

The Education Race for Macedonia, 1878—1903

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During the first decade of the twentieth century, Macedonia¹ stood amongst the last and most coveted territories in the dwindling European holdings of the Ottoman Empire. This is a time and place that is synonymous with ethnic violence and inflamed national passions. Local guerrilla bands and paramilitary forces led by famous patriots from regional nations traversed the rugged mountains and forests of the territory, setting ambushes and descending on beleaguered villagers to demand provisions and oaths of loyalty. This was a struggle between competing nationalist movements, each of which envisioned Macedonia as an integral part of its nation.

As strong as nationalist sentiments ostensibly were in Ottoman Macedonia, nationalism was, however, a relatively recent phenomenon. In mid-nineteenth-century Macedonia, one would have been hard pressed to find many committed nationalists. Loyalty was first to one's family and village. Identity was primarily religious, and adjectives of nationality were commonly used to denote social class or occupation. Yet, within half a century, nationalism arrived, inspiring or forcing the people of Macedonia to take sides in a struggle that was escalating towards violence. Why this sudden shift? What were the forces and agents that accounted for this sudden spread of nationalism, and why did it lead to such bloodshed in Macedonia?

This study examines the role of education in the development of the competing national movements in Macedonia that triggered the Macedonian Struggle of 1903-1908. Using established primary and secondary sources, each of the competing national movements is discussed in turn, while illustrating that education was the key to this decades-long propaganda war, which accelerated after the 1878 Treaty of Berlin and led to a violent struggle after the turn

of the century. My intent is to provide a balanced assessment of the education race, which has not been given sufficient examination in many of the surveys of the south Balkan region and has been often approached in a one-sided or non-comparative fashion by historians who have examined the educational work of just one of the competing parties.

Education enabled the spread of nationalism in Ottoman Macedonia. Benefiting from the structure of the Ottoman Empire and favourable historical circumstances, teachers were able to exploit their position as respected educators and propagate nationalism amongst Macedonia's residents. With the Ottoman Empire's hold on Macedonia apparently tenuous following the events of 1878, the states of Bulgaria, Greece, and Serbia each sent in troops of priests and teachers to win over the hearts, minds, and tongues of Macedonia's Orthodox masses.² The Bulgarians, Greeks, and Serbs were joined in this studious struggle by Romanian-backed Vlachs, Albanians, and Jews, as well as the Ottomans, who wished to ensure the loyalty of their Muslim subjects. Nevertheless, the main battle was between Bulgaria, Greece, and Serbia for the allegiance of the majority Christian Orthodox population.

What made the struggle complex was the fact that the identities and loyalties of the Orthodox population were enigmatic. For instance, native Macedonians of the Orthodox faith might be considered Greek if they attended a Greek Church, but Bulgarian or Serbian if they spoke a Slavic language. Some spoke more than one language and often proved willing to manipulate circumstances in their own favour by changing churches or schools if offered a better deal. Thus competition intensified as the rival parties attempted to consolidate and legitimize their presence by building churches and schools, which also served to validate their claims to the Great Powers. While it is questionable how much mass appeal the competing national movements truly had, their competitive pedagogical endeavours produced new generations of idealists who were no longer willing to accept Ottoman rule. As a result, Ottoman Macedonia was transformed from a relatively submissive province into a cauldron of violent conflict.

The development of nationalism via education corresponds to the work of Miroslav Hroch and his theory of the nation-building process in Europe. Hroch's theory tracks national development through three phases: "scholarly inquiry," "patriotic agitation," and "mass movement."³ In the case of the Southern Balkans and Macedonia, education was the driving force of Hroch's model. Intellectuals were the ones doing the "scholarly inquiry," often as

students in neighbouring “free” countries or in Western Europe or Russia. Upon their return, they embarked as teachers on programs of “patriotic agitation” through the forum of community schools.

An important factor which enabled this education race to take place was the Ottoman Empire’s *millet* system, which defined identity according to religion and systematically reinforced it. Importantly, education was delegated as the responsibility of each religious group as defined by the authorities. The Ottoman state granted more official support to minority education in the Tanzimat era of the mid-nineteenth century, particularly with the passing of legislation in 1869 which gave the right of education to all citizens, further institutionalizing the empire’s diversity.⁴

For years, education in Christian *millets* had been the responsibility of poorly trained monks who attracted few pupils. Beginning in the late eighteenth century, new generations of inspired teachers strove to nationalize the religious identity of the *millets* by building on memories of the past, as well as on local legends and folklore. In addition, the teachers preached emulation of the modern, Christian West and expounded on the glory of European and American revolutionaries. The rise of nationalism, liberalism, and socialism in other parts of Europe made it easier for such patriotic agitators to captivate the imaginations of the peasant populations of Ottoman Macedonia suffering under the increasing tax burdens and limited mobility of the Ottoman Empire. It was hoped that, through education, children and their families would, ideally, all acquire a uniform, national identity with a sense of a national past and a vision of a revolutionary future. In essence, these competing parties of teachers sought to create a nation that would become a state or part of a neighbouring state.

The idealistic teachers were able to pursue their national dreams thanks to the structure of the Ottoman Empire, new innovations in education, and the ascendance of the ideology of nationalism. As the nineteenth century progressed, the principle of nationality became dominant in European thinking and politics. Intellectuals like Rousseau and Herder urged the Slavic populations of Eastern Europe to take pride in their customs, history, folklore, and—especially—language, since they considered language to be the element that kept this sacred heritage alive.⁵ According to Benedict Anderson, this “linguistic nationalism” decreed “that each nation was marked off by its own peculiar language and literary culture, which together expressed that

people's historical genius.”⁶ The problem with most of south-eastern Europe and Macedonia in particular was that much of the population did not have firm national identities; therefore, they could be claimed by more than one nation, thus defying simple ethno-linguistic divisions and allowing more than one nation to call the territory as its own.

