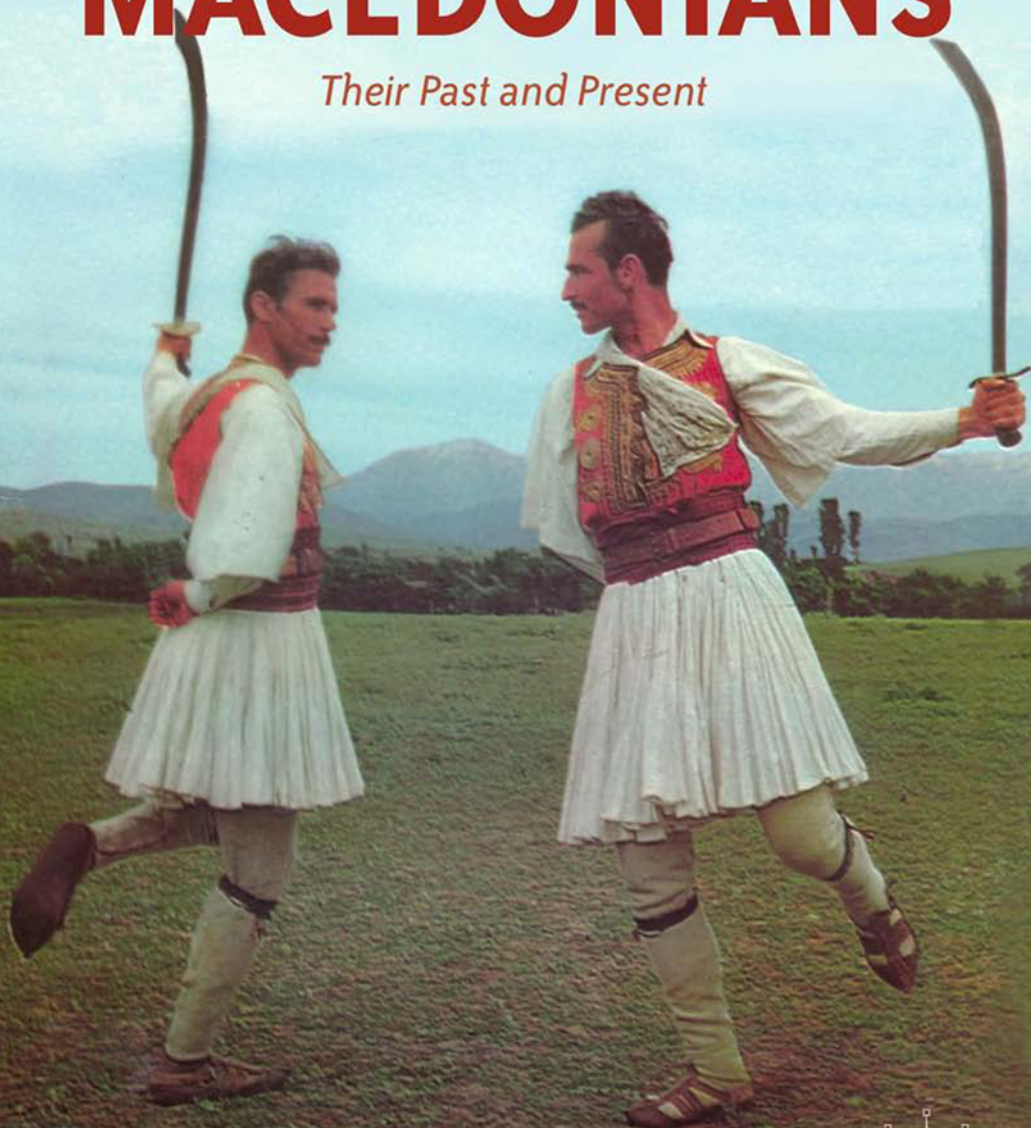


THE MACEDONIANS

Their Past and Present



Ernest N. Damianopoulos

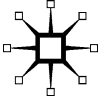


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*To My Gallant Grandfathers, Christo and Dimitri,
Who Raised Me within Their Homeric Outlook on Life*

CONTENTS

<i>List of Figures and Table</i>	ix
<i>Preface</i>	xi
1 Summary Overview: Some Historical Facts on the Ground	1
2 Statement of the Problem and Basic Questions	19
3 The Methodology of Ethnicity Research	35
4 Historical/Political Manifestations of the Macedonian Ethnic Identity	57
5 Cognitive Self-Descriptor Evidence for Macedonian Ethnicity	83
6 Sociocultural Characterization of the Macedonian Ethnic Identity	109
7 Components of the Macedonian Ethnic Identity: Genetic DNA Evidence	127
8 Who the Macedonians Are: An Across Domain, Evidence-Based Answer	145
9 Problems in Development of the Macedonian Ethnic Identity	183
10 A General Ethnicity Model	195
Appendices	
<i>Appendix I Reference to Macedonians in Lord Byron's Childe Harold's Pilgrimage (1812)</i>	203
<i>Appendix II Plates 1–4</i>	205

