

VIRTUES OF POWER



**Boris Trajkovski's Pursuit of Jesus
in Politics and Government.**

GOTTFRIED CLAUSSEN

Dedication

I dedicate this book to all those who endeavour to follow Jesus Christ in their work for their society and their country and also for Europe and the world.

A word of thanks

I would like to say a big thank you to the following people for their active support. Without their help the book would have been neither written nor published.

My wife Irmgard, who constantly encouraged me to hold on to the project.

My daughter Jennifer, who was very diligent in transcribing the interviews from the tape.

My family, who gave me the necessary space to write this book.

Hans-Georg and Wiebke Topf for their support towards the English translation.

Thomas and Manuela Sommerer for the cover design and the layout.

Jason Miko for editing the book and giving valuable advice.

Margaret Kahlberg for translating the German Version.

Mrs Vilma Trajkovska, widow of the late president Boris Trajkovski. She supported this project right from the start.

All the people who were prepared to give interviews (see appendix for this).

Mr Robert Milcev and the team from the Boris Trajkovski International Foundation, who helped with advice, resources and the picture material.

Foreword

I liked Boris Trajkovski from the moment I first met him. It was in England. I felt an immediate empathy; the chemistry was good. People in positions of responsibility were present; the focus of our discussion was on the relevance of Jesus Christ in public life. There was no talk of presidential aspirations; and so it was that when he emerged a few months later as the Macedonian Head of State, I was both surprised and delighted. We were together again in Skopje in January 2000, a little over one month after his election, but more of that later.

The spirit of religion broods over Europe, and has done so for centuries. In most cases it produces spiritually docile and passive communities, but in some, as in Ireland and the Balkans, particularly in the countries which comprised former Yugoslavia, it has resulted in aggression, hate and war.

Doctrine divides, creating religious division and barriers between people. Christianity is divided and offers a broken and fragmented picture of Christ. Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Protestantism, are pitted against one another. They have become benign competitors at best, while at worst they have acquired entrenched entitlements to the exclusion of the other even to the point of categorizing some as cults. Political leaders have swooped on this notion of difference to promote their own nationalist agendas with devastating effect. For instance, it is difficult to be a Croat and not be a Roman Catholic, while the criteria for being a Serb or Macedonian is to show allegiance to Orthodoxy. Throughout former Yugoslavia nations are split down

nationalist and religious lines - take the case of Bosnia where the toxic mix of Catholicism, Orthodoxy and Islam has created such deep divisions that harmony is almost impossible, outside of Sarajevo, where tolerance and harmony predominate. Boris was a member of the Methodist Church, a protestant denomination.

Neither Christianity nor any other religion or creed has the answer to the problems of the Balkans or of anywhere else for that matter. The only answer lies in Jesus of Nazareth. The Jesus with arms outstretched to forgive, love, embrace and always to include. Ask the many young adults that I have met throughout the region over the past fifteen years, and they will confirm this to be the case. Like Boris before them, they have discovered Jesus and are following His teaching and His principles. They have risen above the ordinary to believe that through His death it is possible to forgive and to love. In short, to follow the golden rule of "Do unto others as you would want them to do to you". It is all about a relationship with Jesus and then with one another.

Boris, in the same way as did that icon of the twentieth century, Mother Theresa, rose above the secular, religious and political culture of his day and really did believe, beginning with Jesus, that every individual was of the utmost importance; knowing that it was therefore more important whom you knew rather than what you knew.

Saul, the leading persecutor of the early church was encountered by Jesus on his way to Damascus. Physically blinded, he was led to Ananias who had been instructed by God to inform the renamed Paul that he had been chosen by the Lord "to carry my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel". Similarly this idea of carrying the Name (above all names) wherever he went, whether to leaders at the highest level, to the ordinary citizens or to his enemies, was a hallmark of Boris' life. He had such an intimate relationship with the person of Jesus that it very naturally enabled him to take Jesus with him wherever he

went. A skill honed first amongst his family, with Vilma and his children Stefan and Sara who supported him throughout, enabling him to live out this principle wherever his responsibilities took him.

Boris knew that the world in which we live is the battle ground between good and evil, and that this war is a spiritual one driven by demonic spirits hell bent on destruction and death. It is written that “our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms”.

The fight is not against people, but against the spirits that motivate them. The Kingdom of God is here, but not yet! In His well known prayer, Jesus taught us to pray “may your Kingdom come, may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven”. There is one world with two realms; the world which we can see, and the much larger invisible world where forces of heaven and hell are fighting for the possession of the visible world. The more important our responsibility, the greater the spiritual battle until at Head of State level the battle is most severe: it is the battle for the very soul of a nation. Boris, who was intensely interested in what he believed Christ wanted to accomplish, and who was a champion of justice and equality, was exposed to the full force of this as President of Macedonia.

The power (of God) that was within him was greater than the forces of evil outside of him. So he knew that he could face the constant attacks against him in the confidence that the final battle had been won for him - on the cross. This did not prevent accusations of party political disloyalty, marriage infidelity, financial indiscrepancies, cowardice and failure, none of which were of course true. Lies and conspiracies against him abounded; as indeed conspiracy theories over the cause of his death linger on.