The national educational missions were also aided by innovations in teaching and by some rather unwitting benefactors. The nineteenth century saw the establishment of large, secular state schools in Western Europe, taking education—for the poor—away from religious organizations and informal neighbourhood schools run by women. Education was standardized, licensed, and professionalized. Teaching was “masculinized” into a “real” profession,⁷ as the subject of lessons shifted from the prayer book to political economy and the principles of nationality.⁸ In order for teachers to cope with large class sizes, the Bell-Lancaster teaching system, which employs a series of bells, whistles, and pupil monitors, was developed in the early nineteenth century. While Bell-Lancaster has its limitations, it enables an individual teacher to teach the fundamentals of elementary math and literacy to large numbers of students. The national educational campaigns of the Balkan Christians were also aided by an influx of bibles in the local languages courtesy of American missionaries determined to steer the Christians of the Ottoman Empire towards evangelical Protestantism. Their efforts were largely in vain, but the Americans became popular for their generous and wide distribution of bibles and grammar books in local languages. For students who may have read their language only from etchings on chalkboards, a new American-pressed bible or primer was a gift indeed. Thus the missionaries unwittingly subsidized national movements by providing reading material to a nationalism in which language was paramount.

Education factored into several national liberation movements in the region. Many of the men who inspired and planned the Greek Revolution had been educated in Western Europe and had been impressed by the French Revolution. They came to believe that change could not come through reform and judged that the old order would have to be overthrown—from Ottoman administrators and tax collectors to the Greek Patriarchate itself. Adamantios Korais was one member of this new class who was convinced that through education the “double yoke” of Ottoman rule and “the monkish obscurantism of the hierarchs of the Orthodox Church” could be cast off.⁹ Founded in Athens in 1812, the *Philomuse Society* was a “literary club” which received

the support of notable Greek sympathizers (Philhellenes).¹⁰ While the *Philomuse Society* did little in terms of physically inciting revolution, it did keep young Greeks going to Western universities and provided a smokescreen for the far less benign *Philike Hetairia* organization, which clandestinely orchestrated the opening of the Greek Revolution.

In the Bulgarian lands, education cultivated nationalist sentiment in the mid-nineteenth century. As had been the case with the Greeks, wealthy Bulgarian merchants, sent their children away for a secular education, turning some of them into Bulgarian patriots. By the mid-nineteenth century, secular Bulgarian schools were spreading throughout the Bulgarian lands, aided by American printing presses and Bell-Lancaster classroom techniques. This expanding network of Bulgarian schools began to come into conflict with Greek schools in Rumelia, Thrace, and Macedonia, setting the stage for future conflict.

The Bulgarian cause was greatly aided by the Ottoman civic reforms of the mid-nineteenth century and the 1870 *firman* (decree) creating a Bulgarian Exarchate Church autonomous of the Greek Patriarchate. The 1870 *firman* gave the Bulgarians control from the Danube to the plains south of the Balkan Mountains. A provision was included whereby the over sixty remaining dioceses, mostly in Thrace and Macedonia, could join the Bulgarian Exarchate if two-thirds of the population voted in favor of doing so. The *firman* of 1870 left a political question mark regarding Thrace and Macedonia, but the Bulgarians now had their church through which to build their nation. In response, the Patriarchate declared a schism, denouncing the Exarchate for phyletism, the sin of maintaining jurisdiction through ethnicity.¹¹

By the 1870s an entire generation of Bulgarian educator-apostles had been raised with a determination to emancipate their people from Ottoman rule. The most famous leaders of this generation were Liuben Karavelov, Hristo Botev, and Vasil Levski. All came from Balkan Mountain towns, had some Bulgarian secular education, spent some portion of their lives abroad, and found employment for a time as teachers or writers.¹² After planning and preparation, the Bulgarians rose in four districts in the April of 1876.

The Bulgarian Uprising was a military disaster but a political success. Reprisals by local Muslims and Ottoman forces were widely publicized and led to direct intervention by Russia. Following hard-fought victories, the Russians enacted the Treaty of San Stefano, which

expanded an autonomous Bulgaria from the Black Sea to Lake Ohrid and the territory between, including most of Macedonia. However, this large Russian client-state alarmed other Great Power nations, so a new conference was convened which produced the Treaty of Berlin. Autonomous San Stefano Bulgaria was reduced by some 62.5 percent, as all of Macedonia reverted to Ottoman Rule.¹³

Flush with instant irredentism, the Bulgarians would take the lead in the escalating education race for the allegiance of the Orthodox populations of Ottoman Macedonia. However, the fact that Serbs and Greeks also coveted the territory set the stage for a spirited competition. Without Great Power support, none of the Balkan states had the military resources to unilaterally dislodge the Ottomans from Macedonia. The conflicting claims to Macedonia made any prospect of an alliance between Belgrade, Athens, and Sofia impossible, leaving the Balkan states to contend for the hearts, minds, and tongues of the Macedonian peasants through their respective schools. As described by British folklorist G. F. Abbott, the circumstances of the competition created a propaganda race:

The Macedonian peasants themselves—excepting those in the south whose Hellenic nationality has never been disputed—can hardly be said to possess any national soul, or, for that matter, any soul at all. If they are caught young by the Bulgarian propaganda, and then reared in its school, they are imbued with the idea that they are Bulgarians. If the Servians are first in the field, they become Servians. The race is to the swift and to the rich.¹⁴

In the years following 1878, the teachers of the competing nationalities and organizations would beat paths to the towns and villages of Macedonia, establishing hundreds of schools there. Through the 1880s and 1890s, the race to establish schools reached frenzied proportions. Competing parties courted the crucial favor of the Porte and increasingly resorted to desperate measures to establish schools and attract students. The brightest of these children often were given the chance to further their education in Sofia, Belgrade, or Athens. Many returned to Macedonia as teachers to teach new generations of children “their history.”

The Bulgarian Advance Post 1878

Autonomous Bulgaria was born with a sense of injustice and with the goal expanding into Eastern Rumelia and Macedonia. The importance of re-obtaining Macedonia and Eastern Rumelia prompted the political decision to move the capital from Turnovo to the more westerly

city of Sofia.¹⁵ Lacking Great Power support for a military offensive to drive out the Ottomans, the Bulgarians pursued a two-pronged strategy. First, they lobbied the Porte and the Great Powers for full implementation of Articles 23 and 62 of the Berlin Treaty. These articles respectively called for more native representation and the banning of religious discrimination in Macedonia. Second, they exploited the presence of the Exarchate within the Ottoman Empire to further the establishment of more bishoprics, and hence, more schools in Macedonia. For this reason, the Bulgarian Principality lobbied to have its spiritual head remain outside its borders. The Ottomans made several unsuccessful attempts to have the Exarchate moved to the Bulgarian Principality.¹⁶ In 1882, the Russians lobbied for Bulgarian schools in Macedonia to become the responsibility of Sofia. Again, the Bulgarians objected, as they well knew that the Ottoman *millet* system functioned as a means of continuing to establish schools in Ottoman controlled Macedonia legally.¹⁷ For the first decade after the Treaty of Berlin, the creation of schools was left up to the Exarchate in Constantinople, as Sofia focused on the territory of Eastern Rumelia immediately south of the Balkan Mountains. This did not sit well with many of the angry young men left under Ottoman rule in Macedonia.

