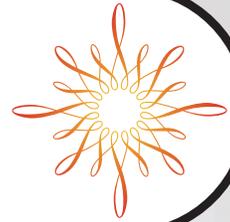


UMD Voice



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UMDV Interviews Evgenija Natsoulidou, Editor of Zadruga Macedonia, from Voden, Aegean Macedonia



An Interview With Ziya Tong

UMD Voice



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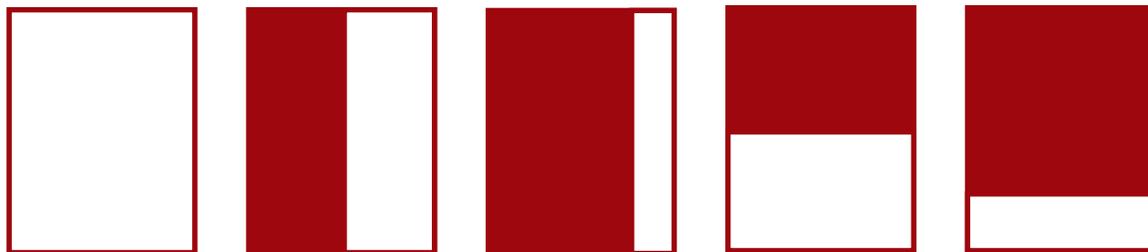
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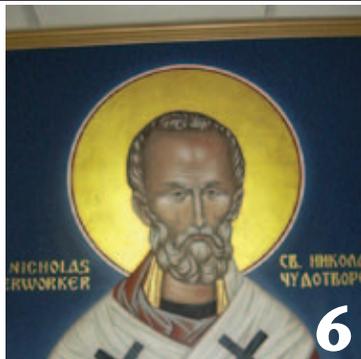
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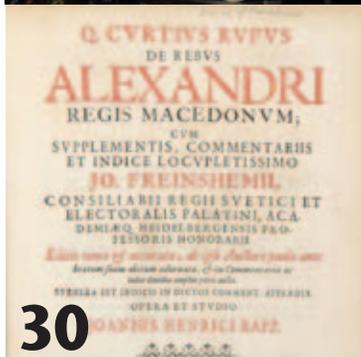
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Founded in 2004, United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD) is the leading international non-governmental organization addressing the interests and needs of Macedonians and Macedonian communities throughout the world.

Headquartered in Washington, D.C., UMD has an office in Melbourne, Australia and Toronto, Canada and representatives in Paris, London, Brussels, Vienna, Kiev, St. Petersburg, and Stuttgart.

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Letter from the President



Dear Reader,

While Washingtonians went on vacation in August, UMD headquarters was busy organizing a senior Congressional staff delegation to Macedonia. I had the opportunity to accompany the delegation, which was a great success. The Macedonian government and people welcomed the delegation with open arms and thanked them for the United States' strong support of Macedonia. The individuals chosen to be part of the delegation truly represented the American people in the best light.

In this issue of UMD Voice, you will find articles on various different topics ranging from a Roman historian's views of Macedonia and the Czar of the Pirin, Jane Sandanski to Kavadarci artists visiting Southern Florida and Habitat for Humanity's mission in Macedonia. Our UMD Voice team, headed by Editor Mark Branov and Development Director Stojan Nikolov, has done a superb job once again! This issue also features a detailed reporting of our 2nd Annual UMD Global Conference held in Toronto, Canada this past June, which brought over 1,000 guests from close to 20 countries around the world. Plans for the 3rd Annual UMD Global Conference are underway! It will be held June 23-25, 2011 at the J.W. Marriott, next door to the White House in D.C. We are planning a big celebration for the 20th Anniversary of Macedonian Independence – **hope to see you there!**

Late last year, I was doing a search on famous Canadian-Macedonians to invite to our Global Conference, and came across the name Ziya Tong. I dug deeper and found out that Ziya's father is Chinese, and her mother is Macedonian, and sister to the famous Macedonian painter Ruben Korubin. She is also the co-host of the Discovery Channel's Daily Planet. Enjoy the interview we did with Ziya in this issue of UMD Voice!

Ziya's background brings me to the topic of inter-marriage within our community. Many of our male ancestors, when emigrating outside of Macedonia, brought with them their Macedonian wives, or sent for Macedonian wives after they settled in their new homelands. Today, this is not the case. Many Macedonians are marrying outside of our community. I have met mixed Macedonian-Indian, Macedonian-Irish, Macedonian-African-American, Macedonian-Lebanese, Macedonian-Ukrainian marriages, etc...I have cousins who are married to non-Macedonians. However, in all these marriages, I have seen the parents take great effort for their children to not forget their Macedonian heritage. We cannot expect that every Macedonian will marry a Macedonian, but we can encourage the upholding of our rich heritage and traditions! This is the key to the future of our community!

To those who are UMD members, please stay tuned to your e-mail for updates on UMD activities, and please renew your membership for 2011 before December 31. For those who are not members, I encourage you to please join us, and support our organization's important mission. **UMD relies on the support of our members!**

Yours truly,

Metodija A. Koloski
President

Editorial



The Aboriginal People of Macedonia

By Mark Branov

"I am a red man. If the Great Spirit had desired me to be a white man, he would have made me so in the first place. He put in your heart certain wishes and plans, in my heart he put other and different desires. Each man is good in his sight. It is not necessary for Eagles to be Crows."

-Sitting Bull, Lakota Sioux holy man and war chief, 1831-1890

"What do we call a nation? – People who are of the same origin and who speak the same words and who live and make friends of each other, who have the same customs and songs and entertainment are what we call a nation, and the place where that people lives is called the people's country. Thus the Macedonians also are a nation and the place which is theirs is called Macedonia."

-Gjorgi Pulevski, Macedonian writer and revolutionary, 1817-1895

I have always had a fascination with the history of the Native Americans. Even as a young lad, I would watch black-and-white cowboy movies from another era with my dad, and I would find myself rooting for the underdog. I remember a school trip to Sainte-Marie Among The Hurons like it was yesterday; an outdoor museum of an early Jesuit settlement in the woods of Southern Ontario. Later, I would quickly devour historical books like *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* by Dee Brown, and I would find myself compelled to watch any imperfect attempts to portray the Indians sympathetically that Hollywood had to offer, films such as *The Mission*, or *Last of The Mohicans*.

I think part of the reason for this fascination is in my ethnic Macedonian heritage, and in particular, my roots in Aegean Macedonia. I have always had sympathy for the immense sense of loss that accompanies being forced from one's own land, and how this particular kind of trauma can echo from generation to generation. Also, I have always felt I could relate to what is meant by an official government policy to negate and assimilate an ethnic minority, because such a policy had affected my own family.

Years ago, I had an opportunity to meet a man from Arizona who was part Apache. I asked him a lot of questions about his people's history, and he obliged me in great detail; everything from the forced relocations of the 1800s to the residential school system. It was all part of an official Americanization policy at the time. It began with exiling large numbers of natives from all the fertile land, and then it was followed by the forced assimilation of those who remained. Outlawing the Apache religion, banning their cultural traditions and music, destroying their language and even the changing of personal names all played vital roles. As I learned more, I was amazed at how many similarities I could spot between the forced Americanization experience of the Apache nation, and the

forced Hellenization experience of the Aegean Macedonians in the 20th century.

I can never forget when the man told me about how Indian children would be punished by their schoolteachers. Whenever a child had been caught speaking their native language, they would be made to kneel down on a bed of rocks, and hold out their arms straight, at each side. Then, the teacher would put a heavy book in each hand, and force the child to hold them still.

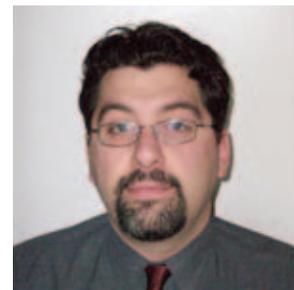
When I heard about this, I was shocked, but not because it was a shocking example. The man's description of an early American schoolteacher's method of punishment - on another continent, at another time - was almost identical in every way to what my own Baba had told me about the Greek school she was forced to attend, in the village Ostrovo, Vodensko. But her story was not just similar, mind you! Her experience was practically the same; whenever a student was caught speaking what the Greek teacher called "Βουλγαρικά", the Macedonian child would have to kneel on rocks, arms spread out, and hold a Greek Bible in each hand. The two stories were so similar, it makes you wonder if there is some kind of manual out there somewhere, passed along from one regime to another.

This is just one small part of the quiet, almost forgotten history of Macedonia, the history of the 20th century, and the history of the regimes of General Metaxas and others. It's the part that pro-Greek historians spend little time examining; the part that hits too close to home, the part that's still hidden by the shroud of the Cold War. But it is the part that lives on in people's hearts, and fuels modern political phenomena much more than stories of Aleksandar Veliki ever will, for either side.

The facts are that modern ethnic Macedonians are the aboriginal people of the land called Macedonia – places called Kostur, Stip, Voden, Ohrid, Gorna Dzhumaja, Lerin, Tetovo, and Solun. The blood of the Macedonians is in the soil. Greece never ruled any part of Macedonia until 1912, and no amount of propaganda from Athens is ever going to change that. Similarly, no one will silence the Aegean Macedonians of 2010, of 2035, of 2060, and beyond.

The Greek people must confront their national myth – the myth that Greece is an ethnically pure state. They must realize that if the Greek state was going to eradicate the Aegean Macedonians, it would have succeeded long ago, when it had much more persuasive means at its disposal. What fuels Greek fanaticism in 2010 has nothing to do with the Republic. Rather, it has to do with what is to become of the "Last of the Mohicans."

It is time for full recognition of the Macedonian nation, culture and language by Greece, both domestically and internationally. Together, the new generation of Macedonians and Greeks must build an atmosphere of mutual respect. And, they must accept nothing less, because basic respect is the only way forward.



The Icons of Gligor Stefanov at Sveti Nikola

By Vladimir Jancevski, Art Historian; Translated to English by Vera Najdovska

The conception and design of the iconographic artwork in Sveti Nikola Church in Windsor, Ontario, Canada, represents a monumental task. It is the largest art project in Windsor and Essex County, both in number of compositions and painted figures. The development and design of the iconography of the church has been in progress for the last fifteen years, and has been completed in two phases. From the beginning, the project has been led by the artist Gligor Stefanov and ARTSOME studio.

One of the key characteristics that defines Sveti Nikola Church of Windsor as an authentic Orthodox church design is the fact that the interior space is composed of parallel iconostasis on all four walls, therefore covering all the space within the church in a full circle.

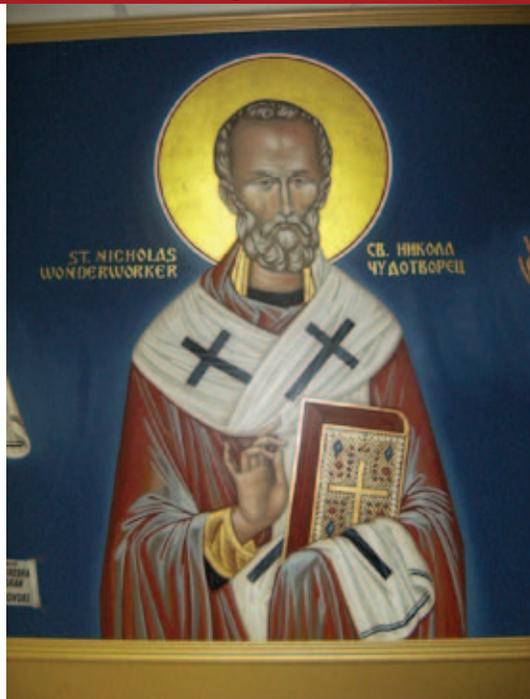
This model of interior décor for Sveti Nikola Church was technically limited, due to the inability to paint directly on the walls of the church. Therefore, a whole new concept was developed. The icons were painted on wooden panels covered with material and placed in golden relief defined frames. On the frames, relief seraphims are represented as one of the dominant and repetitive elements. Traditionally, the icons resemble the work of the silversmith – a rich canonical tradition. Even though these carefully chosen details are for emphatic decorative function and for the purpose of achieving highly impressive visual effect, they do not take away from the iconographic canon.

Viewers' attention is drawn to the impressive ornamentation of the halos of the saints. The halos are made of wood and then covered with gold leaf, symbolizing the radiance of the Divine Light or Grace of God.

In the spacious nave of Sveti Nikola Church in Windsor, the art work follows a two-section disposition east to west, along the length of the south and north walls, adopting the height of the architectural composition of the church.

Above the nave, on the central part of the slightly vaulted ceiling dominates a half-figure icon of Christ the Almighty–Pantokrator, depicted in circular form. The arrangement of the icons in the second section is unusual, since compositions are not arranged in order of occurrence as in the gospel texts. On the south wall, selections of ten icons form one mural of the Easter feast, with special attention is given to the Icon of Crucifixion. On the north wall, again ten scenes are composed with other themes, such as the apocryphal life of the Holy Virgin, as well as themes from the Old Testament.

Between the scenes on the second section on the north wall, a composition of the Holy Synod of



Macedonian saints stand out from the rest, and it is the first of its kind. Here, Stefanov accolades the representation of seven Macedonian saints, notable for their spiritual, educational and cultural traditions of Macedonia. The grouping includes Sveti Kiril and Metodi, Sveti Kliment and Naum, as well as Sveta Zlata Meglenska, Sveti Gjorgji of Kratovo and Sveti Nektorej of Bitola. The saints are grouped in two rows, and easily identified by their physical features and appearance. In the upper part, they are embraced by the Virgin Mary (Znamenije).

In accordance to the iconographic canon, the first section of the interior of an Orthodox church is reserved for life size and full-figure saints. Therefore, on the south and north wall, thirty four life-size full-figure saints grace the walls. In between the saints, there are representatives from

all religious hierarchical orders; archbishops, apostles, hermits, warriors, healers, and feminine saints. Incorporated among them are some of the above mentioned notable Macedonian saints, who dominate on the south wall. The church's patron, Sveti Nikola, is represented twice in the interior décor of the church; once in full life-size figure on the south wall of the church, and again in front of the main entrance of the church where he is portrayed from the waist up, together with the Virgin Mary and Christ, who are symbolically confirming his status of an archbishop.

The territory of Macedonia is rich in Byzantine art and traditional Orthodox iconography. Stefanov is influenced by the art of his homeland, and follows the best and most notable examples of Byzantine art. When composing the icon scenes, he draws inspiration from his cultural and spiritual heritage and also from Byzantine art as a whole. His main source of inspiration is the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary – Majka Bogorodica, Perivletna, in Ohrid, which was built in 1295 AD. In his compositions, Stefanov focuses on all details through intensity of color and playfulness of the lines of the clothes, emphasizing numerous dramatic events that are described in the gospels or the apocryphal texts. The figures are painted with specific proportion and excellent drawing skills. Special attention is given to every detail, including color harmony. The background is filled with dark grey color, whose dynamics and expression shows the dramatic lives lived by the saints, be it the life of temptations or the sacrifices. In opposition to their suffering and hard lives, the faces of the saints express peace and tranquility.

To what degree can a contemporary artist, who has demonstrated his creative maturity in his contemporary work, express creativity



within the frame of one strict canonical artistic tradition, which is theologically predefined? The hardest thing for an icon artist is to find a balance between observance of the canon and creativity, and also balance between following tradition and innovation, which is always individual and an integral part of art. It is precisely this that makes Stefanov's project unique.

The authenticity of an Orthodox iconographic art assembly is established by its representation of the scenes in compliance with the assigned space, as well as composition of individual scenes, the placement of the figures within the scenes, the expressiveness of their bodies, style and characteristics attributed. It is exactly this that is specifically important for the continuity of tradition in the iconography of an Orthodox church, which literally and strictly obeys the "word", in accordance to the canon,

and manifests its actual conservation, even though it is evident that iconographic art work has also evolved over time.

Gligor Stefanov's work shows strong individuality but within the form where the idea was conceived, and that is evident in Sveti Nikola. The formality of Byzantine iconographic art, canon or iconography, gospel principles and his vast artistic knowledge is evident throughout this massive project. As an artist, Stefanov not only shows technical skills, but also a deep understanding of the principles of Byzantine art, which is theologically fundamental. He also emphasizes his feelings associated with the dramatic events of the Bible that are featured in the iconography, using the symbolic role of colors in Byzantine aesthetics. With hope, this work of art will last forever, and inspire all who encounter them. ✨

Help Bisera's Dreams Come True!

By Cynthia Beebe, Annie Wright School, Tacoma, WA

Bisera Bogoevska is from Macedonia - a beautiful but economically developing country in Southeastern Europe - and her lifelong dream was always to come to America.

