from deteriorating further, Britain pushed for high-level reforms which resulted in the appointment of two Turkish inspectors. One was Hilmi Pasha, former governor of Yemen. He was dispatched to Solun as Inspector General with orders to reform the Turkish administration. But as usual nothing was done. "Hilmi Pasha issued a proclamation in Bitola saying that the law courts had been reformed, that the police and gendarmerie had been reorganized, that Christian village guards had been appointed, that the schools had been reopened and that roads and bridges had been repaired. He went on to announce that if indeed all was not working smoothly it was because evil people endeavoured to impede the

Government." (Page 112, Dakin, The Greek Struggle in Macedonia 1897-1913)
No one was deceived by Hilmi Pasha's words.

Before the uprising, Russia and Austria proposed "The Vienna Scheme of Reform" which basically required the Turks to appoint an Inspector General to each of the Macedonian Vilayets for a minimum of three years. In short, the reforms proposed local control of troop enlistment, local control of finances and appointment of foreign specialists inside Macedonia. The gendarmes were to enlist from local sources to reflect the proportion of the population. General amnesty was to be given to all under arrest or exiled and all pending law cases were to be settled without delay. Obviously these reforms did not work and their failure was blamed on Russian and Austrian neglect.

After the uprising, as the situation in Macedonia worsened, Britain, fearing that Bulgaria would imminently declare war on Turkey, pushed for more reforms. As a result on October 2nd 1903 the Murzsteg Reform Program was drafted and on October 23rd it was proposed to the Turks. The reforms in part read as follows:

1. Two Civil agents, one from Russia and the other from Austria were to be attached to the Inspector General (of police) Hilmi Pasha for two years to accompany him everywhere and call to his attention the abuses and recommend remedies. They were also expected to report all activities to their respective governments.
2. The Ottoman gendarmerie was to be reorganized by a "general of foreign nationality" and to him were to be attached military officers from the armies of the Great Powers to lead, supervise, instruct and report on the activities of the Turks.
3. As soon as the rebellion was put down, the Great Powers would demand an administrative reorganization of the Macedonian territory based on "nationalities".
4. Administrative and Judicial institutions were to be reorganized allowing Christian employees to run them.
5. Mixed committees with consular membership from Russia and Austria were to be formed in the vilayets to inquire into political and other crimes.
6. The Turkish Government was to allot a special budget to pay for the return of refugees and for re-building the damaged houses, schools, churches, etc. The money was to be distributed under the supervision of the Austrian and Russian consuls.
7. Christian villages burned down by Turkish troops and Bashi-bazouks were to be exempt from all taxes for one year.
8. The Turkish Government was obliged, without delay to implement the "Vienna Scheme of Reforms" introduced in February of 1903.
9. The Turkish second class reservists were to be disbanded and the Bashi-bazouks were to be prohibited from banding together.

The Murzsteg Reform Program, like its predecessor the Vienna Scheme of Reforms, clearly did not have the interest of the Macedonian people in mind. The

priority here was to keep Turkey out of trouble and in control of Macedonia. On November 24th 1903 the Turkish Government accepted the nine-point Murzsteg Reform Program in principle, reserving the right to negotiate the details later. Noting that there was a two-year limitation on provision 1, the Turks haggled over the details, introducing delay after long delay while the Great Powers continued to show indifference. Precious time was wasted as the Turks were claiming credit for the relative quietness in Macedonia, which was largely due to winter weather. In time the Murzsteg Reform Program, like its predecessor the Vienna Scheme, entered the "annals of empty promises".

As mentioned earlier, determined to eradicate IMRO influence, Turkey turned to her neighbours for help. By declaring Macedonia a "multi-interest-zone" Turkey invited armed propaganda from Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia to counter the insurgents.

The failed uprising, loss of so many great IMRO leaders, the Turkish backlash and now the foreign influence was too much for IMRO. The close links with the villages and the ideological differences between isolated IMRO branches widened. Although IMRO continued to live, it lacked direction and was on the verge of an ideological collapse. In time, however, it managed to muster two more congresses. With the advent of Krste Misirkov's book, a new tide of opinion was spreading throughout Macedonia. Misirkov warned against falling under the influence of the chauvinistic elements and recommended taking a more nationalistic approach in order to weed out Vrhovist and conservative elements. At the Prilep Congress held in May 1904, IMRO was re-vitalized and its independence reasserted (this time with a socialist character). The most significant developments to emerge from this Congress were IMRO's ability to shed itself of its conservative elements and to adopt a resolution to decentralize the organization and give more power to the sub-districts. This Congress literally split IMRO into two ideologically polarized halves. While leftist IMRO adopted a defensive strategy, the right wing conservative Vrhovists pursued a policy of renewed confrontation. The two factions continued to masquerade under the same banner and were headed for a showdown. The showdown materialized in November of 1905, at the Rila Monastery near the Macedonian-Bulgarian border and took the form of a General Congress. There was a single item of paramount importance on the agenda, to determine the direction of the Organization. Twenty-two elected delegates, in total, attended the Rila Congress and by secret vote the left came out victorious.

As a result of the Rila Congress, a rulebook was issued proclaiming the aims of the Central Committee, which basically called for:

- a. creating an autonomous and independent Macedonia
- b. achieving this by means of a united national front, over a long period of revolutionary activity
- c. resisting all foreign interference

There was one more safeguard added that is worth mentioning. IMRO now possessed the capacity to recall a rebellion by a 75% majority vote of its

delegates. They could only be nominated from regional sub-committees within Macedonia; a safeguard that guaranteed there would be no more interference from Sofia and the Vrhovists.

Defeated at the Rila Congress, the Right wing Vrhovists took up permanent residence in Sofia and continued to wage a terrorist war on the IMRO leadership. Both Nikola Karev, in 1905, and Dame Gruev, in 1906, were indirectly eliminated by terrorist acts of the Vrhovists.

Bulgarian interference in Macedonia not only damaged the revolutionary movement but also put fear in the civilian population, ripening conditions for Balkan intervention. Greece and later Serbia were quick to take advantage of a weak IMRO and a frightened population. With the assistance of the Turkish military they were able to step up armed propaganda campaigns inside Macedonia. The aim was to kill two birds with one stone. By being the eyes and ears of the Turks, the Greek clergy spied on the Macedonians and disclosed information to Turkish authorities. The Turkish military in turn, stepped up activities to eradicate the remnants of the Cheti and their leaders. At the same time, in the midst of terror, the same Greek spies were offering Macedonians Hellenism as a way to salvation. "No one can deny that the Greeks owed much to the Turks. Indeed the victory of the Turks in 1903 was the salvation of Hellenism in Macedonia. From the outset the Greek clergy and notables devised means of passing information to the Turks. The Turkish authorities on their side welcomed this support." (Pages 118-119, Dakin, *The Greek Struggle in Macedonia 1897-1913*)

The most notorious of the Greek clergy was the Metropolitan of Kostur, Archbishop Germanos Karavangelis. Karavangelis was sent to Macedonia by the Patriarch Constantine V who favoured the Athenian (the most nationalist) style of Hellenism and selected Karavangelis as the right man to do the job. Dakin portrays Karavangelis as a charismatic and capable figure of a man that is a credit to the human race. (Pages 119-127, *The Greek Struggle in Macedonia 1897-1913*) That, however, is far from the truth. Karavangelis was a ruthless killer and a disgrace to the Christian religion. Karavangelis was personally responsible for the assassination of hundreds of Macedonian patriots including priests, notables, teachers and IMRO leaders. He was also personally responsible for Hellenizing hundreds of Macedonian villages, by force and by sheer terror. If you wish to know more about Karavangelis' terrorist actions in Macedonia read his biography (the original version) "Arheio Makedonikou Agona, Pinelopis Delta, Apomnimoneymata, Germanou Karavaggeli, Georgiou Dikonymou Makri, Panagiotti Papatzanetea". Karavangelis' first priority after accepting the post as Metropolitan of Kostur was to raise an army. He couldn't import one, the Great Powers were watching, so he resorted to purchasing one. The most pliable and feeble-minded man who would sell his soul for gold was the self styled brigand Kote of Rula ("the darling of Athens"). Kote sold out his own people for Greek gold. From being the most revered Cheta leader, Kote became the most hated man in Macedonia. When Karavangelis decided who was to die, Kote became the executioner. In addition to regular pay for murder, Kote and his band

of no-goods received additional rewards of gold coins for turning in desired body parts from their victims. While Kote was doing the murdering in the Macedonian villages, Karavangelis, in person with Turkish escorts, was Hellenizing. Nothing and no one could stand in his way. Those who Karavangelis couldn't buy or bribe he had killed. "By containing and fragmenting the Internal Organization in Western Macedonia, Kote (Kote) and Karavangelis not only caused the projected rising to be continually postponed but they also caused it to be undertaken prematurely; and eventually they both contributed towards its defeat and failure. True, most of the recorded action (the arrests, searches and attacks on villages and bands) were carried out by the Turks, but the Turks nearly always acted on information supplied by Karavangelis or his agents. It was Karavangelis again who prevailed upon the Turks to attack Smardeshi (Smurdersh) on 9/22 May 1903." (Page 132, Dakin, *The Greek Struggle in Macedonia 1897-1913*)

"After the Ilinden rising of August 1903, it was Karavangelis who, escorted by 600 Turkish soldiers, visited the villages, celebrating mass, speaking to the villagers and calling upon them to surrender arms. The result was that even such strongholds as Aposkepos (Aposkep), Zagoritsani (Zagoricheni) and Gabresi (Gabresh), which only a few months before had declared themselves Exarchist, now returned to the Patriarchist fold. Without the support of the Turks, it is doubtful whether Karavangelis's work would have been successful. It is equally doubtful, however, whether but for the activities of the Patriarchist counter-movement, the Turkish authorities could have dealt such a decisive blow to the Internal Organization (IMRO)." (Page 135, Dakin, *The Greek Struggle in Macedonia 1897-1913*)

Even my own small village Oshchima didn't escape the hand of Karavangelis. It was a Sunday morning when Georgios Tsantos (Varda) and his gang came to Oshchima looking to murder Pop Giorgi Popov. On the way they ran into a young man named Yane Zhigerov who was taking his mule to pasture. It is unknown what transpired but the young man was found dead, with his throat cut. After killing Yane, Varda broke into Oshchima's Svety Nikola Church and killed Pop Giorgi by stabbing him multiple times. He then skinned the beard off his face and cut off his blessing finger. Varda was prepared to kill many more had it not been for the Oshchimian Cheta led by Bozhin Temov who drove Varda and his hoodlums out of Oshchima at gunpoint. Pop Giorgi Popov's beard and finger were delivered to Karavangelis in exchange for gold.

With regards to Kote from Rula, greed was stronger than loyalty. Lazo Papatraikov, an usher at Kote's wedding and a man who twice saved Kote's life, was on Karavangelis's hit list. After a skirmish with the Turks in Mariovo, word was out that IMRO leader Lazo Papatraikov had received a wound on the head and was on the run. Kote caught up to him at Turtska Polena in Oshchima and after a long chat the two men said their good byes and Kote left. On his way to Zhelevo, Kote sent some Zhelevtsi to kill and decapitate Lazo. Lazo's head was taken to Karavangelis to collect the reward. Lazo's headless body was buried behind the altar in Sveti Nikola Church in Oshchima.

The ultimate disgrace for Karavangelis came after the massacre of the village Zagoricheni. Refusing to bend to Hellenism, Zagoricheni, on direct orders from Karavangelis, was massacred to the last person the Greeks could lay their hands on, including the unborn children inside the wombs of pregnant women. Witnesses reported finding bodies of pregnant women with their abdomens cut open. The survivors who escaped the atrocity refused to bury the dead bodies of their neighbours. For days the dead were guarded until the European consuls in Bitola came to witness the atrocities for themselves. Here is what Brailsford had to say. "The chef d'oeuvre of this Hellenic campaign was achieved at Zagoricheni, a large Bulgarian village (author's note: Macedonian village, there were no Bulgarian villages inside Macedonia) near Klissoura, which, like Mokreni, took a leading part in the uprising of 1903, and like Mokreni was burned by the Turks. A Greek band, which is said to have numbered over two hundred men under three Greek officers in uniform, surprised it by night (April 6-7, 1905) by using bugle calls which led the villagers to suppose that Turkish regulars were manoeuvring in the neighbourhood. They burned ten houses, and twenty-eight of the temporary homes erected amid the ruins of the last conflagration. They wounded seven persons and killed no less than sixty, among them seven women, twenty-two persons over sixty years of age, and five children under fifteen. There was a good deal of evidence to show that the local Turkish authorities were privy to this massacre, and some circumstances seemed to include the Archbishop of Castoria (Kostur). It is quite clear that no conflict or provocation preceded what was simply a deliberate massacre, and the only reason for choosing Zagoricheni was that it was an eager and patriotic Bulgarian center, and that it disobeyed the summons of the Greek Archbishop to return to the Patriarch fold." (Pages 216-217, Macedonia its Races and their Future) After the massacre when it was discovered that Karavangelis was implicated, to escape punishment, the cowardly Archbishop of Kostur fled to Sveta Gora (Holy Mountain) where he spent two years in hiding before fleeing to Austria. Today, there is a statue of Karavangelis in Kostur to commemorate his great contributions to Hellenism.

The Roumanie of Bucharest has published the text of a circular found by the Turks in some documents seized on the person of a Greek prisoner. It reads like a genuine Greek document, and its authenticity has not been questioned by the Greek organs. It is said to bear the seal of the Greek Committee. (Remember there were no Bulgarians or "Bulgars" in Macedonia). It read like this: "Brave defenders of Hellenism, I address you today in order to express the gratitude which the entire nation feels for all you have done and will yet do on behalf of the Fatherland. Continue the struggle against the Bulgarian assassins, and neglect no means of proving to the whole world that Macedonia is purely Greek. Exterminate the priests, the teachers, and the notables who compose the Bulgarian Committees. It is at length time to put in practice the saying: an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. When it is a question of taking vengeance we must not spare the Bulgarians, even when they hide under the robes of a priest. Burn, shoot, assassinate, and purify the soil of Macedonia from all that is Exarchist. The Supreme Panhellenic Committee has decided to intensify the struggle by

making use of your arms, O valiant combatants, and if for some time past the Committee has hardly seemed equal to the occasion, the reason is that official Greece hesitates. But what is official Greece to us, when we have the approbation of the whole Hellenic world? Forward, then, until you have wiped out the last Bulgarian in our Macedonia. Your names will be inscribed in letters of fire in the annals of the race. May Heaven grant that the day be near when the sun of Hellenism will shine on Macedonia; then there will be peace for us and for the Turks, with whom we stand on the best of terms. Let our motto be: Purge Macedonia of the Bulgars." A quote from M. Gaulis' admirable paper, *La Macedoine*. (Page 217, Brailsford, *Macedonia its Races and their Future*)

Macedonians were well acquainted with the murderous activities of the Bulgarian Vrhovists whose new waves of terrorist bands began to penetrate the eastern borders of Macedonia in March of 1904. Fortunately, Yane Sandanski's forces were still in control of the Pirin district and more often than not, successfully repealed Bulgarian advances. In the west bands of young Turks, who deserted the army during the Ilinden rebellion, joined Albanian gangs, looting and killing indiscriminately. From the north Serbian bands began to penetrate Macedonian territory. By mid 1905, there were eleven bands numbering almost 100 men pillaging, murdering, razing entire villages and wreaking their own special brand of terror. The most violent campaign was waged by the Greek terrorists who penetrated the south-central regions of Macedonia. By 1905 the Greeks imported a contingent of Cretans, a thousand-strong, reinforced by Turk deserters who roamed unhindered razing and slaughtering entire villages. By 1906 eight bands numbering over 400 men were operating in the Solun district alone and another twelve bands (600 men) around Bitola.

Along with the intrusions of armed bands in Macedonia there reappeared the foreign schools and propaganda institutions directed by the Greek and Bulgarian churches. The terrorist bands instilled fear in the Macedonian population and the churches were quick to take on the role of protector, setting the stage for the partitioning of Macedonia. Unfortunately for them, something else was brewing within Turkey, liberalism, headed by a small group of European educated, young Turks.

Chapter 25 - The Young Turk Uprising and the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913

The Murzsteg Reform Program was the last hope for the Great Powers to salvage the Ottoman Empire in Macedonia. While the Murzsteg Reform Program proved fruitless for the Macedonians, it raised hopes for Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia. Item 3 of the Murzsteg Reform Program, which stated "as soon as the rebellion is put down, the Great Powers would demand an administrative reorganization of the Macedonian territory based on nationalities", caught the eye of the Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian protagonists.

It was well known that there were no Greek, Bulgarian, or Serbian nationalities living in Macedonia but that didn't stop the new Balkan States from

inventing them. The wheels of the protagonists were turning when they attempted to kill two birds with one stone by cleverly substituting “nationality” for “religious affiliation”. By the end of the 19th century the Christian Millet of Ottoman Macedonia was already divided into two millets (the Greek Patriarchist Millet and the Bulgarian Exarchist Millet). First, since there was no Macedonian Millet there was no “governing body” to represent a Macedonian religious denomination. Second, since all Christians in Macedonia already belonged to one millet or another, it was easy to make “nationality” claims on behalf of “religious affiliation”. In modern terms, all Macedonians belonging to the Patriarchist fold were considered to be Greek by nationality. Similarly, all those Macedonians belonging to the Exarchist fold were considered to be Bulgarian by nationality. By introducing Serbian churches and schools, Serbia later used similar tactics to claim the existence of a Serbian nationality inside Macedonia.

All Macedonians belonging to the Patriarchist church were given Greek or “Hellenized” names. Similarly, all Macedonians belonging to the Exarchist church were given Bulgarian names. In many instances brothers, born of the same parents, were given different last names because they happened to go to different churches. Their choice of church had nothing to do with loyalty to one faction or the other, but rather with the church’s location relative to home. Each brother attended the church nearest to his house as he had always done. The sad part was that now with every spoonful of religion came a dose of venomous propaganda. Brother was pitted against brother, one fighting for “Hellenism” and the other for “Bulgarism”. At the beginning of the Ilinden rebellion most Macedonian villages belonged to the Exarchate Church. With increased Greek activities through Karavangelis and others like him, however, the tide was turning. The Greek success was mainly due to the Turkish-Greek alliance and the Turkish militia’s assistance. The Macedonian people were frightened to a point of being willing to do anything to escape further punishment.

The alliance, which gave the Greeks the upper hand did not go unnoticed by the Bulgarians. British fears of a Turkish-Bulgarian war were alleviated when Bulgaria on April 8th, 1904 signed a peace agreement with Turkey. Bulgaria promised to reduce subversive actions in Macedonia in exchange for Turkish promises to implement the Murzsteg Reform Program and to extend it to the Endrene (Dardanelles) region. Russia was not too happy about the agreement, especially since Bulgaria herself was beginning to make moves towards Endrene. Being of strategic importance, Russia was hoping to eventually annex Endrene for herself.

The prospect of declining Bulgarian intrusions inside Macedonia was welcome news for Karavangelis. The Greeks could now import fighters from Crete, to fight the Macedonian Cheti, side by side with their Turkish allies without Bulgarian interference. Unfortunately, while they reduced military intrusions, the Bulgarians stepped up Exarchist activities creating stiff competition for the Greeks. The clergy on both sides were going after the same flock as both sides appointed themselves protectors and guardians of the people. In the eyes of the world they became ambassadors of the Christian flock in

Macedonia. This competition to attract parishioners created friction between the opposing factions. Friction turned to violence in villages where both groups existed and fought for control over the village church. The Turks were indifferent to the squabbling due to its religious nature and remained neutral in church disputes. When fights erupted, the Turks padlocked the church so neither group could use it. As competition for control of the village churches intensified so did brigand warfare. Local squabbling never went unnoticed and both Patriarchists and Exarchists sent their hatchet men to eliminate the so-called “troublemakers”. Many priests, teachers, notables and community leaders lost their lives this way.

The Western Powers had little faith in the Turks and their old Ottoman conservative Islamic values but preferred the status quo maintained in Macedonia. There were two factors at play that hindered the Powers from taking action. The first was the lucrative Ottoman import-export markets upon which the Ottoman consumer was dependent for a variety of goods, and a moneymaking venture for the Western Capitalists which they did not want to lose. The second was the power struggle between the Great Powers themselves over Balkan domination. The Powers were locked in a diplomatic embrace where none could freely maneuver without upsetting the others. Each of the Great Powers knew that a sudden or massive shift in any one’s policies would result in an engagement that would involve all of them. No one wanted a “world war” on his hands.

Britain, at one point, contemplated creating an autonomous Macedonia but knew that Russia and Austria would be against it. “It was fortunate for Greece at this juncture that Lansdowne’s plans foundered in a sea of European politics and that both Russia and Austria opposed Macedonian autonomy.” (Page 152, Dakin, *The Greek Struggle in Macedonia 1897-1913*) This is an important fact for ALL to know, which is contrary to “Greek propaganda”, that no Macedonians existed before 1945. Here is documented proof that a Macedonian nation did exist prior to the 19th century and came very close to achieving independence. The Ilinden rebellion was ALL about Macedonia and about Macedonians asserting their desire to live as equals in the world. The Great Powers, especially Britain and Russia, owe it to the Macedonian people to come clean and put an end to the incessant “Greek propaganda”. It no longer makes any sense to keep the Macedonian people from taking their rightful place in the world. They are certainly not a threat to anyone. Those who committed crimes against the Macedonian people and continue to deny their existence obviously have a problem. But why punish the victims, for being victims?

The Western Powers were not happy with the way Turkey was dealing with the reforms in Macedonia but at the same time they could not agree, amongst themselves, to a viable solution. The Ilinden uprising was a wakeup call to how urgently reforms were needed.

“During the later part of the C19th new social forces had emerged within Turkey. Given the conditions of absolutism within the Empire, the emergence of liberalism seemed inevitable. This new creed took the form of political agitation,

calling for a broad spectrum of reforms. It was headed by an embryonic Turkish bourgeoisie, and supported by an European-educated intelligentsia.” (Page 125, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

The Young Turk movement had been active for at least thirty years, ever since Turkish students were allowed to attend European schools en masse. Among other things, the Young Turks were in favour of granting self-government to Macedonia, Thrace and Albania and believed that the Ottoman Empire could be salvaged via reforms. When the 1903 Ilinden rebellion started, many of these European educated students had already joined the ranks of the Turkish military as junior officers. The atrocities committed and the methods used in dealing with the rebels during the Ilinden aftermath went against the principles of these young men and many deserted the Turkish army. Some joined roving Albanian bands in hopes of eliciting their assistance to form an opposition to the Sultan. Some attempted to establish contacts with IMRO, hoping that IMRO would join them to rise against the Sultan.

By 1905 the Young Turks organized under the banner of “Union and Progress” and established themselves in Solun, away from the grasp of the Sultan in Tsari Grad. It was not too long before they gained some measure of control over the local Turkish army, especially in Macedonia. It was not difficult to convince soldiers serving in Macedonia that anything was better than killing and murdering women and children.

After observing the actions of the Young Turks, the IMRO leadership was convinced that it was better to work with them than against them. The Young Turks also offered self-government and significant agrarian reforms if they gained power, which was attractive to most IMRO leaders. Dame Gruev and Nikola Karev were already dead, which left IMRO in the hands of Gjorce Petrov, who favoured a policy of urban-led insurrection. Popularity and the strength of the rebellion, however, lay in the hands of the legendary Yane Sandanski. He was in favour of supporting the Young Turk regime, especially their prospective agrarian reform programs.