Armed resistance to the reestablishment of the Ottoman authority in Macedonia began before the convention of the Turnovo assembly. However, a lack of outside support and poor planning spelt disaster, and the armed struggle petered out by 1883. The changing borders and crushed uprisings sent successive waves of Slavic refugees from Macedonia into the Bulgarian Principality. The migrants from Macedonia formed a powerful political lobby in Bulgaria. By the turn of the century, estimates of the Macedonian population in Sofia reached as high as 200,000, half of the capital's population.¹⁸ A strong lobby had come to exist in Bulgaria to which expansion into Macedonia was paramount. The Macedonians in Bulgaria created an often-volatile political climate much like the Palestinian presence in Beirut, Damascus, and Amman after 1948.¹⁹ Without the means or the will for military action, the irredentist struggle was left in the hands of the priests and schoolteachers of the Exarchate.

Confident that it could deliver Eastern Rumelia and Macedonia, the Exarchate made ambitious proclamations. According to historian Douglas Dakin, the Exarch pledged: "We will make Macedonia a Bulgarian province by the schools and uniquely by the schools."²⁰ However, Bulgarian gains were met by Ottoman countermeasures. During the 1877-8 war, Exarchate

bishops had been recalled to Constantinople and retained, resulting in the closure of several Exarchate churches and schools in Macedonia.²¹ The Ottomans refused the Exarchate's requests for new priests to be sent to Macedonia,²² thereby allowing the Greeks to assert control over communities waiting for new priests and teachers. Additionally, to further offset Bulgarian gains, it allowed the Serbs to establish more schools.²³

The Exarchate still strove to strengthen its weakened position as petitions for assistance came in from Macedonian communities. Exarch Joseph I visited Macedonia in early 1880 to try to "ameliorate the deplorable condition of the Bulgarians in Macedonia."²⁴ The Exarchate opened a Schools Department in 1880 to maintain schools in Macedonia and Thrace and to train teachers to work in these schools.²⁵ After 1883, the Exarchate went further in order to more effectively control the creation of schools, teacher hiring, and scholarships.²⁶ It was able to found a secondary school in Thessaloniki in 1880, which soon flourished.²⁷ Successful Exarchate schools were also re-established in Bitola.²⁸ However, it was much tougher going in other regions. In the Serres district east of Thessaloniki, the Patriarchate and its schools had Hellenized the Slav population that had lived there before the war.²⁹

The Ottoman authorities responded favourably to Greek cries of aggressive Pan-Slavism and turned a blind eye to Greek measures taken against Bulgarian teachers. A lengthy report in *The Times* on the conditions in Macedonia in 1881 describes the coordinated effort which the Patriarchate and Porte put forth in opposing Bulgarian schools and teachers:

At present, when Panslavism seems a much more formidable enemy than Panhellenism, the Porte leans rather to the side of the Greeks, and not only assists the representatives of Phanar in their efforts to suppress the Slavonic liturgy and the Bulgarian schools, but occasionally arrests in rather indiscriminate fashion a number of Bulgarian schoolmasters and peasants who are suspected of treasonable designs. The trial of these suspected persons is always more or less summary and irregular, and generally ends with their being condemned to exile in Asia Minor.³⁰

Consequently, in spite of its efforts and expenditures, the Exarchate was losing ground in Macedonia in the early 1880s. In addition to Greek opposition and oppression by the Ottoman authorities, the deteriorating security situation in Macedonia further hampered the Exarchate. Bandits ravaged the countryside, and—as shown in this 1884 report—even targeted students returning to the Bulgarian secondary school in Thessaloniki:

Some of the students of the Bulgarian Gymnasium at Salonica, who were returning to that institution after their summer's vacation were robbed upon the road and arrived at the gymnasium almost without a particle of clothing upon their backs. It is almost impossible for the Bulgarians to obtain instruction in their mother tongue; so many obstacles are placed in the way of their obtaining it. Books in Bulgarian and especially in the Russian language are eagerly seized by the Turks and mercilessly burnt. To-day I saw ten Bulgarians chained together and being led through this town (Soloon) [Thessaloniki] to prison because they had dared to ask the authorities to allow them to have a Bulgarian teacher for their village. In some instances, too, the Greeks incite the Turks against the Bulgarians, saying they show signs of a rebellious disposition, and the Turks pretend to believe the Greeks, because these latter assist the former in their plundering attacks upon the Bulgarians.³¹

In October of 1887, *The Times* reported that: "The state of Macedonia is worse now than it was at the time when the Powers at Berlin prescribed a remedy for it."³² In 1888 the number of students in Exarchate schools still numbered less than half the number before the 1877-8 war.³³ The Exarchate needed political help from the Bulgarian Principality more than it needed money in order to end the oppression and open more schools.

The irredentist energies within the Bulgarian Principality had been focused on Eastern Rumelia from the time of the Turnovo assembly until the successful local coup in September of 1885 which brought about union with Bulgaria. A critical development that arose from the fallout over the Eastern Rumelian crisis was the emergence of Stephan Stambolov as the most powerful force in Bulgarian politics. As prime minister, Stambolov was determined to steer Bulgaria on a more independent course. Stambolov and his party of "Russophobe nationalists" pursued British and Austrian support and put a new Germanic Prince, Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, on the Bulgarian throne in 1887.³⁴ Stambolov also obtained Ottoman support, a move that bolstered the Exarchate's education campaign in Macedonia.