Bisera studied diligently and won many awards, including 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place in national competitions in Biology, Ecology, Physics, Poetry, and Astronomy. She was declared a Student of Distinction, and received a special award from the mayor of her hometown Kumanovo.

In her sophomore year of high school in Macedonia, Bisera learned about the Annie Wright School, in Tacoma, Washington. It is a very challenging college preparatory school, with a boarding department for international students. Bisera applied for admission, and because of her financial need and her stellar academic achievements, she was given close to a full scholarship to Annie Wright. Even though her father died when she was three years old and her mother has struggled to make ends meet at a shoe factory, Bisera managed to save the money for a year's living expenses through tremendous hard work of her own, and arrived at Annie Wright last August.

The school originally believed this would be her junior year, but she was determined to graduate as quickly as possible and go to college here. Bisera has taken three years of high school, and graduated with high honors in June 2010. She also managed to do this at age seventeen, thousands of miles from home for the first time in her life, studying college prep courses in a second language, while working 20 hours a week on campus.

Bisera's next goal is to get an engineering degree at an American university. However, she was told when she came here that it would be nearly impossible financially for her to attend college in the U.S. without private money, since very few colleges or universities give financial scholarships to first-year international students. Nonetheless that has not deterred Bisera, and all this year she has tried to figure out a way to attend college this fall here in the U.S.

She is on a student visa, however, which only permits her to work 20 hours a week on the campus where she attends school. After her first semester of college, Bisera will be able to work at least 16 hours on campus and earn some of the money



she needs, but whatever she earns will not even come close to covering her tuition alone. She and those who know her are certain she will receive scholarship funding after this first year, if she can simply manage to pay for her first year of college.

Bisera's only hope of attending college this year is to seek donations. All she needs is enough money to attend college this year. We are convinced her stellar academic performance will come close to guaranteeing that she will receive scholarships for the rest of her college years.

In her college application she wrote, "My dream is so big that I feel I must use every minute to move forward in some way." She has devoted every minute of the past year to accomplishing her goal of getting an engineering degree from an American university, and we're convinced that she will succeed! We are committed to doing what we can, and there are others who are also actively helping. We hope you will be one of them: Bisera is determined to do great things, and you will be proud to have been part of her success. Please visit <http://bettingonbisera.blogspot.com/> and support this brilliant young woman.

I have been so amazed by Bisera's drive and work ethic. Actually, it has been an interesting (and sometimes humorous) experience for us to watch her trying to learn to be "bored" - she has spent her entire life studying or working, or both, but after graduating in June she found herself doing neither. Desperately wanting to earn money but not allowed to work due to her student visa restrictions has been difficult... If I had the means to pay for Bisera to go to the best engineering school, I would surely do it. I have never met a more deserving young lady!

- Maggie Elinel, Bisera's home stay "mom" in the U.S.

Bisera is grateful and resourceful, and highly motivated to succeed. I believe that with just a little help in the short term, she will do something spectacular. We want to be a part of that. That's why we're Betting on Bisera!

-Brenda Bisciglia, helped Bisera with her university applications

Please visit: <http://bettingonbisera.blogspot.com>, and support this brilliant young woman. ✨

Protecting Ethnic Macedonian Culture in Egejska

By Mark Branov

One of many active ethnic Macedonian groups in Aegean Macedonia, the Educational and Cultural Movement of Voden (Edessa, Northern Greece) has a clear mandate. The local people in this historical town created it for the love of their family traditions within the rich ethnic Macedonian culture; a culture officially oppressed by the Greek government for decades.

With a strictly non-political agenda, the Voden group works to build partnerships with like-minded organizations from all parts of Macedonia and beyond, to highlight Macedonian cultural expressions from the region. One major initiative is recording traditional folklore and artistic expression that can easily disappear in Greece, where the officially unrecognized Macedonian language is actively threatened. These precious artistic works include traditional music, song, and dance, as well as an oral story-telling tradition and ancient fables passed down from grandparents to grandchildren. The group also assists the emergence of new ethnic Macedonian artists in Greece, who often have no means to display their art, and organizes free lessons for people who want to read, write, speak and understand Macedonian language better.

Despite the constant danger of recriminations from extremist groups, the Voden patriots have taken the responsibility to conserve their cultural customs and heritage head on, so this inheritance from the ancestors may pass to the next generation.

Last May, the group also started the publication of a periodical magazine called Zadruga. We spoke with the editor of this publication, Evgenija Natsoulidou:

MB: Could you please tell us some details about the origins of this group, and why you felt the desire to become to be a part of it?

EN: Many Macedonians in the region of Voden had felt the need to create



a Macedonian cultural association where Greek influence and imposition would not be possible. I am saying this because most of the Macedonian cultural associations are actually financed by the Greek state (municipalities, prefectures), so they have to obey some “conditions”. This situation makes it impossible for these associations to function freely, and present themselves as ethnic Macedonian, and not Greek-Macedonian. An example is that almost all these associations have a dancing group but none has singing groups or singers to sing traditional Macedonian songs. These associations are not allowed to make any historical research about our homeland. They are not allowed to safeguard oral traditions in Macedonian language (tales, stories, poems, etc) and of course there is no way they can be allowed to do something to save our local Macedonian dialects. After much thought, some of us came to a decision to create a non-profit private company, for which we did not need a court permission for the purposes of the association, only the signatures of 25 founding members, as required by law. And of course, our company

cannot be closed or declared illegal by a court decision. So, now we have a tool to do all those things cultural associations are supposed to do.

MB: What do you see as the greatest threats to Macedonian language, culture and traditions in the modern Hellenic Republic?

EN: If we do not do something to safeguard, to record and teach our local Macedonian language, it will be extinguished. It is still alive and we can save lots of these old dialects in Egejska, but we have to act quickly. Macedonians like me in our 50s or older still have memories of our ancestors who did not speak other languages but their mother tongue, Macedonian. The younger generations do not have this experience and memory. Many people like me do not speak Macedonian anymore, others speak the dialect, but their pronunciation is already altered and influenced by the Greek language they speak every day. We have to do something very soon otherwise our language will become a dead language. But, I would like to note, I am insisting on the safeguard of the dialects. I am not talking about teaching of the official language of the Republic of Macedonia, as that is not our first concern. The reason is that our local languages are in danger of being extinguished and need to be saved. Of course, if the Greek government decided to allow the teaching of Macedonian language, the introduction of the official one of the Republic of Macedonia in the state schools in Egejska would be a must.

MB: Some say that the current government in Greece is more moderate than before, and the overall environment is becoming less hostile to ethnic Macedonian citizens of Greece who publicly express their culture. Is there any truth to that idea?

EN: If they compare today with Metaxas times, well, yes, we have a huge

difference. My late mother 15 years ago felt so happy and free because she could speak her mother tongue in public without being harassed and could hear her beloved Macedonian songs on a cassette player! But, no, things are far from being normal by European standards of human rights. We want to express our Macedonian identity freely. But, sometimes, it is also our fault because we do not challenge the Greek state enough: we sit back and expect others to do the job for us. I know it is not easy to overcome old fears, and the Greek state still has its mechanisms to keep those fears alive and well, but somebody has to come forward and show the way to others, too! And fortunately, we have many such examples now and these will make a big difference.

MB: I understand that, despite the ongoing international disputes between the two countries, cross-border trade between local communities in Greece and in the R. of Macedonia has been increasing, with Greek citizens of all ethnicities visiting Macedonia more than before, and Macedonian citizens visiting Greece. Do you think that these personal interactions might contribute to stronger cultural ties among ethnic Macedonians in both countries, or an increased understanding with the ethnic Greek community in the region?

EN: Of course! It is imperative to make people come close to one another, to come to know one another. Macedonians from both sides of the border and Greeks need this. Do not forget that politics bring fear to the Greek population about the Macedonians: even today, many Greeks feel insecure in Egejska, as most of them come from the families of refugees who escaped from Turkey. They also have memories of the pain and suffering of their people back in 1922. They are afraid they may have the same fate their ancestors had, and be expelled again. These fears may sound silly to us, but we must have consideration for this problem. As for Macedonians from Egejska, they know they are not Greeks, they know who they are. But Greek propaganda

has made many of them think that the Macedonians in the Republic, or in Pirin (Bulgaria) are a completely different population! If they get in contact, many of them will change their minds about this, I am sure, and will realize we are one nation.

MB: Please tell us about Zadruga, your group's new publication.

EN: Zadruga magazine is published for those Macedonians in Egejska who have no access to internet. The aim of the magazine is to present our culture, history, traditions in a way that our people may feel proud about our identity. It is so frustrating to be called names by Greek people for so long, to be treated like "ignorant peasants," and not being able to answer to them because of lack of education in Macedonian matters! And you cannot imagine how ignorant we are about Macedonia and Macedonians, here in Egejska! This is because we have access exclusively to Greek culture and propaganda... Many people in Egejska still ignore the existence of our magazine, so it will take some time, but we are optimistic it will have great success. The next edition will be ready soon. People who have internet access can also read some very interesting Macedonian blogs in Greek that were created years ago and have had great success among the Egejci. They can also get some information there, about political issues that concern human rights.

MB: I noticed that your website and publication are currently in Greek language only. Do you have any plans to offer translations in Macedonian or English?

EN: Zadruga is mostly written in Greek because almost nobody in Egejska knows how to read Cyrillic. We put some small texts in Cyrillic (little stories, songs, small poems) and the corresponding texts written in Greek alphabet, with no translation so we may get some people to be interested and try to read it as it is. If we put a Greek translation, most people will not even try to read the part in Macedonian language! I do not think it is possible to have a second magazine with translations in English

and Macedonian languages. We already are making a very big effort for Zadruga, with minimum resources and no professional help of any kind! But I have an idea that could be a kind of direct connection between us in Egejska and the Diaspora: we could give to your magazine some articles we publish in Zadruga, translated into English, for you to publish in a special section dedicated to Egejska Makedonija! We could also give you some more articles about activities and news about our people here. I think this could interest your readers.

MB: I agree, and thank you for this excellent offer to exchange materials. Maybe UMDV articles about the Diaspora could interest your readers as well. My final question: what are some ways that ethnic Macedonians in the Diaspora can assist your group?

EN: Our group needs all the help it can get. Right now, with the economic crisis in Greece, it is very difficult to make people spend even the smallest amount for donations to our association. I think that the Macedonians in the Diaspora should be supportive of our people in Egejska, Pirinska, Mala Prespa and Golo Brdo. Unfortunately, all the attention and resources go for the "name issue" matter, and the Diaspora leaves to their fate the Macedonians who still are not free and suffer abuses and lack of human rights. The Diaspora should be supportive to the activities of many groups who try to get their rights, but always (measuring) the success of such activities. Many Macedonians of the Diaspora complain they are giving their money to support various groups here and there, but after many years the situation is the same: they feel they are wasting their resources and their time. This should not happen anymore: today technology gives us the possibility to be able to have a more successful contact and to have all the information we need to create a climate of confidence and solidarity among us.

For more information, please visit:
<http://edessavoden.gr/>

Congressional Staff Delegation Visits Macedonia and Turkey

By TCA and UMD Staff



Congressional Staff Delegation and Turkish Friends on the steps of St. Bogorodica Perivlepta in Ohrid, which houses the remains of St. Clement of Ohrid.

A delegation of 18 senior Congressional staffers sponsored by the Turkish Coalition of America (TCA) visited the Macedonia and Turkey from August 15-22, 2010. The delegation visit to Macedonia was organized with the United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD) with a view to educate senior advisors about the current state of political, economic and social affairs of Macedonia and the country's relationship with the United States and Turkey.

"We set out with the goal of providing participants with a deeper perspective on the region and the crucial importance of this relationship to the U.S.," said G. Lincoln McCurdy, President of TCA. "Thanks to the very informative sessions with the highest representatives of the Macedonian government and other institutions, we are leaving the country with a wealth of understanding about the challenges faced by this country, the key role that the United States and Turkey play for Macedonia and the region, as well as the culture and history of the region and the deep bond between the peoples of Turkey and Macedonia. Our delegation saw that Macedonia has become a responsible, reliable and principled partner in advancing the interests of the NATO alliance, already serving side by side with NATO forces, while striving internally to advance democratic values and principles."

In Macedonia, the delegation met with President Gjorge Ivanov, Foreign Minister Antonio Milososki and Defense Minister Zoran Konjanovski. The delegation was briefed by U.S. Ambassador to Macedonia, Ambassador Philip T. Reeker and senior U.S. Embassy officials, USAID and Pentagon representatives on the current status of Macedonia and the US-Macedonian relationship, as well as the Charge d'Affairs of the Turkish Embassy on Turkey-Macedonia relations and the shared historical legacy between the two peoples. The delegation met with members of the Macedonian Parliament and representatives of prominent non-governmental organizations, all of who emphasized the importance attached by Macedonia to NATO and EU membership, and they thanked the United States and Turkey for supporting Macedonia in these strategic goals. They also expressed the deep disappointment felt in Macedonian society, across the ethnic and political spectrum, with respect to Greece's veto of Macedonia's NATO membership at the 2008 Bucharest Summit, based on Greece's objections to Macedonia's name, and underscored the real security, democracy and economic deficit this decision has created in Southeast Europe.

In the historical lakeside town of Ohrid, where the 2007 NATO Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council Security

Top photo courtesy of U.S. Embassy, Skopje, Bottom: Darko Zagari

Forum took place, President Ivanov received the delegation. In his remarks, the Macedonian President underscored the multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural history of Southeast Europe. He also emphasized the importance of the Macedonian model to succeed throughout the Balkans, which he characterized as “integration without assimilation.” He stressed that the success of this model, and inclusion of Macedonia and other Southeast European countries into NATO and the EU, would create the kind of “open space” needed in the region today, which will open societies, open markets and open minds. He also noted that Macedonia is the only nation in Southeast Europe that has demarcated its borders with all its neighbors, and is no longer an importer of security, but an exporter, currently engaged in missions in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Darfur, and Lebanon.

The delegation saw the historical, religious and cultural sites in Skopje, Bitola and Ohrid, including the museum dedicated to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in Bitola at the historical Ottoman Military Academy, where the historic Turkish leader attended school as young man. The trip was well-publicized in the media, with all Macedonian media outlets reporting on the visit.

“The United Macedonian Diaspora is very grateful to our partner TCA, and to the Congressional staffers, for taking time out of their busy schedule to participate in this delegation,” said Metodija A. Koloski, President of UMD, “This is the largest Congressional staff delegation to visit Macedonia in its history. While other Congressional delegations have been to Macedonia, we have seen a decline in the last four years. UMD is pleased that these staffers could experience Macedonia first hand, learn about the challenges it faces domestically and internationally... I was honored to lead this delegation alongside Lincoln and our TCA colleagues; I cannot be happier with the group of staffers selected for this trip, they were truly remarkable ambassadors of the United States Congress



Congressional Staff Delegation and Turkish Friends with Ambassador Philip T. Reeker and Embassy Personnel

and people.”

During their time in Turkey, the delegation met with religious and secular community leaders, scholars from various think tanks, NGO representatives, academics, members of the press, and Turkish business community leaders. The delegation also visited the historical World War I battlefield of Gallipoli and the Canakkale (Dardanelles) Straits, as well as the legendary site of Troy.

In Ankara, the delegation met with Doug Silliman, Charge d’Affairs of the US Embassy, and Ambassador Selim Yenel, Deputy Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In his remarks to the delegation, Silliman stressed Turkey’s strategic importance and underlined that the country is involved in eight of the United States’ nine top foreign policy issues. He said that the relationship had its high points and low points through history, and that both sides needed to continue to work hard to strengthen it, while keeping dialogue open.

The meeting with Ambassador Yenel gave the delegation a chance to engage in a discussion on Iran, relations with Israel, and other regional issues. Ambassador Yenel highlighted that Turkey’s efforts to mediate neighbors’ conflicts stems from a wish to bring about regional stability and peace, not to take on a neo-Ottoman role. Ambassador Yenel underscored that while Turkey and the United States differ on their foreign policy approach, they ultimately desire the same stability and prosperity in the region and the world. He also acknowledged that relations with Israel are at a low point today, but expressed confidence that the relationship would eventually be restored and strengthened to the benefit of both countries.

G. Lincoln McCurdy, TCA President stated: “We believe that America’s leaders need to have first-hand knowledge of Turkey and the region in order to make responsible decisions for American foreign policy. There is simply no substitute for direct exposure to a country and its peoples in order to foster understanding and cooperation today and in the future.”