The actions of the Young Turks did not go unnoticed by the Sultan who complained to the Great Powers but did not receive an immediate reaction. The coup d’etat did not materialize until “rising star” Enver Beg, from Albania, was summoned to Tsari Grad to receive a military promotion from the Sultan. Fearing it was an assassination attempt, Enver Beg and his followers fled to the mountains and called for the revolution to begin.

The rebellion first materialized in the larger cities in the form of demonstrations. On June 22nd, 1908 Solun alone drew over 20,000 protesters. By July 3rd the Young Turk officers took control of most of the Sultan’s forces and by July 22nd all of Macedonia was free.

True to their word, the Young Turks released all political prisoners and began to work on reforms. Their first act was to send the Sultan an ultimatum to reinstate the 1876 Constitution. Being in no position to resist, Sultan Abdul Hamid II reluctantly obliged. As soon as the constitution was reinstated, amnesty was proclaimed for all those under arms, including the Cheti and all foreign

bands. The Macedonians, Serbians and Bulgarians took advantage of the amnesty, came down from the mountains and surrendered their arms. The Greeks who had the most to lose were at first hesitant but warmed up to the idea. They had dreams that they might reclaim their former glory in the Phanar.

As it turned out, however, the Young Turks were very suspicious of the Greeks and watched them with caution. The Greek dream to rule from the Phanar did not materialize. In time, by deactivating and expelling armed bands, the Young Turk regime brought some stability to Macedonia.

The Young Turk regime, headquartered in Solun, survived unobstructed for over six months. Then, with support from Yane Sandanski's Cheta, the Young Turks attacked and successfully took Tsari Grad. Unfortunately, by now it was becoming evident that the Young Turk regime was too dependent on the Turkish establishment and bureaucracy for its survival. As a result, it had to subordinate most of its reform programs to safeguard its own power. In actual fact, after all this time in power, the Young Turk regime did very little to alleviate the social and economic problems in the Macedonian villages.

To prompt the Young Turks to deliver on their promises, Sandanski had a plan of his own. He proposed that in exchange for IMRO's help, the Young Turks were required to redistribute much needed land in favour of the poor (landless) Macedonians. Additionally, to ensure the land reforms were put in place according to agreements, Sandanski requested that he personally be given the task of organizing a peasant militia to supervise the implementation. Unfortunately, while Sandanski's proposals were widely accepted by the Macedonian peasants, they attracted negative attention abroad. The first to complain were the Greeks as follows; "The consequences of Sandanski's plan, as unfortunately confirmed by events, would be terrible (for us). Unless something else, like a war, or an agreement between the European Powers, settles the Macedonian question in our favour, it is my opinion that there can be no doubt that settlement of the agrarian question would create possibilities for the final settlement of the Macedonian question..." (Page 127, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

Sandanski's move for cooperation with the Young Turks was a radical departure from IMRO's policies (seizure of power by revolutionary means). To take advantage of the new situation and stay on course, IMRO created an offshoot branch dubbed the "National (or Peoples') Federative Party"(NFP). The NFP was officially launched in early 1909 and worked with (pressured) the Young Turk regime to develop a quasi-parliamentary system and to preserve the national and territorial integrity of Macedonia within an Ottoman Federation.

By the time the NFP was organized and ready to deal with the issues at hand, the Young Turk regime was losing momentum and stagnating. By now it was obvious to IMRO that without "grass roots" support from the Turkish establishment, the regime was fighting a losing battle. Its rise to power resulted from a coup and the regime itself was no more than a "dictatorship".

The Young Turk regime was a "western backed idea", an "alternate solution" to a problem with no end. The majority of IMRO leaders could no longer agree

to provide continued support and were contemplating breaking off relations with the Young Turks. To make matters worse, a class struggle (socialism) was brewing in Europe causing unrest between the rich and poor; dividing people along class lines. The so-called “religious wars” between the Patriarchists and Exarchists were also having their effects, further dividing IMRO and the Macedonian people. By 1910, armed propaganda in Macedonia was replaced by Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian “Political Clubs” which continually worked against NFP agendas and the NFP leaders.

While Russia was having mixed feelings about the Young Turk regime, the European powers, especially Britain who through intrigue created the regime, were relieved to be rid of the old reform programs. Britain approved of the cooperation between NFP and the Young Turks, which caused further fracturing between the NFP (who wanted to create an autonomous Macedonia inside an Ottoman Federation) and “grass roots” IMRO (who wanted independence by armed rebellion). Unfortunately, the Young Turk regime, with all its promises, did not meet expectations and reverted to the old Turkish way of rule. To stave off attempted coups by extremist factions, the Young Turk regime resorted to dictatorial rule in place of fostering liberal programs. This clampdown manifested itself in a number of repressive laws in Macedonia including the laws on strikes, political associations and armed bands. This policy reversal again destabilized Macedonian society by bringing back the old oppressive political climate. The NFP and all other political, cultural and professional organizations were effectively banned, forcing IMRO to go underground. The Macedonian people, in the meantime, were thrown back into anarchy and things went downhill from there.

The Young Turk regime predicted its own demise. To save itself, between 1910 and 1911, it re-settled almost a quarter of a million Turks in Macedonia, hoping to maintain control of Macedonia if it was ejected from Tsari Grad. They faced several fronts, including the Albanian revolution in 1909-1912, the Italian-Turkish war in Libya in 1911, domestic opposition, the resurgence of armed bands and finally the Sultan’s new loyal army. The Young Turk regime could no longer maintain a hold on power and on July 13, 1912 capitulated to the Sultan.

In the meantime, the Great Powers were locked in a struggle of their own where none could maneuver without upsetting the delicate balance of the status quo. While the Great Powers were held in balance by their own political vices, the new Balkan nations were flexing their economic and military muscles. Alliances like the Serbian-Bulgarian league against Greek-Turkish collusion or the Greek-Romanian league against Bulgarian aims at Macedonia came and went. On the surface it seemed that everything was normal but deep inside a rift was developing.

The rift became apparent when Russian-Austrian relations began to seriously cool. Dividing lines were drawn as Russia began to warm up to Britain and France while Austria began to warm up to Germany. Italy remained neutral for a while and took a few shots at Turkey but was prohibited (by the other powers) from attacking the centers of Turkish power. (It was through these campaigns

that Italy occupied the Dodecanese). Even though Italy was restrained from further campaigns, it weakened Turkey enough for the three new Balkan States to consider campaigns of their own. Italy's actions were also a sign of things to come and created an atmosphere of urgency for the new states to expedite their own plans for territorial annexation.

Everyone wanted a piece of Macedonia but no one dared stick out his neck to get it. The three wolves of the Balkans, with Russian help, realized that each alone could not accomplish what the three could do together. They swallowed their pride, put their differences aside and by the end of 1911 they started negotiations.

As a way of preventing Austrian aspirations in the Balkans, Russia invited the idea of a Serbian-Bulgarian league. Russia hoped that, jointly, Serbia and Bulgaria would be able to withstand Austrian advances in Macedonia without her involvement. After getting them to agree to talk, Serbia and Bulgaria listed their terms but could not reach an agreement. Autonomy for Macedonia was one major issue of contention upon which they could not agree. While Sofia supported the idea of autonomy Belgrade opposed it. Finally, for the sake of expediting the negotiations, all parties agreed that the "autonomy question" would be left separate and dealt with after the annexation of Macedonia.

Russia made it clear to both parties that they couldn't invade Macedonia without her permission and only if Turkey became a threat to the Christian population. In the meantime, Serbia was encouraged to take steps to annex Albania and Kosovo. A draft Serbian-Bulgarian agreement was reached and signed on March 13th, 1912. Included in the agreement was a crude delineation of prospective boundaries and suggestions that the final boundaries might be settled by force of arms. The Russians also insisted that Tsar Nikolas II would arbitrate any disputes regarding the exact territorial limits.

Even before the Serbian-Bulgarian agreement was finalized, Greece was already having discussions with Bulgaria about negotiating a Greek-Bulgarian agreement. The Greek-Bulgarian negotiations, like the Serbian-Bulgarian negotiations, were conducted in secret known only to the Greek King, Prime Minister Venizelos and their negotiator "The Times" correspondent J. D. Bouchier, an old friend of Venizelos. Like the Serbs, the Greeks had always opposed the idea of Macedonian autonomy but the Bulgarians were unwilling to proceed until Greece agreed to the autonomy. The Greek-Bulgarian treaty was signed on May 30th, 1912. Both parties promised not to attack one another and to come to each other's defense should Turkey attack them.

The "Balkan League of Nations" was spawned in June 1912 and shortly after Turkey was given a signed ultimatum bearing the League's signature, which in short read, "deliver the promised reforms in Macedonia or prepare to be invaded".

There was much intrigue, agreements, counter-agreements and secret deals between the League of Nations (Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia) but from the outset each was determined to exploit any situation that developed, purely for its own gain. "The League of Nations in fact was simply a device for synchronizing a

military effort upon the part of the four powers (Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro) who had come to realize that the simplest way to settle the Turkish question, before it was too late and while circumstances were favourable, was to attack Turkey simultaneously and present the European powers with a fait accompli.” (Page 440, Dakin, *The Greek Struggle in Macedonia 1897-1913*) All that remained now was to provoke Turkey into committing an offence against the Christian population and the invasion would become a reality.

Using proven techniques of terrorism to prepare the battleground, Vrhovists, masquerading as IMRO agents, conducted many raids inside Macedonia murdering, raping and plundering villages in hopes that the Macedonian bands would be blamed. When the Turks investigated the disturbances, both Patriarchist and Exarchist authorities corroborated their stories and pinned these acts on the Macedonians. As expected the Turks responded swiftly and dealt with the situation in the usual manner. Unfortunately for the Turks their actions were welcome news to the League’s spies who dispatched them to the European press. The Turks, in the eyes of the world, committed atrocities against the Christians in Macedonia and something had to be done. It was now up to the Great Powers to decide the course of action.

Along with documents of Turkish atrocities, the foreign press also received well-camouflaged League propaganda. The League had commenced extensive propaganda campaigns against the Turks, detailing every Turkish act for European consumption. A war was imminent but, according to the League’s propaganda, it was a necessary war to “liberate” the enslaved Christians from Turkish oppression. The League, through extensive media campaigns, called on all Christians in Macedonia to join the League and oust the oppressive Turk. Here is what Yane Sandanski had to say; “We ought to work on the awakening of the consciousness of the Macedonian masses that they are an independent nation...because those who seek to ‘liberate them’... will actually be coming to enslave them...” (Page 134, Radin, *IMRO and the Macedonian Question*)

As mentioned earlier, the Western Powers had not exhausted the full potential of the Ottoman markets and were unwilling to let the Ottoman regime in Macedonia collapse. At the same time Britain, France, Italy and Russia were greatly concerned about the aggressive attitudes of Germany outside of the Balkans. More importantly, they were concerned that the Turkish regime was leaning towards a Turkish-German alliance.

When Russia proposed the idea of a “Balkan League of Nations” it was welcome news for Britain, France and Italy. The League was viewed as an anti-German front, a way of ejecting the Ottoman regime from Europe and at the same time, safeguarding (British, French and Italian) interests and expansionary ambitions. The not so obvious Russian motive for sponsoring the League was to guarantee its own influence in the Balkans perhaps through Serbia or Bulgaria or both.

On October 18th, 1912 Montenegro declared war on Turkey with the League following suit. The battles that ensued were fought almost entirely on

Macedonian soil, once again causing the Macedonians to suffer from someone else's war.

Russia, the architect of the Balkan League, was against a war in 1912 and so were France and Britain. A war at this point might throw off the delicate diplomatic balance and escalate into a "world war". Russia feared that the half-millennium old Ottoman Empire might not be as easy a target as the League had estimated. Britain and France feared a backlash from Germany and Austria now that Turkey was warming up to them as a prospective ally. To stop the League's aggressive actions, both Britain and France threatened them with economic sanctions but that was not enough to suppress the appetites of the three hungry Balkan wolves.

The League's plan was to surround the Turkish army in Macedonia and force it out to Tsari Grad. To everyone's surprise, however, the League won a crushing and unexpected victory in just six weeks. Five Ottoman divisions were surrounded and defeated in two battles, in Bitola and Kumanovo. With the exception of Sandanski and a force of 400 Macedonians who fought back and liberated Melnik and Nevrokop, the League received no opposition from the Macedonians. In fact, the enthusiasm created by the "liberators" not only helped the League fight harder but also encouraged thousands of Macedonians to enlist in the League's armies. "A Macedonian Militia force of 14,000 fought under the Bulgarian command in the East. The 'Volunteer regiment', directed by IMRO veterans, consisted of a thousand Macedonians, Turks and Albanians. In the Serbian and Greek armies, Macedonian detachments such as the 'National Guard' and the 'Holy Band', were given the task of encircling the Turks to fight their retreat." (Page 143, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question) Even Chakalarov, the protector of the Lerin and Kostur regions, joined the fight to help the League get rid of the Turks. The League's victories and intense propaganda were so convincing that the entire Macedonian nation welcomed the "liberators" with open arms.

The moment the three wolves evicted the Turkish army from Macedonia, they quickly worked out a partitioning strategy along the following lines:

Serbia was to receive the northwestern portion of Macedonia, which included Skopje, Bitola, south to west of Lerin, east to Gevgelija and west to the Albanian Mountains.

Bulgaria was to receive all of Thrace, west to Gevgelija, south to the Aegean Sea and east from Solun.

Greece was to receive north to Lerin, west to the Albanian Mountains, all of Epirus and east to Solun. "To ensure their hegemony and quell any dissent, the occupying forces set up the apparatus of government and, by legislative decrees, extended their own constitutions to these new bodies, from which Macedonians were absent. Indeed, in many provincial centres, such as Gevgelija, a double or triple condominium was established, much to the detriment of the Macedonian citizens." (Page 143, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

In view of the Macedonian contribution to the League's success in evicting the Turks, in December 12th, 1912 Sandanski called for Macedonian autonomy.

The League's occupying armies, however, refused to budge and initiated a violent assimilation program. The Macedonian fighters, who fought side by side with the League's armies, found themselves policed by a joint League command ensuring that no resistance or independent action would arise. The League also pursued Sandanski and his men. Sandanski resisted and stayed active in the Pirin Region until his assassination in 1915 by Bulgarian agents.

The changing conditions inside Macedonia forced the IMRO leadership to seek refuge in foreign cities away from home. Some of the more prominent leaders moved to St. Petersburg and joined the Macedonian community living there. This small group of Macedonians consistently lobbied for Macedonian Statehood and, in the war's aftermath, acted as a government in exile. The most outspoken advocate of the Macedonian leaders was Dimitar Chupovski who published the "Macedonian Voice" and continuously protested to the Great Powers against Macedonia's partition. In June 1913 he wrote; "The division of Macedonia among the brother nations is the most unjust act in the history of these nations – it is trampling on the rights of man, and a disgrace for the entire Slav race." (Page 145, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question) In total eleven issues of "Macedonian Voice" were published and distributed all over Europe.

"A great terror reigns in Macedonia now. The 'freedom' of the allies has no frontiers, no-one from Macedonia has the right to travel outside, to protest or complain before the European states. Whoever disturbs this order is either killed or imprisoned. The allies surround Macedonia with a Chinese Wall..." (Page 145, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

The Macedonian people must not stand idly by and accept the unworthy fate of being divided so that others may profit from it. "In the name of the Macedonian people, we demand that Macedonia remain a single, indivisible, independent Balkan state within its geographical, ethnographic, historical, economic and cultural frontiers...Macedonia represents a unified body both from the historical and natural viewpoints, and cannot voluntarily end its many centuries of existence by agreeing to be broken up...Can we allow a people to be, at one and the same time, Bulgarian, Serb and Greek? Is it not simpler to assume that the nationality attributed to us is dictated by the big power politics of the interested parties who wish to take over Macedonia?" (Page 145, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

By November it was becoming apparent that Turkey was running out of options. On November 12th, 1912 it called on the Great Powers to bring about an armistice. To deal with the situation a peace conference was scheduled for December 16th, 1912, to take place in London. Having some time to adjust to the new situation, the Great Powers, for the first time, opted from the usual "status quo" recommendations and considered making concessions to the victors. Austria, however, was not too happy at the prospect of a "large Serbia" let alone allowing Serbia access to the Adriatic Sea. Austria was eyeing the Adriatic region as a prospective sphere of influence for herself. Being unable to make concessions by herself, however, Austria did the next best thing and agreed with

Britain to the idea of “creating” a new State, Albania. Another reason why Austria did not want Serbia to have access to the Adriatic Sea was because a Serbian port might become a Russian port.

This attempt to deny Serbia access to the Adriatic Sea not only left Serbia landlocked but also upset Russia, causing her to break relations with Austria. Italy too was affected by this diplomatic power play, pushing her to improve her relations with Austria. This, as it turned out, was the crucial historic moment which gave birth to the “Triple Alliance” (Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy) and the “Triple Entente” (Britain, France and Russia), a division that would have future consequences.

As a result of this sudden change of events, Austria began to amass troops along the Serbian border. At the same time, fearing German intervention, Russia ordered a halt to Bulgarian and Serbian advances towards Tsari Grad. To fully curb Serbian and Russian expansionism: France, Britain and Italy voted to grant the newly created Albanian State full independence. This saved Albania from being partitioned by the Greeks and Serbians and made her a Great Power protectorate, which Albanians enjoy to this day.

I want to emphasize that by 1912 it was well known that a Macedonian Nation with a Macedonian consciousness existed and demonstrated its desire for independence. These actions were well documented and familiar to the Great Powers, yet even after pleading their case, the Macedonians were NOT ALLOWED to attend the London Peace Conference of December 16th, 1912. Numerous petitions were made by IMRO affiliates from St. Petersburg, all ignored. Also, Chupovski’s memo to the British delegation was not tabled. Here is what Chupovski (in part) had to say; “In the name of natural law, of history, of practical expediency, for the Macedonian people, we ask that Macedonia’s right to self-determination be admitted, and that Macedonia be constituted within its ethnic, geographical and cultural borders as a self-governing state with a government responsible to a national assembly.” (Page 147, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

The London Conference adjourned on August 11, 1913, officially declaring an end to the First Balkan War. In spite of all the wheeling and dealing that went on during the conference, the resolutions left all parties dissatisfied. Serbia was dissatisfied with losing the Albanian territory. Serbia appealed to Bulgaria to grant her access to the Aegean Sea via Solun and the Vardar valley, but her appeals fell on deaf ears. Greece also was not happy with Bulgaria’s invasion and annexation of Endrene. To balance her share, Greece wanted Serres, Drama and Kavala as compensation. That too fell on deaf ears. Bulgaria, frustrated with not achieving her “San Stefano Dream” (fiction), was bitter about Russia deserting her during the London Conference negotiations.

Seeing that Bulgaria was not going to budge and the fact that neither Greece nor Serbia alone could take on Bulgaria, should a conflict arise, Greece and Serbia concluded a secret pact of their own to jointly act against Bulgaria. In short, the objective was to take territory from Bulgaria west of the Vardar River, divide it and have a common frontier.

After stumbling upon this Greek-Serbian pact, despite Russian attempts to appease her by offering her Solun, Bulgaria remained bitter and in a moment of weakness was lured away by Austria. By going over to Austria, Bulgaria in effect broke off all relations with the Balkan League. Russia, disappointed with the Bulgarian shift in loyalty, made it clear that Bulgaria could no longer expect any help from Russia.

In what was to be termed the “Second Balkan War”, the Bulgarian army, unprovoked, attacked its former allies on June 30th, 1913, again on Macedonian soil. Preferring the element of surprise, Bulgaria turned on her former allies and renewed the conflict, officially turning the Macedonian mission from “liberation” to “occupation”. There were two things that Bulgaria didn’t count on, Romanian involvement and Austrian treachery. The bloody fight was short lived as Romania, Montenegro and Turkey joined Greece and Serbia in dealing Bulgaria a catastrophic blow. The promised Austrian support didn’t materialize as the risks for Austrian involvement outweighed any benefits. The real surprise, however, was Romania’s break with neutrality. Up to now Romania had remained neutral and refused to get involved. No one, not even Bulgaria, anticipated this attack from the north. However this was a once in a lifetime opportunity for Romania to regain lost territory. Even Turkey was able to re-gain some of what she had recently lost to Bulgaria. Being involved in too many fronts at the same time, Bulgaria was unable to repel Turkey and prevent her from taking back the Endrene region. The biggest winners were Greece and Serbia, both of whom got exactly what they wanted, virtually unabated.

The Macedonians fared worst in the conflict mainly due to their own enthusiasm. As frontlines shifted positions, Macedonian citizens who were enthusiastic about supporting one faction now became traitors for doing that and butchered by the other faction for showing sympathy to their enemy. “The Carnegie Relief Commission, dispatched to the Balkans in late 1913, reported the incredible story of human suffering. In Macedonia alone, 160 villages were razed leaving 16,000 homeless, several thousand civilians murdered, and over 100,000 forced to emigrate as refugees.” (Page 149, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question) This genocidal tragedy was committed in a relatively short time, by those who marched in and were welcomed as “liberators”. Worst and most unexpected was that “Christians” committed this genocide against “Christians”, reminiscent of the 1204 tragedy committed by the Western Crusaders.

After a great deal of jockeying for position, deliberating and negotiating, the warring factions agreed to an armistice, and peace between Romania, Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia was negotiated in August, 1913 in Bucharest. The map of Macedonia was again redrafted without Macedonian participation. The new boundaries ignored previously agreed upon considerations such as lines of “nationalities” (not that any existed), the Macedonian people’s democratic desires, etc., as the Bucharest delegates imposed their artificial sovereignty upon the Macedonian people. With the exception of one minor change in 1920 in Albania’s favour, these dividing lines have remained in place to this day. Of the

total Macedonian territory 50% went to Greece, 40% to Serbia, and 10% to Bulgaria. August 10th, 1913 became the darkest day in Macedonian history.

Not since Roman times has Macedonia been partitioned in a way where three brothers were forced to assume three different (imposed) identities, speak three different foreign languages in their own homes and were treated as strangers in their own lands. The future will show that where half a millennium of Turkish suppression and a century of forced Hellenization/ Bulgarization couldn't erode Macedonian consciousness, Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian aggression, in less than a decade, would. The once proud Macedonian nation, that long ago conquered the world, bridged the gap between east and west, introduced Christianity to Europe, safeguarded all ancient knowledge and protected the west from eastern invaders, had now been beaten and reduced to a shadow of its former self. The force of this latest intrusion transformed the Macedonian nation into a shy creature, seeking homes in foreign lands and hiding in the twilight while its enemies danced on the heads of its dead and, to the world, proclaimed them as their own. It was not enough that they consumed the Macedonian lands. These new depraved creatures, spawned by western greed, consumed all Macedonian treasures such as history, culture, religion, literature, folklore, ancient knowledge stolen from Holy Mountain (Athos), etc. and regurgitated them as their own. Without hesitation they will lie to the world, even to their own people, about "their true identities" and blame their ills on the innocent. Their propaganda will turn "lies to truths" and "truths to lies" until all people are poisoned with hatred, an artificially created hatred, which will haunt Macedonians for all time and render them mute. Silence will fill the air and children will not dare cry, for if they utter anything Macedonian a terrible curse will befall them which can only be partially lifted if they leave their lands or submit to the will of their new masters. The proud name "Macedonia" which echoed through the centuries and outlasted time itself, will become a "dirty word" never to be spoken. The Macedonian language, the mother of all Slav languages, the "Voice of Eastern Christianity" will be "muted", to be spoken only in the shadows, in fear that "enemy ears" may be lurking. In time it will become known as "our language", spoken by "our people", a mute language spoken by a nameless nation. In time, the Macedonian nation, the Macedonian people and the Macedonian language will become "an anomaly" in its ancestral land.