Stambolov understood better than his contemporaries that education was the key to Macedonia. He knew that no Balkan country could win a sustained war against the Ottoman Empire without support from one of the Great Powers, which, for the time being, were not interested in the Balkans. Stambolov's plan to expand the number of Exarchate schools in Macedonia was ideally suited to the political circumstances, as it gave the Bulgarians a legal and less visible avenue to propagate Bulgarian nationalism in Ottoman Macedonia. It was hoped that strengthening and extending the network of Exarchate schools in Macedonia would "create a

Macedonian national consciousness such as would enable it to annex itself to Bulgaria eventually by force of its own nationality movement.”³⁵ Through this policy of “peaceful penetration,” Stambolov envisioned a repetition of the Eastern Rumelia union whereby a majority Bulgarian population would come to dominate a provincial government and, under the right circumstances, demand union with Bulgaria.³⁶ He realized it would take a decade or two to teach the illiterate Slavic peasants of Macedonia that they were in fact Bulgarian nationals, and that to do so required good relations with the Ottomans.³⁷ Stambolov relentlessly hunted down and executed bandits who worked the frontier with the Ottoman Empire. He suppressed radical Macedonian and Russophile elements within the principality, and he cultivated a mutually beneficial relationship with the Porte in the late 1880s.³⁸ When Serbian leader Nicola Pasic came to Sofia with a plan for an alliance to divide Macedonia, Stambolov immediately rejected the offer and informed Athens and Constantinople of the plan.³⁹ Likewise, when Greek Prime Minister Tricoupis made an overture during visits to Belgrade and Sofia in 1891 for a Balkan alliance to expel the Ottomans from Europe, Stambolov showed not the least interest in the scheme and reported it to the Porte.⁴⁰ *The Times*’ Sofia correspondent reported:

The Bulgarians are confident in the future of their race and are unwilling to barter away any portion of their heritage They will do nothing against the interests of the suzerain Power, provided the latter performs its duties to its present Bulgarian subjects.⁴¹

Stambolov’s policies were getting results. Sultan Abdulhamid II agreed to recognize Prince Ferdinand as the sovereign of Bulgaria in 1891⁴² and connected Sofia to Thessaloniki by rail, giving the Bulgarians improved access to the Mediterranean and increasing communication between Macedonia and Bulgaria.⁴³ Most significantly, the Porte granted Bulgarian Exarchate bishoprics to Skopje, Ohrid, and Bitola in 1890 and to Veles and Nevrokop in 1894.⁴⁴ As reported in 1890, this mattered more in terms of education than religion:

But religion has really nothing to do with the matter. The appointment of Bulgarian Bishops in Macedonia involves tolerance of Bulgarian schools, and in the educational struggle between the Greek and the Bulgar the weaker race, whichever it may be, will have to go to the wall.⁴⁵

The Porte instructed the Greeks not to obstruct those who wished to abandon the Patriarchate and control their own schools. This resulted in some 150 towns and villages opting to join the Exarchate in late 1890.⁴⁶ The Greeks were squarely on the defensive and could only

make token protests, such as suggesting that the new Exarchate bishops should wear a different dress than those in the Patriarchate and should be described as belonging to a “schismatic” Church.⁴⁷ Stambolov’s policies continued to reap substantial gains for the Bulgarians in Macedonia in the early 1890s. However, his methods were by no means universally popular, and vicious political intrigue remained the norm in the principality.

Stambolov’s nationalist policies enraged Pan-Slavist Russians, Bulgarians, and Macedonians alike. He limited Russian language instruction in Bulgaria and forced most minority children to be educated in Bulgarian during the early 1890s.⁴⁸ His most bitter enemies were those who wished for a military solution to the Macedonian Question. Campaigns against bandits had primarily affected the Macedonians in Bulgaria, some of whom complained of being second-class citizens in Stambolov’s Bulgaria. Macedonian radicals accused Stambolov of sustained complicity against the Macedonian cause dating back to the uprisings of 1879-1882. For these radicals, Russian assistance was paramount for liberation, which furthered their resentment toward Stambolov. For his part, Stambolov pursued his enemies ruthlessly. In 1890, his police prevented the successful execution of a plot devised by the Macedonian-born officer Major Kosta Panitsa to assassinate Prince Ferdinand. Stambolov had Panitsa’s fellow Macedonians execute the major.⁴⁹

Stambolov’s loyalty and tutelage mattered little to the enterprising Prince Ferdinand. In time, the Prince learned much from his “Bulgarian Bismarck,” and he disposed of Stambolov in 1894 when he felt confident enough to rule himself. Stambolov was placed under virtual house arrest and in July of 1895 was hacked to death in the streets of Sofia by Macedonian assassins. Before succumbing to his death, he blamed the attack on Ferdinand. While some Bulgarian historians, such as Martin Pundeff, are critical of Stambolov’s “peaceful penetration” policy towards Macedonia,⁵⁰ Duncan Perry credits it as being the “hallmark” of Stambolov’s prime ministry: “His approach was logical enough, but it was too slow for the taste of the hotheaded Macedonian revolutionaries.”⁵¹

The Exarchate school program in Macedonia survived into Ferdinand’s reign in spite of a scare in March of 1894 when the Sultan, fearing that the educational balance in Macedonia was tipping too far in Bulgaria’s favor, ordered the closure of Bulgarian schools.⁵² The Exarch and the Bulgarian government appealed to the Great Powers and threatened to provoke hatred against

the Turks living within the Bulgarian Principality.⁵³ The Sultan gave in almost immediately. Much to the displeasure of the Macedonian radicals, Ferdinand and his subservient ministers did not pursue military intervention. The prince did reconcile with Russia but continued to court Ottoman favor, while reminding the world of how important it was to fully implement the Berlin Treaty. Ferdinand was made a field marshal of the Ottoman Army amidst considerable fanfare on a visit to Constantinople in 1896.⁵⁴ The close relationship continued to be mutually beneficial, and Bulgarian neutrality in the 1897 Ottoman-Greek War allowed the Sultan's forces to rout the Greek army. In that same year, bishoprics were quietly granted to the Exarchate in Bitola, Strumitsa, and Debar on the condition that the announcement remained a secret until after the peace treaty with the Greeks had been ratified.⁵⁵ In 1898, the senior Bulgarian diplomat in Constantinople admitted that the Bulgarians had chosen to follow Stambolov's strategy of peaceful penetration:

Our principal concern at present is with Macedonia. In our policy towards Turkey, I am a pupil of Stambolov, inasmuch as I am of the opinion that the interests of Bulgaria in the Balkans are almost identical with those of the Turks. They require that we should proceed in close agreement.⁵⁶

Thanks to Stambolov, the Bulgarians were able to make significant progress in advancing the number of Exarchate schools in Macedonia throughout the 1890s. Better relations with the Porte gave them the necessary legal agency to establish more schools. A smooth relationship between the Exarchate and the government in Sofia empowered the Bulgarians to work proactively at the expense of the Greeks.⁵⁷ Although statistics concerning Macedonia are notoriously unreliable, most sources show a marked increase in the number of Exarchist schools after 1887. According to Andrew Tosheff, the number of Bulgarian schools grew from 353 in 1886-87 to 1,196 in 1912.⁵⁸ Yet, this success required more than official favor. The Exarchate's administration of its schools improved after 1890, when Macedonia was divided into four school districts with superintendents and a council to oversee local school councils.⁵⁹ All Exarchate schoolteachers were hired and paid by the Exarchate and were supplied with manuals and a curriculum. The local and haphazard administration of previous decades was replaced by one which was uniform and hierarchical, allowing for an organized and rapid advance into the villages of Macedonia.