Left to right: UMD President Koloski, President of the Republic of Macedonia Ivanov, and TCA President McCurdy

UMD Honors U.S. Senator George V. Voinovich (R-OH)

By Sam Jackson, UMD Spring 2010 Fellow



Top photo courtesy of U.S. Embassy, Skopje. Bottom: Darko Zagar

On April 28, 2010, UMD held its 2nd Annual UMD Day On The Hill, where it honored U.S. Senator George V. Voinovich (R-OH) with the UMD International Freedom Award, in recognition of his efforts to advance U.S.-Macedonia relations, and to assist Macedonia's membership to NATO.

Macedonia's Honorary Consul in Naples, Florida, Lou Vlasho presented the award to Senator Voinovich. Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), the Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's Europe Subcommittee,

Congresswoman Jean Schmidt (R-OH), and Macedonia's Ambassador to Washington, D.C., Ambassador Zoran Jolevski gave remarks.

As a leading member of Congress, Senator Voinovich used his deep knowledge of the Balkan region to advance peace and prosperity in the region for many years. More recently, he has unequivocally and publicly supported Macedonia's accession to NATO. Senator Voinovich has been to Macedonia on several occasions, most recently alongside Senator Shaheen in

March 2010 to meet with Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski.

Over 100 people attended the reception to honor the Senator, including Macedonia's first Ambassador to Washington, D.C., Ambassador Ljubica Z. Acevska, members of the various Southeast European embassies, Congressional staffers, State Department and USAID officers, and members of UMD. The reception was held in the Hart Senate Office Building overlooking all of Capitol Hill and Washington, D.C. ❄



Dennis Manevski, Diana Booth, Steve Vlasho, Lou Vlasho, Janet Voinovich, Senator George Voinovich, Metodija A. Koloski, Diana Popstefanova, and Boban Jovanovski

Blake Taneff: Academic and Athletic Excellence

By Vera Najdoska



Blake Taneff

Blake Taneff is an extraordinary 18 year-old high school senior. He not only excels academically with a 4.0 GPA, but he also excels with impressive accomplishments in track and field and cross-country running. During his three years in high school, he has been Varsity Letterman in track and field and cross country each year, as well as League Champ, District Champ and regional and state qualifier. He also won the Academic All-Ohio Award, both in track and field and in cross country.

Blake has always excelled academically, especially in science. That is why he chose to enrol at Metro Early College in Columbus, Ohio, as it has a collaborative venture with the Ohio State University. This high school offers an intellectually vibrant learning environment designed to serve students with extraordinary learning experience, allowing them to take university courses in junior year. The school's rigorous curriculum puts extra emphasis on the "STEM" subjects (science, technology, engineering and math) and out-of-classroom experiences. As a part of the curriculum, all students are required to complete an internship, and Blake was the very first high school intern at the Ohio State University mass spectrometry and proteomics laboratory, i.e. determining the elemental composition of molecules, and the large-scale study of the structures and functions of proteins. He was also an intern at the University

of Cincinnati Medical School's Center for Surgical Innovation.

Blake is concurrently enrolled in his home district public school system at the New Albany High School. While excelling academically at Metro, at New Albany High School he excels in sports. In his sophomore year, Blake tied the school record in 3200 meters, posting a time of 9:35. He also helped set the school record in the 4x800 meters where his relay team ran an 8:26. He won the league meet in the 3200 and had the honour of being the only one out of sixteen boys to become New Albany's first boys' state qualifier in Division 1 track. He was New Albany's lone representative at state, finishing 12th in the 3,200 meters in 9:39.5 minutes. As a junior in Cross Country he became the team captain. He won the league meet and District meet and also advanced to the state meet with his entire team, another first for Division 1. This spring in track he set the school record in the 3200 where he ran 9:28. His 4x800 team also set another record, 8:11. He has also won the league meet in the 1600, 3200 and 4x800, and advanced to the regional meet. He is a two-time League Champ in the 3200, 1600 League and 4X800.

This fall, Blake will be starting his first quarter at the Ohio State University as a senior in high school. His goals are to set more records on the track before he finishes high school. Once at the university Blake is planning to major in biochemistry where many scholarships have already been offered to him due to his excellent academic standing.

While much of his time is spent studying and training in cross country and track and field, Blake still finds time to volunteer, having contributed hundreds of hours. His volunteering started as early as grade six, where he volunteered 100 hours at the Center of Science and Industry. For three years, he held the position

of head middle school nature preserve steward for the wetland preserve at New Albany Middle School. He led group tours, with guest ranging from kindergarten age, all the way up to graduate students.

Blake is a second generation American of Macedonian descent. His paternal grandparents immigrated to Canton, Ohio; his grandfather from the village of Gavato, Bitolsko, and his grandmother from Pero, Prespansko. His father Thomas Taneff was born and raised in the USA, except for a year and a half that he spent in Macedonia. Thomas practices law and is currently the Macedonian Honorary Consul to the United States in Ohio. Being a proud Macedonian, Thomas loves to share his stories about Macedonia with sons Blake and Evan, and the visits have left a wonderful impression on both of his sons. The family has even bought a summer house there, where they vacation every year. Blake's visits to Macedonia are filled with wonderful and happy memories, and he is always looking forward to his next visit.

"I am looking forward to my future because I believe the best is yet to come," Blake says, "and I always remember two things; that God comes first, and that I will strive to bring glory for Him in all that I do, by working hard and trying to love every human being I encounter. I will never forget my roots in Macedonia and the lessons that my grandparents, my father and mother taught me, lessons that have enabled much of my success." ✨



Blake Taneff in action

UMD *Global*

CONFERENCE *2010*

UMD Global Conference 2010: An Event To Remember

Written by UMD Staff, Photos by Zoran Karapancev

In 2009, UMD held its first Global Conference in Washington, D.C., and it was an outstanding success. The 2010 event, held from June 3rd to 6th, was proud to carry forward this new tradition, and especially to do so in Toronto, Canada, one of the largest Macedonian Diaspora communities in the world.

The inaugural global conference was themed “The Way Ahead.” It addressed the challenges of the 21st century for the Republic of Macedonia, and Macedonians globally. As we move forward, meaningful collaborations with businesses, organizations, and governments will be the foundation for future progress and success. Themed “Building Partnerships,” this year’s event in Toronto not only illustrated the importance of Macedonian alliances, but also provided attendees with an intimate understanding of Macedonia’s future in a globalized world. The conference united Macedonians from five continents, and from fields such as business, government, and academics, for a unique four-day experience. It also served to foster greater awareness and understanding between all Macedonian Diaspora groups and stakeholders in the region.

The conference program included panel discussions from experts in areas such as: investment in Macedonia, tourism opportunities, international relations between Macedonia and the world, ancient and modern history of Macedonia, the human rights movement for ethnic Macedonians in the Balkans, and much more. There were cultural events including fine art from Macedonia, traditional Macedonian foods, music and dance, the unique rhythms of the world-renowned folk-fusion ensemble Synthesis, and the brilliant documentary *A Name Is A Name*. There was also a list of awardees and special guests too long to mention, which included:

- Right Honourable Prime Minister of Canada, Stephen Harper
- Mr. John L. N. Bitove, renowned business leader and philanthropist
- Honourable Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, Jason Kenny
- Ambassador of the Republic of Macedonia to Canada, His Excellency Ljuben Tevdovski
- Mr. Lui Temelkovski, the first MP of Macedonian heritage in Canadian history
- Archimandrite Nikodim Tsarknias, spiritual leader

and human rights activist for the ethnic Macedonian in Greece

- Mayor Edmond Temelko, of Pustec, Albania, and human rights activist for ethnic Macedonians in Albania
- Mr. John I. Bitove, entrepreneur in hospitality, major league sport and communications
- Mr. Thomas L. Caldwell, Chairman of Caldwell Financial and former president of Toronto Stock Exchange
- Mr. Ken Shaw, CTV News Toronto Anchor and National Editor
- Mr. Mike S. Zafirovski, high ranking executive with firms such as Motorola, Nortel and Boeing

June 3rd

The first day opened with a variety of key events designed to give the participants a chance to introduce themselves to each other, and events that give UMD a chance to introduce Macedonia to the world.

The day’s events began with an Opening Plenary, introduced by UMD President Meto Koloski, and Macedonian Ambassador to Canada, H.E. Ljuben Tevdovski.

“This year marks the 19th year of independence for Macedonia... the road to independence was not easy and the road ahead faces many difficulties,” President Koloski said. “But, together we will come together to meet these challenges.”

Ambassador Tevdovski added: “You – representatives of Macedonians from many countries –



UMD President Metodija A. Koloski opening the UMD Global Conference 2010

have gathered here in democratic Canada, have gathered to send a message of peace around the world,” he said, “We are proud that the Macedonians are known and respected in this democratic country, because Canada and Macedonia share a common democratic future. The connection between the Macedonian people and Macedonia is unbreakable. Independent Macedonia will never forget the efforts of every one of you.”

This was followed by a keynote address by Mr. Thomas Caldwell, Chairman of Caldwell Financial, and former President of the Toronto Stock Exchange. Mr. Caldwell made a very accessible, engaging presentation on the lessons learned from the financial crisis of 2008, including a Q & A session. He described the issues affecting the world’s economy, and the lessons there are for emerging economies such as Macedonia’s.

One of the key points he came back to repeatedly was the danger of debt: “When Greece entered the Eurozone, they could suddenly borrow at 6% less, so they started borrowing like crazy... it was the attitude of a 15-year old with a credit card,” he said, and he urged Macedonia not to make the same mistakes once it gets access to more credit. Caldwell also expressed optimism that the EU would get the debt crisis under control, and that the euro currency would eventually become a good idea, despite the current difficulties that it now faces.

Regarding Macedonia, Caldwell acknowledged that EU membership would be very valuable in the long-term, but he also stressed that there is no need to rush towards membership. “It’s kind of like trying to join any kind of exclusive club, there is no need to push too hard,” he said.

The next major event was called “Doing Business in Macedonia – A Unique Business Gateway to Southeast Europe.” This was a wide-ranging panel discussion moderated by UMD Director Ivona Grimberg. Panelists included entrepreneur John I. Bitove, InvestMacedonia CEO Victor Mizo, high-ranking executive Mike Zafirovski, and Renato Discenza, of Invest Toronto.

Mr. Bitove described the various activities of Macedonia 2025, and said: “There’s a climate that needs to take place in Macedonia, to create jobs and opportunities in the Republic... as Mr. Caldwell says, reputation precedes investment in every case. You can’t change a society overnight. We need to plant the seed today that will ultimately flourish and grow. It will take a generation to go from an Eastern bloc socialized state, to a modern nation.”

He stressed the essential importance of an independent judiciary and an efficient bureaucracy for Macedonia’s economic engine to truly establish itself. “Investors and young Macedonian entrepreneurs need to know that if they have been wronged, that the courts will correct it, or the state will correct it,” he said.

He also touched on the coordination of customs law, issuing work visas to foreigners with needed skills, liberal lending laws allowing credit to small business, and fighting corruption and the black market. “Regardless of

whether Macedonia joins the EU or not, conforming to the *acqui communitaire*, or EU standards in these areas, is a valuable key to Macedonia’s future,” he said.

Mr. Mizo focused on the key selling points that make Macedonia a featured investment destination, and the importance of creating brand awareness for the country in the halls of industry. One of the key initiatives was organizing meetings with the President, Prime Minister and other top-level decision makers for all major investors. “The country has used a regulatory guillotine,” he said, “where foreign companies are treated the same way as domestic ones.” He also went over macro-economic details that show Macedonia is on the right track towards producing an attractive investment environment, including high technology zones with low tax and no tax incentives, and bilateral free trade agreements with the EU and other major trading blocks in the region. He also focused on demographic and education advantages, and key industries that have located in Macedonia, including automotive components, pharmaceuticals, agribusiness, energy, construction, textiles, tourism and other areas. He mentioned multi-million dollar investments with Johnson Controls, Johnson Matthey, Iskra, Haier and other international conglomerates.

Mr. Zafirovski, born and raised in Skopje, opened with personal anecdotes about his close friendship with the former president, the late Boris Trajkovski, and how he has tried to give back to his native land. His comments



Left to Right: Ivona Grimberg, John Bitove, Viktor Mizo, Mike Zafirovski, and Renato Discenza

focused on the need to study best practices, a great deal of perseverance, and professional execution. “It’s not only about bringing business in, but also about making sure the companies who do invest are benefitting year to year,” he said, “The benefits cannot just be words on a piece of paper, but real benefits... if a commitment is made, the commitment must be kept.” He stressed that capitalism has proven to be the greatest system in the history of mankind, but it also has a lot of hard edges, so measures to ensure a healthy society overall are essential. “The foundation is there... and so I am cautiously optimistic.” Mr. Zafirovski also made some personal comments about the achievements of his friend John Bitove, Sr.

Mr. Discenza made a variety of comments about Toronto being the home to the world’s safest banking

system, as well as being the home to the most culturally diverse city in the world. He focused on the importance of reputation, a streamlined investment process, and taking advantage of cultural diversity. “You need to recreate the legend; you were a trading nation long before our society even existed, you can be a centre of economic trade again,” he said, “If you’re going to attract business, you need to create hope that doing business here is better than somewhere else. Identify your own story, and tell that story.”

The next panel was called “Success Stories and Building Partnerships,” and it was moderated by UMD Canada Liaison Officer Goran Saveski.

Mr. Tim DiScipio is the founder of ePals, a protected, internet-based classroom community, where children from countries around the world can communicate with each other, including Macedonia. The site reaches over 20 million teachers and students in 200 countries. “With the wi-fi rollout in Macedonia, the country is headed on a technological path. We have to guide that passion in an educational direction... but the Internet has leveled the playing field, and the country is off to an amazing start,” he said.

Mr. Chris Temovskiy is the founder of Ddrops, an innovative natural pharmaceutical company producing vitamin D products. He opened with remarks about how Macedonia’s pharmaceutical industry is surprising advanced, with incredibly proficient companies that were prepared to take the risk, and skillfully navigate the regulatory and marketing aspects of the industry. “I was particularly impressed by Macedonia’s necessity-based innovation, where limited resources have produced some incredible products.”

Mr. Robert Lomauro is President and CEO of the Somerset Hills YMCA in Basking Ridge, New Jersey, one of the premier YMCAs in the United States. “The great assets of Macedonia are its beautiful country, its beautiful people and its beautiful culture,” he says, “The YMCA, in partnership with the UMD, can bring real improvement to the lives of people in Macedonia.” He detailed YMCA youth exchange programs in Bitola, and collaborations with other organizations, such as Habitat for Humanity in Skopje, and the Peace Corps.

Compliments of H. E. Ambassador Tevdovski, the conference participants enjoyed an excellent reception; an opportunity to network with fellow Macedonians from around the world. This was followed by a special presentation of the fine art of Dimce Isailovski, who had 40 fine paintings on display. Finally, this was followed by a speech by Macedonian MP Aleksandar Nikoloski, who presented President Koloski with a beautiful golden mask; a replica of an archaeological artifact found in the Ohrid region, which dated back to the 6th century BC.

Finally, the evening was concluded with a screening of the brilliant documentary *A Name Is A Name*, followed by a Q&A session with producer Jason Miko.

June 4th

As GC2010 expanded to its second day, it also expanded its scope significantly as well. The first event of the day was called *Tourism: The Undiscovered Macedonia*, moderated by Virginia Dubiel. Speakers included Filip Blazeski of InvestMacedonia, Vladimir Naumovski, Ohrid Travel Agency, Douglas Munch, DFM, Ltd., and Susan Riggio and Karen Witt, Somerset Hills YMCA. The discussion ranged from practical issues surrounding the obstacles facing the tourism industry in Macedonia, as well as the vast potential it has to develop further.



Left to right: Goran Saveski, Chris Temovski, Robert LoMauro, and Tim DiScipio

The next event was a panel called *Macedonia in a Globalized World*, moderated by Sofia Blazevska, Analyst at Canada’s Department of Defense. Panelists included two-term Macedonian MP Aleksandar Nikoloski for VMRO-DPMNE, and member of various high-level international committees, Ms. Viktorija Greier, accomplished academic working for Macedonia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Jason Miko, activist, journalist and film producer of *A Name Is A Name*, and Mr. Hristo Ivanovski, Editor of *Dnevnik* newspaper.