<i>Appendix III Survey/Questionnaire: Who the Macedonians Are</i>	209
<i>Notes</i>	219
<i>Bibliography</i>	237
<i>Index</i>	245

FIGURES AND TABLE

FIGURES

7.1	DNA Tribe regions for the European continent	130
7.2	Diagram showing worldwide major and minor grouping according to degree of contribution based on the genetic DNA evidence	132
7.3	The Tribe categories shown in figure 7.1 are presented according to major and minor component contributors	134

TABLE

6.1	Criteria and evidence for Macedonian ethnicity	111
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PREFACE

While pursuing graduate studies toward the Ph.D. degree at Syracuse University between the years of 1959 and 1962, I was a research assistant at the New York State Mental Hygiene Research Unit at Syracuse, NY. Elaine Cumming and W. E. Henry at this point were writing their classic work on aging called *Growing Old: The Process of Disengagement* (1961). A basic sociological study of a selected aging population sample in the Chicago area had been conducted, the data compiled and the findings written up, chapter by chapter. As I had come to the unit as a young researcher with a background in philosophy of science, I was invited by Elaine Cumming to be a reader in this, the preparatory stage, prior to the final version. The coauthor William E. Henry was at the University of Chicago and, thus, not immediately accessible, at this level, in those days prior to the Internet and computer. We would meet once a week to discuss the chapters as they were written and offer suggestions.

As the work progressed with each chapter containing the integrative and interpretive concepts to describe the specific findings, it appeared to me that a theory of aging was embedded within but presented in a piecemeal and unorganized manner. I suggested that the conceptual and theoretical material dispersed throughout the book be collected and put together into a single additional chapter devoted to a formal statement of the disengagement theory in ordinary language terms for greater clarity and precision. Thus, I wrote the nine postulates of the disengagement theory (chapter 12).¹ This chapter, following publication, became the highlight and focus of attention as apparently it had been an innovation that facilitated the reading and understanding of the entire work. It appeared also as a major factor in its success. Now some 46 years later, to my shock and great surprise, I find in a Google search citations indicating that I am indeed the author of the disengagement theory of aging and have been given sole credit for it. Even a greater surprise was to find the nine postulates of disengagement theory of chapter 12 as required

reading in a developmental course on aging in a major university.² I immediately hasten to add that the credit belongs elsewhere; to the two authors who had done the basic research and came up with the core explanatory concepts. At about the same time, a little later in 1967,³ I published a theoretical model of Pavlovian conditioning, again stated in formal ordinary language terms. More importantly in 1987,⁴ I published a comprehensive mathematical model of Pavlovian conditioning that would explain with 15 math formula equations the basic phenomena and processes in the area of animal learning. Somewhat later, in my new area of competence, neuroscience, I published two methodological papers⁵ on how to identify a Pavlovian cocaine-conditioned response in animal models using voluntary locomotor responses as target response measures that in the past have and would otherwise lead to a variety of false positives. The significance of showing unambiguous cocaine drug conditioning to exteroceptive environmental stimuli is that Pavlovian drug conditioning is a primitive type of learning below conscious level of awareness that has been identified as the major mechanism mediating craving and relapse following therapeutic rehabilitation. Unfortunately, it is a mechanism that operates across drugs to reinstate a partial drug response and craving in the absence of a drug. Moreover, it is resistant to extinction by standard methods. Thus, relapse in abstinent individuals is a common phenomenon with obvious untoward societal implications.

The relevance of this background in theory construction, model formation, and methodology came to the fore when, after about ten years of research into the Macedonian ethnic identity, I was forced to accept the idea that ethnicity as a scientific concept was inadequately defined with no agreement in relation to objective anchoring markers to help identify an ethnic identity, unlike the related concepts of race and nationality. The influential analysis of Curta (2001), although coming too late, substantially confirmed this unsettled picture as to what ethnicity is exactly and what kinds of evidence apply. It was not as if definitions, including operational definitions, did not exist, but that there was no agreement as to the type of evidence entailed by each definition that would be necessary and sufficient for an inference of ethnic identity. Implicitly, the issue was and is that of construct validity; something needed if ethnicity is to ever become a useful scientific concept. In the face of this background of uncertainty, I fell back on my theory and model building experiences, as well as on my past experiences addressing convoluted methodological problems. Furthermore, my earlier background in philosophy of science suggested that nothing but a top-down approach was needed