This is the fate that awaits the Macedonian people in the 20th century, all with the blessings of the Great Powers (Britain, France, Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy).

Chapter 26 - Macedonia from 1912 to 1939

The jubilation of liberation died down quickly as the fires of burning villages lit the night skies. Macedonia was in flames again. Liberators turned to occupiers and rained havoc on the Macedonian population. The political, economic and ethnic unity of Macedonia was no more. Greek soldiers who came to liberate

their Christian brothers from the oppressive Turks and terrible Bulgarians were now burning, torturing and murdering people. In the words of Sir Edmond Grey, "The Balkan war began as a war of liberation, became rapidly a war of annexation, and has ended as a war of extermination." (Page 294, Vasil Bogov, Macedonian Revelation, Historical Documents Rock and Shatter Modern Political Ideology)

The Greek atrocities were revealed to the world when a lost mailbag was discovered containing letters from Greek soldiers in Macedonia to their families in Greece. The mailbag was turned in to the Carnegie Relief Commission and the contents of the letters were made public. Expecting to fight for the glory of the fatherland, the soldiers instead found themselves torturing, murdering, burning houses and evicting women and children from their homes in a most vile way. The letters revealed that the soldiers were acting on direct orders from the Greek authorities and the Greek king himself. Macedonian families of known Exarchists (Macedonians belonging to the Bulgarian Church) were ordered by force to "take with them what they could carry and get out". "This is Greece now and there is no place for Bulgarians here." Those who remained were forced to swear loyalty to the Greek State. Anyone refusing to take the loyalty oath was either executed, as an example of what would happen to those disloyal, or evicted from the country. To explain the mass evacuations, Greek officials claimed that the inhabitants of Macedonia left by choice or became Greek by choice. The truth is, no one was given any choice at all.

"A thousand Greek and Serbian publicists began to fill the world with their shouting about the essentially Greek or Serbian character of the populations of their different spheres. The Serbs gave the unhappy Macedonians twenty four hours to renounce their nationality and proclaim themselves Serbs, and the Greeks did the same. Refusal meant murder or expulsion. Greek and Serbian colonists were poured into the occupied country... The Greek newspapers began to talk about a Macedonia peopled entirely with Greeks-and they explained the fact that no one spoke Greek by calling the people 'Bulgaro-phone Greeks' ... the Greek army entered villages where no one spoke their language. 'What do you mean by speaking Bulgarian?' cried the officers. 'This is Greece and you must speak Greek.'" (Page 104, John Shea, Macedonia and Greece, The Struggle to define a new Balkan Nation)

In 1913 Professor R.A. Reiss reported to the Greek government: "Those whom you would call Bulgarian speakers I would simply call Macedonians...Macedonian is not the language they speak in Sofia...I repeat the mass of inhabitants there (Macedonia) remain simply Macedonians."

History again turned its eyes away from the Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian atrocities in Macedonia to focus on new events that were about to unfold and engulf the entire world.

After losing Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austria in 1908 and the Albanian territories in 1912 (again because of Austria) Serbia became bitter and resentful. "To the nationalist Serbs the Habsburg monarchy (Austria-Hungary) was an old evil monster which prevented their nation from becoming a great and powerful

state. On June 28, 1914, a young Serbian nationalist, Gavrilo Princip, assassinated the heir of the Habsburg monarchy, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, and his wife at Sarjevo." (Page 104, Felix Gilbert, The End of the European Era, 1890 to the Present)

Within two weeks of the assassination the First World War broke out, engulfing all of Europe. It was inevitable and a matter of time before a "world war" would break out in the Balkans. The Great Powers were incapable of exercising diplomacy either between themselves or with the new Balkan States they helped create. Macedonia was sacrificed in order to appease the new Balkan States but that did little to satisfy their ferocious appetites for lands and loot.

While World War I raged on consuming the lives of millions of young men and women, Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia were serving their own brand of chauvinism in Macedonia. For the next five years, with the world busy with its own problems, there was no one to hear the cries of the Macedonian people at the hands of the new tyrants. If the gravestones of the dead Macedonians could speak they would tell tales of torture and executions, deception and lies. They would say, "Our Christian brothers came to liberate us but instead they killed us because we were in their way of achieving greatness. We were labeled 'criminals' because we would not yield to their demands. I ask you is it a crime to want to live as free men? Is it a crime to want to be Macedonian? Is it a crime to want to exercise free will? It is they who are the criminals for befouling everything that is Christian, for their lies and deception, and for murdering us to possess our lands. History will record August 10th, 1913 as the darkest day in Macedonia, the day our future died."

The triple occupation worsened living conditions in Macedonia but the fighting spirit of the Macedonian people continued to live underground and abroad. Three generations of fighting for liberty, freedom and an independent Macedonia came to a close. The Ilinden generation and IMRO were defeated, not by the Turks or Muslim oppression but by Christian cruelty and deception.

Soon after the occupation, underground societies sprang up everywhere urging the Macedonian people to refuse their new fate and oppose the partition. Accordingly, many Macedonians did so by refusing to obey the new officialdom and by not participating in the new institutions. This, however, did not stop the military regimes occupying Macedonia from systematic denationalization and violent assimilation.

The battle for "dominion of the world", which started over Balkan affairs, soon took a sinister turn to again involve Macedonia. As the Entente Powers (Britain, France, Russia and Italy) were fighting with the Central Powers (Germany and Austro-Hungary), Bulgaria, smarting from her losses at Bucharest, remained neutral. In a turn of events, to the amazement of the Greeks, the Entente Powers approached Bulgaria with an offer of a substantial portion of Macedonian territory in exchange for her alliance. Bulgaria, however, seemed to prefer the company of the Central Powers, perhaps they offered her a bigger portion, because by late 1915 her armies marched in and invaded Macedonia. To quote the Bulgarian War Minister General Nikolaev, "We care little about the

British, Germans, French, Russians, Italians, Austrians or Hungarians; our only thought is Macedonia. Whichever of the two groups of Powers will enable us to conquer it will have our alliance!" (Page 154, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

While the Serbs were being engaged on their northern border, the Greeks were debating which side to take. Their hesitation or "National Schism", as it was later called, lay in the differences that emerged between the Greek Prime Minister Venizelos and the Greek King Constantine I, over which side to join. Venizelos was a strong supporter of the Entente and within days of the outbreak of hostilities was ready to offer Greek troops to fight alongside the Entente. King Constantine, on the other hand, did not share Venizelo's zeal and believed that Greek policies would be best served by staying neutral. Being married to Sofia, the sister of Kaiser Wilhelm II, however, predisposed Constantine towards the Central Powers. The tug of war between Prime Minister and King divided the people of Greece into two camps and the country slid towards a state of virtual civil war. Having the authority to do so, Constantine replaced Venizelos with a pro-German Prime Minister and called for an election to end the impasse. Unfortunately for the King, Venizelos, once again, came out victorious with a clear majority. Bulgaria's attack on Serbia, due to a Greek-Serbian treaty, predisposed Greece to offer Serbia assistance. The king's camp refused to comply on the grounds that it was not Bulgaria alone who was committing the aggression and insisted on remaining neutral. Venizelos called on Parliament and won support to send Greek troops to fight alongside the Serbs and to allow Entente troops to land in the Solun region. Venizelos was again forced to resign. "But whatever the constitutional rights and wrongs of the situation Venizelo's second resignation on 5 October 1915 signified a total breakdown in relations between the king and his elected prime minister. Britain and France, however, had not yet given up Greece for lost and held out to Venizelo's successor, Alexander Zaimis, the prospect of the cession of Cyprus to Greece in return for aid to Serbia, whose forces were now under severe pressure." (Page 109, Richard Clogg, A Short History of Modern Greece)

Soon afterwards, Zaimis too was forced to resign. New elections were held in December but were boycotted by the Venizelos camp. Events came to a head when the Royalists refused to allow evacuated Serbian troops to cross over from Corfu and join the Entente forces on the Solun front. Backed by the Entente, a group of pro-Venizelos officers launched a coup in Solun against the official government and created a provisional pro-Entente government with its own army. Once again many Macedonians, deceived by Balkan propaganda, joined the war with hopes of being liberated only to end up as "cannon fodder" used by both sides at the front. Macedonian casualties mounted and towns and villages only recently reconstructed were again bombarded to dust.

Soon after establishing the Solun front, the occupation of Greece was complete. France had dispatched 60,000 troops to the Balkans with hopes of safeguarding the Skopje to Solun rail links. By late 1917, Entente troops were emerging victorious over the Bulgarians and Germans in Macedonia. No sooner

was the battle over than a problem developed between British and French commands in Macedonia. While the British General, Milne, supported Venizelos and his attempts to constitute a pro-British provisional government in Greece, the pro-Macedonian French General, Sarrail, opposed Venizelos and sought to drive the Greek army out of Macedonia. "The ambitious plan for Macedonian autonomy drafted by the French command in 1915 and 1916 were but mere progressive steps to ensure France a strategic outpost for capital expansion." (Page 155, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

Once again Macedonians were caught in the middle of someone else's war. To save face France recalled Sarrail and replaced him with a pro-Greek commander, thus avoiding a diplomatic disaster.

After establishing a government in Athens and consolidating his power in Greece, Venizelos committed nine divisions to the Macedonian front to assist Entente forces on the Solun front. To further prove his devotion to the Entente, Venizelos committed two more divisions to fight the Bolshevists in Russia.

When the war was over, on November 11, 1918, a general armistice was signed and a Peace Conference was convened in Versailles, France. Venizelos arrived in Paris as the principle negotiator for Greece, determined to reap his reward for his solid support to his victorious allies. One of Venizelos's objectives was to resurrect the "Megaly Idea" by annexing parts of Asia Minor, Smyrna (Ismir) in particular. He convinced the world that the Christians living in Asia Minor were Greek and should be part of Greece. Unfortunately for Venizelos, Italy had prior claims in Asia Minor (Anatolia) which created a problem for the peacemakers. Greek ambition was viewed with suspicion by Italy so to strengthen her claims, in March 1919, Italy began to build up troops in the region. The Greeks viewed this as a threat to their own claim and before a final territorial solution was reached they demanded concessions. The reasons given were that the Greek people in Asia Minor were endangered by Turkish aggression and needed protection. After much protest on the Greek side, Britain, France and the Americans finally gave them permission to send a small defense force. Under the protection of allied warships, on May 15, 1919, Greek troops began their landing in Smyrna. Instead of staying put however, as per prior agreements, they began to occupy western Asia Minor.

No sooner were the Central Powers driven out of Greek territories than the Greek Government, by passing LAW 1051, inaugurated a new administrative jurisdiction for governing the newly acquired lands in Macedonia.

When it started to become clear that the Entente Powers were winning the war, encouraged by Woodrow Wilson's principles of nationality, many Macedonian lobby groups placed their faith in the Peace Conference in Versailles. Wilson's fourteen principles of nationality implicitly asserted the right of all nations to self-determination.

In his address to the Pan Slavic Assembly in Odessa in August 1914, Krste Misirkov called for achieving autonomy by diplomatic means. An article was written and extensively circulated in May 1915, which specifically dealt with the autonomy call.

The student organization "Independent Society", in Geneva Switzerland under the slogan of "Macedonia for the Macedonians", demanded the application of Wilson's principles to create an autonomous Macedonia based on the principles of the Swiss Federative model.

Remnants of IMRO also took action in the rally for an Autonomous Macedonia. After the Bulgarians murdered Yane Sandanski in 1915, his supporters fled the Pirin region to save their own lives and later regrouped in Serres to form the "Serres Revolutionary Council". "Having noted the impetus for unification of the Southern Slavs against the Central Powers, the Council issued a 'Declaration of Autonomy' in October 1918, in which it appealed for membership of a Balkan Federation on the basis of Macedonian territorial integrity. This plea was ultimately rejected by the ruling cliques of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, which later became known as Yugoslavia". "By striving for political and economic hegemony over the Balkans, Balkan nationalism has thrown the Balkan peoples and states into deep contradictions and conflicts which must be begun by war, and finished by war and always war." (Pages 158-159, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

Once again the Macedonian people came to the forefront to plead their case and once again they were shut out. How many more wars must be fought and how much more blood must be spilled for the world to realize that there is no end to Balkan conflicts without involving the Macedonian people in resolving the Macedonian question?

The Peace Conference, which was supposedly "the tribunal of international conscience", had no place for "Wilsonian Justice" or the opportunity for self-determination. Instead of practicing what they preached, the so called "peace makers of Versailles" rewarded aggression in exchange for self-interest.

With the stroke of a pen, in 1919 at the Treaty of Versailles (Paris), England and France sealed Macedonia's fate by ratifying the principles of the Bucharest Treaty and officially endorsing the partitioning of Macedonia. This gave Greece the license she needed to pursue forced expulsion and denationalization of Macedonians and to begin a mass colonization by transplanting "potential Greeks" into the annexed territories of Macedonia. The Neuilly Convention allowed for forced exchanges of populations. About 70,000 Macedonians were expelled from the Greek occupied part of Macedonia to Bulgaria and 25,000 "so called Greeks" were transplanted from Bulgaria to Greek occupied Macedonia.

"Macedonia's fate has been the subject of every kind of political combination, negotiation and treaty since 1912, each more immoral than the last, each ignoring completely the local interests and desires of a population which, with the stroke of the statesman's pen, can be condemned to national dissolution, and denied the right to a free national life while Armenians, Albanians and Jews receive political freedom." (Page 160, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

The Great Powers did not dare lose the strategic importance and untapped wealth in Macedonia or dare disappoint their trusted allies in the Balkans. Think of the endless bickering and complaining!

What was surprising, especially to the Balkan delegation, was the raising of the Macedonian question by Italy. On July 10, 1919, Italy along with the USA made a proposal to the "Committee for the Formation of New States" for Macedonian autonomy. France flatly opposed the motion while Britain proposed establishing a five-year Macedonian Commissary under the auspices of the League of Nations. Greece and Serbia, by refusing to acknowledge the existence of a Macedonian question, literally killed the motion.

Another item that came out of Versailles was Article 51, the League of Nations' code to "protect national minorities". Article 51 of the Treaty of Versailles espouses equality of civil rights, education, language and religion for all national minorities. Unfortunately, article 51 was never implemented by the Balkan States or enforced by the League of Nations which Greece and Bulgaria, to this day, violate and ignore. Why is this? Because to this day, Greece and Bulgaria claim that "the Macedonian nationality" does not exist and has never existed. So, what minorities should they be protecting? In response to the Greek claim I would like to ask the Greeks the following questions:

1. To what minorities were you referring, when on September 29, 1924 your Minister of Foreign Affairs Nikolaos Mihalakopoulou signed an agreement with the Bulgarian Foreign Minister Kalkoff?

2. To what minorities were you referring, when on August 17, 1926 you made an agreement with Yugoslavia regarding the nationality of the "Slavophones" in Greece?

(Pages 159-161, G.A.L. I Kata Tis Makedonias Epivouli, (Ekdosis Deftera Sympepliromeni), Athinai 1966)

On September 29, 1924 Greece signed an agreement with Bulgaria declaring that the Macedonians in Greece were Bulgarians. Not to disappoint the Serbians, when they found out about the Greek-Bulgarian agreement, the Greeks changed their mind and on August 17, 1926 declared that the Macedonians in Greece were in reality, Serbs.

As it turned out, the loudly proclaimed "Wilson principles" at the Paris Conference were only for show. The real winners at the end of the conference were the "players", the biggest one of all being Venizelos of Greece. "The entire forum was a farce, and its offspring the Versailles Treaty, the ultimate insult to the dignity and self-esteem (what remained of it after continuous war and bloodshed) of the long-tormented Macedonian people. Those Macedonians prodded by conscience, by the mistrust gained after generations of suffering, and by the desire for freedom, thereafter treated the Versailles Treaty, and all political treaties, with the contempt they deserve." (Page 166, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

At the conclusion of the Treaty, Greece got back what she had previously annexed and, additionally, received a large portion of Epirus, western Thrace, Crete and the Aegean Islands. It is important to mention here that when Albania's affirmation for independence was signed, at the London Conference in February 1920, more of Macedonia's territory was partitioned. A narrow strip of land

running through Lake Ohrid and southward along Macedonia's western boundary was awarded to Albania.

Soon after arriving victorious in Greece, Venizelos, in a speech in Solun, announced his plans for a "Greater Greece" (Megali Idea) and to bring together all "Greek peoples" under a single Greater Greek State.

I remember, as a child, listening to old men in my village, sitting on the porch telling tales of bygone wars when, as young soldiers, they chased the Turks to Ankara yelling "two Turks to a bayonet". They also told stories of how it took them sixty days to gain sixty miles and how they lost them in one day of retreat. I didn't understand what they were talking about then but it was about the Greek exploits in Asia Minor. As mentioned earlier, after building up a large military presence in Asia Minor, a major offensive was launched in March 1921, and by the end of the summer, the Greek armies reached the Sakarya River about forty miles from Ankara.

The assault on Asia Minor was an "exclusively Greek initiative" without the blessing of the Entente Powers and as a result they found themselves alone and running out of ammunition. They knew they couldn't count on Italy or France for help but the realization of their predicament sunk in when Britain also refused to help them. By early autumn the Greeks were pushed back beyond the halfway point between Smyrna and Ankara, reaching an uneasy military stalemate. Realizing that they couldn't possibly win militarily or politically, the Greeks turned to the Paris Conference of March 1922 looking for a compromise. The compromise called for the withdrawal of the Greek armies and placing the Christian population under the protection of the League of Nations. Sensing a victory, Mustafa Kemal of Turkey insisted on an unconditional evacuation of the Greek forces, a demand unacceptable to the Greeks. Still counting on British kindness, in July 1922 the Greeks unsuccessfully attempted to get permission from their allies to enter Tsari Grad.

Turkey launched a full-scale offensive on August 26, 1922 (a dark day for Greece and her Megali Idea) near Afyonkarahisar and forced the Greeks into a hasty retreat back to Smyrna. On September 8 the Greek army was evacuated and the next day the Turkish army invaded Smyrna. The worst came on the evening of the 9th when outbreaks of killing and looting began, followed by a massacre of the Christian population in which 30,000 Christians, mostly Armenians, perished. As a result of the violence 250,000 people fled to the waterfront to escape the catastrophic disaster.

The Asia Minor campaign was over along with the "Megali Idea" of a Greater Greece. Worse yet, as a result of this catastrophic Greek fiasco, over one million Turkish Christians were displaced, most of them into Macedonia. Their settlement affected the demography of the Macedonian landscape as well as the morale of the Macedonian population.

An entire generation of young Macedonian men, who were drafted into the Greek military, were sent to the Asia Minor campaigns and many lost their lives. The Greek authorities never acknowledged their service and no compensation was ever paid to the families of those "breadwinners" who lost their lives. The

reason for the omission, according to the Greek authorities, "they were Bulgarian".

It is, I am told, noble to die for your country. Would it not be "nobler" to die for someone else's country? How did the Greeks repay those, noble enough to die for Greece? They let their widows and children live in poverty. This is how Greece treated its noblest citizens!

By the Treaty of Lausanne in July 1923, the Greco-Turkish war came to an end. Greece and Turkey signed a population exchange agreement using "religion as the basic criterion for nationality." (Page 120, Richard Clogg, *A Short History of Modern Greece*)

The November 1925 issue of *National Geographic Magazine* best illustrates the magnitude of the human wave, the audacity of the Greek and Turkish authorities and the total disregard for human life. "History's Greatest Trek, Tragedy Stalks the Near East as Greece and Turkey Exchange Two Million of their People. ...1922 began what may fairly be called history's greatest, most spectacular trek-the compulsory intermigration of two million Christians and Muslims across the Aegean Sea." " ...the initial episodes of the exchange drama were enacted to the accompaniment of the boom of cannon and the rattle of machine gun and with the settings pointed by the flames of the Smyrna holocaust." (Page 533, Melville Chater, *National Geographic*, November 1925)

"Stroke of the Pen Exiles 3,000,000 People. It is safe to say that history does not contain a more extraordinary document. Never before in the world's long pageant of folk-wanderings have 2,000,000 people-and certainly no less than 3,000,000 if the retroactive clause is possible of complete application-been exiled and re-adopted by the stroke of the pen" (Page 569, *National Geographic*, November 1925). "Even if regarded as a voluntary trek instead of a compulsory exchange, the movement would be without parallel in the history of emigration." "One might just add that history has never produced a document more difficult of execution. It was to lessen these difficulties that exchangeability was based in religion and not race. Due to five centuries of Turkish domination in Greece, the complexities in determining an individual's racial status are often such as would make a census taker weep." (Page 570, *National Geographic*, November 1925)

"Greece with one-fifth Turkey's area has 1,500,000 more people. Turkey with a population of 5,000,000 and naturally rich territory contains only 15 people to the square mile...Greece, with less than one fifth of Turkey's area, emerges with a population exceeding the latter's for the first time by 1,500,000 people averaging 123 to the square mile." (Page 584, *National Geographic*, November 1925)

"History's Greatest Trek has cost 300,000 lives. Conservative estimates place it at 300,000 lives lost by disease and exposure." (Page 584, *National Geographic*, November 1925)

"The actual exchange was weighted very heavily in Turkey's favour, for some 380,000 Muslims were exchanged for something like 1,100,000 Christians." "The total population in Greece rose between 1907 and 1928 from 2,600,000 to 6,200,000." "After the Greek advances of 1912, for instance, the

Greek elements in Greek Macedonia had constituted 43 percent of the population. By 1926, with the resettlement of the refugees, the Greek element has risen to 89 percent." (Page 121, Richard Clogg, A Short History of Modern Greece)

After all this, surprisingly (and shamefully) Greece still claims her population to be homogeneous; direct descendents of the peoples of the ancient City States.

"If Greece exists today as a homogeneous ethnos, she owes this to [the Asia Minor Catastrophe]. If the hundreds of thousands of refugees had not come to Greece, Greek Macedonia would not exist today. The refugees created the national homogeneity of our country. (Antonios Kandiotis, Metropolis of Florina, Page 141 in Anastasia Karakasidou, Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood)

According to Karakasidou, almost half of the refugees were settled in urban centers and rural areas in Macedonia. "Searching for locations in which to settle this mass of humanity, the Greek government looked north to the newly incorporated land in Macedonia..." "...by 1930, 90 percent of the 578,844 refugees settled in rural Greece were concentrated in the regions of Macedonia and western Thrace. Thus Macedonia, Greece's newly acquired second 'breadbasket' (after Thessaly), became the depository for East Thracian, Pontic, and Asia Minor refugees." (Page 145, Anastasia Karakasidou, Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood)

While Greece was contemplating repopulating Macedonia with alien refugees, new developments were boiling to the surface in Macedonia.