The Exarchate schools attracted thousands of students in Macedonia for several reasons. First, they drew Slavic-speaking students away from Greek schools by offering the Slavs education in a language that was close, if not identical, to their own, and by establishing schools in villages where schools had not existed hitherto. Second, boarding schools in centers like Skopje, Kastoria, Bitola, and Thessaloniki gave promising students a chance to leave their villages and continue their education; some students could even look forward to scholarships to study in Sofia.⁶⁰ Third, in the 1890s, Exarchate teachers were increasingly likely to be native Macedonians who had come up through the school system and had received further education in Sofia and beyond.⁶¹ Finally, another important “pull” factor for the Exarchate schools was the fact that they were free, which encouraged many parents to forgo the prestige of a Greek education in order to save money. In rural areas, entire villages were enticed to switch allegiances. British aid worker H. N. Brailsford observed this phenomenon on his first visit to Bitola:

I was talking to a wealthy peasant who came in from a neighboring village to Monastir [Bitola] market. He spoke Greek well but hardly like a native. “Is your village Greek,” I asked him, “or Bulgarian?” “Well,” he replied, “it is Bulgarian now, but four years ago it was Greek.” The answer seemed to him entirely commonplace. “How,” I asked in some bewilderment, “did that miracle come about?” “Why,” said he, “we are all poor men, but we want to have our own school and a priest who will look after us properly. We used to have a Greek teacher. We paid him £5 a year and his bread, while the Greek consul paid him another £5; but we had no priest of our own.... The Bulgarians heard of this and they came and made us an offer. They said they would give us a priest who would live in the village and a teacher to whom we need pay nothing. Well, sir, ours is a poor village, and so of course we became Bulgarians.”⁶²

Free education also gave an emergent generation the confidence to challenge traditional class structures, within which “Bulgar” was a synonym for peasant and “Greek” a synonym for merchant. Slavs assumed positions which were once exclusively the domain of Greeks, such as businessmen and educators, and they did so without learning Greek.⁶³ Education also radicalized new generations, as it gave thousands of children a taste of western European liberalism, which made their surroundings seem backward and primitive. Brailsford received an insightful response when he asked the Ottoman Vali of Thessaloniki for an explanation of the troubles in Macedonia:

It is all the fault of the Bulgarian schools.... In these nests of vice the sons of peasants are maintained for a number of years in idleness and luxury. Indeed, they actually sleep on beds. And then they go back to their villages. There are no beds in their father's cottages, and these young gentlemen are much too fine to sleep on the floor. They try the life for a little, and then they go off and join the revolutionary bands. What they want is a nice fat Government appointment.⁶⁴

Indeed, the only job most could get which would not offend their sensibilities was a teaching post, where they could expound their ideals to the next generation of pupils and parents eager for education; this post would most likely be in a remote Macedonian village. Whether these teachers were sitting in Sofia cafés or teaching in the mountains of Macedonia, they were growing impatient with the status quo.

The Greek Response

Macedonia was one of several “unredeemed” territories beyond the boundaries of the Greek state that Greek nationalists coveted for their *Megali Idea* (Great Idea) of a Greater Greece that would stretch across two continents and five seas. Macedonia was part of the ancient Hellenic civilization, the birthplace of Alexander the Great, and for centuries an integral part of the Byzantine Empire. The Greeks maintained that the population was ethnically Greek. Slav speakers were considered wayward “Slavophone” Greeks who had lost their Greek language skills over time through processes such as repeatedly using Slavic to give orders to their Slavic servants.⁶⁵ Given the territory's Hellenic heritage and the religious and cultural dominance of the Ecumenical Patriarchate reigning in Macedonia through the Orthodox *millet*, the Greeks assumed Macedonia would just fall into their possession.⁶⁶ But it did not. The Patriarchate instead faced a sustained challenge to its authority in Macedonia that necessitated countermeasures; it met assertions by Slavic communities and the establishment of the Exarchate with propaganda and violence. The Greek educational cause in Macedonia benefited from Ottoman backing after 1878, but the static and elitist nature of Greek education allowed the Bulgarians and others to make gains at Greek expense through the 1890s. Lack of coordination between the Patriarchate and the Greek State, practical disadvantages, near-bankruptcy in Athens, and an inability to retain teachers all contributed to Greek difficulties, until more practical and aggressive measures were taken at the turn of century.

The Bulgarian schools not only drew pupils away, but also constituted a threat to the authority of the Patriarchate and to a whole Greek-dominated way of life in Macedonia. As explained by historian Douglas Dakin:

Hellenism derived largely from the Patriarchal Church; from the flourishing Greek schools; and from a class which enjoyed in some measure an economic superiority, a class which was conservative, which had everything to lose, and which had accommodated itself to Turkish rule⁶⁷

The Greeks took full advantage of the Ottoman suppression of the Exarchate following the Treaty of Berlin, establishing educational dominance in the south and completely Hellenizing most of the Slavic villages in the Thessaloniki area.⁶⁸ The reigning Patriarch, Joakim III, was a former metropolitan of Thessaloniki who grasped the situation in Macedonia and ordered cooperation with the Ottoman authorities. The Greek government in Athens and its consuls in Macedonia were fully aware that Ottoman favor would only last as long as the Greeks were considered weaker than the Bulgarians.⁶⁹ Aided by numerous literary societies, the Greek government poured resources into Macedonia through its consuls for the construction of new schools and new colleges for teachers, and for scholarships at the University of Athens.⁷⁰ Books espousing the glory of Ancient (Greek) Macedonia, such as *The Prophecies of Alexander*, were distributed free to schools.⁷¹ Yet, well before Stambolov turned the Ottomans away from the Greeks, inner rivalries and practical disadvantages hampered the Greek educational cause.