where on my own I would have to develop both a theoretical model of ethnicity and decide also on what kinds of evidence apply; or more to the point, where that evidence is to be sourced from for a defensible inference of an ethnic identity. Inevitably, this was to become a bootstrap operation where I had to develop a general theoretical model of ethnicity at the same time as deciding on what kinds of evidence apply based on an independent logic function analysis of the ordinary language meaning of ethnicity. Finally, a rationale had to be developed and centered on basic science considerations to defend the choices made in terms of the nomological network of the general ethnicity model as well as the applicability of the independently derived domains of evidence. Essentially and in summary, it was a search for a solution to the problem of establishing construct validity for the concept of ethnic identity that is not to be found in the extant literature.

After the writing had been completed, a new domain of evidence appeared with immediate face validity fulfilling nicely the need for objective markers for ethnicity identification. This new domain was the genetic DNA studies of geographically defined European population samples roughly corresponding to parallel ethnically defined population groups, including a Macedonian sample and, for contrast/comparison, Greek and Bulgarian samples. This methodology was made possible by the discovery of haplotype bloc profiles uniquely characterizing each geographically defined ethnic population sampled. Unfortunately, however, this development was, in fact, a commercial application of genetic research technology basically focused on individuals rather than on ethnic or racial groups. Thus, the methodology in the application of sound genetic analysis procedures for such purposes may still be in question. This aspect of transduction of genetic DNA research from its normal linkage to disease syndromes to ethnicity identification had to be reexamined in detail before findings from this domain of evidence could be integrated into issues of ethnic identity. Some obvious problems in application are: how is ethnic identity that is socioculturally defined construct to be determined in the absence of independently defined phenotypes as is the case with genetically linked disease syndromes? How large must a sample be from a geographically defined population for a valid inference about a genetic DNA identification? Are the samples drawn need to be random? Finally, how many and what are the markers used to identify the unique haplotype blocs that characterize a selected group sample; and, are they same or different for the different comparison groups sampled?

Against this background of a multidiscipline approach and a convergent methodology to the problem of ethnicity identification of the present work, it should not be too shocking to state that I have no mentors to thank, no colleagues who might otherwise have helped me with the writing by their critiques and suggestions, nor, any guides to the complex problem of establishing construct validity; thus, I have an indebtedness only to those few authors of historical publications in the field that were a turning point in my decision to write. Enough shock, perhaps, and now comes the critical question every author has to face up to: “why write this book?”

When I came to America in early 1940 at age 12, my father had already been here (so also my two grandfathers before me who did not choose to stay). As my father was a successful businessmen, it was a “soft parachute landing,” as immigrant experiences go, for my mother and I. The only real problem was the English language though, as might be anticipated, it was learned very quickly at that age. I was already bilingual by then; as I knew both the Macedonian and Greek languages. Herein, however, was a problem that would bedevil me in the later stages of my life. Given our non-Greek language, who were we as Macedonians? In my upbringing and later in my professional life, we were “Greeks,” at worst, “Slavophone Greeks.” The ancient Macedonians were Greek as found in coins and archaeological material remains, and we too, therefore, were Greek. However, many times we were insultingly called “Bulgarians” as my mother was by a Greek staff member at the American Consulate in Athens (my mother spoke only Macedonian). We were used to such insults in our native area; but all this was outweighed by the superb public school education offered to us, as well as by the idealistic young teachers, young women mostly, the best in Greece, the first generation to enter professional ranks, sent to us on a civilizing, humanitarian mission⁶ (we had been only recently liberated from Ottoman Empire Turkish rule). Thus, I came to America with a “Greek consciousness” the global defining marker of Greek ethnicity and in this manner proceeded to walk through the middle age years of my life.

A background of conflicting information as to who we were based on public memory of critical historical events at the turn of the twentieth century of the native Macedonian insurgency from 1903 to 1908 and then the “liberation” of Macedonia by Greece in 1912/1913 increasingly occupied my thinking toward the end of my professional life and motivated casual exploration of the available historical texts both on modern as well as ancient Macedonia. The most influential was Eugene N. Borza’s (1990) *In the Shadows of Olympus: The*

Emergence of Macedon. It was the first presentation where I would encounter the thesis that the ancient Macedonians had an identity apart from that of the ancient Greeks. The reading of Peter Green's (1991) *Alexander the Great from 358–325 BC* further confirmed this point of view through numerous examples showing that the small number of troops the Greek City States had placed under Alexander's command were never used as frontline troops and the Macedonians faced a far greater number of seasoned veteran Greek hoplites in the service of the enemy, the Persian emperor, Darius III. The earlier meticulous searches of Ernst Badian (1967) into the same question also confirmed this assessment of a separate Macedonian identity. All this background suggested a new start in the search for an answer on "who we are as Macedonians."