It may seem fanciful to a spiritually unaware person, but I do believe that an important ingredient which contributed to

the opposition he increasingly received was added in January 2000. Longstanding friend Jim Brown and I visited Boris in his Presidential office, shortly after his inauguration. During our discussion, his then close friend, Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski, with whom he also shared a common faith, came into the room and on being asked to remain, the four of us continued our conversation sitting around a small table. Boris was enthusiastically pursuing the idea of encouraging regional and European Heads of State to meet for the purpose of praying together. Jesus said that "if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them". Our two Macedonian hosts agreed that this was a very good idea, and that Boris as Head of State should be the one to initiate the process. They asked us to join them in a prayer that this would come about. This the four of us did then and there. There was a very real sense of the presence of God in the room. Tears welled up in my eyes. It was an awesome spiritual moment. Jim and I were asked to be their arms and legs and to work with them and with Boris in particular to get the process going. We agreed, but on the condition that we would never expect to be, nor would we be present at any of these gatherings. We never were.

It is a strange fact of life that leaders readily meet together to pray when one of them dies, but very seldom do so when they are alive; at least if they do very few ever get to know about it! The reason is simple - the devil doesn't want it - he hates anyone, let alone leaders, agreeing together in prayer, and so will make it as difficult for it to happen as he can. Boris' efforts were fraught with difficulties but he did succeed in gatherings in Macedonia, in the Balkans, elsewhere in Europe and in North America. This was a huge achievement of immense spiritual significance, the consequences of which were and will continue to be far

reaching. Inevitably this brought him into direct conflict with the devilish forces of hell.

Rather like King David and Queen Esther of old, I believe Boris Trajkovski was raised up by God “for such a time as this” to be God’s man for a particular moment of time. He only held public office of any kind for barely four years and was unknown outside of Macedonia beforehand; and yet within this brief period he averted a civil war within, secured the external borders of Macedonia, and achieved so much else, such as reconciling the people groups within the country while at the same time creating a new positive image of Macedonia on the world stage, that he will remain an example of a God-given leader for many, many years to come.

Anthony Cordle,

28 October 2013

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Introduction

The news of Boris Trajkovski's sudden death came to me as a shock. At the age of 48 the second president of the Republic of Macedonia lost his life when his aircraft crashed.

Boris Trajkovski made a great impression through his energetic and creative personality.

He influenced the social situation in the Balkan states and Macedonia as no other politician before him. The most impressive thing, however, was the uncompromising way in which he followed Jesus.

I particularly wanted to focus on this aspect of his presidency on the occasion of a speech I held at the graduation ceremony of the Steinbeis University in Berlin.

Still very much affected by Boris Trajkovski's sudden death, I wanted to let some of his life principles be known in an exemplary way in my address.

The young leaders and MBA graduates were to be given a contemporary example on which they could orient their later actions.

Despite intensive research I was unable to discover anything usable about his political heritage. For this reason, instead of Boris Trajkovski I used three characters from earlier years in my speech to serve as an example through their actions.

- ◆ Dag Hammarskjöld, the Swedish general secretary of the United Nations from 1953 to 1961. Dag Hammarskjöld underlined the final sentence in the book by Albert Schweitzer in which Mr Schweitzer brought the message and humanity of Jesus up to date. "As one

unknown and nameless He comes to us, just as on the shores of the lake he approached those men who knew not who he was. His words are the same: 'Follow me!' and He puts us to the tasks which He has to carry out in our age." For Dag Hammarskjöld, following Jesus becomes the challenge of working on the problems of our time in the current situation with the support of the Holy Spirit. Jesus reveals himself to those who fight and suffer with him.¹

- ◆ Tony P. Hall, American ambassador to the US Agency for Agriculture and Food in Rome for the period of 2002 to 2006. Tony P. Hall was nominated three times for the Nobel Peace Prize. In 1984 Tony P. Hall travelled as a member of Congress to the famine zone in Ethiopia. His life was changed by the things he experienced there. "Many children were dying, many were already dead. Within a few minutes I witnessed 25 children dying." Tony P. Hall felt God was commissioning him to concentrate his political work on human rights in the future.² In his book "Changing the Face of Hunger" Tony P. Hall describes his personal path of following Jesus in political action.
- ◆ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German theologian and leading light of the resistance during the Third Reich. In his book "Discipleship" there are valuable suggestions and thoughts on the entire subject of following Jesus. "Where will the call to discipleship lead those who follow him? What decisions and separations will it bring? We need to go with this question to the one who alone knows the answer. Alone Jesus Christ, who commands discipleship, knows where this path will lead. But we know that it will most certainly be a path that is compassionate beyond all measure. Discipleship means joy."³

People who in their lives and political actions drew from a source that gave them direction and orientation. People like Boris Trajkovski, who followed Jesus.

Whilst working on my speech the idea arose of writing a book presenting the person of Boris Trajkovski and his political legacy in a cohesive way.