Mr. Nikoloski’s comments began with a short political history of Macedonia’s path towards integration in various world bodies, from independence in 1991, up until Macedonian’s recent chairmanship of the Council of Europe. “I am personally proud that – in March, in Paris – one of the Members of Parliament called on Greece to recognize its national minorities... It was the first time that the Macedonian minority was officially recognized in that body,” he said, also mentioning a similar statement regarding Bulgaria’s Macedonian minority in April. He also spoke of the Army of the Republic of Macedonia’s participation in Operation Iraqi Freedom, and ISAF (Afghanistan), stating: “... the country has fully modernized its Army... all Army members are professionals and highly trained.” He also outlined visa liberalization in January 2010, lauding the ability of Macedonian citizen’s to travel more freely. Mr. Nikoloski also detailed some of Macedonia’s setbacks, such as the Greek vetoes that have delayed Macedonia’s accession to the EU and NATO. “All of these obstacles are related to the name issue... we think it is very important to discuss this issue, but

we also say that any decision related to the name should go to a referendum, but we are not ready to make any compromise on the Macedonia's identity, culture or constitutional name. What the Greeks are proposing now is practically suicide... unlike our opponents SDSM, we will not let the politicians decide, we will let the people decide." This last comment caused some controversy in the crowd, which became animated at the suggestion of a referendum on the country's name. When a UMD member asked the minister to clarify why another referendum was needed on the name, when an independence referendum had already been held in 1991, which included the name of the country, the minister simply rephrased his previous comment.

Ms. Greier discussed Macedonia's participation in the Council of Europe and other international committees, as well as the harmonization of Macedonian policies with European policies. "Care for the Macedonian communities living out of state borders, and Macedonian national communities in neighboring countries, represents one of the Macedonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' (major) policies," she said. Ms. Greier outlined a variety of specific measures the Ministry has undertaken to pursue its goals, and various key events that have raised Macedonia's profile, such as the election of Dr. Srgjan Kerim as the President of the United Nations General Assembly.

Mr. Miko's opening comments included: "Globalization is a bit like gravity... you can't see it, but you can feel it, and you'd better get used to it." In that context, his talk focused on the positive strides being made in the country, especially with its branding as a nation and ethnic identity. "I think Macedonia has done a fantastic job of punching above its weight, and presenting everything that it has to offer to the world," he said, mentioning a variety of Macedonian success stories in areas such as business, culture and social development, and also in how these stories have been portrayed positively in traditional and new media. Referring to the current stalemate over European integration, he criticized the EU for failing to stand up to Greek tactics on the name issue, saying: "Greece may be in crisis, but this is also an existential crisis for the European Union. So far, the Europeans see these larger issues as more important than solving the name dispute (and that is what leads to the stalemate)."



Mr. Ivanovski began with some personal anecdotes regarding hurdles he faced in academic circles regarding Greece's name dispute. He also referred to the history of this dispute, including the EU's contradictory

Badinter Commission and Lisbon Statement of the early 90s, and Macedonia's struggle with this. "We are knocking on the door of these Euro-Atlantic organizations, but we cannot enter," he said, "We are like a country with one leg, creeping forward with this provisional name.



As a journalist who knows the situation well, I think we need consensus in all Macedonian parties, academics, civil society and participation of the Diaspora. We still do not know our red line, and, according to me, this should be sharp, clear and visible." He spoke about various proactive measures that need to be undertaken, as well, and stressed regional solutions to common problems. "We still do not have deep relations with major European countries, and we cannot establish direct high-level contacts," he said, "We are fragile in this area."

After lunch, the next presentation was on Canadian-Macedonian relations, with opening remarks by UMD President Koloski and H.E. Ambassador Tevdovski. President Koloski awarded Mr. Lui Temelkovski with the UMD Macedonian Heritage Public Service Award, in recognition for his historical achievement of becoming the first Canadian MP of Macedonian ethnic heritage. The panel also included Ms. Julie Lindhout, President of the Atlantic Council of Canada, and MP Nikoloski.

"Macedonians must be recognized under its constitutional name, and no other," Mr. Temelkovski said, as he detailed his parliamentary record, including establishing the first Canadian-Macedonian Friendship Group, and his introduction of a private member's bill for Canada to recognize Macedonia under its constitutional name. His entertaining and earnest speech included a variety of colorful, personal anecdotes from his time on Parliament Hill. He stressed his advocacy behind the scenes to advance the Macedonian cause, such as introducing a delegation including human rights activist Archimandrite Nikodim Tsarknias to brief the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the status of the ethnic Macedonian minority in Greece. He also talked about threats he received from Greek parliamentarians, and the various events that lead up to Prime Minister Harper standing up to Greek pressure, and eventually recognizing Macedonia under its historical and constitutional name.

Ms. Lindhout outlined the goals of the Atlantic Council of Canada, which is an NGO that promotes, among other things, the expansion of NATO membership to candidate states such as Macedonia. "Macedonia is very ready, and Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen has already stated that Macedonia would join NATO immediately... and in practical terms, Macedonia already



Left to right: Thomas Caldwell, Elizabeth Naumovski, Olga Petro McAfee, and Peter Petro enjoying the Ambassador's Reception

participates in NATO, almost like a full member," she said. She also outlined that over 1000 Macedonian officers have participated in ISAF and other NATO duties, such as training Afghan soldiers and police, and deploying medical teams to the NATO mission in Bosnia. She also described the ACC's various initiatives to advance Macedonia's Euro-Atlantic integration.

Mr. Nikoloski stressed the appreciation Macedonia felt toward Canada in light of Prime Minister's move to recognize Macedonia under its constitutional name. He also detailed the recent bilateral agreements signed regarding pensions. Finally, he outlined that the Canadian-Macedonian economic relationship can develop much further, and that the Diaspora community will be pivotal in making this a reality.

The next panel event was moderated by Ms. Helen Rentis, and entitled "History of Macedonian Emigration." Panelists included Dr. Lillian Petroff, author of *Sojourners and Settlers: The Macedonian Community in Toronto to 1940*, Mr. Harry Herman, author of *Men in White Aprons*, and Mr. Joco Sami, of the Macedonian Centre for Cultural and Social Integration.

Dr. Petroff's comments summarized the experience of Canada's early "pecalbari," or temporary workers abroad, with an intention of returning within a year or two. Of course, for many Macedonians established in Canada, the return never took place. Dr. Petroff described how early Macedonians found employment in manufacturing, and in the abattoirs that lent old Toronto the nickname "Hogtown." Despite the various hardships related to heavy industrial jobs, Macedonians took full advantage of the freedom and opportunity afforded them in Canada.

As a non-Macedonian of Croatian heritage, Mr. Herman began with commentary on his decision to study how certain ethnic groups tended to integrate themselves into certain niches of the economy, and in particular, how a large number of Macedonians prospered in Canada as restaurateurs. He spoke of arduous process of collecting information for his study, due to the fact that many of these restaurant owners were from Aegean Macedonia with relatives back in Greece, who were fearful of Greek spies punishing those relatives if they self-identified as Macedonians to a stranger. He also talked about how he

succeeded in getting such people to open up, so he could learn about their lives and write his book, *Men In White Aprons*.

Mr. Sami described the establishment of his organization, the Macedonian Centre for Cultural and Social Integration, and the initiatives his organization has taken to support the newcomers to Canada from Macedonia. In particular, the organization assists these new Canadians with finding employment, recognition of foreign credentials, English language proficiency, and cultural integration issues.

The next panel was called Preservation of the Macedonian Identity and Language in Today's Global Community, moderated by Virginia Evans. The group of panel speakers included: Ms. Christina Kramer and Mr. Joseph Schallert, University of Toronto Professors, Biljana Belamaric Wilsey, Macedonian Language E-Learning Center, and Vasil Naumov of the Macedonian Centre for Emigration.

Ms. Kramer discussed the political views that ensued after the publishing of her Macedonian language textbook, and how people have pre-conceptions about particular words based on their origin. Ms. Kramer argued that borrowed words from English, Turkish or other languages are not a threat to Macedonian at all, but rather a natural process that allows for variation. All languages have tendencies toward linguistic purism, or toward linguistic borrowing of international words. "In Macedonia, languages compete in an open marketplace," she said, "But Macedonian did not collapse under the weight of foreign words, in fact it is enriched by them."

Professor Schallert used a PowerPoint presentation related to field work in the town of Vrnik, in the Mala Prespa region of modern Albania, where the Macedonian language is spoken today. He then presented an in-depth look at the fine distinctions between the remarkably large number of dialects in Macedonia, a relatively small and mountainous region.

Ms. Belamaric Wilsey described how the Macedonian language binds the disparate Macedonian communities together, even in contexts where there are low concentrations of Macedonians. She also used several real examples of Macedonian people in the Diaspora, and the strategies they use to maintain their Macedonian language ability, including various specific tips on using the Internet to keep your language skills sharp.

Mr. Naumov did an extended look at the connection between the Macedonian language, and how it is inherently connected to our name, culture, folklore and history, but also explored interesting questions raised by the very real existence of Macedonian national identity among people who speak English, Greek or other languages. This led to a very animated question and answer period.

The final panel presentation of Day 2 was titled Archaeology: Burial and Tombs in Ancient Macedonia, and moderated by Juliana Atansoski. The presentation was

given by Ms. Belinda D'Angelo of LaTrobe University, in Australia.

The Melbourne-born academic researcher of Macedonian heritage was prepared with a very detailed PowerPoint presentation. It started with the difficulty in establishing borders in the modern sense of ancient Macedonia, since borderlands in those times were very fluid. "Not only were the ancient Macedonians not Greek, but even the Greeks were not Greek," she said, arguing modern concepts of nationhood did not apply to ancient peoples that more closely associated with their home city-states. She traced the early Makednid peoples, including subgroups such as Argeads, using sources such as Herodotus. She detailed aspects of Phillip II's lesser known talents, such as his diplomatic skills in uniting the Macedonian tribes, from regions that Hellenic writers at the time regarded as barbarous. She detailed the massive stone "cist" tombs found throughout Macedonia, which were elaborately decorated, and larger barrel-vaulted styles.

Ms. D'Angelo also lamented how museums in Aegean Macedonia are well funded, but similar museums in the Republic of Macedonia are in disrepair. "The Republic of Macedonia is on par with Greece with regards to the archaeological relics that exist on our own land, so it is such a shame when the rains wash away evidence in places like Heraclea," she said, "Perhaps this is an important project that the Diaspora should pursue." She went on to describe the major debates in the field, and the evidence available for the various theories, including skeletal remains, numismatic dating, artwork, tomb architecture, vessels and other objects. She also traced evidence of Macedonia's rapid growth in power, followed by its decline. In describing the parameters of her doctoral research in the Pelagonian region near modern-day Bitola, she commented on how tomb styles supply clues to ethnic self-identification of the peoples who built them.

After a traditional Macedonian supper featuring authentic zelnick supplied by local Macedonian church groups, the day ended with an excellent cultural event entitled aLIVE, a musical and cultural event held in the Sheraton's Grand Ballroom.

Emceed by TV personality Elizabeth Naumovski, the evening opened with three award ceremonies



Makedonka Ensemble performing at Friday's aLIVE program

recognizing Outstanding Achievement in the Arts. The awardees included Ms. Virginia Evans for her work with the Macedonian Film Festival, Ms. Olga Sandolowich for her long career in traditional Macedonian dance and folklore, and Mr. Aleks Petlickov, who has lead the dance troupe Makedonka since 1959.

Opening performances included Selyani, Zdravec and Makedonka dance troupes, followed by a brilliant classical violin performance by Ema Nikolovska. This was followed by the signature act, folk-fusion group Synthesis, Macedonia's most famous and exported musical ensemble, which takes the expert skills of the performers in all Macedonian folk instruments, along with the melancholic and beautiful traditional female vocal style, and melds them with modern dramatic rhythms. Following Sythesis were the energetic performances of Miki Petkovski, and Toronto's own Boys from Bouf. All in all it was a fantastic evening, expressing the beauty and richness of Macedonians artistic tradition.

June 5th

GC2010 Day 3 began with a much-awaited chance for UMD members to meet the Board, in a session titled "The Global Macedonian: UMD Highlights, Achievements and Moving Forward."

President Metodija A. Koloski opened the meeting with a warm introduction of Board members present, including Denis Manevski, Stojan Nikolov, Michael Sarafin, Boban Jovanovski, and Jim Daikos.

President Koloski went on summarize a long list of news and achievements in the past year, from the new offices opened, to the UMD Internship Program, to cultural events UMD has funded and advocacy initiatives it has undertaken. He also announced the details for next year's conference: at the J.W. Marriott in Washington, D.C., just next to the White House, June 23rd – 25th, 2011.

In discussing the highlights of his official trip to Australia, "There's so much potential in Australia, and so we just have to push that more and more," Koloski said, which segued nicely into a PowerPoint presentation by UMD representative from Adelaide, Mr. Steve Kostov.

...Continued on page 20.

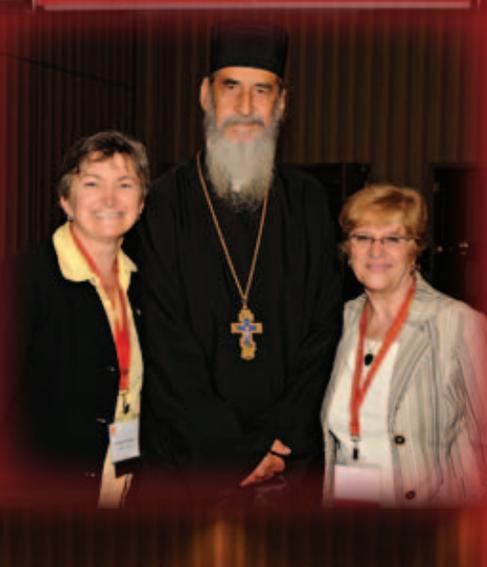


Gorjan Lukash enjoying Friday night's Zelnic

UMD **G** CONFERENCE



Global CONFERENCE 2010





Left to right: Jim Daikos, Metodija A. Koloski, Romanian MP Liana Dumitrescu, Denis Manevski, Boban Jovanovski, Stojan Nikolov and Michael Sarafin

...Continued from page 17.

“It’s been great to see everyone here, and feel the love in this room,” Mr. Kostov said, to a round of applause. Mr. Kostov’s presentation was an entertaining and informative look at his community in South Australia, and it detailed the community’s activities, paying tribute to the contribution of the Adelaide community’s volunteers. He also discussed the considerable power imbalance between Adelaide’s small community, and the hostile Greek community, which runs local institutions and props up the anti-Macedonian propagandist and South Australia Premier Mike Rann, among others. “We need to cross this divide, and the commitment of UMD is very welcome in Australia,” he said.

A lively Q&A session brought up a variety of issues, such as the upcoming election battle in Illinois this November, between Obama ally and anti-Macedonian activist Alexi Giannoulias and Republican Mark Kirk, as well as the use of new media to expand UMD’s message, and future expansion plans for the organization. President Koloski also discussed UMD activities related to leadership initiatives in Macedonia itself and in neighboring countries.

This was followed by some words by Vasil Naumov, Macedonian Minister of Emigration. He described the role of his Ministry in supporting Macedonian emigrants around the world. He stressed the importance of maintaining the Macedonian language, the promotion of emigrants to obtain and Macedonian citizenship, and the right for Diaspora Macedonia to vote.

The second panel, “From the Edge of Extinction to the Brink of Hope, The Current Status of Macedonian Human Rights in Southeast Europe”, was one of the most eagerly anticipated of all, moderated by Vesna Karapetrova.

UMD Director Jim Daikos introduced Archimandrite Nikodim Tsarknias, and awarded him with the UMD Religious Freedom Award, outlining his long struggle with Greek authorities for defending the human rights.

Archimandrite Tsarknias thanked UMD and mentioned how he met President Koloski 15 years ago, and praised his family for producing such patriotic leaders. He also said that young leaders such as Koloski were emerging in Aegean Macedonia every day. “We are living

in a very undemocratic country,” he said, “Even the Greek politicians admit the same, that there was never democracy in Greece, that it is a kind of socialist state. So, the Greek Orthodox Church is a state church, and it is holding the controls, and pressuring Greece not to recognize the ethnic Macedonian minority or the Republic of Macedonia, and it is committing a grave sin.”

Tsarknias also commented on a burning issue in church politics: “Why should Macedonia’s Church want to recognize the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople? I believe our church must take another path,” he said.

He continued: “The Greek state and the Greek church want us to no longer exist, and they are exerting great pressure on us everyday. We must continue to look for help from international organizations and from the U.S., but we don’t expect much from Europe, where various countries have similar minorities themselves that they are busy oppressing. Regardless, I believe we will succeed... and we must always remain positive in our struggle.” He also spoke of how the historical methods used by the Greek state to assimilate the ethnic Macedonians are failing like never before. “There is great pressure now, but the ethnic Macedonian community in Greece will not be lost, I assure you,” he said, to a loud and sustained standing ovation.