Another turn in my thinking came about due to Duncan M. Perry's (1988) work *The Politics of Terror: History of the Macedonian Revolutionary Movement 1893–1903*. This work detailed the native Macedonian efforts toward autonomy and independence within the Ottoman Empire in the first decade of the twentieth century. The futile but noble and heroic struggle of the well-educated Macedonian youth at the cost of their lives left an indelible mark on me; even more so, the pictorial presentations shown in Polianski's (1971) *Gotse Delchev (VI)*. The pictures of young Macedonians like me, had I lived in their time, all lost in their prime, touched me deeply as this part of our historical past had been cast aside, muted, and ground down by Greek historians (e.g., Martis, 1983; Vakalopoulos, 1991). Hitherto, this history was unavailable; only fragments in stories and songs were in my awareness as a youth growing up in Macedonia in the peaceful prewar years of 1940. Thus, it appeared to me that all the elements of the puzzle were now available and that it was my responsibility to the idealistic peers of my grandfather's day to give them voice and speak for them. Relying on some additional experiences in dealing with particularly difficult methodological issues in my own recent area of specialization in neuroscience, Pavlovian drug conditioning, I decided to solve the puzzle. That is, the perennial puzzle and question of "who are the Macedonians?"

It is customary for an author to state in the preface his aims, the sources, and authors who influenced him and his overall perspective. On one side of the ledger, the aim is to challenge the following myths about Macedonia: (1) there are no Macedonians, but only Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbians, and Albanians, that is, Macedonia is multiethnic; (2) the Slav-speaking majority population of Macedonia are of a Slavic ethnicity; (3) there is no connection between the modern Macedonians

and ancient Macedonians; and (4) the ancient Macedonians were of a Greek ethnicity, their language was Greek, and their symbols, heritage, and name are exclusively Greek. On the other side of the ledger, the intent is to (1) resolve the contradiction between a language-based ascription of a nonexistent Macedonian ethnic identity versus a hypothesized unitary, nonexclusionary Macedonian identity across language and region, based on critical sociocultural evidence; (2) develop a standard formulation of the Macedonian ethnic identity as a unitary ethnic identity across language and region anchored to observable and available historical, anthropological, sociocultural, and genetic DNA evidence (the principal theme of the present work); and (3) identify problems in development of the postulated unitary Macedonian ethnic identity.

I gratefully acknowledge the contribution of the following authors and their major works on the development of ideas and methods in addressing the major issue of “Who the Macedonians Are.” Thus, there is, as already mentioned, Duncan M. Perry’s *The Politics of Terror: History of the Macedonian Revolutionary Movement 1893–1903* (1988), Eugene N. Borza’s *In the Shadows of Olympus: The Emergence of Macedon* (1990), and Peter Green’s, *Alexander of Macedon 358–325* (1991). Finally there is also Ernst Badian’s (1967) research and his unrelenting, meticulous detective work in unearthing the evidence on the issue of “Greeks and Macedonians.”

More than a token of appreciation needs to be acknowledged to Andrew Rossos (University of Toronto) and to Philip Shashko (University of Wisconsin), two historians, two fellow Macedonians with whom I have had some discussions and whose work has provided me invaluable documentary evidence at critical points in my thinking on “who the Macedonia are.” George Vratsidis, an engineer at St. Clair College, Windsor, Canada (from the Aegean part of Macedonia) and Goran Stojanov (from the Vardar part of Macedonia) both helped me with close reading of earlier drafts. They provided useful critical commentaries as well as additional sociocultural material on the dances and traditions of Macedonia. Professors Frank Middleton and Anthony Shrimpton both of SUNY Medical University at Syracuse (Syracuse, NY) were the two quintessential consultants who helped sort out the issues regarding applicability of the genetic DNA technology to issues of ethnic/race identity.