On the occasion of the opening of the Albanian State University, Boris Trajkovski said: "It is not inter-ethnic violence but books which will integrate us into Europe."⁴

The quintessence of politician Boris Trajkovski's main concerns should be honoured from the perspective of friends and opponents alike. His exemplary actions will not only have a linking effect here, but can also convey hope so that courage arises to stand up oneself for what is good and right.

At the European Prayer Breakfast in 2005 in Brussels I conversed with Vilma Trajkovska, Boris Trajkovski's widow. She greatly encouraged me to write this book which you now have in your hands. The Boris Trajkovski International Foundation not only provided the necessary pictures and text documents but also arranged the appointments for interviews that took place in May 2006.

Boris Trajkovski's last words in Germany were:

... "Do not fret because of evildoers, nor be envious of the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass and wither as the green herb." Psalm 37:1-2⁵

"In this passage of Scripture we see that God will also exercise justice towards those who do evil. In 2001 and 2002 we had to deal with evil ... in Macedonia, with people who wanted to destroy our country, our way of living and our inter-ethnic relationships. And although they did not experience justice in the way that people would wish, they will one day experience justice from the living

God.”⁶ ... “I would like to close with the following words: We should obey God and love him. We should open the Bible to receive instruction and we should live in humility. These are the words which have been given to all of us, and they are found in the book of Micah: “He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:8) When we do these things I believe God will show us what our contribution can be.

Thank you and God bless you.”⁷

These were the last words we heard from Boris Trajkovski in Germany. Boris Trajkovski, the 2nd president of the still young Republic of Macedonia, was directing his words to the participants at the 8th International Congress in Berlin.

Amongst those taking part was his personal friend, the since deceased President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr. h.c. Johannes Rau, as well as further representatives of the German Federal Government.

In his address Boris Trajkovski expressed the hope that God the father will exercise justice. In his speech he not only looked back on his political actions and on history, not only upwards in prayer, but above all forwards. This view of hope for the future consistently gave him the strength necessary for his political actions.

Pope Benedict XVI wrote the following about this hope of justice:

“... From the earliest times, the prospect of the Judgement has influenced Christians in their daily living as a criterion by which to order their present life, as a summons to their conscience, and at the same time as hope in God’s justice. Faith in Christ has never looked merely backwards or merely upwards, but always also forwards to the hour of justice that the Lord repeatedly proclaimed. This looking ahead has given Christianity its importance for the present moment.”⁸

Boris Trajkovski, president of the Republic of Macedonia, died on 26 February 2004. His aircraft crashed in bad weather in the mountains of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Eight colleagues and the crew of the aircraft also lost their lives.

For almost six years, from 1999 to 2004, Boris Trajkovski had shaped the politics of his country. It was a time full of crises and difficulties. Boris Trajkovski not only ushered in an era of modern politics but led his country through the turbulent time of war and frequent multi-ethnic tension.

Boris Trajkovski was born in 1956 in the district of Strumica in Macedonia. As the second of three children he grew up in the security of a relatively rural region.

On 15 December 1999 Boris Trajkovski was inaugurated as the second president of the Republic of Macedonia.

He followed President Kiro Gligorov who had declared the Republic of Macedonia's independence on 8 September 1991.

The role and character of the president in Macedonia had become very important in the recent history of the country (since November 1991). According to the Republic of Macedonia's new constitution (from November 1991), the Macedonian state president is elected directly by the people for a five-year term of office. He can rightly say that he represents the entire nation. He is the president of all citizens. If he were elected by parliament he would perhaps be viewed as the representative of a particular political orientation. The candidates for the presidency are put forward by the political parties. The people vote for their president through direct election, and for this reason he represents all Macedonians independent of their ethnic background, religion or political affiliation. In practice, the president's personality has proved to be very important for his function as a unifying figure. The president also functions as a control entity for parliament and government.⁹

Prior to his election as president Boris Trajkovski had been deputy foreign minister since December 1998. In this function he was responsible for Macedonia's relations with the international community. During the Kosovo crisis in March 1999, Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski appointed Boris Trajkovski as representative and coordinator of the Macedonian government. This assignment made him very well known. He campaigned intensively for the international community to support Macedonia in the refugee question.

Boris Trajkovski became the proud father of two children, Stefan and Sara. He was married from 1985 to his wife Vilma.

You can find Boris Trajkovski's detailed biography on the Internet on the homepage of the Boris Trajkovski International Foundation at www.boristrajkovski.org.

Hope for the Future

"... as a society we may have lost the only politician who gave us any kind of hope for the future of Macedonia. Boris Trajkovski changed the political culture. He thought in a new way politically - and changed the general political atmosphere in Macedonia. Boris Trajkovski was an example to us, giving us hope for the first time in a long while. An optimism that Macedonia can change and that the Macedonian society can develop into a democratic society."¹⁰

This is how Borjan Jovanovski, a good friend and supporter of the young president, looks back on Boris Trajkovski's activity.

In what way did Boris Trajkovski become an example? Which actions changed the political culture in Macedonia? Questions to which the following observations try to find an answer.

The title of this book, "Virtues of Power", was chosen because virtues, qualities and principles for successful