The next speaker was Director Denis Manevski, who awarded the UMD Human Rights Award to Mayor Edmond Temelko of Pustec, a long-time activist representing the Macedonian community in Albania.

Mayor Temelko said: “The history of the effort from rights in Albania is long and hard-fought. The government in Tirana only recognizes the area of Pustec, which is about 3% of the territory,” he said, “and I hope the process of democratization will assist not only the Macedonians, but also the Greeks, Vlachs, Roma and other minorities in Albania today.” He went on to detail the historical struggle for human rights in that country, including various positive developments in recent years. “There are Macedonians not only in Mala Prespa, but everywhere on Albanian territory, and no one can scare us from our path,” he said, “We are proud to be an unbreakable part of the Macedonian nation. We are not visitors in Albania, but we inhabit our ancestral lands.... Macedonians must enjoy equal rights with all the other citizens of Albania... the Macedonians are loyal citizens of Albania, but we will always protect



UMD Canada Director Jim Daikos giving UMD Religious Freedom Award to Archimandrite Nikodim Tsarknias



UMD Board Member and Treasurer Denis Manevski giving UMD Human Rights Award to Edmond Temelko

the constitutional name of Macedonia, which is central to our identity.” He discussed his organization’s activities to strengthen and maintain the Macedonian language, and other activities, such as Ilinden celebrations.

Director Stojan Nikolov honored Mr. Hristo Ivanovski with the UMD Human Rights Award. He outlined Mr. Ivanovski’s long career in academics and journalism, with a specialty in human rights issues of ethnic Macedonians in South East Europe.

“The European continent is a continent of minorities,” he said, and described his own Aegean heritage. He described the care involved when reporting on human rights issues, including the research required and the obstacles involved. He talked about how the journalist’s trade requires a dispassionate attitude, and how emotional writing is a mistake, and the mistakes are very expensive. For instance, he mentioned the fact that the Macedonian language is being learned in Solun today, in secret schools, but reporting on it in depth would jeopardize it, as it would provoke a response from the Greek authorities. His final advice to human rights activists was simply: “If you want to be accounted for, you have to stand up and be counted.”

The fourth UMD Human Rights Award was presented by UMD Director Boban Jovanovski, and was awarded to Liana Dumitrescu. He mentioned a variety of Ms. Dumitrescu’s achievements as a Romanian Member of Parliament and human rights activist, including the fact that Romania is the only EU or NATO member which officially recognizes its Macedonian minority.

Ms. Dumitrescu discussed the common roots that we all share, a relationship that money can’t buy. “Bill Gates is a very rich man, but he can’t buy his way to becoming a Macedonian. We can’t buy our future with money, but we can build our future together.” She discussed the richness of the Macedonian heritage, and the importance of the Macedonian language. “It’s very nice to say you’re Macedonian and stay home and watch the movie with Brad Pitt... it’s a very nice movie. But that’s not enough to be a Macedonian. You have to be a leader... we came here to do something together, not just to speak.” She then proposed a variety of measures to work together, based on the success she has had in Romania, and discussed initiatives where Romania has stepped in to advocate on Macedonia’s behalf in European bodies, where the Republic of Macedonia was not present.

Other speakers included Professor Vladimir Ortakovski who spoke about the content of European treaties and the actual practice of Macedonia’s neighboring countries toward their ethnic Macedonian minorities, and Mr. Sasha Odzalieski, political activist from Croatia, who described the struggle of the Macedonian community in Croatia. These comments were followed up by Ms. Viktorija Greier, who detailed various racist and xenophobic aspects of law in the Hellenic Republic, where specific articles strip non-Greeks of human rights.

The afternoon continued with a special invitation-only panel by the Canadian-Macedonian Health Professionals Association, with networking opportunities for ethnic Macedonians in those fields.

The fourth panel was entitled “Generation M – Young Leaders Speak,” and was moderated by Director Stojan Nikolov. The panels included Amanda Kostoff and Justin Vasilievski of the Macedonian American Students Association at the University of Michigan, Alexander Karapancev, University of Western Ontario, Goce Dimitrioski, McMaster University in Hamilton, Andrew Ananievski, Australian Macedonian Student Association of Victoria, Alexandra Josifovska, Investors Beyond Borders, and activist Kristopher Maslardzievski.

Ms. Kostoff and Vasilievski described the need to fill a void by organizing a Macedonian student’s association like MASA, and described some of the events they organize to raise awareness and built partnerships with other student groups and the greater community. One such activity was a charity soccer tournament to raise money for an orphanage in Bitola. “People don’t realize the difference they can make,” she said, “We wanted to bring people out of the woodwork for Macedonian causes.” She stressed the importance of cooperation with people of various different backgrounds.

Mr. Karapancev stated: “We have been using the same outdated methods to organize our community, leading to declining participation in various activities and church events.” He stressed the use of modern communications, networking and education. “If you want to get to some place, its best to surround yourself with people that are already there,” he said, talking about his partnerships with



Left to right: UMD Board Chairman Stojan Nikolov with Generation M speakers Andrew Ananievski, Alexander Karapancev, Marijana Josifovski, Amanda Kostoff, Justin Vasilievski, Goce Dimitrioski, and Kristopher Maslardzievski

think-tanks and groups such as the Frasier Institute. He also talked about UMD's leadership in these areas, such as industry-specific networking events and scholarships.

Mr. Dimitrioski's comments spoke of Macedonian identity and historical achievements. "The 19-year dispute with Greece is threatening that identity, but thankfully, this is changing, with 125 countries having recognized us. But many people are still in the dark about who we are, what we do, and what we stand for," he said. He spoke of how: "...many people only know about Macedonians for the wrong reasons. Also, Macedonians do not define ourselves as who we are, but rather as who we are not."

Mr. Maslardzievski spoke of his work with Splash of Hope, a charity organization for the benefit of children in Macedonia.

Mr. Ananievski described the strength of the obstacles facing the Macedonian community in Australia, but also the importance of youth organization to be active. "It is essential to involve young people in the social development process... involving them in the process is the best way to ensure they get what they need. Young organizations are critical avenues for youth (to achieve) their enormous potential." He also detailed the importance for young people in Australia to be proud of their ethnic heritage.

Ms. Josifovska described her organization's efforts to promote green energy in developing economies with focus on the Republic of Macedonia. One such initiative was a worldwide competition among students to write renewable energy proposals for the country, and learning about its needs and challenges. "As a Macedonian, there is a lot of interest when it comes to showing what the nation has to offer," she said, "It's up to us to educate ourselves on what we can offer to our nation... never underestimate the value of experience and the benefit of determination."

The final panel was moderated by Alexander Nitsis, and it was entitled "Macedonians Making a Difference." He introduced a group of Macedonians who are making a difference in their community. The panel included Lubi Uzunovski, best known for his website MakNews, Virginia Evans of the Macedonian Film Festival, Donna Scotland of the Children's Relief Fund, Zlatka Cokov of Canadian

Macedonian Place, and Diana Sterjovska of the Macedonian Community Welfare Community Welfare Association.

Mr. Uzunovski described how 25 years ago, it was very difficult to get information out about the oppression of ethnic Macedonians in Greece. With the advent of the internet, he and other activists saw the amazing potential for modern technology to help the flow of information. Eventually, with the advent of MILS and with the cooperation of a listserver at the University of Buffalo, a new way of sharing vital information was born. Uzunovski described how the birth of the web affected the cause, and his first major project being www.florina.org, which eventually was taken over by Vinozhito. Later, as the MILS organization started to falter, Uzunovski was behind the establishment of www.maknews.com and other sites. Nowadays, Uzunovski's sites receive 10 million unique visitors per year. He also described the personal threats and the Greek propaganda against his sites.

Ms. Evans recounted the Macedonian Film Festival's origins; what started as a fundraiser for the Canadian Macedonian Historical Society, and her success at getting Milco Mancevski to attend a premiere of the film *Dust*. Since then, the MFF arrived, and Ms. Evans described various goals for her organization and future initiatives, such as the MFF Scholarship fund for young filmmakers.

Ms. Scotland described the activities of the Macedonian Children's Relief Fund, to help the children of Macedonian soldiers who were killed in the armed conflict with Albanian terrorists in 2001. With volunteers who were also themselves refugee children of war, the organization's heart goes out to the children of those fallen soldiers, organizing bake sales, craft sales and other fundraising activities for their benefit.

Ms. Cokov discussed her early experience with Canadian Macedonian Place, a Macedonian community senior's home. She spoke of the importance of the CMP in the Toronto Macedonian community, and various aspects of the service there that ensure our elderly people can feel truly at home, such as traditional foods, cultural events and camaraderie with their fellow countrymen.

Ms. Sterjovska, born in Melbourne, made a point of making her entire speech in the Macedonian language. A nurse by training, she came to work with elderly people, and she described their emotional and cultural needs. She also described how the MCWA mission is to meet those needs, and the greater needs of welfare in the community.

The moment everyone was waiting for came next; the Gala Banquet in the Sheraton's Grand Ballroom. Emceed by Canadian TV Personality and CTV News Anchor Ken Shaw, the dinner and ceremony kicked off with a series of special awards.

The first speech from H.E. Ambassador Tevdovski touched on the importance of UMD's role in the world Macedonian movement, and the Republic of Macedonia's role in reaching out to the Diaspora as an essential part of the Macedonian nation.



Left to right: Boban Jovanovski, Jim Daikos, Virginia Evans, and Metodija A. Koloski

Honourable Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who accepted the UMD Goce Delcev Award for his statesmanship in furthering Canadian-Macedonian relations.

First elected to federal Parliament in 1993, Prime Minister Harper has been committed to building a Canada that remains strong, united, independent and free, pursuing accountability measures for government, lowering taxes for working families, helping parents cope with the costs of child care, reforming the criminal justice system and rebuilding the Canadian Forces.

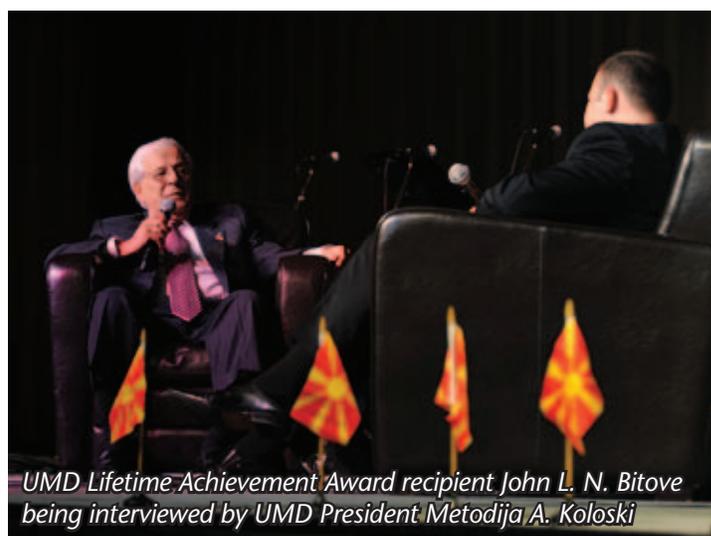
Another concert performance by the unique folk-fusion ensemble Synthesis enchanted the capacity audience, and this was followed by traditional Macedonian dancing into the early morning hours.

June 6th

Sunday morning's closing panel was entitled "Macedonian Organizations: Working Together", and moderated by President Koloski. Attended by a variety of organization leaders, including United Macedonians President Balakovski, the discussion was a lively one. Key issues discussed included how to enhance cooperation and trust between groups, and the need for accountability and transparency. Details of fundraising methodology were discussed, and ways to counter donor fatigue and other fundraising concerns. President Koloski outlined a wide variety of initiatives working toward the 2011 UMD Board Elections, a variety of activities leading up to next year's conference, plans to enhance UMD's multi-language publication and web presence, and plans on how to build partnerships and collaborate with more Macedonian and non-Macedonian groups.

Overall, the 2010 Global Conference was an outstanding success! UMD would like to thank all of the donors, participants, panelists, awardees, as well as a very special thanks to all the volunteers who made this event possible.

UMD would also like to welcome one and all to the 3rd Annual UMD Global Conference, at the J.W. Marriott in Washington, D.C., on June 23-25, 2011. See you there! ✨



UMD Lifetime Achievement Award recipient John L. N. Bitove being interviewed by UMD President Metodija A. Koloski



Dr. Srgjan Kerim giving UMD Macedonia Friendship Award to Minister Jason Kenney

The first presenter was Dr. Srgjan Kerim, Macedonian diplomat and former General Secretary of the United Nations General Assembly. Though he made sure to make some warm comments about Mr. Bitove's leadership, his main task was to introduce Canada's Honourable Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, Mr. Jason Kenney. He was awarded with the UMD Macedonian Friendship Award.

A four-term federal MP in Canada, Mr. Kenney is a former Chair of the House of Commons Subcommittee on International Human Rights. He served in a variety of positions in Opposition, including Finance Critic and Deputy House Leader. In his current role, Mr. Kenney has been instrumental reaching out to the Macedonian community, and representing its interests at the federal level.

The second presenter was John Markou, who introduced a video montage describing the John L. N. Bitove's long career of philanthropy and leadership in the Macedonian community.

With roots in Gabresh, Kostursko, Aegean Macedonia, Mr. Bitove has established himself as a pillar of the Macedonian community in Canada for decades. Though better known in mainstream Canadian society for his remarkable business success, Mr. Bitove is also a very generous philanthropist and leader of the Macedonian-Canadian community for decades.

This was followed by a unique on-stage interview between Mr. Bitove and President Koloski, as Mr. Bitove was awarded with UMD Lifetime Achievement Award.

The third presenter was Mark Branov, UMD Voice Editor, who described the multicultural heritage of Macedonia and Canada, and the importance of Canada's official recognition of Macedonia under its constitutional name in 2007. This was followed by a video presentation of the Right

An Interview with Ziya Tong

By Mark Branov

As widespread as the worldwide Macedonian Diaspora is, our people have distinguished themselves by being highly adaptable to any multicultural environment we find ourselves in. From Australia, to North America, to Europe, Macedonian communities have consistently managed to produce highly talented, successful individuals who are making a big difference in their chosen career fields, and who have passed that success on to future generations.

One key goal of UMD Voice is to focus on Macedonian success stories, and share them with the world. In the field of Broadcast Journalism, Canadian-raised Ziya Tong has certainly made a name for herself internationally, working on a variety award-winning and high-profile television shows. As an accomplished reporter, Ziya is more accustomed to bringing a story to her audience, but in this case, we have (a small part of) her own story:

MB: Please tell us a little about your background.

ZT: I was born in London, England and grew up in Hong Kong. My family moved to Canada when I was 11. My mother is from Skopje, Macedonia, and my father is from Hong Kong.

MB: What are some of the cultural differences you may have noticed, between the Chinese and Macedonian backgrounds of your parents? What are the similarities?

ZT: The Macedonian side of my family is fun loving, boisterous and very close. We spend our time laughing and drinking Turkish coffee together. The Chinese side of my family is perhaps more formal in a way. My grandfather was the grand patriarch, very wise, and often spoke in full proverbs, which I loved. It was like having your own personal Confucius. Both sides of my family are quite big. I have many cousins around the world and we all stay in touch.

MB: Your academic career focused on psychology, sociology and communications. What first sparked your interest in these fields, and did you have your sights set on broadcast journalism early on?

ZT: I love the “-ologies” because they offer such different ways of understanding the world we live in, and our place in it. So the field of psychology is fascinating from the standpoint of understanding human perception and perspective, sociology gives us a macro, or societal view. Working on Daily Planet right now, my weekly column is called Ziyology, and it covers the full spectrum of scientific disciplines – from anthropology and ecology and to nanotechnology and zoology. Broadcast journalism is a passion I’ve always had, as well. I

used play with my younger sister – who incidentally is also now a TV producer – using a tape recorder for hours, and create little shows that we’d then play for our parents!

MB: Many Canadians may know you from your work for ZeD, an Emmy- and Gemini-nominated series that was unique in the way it pioneered the concept of “open-source” TV. What made that program special?

ZT: Even today, when I watch a piece from ZeD, I’m stunned by how ahead-of-the-curve the program was. Not just stylistically, but in terms of content and format as well. We were the first TV show to feature viewer content in our broadcast, and all of this was before YouTube. Al Gore’s team actually came to check out our show and used it as a template when he started Current TV in the United States.

MB: Through your work on the show Island Escapes, you had a chance to tour and film in exotic locations all over the world – sounds like a dream job! What are some of your personal highlights from that project?