Finally, some general directions to the reader on how to read this book. The sequence of chapters is, of course, arbitrary; it may not be suitable to everyone. Each chapter is complete in itself and not dependent upon the others (modeled on Solzhenitsyn’s memorable

autobiographical novel *The Cancer Ward*⁷). Thus, the reader may read and stop at any point. However, for the reader with little or no background, it is best to read the first three chapters in sequence and then choose and pick after that. For those with a professional background in history, anthropology, and/or political science, the first two chapters may be skipped entirely, as the present treatment is a top-down analysis of ethnicity complemented by available evidence on the selected topic of “Who the Macedonians Are.” An anthropologist may start with the last chapter (10); that is, with the 10 postulates of the general ethnicity model before proceeding to the methodological chapter (3). After that, the course and sequence is arbitrary. A historian and/or a political scientist may start with [chapter 4](#), “The Historical/Political Manifestations of the Macedonian Identity,” and then continue to the end before returning to the second chapter for a statement of the problem and basic questions addressed in order to assess what has been accomplished. The chapter on genetic DNA evidence is not for everyone but is essential for historians and anthropologists as a source of unexpected “essentialist” evidence in ethnicity identification. Finally, the eclectic reader with absolute minimalist instincts need not proceed beyond the first chapter as it is a summary overview with plenty of quotable material to choose from, written in a nontechnical popular style to a heightened literary quality.

SUMMARY OVERVIEW: SOME HISTORICAL FACTS ON THE GROUND

Macedonia is largely a land-locked Balkan region with the Serbian frontier in the north and the Albanian frontier in the west. On the east and south are the Pirin and Aegean portions of Macedonia, now parts of Bulgaria and Greece. Within these confines there is, since 1991, a new Balkan country known by its official name as The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), which Greece recognizes internally as *Skopja*.¹ The term “Macedonia” in Greece is reserved for that region in Northern Greece that roughly corresponds to the ancient kingdom of Macedon at the time of Philip II and Alexander the Great. Later on, these borders would expand greatly in the Hellenistic era to include all three portions above. The Macedonians in FYROM have named their country *Republic of Macedonia*, and their official language is “Macedonian,” a Slav-oriented dialect² that was codified as a language only in 1951 with the help of an American Harvard Slav-specialist, Horace G. Lunt. The Macedonians in Greece are rapidly being assimilated into a Greek identity (Karakasidou, 1994; 1997); and, in a parallel development, the Macedonians in Bulgaria into a Bulgarian identity (Seraphinoff and Stefou, 2008). The reader, by now, can already see conflict, inconsistency, if not confusion, as to just who these Macedonians are; or, importantly, where these Macedonians are: in FYROM, in Northern Greece, in West Bulgaria, or in all three. An introduction suitable to this kind of complexity, where the name of a country, its people, and ethnicity—as well as its authenticity as a nation—are all in dispute, would at least need a summary overview of the material presented as a whole in order not to lose the reader right at the outset. That is the objective of the present chapter.

The narrative on the Macedonians begins with outside observers and their impressions while the Macedonians are in deep slumber,

completely ignorant of their past, quite innocent of their potential as a tinder box ready to be lit for insurrections and bloody Balkan wars at the dawn of the twentieth century. At this stage, Major William Leake was, perhaps, the first to explore the Macedonian ethnological landscape, and he did so on his way to the Janinna court of the colorful Albanian chieftain, Ali Pasha of Tepelene. He gingerly reported to the British government on the “extent of the Bulgarian-speaking population of Macedonia” without comment or commitment as to who these Macedonians actually were (Plomer, 1935: 124–125). By the first decade of the nineteenth century, Ali Pasha was a major player in the region in the context of the then Ottoman Empire that included Albania, Serbia, Greece, and Bulgaria in the Balkans, the present-day Turkey in Asia Minor, Jordan, Palestine, and Iraq in the Middle East, and Egypt and Libya in Africa. Ali Pasha held sway, if not absolute control, over Southern Albania, Western Macedonia, Epirus, and most of Western Greece including parts of Peloponnesus as a vassal overlord under the Turkish Sultan. Importantly for the rival powers of the day, France and Great Britain, Ali Pasha also controlled the strategically located Western Greek seaports opposite the French-held Ionian islands in this part of the Eastern Mediterranean over which French and British interests were centered (Brewer, 2001).

Ali Pasha was to provide a base as well as much-needed supplies such as lumber, food, and water to the rival naval contingents of France and Great Britain that were at war at the time. Major Leake’s mission, therefore, was to secure an exclusive agreement toward these aims for his country and his country alone. To reach the court of Ali Pasha in Northwest Greece, he obviously had taken the overland route through Macedonia from Istanbul (Constantinople), the seat of the Ottoman Empire; and, with the peculiarly eccentric interests of an Englishman of his time, he made the reported insightful observation above (Plomer, 1935). Later on, such observations would provide a basis for language-based assessments of the Macedonian identity, all pointing to its nonexistence. To his credit, however, Major Leake never made such an inference.

With the massive conversion to Islam in the seventeenth century, Albania provided some of the most elite troops in the service of the Sultan as well as outstanding military officers and civilian heads of government dispersed all over the empire. In Egypt a minor Albanian functionary, originally from Kavala, Macedonia, Mohammed Ali Pasha, was sent there in 1800 at the turn of the century with a contingent of 300 Albanian troops to help native and British troops expel the French occupiers and to quell some local disturbances. Eventually

he established himself as a provincial governor and proved to be a resourceful ally for the Sultan in keeping check over restless regional disturbances including the rebellion in Greece.