"A book of great importance to Macedonian linguistics and historiography was published in Athens; that was the primer entitled ABECEDAR (A B C), printed in the Latin alphabet, and intended for the children of the Macedonian national minority in Greece - the 'Slav speaking minority' as Sir Austin Chamberlain, British diplomat and delegate to the League of Nations, and Sir James Erick Drummond, General Secretary to the League of Nations, referred to the Macedonians in Greece." (Page 184, Voislav Kushevski, 'On the Appearance of the Abecedar' in Istorija magazine, 1983, No. 2)

"In 1920 Greece signed before the League of Nations a treaty obliging it to grant certain rights to the minorities of non-Greek origin in Greece. Four years later, in 1924, at the suggestion of the League of Nations, Greece and Bulgaria signed the well-known Kalfov-Politis Protocol under which Bulgaria was obliged to grant the Greek minority in Bulgaria their minority rights (language, schools and other rights), while Greece, recognizing the Macedonians from the Aegean part of Macedonia as a 'Bulgarian' minority, was to grant them their minority rights. This agreement was seemingly very much in favour of Bulgaria, but when in 1925 the Greek government undertook certain concrete steps towards the publication of the first primer made for the specific needs of that minority, it made it clear that there were no grounds on which Bulgaria could be officially interested in any 'Bulgarian minority' or expect the primer to be in Bulgarian, for that minority - though speaking a Slav language - was neither Bulgarian nor Serbian.

The very fact that official Greece did not, either de jure or do facto, see the Macedonians as a Bulgarian minority, but rather as a separate Slav group ('Slav speaking minority'), is of particular significance. The primer, published in the Latin alphabet, was based on the Lerin - Bilola dialect. After Gianelli's Dictionary dating from

the 16th Century, and the Daniloviot Cetirijazicnik written in the 19th century, this was yet another book written in the Macedonian vernacular. The primer was mailed to some regions in Western Aegean-Macedonia (Kostur, Lerin and Voden), and the school authorities prepared to give Macedonian children, from the first to the fourth grade of the elementary school, instruction in their own mother tongue. (Grigorios Dafnis, 'Greece between the two world wars', 'Elefteria' newspaper, March 15, 1953, Dionisios Romas in 'Elefteria' newspaper of October 9 and 12, 1954 and Dimitrios Vazuglis in Racial and religious minorities in Greece and Bulgaria, 1954)

The Greek governments have never made a sincere attempt to solve the question of the Macedonians and their ethnic rights in Greece. Thus, while measures were being undertaken for the opening of Macedonian schools, a clash between the Greek and Bulgarian armies at Petrich was concocted, which was then followed by a massacre of the innocent Macedonian population in the village of Trlis near Serres. All this was aimed at creating an attitude of insecurity within the Macedonians so that they themselves would give up the recognition of their minority rights and eventually seek safety by moving to Bulgaria. The Greek governments also skillfully used the Yugoslav-Bulgarian disagreements on the question of the Macedonians in Greece, and with organized pressure on the Macedonian population, as was the case in the village of Trlis, tried to dismiss the Macedonian ethnic question from the agenda through forced resettlement of the Macedonian population outside of Greece.

The ABCEDAR, which actually never reached the Macedonian children, is in itself a powerful testimony not only of the existence of the large Macedonian ethnic minority in Greece, but also of the fact that Greece was under an obligation before the League of Nations to undertake certain measures in order to grant this particular minority their rights" (HRISTO ANDONOVSKI).

Even before Greece had secured her grip on Macedonia, officials were sent to administer "the new lands". The first official Greek administrator arrived in Solun near the end of October 1912, accompanied by two judges, five customs officials, ten consulate clerks, a contingent of reporters and journalists and 168 Cretan soldiers. Among other things, the first order of business was to "Hellenize the New Lands". "After the Greeks occupied Aegean Macedonia, they closed the Slavic language schools and churches and expelled the priests. The Macedonian language and names were forbidden, and the Macedonians were referred to as Bulgarians, Serbians or natives. By law promulgated on November 21, 1926, all place names (toponymia) were Hellenized; that is the names of cities, villages, rivers and mountains were discarded and Greek names put in their place. At the same time the Macedonians were forced to change their first and surnames; every Macedonian surname had to end in 'os', 'es', or 'poulos'. The news of these acts and the new, official Greek names were published in the Greek government daily 'Efimeris tis Kiverniseos no. 322 and 324 of November 21 and 23, 1926. The requirements to use these Greek names is officially binding to this day. All evidence of the Macedonian language was compulsorily removed from churches, monuments, archeological finds and cemeteries. Slavonic church or secular literature was seized and burned. The use of the Macedonian language was strictly forbidden also in personal communication between parents and children, among villagers, at weddings and work parties, and in burial rituals." (Page 109, John Shea, Macedonia and Greece, The Struggle to Define a New Balkan Nation)

The act of forbidding the use of the Macedonian language in Greece is best illustrated by an example of how it was implemented in the Township of Assarios (Giuvezna). Here is a quote from Karakasidou's book *Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood*.

"[We] listened to the president articulate to the council that in accordance with the decision [#122770] of Mr. Minister, General Governor of Macedonia, all municipal and township councils would forbid, through [administrative] decisions, the speaking of other idioms of obsolete languages within the area of their jurisdiction for the reconstitution of a universal language and our national glory. [The president] suggested that [the] speaking of different idioms, foreign [languages] and our language in an impure or obsolete manner in the area of the township of Assirios would be forbidden. Assirios Township Decision No. 134, 13 December 1936." (Page 162, Anastasia Karakasidou, *Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood*)

By 1928 1,497 Macedonian place-names in the Greek occupied Macedonia were Hellenized (LAW 4096) and all Cyrillic inscriptions found in churches, on tombstones and icons were destroyed (or overwritten) prompting English Journalist V. Hild to say, "The Greeks do not only persecute living Slavs (Macedonians)..., but they even persecute dead ones. They do not leave them in peace even in the graves. They erase the Slavonic inscriptions on the headstones, remove the bones and burn them."

In the years following World War I, the Macedonian people underwent extensive measures of systematic denationalization. The applications of these "denationalization schemes" were so extensive and aggressively pursued that in the long term, they eroded the will of the Macedonian people to resist.

"In Greece, in 1929 during the rule of Elepeterios Venizelos, a legal act was issued 'On the protection of public order'. In line with this Act each demand for nationality rights is regarded as high treason. This law is still in force.

On December 18, 1936, Metaksas' dictatorial government issued a legal Act 'On the activity against state security' on the strength of which thousands of Macedonians were arrested, imprisoned, expelled or exiled (EXORIA) on arid, inhospitable Greek islands, where many perished. Their crime? Being ethnic Macedonian by birth.

On September 7, 1938 legal Act No. 2366 was issued banning the use of the Macedonian language. All Macedonian localities were flooded with posters: 'Speak Greek'. Evening schools were opened in which adult Macedonians were taught Greek. Not a single Macedonian school functioned at the time." (Page 8, *What Europe has Forgotten: The Struggle of the Aegean Macedonians, A Report by the Association of the Macedonians in Poland*)

Many Macedonians were fined, beaten and jailed for speaking Macedonian. Adults and school children alike were further humiliated by being forced to drink castor oil when caught speaking Macedonian.

In Vardar Macedonia, the Yugoslav government attacked the problem of denationalization and assimilation by enacting laws, such as the September 24, 1920 "Resolution for the Settlement of the New Southern Regions", designed to

effectively exclude Macedonians from owning any property. The Macedonian language was banned along with cultural institutions through a uniform code known as the December 30th, 1920 EDICT, which was aimed at persecuting all political and trade union associations.

The bulk and most arable of Macedonian lands were awarded to Serbian army officers who survived the World War I Solun front. Land was also awarded to the Serbian administrators of Macedonia including government bureaucrats, judges and the police. The denationalization measures were complemented with aggressive re-education programs producing "little Serbs" out of the Macedonian children. As for the unwilling adults, they were given two options - "live as a Serb" or "die as a Macedonian"!

In Pirin Macedonia, the Bulgarian government enforced compulsory name changes and, through repressive political and economic means, stepped up the assimilation process. Initially land reforms favoured the poor, including the Macedonian peasants. Later, however, that too changed and Macedonians here were exposed to a similar fate as the Macedonians in Aegea and Vardar.

The Macedonians in Albania posed little threat to Albania's authority and fared relatively better than their kin in Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia. The village inhabitants were not persecuted or subjected to any comprehensive denationalization programs. As a result the Macedonian culture flourished, original names remained and the people spoke Macedonian uninhibited.

As mentioned earlier, many of the IMRO regional leaders, fooled by the Balkan League's propaganda, voluntarily joined the League's armies in 1912 to help oust the Turks and liberate Macedonia. When it was over and the so-called "liberation" turned into an "occupation", they found themselves prisoners of the League's soldiers. Those fortunate enough to have escaped, fled to the Pirin region and joined Yane Sandanski's Cheta, which was still active at the time. After Sandanski's assassination in 1915, however, many of his followers went underground and later re-emerged in Serres to form the "Serres Revolutionary Council". The left wing of IMRO re-emerged prior to the 1919 Paris Peace Conference with high hopes of settling the Macedonian question by lobbying the peace delegates. After realizing that their efforts were futile, they gave up and merged together with the Provisional Mission of western Macedonia to form IMRO (United). Macedonia is alive, "United" in spirit if not in substance. Unfortunately, because of Macedonia's division and the impenetrable barriers (closed borders) erected, putting up a united national front was difficult if not impossible. Even though there was much desire to achieve a 'united autonomous Macedonia', no form of mobilization was practical. So how was IMRO going to achieve its objectives? Some leaders believed that by internationalizing the Macedonian question and by working with the supportive political elements of each Balkan State, the denationalization process could be slowed down, even reversed, and a climate for reunification created. IMRO believed that by employing new, revolutionary and non-nationalistic tactics the barriers erected in Macedonia could be penetrated. By joining the "international class struggle against a common oppressor", IMRO believed self-determination could be

achieved. The only political elements that sympathized with IMRO's objectives, at the time, were the Communist Parties of the respective Balkan States. IMRO called on the Macedonian people to join the class struggle and support those sympathetic to the Macedonian cause. Many Macedonians did rise to the task but found they had very little in common with the exploited working class in their respective new countries. Macedonians felt they were exploited first because they were Macedonians and second because they were a working class. To win them over, the Communist International (Comintern) was obliged to consider concessions like offering Macedonians autonomy and the right to self-determination or at least recognize the Macedonian nation with full rights and privileges. The Comintern saw the Macedonians as a potentially strong ally that could be persuaded to rally for its cause. Unfortunately there were problems, many problems. First, there were disagreements between the various Balkan State Communist Parties regarding the degree of concessions to be awarded. Then there were fears of losing Macedonian territory if autonomy was considered. Moscow, the leading Comintern figure, favoured a Balkan Federation with the whole of Macedonia as one of its republics. Unfortunately Bulgaria, still dreaming the San Stefano dream, backed out of the deal.

Without a way of breaking the "artificial impenetrable barriers" imposed on Macedonia by the Balkan States, IMRO was never again able to rise to the glory days of the Ilinden Rebellion. As a consequence, its role slowly diminished and it became extinct after the German occupation of the Balkans in 1941.

After the Great War there was peace in Europe. Unfortunately, Macedonians continued to endure denationalization, forced assimilation, forced emigration and economic neglect at the hands of the new masters. As time will tell, Europe will not have a lasting peace, a new menace with greater ferocity is emerging and will engulf the entire world. Once again someone else's war will be fought on Macedonian soil and once again it will prove even more devastating than any previous war, almost fatal to the Macedonian nation.

Chapter 27 - Macedonia from 1939 to 1949 - WWII and the Greek Civil War

After the conclusion of the Great War and the Soviet Bolshevik revolution, the Great Powers were in ruins and began their lengthy process of rebuilding. Russia's desires for imperialist ventures and her obsession with destroying the Ottoman Empire brought immense economic suffering to her people. While the Macedonians in the Balkans were suffering from denationalization and oppression, the world around them was changing.

Lenin's rise to power put an end to Russian imperialist ambitions in the Balkans, especially the Tsarist desires for annexing Tsari Grad and Endrene. Germany, on the other hand, bitter about her latest defeat, began to rebuild her economy. Smarting from their latest bouts with Germany, France and Britain too began to rebuild their economies and military strengths. Germany, as the

vanquished party and instigator of the Great War, was forced to pay restitution for damages to the victorious nations.

In spite of all efforts made to recover from the Great War, the economic situation in Europe was worsening and came to a climax in October 1929 when the stock market crashed in the United States. The economic collapse of the 1930's and the "Great Depression" polarized the world into "left and right" economic camps. On the left were the supporters of the working class and Communism, while on the right were the supporters of industry and capitalism. The tug of war between left and right came to a climax when civil war broke out in Spain in July 1936. Germany was in support of the right and sent troops to fight on the side of the Spanish Government. Germany, at the time, was only allowed to have a small army, so to compensate for her limited numerical capability she focused her efforts on producing a superior force. Germany's small but capable army was field-tested and battle hardened in the Spanish conflict. This explains her numerous victories during the course of World War II. Russian and German influences did not escape the Balkan States and they too felt the pull from the two camps.

To maintain control of his kingdom, King George II of Greece made his state a dictatorship. In 1936 after the Greek premier's death, General Metaxas, minister of war, was appointed to take charge of Greek affairs.

While there were some prospects for basic human rights for the Macedonian people in the Greek State in the early 1920's, those prospects died as Greece tightened her grip on Macedonia by implementing more racist assimilation policies. If that was not enough, on December 18, 1936 the Greek Government issued a legal act concerning, "Activities Against State Security". By this act thousands of Macedonians were arrested, imprisoned and expelled from their homeland. Among other things, Metaxas on September 7, 1938, by legal act 2366, outlawed the Macedonian language and prohibited people from speaking it by imposing heavy fines and imprisonment.

In 1938 Australian author Bert Birtles in his book "Exiles in the Aegean" wrote, "In the name of 'Hellenization' these people (Macedonians) are being persecuted continually and arrested for the most fantastic reasons. Metaxa's way of inculcating the proper nationalist spirit among them has been to change all the native place-names into Greek and to forbid use of the native language. For displaying the slightest resistance to the edict-for this too is a danger to the security of the State-peasants and villagers have been exiled without trial." (Page 112, John Shea, Macedonia and Greece The Struggle to Define a New Balkan Nation)

Once in control of the Greek State, Metaxas acted against the labour unions and their leaders and declared strikes illegal. He then turned to suppressing all political opposition, outlawed all political parties and imprisoned leaders who would not pledge their loyalty to him. The communist party too was outlawed and driven underground. The press was also heavily censored.

Being a military man, Metaxas dedicated much of the State's finances to modernizing the Greek army in both manpower and military hardware. In the

sphere of education, he re-wrote the Greek history to support his own ideologies declaring that there were three great periods in history: classical, Byzantine and his own regime, which was then known as the "Regime of the Fourth of August". He created a National Youth Organization to bring children together from various social classes and provided military training for boys and domestic skills for girls. Even though the Metaxa regime was ideologically similar to that of Spain and Italy, the Greeks were always loyal to Britain.

In Yugoslavia events were progressing in a similar manner to those in Greece. After King Alexander declared himself dictator of Yugoslavia in 1929, he suspended the constitution and subdivided his kingdom in such a way that the Serbs would be a majority in all districts. He also abolished trade unions and removed personal liberties. The Serbian occupied territory of Macedonia was referred to as "South Serbia" and the Macedonian language was forbidden from being spoken in public. The history of the Macedonian people and their surnames were changed as well, to give Serbian emphasis. Place names too were changed and replaced with historically Serbian names. Unlike the Metaxa regime, after the 1930's, the Yugoslav regimes began to relax their tight grip and allowed unofficial and limited use of the Macedonian dialects to be spoken in the streets of Macedonia and in plays and drama clubs.

In Bulgaria events followed a similar course as in Yugoslavia and Greece. A military coup was imposed in May 1934, the 1879 constitution was abolished and political organizations and trade unions were suppressed. In 1935 King Boris III, in a bloodless coup, overthrew the old dictatorship and replaced it with his own Royal one. Bulgarian governments since Bulgaria's inception in 1878 have officially and adamantly denied the existence of the Macedonian nationality arguing that Macedonians are Bulgarians. Thousands of Macedonians, who over the years tried to express different views, were jailed or exiled. The attitude that Macedonians are Bulgarians was used to justify violent assimilation acts and to deny Macedonians their basic human rights. Ever since her inception in 1878, Bulgaria has been obsessed with possessing Macedonia and has caused immense suffering for the Macedonian people.

The downfall of the Tsarist Russian Imperial Empire, the break-up of the Habsburg Austro-Hungarian Empire and the demise of the Ottoman Empire removed three of the Great Powers from internal Balkan influence. While Britain played a less active role, France and Italy attempted to form competing alliances in the Balkans but did not have the military might to enforce them. The Balkan governments, on the other hand, for the first time had an opportunity to adjust their relations with each other and form alliances to protect their mutual interests. Unfortunately their hatred for each other and fear of losing Macedonia always prevented such alliances and again allowed outsiders to play a role in their internal affairs.

Germany's humiliating defeat in the Great War, coupled with her economic plight in the 1930's, gave rise to a new kind of German radicalism. Hitler exploited that and turned it to his own advantage. Hitler, in the short term, also gave the German people what they desired most, work and hope for a better

future. Unfortunately, in the long term, he delivered disaster not only to the German people but also to many other nations, including the Macedonia.

As a new-world order emerged from the Great War, new alliances began to form. On one side stood the Axis partners, initially consisting of Germany, Italy and Japan. As war broke out, Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Finland and Thailand joined in. On the other side the Allied partners consisted of Britain, the Soviet Union, the USA and China. As the war progressed more and more nations joined the allies, totaling about fifty before the war was over.

In September 1940 Germany, Italy and Japan signed a cooperation agreement. This basically identified their intentions with respect to each others' spheres of influence, defining their political, economic and defense strategies as well as their obligations to each other. The agreement came to be known as the "tripartite pact".

After war broke out in the Balkans, the first to fall to fascist aggression was Albania. By an ultimatum delivered to Albanian King Zog, on March 23, 1939, Italian troops landed in Albania and occupied her territory on April 7, encountering little resistance. Soon after consolidating control in Albania, on October 28th, 1940, Italy declared war on Greece. Greece, however, turned out to be tough to defeat and Metaxa's foresight in arming his state paid off.

Official history praises Greece and Greek soldiers for their bravery and fighting spirit but neglects to mention the contributions and sacrifices Macedonians made to keep Greece safe. Macedonians were the first to be dispatched to the front lines in Albania, taking the full brunt of the offensive as well as the winter cold. More Macedonian men suffered from gangrene than from Italian bullets and bombs. Unprepared for the frigid temperatures, many men lost their fingers, toes, limbs and even their lives to frostbite. Food too was in short supply. The brave Macedonian soldiers had to fight off starvation as well as the Italians. They did this to protect a country that refused and still refuses to recognize them.

All their sacrifices were in vain because six months later, on April 6th, 1941, the German army marched into Greece. Again the Macedonians fought bravely but they were no match for the well-trained, well-disciplined German army. (If you wish to learn more about World War II, specifically about events that involved Greece, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Albania, read Volume 4 of "The Marshal Cavendish Illustrated Encyclopedia of World War II, but don't expect to find anything about the Macedonian contribution.)

There is a story, I am told, of a Macedonian soldier, a real old coot, who refused to surrender to the invading Germans and continued to fire at them in spite of orders to cease. He held his position until he ran out of ammunition and the Germans practically grabbed him by the neck. Expecting to meet his maker, he stood up and bravely faced his enemy. Instead of killing him, the German soldiers, one by one, shook his hand and praised him for his bravery, then let him go. (I don't want to give you the wrong impression about the Germans. This is how they behaved in the beginning during the Partisan days, later however their policy was to "kill ten innocent civilians for each German soldier killed".)

When the Germans reached Athens, the Greek government capitulated and the soldiers on the Albanian front were left on their own. Some were told to go to Epirus and regroup, expected to make the long trek on foot. Others were told nothing and were left to roam the countryside. Eventually they were all picked up by German patrols, disarmed and sent home. The returning soldiers were given a hero's welcome. Unfortunately for those who were wounded, losing fingers, toes and limbs to frostbite, there was no compensation or solace for their pain.

The German invasion was a welcome relief for the soldiers from the Italian front, but at the same time it posed an uneasy uncertainty as to what was going to happen next. No one was certain how the new invaders were going to react. The Macedonian people, having ample prior experience with being occupied, were expecting the worst. As time would show the new invaders were a mixed blessing for the Macedonian people.

After war broke out in Europe, Bulgaria allied itself with the axis powers and on March 1, 1941 joined the German led pact. The entry of German troops into Bulgaria put Yugoslavia in a difficult position. To avoid German wrath, on March 25, 1941, the Yugoslav Regent, Prince Paul, also joined the German led pact. This did not sit well with young King Peter who, with the help of the Yugoslav military, staged a coup and deposed the Regent. This meant that Hitler had to negotiate with Yugoslavia again. Hitler was counting on Yugoslavia to allow him passage to attack Greece. The new situation angered Hitler and instead of negotiating he signed directive number 25 declaring Yugoslavia an enemy of Germany and ordered her destruction. Hitler wanted a swift strike so he withdrew troops from the Russian campaign.

It took Hitler's army 12 days to demolish Yugoslavia, a small diversion in his destructive career, but there are those who believe that this little diversion changed the course of history. To begin with it gave the Soviet Union just enough time to adequately prepare for an offensive, which ultimately led to Germany's defeat. Secondly, the violent nature of the attack created the right conditions for a Partisan uprising, which ultimately helped to establish the Republic of Macedonia. The battle for Yugoslavia and Greece was swift and effective. When it was over the Germans, as an ally to the axis powers, allowed Bulgaria to occupy Vardar (Yugoslav occupied) Macedonia and the eastern region of Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia. Later, after the Italians left, Germany allowed Bulgaria to occupy western Macedonia as well.

Many Macedonians from the Vardar region who had suffered under the Yugoslav regime welcomed the Bulgarian invaders as saviors and liberators. Their euphoria was short-lived as the Bulgarians quickly began to oppress and forcibly Bulgarianize the Macedonian population. If there had been any pro-Bulgarian sentiment before, it quickly disappeared after the occupation. Germany's violent entry into Yugoslavia, coupled with Bulgarian oppressive attitudes towards the Macedonian people, gave birth to an underground Macedonian resistance movement.

In Aegean Macedonia, after the Germans settled in, life for the Macedonian people took on an uneasy normalcy. The Greek police, who had supported the Metaxa regime before the occupation, now cooperated with the German military and again became active in Macedonia. To counter its oppressive tactics the old Komiti (Ilinden revolutionary guard) rearmed and went back to active duty. The "old timers" were angered by Greece's oppressive laws and were spurred back into action by Bulgarian propaganda condemning the oppressive Greek tactics. The Bulgarians were well aware of the unfavourable conditions the Greek Government had created in Macedonia and used the opportunity to agitate the Greeks. Komiti actions were limited at best and were restricted to the Italian zones, as the Germans would not tolerate armed actions in their zones.

The Partisan movement in Yugoslavia was more organized and progressive than in Greece. Led by Tito, the Communist partisans in Yugoslavia organized a war of national liberation in which the Macedonians, led by General Tempo, fought on an equal footing. Macedonians formed their own section of resistance even before they were recognized and accepted by Tito. The first anti-fascist war of national liberation began in the Republic of Macedonia on October 11, 1941. October 11th is the "Second Ilinden" for the Macedonian people. Since 1941 they have celebrated it as "Macedonian Revolution Day". The Macedonian people by their actions, loyalty and patriotism earned their place in the world. By hardship, determination and the spilling of blood the Macedonian people demonstrated their desire for freedom and the willingness to rule themselves. The Great Powers in 1829 (by the London Protocol) satisfied the Greeks by making Greece a country. Similarly in 1878 (by the congress of Berlin) Russia liberated the Bulgarians making Bulgaria a country. Unlike the Greeks and Bulgarians, however, the brave people of Vardar Macedonia had to fight by themselves, for themselves, to earn their place in the world among the free nations.