ZT: Island Escapes was great because I love traveling. We went to some really far-flung locations across the globe like New Caledonia and St. Pierre and Miquelon. It is a dream job, but believe it or not, hosting a travel show is hard work! You travel sometimes for days to get to a destination. We went to a remote location in Australia for example and it took us three days just to get there! We arrived totally jet-lagged and bleary-eyed, shot for 2 days and then packed up and headed off to the next spot. It’s not quite as “relaxing” as it looks on TV.

MB: Much of your most recent work has included a focus on science and technology; from Wired Science on PBS, Wired Magazine, and The Leading Edge, to hosting the Discovery Channel’s Daily Planet with Jay Ingram, and a new season on the critically acclaimed PBS science series NOVA. What led you to specialize in science-related journalism?

ZT: I did my degree in Communications at McGill University where I focused on communications technologies in developing countries. Science & Tech have been a strong part of my world-view since then. In terms of science broadcasting in particular, however, my passion started at 21, when I first visited Africa. I grew up watching David Attenborough and my dream was always to become a science presenter; I love how he’s able to inspire and share the awe of the natural world with television viewers at home.



MB: Do you think your career will ever take you to Macedonia, in one way or another?

ZT: I'm sure I'll be back in Macedonia to visit again soon, as a lot of my family still live there. My aunt, Lile Korubin, also works in TV, and my uncle Rubens Korubin is a professor and painter. I really should check with them to see if there are any cool Macedonian science topics to cover.

MB: What advice would you give to young people who are passionate about pursuing a career in journalism?

ZT: When I started out I didn't have an agent, or any TV experience. I got in by writing over two thousand emails to television executives until someone finally agreed to put me on-air. So, I guess the best advice I could offer is to be persistent. Oddly enough, in Chinese, the word "persistence" is literally my middle name. ✨

"The King of Pirin" Remembered in 2010 Despite Bulgarian Government Interference

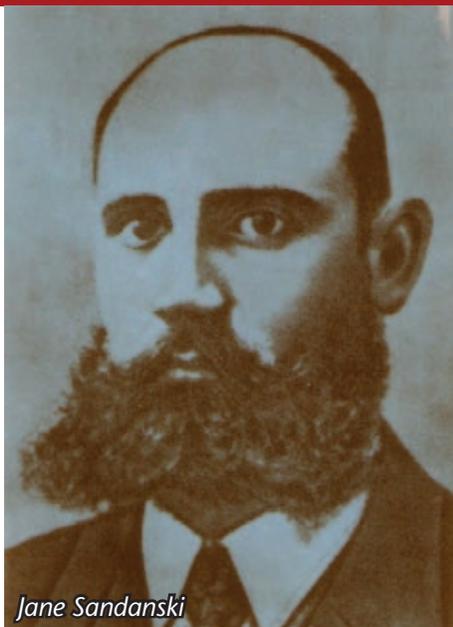
By Boris Patarov

Honoring the great son of Macedonia Jane Sandanski (pronounced "yah-neh") has become a trade mark of the Macedonian organizations in Bulgaria in the last twenty years. Once someone mentions the month of April in Rozen or Melnik, the gathering of the Macedonians in honor of Jane comes to mind.

It was the same way this year on April 25th, at the park in Melnik in front of the monument of Jane Sandanski; a traditional all-Macedonian gathering took place. It was again organized by OMO Ilinden- Pirin, the newspapers "People's Will" and "Macedonian Voice", TMO-VMRO (Independent), Macedonian-Christian Brotherhood-St.Elijah, The Union of the Repressed Macedonians in Bulgaria and the Cultural-Educational Union Nikola Vapcarov, from the town of Pertich. People came from all over Pirin Macedonia, Aegean Macedonia, the Republic of Macedonia and parts of Bulgaria.

The organizers of this event provided a very vigorous program, including ensembles and bands that came from all the parts of Macedonia. Unfortunately not all of them could make it due to the Bulgarian government restrictions. Although officials couldn't stop the event from taking place, they did what they could to prevent people from attending by abusing border controls.

Due to the abuses suffered by the World Macedonian Congress and Refugee Children on April 18th, followed by the bad memories of past years, some of the participants had to cancel their trip. For example, the ensemble Macedonian Lady from Ohrid canceled at the last moment because of the fear that their children, who are a part of their crew, could be exposed



to some of the previously known brutalities done by the Bulgarian police. They chose not to come because of their own moral values and the recognition of the fact that there is no common understanding with the governments of Macedonia and Bulgaria when it comes to this matter.

Even if they had chosen otherwise, their trip would have been for nothing, due to the fact that on April 24th-25th the Bulgarian border was deemed "unofficially closed" for everyone who wanted to attend this All-Macedonian gathering. In months leading up to the gathering, the Bulgarian institutions decided to focus their intelligence service towards their ethnic Macedonian citizens at a peaceful demonstration, instead of fighting corruption and crime in the country.

At the border, it was now claimed that no one is allowed through unless they

have a confirmation from a hotel where they are staying while visiting. No personal invitations were sufficient any longer, even if properly and lawfully documented from the corresponding township authorities, which is absurd considering the thousands of tourists who pass the border every year to go on vacation in Bulgaria. Another common tactic was the lack of medical insurance fees. These fees can be usually paid for at the border before crossing into the country, but customs deliberately didn't notify the Macedonians and told them to go back and provide documents from elsewhere. Those who asked for a form were told the office was closed for the day, and therefore they couldn't let them pass the border.

Among those denied entry were the singer Vancho Tarabunov, Nikola Kosturski from the "Deca Begalci", Ismail Bojda from the "Gorani-Macedonians" in Kosovo, Todor Petrov, President of the World's Macedonian Congress, Slavko Mangovski and the team of TV-"Sonce" a professional theatrical group from Skopje, and others.

Thankfully Vojo Stojanovski and his family were able to cross the border, either because he came a day earlier or the fact that he was traveling with his family. Even though the Stojanovski family were held at customs for two hours, they were still able to make it to the event. After the filtration at the border, no media was present; something that has not been seen in Bulgaria since the time of Tatarchev.

Another victim of the border brutality was also the co-president of OMO "Ilinden"-Pirin Stojan Georgiev, after he went to the border to meet with the team of TV "Sonce" who were earlier

that day denied an entrance. Being held at the customs for hours, searched, his documentation and passport copied by the police without any explanation, it reminded us of abuses against the main editor of "People's Will" Metodija, who suffered in the exact same way without any explanation from the police. We suspect this new policy comes from higher up in the Bulgarian intelligence service, to fight for the Macedonian cause within Bulgaria.

It is important to underline that out of all these abuses, Bulgaria has nothing to gain; it only makes the relationship between Bulgaria and Macedonia more difficult. None of these actions will choke the Macedonian activists in Bulgaria; if anything, this will inspire. When all is said and done, what kind of sympathies are they expecting from the Macedonian media, when they act upon them in this way? How will this affect the Bulgarian reputation world-wide? And in the end, I ask myself, what kind of European nation is this when, in the 21st century, it denies the media access? Even though the pressure against our gathering was significant, it wasn't significant enough to stop us. They only got booed by the people attending the commemoration.

Over 1000 people still attended this grand event. The gathering traditionally starts with one minute of silence, in mourning for the murder of the great revolutionary Sandanski, and the laying of flowers in front of his monument.

This was then followed by a speech in the name of the organizations that made it all that happen, read by the co-president of OMO "Ilinden"-Pirin, Stojko Stojkov: "The representatives of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria, as independent citizens in the community, have every right to expect that the country will be correct and loyal towards them. In order to stop their abusive behavior, to lift the ban on recognition of Macedonian political parties and organizations of similar character, to stop the hatred and the assimilation of the Macedonian people, to allow education in the Macedonian language and history in the Bulgarian schools, in order to keep the connection with our brothers and sisters from across the border."

Stojkov continued: "The past is marked by bad memories that should be gone and never repeated. It is time for

cooperation, and not for fear. The dark warriors of the past and the Iron Curtain of the Cold War are long gone. The time has come for what Macedonian, Bulgarian and other Balkan revolutionaries have been longing for; a time when the borders will come down between countries, bringing unity and a common cause. And as for us, the citizens of today, it is our responsibility to make that happen. In this fight, minorities have to take their historic role and bridge the elements of the past, not as something that creates divisions among the peoples. In this aspect, we see the role of the Macedonian minority in

"The representatives of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria, as independent citizens in the community, have every right to expect that the country will be correct and loyal towards them."

- Stojko Stojkov, OMO Ilinden-Pirin

Bulgaria. And we believe that a similar role will be played by the Bulgarian minority in Macedonia."

Prof. Dr. Georgi Radulov addressed the crowd on the life and the ideology of Jane Sandanski. Unfortunately, due to the blockade on the border, Nikola Kosturski and Ismail Bojda were not able to make their planned speeches, as with representatives from Rainbow-Vinozhito, Macedonian International Movement for Human Rights and the Australian-Macedonian Committee for Human Rights.

A ceremonial presentation of a greeting telegram was read in the name of the United Macedonian Diaspora, that said: "United Macedonian Diaspora wants to salute everyone that is present on this gathering today, gathered to express respect to his excellence Jane Sandanski. Don't be discouraged. Continue with your brave fight. The spirit of the "Pirin King" lives on, and grows in the hearts of all of the Macedonians, and his ideology will be entirely realized when all the Macedonians on the Balkan will live free, and enjoy the rights of a multiethnic and multicultural society, such as it is in the Republic of

Macedonia; an essential part of modern Europe, a Macedonia without borders, without divisions and abuses, but based on the grounds of mutual respect, decency and peace between all peoples."

Representing the Group for Bulgarian-Macedonian Friendship was Prof. Ivan Kalchev, who also announced the end of the official group speeches.

After that, a recital in honor of Jane Sandanski was held by Dimitar Ivanov of Shumen. Some of the representatives read poems about Jane Sandanski. The musical program opened with "The Brezan Grandmas", who did an a cappella version of traditional Macedonian singing. They were followed by the folklore group "Solunci" from Solun, Aegean Macedonia. Dressed in traditional Macedonian clothes, they performed and danced in typical Aegean folk dances. The performance of traditional dances that came from the region of our cultural genocide excited the crowd, especially the representatives from Aegean Macedonia. "I can't believe that I just witnessed this" said a senior citizen with tears in his eyes. The massive emotional response from the crowd ended in a big traditional dance ("Oro") in which everyone took part. The group "Solunci" had come to Melnik for the folk competition that had previously also taken place in Athens, Greece. Aside from the Macedonian folklore, they also teach Macedonian language in Greece. The end of their performance was then followed by an enormous response from the crowd, expressed by handclapping and emotional hugs and handshakes. After their performance, they read a letter from the organizers of "Solunci" which noted: "We are thankful for this great celebration with your young and elder Pirinci. We want to thank you for giving us the opportunity to "recharge the batteries" of our hearts, and to pursue this tough path which is also fulfilled with many beautiful and real experiences".

Next, Vojo Stojanovski and the orchestra "Macedonia" from Musomiste played, led by Georgi Popov. His songs fired up the crowd even more. They got everybody in a rhythm making it a fascinating sight for the eyes. It is worth saying that even after the repression experienced, this gathering was one of the best in the past decade, if not the best ever. ❄

Kavardarci Artists Visit South Florida

By Irena Gapkovska

As part of a continuing international collaboration, fine artists from Kavadarci, Goran Boev and Marina Ubavkova, visited Miami as part of the NGO Art Studio / Bakehouse Art Complex artist residency program. This Skopje-based non-profit open art studio and Miami-based art institution have teamed up to provide reciprocal one-month artist residencies, offering

promising young artists from Macedonia the opportunity to be cultural ambassadors in the U.S. and vice-versa, as well as offering practical help, such as affordable housing / studio space, exhibition galleries and valuable professional development opportunities.

Additionally, on August 13th, Bakehouse Art Complex Studio #26 hosted a gathering of the "South Florida Balkan Connection," a networking group for expatriates from all countries in the Balkans. "This is a great opportunity to develop new friendships, build new business alliances, and exchange information in this comfortable atmosphere," said Macedonian Honorary Consul General



Dana Klein of Hollywood, Florida, a fan of BAC who organized the group.

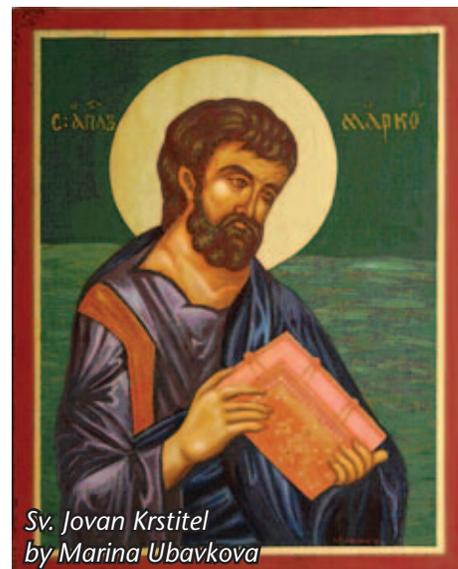
Visiting Artist Goran Boev was born in Kavadarci, Macedonia, in 1982. He graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts Department of Painting Restoration and Conservation in Skopje in 2005. Since 2007, he has been a teaching assistant at the Faculty of Art and Design at the European University of Skopje. He earned his Masters degree in 2009 from Sts Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje. Goran's artwork is a mixture of many different styles but mostly is focused on metaphysical art and surrealism. He says: "For my participation as a visiting artist at Bakehouse, I expect to see my art from a different perspective and to bring the experience back to Macedonia."

Marina Ubavkova was born in 1987, also in Kavadarci, Macedonia. Marina's art is focused on Byzantine icons, which are venerated in Orthodox Christianity as part of the liturgy. "Every artist works within a tradition," says Marina. "I was

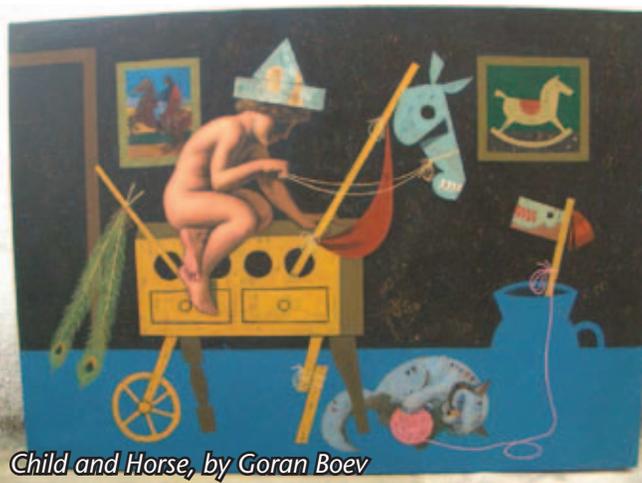
born a Macedonian, and my Macedonian soul is brought into a holy vibration and I feel a profound spirituality in the language of icons. This is my tradition."