By the early part of the nineteenth century Ali Pasha of Tepeleni was already well-established as a vassal overlord of the region (Brewer, 2001). He held court for civilian and diplomatic affairs with the outside world at the city of Janinna (Northwest Greece) and at Tepeleni (Southwest Albania), which served as his military base and center of operations. Traveling on horseback from Janinna, Lord Byron, the famed English poet, went to Tepeleni and visited his court. He subsequently recalled his impressions in his long poem *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (see appendix 1), pointedly identifying the men of Macedon with their blood-red scarves among Ali Pasha's multiethnic military as a distinct ethnic group. Thus, in the first documented instance, a cultural feature, namely, the crimson (blood-red) scarves over their vests and *foustanella*, marks the Macedonians as a separate ethnic identity in sharp contrast to the previous language-based tentative attempt by Major Leake to identify the Macedonians potentially as Bulgarians.

Here is a first glance into the Macedonians; there is already a question as to who they are. Are they Macedonians or Bulgarians?

Ali Pasha, in his time, was well known in Europe's social as well as diplomatic and military circles. The French novelist Alexandre Dumas mentions him favorably (but erroneously) as a person of noble character in his major work *The Count of Monte Cristo*. For the West, he was the little Napoleon of the Balkans, reflecting his talent for war and success in battle. At a more local level, there is to this day a lasting place for him in peoples' memories for his many daring exploits against competing bandit chieftains whom he subdued, but more so, for his repeated defiance and show of independence from Turkish absolutism that eventually would cost him his life a decade later.

Impressed by his military and diplomatic talents and show of local power, he was offered the overall command to lead the Greek revolution by the numerous *Kapitans* (chieftains) of the rebel guerrilla/outlaw bands operating in Rumeli (Epirus) and the Morea (Peloponnesus).³ Almost all were Christian Albanians who had served him earlier in his court as pages and, later on in adulthood, as officers in his military contingents (Brewer, 2001; Plomer, 1935). They hoped that at this critical moment, he would abandon Islam, turn to Christianity, and lead them. They were turned down, as such offers, in his estimate, were made by men of doubtful character who had comically skirted

in the past between loyalty and treason. His distrust and paranoia of those around him could inspire no more than a momentary loyalty. Treason, treachery, and shifting loyalties were the rule of the day sapping effectiveness throughout the Sultan's realm. In time Ali the Lion, as he came to be known locally, passed on as a folk hero in the surrounding regions despite extreme cruelty to friends and foes alike, exceeding even the most imaginative depravity, treachery, and all-around mayhem (Plomer, 1935). His valor is still celebrated in Greek and Macedonian folk songs⁴ as apparently, even a downtrodden, subjugated people need heroes; a most primitive Homeric need at that in those whom history has left behind; a need suppressing even elementary considerations as to decency and nobility in those that pass on from the past as heroes of the present. Hatred for Ottoman rule had by now reached such levels of desperation; and, already, outbreaks in Greece (1821) and Serbia (1815) were leading the way toward independence. Ali Pasha had shown them, and later on the Macedonians, that overwhelming Turkish military might could be defeated.

Macedonia was a quiescent *terra incognita* when Major Leake passed through; a *terra incognita* in the sense that the Macedonians were unknown to the outside world and the Macedonians themselves did not know who they were. No doubt, the centuries of occupation especially that of the preceding 400-year Ottoman Turkish rule had erased all public memory of who they were. They were functionally amnesic regarding Macedonia's past; and, thus, no organized movement against the conqueror could be formed. My own ancestor Damian (or *Damche* in the Macedonian vernacular), from whom we acquired the family name, helped build the Patriarchate Orthodox Church in Bitusha (Lerin/Florina) whereupon he gained his reputation as the strongest man in the village as he single-handedly lifted the large round stone on which, until the present time, the altar stood.

In the wake of Ali Pasha's recently acquired dominion over Western Macedonia, newly arrived Moslem Albanian settlers placed themselves in strategically located small hamlets among the mountain villages. They were to dominate and control the surrounding local population for the town-dwelling Turkish overlords in nearby Monastir/Bitola, soon to become an important military and diplomatic center in the empire. Down below in the fertile low lands were their large *ciflicks* (estates) that had been originally ceded to the conquering Ottoman Turks, the "Ghazis" in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. As acolytes to the Turks, the Albanians were there to ensure peace over the tenant Christian farmers tiling the land. At times a Christian villager would rise up in rage and punish the Albanians and then leave for

the mountains or exile in America.⁵ There was once a man called “Yankoula” who left our village never to return, save for one singular punitive raid selectively administered on culprit Albanians who had forced his wife into another marriage.