For just over a year the Macedonians of Vardar endured enough Bulgarian treachery to last them a lifetime. Then in April 1942 they rose up and demonstrated their displeasure. Macedonian Partisans took up arms against the Bulgarian army but were massacred in a bloody battle. Unarmed Macedonians then took to the streets to protest the massacre and they too were cut to pieces.

To escape persecution, sections of the Macedonian Partisan force in Yugoslavia fled into Aegean Macedonia. Some entered the Italian zones near the village of Besfina and the rest penetrated the German zones in the region around the village Sveta Petka and quickly went underground. The Besfina force, before it had a chance to make contact with the local population, was spotted by the Komiti who quickly sprang into action. Seeing uniformed men on the Besfina hillside startled the old Komiti. Thinking that it was a Greek police (Andari) invasion force, the Komiti appealed to the local Italian garrison and were given arms and permission to attack. When the Komiti started the offensive the Partisans backed off and sent representatives to negotiate. They went from village to village and spoke with the local chiefs. The strangers wore handsome uniforms and conducted themselves seriously, with charm and charisma. They

spoke long and well about freedom, liberty and the treachery of the Bulgarian Fascists.

When the Komiti found out that the uniformed men were Macedonians they accepted them with open arms, gave them (surrendered) their weapons and many voluntarily joined their cause. The Partisans of Sveta Petka, because of a German presence, had to work under cover but they too succeeded in recruiting volunteers from the local population. After the Partisan penetration, the Macedonian people of Aegean Macedonia learned about Bulgarian atrocities and ceased to believe the Bulgarian propaganda. The old Ilinden guard was demobilized and replaced by a Partisan movement.

Partisan organizers took extraordinary measures to explain to the Macedonian people that they were fighting for the freedom and liberation of the Macedonian people from the tyranny of the oppressive states. The Macedonian involvement in this war, and later in the Greek civil war, was not about "Communist ideologies" or about alliances or obligations to the Great Powers. It was simply the next stage in the long struggle for "liberation from oppression" and to fulfill a longing for freedom, re-unification and self-rule. The Macedonian contribution in fighting against Fascism is not only under emphasized but also misinterpreted by historians. I will once again say that the Macedonian people, during the Second Great War (WWII), rose on the democratic side and fought against fascism for the liberation of the states in which they lived. The Macedonian people, like other people in the Balkans, fought to liberate their homeland and thus earn their place in the world. This cannot be ignored and must be recognized and recorded in the annals of history.

Word of a Macedonian Partisan movement in Aegean Macedonia spread like wildfire. People came out on the streets to freely speak their native Macedonian language, to sing songs and write Macedonian plays and poetry. The Partisans even set up Macedonian schools and taught children patriotic songs, poems and Macedonian history, using local Macedonian dialects. The younger generations, for the first time, saw written words in their beloved, sacred Macedonian language. The newfound freedom brought happiness to the lives of the oppressed Macedonian people who welcomed the Partisans into their villages as "our own boys and girls". The newfound confidence and strength projected by the Macedonians terrified the Greeks, especially the Andari and their collaborators. For a while they were no longer a threat.

The Germans and Italians did not care one way or another about Macedonian affairs as long as there was no trouble for them. Macedonian interest in Partisan activities continued to climb, bringing new recruits and volunteers to the cause. Youth organizations (NOMS) were created with young men and women recruited to be the eyes and ears of the community and to help defend the villages. Many young volunteers of military age were recruited and trained to perform policing and civic duties in the newly formed organizations. The organization NOF (Macedonian People's Liberation Front) was formed and recruited fighters from the Kostur, Lerin and Voden regions. NOF even cooperated with Greek organizations with similar ideologies. Later there was talk

about re-uniting Macedonia, possibly through a Balkan confederation. Britain unfortunately was against the idea and discouraged Greece from taking part in such matters. Bulgaria too could not agree and withdrew support. As usual the Bulgarians wanted to become rulers of Macedonia, which was unacceptable to the Macedonians.

There is a story told that about five hundred young Macedonian civilian men gathered in the village D'mbeni, eager to join the Partisan movement. Word of this reached the Greek Partisan leadership who appeared to be terrified at the prospect of a strong all Macedonian force. There was nothing the Greeks feared more than losing Macedonia. The Greeks by this time had formed their own Partisan movements (outside of Macedonia) and began to negotiate with the Macedonians about combining forces. For some time Greek Partisan representatives tempted the Macedonians to join them. When negotiations failed to achieve results, the Greeks tried ordering the Macedonians to surrender their arms. Macedonians were well aware of Greek treachery and refused to join them or surrender their arms. Instead they sealed the borders from Bigla to Korcha, rendering them inaccessible to the Greeks. Initially the Macedonians acted alone but later they joined a wing of the EAM, the Greek Popular Liberation Army.

The leadership of the Macedonian force in western Aegean Macedonia was shared between Voivoda Ilia Dimov, code named "Goche", and our own Oshchimian Voivoda Mito Tupurkovski, code named "Titan". Both commanders were loved by their men for their fighting abilities and respected for their leadership.

I briefly want to mention that in an ironic twist of events, while Mito Tupurkovski engaged the Germans in bitter battles, his mother Sulda was accidentally killed by a stray German bullet. It was an ordinary summer day in 1944. For some time now the local people had become accustomed to German patrols making their routine rounds, inspecting the road conditions and communication lines between Zhelevo and Breznitsa. Early each morning two German soldiers left Zhelevo on foot for Breznitsa and a pair left Breznitsa for Zhelevo. When the patrols met they reversed direction and continued this routine all day long.

On this particular day, ten Partisans came to Oshchima and decided to attack one of the patrols and take the soldiers as hostages. They set a trap in a ditch near Ternaa and sat in wait. While they were waiting two men from Oshchima, Paso Boglev and Giro Keleshov, went to a nearby mill. Paso left his donkey to graze on the road above and stepped inside the mill. When the Germans passed by they borrowed the donkey and one of them rode it as they made their way. When they reached the Partisan trap, the only armed Partisan fired a rapid-fire volley in the air. Unfortunately after the initial burst his gun jammed. The Germans quickly took cover in the ravine and started to fire back. Discouraged by their failed attempt the Partisans quickly fled into the mountains. The loud gunfire alerted the German garrison in Zhelevo and reinforcements were quickly dispatched. Paso and Giro also heard the gunfire and came out of the mill to investigate. Seeing a rushing vehicle with armed soldiers headed towards them startled the

two men and in panic they fled. Paso ran down to the river and hid. Giro unfortunately ran up the hill and was in full view of the German patrol. The Germans, thinking he was the culprit, gave chase. Giro was a fast runner and the Germans couldn't catch him so before he could disappear into the woods, one of the soldiers fired a rapid-fire volley at him. Who would have expected that a stray bullet from that round would mortally wound Mito's mother, Sulta, who was quietly sitting in her yard enjoying a beautiful summer's day. Giro escaped unharmed but unfortunately Sulta died from her wound on August 20th, 1944.

In September 1944 German troops began to withdraw from the Balkans. Fearing reprisals many Macedonians evacuated their villages and set up temporary homes secluded in the mountains. As it turned out, the Germans were not a threat and after a month or so villagers returned to their homes. The people who lived near main roads were afraid to return and took up residence with relatives in secluded villages and stayed there until all the Germans were gone. There was one incident that I know of where the Germans did do damage. This was in the Village of Ternaa where returning Germans found their "host village" empty, became enraged and stoned two old people to death.

To protect soldiers from being attacked out in the open at night, the Germans assigned them residences inside the villages among the locals. Each house was identified with a marker and returning soldiers used it for shelter. In Oshchima, as in other villages, identification numbers were stamped on the outside door of each house. Time and time again the same soldiers came back to the same house. According to stories my family told, several German soldiers used to spend the night at our house. When someone was missing, my grandfather would motion "what happened" and point in the direction where the man had last sat. The Germans would then motion back "sleep", meaning that he was killed or would say "mama" for gone home on leave to visit his family.

After all the German and Bulgarian occupying forces withdrew from Yugoslavia, the Partisans, numbering about 800,000, were in full control. There were no outside invasion forces (Allied or Russian) inside Yugoslavia, so foreign interference was not a problem. At that time the Macedonian Partisans possessed a sizeable force and wielded considerable influence in the ranks of the Tito regime. The Macedonian people did their share of fighting for the liberation of Yugoslavia from the Fascists and earned their place as equals among the Yugoslav people.

On August 2nd, 1944 Macedonia was officially proclaimed a Republic within the Yugoslav Federation. A Bitola-Lerin dialect was chosen and adopted as the official language of the Republic and the city of Skopje was chosen as the new Republic's capital.

No sooner had the Germans withdrawn from Greece than the British military arrived in Athens. Athens was evacuated on October 12, 1944 and a British occupation force entered the city a few days later. While Britain entered Greece with only four thousand troops, most unfit for combat, ELAS (Greek Partisans) in contrast had seventy thousand men armed and ready for combat. Even the British admit that if the Greek Partisans wanted to, they could have seized

power. The conditions were certainly right. The question is why didn't they, and what was the Civil War all about? Official history provides no answers, only more questions.

It took the British a couple of months to organize and by mid December 1944 they had fifty thousand soldiers of their own and some loyal Greek troops to back them. The local Greek troops came from the ranks of the Andari (National Republican Greek League), the same men who fought alongside the Germans. They switched their German gear for British uniforms and were back on the streets again attacking the Partisans.

As Greece started to collapse, before Germany invaded in 1941, King George II fled and formed a government in exile in London, which was recognized by the Allies as the official Government of Greece. Also the British, in advance of the German departure, established a center of Greek activity in Cairo where a Greek army, navy and air force operated under British command.

After the British consolidated power in Greece they were able to support the British appointed Greek Government and ordered the Partisans to demobilize. What is interesting here is that before the British were able to militarily enforce a disarmament they ordered the Partisan forces to disband. What is more interesting and noteworthy is that EAM agreed to demobilize its own forces with hardly any conditions. The only condition worthy of mention is the request for Britain to disarm the "Government support units"; EAM's main opposition. Knowing full well that Britain would never allow communist rule in Greece and also knowing that the Soviet Union signed an agreement with Britain not to interfere in Greece, EAM still believed it could come to power with no outside help.

When the British went ahead with the original plan, ignoring EAM's request to disarm the Government Support Units, EAM withdrew from the government. EAM then protested against British actions by organizing demonstrations and general strikes. When the Athens Square began to flood with thousands of demonstrators the police were ordered to fire on the crowds, killing fifteen people. To make matters worse, Churchill approved a plan for Britain to occupy Athens by any means necessary if required. ELAS still held more than three-quarters of Greece but because it could no longer count on outside (Soviet) support, it had to re-evaluate its own position.

Under these conditions EAM, in January 1945, accepted an armistice trading guns for votes. The Varkita agreement was signed on February 12, 1945 requiring all bands to demobilize and surrender their weapons. The British, once again, confirmed their allegiance to the Greek Government by giving Athens full political and military support, committing their willingness to fight to prevent a Partisan victory. The biggest losers of the Varkita agreement were the Macedonians. As soon as EAM signed the agreement, all anti-Macedonian laws were back in force and the Macedonian people lost all that they had gained during the German occupation. EAM/KKE (Greek Communist Party) made absolutely no effort to safeguard Macedonian rights in the agreements with Britain and as a result began to lose favour with the Macedonian leadership.

When the Macedonian Partisan forces were ordered to demobilize, as part of the Vartika agreement, the Macedonian leadership refused. Goche and Titan refused to disarm and disband without guarantees that no harm would come to their men or to the Macedonian people.

The question of "what will happen to Aegean Macedonia under Greek communist rule" was still unclear. Greece was determined to rid itself of the Macedonians one way or another and outlawed the Macedonian forces. A strike force was assembled by ELAS (the Greek Partisans) and sent north to intervene and arrest the Macedonian outlaws. Instead of putting up a fight the Macedonian brigades crossed over the Yugoslav border and entered Vardar Macedonia. There they were a welcome addition to existing Macedonian forces fighting the Albanian Balisti (German allies) in Tetovo and Gostivar. The Macedonian leadership could have stayed and fought ELAS but it would have made no sense to bring the war home to Macedonia. They knew very well that British troops would soon follow and they would be fighting a senseless, bloody war in their own backyard.

With the Macedonian force out of the way, the Greek police were back and up to their old tricks. This time it wasn't only the Macedonians who were their victims. They hated the Greek Partisans just as much. With practically no one to stop them, the Greek police escalated their terror activities arresting, torturing, and murdering people indiscriminately, including the EAM, ELAS and KE (Communist Party of Greece) leadership. By the time elections were convened most of the Partisan leadership had disappeared. They were either in jail serving hard time on fabricated and trumped up charges or they were dead.

Elections were scheduled for March 31st, 1946. Instead of voting, the Greek Partisans re-armed themselves and rebelled against the Greek Government. The rebellion manifested itself as an attack on Greece in the village of "Lithohorion", situated east of Mount Olympus directly south of Katerini in Thessaly. Other attacks soon followed and in no time the conflict escalated into a full scale Civil War, engulfing not only Greece but Greek occupied Macedonia as well.

In a bizarre turn of events, ELAS, who less than a year ago turned their guns on Macedonian fighters, now extended their hands in friendship. All was forgiven and forgotten when the ELAS leadership asked the Macedonians for their help. This time they came with offers of "equal rights", "recognition" and even possibilities of "re-unification with Vardar". Now tell me what Macedonian could resist that?

Many Aegean Partisan fighters who had crossed over to Vardar Macedonia only the year before came back. On their return they organized themselves under NOF, the Macedonian National Liberation Front, and fought side by side with ELAS. Many were well aware of the saying "beware of Greeks bearing gifts" and knew that the Greek offer was too good to be true. But there was always that small ray of hope that perhaps this time the outcome for Macedonia might be different. Besides, their families, homes and lives were in Aegean Macedonia. What other choice did they really have? They returned because they were lonely, loved their families and because they had to live with the guilt of leaving their

loved ones in dire straits. Every Macedonian born in Macedonia, even in the most desolate places, knows the feeling of homesickness and yearns to return.

The new alliance between ELAS and NOF opened many opportunities for the Greek Partisans beyond the Greek borders. While the Greek government controlled the big cities and towns, Partisan strength was in the villages and mountains. Most of the Partisan recruits came from the peasant population and showed themselves to be idealistic, hopeful and determined to fight. Camps were set up in mountainous seclusion where new recruits were given combat training. There were also training camps and supply depots set up outside Greece, in Albania and Yugoslavia. One such camp was the town of Bulkes located in northern Yugoslavia. Bulkes was a beautiful town with neat rows of lovely houses and fertile lands that could feed an army. The Germans had built Bulkes to house German families. After the German armies retreated, some residents of Bulkes were kicked out while others left voluntarily. The empty town was loaned to the Greek Partisans to use as a supply depot for warehousing food, uniforms and weapons. Bulkes was also a training center for officers and an administrative center for propaganda. During the Partisan days the town of Bulkes was administered in the true spirit of socialism.

By early 1947 the Partisan force was showing real strength in military capability and promise for delivering on its commitments to the Macedonian people. About 87 Macedonian schools were opened in the Lerin and Kostur regions. A record number of students (10,000) were reported attending school. Macedonian literature and culture seemed to flourish. The Greeks, unfortunately, were never at ease with the Macedonian gains and there was visible resentment and mistrust between the two peoples. Greek chauvinism seemed to flourish even at the best of times. Macedonians, on the other hand, were never at ease about revealing their real names or identities, especially to the Greek Partisans. One Macedonian explained it to me this way, "If they knew that you were Macedonian then you had to watch both your front and back, because you never knew where the next bullet was going to come from."

In Macedonia the ranks of the Partisans were swelling mostly with volunteers from the patriotic Macedonian villages. Some who had combat experience were promoted to the rank of officer. The Greeks were hesitant and careful not to promote Macedonians to high ranks. Those they reserved for Greeks only. In addition to enlisting men, the Partisans also drafted women as nurses, field medics, tailors, menders, launderers, cooks, supply organizers and even armed combatants. For a while the Partisans grew their own food in donated and abandoned fields. The workforce, managing the harvests and delivering food to the Partisan camps, was made up mostly of women volunteers.

Britain was not happy with the new developments and pressed the Greek Government to expand its military capability and arm itself with heavy arms. "Up to 1947 the British Government appointed and dismissed Greek Prime Ministers with the barest attention to constitutional formalities. British experts dictated economic and financial policy, defense and foreign policy, security and legal policy, trade union and unemployment policy." (Page 306, Barbara

Jelevich, History of the Balkans, Twentieth Century) For her interference inside a Sovereign State's affairs and for allowing heavy-handed tactics, Britain received criticism from the United States, whose dollars were used to rebuild Greece.

Both the Greek Government and the Partisans were recruiting fighters from the same population. While young men were drafted to fight for the Greek Government, their wives, sisters, brothers, mothers and fathers were drafted to fight for the Partisans. There were heavy propaganda campaigns conducted on both sides poisoning the minds of the young and impressionable, dividing and tearing the community apart and pitting brother against brother.

This was the Greek legacy passed on to the Macedonian people for offering their help. This was the "Greek curse" that many Macedonians must bear for partnering with the Greeks. To this day many Macedonians harbour hard feelings and struggle to make amends. To this day the Macedonian community remains divided on this issue.

From the day the British set foot in Greece they were adamant about ridding themselves of the Partisans by any means possible, even condoning acts of violence and terror. From mid-1945 to May 20th, 1947 the Partisans reported that "in Western Macedonia alone, 13,529 Macedonians were tortured, 3,215 were imprisoned, and 268 were executed without trial. In addition, 1,891 houses were burnt down and 1,553 were looted, and 13,808 Macedonians were resettled by force. During the war, Greek-run prison camps where Macedonians were imprisoned, tortured, and killed included the island of Ikaria near Turkey, the Island of Makronis near Athens, the jail Averov near Athens, the jail at Larisa near the Volos Peninsula, and the jail in Thessaloniki. Aegean Macedonian expatriates claim that there were mass killings on Vicho, Gramos, Kaymakchalan, and at Mala Prespa in Albania." (Page 116, John Shea, Macedonia and Greece, The Struggle to Define a New Balkan Nation)

In 1946 the Greek police attacked a band of musicians from Oshchima and Ternaa at Popli while they were on their way to play at a wedding in Rudari. The musicians were severely beaten and their musical instruments were destroyed. For one young man his trumpet was his only means of support.

In 1946, a Greek policeman shot and killed Sofia Ianovska from Zhelevo for fun. The woman, whose husband was in Canada at the time, was standing on her front porch waiting for her children to arrive from work. The crazed policeman fired at the woman instantly killing her because she was looking in his direction. According to local accounts an inquiry was not conducted regarding the shooting, nor was the policeman ever questioned about his actions.

In 1945-46, in retaliation for one of their own being killed, the Prosfigi (people that Greece imported from Asia Minor during the 1920's) of Popli killed Nikola Cholakov, an innocent man from Orovnik. The only connection Nikola had with the dead man was that he was a supporter of the opposite side in the conflict.

I have been told that the Prosfigi in Macedonia committed atrocities against the Macedonian people but were never punished for their crimes. I also want to

emphasize that the Macedonian Partisans had the strength and opportunity to round up all the Prosfigi in northwestern Macedonia and massacre them to the last one but instead they used sound judgement and left them alone. Macedonians understood that the Prosfigi were also victims of Hellenism.

The Greek Government in Macedonia worked closely with local collaborators and enlisted, from the Macedonian population, only those who could be proven trustworthy. The collaborators worked hard to identify all those who were sympathetic to the Partisans and reported on their activities on a regular basis. Anyone reported aiding the Partisans was severely punished and sometimes executed. In the spring of 1947 all those who were blacklisted were rounded up, arrested and locked up in Lerin jails. Those accused of aiding the Partisans were taken out and executed. The rest, after spending one hundred days in jail without trial, were sent to various concentration camps in the most desolate Greek Islands.

I want to mention something very important here because I believe the Greek Government, even before the Greek civil war, had plans "to deal with the Macedonians in Greece". "In 1947, during the Greek civil war, the legal act L-2 was issued. This meant that all those who left Greece without the consent of the Greek government were stripped of Greek citizenship and banned from returning to the country. The law applied to Greeks and Macedonians, but in its modernized version the act is binding only on Macedonians. It prevents Macedonians, but not former Communist Greeks who fought against the winning side from returning to Greece and reclaiming property. On January 20, 1948, the legal act M was issued. This allowed the Greek government to confiscate the property of those who were stripped of their citizenship. The law was updated in 1985 to exclude Greeks, but still binding on Macedonians." (Pages 116-117, John Shea, Macedonia and Greece, The Struggle to Define a New Balkan Nation)

Clearly acts L-2 and M were designed to work against the interest of the Macedonian people. Even innocent Macedonians who left before the Civil War were not allowed to return. The question now is "What was Greece planning to do with the Macedonians?" The way acts L-2 and M were enforced over the years brings another question to mind. If there were no Macedonians living in Greece, as the Greeks claim, then what nationality were these people the Greek Government refused to allow back? Why is it that Greek law makes the distinction between Macedonians and Greeks when it suits Greece but not when it benefits the Macedonians?

By the end of 1947 battles were raging everywhere and the war was slowly moving north into Macedonia. Clearly this was a "Greek War", yet again the Macedonian population was being sucked into it. The heavily armed Greek air force and mechanized artillery gained control of most cities and main roads. The Partisans were literally trapped and continued their strictly defensive campaigns mainly from the mountains of Vicho and Gramos.

As the situation became critical, both sides stepped up their recruitment campaigns and again were drawing from the same population. The Partisans

could no longer count on volunteers alone and began to enlist fighters by force and drafted anyone they could get their hands on, male or female. In addition to support roles, women were now armed and given combat duties. They fought alongside the men against the well-trained, well-disciplined and heavily armed Greek Army. Such was the fate of the Macedonian women, most of whom were taken by force to fight someone else's war.

As the war intensified the Greek air force regularly bombed Macedonian villages putting the civilian population, including children, in danger. In the spring of 1948, to save the children, a temporary evacuation program was introduced and implemented on a voluntary basis. It is estimated that about 28,000 children from the ages of 2 to 14 were rounded up and taken across the border into Yugoslavia. From there they were sent to various Eastern Block countries.

Again, I want to point out that the evacuation program was sponsored and organized by the Greek Partisan Leadership which was fully versed in "Greek Law"(act L-2). Yet they carried out the children's evacuation program and lied to the trusting mothers that the evacuation was only a temporary measure. Almost all the Macedonian children who were evacuated in 1948 are still not allowed entry into Greece.

By the spring of 1949 the Greek Civil War became a "killing field" consuming the Macedonian population. Some of the children who were previously evacuated were brought back to fight against the battle hardened Greek army. Children who were strong enough to carry a rifle, regardless of age, were snatched from the child refugee camps in Romania and brought back to Greece. Two of the three groups that were brought back were instantly massacred upon engaging the Greek Army. They were all under the age of fifteen, had no combat training and no idea of what to expect. The third group was spared only because mothers protested against such barbaric acts. The Partisans demobilized the third group before it reached the battlefields and sent the children home.