Established in 1998, NGO Art Studio has established itself as part of the flourishing art scene in Miami, thanks to support from the Cultural Information Center -Skopje; the United Macedonian Diaspora; the Macedonian Arts

Council; Prima Center Berlin; the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of St. Cyril & Methodius; and Art Hostel Skopje. Additional support for NGO Art Studio and Bakehouse Art Complex comes from the International Music and Art Foundation; the Miami Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs; the City of Miami; the Cultural Affairs Council; the Miami-Dade Mayor and Board of County Commissioners; Greater Miami, Florida, Department of State Division of Cultural Affairs; the Florida Arts Council; and MiamiArtZine. ✨



Sv. Jovan Krstiteľ
by Marina Ubavkova



Child and Horse, by Goran Boev

Roman Historian: Ancient Macedonians and Hellenes Communicated Through Translators

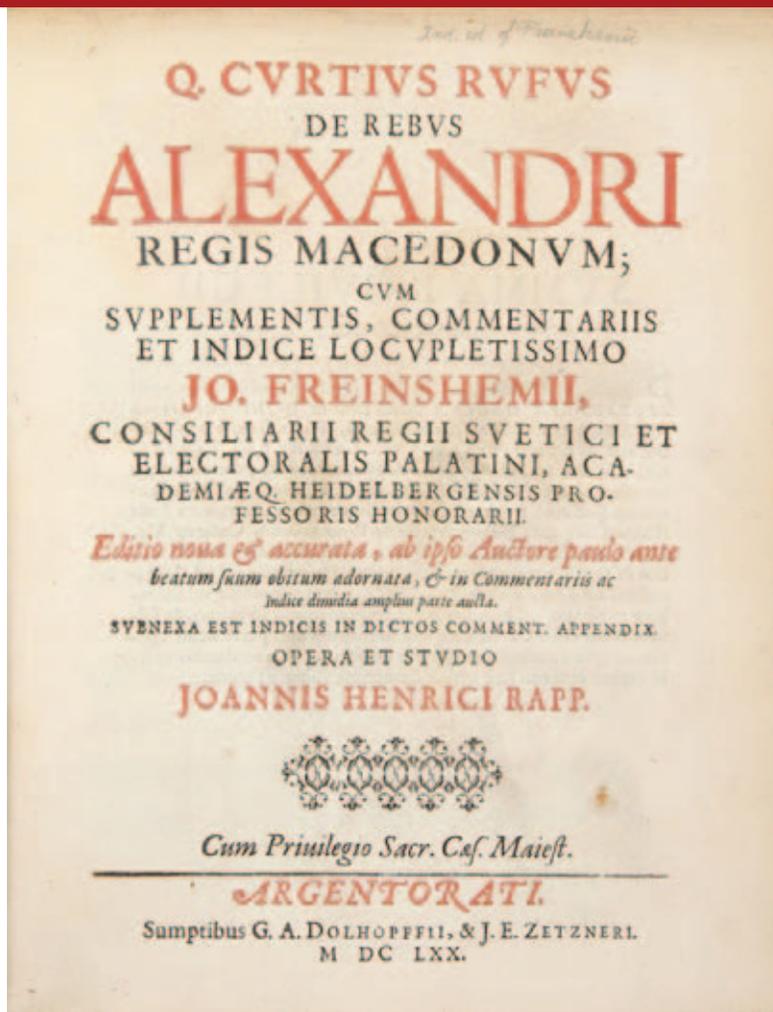
By Aleksandar Donski

On March 30th, 2009, the then Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece Ms. Dora Bakoyannis stated: "... I would like to emphasize that history is a field of science that determines historical truth through scientific methods. ... History is not something that can be negotiated. The history of the ancient world was written and documented, and it has been for centuries, through painstaking research by internationally distinguished historians and archaeologists."

We completely agree with the above conclusion of the Greek Minister. In the Ancient World, over fifty authors - mostly Greeks and a few members of other ancient peoples - have clearly written that the ancient Macedonians were a separate nation from the ancient Greeks, which will be outlined in my upcoming book. In this text, we will make references to the writings of the Roman historian Quintus Curtius Rufus.

This Roman author and historian is known for writing the biography of Alexander the Great of Macedonia. There is not a lot of data on the life of this historian, but it is believed he lived in the 1st century after Christ. The following excerpts from his work are striking regarding the distinctions between the language of the ancient Macedonians and the language of the ancient Greeks. Quintus Curtius Rufus clearly wrote that the ancient Macedonians and Greeks interacted with each other through translators!

For instance, the trial of Philotas is well-known. He plotted to kill Alexander the Great, but the plot was discovered and Philotas was publicly questioned by Alexander personally. Describing this incident, Quintus Curtius Rufus recorded that the Macedonians spoke a separate language. He even quotes a statement of Alexander, where he is addressing the Macedonians in the first person plural. He mentioned (citation): "our mother



and native language". Alexander addressed Philotas with the following words: "Now the Macedonians will judge your case. Please state whether you will use our native language before them?"

Philotas said no, and replied that besides the Macedonians, there were many present who were not Macedonians, and for that purpose, it would only enable more people to understand.

At that, Alexander told the audience: "Do you see how offensive Philotas finds our native language? ...But let him speak as he pleases - only remember he is as contemptuous of our way of life as he is of our language." (Quintus Curtius Rufus, "De Rebus Gestis Alexandri Macedonis", VI, 10; Quintus Curtius Rufus "History of Alexander the Great", translated from

Latin to Macedonian by Dr. Ljubinka Basotova, Skopje, 1998, pg. 272).

But, Philotas did not remain indifferent to these accusations, and in his defence he replied: "I refuse to speak the native language and I am appalled by the customs of the Macedonians. Does it mean that I have threatened the kingdom, which I despise? But even earlier, this native language was abandoned in society with other nations, and so both the winners and the losers had to study a foreign language." (Quintus Curtius Rufus. Citation opus, pg. 274).

However, in the accusations against Philotas, one of Alexander's generals, Bolon, interfered and accused Philotas among other things (citation): "... Even though he is Macedonian, he was not ashamed to listen through a translator to the people, to hear what they were saying in his own native language".

This incident makes it clear that a separate Macedonian language existed. Also, from the above description, we can see that some Macedonians for practical reasons and for a better chance of communicating

with other people, used Koine Greek - a “patois” language created from several Greek dialects and words from other languages, like a sort of Esperanto of the time. But amongst themselves, they were still speaking their native Macedonian language.

It was observed by Alexander that Philotas did not want to address the Macedonians in the in the “native language.” Philotas meanwhile, accused Alexander of introducing the Koine, and stated that the Macedonian language has long been neglected, and now the winners (the Macedonians) and the defeated (Greeks, Persians and other nations which fell under Macedonian government) should learn the new language.

To this, Bolon stated that Philotas was Macedonian, and that during the time he was in power with the Macedonians he communicated through translators. This is a very important testimony and evidence that at the time, many Macedonians did not know Koine, therefore, when they wanted to communicate with someone, they communicated through a translator. Although Philotas knew the Macedonian language, he did not want to hear the Macedonians speaking in their own language, but insisted their words be translated to him in Koine.

Quintus Curtius Rufus mentions elsewhere that the Macedonians and Greeks were separate nations, as well. Regarding the conquering of the Asian tribe the Arachians by the Macedonians, and while staying in their country, Quintus Curtius Rufus writes: “There (Alexander) has united the army that was under the command of

general Parmenion. That was six thousand Macedonians, two hundred aristocracy and five thousand Greeks with six hundred horsemen... “(Quintus Curtius Rufus, citation opus pg. 292).

The writing of the ancient historian Quintus Curtius Rufus is another strong source of ancient evidence against the modern Greek propaganda. These days, the Macedonian Literary Association “Prlicev” from Sydney, and EMARI from Stip, under the auspices of the Institute of History and Archaeology at the University “Goce Delchev” in Stip published a brochure titled “The Ancient Macedonians were not Greeks” by the historian Aleksandar Donski. This brochure is a response to a letter that was sent to the United States President Barack Obama in April 2009 by a number of pro-Greek oriented scholars from several countries. The letter had claimed that Macedonia was “Greek” and that today’s citizens of the Republic of Macedonia have no right to declare themselves Macedonians. In response, I have objectively and with the help of historical evidence have disputed the argument in another letter to President Obama. The brochure is published in two separate editions in English (translated by Milkica Paneva and Michael Braxton) and in Macedonian. With the help of the Macedonian Diaspora, this brochure has been distributed among politicians, media, historical institutions and individuals worldwide, including the signatories of the letter that was sent to President Obama, as well. ✨

UMD Australia Update

By Ordan Andreevski, UMD Director of Australian Operations

Nurturing Community Relations

On Saturday, 24 July 2010, Zak Milenkovski and Ordan Andreevski attended the annual Gala Dinner organized by the Macedonian Community Council of Victoria. It was a great opportunity to lend support to the work of this important community asset in the



Whittlesea Mayor Mary Lalios

State of Victoria, and encourage its team to continue working for the Macedonian community in partnership with UMD. It was also a great pleasure to speak to the dignitaries that were present at the event, such as Minister of Resources and Tourism Martin Ferguson, in the new Australian Government lead by Prime Minister Julia Gillard, and Speaker of the Australian Parliament Harry Jenkins, who did not miss a chance to

enjoy the Macedonian music and engage in traditional dancing known as the Oro. The Premier of Victoria John Brumby was represented by his Minister for Community Development, Lili D’Ambrosio. The Mayor of Whittlesea Mary Lalios was also present, and spoke in her Macedonian mother language.

Strengthening Relations with the Feds and Parliament

On 3 June, a draft position paper on Australia-Macedonia Relations was sent to federal parliamentarians representing Labor, the Liberals and the Australian Greens, as well as to their policy advisers. The draft position paper outlined key opportunities and challenges for closer Australia-relations, as well as issues that are important to the community. Documents of this nature help elected representatives and policy makers have a better understanding of the needs and aspirations of the Australian Macedonian community. They also demonstrate our readiness to engage in meaningful partnerships for policy innovations that are in Australia’s national interest. Most Australian politicians have relatively little understanding of the major advancements that Macedonia has made since independence and the obstacles it faces as it tries to integrate into global and regional institutions and markets. Positive change in

policy will come about by raising awareness, interest, desire and action through communication and close links with decision makers and decision shapers.

On 28 June, a letter was sent to Australia's new Prime Minister Julia Gillard, congratulating her on her appointment. She was invited to lend practical support for the implementation of the Roadmap for Closer Australia-Macedonian Relations. A meeting with the PM and the Foreign Minister Stephen Smith has been requested and a response is expected after the federal election on 21 August 2010.

In mid-July, the author attended the launch of the Australian Greens candidate for the Senate in Victoria, Dr. Richard DiNatale. This was a fantastic chance to discuss the possibilities for closer engagement with the Greens for support of closer ties with Macedonia, and its community in Australia.

UMD Australia works closely with all political parties and thanks all those federal MPs and Senators who have shown an interest in Macedonian issues, and the work of UMD in Australia and globally.

Regional Representatives Swing into Action

We are delighted to announce that UMD's Regional Representative in Western Australia, Mr. Dame Krcoski, held his first meeting with a group of educated and enthusiastic young Macedonians on Ilinden. His first report from the meeting is that UMD Australia is going to be big. Similarly, we are pleased to inform that a Regional Representative in ACT-Canberra will start to operate soon.



Dame Krcoski

Media Relations

As part of the outreach strategy, contacts were made with the editors of The Age, the Sydney Morning Herald, the Australian and the Australian Financial Review, focusing on the need for foreign policy innovation on Macedonia. The journalists were given copies of the position paper on closer relations between Australia and Macedonia, as well articles from On Line Opinion, the Canberra Times and links to the UMD website. At the same time, close relations are maintained with the Australian Macedonian media such as the Australian Macedonian Weekly, Today/Denes and the SBS Radio Macedonian program.

Foreign policy has not been a hot topic in the Australian federal election campaign that is underway. Most attention is paid to the war in Afghanistan and policy on asylum seekers arriving by boat from Indonesia. The opportunity for UMD Australia is to feed information to journalists which is timely and

newsworthy, as well as brimming with real-life drama and content that is relevant to viewers, readers and or listeners.

Research Project

The Survey of the Relations between the Australian Macedonian Diaspora with the Republic of Macedonia has been translated into Macedonian and will be available online via Survey Monkey in mid August 2010. This is an important research project which will generate evidence based data and information for decision-making, community capacity building and advocacy. The results of the survey will be published in top tier refereed journals, and presented at the UMD Global Conference in Washington, D.C., in 2011.

Relations with Top Universities and Think Tanks

On 30 July, the author attended the Jean Monnet Public Lecture entitled "EU-Asia Relations and the new European Diplomatic Service" delivered by Dr. Georg Wiessala, Professor of International Relations, University of Lancashire, UK and visiting professor at the University of Melbourne. Prof. Wiessala was pleased to note that a growing number of Macedonians are studying international relations in the UK, and that more research needs to be done on EU Foreign Policy on Macedonia. The challenge for UMD is to encourage Government and the Community to invest in this critically important area and find innovative sources of funding from philanthropists, foundations and corporations. Creating a culture of giving and investing in the future of Macedonian advancement is a high priority for UMD.

Australia Has Got Talent – Bobby Andonov

Finally, it is important to mention that the young and highly talented Australian Macedonian singer Bobby Andonov did a fantastic job competing for the top prize of \$250,000 as part of the national TV show 'Australia Has Got Talent'. Bobby's admired decision to declare himself a proud Macedonian on numerous occasions during the show, which ran over a number of weeks, was priceless. He has inspired the younger generation to have confidence in showing their heritage and identity. Bobby is a rising star and we are very proud of him. ✨



Bobby Andonov

U.S. Flag Raisings Celebrating Macedonian Independence

With files from Argje Bellio and Andrea Alusheff

Encouraged by the United Macedonian Diaspora, Macedonians in Fort Wayne, Indiana, organized a flag raising ceremony on September 8th to mark Macedonian Independence Day at the Courthouse Green in the city's downtown. The ceremony honored those that had labored for Macedonian independence, and those who tirelessly work in the interests of peace and prosperity of the Macedonian Republic. The ceremony started with introductory words by Aleksandar Popovski, of Indiana-Purdue University Fort Wayne, and Argje Bellio, former chair of Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church. In the remarks, Popovski explained the importance of September 8th to Macedonians around the world, and Bellio praised the strong, active Macedonian community of Fort Wayne, which is proud of its heritage. The Macedonian flag was waving the entire day in front of the Courthouse, thanks to the cooperation of Fort Wayne Mayor Henry.

Meanwhile, another Independence Day celebration took place in Cleveland, Ohio. The event was attended by Macedonians from across Ohio, as well Valarie McCall, Chief of Government Affairs of Mayor Frank Jackson's office. Father Vasil Manasiev, Parish Priest of St Clement of Ohrid Macedonian Orthodox Church, Avon, OH, and Father Zoran Zdravev, Parish Priest of St Nikola Macedonian Orthodox Church of Green, OH, who said the blessing. Pavle Dolovski, also from St Clement, served as Master of Ceremonies, assisted by Pete Gorgievski of St Nikola Church, who raised the flag atop Cleveland City Hall.



Left to right: Aleksandar Popovski and Argje Bellio.



Macedonian and U.S. flags flying in Cleveland, OH.

Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), at right, with her Chief of Staff Art Estopinan and Macedonian Honorary Consul Dana Klein



The Macedonian Question in Bulgaria

Македонското прашање во Бугарија

By Goran Stojanov - Од Горан Стојанов

The idea for a fair resolution of the Macedonian question in Bulgaria appeared immediately after the Balkan Wars. It was an extension of the idea for Macedonian autonomy that was widely present in all strata of Bulgarian society in the late 19th and early 20th century. But it took three lost wars for that idea to defeat Bulgarian chauvinism and to become the official political view of the new post WWII government, which on September 9th 1944 fully accepted the resolution of the First Session of ASNOM, the supreme legislative body of the Macedonian state from 1944 until the end of World War II. This included the declaration for the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Macedonia as a state of the Macedonian nation on the entire ethnic territory of Macedonia.

This decision was formally announced in a letter that the Bulgarian Worker's Party sent to Marshal Tito and the Yugoslav Communist Party on November 2nd 1944, in which they wrote: "In view of the establishment of a free Macedonian state within the framework of a federal Yugoslavia, making it the first and appropriate step for the realization of the Macedonian ideal of emancipation of one United Macedonia, we would like to inform you that our Party and our people most sincerely welcome the new Macedonian state."

On October 7th, 1946, the remains of Goce Delchev were transported from Sofia to Skopje. Todor Pavlov, a member of the Bulgarian Academy, gave the following speech: "The understanding and assessment of Goce makes it possible to consider him a forerunner of the National Liberation Macedonian Front, which in our time finally succeeded to create a free and sovereign Macedonian state, which has freely opted to become a part of Tito's Yugoslavia as a federal republic. Goce, with his entire revolutionary activity and thought, greatly contributed to



Romanian and Bulgarian Dictators
Nicolae Ceaucescu and Todor Zhivkov, in 1979.

the formation and development of the Macedonian national awareness, Macedonian, and not Bulgarian nor Serbian. In one of his letters, Goce wrote: 'Is there no one to write at least one book in Macedonian?' This cry of Goce's demonstrates that had he stayed alive he would not have been indifferent to the fact that today in Macedonia there are many books, not only books of poetry, and not only historical books written in the Macedonian language. This act, the act of transferring the remains of Goce Delchev to the free capital city of the emancipated Macedonian state, I would like to say, will be of great historic, symbolic significance, even more so because, on their way, they will pass through Pirin Macedonia. Macedonia can be, should be, and will be finally united in its natural historic boundaries. This united, powerful, emancipated, sovereign and in every way progressive state will truly become a mighty unification link of the Balkan's democratic peoples. Long live the free, sovereign, People's Republic of Macedonia, the dream of its immortal son, Goce Delchev."