The traditions of the Greek Patriarchate simultaneously gave Greek education in Macedonia great strength and an exploitable weakness. Greek education offered upward mobility into the educated and commercial classes, making it attractive to ambitious Slav families. Greek was also extolled by the Patriarchate as the sacred language through which one communicated with God.⁷² Yet, because the Patriarchate was a component of the Ottoman state, it resisted participating in coordinated action with the secular, nationalist Greek State, especially in regard to education in Macedonia. Literary societies based in Constantinople rivaled those based in Athens. According to historian Evangelos Kofos, Greek government consuls and the Patriarchate's bishops were "more frequently than not, at loggerheads."⁷³ Kofos cites consular papers from 1883 reporting on feuds over education in which the authors accuse the local priests of "insufficient national zeal... and of emphasizing ecumenicity rather than nationalism."⁷⁴ The

Porte exploited this division after 1887 by pressuring the Patriarchate not to work with the consuls or the secular literary societies.⁷⁵ This division became increasingly problematic.

Hellenism in Macedonia struggled with an internal ideological division between the irredentist nationalism of the Greek state and the privileged theology of the Patriarchate. Due to its primary worldview, the Patriarchate misjudged the Exarchist challenge, seeing it as a revolt of schismatic peasants against its privileged, holy authority.⁷⁶ The Patriarchate believed that all the Christians of Macedonia were Greeks—its Greeks. Its prelates in Macedonia continued to be oblivious to the appeal of the Bulgarian Exarchate,⁷⁷ which offered free services and education in a language the Slavic peasants could identify with more closely than Greek. The frustration in Athens prompted the Greek Government to threaten to review relations with the Patriarchate.⁷⁸ This lack of coordination and the inability to take proactive steps to meet the Bulgarian campaign caused the Greek campaign to lose ground throughout the 1890s. A reporter for *The Times*, who assessed the school competition in the Bitola region in 1898, noted that, despite the fact that Greek schools outnumbered all their rival schools combined, the Bulgarians were making steady gains at the Greeks' expense:

They [the Bulgarians] enjoy the advantage of simple organization, for the Exarchate alone directs the propaganda, while in the case of their rivals disputes between the Consulates and the spiritual authorities over the application of funds often exercise a paralyzing effect. The Greeks in general have committed the error of assuming a combative and repressive attitude towards the other nationalities instead of devoting all their attention to the organization and the development of their own movement.⁷⁹

Greek schools in Macedonia faced several practical disadvantages. While there was no apparent shortage of books and bibles, most books were in Atticized Greek, which differed substantially from the local Greek dialect.⁸⁰ This made reading a challenge even for native Greek speakers and discouraged Slav speakers, who could find publications they could easily understand in the Exarchate schools. Curriculum content, where and when it was applied, also lessened the appeal of Greek schools. While the Bulgarians endeavored to bring in more Western subjects and set up vocational schools in key central cities tailored to the local needs of students,⁸¹ the Greek schools stuck to Literature and Classicism. British folklorist G. F. Abbott found the teachers of a Greek school in Serres so passionately fond of the classics that they called one another “Bentley” and “Porson.”⁸² Brailsford made a similar observation:

... while the Bulgarian schools are modern institutions devoted to science, commerce and the modern languages, the Greek gymnasia favor a purely literary course. The main study is ancient Greek, and it is not an uncommon thing to meet a clerk or a country solicitor who can recite three or four plays, a speech or of Demosthenes and half the *Odyssey*.⁸³

This was impressive but impractical in a land populated largely by peasants looking for an inexpensive education for their children that would help them to prosper in a modernizing world. Graduates of Exarchate schools who opted to become teachers had their placement prospects limited to Macedonia and the Bulgarian Principality. New Greek teachers flushed with the spirit of Hellenism would have likely found the prospect of working in Constantinople, Athens, or Cairo more appealing and rewarding than working in a dusty Macedonian town where they had to struggle with students who might not understand them or appreciate their talents. The appeal of working in Macedonia was also lessened by the fact that the Ottomans did not allow Greek teachers to receive pensions from the Greek government.⁸⁴

As critical as the Greek government was of the Patriarchate, Athens' own policies proved detrimental to Greek education in Macedonia. Kofos blames the Greek government for failing "to finance a major program of national education and indoctrination" in Macedonia in order to compensate for the Patriarchate's shortcomings. Furthermore, Athens' foreign policy in the 1880s and 1890s put the Greeks at a disadvantage by angering the Ottomans. Boundary revisions to the Treaty of Berlin gave Greece Thessaly—immediately to the south of Macedonia—in 1881, but only after Greece threatened to mobilize.⁸⁵ Greek mobilization in 1886 over Epirus, followed by the growth of irredentist aspirations toward Crete, turned Athens' attention south and angered the Porte, in turn giving the Bulgarians a diplomatic opening to use to their advantage. Greek Prime Minister Kharilaos Trikoupis approached Bulgaria in a failed bid to build a Balkan alliance. Nonetheless, Macedonia was not Trikoupis' principal concern. While he believed in the *Megali Idea*, Trikoupis put the modernization of the Greek kingdom ahead of irredentist goals.⁸⁶ Under Trikoupis, Greece undertook a number of modernization initiatives, such as constructing railroads, building the Corinth canal, and expanding and modernizing the state school system. These were vital and significant projects, but they left Greece near bankruptcy in 1893, while Exarchist schools were mushrooming throughout Macedonia.⁸⁷

Empty state coffers and the lack of a government policy to realize the *Megali Idea* prompted the creation of *Ethniki Hetairia* (National Society) in 1894. *Ethniki Hetairia's* immediate aim was to direct efforts towards countering Bulgarian advances in the north. This society consisted of Greeks from the middle and upper-middle classes who understood the importance of the educational struggle in Macedonia.⁸⁸ *Ethniki Hetairia* worked quickly to lobby the Greek government to fund schools in Macedonia. According to L.S. Stavrianos, the Greeks were soon spending “more money in proportion to population on schools in the so-called unredeemed territory than they did in Greece proper.”⁸⁹ What is more, teaching in Macedonia became a patriotic undertaking for Greeks. Traveler Lucy Garnett noted that many of the female teachers in rural Greek schools in Macedonia were from Athens.⁹⁰ Nevertheless, the Greeks continued to lose ground and faced a severe setback in 1897 when Ottoman troops decisively defeated Greek forces in Thessaly. Only Great Power intervention prevented the Ottomans from marching into Athens. Subsequently, *Ethniki Hetairia* was officially disbanded.