By the twisted hand of fate, Zachariadis, the supreme commander of the Partisan forces and his cronies, in their wisdom, decided to make a final stand against Greece that would make or break the Partisan movement. Their rationale was that the Partisans needed to occupy a large town or city to serve as their base. This would make them worthy of consideration and perhaps gain the attention of the Great Powers, especially the Soviet Union. There are many who share my belief that the Partisan attack on Lerin on February 12, 1949 was nothing more than an attempt to exterminate the Macedonian fighting force and terrorize the rest of the Macedonian population into leaving Greece. I can say that with certainty now because that is exactly what happened.

In one last-ditch attempt to gain composure and legitimacy, the Partisans attacked the city of Lerin, attempting to create a base of operation and show the world that they were a force worthy of recognition. Their effort however was not rewarded. They didn't capture Lerin and lost most of the force in the attempt. Seven hundred young Macedonian men and women died on that fateful day,

their bodies buried in a mass grave. The Partisan leadership waited until dawn before ordering the attack. Wave after wave of innocent young men and women were slaughtered, cut down in their prime by Greek machine-gun fire. The horror of the slaughter became visible at dawn when the first light revealed the red stained terrain. The fresh white snow was red with the blood and bodies of the fallen.

To this day opinions are divided on the rationale for attacking Lerin so late in the war. The war was almost over and the Greek Army, supported by Britain, was unstoppable. In retrospect, some believe that gaining control of Lerin would have given the Partisan leadership a bargaining chip for surrender. Looking at the facts, however, reveals a more sinister plan. By now it was well known throughout the world that Britain would not allow a communist influence in Greece. Britain's decision was supported by the Soviet Union and by Stalin himself. The Partisan leadership was well informed that it could no longer depend on support from the Communist Block countries, under Soviet influence. Relations with Yugoslavia had broken off and the Greek-Yugoslav border was closed. The Communist Party, which promised Macedonians human rights and freedoms, slowly began to distance itself from its commitments. Most of the Partisans who fought in the battle for Lerin were new recruits and inexperienced fighters. Most of the force was made up of Macedonian men and women under Greek leadership. The Partisan command hesitated when it was time to launch the offensive, thus giving the enemy extra time to prepare its defenses. The hesitation demoralized the Partisan combatants who were not prepared for the prolonged outdoor winter cold.

A cursory analysis of developments prior to the Lerin assault and a post-mortem of the aftermath led to one inescapable conclusion. The assault on Lerin was designed to destroy the Macedonian Partisan force. By offering the Lerin offensive instead of surrendering, the Partisan leadership "sacrificed its own force". By accident or by design the assault on Lerin contributed to the demise of many Macedonian fighters and to the mass exodus of the Macedonian population. Many believe that the Greek civil war succeeded in "ethnically cleansing" the Macedonian people, where many years of assimilation had failed.

Fearing reprisal from the advancing Greek army, in August 1949 waves of refugees left their homes and went to Albania to save themselves. When the war was over Greece did not want them back. As a result they were sent to Eastern Block countries that were willing to take them.

Years later some tried to return but Greece (act L-2) would not allow it. Even innocent Macedonians who did not participate in the conflict, including the evacuated refugee children, were refused entry (again act L-2). Years passed and still they were refused entry again and again. They were not even allowed to visit ailing relatives. Finally in 1985 a repatriation policy was introduced and amnesty was given but only to those of "Greek origin". This again excluded the Macedonians.

As the Macedonian terrain was rained upon by bombs from the air and from cannon fire, the frightened Macedonian people, mostly made up of old men and

women and mothers with young children, took with them whatever they could carry and left their homes for the safety of the mountains. From there they were told to go to Albania and meet up with their relatives.

"One such group left the village of Kolomnati and was headed down the mountain towards Rula when it was spotted by a young Greek officer. The young man immediately telephoned his general and informed him of the situation. 'Should we intercept?' inquired the young officer. 'No, let the troublemakers go, we don't want them here,' replied the old general." (Story told by the general's assistant who asked to remain anonymous)

When the Greek Army broke the Lerin Front the Partisan force that survived the onslaught fled for Albania. The fighters closest to the city were captured and imprisoned. Those who confessed to having voluntarily joined the Partisans were all executed. The others were either exiled in the Greek Islands or released after serving their sentences in local jails.

In its pursuit of the fleeing Partisans, the Greek Army managed to cut off the escape route of a group of Partisans who were manning the cannons and artillery fire at Bigla (the cannons after the war were put on display in the city of Lerin). Being unable to flee to Albania, the Bigla group attempted to cross into Yugoslavia near Prespa Lake. At the Yugoslav border they were stopped by the Yugoslav army, which agreed to allow them passage only if they voluntarily disarmed. Expecting to continue the war from Albania, the Partisans were reluctant to disarm and chose a different escape route. Unfortunately, they attempted their escape during the daytime and were spotted by the Greek Air Force. Many were killed by machinegun fire from above and some drowned attempting to swim across Lake Prespa. Only a small group made it to Albania.

When they arrived in Albania, to cover for their own blunders, the leaders of the Bigla group concocted stories claiming that Tito's forces attacked them and would not allow them entry into Yugoslavia. Later the same men changed their stories and told the truth about what happened. Unfortunately by then Greek Partisan and Yugoslav relations had deteriorated. Even though Yugoslavia was one of EAM's strongest supporters, the Greek Partisans used this story in their propaganda campaigns to discredit Tito in the eyes of the Soviet Union.

When the Greek Civil War was over the Partisan leadership assembled in the abandoned Italian camp of Bureli, Albania, to assess what went wrong and why they lost the war. After some deliberation they came to the conclusion that it was Tito and Macedonian collaboration that sabotaged the war effort. The failure was blamed on the Macedonian Partisan leadership for co-operating with Tito's Partisans. Seven of the most loyal Macedonian leaders were accused of sabotage and sentenced to death. Fortunately Enver Hodzha (Albania's highest State Leader) did not want atrocities committed in his country and would not allow the executions to take place. The men were taken to the Soviet Union, tried for treason and sentenced to life imprisonment, to be served in the prison camps of Siberia. After Stalin's death Krushchev re-opened their cases and found the men innocent of all charges and released them.

After the Greek Civil War was over life in Aegean Macedonia was no longer the same. The smaller villages were evacuated (some permanently) and the people were relocated to the larger towns under the watchful eye of the Greek police. The familiar joy and laughter that once filled the streets was gone and the streets were barren of children. The proud Macedonian people, who only a few years before had reveled in life, were once again joyless.

Through the conflict of the Second Great War a new-world order emerged. Two industrial giants, the Soviet Union and the United States, rose above the rest and with their opposing ideologies would dominate the future world.

Chapter 28 - The Plight of the Macedonian Refugee Children

It was a dreary spring day on March 25th, 1948 when it all began. It was a day filled with high emotions, tears and heartbreak for the mothers and children of western Aegean Macedonia. It was the day the Detsa Begaltsi (Refugee Children) left, and for most it was the last time that they would ever see their beloved family and home.

The idea of evacuating the children was proposed by a sympathetic group of young men and women at a Youth Conference in 1947 in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. The escalating conflict in the Greek Civil War posed a threat to the civilian population, which was a concern for the "progressive youth". Although they couldn't do anything for the civilian adults who were needed to support the war effort, there was a way to help the children. They proposed a temporary evacuation whereby the children would be sent out of the country to pursue their education in safety, with the intent of being returned once the conflict ended. Although it was a good idea, the Greek Communist Party (KKE) saw no immediate need for such a plan and as a result it didn't give it much support. Partisan General Markos Vafiadis saw merit in the proposal because he believed that the conflict would escalate and concentrate in western Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia. He was, at the time, responsible for the defense of parts of western Macedonia that included the territories of the Lerin region and parts of Kostur and Voden regions. In 1947 the Partisans were at their peak strength and, with the exception of the large cities, were in control of all territories in western Aegean Macedonia.

When the Greek Government began to use heavy artillery and aerial bombardment, the idea quickly gained KKE support and the "save the children" program was born. Before the program was put into action it gained approval from the Macedonian Liberation Front, the Women's Antifascist Front and the Red Cross. The host countries, willing to look after the children, were contacted to gain their approval and information campaigns were begun to inform the people about the program. The district and village organizations were also asked to participate and were eventually given the responsibility of organizing and implementing the actual evacuations.

When the authorities in the Greek Government found out about the "save the children" program they initiated their own so-called "pedomazoma" (collect the

children) campaign. The Greek army upon capturing Macedonian villages was ordered to evacuate the children, by force if necessary. After being gathered at various camps the children were eventually sent to the Greek Island of Leros. There they were enrolled in schools to study religion and became wards of the Greek Queen, Fredericka.

After the conclusion of the Greek Civil War (1951-52) some children from the "pedomazoma" were returned to their homes in Macedonia. Most, especially those whose parents were killed or fled the country as refugees, became wards of the Greek State and remained in dormitories until adulthood. All the children who remained at Leros were completely Hellenized and were never heard from again.

The Leros camps became active again after 1952, this time with children who had returned from the "save the children" program from Eastern Block countries. As a result of Red Cross intervention some children were allowed to return home. Unfortunately the Greek authorities collected them and sent them to the camps in Leros where they were kept until the fall of 1959 before they were released.

Pressure from the community prompted organizers of the "save the children" program to expedite the evacuation process to stop the "Burandari" (nickname for Greek Government soldiers and policemen) from taking more children.

The evacuations carried out by the Partisans were done strictly on a voluntary basis. It was up to the child's parents or guardians to decide whether the child was to be evacuated or not. No child was ever evacuated by force or without consent, but fear and peer pressure were certainly motivating factors. The evacuation zones were selected based on the severity of the conflict and the degree of danger it posed to the children. Central command organizers decided on the selection criteria and qualifications for which children were to be evacuated. The lists included all children between the ages of two and fourteen as well as all orphans, disabled and special children. Before the evacuation was put into effect, women over the age of eighteen were enlisted from the local population and from the Partisan ranks to be trained to handle young children. Widows of fallen Partisans were also recruited as "surrogate mothers" to accompany and assist the children through the evacuation process and during their stay in the host countries.

The evacuation program began to gain momentum in early March of 1948 starting with the recruitment and training of the special teachers. The actual evacuations were carried out en masse starting on March 25th through to March 30th, 1948 until all the designated villages were evacuated. Most children were transported through Yugoslavia and were sent to Hungary, Romania, Czechoslovakia and Poland. Some were evacuated through Albania and Bulgaria. As the numbers of the evacuated rose, children were also sent to East Germany and the USSR. It is estimated that about 28,000 children in all were evacuated, most of them from northwestern Aegean Macedonia. Although smaller in number some orphans, children of Partisans and children of families who were in trouble with the Greek Government authorities were also evacuated.

When their turn came the children from each village were summoned and escorted by Partisan guides to the closest designated border crossing. For their safety the children traveled under the cover of darkness and away from the main roads. In some cases, due to heavy aerial attacks and falling bombs, some villages evacuated their children in haste without escorts and they became stranded in the snow-covered mountains without shelter.

Mothers prepared luggage, a change of clothing, food and eating utensils before escorting their little ones to the designated meeting places. With eyes tearing, mothers said goodbye to their loved ones before sending them into the hands of destiny. Their cries could be heard for a long time as they disappeared into the distance. It didn't take too long before the emptiness was felt and many mothers could not stop crying, contemplating the fate of their little ones.

The children walked in single file behind their surrogate mothers, holding hands. The older children comforted the young as they moved into seclusion. Under the cover of darkness they silently slipped over the terrain, avoiding roads and open spaces, being constantly reminded by their Partisan guides to keep quiet. They crossed over high mountains and steep slopes ever mindful and vigilant of the flying Greek menace above as they made their way to the borders. The lucky ones spent the nights indoors in designated villages. The others slept outdoors in the open spaces of the frigid mountains questioning the wisdom of their elders and wondering, which was more dangerous the falling bombs or the freezing cold.

During their trek one group came across a dangerously steep slope laden with loose rocks leading directly into the rushing waters of a river. Being too dangerous for the children to cross alone each mother had to make several trips carrying children on their shoulders one at a time. Expediency was in order as the slope was exposed to aerial view. One child was lucky that day as a tragedy was narrowly averted. In her haste to get across one mother tripped over a thorn bush, losing her balance. As she stumbled she managed to take the child off her shoulders and toss her up the slope. Luckily the girl didn't panic and was able to brace herself. The mother then grabbed the child's feet and regained her own balance. It was a frightening experience for everyone in the group.

Another group, frightened by the heavy aerial bombardments, left their village under the cover of darkness at one thirty in the morning. It was cloudy and raining that night, ideal for escaping the bombers but a disaster for the morale of the children. It rained all night and through to the next day as the group hid in the mountains. They couldn't risk lighting a fire and being seen so they stayed wet and cold through the day, enduring nature's punishment. When night came they inched their way through darkness over snow covered; thorn infested terrain to the next village. The children were in shock and hardly felt the bleeding cuts on their feet. Some had no shoes and their mud soaked socks offered no protection against the sharp rocks and stinging thorns.

As one group made their way towards their destination one of the surrogate mothers couldn't stop crying. The person in charge of the group explained that there was no reason for her to be upset since all of the children were accounted

for, fed and looked after. But the mother was still upset and kept crying. When asked what was the problem she explained that she couldn't properly take care of a six-month-old orphan baby that was left in her care. She only had one spare diaper and after washing it she had no means of drying it. The best she could do was put the diaper against her own chest. It never dried and she felt so sorry for the poor child who had to wear a cold, wet diaper out in the freezing cold.

The borders could only be crossed at night so the children had to wait in seclusion until it was dark. To prepare them for the journey the children had to leave the villages and head for the mountains before dawn. As they left they were told to leave their belongings behind, promised that they would be delivered to them later by wagon. As the children made their way past the border crossing, the wagon never materialized and they were left without food, utensils, blankets, or a change of clothing. To this day many believe that the Greek Partisans stole their belongings.

After crossing the Yugoslav border, the children were taken to the village of Dupeni and from there to Ljubojno to wait for more arrivals. In the care of their surrogate mothers, the children were placed in designated homes where they spent up to a week sleeping on straw covered floors, fifteen children to a room. Food was in short supply so each child was only given a slice of cornbread for supper before being put to bed, still hungry. After a few days of hunger some resorted to stealing food from the village homes.

After spending a week in Ljubojno, the children were transported by military trucks to Bitola where they boarded a train for Brailovo. In Brailovo each group was assigned to a home where they slept together with their surrogate mother in a room lined with hay for bedding. Morale was low and the children constantly cried from the enduring hunger and homesickness. Food was scarce so, to preserve rations, the children were fed one meal every other day. Those who lost their belongings had no bowls or spoons to eat with and resorted to using discarded sardine cans and whatever else they could find. Some found discarded toothpaste tubes and fashioned them into spoons. One surrogate mother found a rusty bucket and after cleaning it, used it as a soup bowl. The warm soup took on a red colour as the rust dissolved and came to the surface. The children were too hungry to waste it so she skimmed the rust off the surface and spooned it into all the children. An old woman seeing this felt so sorry for the bunch that she offered them her portion, preferring to stay hungry rather than having to watch the children starve. At this point most of the older boys were contemplating escape but their concern for the younger ones kept them from doing so. Some were so hungry they scoured the countryside looking for food, eating kernels of grain and corn and even resorting to killing wildlife to satisfy their hunger. After spending a little over a week in Brailovo, the various groups were transported to the nearest train station where each child was pinned with a name and destination tag and prepared for travel to the various host countries. Separating the children was not an easy task as the young clung to the older children and refused to be separated. Siblings clung to each other with all their might, fighting back with

tears and cries. It took a lot of convincing and reassurances before they could be separated.

The first groups to leave were the younger children aged five to ten. Most of them were sent to Bela Tsrkva in northern Yugoslavia. These children were the most vulnerable and had to be quickly rescued before they died of starvation. In Bela Tsrkva, after spending some time in quarantine, the children were placed in dormitories with proper facilities and plenty of nutritious food. The rest, after spending a week or so at the train station, were sent to Skopje. Life at the train station was harsh as most children were nearly starving and had no energy to move. Their hunger was so overpowering that the children had no energy to even complain about the tormenting lice. Many spent their time resting in the stable cars nestled in the warmth and comfort of the hay. The cars, left from WW II were used by the Germans to transport horses.

When they arrived in Skopje the children were given milk and food, which seemed like a gift from heaven after starving for so long. Without much delay the train wagons were again divided and a group was sent to Romania while the rest continued on their way to Bulkes. Considering the episodes from the last separation, this time the authorities decided not to inform the children or the surrogate mothers. As a result, some children were visiting friends in neighbouring cars and ended up going to the wrong destination. Many mothers didn't know what had happened and worried endlessly about the fate of the missing children. When they arrived in Bulkes (Vojvodina) the groups were supplied with food donated by the United Nations and the children were bathed and given new clothes. From there they were taken by wagons to a nearby hospital for physical examinations. Bulkes was a town built by the Germans and occupied by the Greek partisans. It was teeming with activities geared towards supporting the war effort. Food was plentiful and the children spent most of their days living in empty schools and warehouses. Besides the Macedonians there were also children from Epirus and Thessaly.

As soon as they became comfortable the children were again on the move. After spending about a month in Bulkes they were again loaded onto train cars, given some food and sent off to various destinations. Unbeknownst to them they had been separated again and sent to Hungary, Poland, or Czechoslovakia.

When the group destined for Czechoslovakia arrived, the Czech authorities stripped the children naked from their lice infested clothing, cut their hair and gave them a bath en masse. It was a new experience for the Macedonian children to be bathed naked in front of so many people. The local buildings and baths once belonged to the German soldiers but, since their expulsion, they became a haven for the refugee children. After spending time in quarantine the children were taken to a new camp and assigned quarters and schoolmasters. Here they joined other refugee children who had arrived earlier via a different route. The children were re-grouped into pre-school ages 4 to 6, public school ages 7 to 12 and technical school ages 13 and over. The surrogate mothers were responsible for looking after the younger groups consisting of about twenty children each. Their duties included waking them up in the morning, helping them dress into

their uniforms, supervising their morning exercises and making sure everyone ate a good breakfast. In the evening they supervised the children playing until they were put to bed. They also had to make sure shoes were polished and uniforms were cleaned and properly hung for the night. Morning started with exercise and a good breakfast. The Czech teachers were professionals, trained in child psychology, who did their best to educate the children properly. In addition to the regular curriculum, the children were expected to learn various languages including Czech, Greek, Macedonian and Russian.

On occasion mothers and children were sent on work assignments to the farms to assist with gathering fruits, berries and mushrooms. With time mothers and children began to adjust to their new life, with the exception of the usual fighting between Greek and Macedonian children, especially the boys. There was friction between the Greek and Macedonian children, with frequent verbal insults sometimes resulting in fistfights. Eventually the Greek children were moved to a new camp, which put an end to the fighting.

When the group destined for Romania arrived, about one thousand five hundred children were offloaded and sent straight to the baths and their flea-ridden clothes were washed in boiling water. After the bath each child was issued under garments and pajamas and was sent to a nearby compound formerly used by the Germans as a hospital during the war. The children stayed there from April until October 1948. Then on October 25th, 1948 many of the children were relocated to Poland. Most Macedonian children wore homemade woolen clothes that shrank during the hot wash. Fortunately, the good people of Romania donated replacement garments and the children were clothed before leaving for Poland. After spending six months in Romania in a quasi-supervised compound without any schooling, the children became wild and undisciplined. With one supervisor for the entire train the trip to Poland was a joyride. Some children mischievously climbed through the windows of the railcars to the roof of the moving train and stood upright, pretending to fly. When the train approached a tunnel they lay flat on their stomachs clinging hard to the roof of the rail car. As the billowing smoke from the steam engine enveloped them their faces blackened beyond recognition. When they crossed into Poland the train was taken over by a Polish crew. A supervisor, trained to handle children was assigned to each car to deal with the rowdiness. For the rest of the trip the children were well fed and rewarded with chocolates and apples for good behaviour. When they arrived in Poland at the city of "Londek Zdrui", the children were placed under Greek supervision, grouped by age and assigned to various school dormitories. Children, of unknown age were grouped by size and height. Initially the children refused to cooperate, mistrusting the administrators and fearing separation again. It took Red Cross intervention and much reassurance to convince them to cooperate. Unlike the compound in Romania, the dorms in Poland were well staffed with one director and two or three assistants per dorm. Each dorm had eight to ten rooms with four children per room. There was no shortage of food, toys, or games. The directors were responsible for supervising morning exercises, breakfast and getting the children to school on

time. After school they made sure the children came back safely, were given supper and put to bed.

About 2,000 refugee children were sent to Hungary and assigned quarters in a military barracks in Budapest. There each child was undressed, sprayed with pesticide, bathed, dressed in new clothing and given a package of toiletries that included soap and a tube of toothpaste. The children not knowing what the toothpaste was mistook it for food. The aroma of mint reminded them of candy and many wasted the toothpaste, attempting to eat it. Initially Greek and Macedonian children were mixed together in a single group. But due to fights the authorities were forced to split the children into smaller groups, segregated by village of origin. After spending three weeks in quarantine the groups were adopted by the Hungarian community. Each village community, supported by a factory complex, adopted a group. Some found themselves among the richest communities in the region and were privileged to live in quarters made of marble. Nearby there was a small lake teeming with exotic and colourful fish. Unfortunately the children were all homesick missing their mothers and had little appreciation for luxury. Slowly however routine began to set in as the children attended school and became involved in school and community activities. Besides the regular curriculum the refugee children were expected to learn to read and write in their native language. Even though Greek officials administered the programs and scoffed at the idea, the Macedonian children were given the choice of learning Macedonian if they wished.

I want to mention here that the Macedonian programs were a direct translation (word for word) from the Greek programs. Even though the children were learning in their native Macedonian language, they were learning what the Greeks wanted them to learn. The Macedonian teachers were not allowed to diverge from the established programs. In other words, Hellenization and Greek propaganda continued to influence the Macedonian children even outside the Greek borders.

By 1949 casualties were mounting at home and reports were filtering through to the refugee camps where children received bad news about the fate of their parents and relatives. Morale was so low that the children became isolated, withdrawn and would not sing, talk, cry, or even eat. To boost their morale the surrogate mothers, who wore black to mourn the deaths of their husbands, resorted to wearing white and colourful dresses. For the sake of the children, in spite of their own sorrow, mothers had to appear cheerful and put on happy faces.

As the Civil War in Greece intensified, the Partisans were running out of recruits at home and began to look at the refugee children abroad as a possible source. Although draftees were recruited from all the camps abroad, most of the fighting force came from Romania. Initially two new groups were formed and brought back for military training. The recruitment campaign and propaganda was so tempting that the youngsters couldn't resist it and were happy to volunteer. Any child strong enough to carry a rifle, regardless of age, was good enough for the draft. The first two groups recruited were instantly massacred

upon engaging the battle hardened Greek Army. They were all under the age of fifteen, had no combat experience and no idea of what to expect. The third group left Romania and went to Rudary, Prespa via Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. Upon arriving the young soldiers were sent to Shterkovo, another village in Prespa, for about a month of military training and preparation for combat. The young men spent part of March and April 1949 performing military exercises, learning to operate weapons and set explosives. When word came that the first two groups of young fighters were decimated there was a loud outcry by the community against such atrocities, "We did not save our children so you can slaughter them." The third group was only spared because many mothers demonstrated and voiced their anger against such a barbaric draft. The group was demobilized before reaching the battlefields and many of the children were sent back to the refugee camps. Some were allowed to go home only to end up as refugees again during the mass exodus in the fall of 1949.