The resolution of the Macedonia Question led to building close relations between Bulgaria and

the other nations of Yugoslavia, and even to serious plans for inclusion of the Bulgarian state in the Yugoslav federation. Great Britain objected to the plan, complaining that Bulgaria was a defeated side in the WW2, and cannot conduct an independent foreign policy until it signs the Peace Agreement. Stalin too had reservations, especially toward Tito, so he ordered Georgi Dimitrov, the Bulgarian President, to delay the plans for federation for a few years, and hence to delay the unification of Vardar and Pirin Macedonia. Yet as early as the spring 1945, Macedonian newspapers started to arrive in Pirin Macedonia. First in Gorna Dzumaja (the present day Blagoevgrad), and after that in almost all towns of Pirin Macedonia, Macedonian libraries were opened, in the movie theaters they started to show short movies produced in the Republic of Macedonia, and the next year in Gorna Dzumaja, a Macedonian theater was established. Toward the end of December 1946, Bulgaria conducted a census, according to which a hundred and sixty thousand, six hundred forty-one, or 63.6% of the population of Pirin Macedonia have self-identified as ethnic Macedonians. At the end of 1947, teaching in Macedonian

language began in schools across Pirin Macedonia, and in the spring of the next year, 300 students and high school graduates, Macedonians from Pirin Macedonia, were sent to the recently established Teacher's Academy in Skopje.

This process was brutally interrupted in the summer of 1948 with the Resolution of the Informbiro, in which Yugoslavia was declared as a revisionist state, and therefore an enemy of the Soviet Union and its allies. The Bulgarian leadership was ordered to terminate all agreements with Yugoslavia and to stop all plans for federation. Attitude towards the Macedonians in Bulgaria, though, did not change significantly for fifteen more years. Although the teaching of Macedonian language was discontinued, Macedonians were not compelled to renounce their nationality. Thus, according to the second census in 1956, despite the broken ties with Republic of Macedonia and the anti-Yugoslav propaganda that was carried on intensively in Bulgaria, the reported number of Macedonians in Pirin Macedonia did not decline, but it increased. 178,862 inhabitants of Pirin Macedonia declared themselves as ethnic Macedonians.

It was at the congress of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian

Communist Party, on March 11 and 12, 1963, that the stance regarding the Macedonian issue was radically changed. The infamous Bulgarian dictator Todor Zhivkov, then newly appointed as a president of the Bulgarian Communist Party, called for a radical change towards: "that population, which is part of the Bulgarian nation", then he added: "the Macedonian nation does not, and cannot exist." This triggered a massive persecution of the Macedonians in Pirin Macedonia. Many Macedonians were fired from their jobs, forcibly moved, taken to forced labor camps, or imprisoned as enemies of the state.

The third census in communist Bulgaria was very carefully prepared so that, according to Zhivkov: "By employing one maneuver, in just a few days, the entire population in that region (Pirin Macedonia) was reformulated as pure Bulgarians". The executors of the census that was carried on in December 1965 provided an extremely low number of only one thousand four hundred thirty-seven ethnic Macedonians in Pirin Macedonia, or less than 1% from the previous census, a figure that cannot be explained by any normal demographic changes. In the rest of Bulgaria, Zhivkov's maneuver was not employed, so the number of



Goce Delchev, 1872-1903; born in Kukush, Aegean Macedonia, laid to rest in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia

Macedonians remained almost the same with that of the first and second census. The situation in Bulgaria since then oscillates between the extreme position of Zhivkov - "the Macedonian nation does not and cannot exist", which unfortunately is also the position of many current Bulgarian politicians - and a more moderate position of the later Bulgarian governments - "Macedonians do exist in the Republic of Macedonia, but not in Bulgaria. ❄️

Идејата за праведно разрешување на Македонското прашање во Бугарија се јавила веднаш после Балканските војни. Таа се надоврзува на идејата за македонска автономија присутна нашироко во сите слоеви на бугарското општество кон крајот на 19-тиот и почетокот на 20-тиот век. Но биле потребни три неуспешни војни за



Tomb of Goce Delchev

таа идеја да го надвие бугарскиот национал-шовинизам и да стане официјална политика на новата Отечествоно-фронтиска власт, која на 9-ти септември 1944 година целосно ги прифатила заклучоците на Првото Заседание на АСНОМ, вклучително и прогласот за создавање на Демократска Република Македонија, како држава на македонскиот народ на целокупната етничка територијата на Македонија.

Оваа решение и формално било доставено во писмото кое Бугарската Работничка Партија му го упатила на маршал Тито и Југословенската Комунистичка Партија на втори ноември 1944 годинина во кое тие напишале: „Со оглед на формирањето на слободна Македонска Држава во рамките на Федерална Југославија, како прв и правичен чекор кон остварувањето на Обединета Македонија, би сакале да ве известиме дека нашата партија и нашиот народ најтопло и најискрено го поздравуваат формирањето на новата Македонска Држава.“

Тодор Павлов, член на Бугарската Академија и регент на Бугарија, на седми октомври 1946 година, по повод испраќањето на посмртните останки на Гоце Делчев од Софија за Скопје одржал говор во кој меѓу другото

рекол: „Гоце Делчев можеме слободно да го сметаме за основач на Македонскиот Народноослободителен Фронт кој во нашето време успеа да ја воспостави слободната и суверена Македонска Држава, која слободно и самостојно се определи да стане рамноправна република во Титова Федеративна Југославија. Гоце со целата своја револуционерна активност и мисла силно придонесе за основањето и развојот на македонската национална свест, македонска, а не бугарска или српска. Во едно од неговите писма Гоце напишал: „Како не се најде од мајка роден да напише барем една книга на македонски јазик“. Да беше Гоце сега жив, ќе му се наполнише срцето да види дека денеска во Македонија се печатат многу книги, не само поезија, и не само историски книги напишани на литературен македонски јазик. Овој чин, пренесувањето на останките на Гоце Делчев во новата слободна престолнина на Македонската Држава ќе биде од огромно историско и симболично значење, зашто ќе помине низ Пиринска Македонија. Македонија може, треба, и ќе биде обединета во нејзините природни и историски граници. Така обединета, силна, еманципирана, суверена и во секоја смисла прогресивна, ќе стане моќна алка која ќе ги спојува балканските демократски народи. Да живее слободна, суверена, Народна Република Македонија, сонот на нејзиниот бессмртен син Гоце Делчев.“

Разрешувањето на Македонското Прашање довела до брзо приближување на Бугарија кон другите народи во Југославија и дури до сериозни планови за влегување на бугарската држава во југословенската федерација. На тоа се спротивставила Британија со аргумент дека Бугарија беше поразена страна во Втората Светска Војна и нема право да води самостојна надворешна политика се' до потпишувањето на мировен договор. На тоа се надоврзала и недовербата на Сталин спрема Тито, па на бугарскиот претседател Георги Димитров му било наредено плановите за федерација да ги стави во мирување за неколку години, а со тоа да го одложи и обединувањето на Вардарска со Пиринска Македонија. Сепак уште во пролетта 1945 година во Пиринска Македонија почнале да пристигаат весници на македонски јазик. Најпрво во Горна Џумаја (денешен Благоевград), а потоа и во речиси сите градови во Пиринска Македонија се отвориле библиотеки со книги на македонски јазик, во кината се прикажувале кратки филмови произведени во Македонија, а следната година во Горна Џумаја почнал да работи театар на македонски јазик. Кон крајот на декември 1946 година бил спроведен попис на населението според кој во Пиринска Македонија сто и шеесет илјади, шестотини четириесет и еден, или 63,6% од населението, се изјасниле за Македонци по националност. Кон крајот на 1947 година започнала настава на македонски јазик во сите училишта во Пиринска Македонија, а пролетта биле испратени 300 студенти и завршени средношколци, Македонци од Пиринска Македонија, на студии во штотуку отворената Педагошка Академија во Скопје.

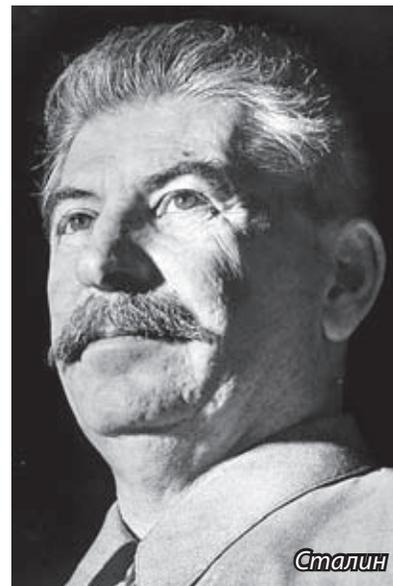
Овој процес бил насилно прекинат во летото 1948 со Резолуцијата на Информбирото со која Југославија била прогласена за ревизионистичка држава и според тоа непријател на Советскиот Сојуз и неговите сојузници. На

бугарското раководство му било наредено да ги раскине сите договори со Југославија и да ги прекине сите планови за федерација. Односот спрема Македонците во Бугарија, меѓутоа, не се променил значително уште цели петнаесет години. Иако наставата на македонски јазик била прекината, на Македонците не им бил вршен притисок да се откажат од својата национална припадност. Така според вториот попис

од 1956 година, и покрај раскинатите врски со Вардарска Македонија и антијугословенската пропаганда што интензивно се водела во Бугарија, бројот на Македонци по националност во Пиринска Македонија не само што не опаднал, туку се зголемил. Дури сто седумдесет и осум илјади, осумстотини шеесет и два жители на Пиринска Македонија се изјасниле како Македонци по националност.

Промена во однос на македонското прашање во Бугарија се случила дури на пленумот на Централниот Комитет на Бугарската Комунистичка Партија на 11 и 12 март 1963 година. Доскорешниот бугарски диктатор Тодор Живков, тогаш штотуку назначен за претседател на бугарската Комунистичка Партија, повикал на радикална промена спрема: „тоа население, кое е дел од бугарската нација“, потоа изјавил дека: „македонска нација не постои и не може да постои.“ Со тоа започнал масовен прогон на Македонците во Пиринска Македонија. Многу Македонци биле отпуштени од работа, насилно преселени, одведени на принудна работа или затворени како непријатели на државата.

Третиот попис во комунистичка Бугарија бил многу внимателно подготвен па, според зборовите на Живков: „Со еден маневар, за неколку дена целото население во тој крај (мисли на Пиринска Македонија) осамна како чистокрвни Бугари“. Извршителите на Живков во пописот спроведен во декември 1965 година даваат исклучително низок број од само илјада четиристотини триесет и седум Македонци по националност во Пиринска Македонија, или помалку од 1% од претходниот попис, бројки што не можат да се објаснат со никакви нормални демографски промени. Во другите области на Бугарија маневарот на Живков не бил изведен, така што и на третиот попис бројот на Македонци останал речиси ист со тој од првиот и вториот попис. Позицијата на Бугарија оттогаш наваму осцилира меѓу екстремната позиција на Живков: „Македонска нација не постои и не може да постои“, која за жал е и позиција на многумина актуелни бугарски политичари, и само за влакно поумерената позиција на подоцнежните бугарски влади: „Македонци постојат во Република Македонија, но не и во Бугарија“.



Habitat for Humanity Macedonia: Making a Difference, One Brick at a Time

By Mark Branov

As a newly independent state, Macedonia is facing a variety of economic challenges. According to some estimates, per capita GDP stands at US\$4,600, with an average monthly salary of approximately of US\$430 per month, not to mention 36% unemployment. As a result of this economic malaise and other factors, one of the most pressing concerns in Macedonia is a lack of affordable housing. In 1990, under the Yugoslav regime, new construction stood at 5 units per 1,000 people. Now, this figure has actually dropped to a mere 1.6 units. Add to that the fact that 16% of the current housing stock in the country – approximately 110,000 homes – is in dire need of renovation, due to unsafe construction, poor maintenance, or inadequate sanitation.

Founded in 1976, Habitat for Humanity is an international, ecumenical Christian, non-governmental, not-for-profit organization devoted to building “simple, decent, and affordable” housing. HFH Macedonia was founded in 2004, with a focus on microfinance models and partnerships with local organizations. Key projects have involved home improvement micro-loans, water supply & sanitation, an ambitious new build in the town of Veles, and a new energy-efficiency initiative. At the major construction project in the town of Veles, 102 homes are being built in 11 buildings, for a total of 5674 m2 in three years, at a value of approximately US\$3m.

Providing a hand up rather than a hand out, HFH families are viewed as clients, and they are fully expected to repay their loans, while local microfinance organizations Mozbnosti and Horizonti share in the funding model. HFH determines the target group, provides construction advice, and does construction monitoring, whereas the local partner organizations screen the client’s financial reliability, process the loans, and are ultimately responsible for repayments.

UMD Voice had a chance to communicate with Mr. Zoran Kostov, the National Director of HFH Macedonia:



MB: Generally speaking, why is it that Macedonia is producing less housing now than it did pre-independence? What are some of the social consequences that have resulted from the lack of affordable housing, or poor standard of housing, in the country?

ZK: For several decades social housing had been one of the pillars of the centrally planned economy. After the market economy was introduced during the early 1990s, the entire housing sector was left to commercial

initiatives, with poor involvement of the government and even poorer alternatives. A lack of affordable housing was a logical consequence of this trend. At the same time, the gradual impoverishment of the population resulted in poor maintenance of the existing housing stock, with no affordable financing for the necessary renovations. This parallel trend has led to a number of substandard homes all across the country.

MB: When I think of the Habitat for Humanity, the first image that comes to my mind – rightly or wrongly – is the face of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter. I read a quote from him, as follows: “Habitat has successfully removed the stigma of charity by substituting it with a sense of partnership. The people who will live in the homes work side by side with the volunteers, so they feel very much that they are on an equal level.” Have you seen these principles in action, in Macedonia?

ZK: We have been witnessing these principles all these years, on a daily basis. While contributing their “sweat equity” during the construction of their homes, our partner families develop a sense of ownership, dignity and pride at the same time. This is a critically important element in Habitat’s philosophy, to which President Carter contributed a lot. His Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Work Project with Habitat for Humanity became a globally recognized effort, and many dignitaries and officials have followed it. Among others, we had Macedonian President Gjorge Ivanov on our construction site several months ago, working side by side with volunteers and partner families.



MB: What does HFH gain by having local Macedonian organizations on the ground, working hand-in-hand as partners and sharing responsibilities?

ZK: (We believe) that the non-profit sector and the Macedonian civil society organizations can also contribute their expertise to poverty alleviation and economic recovery of the country. This helps in overcoming the inherited attitude, deeply rooted in the Macedonian society, that the government alone is expected to solve all of our individual problems, from salaries, to climate change, to housing. In this respect, several of the most credible local non-profit organizations that run multimillion development programs have been already thinking about the idea of establishing a kind of anti-poverty coalition in Macedonia, and initiating an independent development fund for anti-poverty programs.

MB: What are the various ways that the Macedonian Diaspora can lend their support?

ZK: The Macedonian Diaspora has to a great extent lost its confidence in supporting local initiatives, due to the

widely-known local inefficiency and corruption. So, prior to looking into the various ways of support, we should focus, in my opinion, on regaining the Diaspora's trust. In fact, Macedonia has a number of reputable, externally audited organizations that can successfully carry out complex development programs. The next step may be to start, once again, a development initiative for Macedonia, aimed towards fighting local poverty and social exclusion, which could include establishing some form of Diaspora-supported

development fund that could provide some moderate return to the investors. As for Habitat's programs in Macedonia, we already have a number of U.S.-based supporters, so we would welcome any other interested parties to donate a 100% tax-deductible gift to Habitat for Humanity, and designate the funds to Macedonia; all financial contributions are acknowledged with a letter that serves as a tax receipt. Additionally, we have a huge, well established international volunteer program, that might serve as initial motive for the second- or third-generation Macedonian-Americans, Macedonian-Canadians or Macedonian-Australians, to start visiting and getting to know the country of their grandparents. ✨



**RESEARCH OF MORAL VALUE SYSTEMS:
INTERNATIONAL CONTESTS "EMILIA AND MARIA KUKUBAJSKI"**

NVO "EMARI", Washington/Stip, which promotes ethics, academic research, history of culture, announces its new international competition in academic research: "Traditional ethics in Christian views, compared to relativistic, secular, atheistic, agnostic ethics". Eligible applicants are graduate and undergraduate students from Macedonia, the Diaspora, and universities from around the world. The competition is open from October 4th to Thanksgiving, and the award in amount of \$1000 will be announced for Christmas. 2010.



Scientific papers, in English, Times New Roman, should be sent to marija.kukubajska@ugd.edu.mk and maria_kubajska@yahoo.com. All submitted papers will be published and 50% of the sales' proceeds will be donated to UMD Washington, in support of raising moral awareness among children and youth. The award is in memory of the 31 anniversary from the birth and the 4th anniversary from the untimely death of the American-Macedonian writer, humanist and advocate for ethics applied in real life, Emilija Kukubajska (Emilia Kubajska), co-founder of EMARI.



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