The defeat of 1897 did provoke more Greek interest in Macedonia. Author and patriot Ion Dragoumis wrote that because of it, Macedonia could serve a cathartic purpose for the Greek national cause.⁹¹ Appointed as consular secretary to the Greek consul in Bitola in 1902, Dragoumis was one of a new generation of Greeks committed to pursuing the Greek cause in Macedonia more energetically. The Patriarchate, too, began to appoint more competent and nationalistic metropolitans to Macedonia under the direction of Patriarch Constantine V. The most notable of these was Germanos Karavangelis, who was appointed to Kastoria in 1900. A strong nationalist, Karavangelis had earned a doctorate of philosophy in Germany and, as Bishop Pera, gained notoriety for reforming and investing in the schools. He found Kastoria full of the Patriarchate's priests and schoolteachers, who had fled the surrounding towns and villages to escape violence and intimidation from those working for the Exarchate. The new metropolitan quickly moved to set up an intelligence network and organized armed bands to re-establish the Greek presence in the countryside.⁹²

In the new metropolitan of Kastoria, the Greeks had someone who could employ their opponent's tactics of benevolence and ruthlessness. A program to provide free food to students soon increased the popularity of Greek schools in the area.⁹³ After the unsuccessful Ilinden Uprising in 1903, Karavangelis enlisted Ottoman support to forcibly convert entire villages to the

Patriarchate. He also took the opportunity to destroy the Exarchate school system in his jurisdiction.⁹⁴ By 1904, a new Greek Macedonian Committee had been formed from the membership lists of *Ethniki Hetairia*, supporting not only Greek schools but also the Greek guerrilla bands that were pouring into Macedonia. These bands were comprised of brigands, border guards, and young officers headed by Dragoumis' brother-in-law, Pavlos Melas.⁹⁵ Killed in a skirmish with Ottoman troops in October 1904, Melas became a hero and martyr of the Greek cause in Macedonia. Practical strategies helped stabilize the Greek schools in Macedonia until the cavalry, quite literary, arrived. The Greeks had also weakened the Exarchist cause by granting permission for more Serb schools that, unlike the Greek schools, could appeal to the Slavs of Macedonia on the basis of language and custom.

Serbian Surges

Macedonia had not been at the centre of the autonomous Serbian principality's agenda; however, Serbs still coveted Macedonia as part of "Greater Serbia." Skopje had been the capital of the medieval Serbian kingdom of King Dushan in the fourteenth century. Macedonia was also adjacent to the hallowed territory of "Old Serbia" (Kosovo), home of the Serbian Patriarchate until 1766. Ethnographic maps of Serbian territory, such as the "Serbian High School Map of 1891," stretched Serb claims south almost as far as the Aegean.⁹⁶ Yet, Serbian educational efforts were fairly piecemeal prior to 1878, and did not get sufficient support and attention from Belgrade until Bulgaria defeated Serbia in 1885. As latecomers to the education race, the Serbs cooperated with the Greeks and made cultural, linguistic, and financial appeals to attract students from Bulgarian schools. New, aggressively promoted Serb schools prompted the creation of Exarchist societies and organizations devoted to checking Serb efforts. Utilized by the Greeks and despised by the Bulgarians, Serb schools were mainly limited to larger population centers in the north and west of Macedonia, where they usually placed third in popularity behind the Bulgarians and the Greeks.

The Serbian literary awakening, led by Vuk Karadzic, had sparked interest in parts of Macedonia as early as 1813. During the nineteenth century, a relatively small Serbian educational movement developed alongside its larger Bulgarian rival. Serbian teachers were found at work in Veles, Ohrid, and Prelip in the early 1860s. The Serbian Principality began to take more interest in Macedonia and established a cultural committee in Belgrade in 1868,

“whose chief aim was the opening of Serbian schools in Old Serbia and Macedonia.”⁹⁷ According to Serbian historian Michael Boro Petrovich, the Serbs had established over sixty schools across the north and west of Macedonia by 1871, including a teacher-training school at Prizren in Kosovo.⁹⁸ Serbia’s 1876 war with the Ottoman Empire prompted the closure of all Serb schools in Macedonia; however, Serb schools regained favor soon after 1878, when Serbia gained full independence. At this point Belgrade began to take more interest in Macedonia. The Austrian occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina cut off the westward designs of Serb irredentism, compelling nationalists to look south.⁹⁹ Military defeat in 1885 brought more urgency to the Serb cause in Macedonia. Ostensibly on private initiative, the Society of St. Sava was formed in Belgrade in 1886 with an edict to spread Serbian nationalism in Old Serbia and Macedonia through education. Within three years, the society had opened forty-two schools in the “unredeemed” lands to the south.¹⁰⁰

What success the Serbs enjoyed in Macedonia should be credited to the work of historian and politician Stojan Novakovic. He was appointed as Serbia’s envoy in Constantinople and procured permission to have Serbian consulates established in Skopje, Thessaloniki, Bitola, and Pristina in the late 1880s.¹⁰¹ Additionally, he was responsible for creating a rail connection from Skopje to Thessaloniki and improving trade links between Serbia and the Ottoman Empire. Novakovic’s most important contribution was his recognizing that language, literacy, and education were the foundation and strength of the Bulgarian movement in Macedonia. He realized that Serbia had to build its own schools and develop educational strategies to extend its influence in Macedonia. As early as 1866, Novakovic grasped that Serbia’s linguistic connections to Macedonia were weaker than Bulgaria’s.¹⁰² In a search for closer connections, young Serb scholars studied Macedonian dialects, looking for similarities to the Serbian language in order to strengthen Serb claims.¹⁰³ Novakovic admitted that Serbia’s adoption of the “Ekavian” dialect as the standard Serbian language after 1878 was aimed in part at strengthening Serbia’s claim to Macedonia.¹⁰⁴ Novakovic also gave Serb backing to Slavs in Macedonia who were pursuing a distinct Macedonian national and linguistic identity in a further effort to undermine the Bulgarians.¹⁰⁵ From 1886 to 1898, Serb teachers in Macedonia instructed in a mixture of Serbian and local Macedonian, using customized textbooks published by Serbian interests in Constantinople.¹⁰⁶