As the Greek Civil War was coming to a close western Aegean Macedonia was bombed to dust. Partisans and civilians alike fled to Albania to save themselves. When the war was over many wanted to return but Greece did not want them back. Anyone who voluntarily fled was not allowed to return, regardless of whether they were guilty of any crimes or not. After spending some time in the camps in Albania, the people of Macedonia, again victims of someone else's war, became permanent war refugees and were sent to various Eastern Block countries. Before departure the refugees were separated into two groups. One, made up mostly of Partisan fighters, was sent to the USSR. The other, consisting mostly of civilians and Partisan support staff, was sent to Poland. After the groups were separated they were transported to the port of Durasi, loaded onto cargo ships and sent westward through Gibraltar to Poland and eastward via the Black Sea to the Soviet Union. The voyages were long and unpleasant. To avoid detection the refugees were literally hidden inside the cargo and at critical times ordered to remain immobile and quiet for long periods of time. When they landed at their destinations the refugees were stripped and their flea-infested clothes were burned. After being powdered with pesticide and bathed in hot baths they were placed in quarantine where they spent about a month and a half resting idly before being relocated to permanent quarters.

After settling down and securing employment in their new countries, many parents began to look for their refugee children and with the help of the authorities were able to bring them home. As a result many children left their host countries to join their parents in Poland, the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, etc.

Refugees with relatives in Canada, the USA and Australia through sponsorship made attempts to immigrate themselves and look for their children or have their relatives look for their children if immigration was not possible. Initially "the iron curtain" was shut tight and made it difficult to make inquiries but as the Red Cross became involved it became easier. In 1953, during a Red Cross convention in Switzerland, the question of the Refugee Children from the Greek Civil War came up and the various Red Cross agencies agreed to cooperate and exchange information with each other. After that anyone

requesting help to locate missing persons in Eastern Block Countries was not refused.

There are instances where Macedonians did experience problems with the Red Cross but these were due to Greek misinformation. When the Red Cross went looking for refugees in the Greek administered refugee camps they were told that the Macedonians were "migrant workers", not refugees. Here is an actual account of what happened to one Macedonian woman in Poland.

The woman was well liked by her colleagues and in time became a model worker and qualified for a month of paid vacation. When her turn came she was sent to a luxurious mountain resort. She was alone and felt uncomfortable going places but did agree to go and see the nativity in a local church. There she met two women who suspected that she was not Polish and were curious about how she had gotten there. After some discussion it turned out the women were Red Cross workers and interested in finding people like her. When the women found out that she was a refugee interested in returning home, and that many others were in a similar situation, they urged her to seek help. She was given an address in Warsaw where she could meet with Red Cross officials and tell them her story. Upon returning from her vacation she and a friend went to Warsaw. After eleven days of appealing and pleading their story was heard. Officials were curious as to why this hadn't come up at the refugee camps during the official Red Cross visits. As she recalls, unbeknownst to her, the Greek organizers made sure that the Macedonians were sent on day trips on the days of the Red Cross visits. Even after all this the woman was still not allowed to leave. Greece would not accept her without a request from her husband. Her husband at the time was serving a prison sentence in the Greek concentration camps. It was not until 1954, three years later, that he was able to initiate the process for repatriation. The woman arrived home in May 1958 but could not stand the oppressive atmosphere and soon afterwards she and her family immigrated to Canada.

By 1950 Greece was taking extreme measures to close her borders with Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Trusted Albanians from Epirus were brought into Macedonia and seeded throughout the border villages to act as eyes and ears for the Greeks. Greek authorities clamped down on the remaining population and no one was allowed to travel without permission. There were strict rules of conduct put into effect, including curfews. Anyone caught wandering outdoors past dusk was shot on sight. Many shepherds quit their jobs for fear of being killed and left their sheep wandering aimlessly. One little boy had an argument with his stepfather and ran away. The authorities were not at all sympathetic and wouldn't allow the family to go looking for him. The boy's mother and sister went looking for him anyway and brought him home safely at great risk to their own safety.

When the violence in Greece subsided, parents and relatives began to inquire about repatriating their children. Those who displayed some loyalty to the Greek cause were told that their children would be allowed to return if decreed by the Greek Queen Fredericka. Unfortunately this process required connections with the local Greek authorities and a lot of money, money that most Macedonians

did not have. Those considered for repatriation had to meet a number of conditions including the willingness to accept permanent Hellenization. Children from Partisan families were automatically disqualified. Those who weren't willing to change their names or weren't liked for some reason were also disqualified. As the years passed fewer children were allowed to return and requests for repatriation continued to be ignored. Parents and relatives died and still their children were not allowed to return, not even for a visit.

After travel restrictions to countries behind the iron curtain were lifted, parents, in spite of the expense, old age and ill health, made their way to visit their children. One woman on her deathbed made her husband promise her that he would visit their daughter in Poland before he died. Feeling his own mortality the man, in poor health, made the long trek and after thirty years of separation saw his daughter for the first time. She will never forget her father's sacrifice.

Another woman who let all four of her children (two sons and two daughters) leave during the dreaded May 1948 evacuation also made the trek to Poland to see them for the last time. The woman was crippled from a war wound and could hardly walk but knew that soon she would die and wanted to see her children one last time. She traveled by train and in spite of her condition made it to Poland in good spirits. When she arrived, two of her children, a son and a daughter, came to greet her. The daughter recognized her mother and after a long and emotional hug asked her if she knew which daughter she was. Her mother would not answer because she didn't know and didn't want to make a mistake. That deeply troubled the adult daughter who began to weep uncontrollably. She did recognize her son and called out his name but would not answer her daughter's pleas. After a while she finally recognized her, wiped her tears and with a wide smile called out her name. It was an emotional but happy ending for that family. Unfortunately for every happy ending there are dozens of sad ones. One old couple did not have enough money or the strength to make the trip to visit their children. Since then both have passed on heartbroken, with their desire to see their children unfulfilled.

Many of the people I interviewed don't know why the Greek authorities wouldn't allow the children to return. In spite of pleas, even on humanitarian grounds, the Greek authorities decade after decade, government after government, maintain the same policy and will not allow the Macedonian refugee children to return home.

After the war was over and all the remaining Partisans were captured or killed, people who were evacuated by the Greek authorities were slowly allowed to go home to their own villages. While many returned to their old homes a few families decided to make the new village their home. Some lost their farm equipment, tools, livestock and personal belongings to looters. For most life had to start all over again. As tensions began to ease, those held in concentration camps were released and began to arrive home only to find their property gone. The Greek authorities, in addition to confiscating the properties of many of those who fled as refugees during the mass exodus of 1949, also confiscated the properties of those held in concentration camps.

In time people became demoralized and lived in constant fear of the authorities and retribution from their collaborators. There was a certain stigma attached to the relatives of Partisans or their supporters that caused them to withdraw from society and keep to themselves. Those who served in the Greek concentration camps were constantly harassed with curfews, restricted mobility and suspicion of espionage. Many were followed by plainclothes policemen and pressured to become informants and spy on their neighbours. Strangers were viewed with suspicion and automatically assumed to be foreign spies.

As radios became affordable people began to purchase them and listen to various programs, including broadcasts from Eastern Europe and the Federal Republic of Macedonia. The Greek police became vigilant and on many occasions were observed outside people's yards listening to hear what programs were playing. Those caught listening to foreign programs were accused of espionage. The Macedonian language was once again banned from use and the "M" word became a dirty word even if it was spoken on the radio. Ever since Greece invaded the Macedonian territory, successive Greek Governments refused to acknowledge the existence of the Macedonian language.

One by one, all those who came back from the Eastern European countries left for Canada, the USA and Australia because they could no longer stand the Greek oppression. They had tasted freedom and wanted more even if it meant abandoning their beloved ancestral homes. They remembered how life was before the latest Greek clampdown and now it was not the same. The people had changed also, they were still courteous and kind but their spirits were broken. Everyone was afraid, careful not to say anything incriminating as if every word was going to be judged and punished. Children born during this time were brought up believing that this was how life was and it was supposedly the best life one could have. They were taught to understand that Greece was the cradle of democracy and no one in the world was freer than the Greeks. Those who knew better did not dare speak. There were certain things that could not be done or discussed, especially the Greek Civil War. Children were taught Greek chauvinist songs in school and sang them at home in front of their parents who didn't dare say anything. Even their children could unwittingly betray them. The Macedonian language became "our" language and could only be spoken in secrecy with relatives and trusted friends. The word "Macedonia" or "Macedonian" was banned from the peoples' vocabulary and could not be spoken, especially in public. Pre-school children who learned "our" language at home from their grandmothers spoke Greek with a heavy accent and were constantly teased and scolded for not knowing how to speak properly. If a child was caught speaking "our" language in class or in the yard, punishment ensued which varied from being publicly humiliated and told not to speak "those filthy words" to being given a good dose of castor oil. Sometimes children sang Greek songs about the deeds of the Greek heroes and broke their parents' hearts. Their precious children were unknowingly idolizing the true criminals and murderers; Macedonia's worst enemies. Some parents, when their children were old enough to keep a secret, taught them that they were a different people, that they were

Macedonian, not Greek. Other parents, thinking that it was in the best interest of the children not to know their true identity, allowed them to believe that they were Greek. Their loyalties however were never rewarded since it was very rare for a Macedonian child to be accepted in Greek society. It was not because Macedonian children were incapable of being intellectual, as the Greeks would have us believe, but because the Greek Government systemically discriminated against Macedonians. Discrimination was common practice especially at the individual level. Macedonians were constantly put down and as a result kept to themselves. Sometimes, however, during heated discussions or unavoidable arguments Macedonians did show discontentment but the arguments always ended with the lethal insult of being called a "Bulgar", the lowest form of life known to Greeks. The highest level of education a Macedonian child was permitted to achieve was grade six. Junior high was possible only for the children of those who had shown and continued to show loyalty to the Greek cause. One young man whose parents were killed during the Greek Civil War joined the Greek military and afterwards considered the army to be his only family. He was very loyal, studious and hard working but was constantly denied promotions. During a military exercise he saved a high-ranking officer from drowning. For saving his life the officer promised to help him if he ever needed it. After years of frustration finally the young soldier went to the officer with his complaint. After some investigation the officer advised him that his requests for a promotion were turned down because he was not Greek, more specifically because his parents were of Slav origin. This unfair treatment angered the young soldier enough to leave the Greek military, the only family he had ever known. Disheartened he left Greece altogether and joined his aunt in Toronto, Canada where he is currently learning to speak Macedonian. Even though he speaks no other language, he refuses to speak Greek.

After the fall of the dictatorship in Greece, in the mid-sixties, many Macedonians were publicly encouraged by the Greek politicians to leave Greece because "there was no future for them there". Many of the empty villages in western Macedonia were filled with Albanians from west central Greece. Vlahs who originally lived in the highlands of Thessaly and spent summers in the Macedonian mountains took up permanent residence there. Many applied for and were granted the properties of post-Greek Civil War migrant families.

Macedonians who immigrated to Canada, the USA and Australia at the start of the 20th century organized village associations to assist fellow immigrants in adjusting to their new countries. As post-Greek Civil War immigration accelerated, these village associations became a haven for new immigrants and their membership grew. Encouraged by their newfound freedoms, many of the new émigrés enjoyed their Macedonian culture and language in the Diaspora. This was perceived as a threat to Greek influence both at home and abroad. As the associations grew in strength so did their threat to the Greek chokehold. To counter this, with help from the Greek Embassies and Consulates, pro-Greek factions began to infiltrate the Macedonian associations. The weaker associations were overpowered and rendered ineffective. Those that resisted managed to

survive and preserve their unique Macedonian identity. For the ones that the Greeks could not subdue, parallel and competing pro-Greek associations were formed. The day a Macedonian association held an event the pro-Greek association held a similar event, to divide the people. Macedonians wishing to participate in events and prone to blackmail were discouraged from joining the Macedonian organizations and encouraged to join the pro-Greek ones. This is precisely why the Macedonian community in the Diaspora has become a silent community. This suits the Greeks perfectly and leaves the Macedonians frustrated and disappointed.

The most anti-Macedonian organization to surface from all the Greek associations is the Pan Macedonian Association, which aims to not only divide the Macedonian Nation but also destroy everything that is Macedonian. To this day this organization preys on the weak, innocent, naïve and those who can be bought and continues to spread hatred and lies at every opportunity. The Pan Macedonian Association is a "false organization" fully financed by Greek taxpayers most of whom are unaware of its discriminatory practices and the friction it creates between fellow Greek citizens.

In addition to disseminating anti-Macedonian propaganda and lobbying for "the Greek cause", many of these so-called "Greek-Macedonian" organizations spy on Macedonian organizations and individuals, reporting their activities to the Greek authorities. Many activists and supporters of the Macedonian cause, even though they are Greek citizens, are barred from returning to Greece. Their cause is noble if they serve the Greeks at their own expense but as soon as they attempt to serve their own interests they suddenly become traitors.

Macedonians are refused entry into Greece at the border points without any explanation. Without consent their passport is stamped "void" and thrown back at them. They do the same to individuals with foreign passports without respect for the foreign State's property.

After years of living in Australia one man decided to visit the Republic of Macedonia. Upon entry his passport was stamped with a beautiful red symbol, a real treasure, which made him very proud and happy. His visit to Macedonia was so wonderful that he decided to cross over into Greece and visit Nered, the village where he was born. Unfortunately the Greek customs officials would not allow him entry. What was most unbelievable is that the Greek officer took the man's Australian passport without his consent and stamped it "void" all over. He literally destroyed the Macedonian symbol by repeatedly stamping "void" over and over until it was no longer visible. No explanation or apology was given.

The Macedonian Refugee Children wish to express their gratitude to the countries and people who opened their doors to them at a time of their greatest need. They treated them not as strangers or immigrants, but as equals. They also wish to express many thanks to the countries and people for giving them the opportunity of free education in their institutions. Only through their generosity away from Greek bias did the Macedonian children prove themselves equal to all the children in the world. Free from Greek oppression they excelled in education

and talent becoming professors, doctors, engineers, poets, playwrights, composers, economists, etc.

Most of the refugee children today are living in the Diaspora. A great number of them have immigrated to Canada, the USA, Australia and the Republic of Macedonia. Some remained in their host countries (Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Germany and Russia) and have made them their homes. They maintain contact with each other through associations and clubs and from time to time meet, attempting to gain entry to visit their homeland. Unfortunately to this day they have had no success. Greece, after fifty-five years, still does not want them, not even to visit.

Chapter 29 - The Republic of Macedonia

In 1991 the part of Macedonia that was originally occupied by Serbia during the 1912, 1913 Balkan Wars, by referendum, declared its independence from the Yugoslav federation and became a free and sovereign state called the Republic of Macedonia.

Although still restricted from speaking their language and practicing their culture, ethnic Macedonians living in Greece and Bulgaria as a result, began to assert their rights as people first by speaking Macedonian in public and then by singing Macedonian songs at weddings and festivals. Initially, from fear of persecution, they only sang and played melodies without lyrics but in time and as the numbers grew they began to add lyrics and even record songs in Macedonian.

With the imminent breakup of Yugoslavia looming over the horizon, Macedonians worldwide began to see the possibility of at last having their own State. Even the oppressed Macedonians in Greece began to feel the fervor and started to form their own movements. According to Pavle Voskopoulos, a Macedonian activist in Greece, "Vinozhito and the Macedonian activists in Greece have come a long way in the last twenty years or so since their first appearance in 1982. It was in 1982 that, for the first time since the 1940s, Macedonian songs and dances began to be openly and publicly expressed. No one would have believed that ten years later the Macedonians would have been able to organize 'Vinozhito', a political party. Even after Vinozhito became a political party in Greece, no one would have believed that in the next ten years it would hold its first successful congress in Solun, the heartland of Greek chauvinism. This was only possible through the hard work and perseverance of Vinozhito's membership and with the assistance of Vinozhito's European partners."

In their fight for human rights as national minorities in Greece, Bulgaria and Albania organizations such as Vinozhito, OMO Ilinden, OMO Ilinden-Pirin, Bratstvo, MIR, Prespa, MED and others began to form. To help their compatriots in the occupied Macedonian territories, human rights and other organizations began to form in the Diaspora. These organizations became the voice of the Macedonian people in the occupied territories. Initially the most active were the

Detsa Begaltsi (Refugee children from the Greek Civil War) who organized worldwide and brought world attention to their plight, unfortunately without much success. Greece refused to hear their pleas and would not budge on their issues.

As federal Yugoslavia began to disintegrate in the late 1980's the Macedonians in the Peoples' Republic of Macedonia sought their chance to finally create their own state. On September 8, 1991, in a referendum, 95% of eligible voters approved of a sovereign and independent Republic of Macedonia with Kiro Gligorov as its President.

The will of the people was confirmed on September 18, 1991 at the Macedonian Parliament with the declaration for acceptance of the results from the referendum.

The next important step in strengthening the state was the adoption of the Constitution on November 17, 1991, which was supplemented after the 2001 conflict and signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement

The internationally legal subjectivity of the state was recognized on April 8, 1993 with an acclamation of the UN General Assembly. Macedonia was admitted as the 181st full-fledged member.

Fearing that it might lose its Macedonian occupied territories, Greece was first to object to the Republic of Macedonia's independence.

Although the European Community acknowledged that Macedonia had fulfilled the requirements for official recognition, due to the opposition of Greece which was already a member of the community, the EC decided to postpone the recognition. Greece, afraid that Macedonia might put forward a historical, cultural and linguistic claim over Aegean Macedonia, insisted that the new nation had no right to use the name "Macedonia" and use the emblem of ancient Macedonia on its flag. In July 1992 there were massive demonstrations by Macedonians in the capital Skopje over the failure to receive recognition. But despite Greek objections, Macedonia in 1993 was admitted to the United Nations under the temporary reference (not an official name) "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia". Full diplomatic relations with a number of EC nations followed, while Russia, China, Turkey, Bulgaria and most nations ignored Greece's objections and recognized Macedonia under its constitutional name "Republic of Macedonia".

Greece, dissatisfied with the results, in February 1994 imposed a trade embargo on Macedonia in an attempt to force President Gligorov to make changes to his country's name, nation and language and amend the Constitution to remove Article 47 which stipulated that "the Republic of Macedonia cares for the statue and rights of those persons belonging to the Macedonian people in neighboring countries, as well as Macedonian ex-patries, assists their cultural development and promotes links with them." Ironically, Greece also has a similar article in its own Constitution, as is normal for any country in the world to care for its minorities in other countries.

Faced with an economic collapse and left without any support from the international community, Macedonia had no choice but to change its flag and constitution, after which Greece lifted the embargo.

In 1995 Human Rights Watch - Helsinki condemned Greece for the oppression of its ethnic Macedonian minority, which Greece denies exists. Both Amnesty International and the European Parliament urged Greece to recognize the Macedonian language and to stop oppressing ethnic Macedonians living within its borders.

Still reeling from the Greek embargo, from the internationally imposed embargo on Serbia, its traditional trading partner, and from unresolved issues with Greece, the Republic of Macedonia was faced with a new set of problems, a war at home.

Due to the conflict north of Macedonia and as a result of the NATO bombing of Serbia, an influx of war refugees numbering in the three hundred thousand entered Macedonia. This created economic as well as political strain on impoverished Macedonia which on one hand, had to cope with a 15% overnight population increase and on another with criticisms from various human rights groups for the ways it handled the refugees.

No sooner was that crisis over when armed bands of Albanian fighters spilled over from the Serbian conflict began to infiltrate and stir up trouble in Macedonia.

In 2001 these illegal bands, first branded by the international community as terrorists and later as “freedom fighters” began to occupy camps and later villages in western Macedonia. Initially these bands were seen as benign but as they started to assert themselves by restricting travel, kidnappings, torturing civilians and cutting off electricity and water supplies to various communities, the Macedonian police and military began to pursue them. There was an immediate backlash from the western media which, in spite of their violent acts, the Albanian band were viewed as human right fighters and the Macedonian government and its people as aggressors.

As the war raged on in western Macedonia, rumors were flying, some substantiated, that certain elements in the Macedonian government were involved in sparking the conflict in order to partition the Republic of Macedonia perhaps between Albania and Serbia, Greece or Bulgaria.

“In 1992 I came across a high-ranking NATO source in Brussels, Belgium. He revealed to me the secret plan to partition Macedonia along ethnic lines after a short war: the west would be incorporated into a Greater Albania and the left over parts would be incorporated either by Serbia or Bulgaria. I found the plan to be far-fetched when I first heard it. I thought this person was pulling my leg. But later events showed that it wasn't far-fetched.

The NATO source invited me out for drinks a number of times. He was a big vodka drinker. He must have had 5 or six when he let rip with the revelation that Macedonia's days as an independent nation were numbered. I laughed and said, ‘I agree with you unless the problem of corruption and the economy are fixed.’

‘No it's not just a matter of money,’ he said. ‘There are greater outside forces at work that you don't know about.’ He would not elaborate. He had another 5 vodkas and left. This cat and mouse game kept going for a month or two, until he let it all hang out.

He revealed in great detail how war would start in Macedonia; he named names; told me how weapons were being smuggled by ethnic Albanian insurgents into Macedonia through Kosovo and from Albania. He said a favourite supply route was through the western town of Debar, which sits on the Macedonian-Albanian border. He mentioned there were a number of mountain caves near Debar being used to hide weapons. Donkeys were being used to ferry ammunition.

But he would not tell me who was pushing for war in Macedonia. By 1993 UN peacekeepers from the UNPROFOR mission were deployed to protect Macedonia's borders. This mission later became UNPREDEP. Years later, for some crazy reason the Macedonian government recognized Taiwan and China in retaliation used its seat in the UN Security Council to stop the mission. With UN peacekeepers out of the way, the 2001 war in Macedonia began as a spill over from the Kosovo conflict of 1999.

The whole thing was mind-boggling. I remember talking to Mira, an elderly Serbian woman who was teaching the Macedonian language to Belgian children. She asked me what I was interested in writing about Macedonia. I said to her I would like to investigate the claims made by the NATO source and look into past Yugoslav communist crimes in Macedonia such as the infamous Chento show trial of 1946.

Her response was ‘You don't need to dig up the past nor worry about the future.’ I found her lack of curiosity surprising considering her ex-husband was famous Macedonian writer Meto Jovanovski, and both her children are journalists. Son Borjan Jovanovski was a former Presidential media spokesman whilst daughter Svetlana Jovanovska is the Brussels correspondent for major newspaper Dnevnik.

One day walked into our Brussels office a fit looking man in his late 30s or early 40s. He had very short blonde hair and had a military bearing. He introduced himself as Andreas Renatus Hartmann, a Member of the European Parliament for the German political party, The Christian Democratic Union (CDU).

Mr. Hartmann invited Dr. Naumovski and myself to dinner at a swanky Moroccan restaurant. The dinner went well. We talked about a wide variety of subjects but the attention inevitably turned to the Balkans. I was enjoying eating the couscous and almost choked when Mr. Hartmann said matter of fact that German Intelligence was about to open its first ‘station’ in Tirana, Albania since World War II, and the British were pissed off at being beaten to the punch.

I thought to myself why is this guy telling me this? He dropped more bombshells when he said that Europe, in particular Germany and France did not want an Islamic state in the Balkans namely Bosnia-Herzegovina or a Greater Albania. The German and French right wing parties wanted to strengthen

Macedonia to act as a buffer state against possible Islamic fundamentalist terrorism.