As the nineteenth century wore on, the role of the Albanians began to diminish. The Ottoman Empire was now modernizing its army along European lines; and, at best they were to become an irregular force in times of need or integrated into regular army units. Concurrently, as their role diminished, a drive to autonomy and independence was about to begin in their own native Albania.⁶ All day long, the Albanians would remain idle in their *Koulas* (fortified guard towers) in the Christian villages, except when preoccupied by petty feuds, personal vendettas, and punitive raids on targeted villagers. Some served as field guards watching over Turkish as well as Christian-held lands. At the end of the day, they would return to their homes in small isolated hamlets. Thanks to their conversion to Islam and, importantly, their acquired right to bear arms, they would have the Christian villagers till their small plots of land on Sundays to provide life’s bare necessities. The Albanians were a simple people, living a Spartan life, and were never to acquire the more sophisticated taste for luxury and polygamy of the indolent, city-dwelling Turks in towns nearby. Generally, according to traditional Albanian canon, they left untouched wives, children, and families of men they targeted for punishment. My mother’s childhood stories even told of their piety as they would stoop to pick up from the ground the slightest bread crumb in a graceful/grateful acknowledgment to their Allah for such bounties as had been given them. Childhood stories of my mother also told of their tragic end, when in 1923, a decade after the Turkish overlords left Macedonia with the end of Ottoman rule, tattered and battered remnants from small hamlets trekked their way in loaded oxen carts toward Eastern Thrace and safety in Moslem Turkey (see also Karakasidou, 1997: 294). Few survived beyond the nearest mountain range, according to my mother’s estimate.⁷

For more than 400 years the Ottomans had ruled Macedonia and the surrounding Balkan provinces that in time either alone or with the help of foreign powers would evolve into the present-day Serbia (1815), Greece (1831), and Bulgaria (1878). Ethnic identity had no real meaning, in the Turkish era, if it ever had any meaning at all. Long ago it had lost its significance in the daily life of the Christians in the empire, nor, did it ever have any in the preceding Roman, Eastern Roman, and Byzantine Empires. Now, only religion mattered since as Christians they could not bear arms nor take part in

the official life of the empire. In the absence of schools and/or other means of communication with the outside world, the Macedonians like their Greek Christian brethren further down south waited to be enlightened by outside observers, by outside experts, informed about their regional history and problems. The Greeks were more fortunate in this as there were strong sympathetic Philhellenic organizations in the capitals of most major powers in Europe (e.g., Lord Byron's circle in England); and, closer still for material and military expertise were the highly supportive branches of the Phanariote *Philike Etaireia* (Friendship Society)⁸ in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in Russia and Romania. This organization would in time rekindle Greek national consciousness and give it focus and direction (Brewer, 2001). Moreover, the Greek language presented, if nothing else, a demonstrable linkage with the ancient Greeks to the outside world and thus cleared the way for recognition by the Great Powers as a historically well-established ethnic identity with a justifiable claim to nationhood and independence.

By contrast, no such linguistic continuity existed for the Macedonians as the original ancient Macedonian language had been lost in the intervening millennia. Thus, for them, no external material and intellectual support would materialize. When it did come, in the form of schools, churches, and, eventually, small armed rebel-guerrilla bands toward the end of the same century and into the next century, it was foreign and divisive (Brailsford, 1906/1971; Perry, 1988; Sonnichsen, 1909/2004; Seraphinoff and Stefou, 2008). It took advantage of the linguistic fault lines of the then-existing Macedonia serving exclusively the expansionist dreams of the surrounding Balkan countries of Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria, and even Romania that now claimed them as their own, that is, the Slav, Vlach, and Greek speakers of Ottoman Macedonia (Shashko, 1995). The intent was to win hearts and minds and turn the Macedonians into patriotic Serbs, Greeks, Bulgarians, and Romanians. Inevitably, these outside forces came into conflict not only among themselves, but also against an initially inconsequential native Macedonian revolutionary organization within Macedonia that was just now being formed by a small nucleus of an emerging educated elite of the majority Slav-speaking population. This was the infamous IMRO (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization) that was to become, after a little more than a decade, Europe's most dreaded terrorist organization at a time when terrorism still had some degree of respectability. In this way, Macedonia entered the twentieth century divided in spirit and ideology with a tragic fratricidal civil war on its hands and an insurmountable

drain on resources and manpower for the planned struggle against the Ottoman Turks from 1896 to 1908 (Polianski, 1972). Against this backdrop of ignorance of the past, lack of international recognition as a separate ethnic identity, and lack of a native educated elite as a counter, events in Macedonia were completely dominated by foreign initiatives (Rossos, 1991b). Worse still, the Macedonians were splintered into numerous factions and ideologies even before the critical first decade of revolution and civil strife against the Ottomans, ending in a dismal failure, with catastrophic consequences, as nothing was resolved or achieved.

Such were the circumstances that set the stage for the subsequent vicious circle of misinformation, confusion, and distortion under the erroneous, foreign-imposed rubric of a multiethnic Macedonia that has since held Macedonia hostage to foreign initiatives and has given rise to the incredibly misplaced Macedonian Question (e.g., Danforth, 1991; Glenny, 1996; Ivanovski, 1992; Perry, 1988; Pettifer, 1992; Roudometof, 2000) based on an erroneous, undisclosed, unrecognized tacit assumption that language/linguistic dialect in the case of Macedonia could be used to ascribe ethnic identity as it had for Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece earlier. Had the Macedonians been accepted at the outset as Macedonians with a distinctive ethnic identity, there never would have been a Macedonian Question. That is, there never would have been a question as to “who the Macedonians are,” “to whom Macedonia belongs,” “how many of each, Turks, Greeks, Albanians, Vlachs, Bulgarians,” and “extent of geographical boundaries,” all components of the perennially unsolved Macedonian Question (Danforth, 1991; Glenny, 1996; Ivanovski, 1992; Perry, 1988; Pettifer, 1992). This is a question that still haunts major power diplomacy today (Daskalovski, 2006); a question that baffles the Macedonians as to how it came to be; a question reluctantly addressed below; a hundred years later, a hundred years too late, perhaps.

The Macedonians, at the dawn of the twentieth century, had no inkling of what the ancient Macedonian language was, had mistakenly assumed that ancient Greek had been their language, and that, therefore, were Greek; importantly, they had no literary legacy left to them and, also, they themselves had only a rudimentary Slav-oriented dialect (written at times in the Greek or Cyrillic alphabets; also see note 2). The Macedonians could not speak for themselves, as they had no literary language of their own; worse still, there was a clear disconnect with the ancient Macedonians that was never bridged. They had no heritage, no history to appeal to, no native institutions, and total amnesia of the past. In a real sense, they were a lost people

with no defenses against divisive/destructive *deethnicization* outside influence in the form of schools, churches, and, eventually, armed rebel bands. By the end of the nineteenth century, after 500 years of Ottoman rule, this was the outcome.

It was in such circumstances that Sir Arthur J. Evans, the discoverer of the Minoan remains at Knossos, Crete, wrote his famous letter to the *Times* of London (September 29, 1903), stating emphatically that “there are no Macedonians,” just “Bulgars, Greeks, Roumans (Vlachs), Albanians, Turks, and Gypsies.” This conceptual framework became widely accepted by the Great Powers and it was tailor-made for the expansionist dreams of neighboring Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria, and even Romania (Shashko, 1995). These Balkan Powers had, for a long time, planned to carve up Macedonia, and these dreams were realized in the first and second Balkan wars of 1912/1913 following the failure of the Macedonian insurgency from 1903 to 1908 (Perry, 1988; Seraphinoff and Stefou, 2008).

Here is a second glance into the Macedonians; the Macedonians of a century ago attempting and failing to emerge as a nation against a backdrop of a confused historical past with no international support; or even the bare minimum, recognition as people.

In international diplomatic circles, the error of regarding the Macedonian identity as being multiethnic, that is, the assumption that there are no Macedonians, began quite early in the twentieth century when the hyphenated “Bulgarian-speaking,” “Greek-speaking,” “Vlach-speaking,” and “Albanian-speaking” labels were dropped by subsequent surveyors of the Macedonian ethnological landscape (by Sir Arthur J. Evans, 1903, and H. N. Brailsford, 1906/1971, among others) in favor of the simplistic “Bulgarian,” “Greek,” “Vlach,” and “Albanian” appellations as labels designating ethnic identity.⁹ This multiple ethnicity categorization of the Macedonians at a time when they were just beginning to awaken following the 500-year dark age period could not be effectively countered by the small newly emergent Macedonian educated elite that itself had been misled along these mistaken ethnicity categorizations by the host countries of Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, and Romania where the Macedonians had gone for higher education. This mislabeling, which continued throughout the twentieth century, had a devastating effect on the development of the Macedonian identity as it fostered the idea that *there are no Macedonians at all*. Macedonia was understood to be a region peopled by various ethnic groups—not a nation, but a region to be annexed by the surrounding “mother countries” upon the