I found this at odds with the NATO source's revelations. Was Macedonia caught in the cross-fire of a power play between competing European nations? What could it possibly all mean? And why was I told this?

I could only speculate and say maybe they saw me as a young and enthusiastic journalist wanting to make a name for myself who would float the information in my articles. But what they didn't count on was unbelieving newspaper editors!" (Sasha Uzunov)

A month later it was confirmed, when a force of 400 KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army) fighters was surrounded in the Village Arachinovo near the capital, Skopje. As Macedonian security forces moved in, they were halted on NATO orders. U.S. army buses from Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo arrived to remove all the heavily armed terrorists to a safer area of Macedonia.

The fighting in western Macedonia began as isolated attacks in the early spring of 2001 by armed and uniform wearing Albanian insurgents who claimed that their quarrel was with the government and its forces in Macedonia.

They also claimed that their goal was to achieve more equal rights for the Albanian minority population of Macedonia. However, in July of 2001 after achieving a sufficient mobilization of the local Albanian population, they began the conquest of territory where the Albanian population formed the majority.

Western journalists have continued to portray this insurgency as some kind of armed civil rights movement, but the reality on the ground is quite different. The insurgents, in fact, achieved a semi-permanent occupation of territory through an on-going campaign of ethnic cleansing. It is now clear that in July of 2001 there was a sudden shift in the focus of their movement from conflict with police and army units to systematic terrorization of the civilian ethnic Macedonian minority in the occupied territories.

One of the first documented cases of such terrorization in occupied western Macedonia occurred on July 8, 2001 in the village of Neproshteno, about 7 miles north of the city of Tetovo. Thirty year old Darko Boshkovski was alone, unarmed and in civilian clothes when he was abducted from his car at a road block near his home that day. He reported that it was about 6:30 in the evening when a group of about 150 men in Albanian National Liberation Army NLA uniforms stopped his car and forced him at gun point to accompany them first to the nearby village of Poroj, and then to Drenovec 2, and finally to the village of Gjermo.

There, he was locked in a horse stall with two horses. He was blindfolded and questioned about his father, a retired policeman who had worked on drug-related crimes, and his possible family connection to Interior Minister Ljube Boshkovski. Then his arms were stretched and bound behind him with a rope that also bent his back to the point where breathing was made difficult. He was then repeatedly beaten over the course of the evening by a series of men, some with fists, others with clubs or shovels. He was also tied to a horse and dragged around the barn and later force fed horse urine and dung.

About 1:30 in the morning NLA commander Avzi came and told him that they were releasing him. They then took him by car to the city of Tetovo and delivered him to his waiting family, his wife and parents, who had paid a ransom for his release. He was warned not to reveal what had happened to him under the threat of further violence. He was later treated for numerous wounds, including serious internal injuries, at the local hospital and later at a sanatorium in Serbia. When his family was finally able to return to their home in the village months later they discovered that their house, shop and outbuildings had all been looted and burned. Darko's automobile, a tractor and all of the goods from their building supply business had been stolen.

A year later the family remained homeless and destitute. All that they had slowly built up or acquired over the years was gone. And visits to the village or nearby town are made all the more painful by the open presence, after the public amnesty of the rebels, of those who tortured him and destroyed his family's home and livelihood in western Macedonia. It wasn't just the Macedonian authorities and press who were reporting such incidents either. According to a report issued on July 26 by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, their mission human rights specialists found evidence of numerous human rights violations by the rebel NLA forces. Their report on their meeting with three young Macedonian men who were being treated for injuries at the hospital in Tetovo on Friday, July 20, 2001 is typical of what they found during their investigation.

Although the young men refused to participate in a formal interview, the Mission report states that they were able to learn the following: "These persons appeared extremely fearful of Mission's presence, but ultimately consented to showing their injuries to the investigator. There were chafing marks on their wrists that appeared consistent with their hands being bound. By observing the pattern of the bruises and abrasions, it appeared they had been beaten whilst their hands were bound behind their backs. From the appearance of their injuries, it appeared they had been struck with rifle butts and wooden or metal rods, objects typically associated with the kinds of deep bruising observed on the subjects.

One person stated briefly that a particular pattern of injuries had been caused by being struck with a wooden broom handle and a police baton. All had been beaten on the soles of their feet as well as on the back of the legs. One had reduced kidney function upon admission, but was improving. These impressions were later confirmed in conversations with the attending doctor. It was also discovered that the three young men had attended an engagement party and were standing outside the house of one of them when a car with three armed NLA members drove up and accosted them. They were roughed up, blindfolded, and driven to a location where the beating was administered."

These two incidents were among the first of what soon proved to be a series of abductions and beatings of unarmed individuals or small groups of Macedonian civilians in the western part of the country. By July 23, the OSCE Mission had received credible information that at least 25 people had been abducted at gun point in the Tetovo region.

The ethnic cultural basis for these attacks can be seen in the case of Macedonian Orthodox Christian priest Perica Bojkovski. He was first threatened by an Albanian armed group on July 14, 2001. At that time he was pulled out of his car by an armed group that blocked the road at the village of Odri. At that time men dressed in the black uniforms and wearing the insignia of the Albanian NLA beat the priest and told him not to come back to his parish.

Three weeks later on August 9 Father Bojkovski was stopped again during a visit to one of the mountain villages that were his responsibility. At the time he was riding in a car with Pero Marcheviski on the way to the village of Dobroshte. They were both dragged from the car by armed men wearing NLA uniforms. They were taken by car to the village of Djepchishte, where they were put in a barn. There they were questioned about the names of reserve policemen and the location of army and police units in the villages they visited. When their interrogators didn't receive the answers they sought, they began to beat the two men with guns and fists. They also put a gun barrel in the priest's mouth during the interrogation.

Their captors then drove them to another location in the village where about fifteen young men in civilian clothes locked them in a cellar. This new group continued the beating, which included demands that the priest sing Albanian nationalist songs and the call of the Moslems to worship.

Eventually the priest lost consciousness and was revived with cold water. When it was discovered that he was coughing up blood, he and his companion were driven back to the village of Dobroshte, where they were again beaten and then released at their car. Father Bojkovski was later treated at the Military Hospital in Skopje, where doctors found injuries over the entire length of the priest's body.

This maltreatment of a cleric who carried no weapons and traveled openly in his religious dress on his priestly duties was clearly intended to intimidate the Christian Macedonians in that parish. It was meant to teach the lesson that no one from their ethnic religious cultural community was safe there any longer. Ethnic cleansing in western Macedonia by organized Albanian armed groups took on a truly mass character on the July 23rd, 2001. At that time the NLA launched a series of attacks on the mixed Macedonian-Albanian villages of Tearce and Neproshteno and the all-Macedonian village of Leshok in direct violation of a cease fire that their leadership had signed on to the preceding week. Poorly armed policemen and a few local reservists tried to defend the villages, but they were overwhelmed by the sudden onslaught of hundreds of heavily armed NLA fighters.

The NLA soldiers went door to door in the middle of the night dragging people from their homes, from the smallest child to the oldest grandmother. Several thousand people were driven out with little or no time to gather any possessions and with little hope that there would be anything to return to later. Long lines of people, many hundreds, were forced to make their way on foot to the nearby Macedonian hamlets of Ratae and Zhilche. Some did resist. Men who had invested years of their lives in the creation of a home, and those who could

not bring themselves to abandon homesteads and communities with over a thousand years of family history in them. Some defended their homes with guns. Many resisted the invaders until it was clear that they could not win, and then they retreated along with their families. Others resisted until they were wounded or killed by the NLA. About a dozen men of Leshok and Neproshteno were wounded that day and one, Gjoko Lazarevski, died from his wounds. He was 30 years old. He had just completed construction of a new home, and he was soon to be married.

The NLA aggression and ethnic cleansing of Leshok, Gjoko Lazarevski's home village, was among the most indefensible acts of the recent conflict. The aggression took place in direct violation of a cease-fire agreement signed by the NLA with NATO mediation. It involved the occupation of a village that had never had a single Albanian inhabitant in its several thousand year history. It resulted in the criminal looting and destruction of the lifelong personal possessions and property of all of the residents.

The NLA would later, completely outside the military conflict, set explosive charges under the foundation of a Macedonian and world cultural monument in Leshok, a beautiful Orthodox church, first built in the 14th century and expanded into a grand cathedral in the 20th century, reducing the Church of St. Atanasij to a pile of rubble. One young man who tried to resist this ethnic cleansing was made the ultimate example of what resistance would bring, when he paid with his life.

The campaign of ethnic cleansing that day also included one of the worst crimes of terror imaginable, the abduction that ends in disappearance of individuals from a community. It was on that day, July 23, 2001, that the terrible crime had occurred. It was on that day that NLA gunmen abducted 52 year old Cvetko Mihajlovski from a field near his home in the village of Neproshteno. At the same time they took his 37 year old son Vasko, whose wedding had taken place the night before, and an elderly neighbor, 69 year old Krsto Gogovski, from their homes in the same village. They were led at gunpoint in some unknown direction and have never been reliably heard from since.

That same day 62 year old Dimo Dimoski, who was visiting his wheat field in the neighboring settlement of Djepchishte, was also taken by NLA gunmen. And the next day 60 year old Sime Jakimovski was literally taken off the street of a suburb of Tetovo called Drenovec One. The day after that, July 26, 2001, in that same northern suburb of Tetovo, where some of the most heated fighting between NLA and government troops would occur, 47 year old Gjoko Sinadinovski and 28 year old Bobi Jefimovski were taken. Elsewhere on that same day the NLA apparently also took 48 year old Ilko Trajchevski and his 25 year old son Vasko Trajchevski. Two weeks later, also in the vicinity of Drenovec, two brothers, 59 year old Slavko and 42 year old Boshko Dimitrievski were taken by the NLA.

The families and friends of these 12 men have endured a number of years now of agony-filled uncertainty concerning the fate of their loved ones. NLA commanders claim no knowledge of these men.

Swedish Ambassador to Macedonia Lars Wahlund recently headed an international commission to determine the facts of some 20 cases of unsolved abductions during the time of the conflict last year. His commission concluded that NLA commanders probably know the fate of the Macedonians abducted, and Macedonian officials may know the fate of several missing Albanians and a Bulgarian, but no one will reveal what they know.

Angelina Mihajlovska waited for over a year for news of her husband Vasko. The day after their wedding she and her husband and most of the guests at their wedding were kidnapped by the NLA. She and some others were released after three days. But there is a rumor that she received her husband's ear and a hand later from local NLA commander Leka. This was said to be in retaliation for Vasko having pulled a gun on Leka when he and his men appeared at their wedding. The commission concluded that it was likely that Leka, in particular, does know the fate of eight of the Macedonian men seized in his district of operations in July of 2001. Several bodies exhumed from a site near Neproshteno, according to the commission report, may yet prove to be some of the missing. But people like Angelina Mihajlovska have no choice but to continue a campaign of public protest before the public, the government and the international community in Macedonia until the fate of her loved ones is resolved. And to this day they must occasionally pass amnestied NLA leaders such as commander Leka on the streets, men who probably know of their missing men even if they are not directly responsible for their fate.

During the six month's of the open conflict 15 civilians from the Tetovo region are known to have been killed and many others injured. The dead included Natsa and Petar Petrovski, a mother and son whose car hit a land mine set by Albanian rebels on the road between Leshok and Zhilche in mid July of 2001. It also included the particularly gruesome murder of two night custodians at the Hotel Brioni in the village of Chelopek. One night late in August Albanian gunmen appeared at this Macedonian-owned business. They took the two hotel employees present at the time prisoner, named Svetislav Trpkovski and Bogoslav Ilievski. They then mined the premises with explosive charges and blew up the hotel, at the same time killing the two workmen, who they had tied up and left inside the building to die.

Other grisly crimes committed against Macedonian civilians by armed Albanian groups during this period included the abduction and torture on August 8, 2001 of four construction workers from a site on the Tetovo-Skopje highway. These four men, who were later released, reported to authorities that in addition to beatings, they were subjected to sexual abuse by their Albanian captors, and in a final act of barbarism before letting them go, they carved the initials of the rebel group into the living flesh of the backs of their captives with knives.

Abductions, robberies and brutal beatings of unarmed civilians in the Tetovo region have continued since the open conflict ended in the fall of 2001. On the 3rd of November 2001, for example, 32 year old Cane Trpevski was returning to his home in the village of Ratae from Tetovo, where he had gone to pick up his

monthly wages, when he was captured by an armed Albanian group. They robbed him and then held him for two days. During that time they beat him over the entire length of his body, while keeping his hands tied and with a feed sack placed over his head. He reported that the worst part of his ordeal had been the fact that during that entire time they had refused to give him a single drop of water to drink.

Reserve policeman Dushko Simoski received similar treatment on April 14, 2002, when he was taken prisoner by an armed Albanian group in the village of Shemshevo. They also held him bound and blindfolded in a livestock stall, while brutally beating him for over two days, before he was finally released.

Of course, active policemen and soldiers of the Macedonian army have suffered their share as well at the hands of Albanian armed groups, but at least their suffering came in the course of their sworn service, for which they are honored today for their sacrifices.

The continued campaign of terror, death and destruction included the looting and burning of over thirty churches in the Tetovo region since hostilities began in the spring of 2001 and many hundreds of houses. The looting and destruction of Macedonian homes continued in outlying villages such as Otunje or Varvara, and even certain Tetovo neighborhoods continue to lose residents who find life unbearable there.

Tearce, small shops, restaurants and gas stations in Tetovo, and the infamous destruction of the Brioni Hotel in the village of Chelopek. Of course, many thousands of people were denied their livelihood simply because they did not dare to go to work for extended periods. Farmers couldn't reach their fields and other workers couldn't drive the roads to various workplaces. And the Popova Shapka major ski center on the picturesque mountain above Tetovo had no tourist season.

Macedonia was forced to concede defeat and obliged to accept all the terrorist demands. When the peace treaty was signed, Lord Robertson proclaimed, "This day marks the entry of Macedonia into modern, mainstream Europe ... a very proud day for their country." (James Bisset).

This war placed great strains on Macedonia's economy and created a long lasting divide between the Macedonian and Albanian communities in Macedonia, communities that coexisted peacefully for centuries.

American and French negotiators helped craft the Ohrid Accord of 2001 that ended the military conflict by granting Albanians in Macedonia rights and privileges that no minority in the Balkans has ever enjoyed to this day. It also altered the Macedonian Constitution so that it no longer refers to the Republic as the state of the Macedonian people, but as the state of all citizens of the Macedonian Republic, making it the first and only Balkan state to "denationalize" itself. The Accord was a source of terrible humiliation to the Macedonian people, but it put an end to the violent struggle that was tearing the country apart at a time when "only" hundreds had died in the fighting rather than the thousands who have been killed in the other wars that have accompanied the break up of Yugoslavia.

Since 1991 all governments in the Macedonian parliament have been coalition governments comprised of allied ethnic Macedonian and Albanian parties. In fact, Albanian militants who only a few years before had led armed paramilitary units now sit in parliament as elected representatives of their people. Obviously, this is not a country where citizens are denied their democratic right to free association. This, however, cannot be said for their neighbors, Greece and Bulgaria and to some extent, Albania. Macedonians who merely demand the right to self-identity as Macedonians and free association in organizations of their minority group are routinely harassed and intimidated by governmental authorities there.

Both the Macedonian minority organizations OMO Ilinden in Bulgaria and Vinozhito in Greece have well-documented cases of violations of their rights. Human rights groups worldwide have come to their defense and issued reports on many of these violations. Human rights courts have also ruled in their favor in suits.

The western media vilified Macedonia quickly forgetting that Macedonia was the only republic to peacefully break away from Yugoslavia.

“The West has always insisted on the just principle that violence, terror, and ethnic cleansing should not pay. This principle was enforced - sometimes militarily - in Bosnia and Croatia. Yet, for tactical and political reasons, the West has made two exceptions: Kosovo, and Macedonia. In Kosovo, it rewarded a crime organization turned liberation movement (the KLA or UCK). It armed it, trained it, and transformed it into a respectable political player and partner in shaping the future and nature of Kosovo. In Macedonia, it has leaned on the democratically elected government of a sovereign country to accommodate the demands of armed terrorists, even as these terrorists continued to intimidate, murder, occupy land, and ethnically cleanse its Macedonian inhabitants. Thus, Macedonia is made to pay for the mistakes of the West in creating a monster (the KLA) that is now well out of their control (in the form of the NLA and ANA) and threatens to transform KFOR into 50,000 hostages in Kosovo.” (Sam Vaknin)

The war lasted approximately six months and officially ended with the signing of the Ohrid agreement on August 13, 2001.

“According to the Ohrid Peace Agreement, the international community was invited to support the challenging road of Macedonia from the brink of civil war in August 2001 to peace, stability and integration into Euro-Atlantic structures.

In response to a request for NATO assistance made by the Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski on June 20, 2001, this military organization drew up the operational plan that was dedicated to the peace and stability of the Republic of Macedonia. However, NATO had imposed three conditions for its help in resolving the crisis: conclusion of political agreement between the various parties in the Republic of Macedonia, armistice linked with amnesty for the members of the NLA and finally pledge of full demilitarization from the NLA. Once the Macedonian political parties signed the Ohrid Peace Agreement, the way was opened for NATO’s first mission in the Republic of Macedonia. The

NATO military support to the Republic of Macedonia effectively commenced on August 27, 2001, with Operation Essential Harvest / Task Force Harvest (TFH). This UK-lead mission involved the rapid deployment of 4,600 Allied troops that were initiated to fulfill NATO's promise to assist the Macedonian people by collecting and destroying arms and ammunition on a voluntary basis from ethnic-Albanian extremists.

By September 14, 2001, the successful disarmament of the armed Albanians was achieved and in so doing, established the conditions for the peaceful resolution of the crisis that could well have engulfed this country. Essential Harvest succeeded in collecting and destroying 3,875 weapons over 30 days. Included were four tanks and armored personnel carriers that the NLA have captured from the Macedonian security forces, 17 Strela-2M (NATO: SA-7b Grail) man-portable low-altitude air defense weapons systems, 161 anti-tank systems, 483 machine guns, 3,210 assault rifles and nearly 400,000 mines, explosives and ammunition. Because the armed insurgency was a manifestation of "discontent" among the ethnic Albanian community in the Republic of Macedonia, in accordance with the Ohrid Peace Agreement, constitutional changes have been made that are granting more rights to the ethnic Albanian minority that is 22.7 percent of the country's population of just over 2 million.

In order to prevent a rise in ethnic conflicts after the termination of the NATO Operation Essential Harvest, the Macedonian government, the EU, and the OSCE agreed that international observers should supervise the orderly return of Macedonian security forces to the areas formerly held by ethnic Albanian extremists. In order to provide additional security to the international observers, while authorities of the Republic of Macedonia had primary responsibility for their security, on September 26, 2001, NATO began restructuring Task Force Harvest (TFH) and the next day Operation Essential Harvest was replaced by Operation Amber Fox / Task Force Fox (TFF). Further democratization and improvement in human rights through the process of dialogue and reconciliation progressed significantly and Operation Amber Fox was extended for a period of three months in March 2002 and again in July 2002.

As a result of the greatly improved security in the country, authorities of the Republic of Macedonia and NATO finally decided to bring the mission to an end on December 15, 2002. The Operation Amber Fox was of great importance for Germany because for the first time in this country's history the German Federal Armed Forces assumed leadership and logistics of a NATO military operation that was consisting of some 700 German and other NATO nations troops." (http://www.airserbia.com/magazin/bozinovski/eu-nato/eu-nato_in_macedonia.htm).

In regards to developments with the Macedonians in Greece, on September 8, 1995, members of the ethnic Macedonian political party in Greece, the RAINBOW PARTY, also known as the "VINOZHITO PARTY" in Macedonian, opened an office in Lerin.

On January 19, 1997 a Second Conference of the "RAINBOW" party was held in Lerin and was attended by 76 delegates of all local units. A Political

Manifesto and Organizational Principles were adopted and a Central Council comprised of 19 members was elected.

The Central Council held its first session in Voden on January 26, 1997, and elected a five-member Political Secretariat, an Economic Commission, an Editors' Council, etc.

In its Political Manifesto "RAINBOW" has aired its wish to cooperate with all democratic and anti-nationalist forces in the country in its struggle for peace and European integration.

The RAINBOW PARTY is a member of the European Free Alliance which has been standing up for the rights of stateless nations, peoples and regions for decades.

Other development with regards to the Macedonians in Greece includes the opening of the Greek branch of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages (EBLUL), an organization dedicated to the preservation of lesser used languages in Europe.

Across the European Union, no fewer than forty million people speak languages in their everyday lives, which are different from the official language of the state in which they are living. At present this figure represents 10% of the total European population, but shortly, with the expansion of the Union, the number of people speaking a different language from the official language of their state will be much, much greater. Greece, too, is no exception; however vigorously the state may deny it, the facts tell their own story. A by no means negligible section of the Greek population is bilingual. It is not possible to provide precise figures, since none of the censuses carried out to date has included a question on language. The one exception was the census of 1920, yet the figures it yielded for the northern regions of the country were never published.

Moreover, the long-standing policy of marginalization and suppression has succeeded, naturally enough, in reducing the actual number of those speaking the non-official languages. This hostile treatment of heteroglossy in Greece had its beginnings in the early days of the modern Greek state, 170 years ago. In those areas of the country where Arvanitika was prevalent, every effort was made to discourage its use. There was perhaps some justification for this in the desperate efforts being made to unite the regional populations into a single Greek state, using as a means to this end a policy of homogenization of the various populations.

Macedonians, such as Nase Parisis who is currently President of the Greek branch of EBLUL, are striving to introduce the Macedonian languages into the Greek educational system.

In regards to development with the Macedonians in Bulgaria OMO Ilinden PIRIN was a political party of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria. It was registered as a political party in 1999 and participated in municipal elections in October 1999, where it elected five local officials. However, on February 29, 2000, the Constitutional Court in Bulgaria declared OMO "Ilinden" - PIRIN

unconstitutional. This was in direct violation of the right to freedom of association and the right to freedom from discrimination.

The Bulgarian government refuses to acknowledge the existence of the large Macedonian minority in Pirin Macedonia and continues to violate its basic human rights. Members and supporters of OMO Ilinden PIRIN (political party and human rights organization) and OMO Ilinden (human and minority rights organization) have been videotaped, harassed, beaten, fined, and even imprisoned simply for asserting their ethnic Macedonian identity.

In regards to current developments with the Macedonians in Albania, at the local elections held on February 18, 2007, a Macedonian from the party Macedonian Alliance for European Integration (MAEI) was, for the first time, elected as mayor. Edmond Temelko, a 36-year-old veterinarian turned politician won the mayoral position in Prespa municipality, making him the first Macedonian elected in Albania.

Macedonians in Albania are still unable to fully exercise their basic human rights such as obtain schooling in their mother tongue, using Macedonian national symbols and participation in state institutions. Macedonians fought hard to register their political party, the Macedonian Alliance for European Integration with success which is a major accomplishment for Macedonians, because they demonstrated maturity and voted for themselves. By doing so they showed the Albanian society that they are part of it and will take an active role in dealing with issues in the country.

The Prespa municipality has nine towns, inhabited mostly by ethnic Macedonians who speak their own language and foster their own cultural heritage. The Macedonian language will become the second official language and all Macedonian landmarks will be given their original names which were changed during Enver Hodza's regime.

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