Serbian efforts intensified further after 1888, with the Belgrade government taking a more direct role in establishing schools in Macedonia. In 1887, the Ministry of Education had opened a special department for schools and churches outside Serbia, which was transferred, along with the interests of the Society of St. Sava, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.¹⁰⁷ Working through the Serbian consuls in Macedonia, the ministry's propaganda department sought to open Serbian boys' and girls' schools wherever possible. They enjoyed some success in recruiting students from the Exarchist schools with scholarships to study in Belgrade endowed by the St. Sava Society.¹⁰⁸ The Serbs also received some diplomatic and material support from Russia to aid their education efforts. Journalist Fredrick Moore observed that, at Russia's suggestion, students of a Serb school in Skopje had "adopted a distinctive uniform after the manner of Russians in Finland."¹⁰⁹ According to historian Wayne Vucinich, the number of Serb schools in Macedonia had grown to 300 by 1902.¹¹⁰

The Serbs employed a number of the Exarchate's methods to attract students to their schools. Free books were given to poor pupils and Belgrade scholarships were awarded to promising students. Towards the turn of the century, the Serbs were increasingly resorting to financial incentive. An 1898 report from Bitola by *The Times* recounts a "sudden advance" made by Serbian schools in the area in the preceding two years. The Serbs' rivals maintained that this advance was "due to the unlimited employment of funds for the purpose of bribing the Bulgarian peasants to send their children to the Serbian schools."¹¹¹ However, student enrolment continued to be a problem for the Serbs. In the Skopje area, the Serbs set up schools in neighborhoods where only one household had asked for a school.¹¹² Elsewhere, too, some Serbian schools had more teachers than students.¹¹³ This prompted creative management; for instance, in December 1899, a group of Serbian teachers established a school in Veles and "imported" twelve students from Skopje to bolster the school register. This move provoked such violent reactions from the Exarchate's local followers that the Ottomans had to dispatch four battalions of troops to keep the peace in Veles.¹¹⁴

The Bulgarian Exarchate and its followers took steps to check the Serbian advance. In 1897, the Brotherhood of Mercy was formed in Thessaloniki to prevent Slavic children from attending Serb schools. The organization also enticed Serbian teachers to work at Bulgarian schools, a move which apparently succeeded.¹¹⁵ Future revolutionary leader Gyorche Petrov

convinced two villages in the Bitola area to abandon Serbian patronage and accept that of the Exarchate, and then celebrated with the new adherents by burning all their Serbian books.¹¹⁶ In some places violent incidents were enacted against Serbian schools and teachers. In Kilkis, a Serb teacher established a school in a rented house and recruited children from a few poor families with offers of candy and money. Consequently, a mob of local Bulgarians beat the Serb teacher, damaged the building, and ordered the proprietor to cease renting his house to the Serbs under the threat that it would be burnt down.¹¹⁷ Some “pro-Serbs” who set up schools in the Bitola and Thessaloniki areas were murdered.¹¹⁸

Although the Serbs had established several schools and had sufficient financial resources, they had difficulty making educational gains in Macedonia for a number of reasons. First, they started late, only making a concerted effort in the late 1880s, long after hundreds of Bulgarian and Greek schools had been established in the territory. Second, the Serbs tried to appeal to ethno-linguistic similarities and to use financial incentives, both of which had already been used successfully by the Exarchate. The Exarchate’s hold on the Slavs under its influence was maintained by Bulgarian countermeasures against Serb encroachments. Critically, the Serbs were not recognized as a nationality in the Ottoman Empire; therefore they needed the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s approval to establish schools. Shifting education into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the banner of propaganda indicates that the Serbs understood the political nature of education in the contest for Macedonia. Even so, without the administrative means of their own *millet*, they could not hope to equal the flourishing schools of the Exarchate. The Greeks did grant permission for Serb schools, but usually only in order to meet Greek needs, since Serb schools could offer Slavs education in a Slavic language while allowing them to remain loyal to the Patriarchate. However, Belgrade and Athens failed to agree on a coordinated education strategy in Macedonia in 1891 due to conflicting territorial claims.¹¹⁹

After 1898, the Serbs faced further difficulties and came into more frequent conflict with all the competing nations and organizations. Belgrade discontinued its use of local Macedonian dialects in school instruction, opting for standardized Serbian, and thereby pushing locals to ally with the Bulgarians. Although the Serbs increasingly relied on financial incentives to attract students, this strategy had its limits, and the Serbs lost ground around the turn of the century. Serb schools lacked the classical, elite prestige of the Greek schools and had trouble matching

the ethno-linguistic appeal of the Bulgarians. The dialects that the Slavs of Macedonia spoke were much closer to Bulgarian than Serbian. This may be another reason why many of those who had left Bulgarian schools to attend Serb schools returned to the Exarchist institutions. Keith Brown cites British Foreign Office correspondence from 1898 in which the author doubts that even children enrolled in Serb schools would “forget that they are really Bulgarians.”¹²⁰ While the Serbs boasted they had some 300 schools in 1902, it should be noted that these numbers included Macedonia and Kosovo. In Kosovo, the Exarchate had few interests, while the Greeks and Vlachs had almost none. Furthermore, where Serb schools existed, they were not always well-attended. In Skopje, the Exarchate had successfully appealed to have Serb schools closed since they did not have enough students for the minimum level of support.¹²¹ Finally, the Serbs suffered from not having many secondary schools; as a result, significant numbers of their best elementary level students went on to attend Exarchate schools. A Serbian schoolmaster related this dilemma to aid worker Edith Durham when she was in Ohrid:

‘I teach the children to be Servian [Serbian] patriots,’ said the active little Servian schoolmaster to me; ‘their parents are Serb, and they wish their children also to be Serb, but unluckily this is only an elementary school. Those who cannot afford to go elsewhere to finish their education must finish in the Bulgarian school, and there they will be taught they are Bulgars. It is very sad.’¹²²

Like the Greeks, the Serbs took advantage of the aftermath of the failed 1903 uprising to form armed bands to forcibly agitate for Serbia in Macedonia. The Porte did its part by recognizing the Serbs as a nationality in the Ottoman Empire.

The Rest of the Pack

The Bulgarians, Greeks, and Serbs were the main competitors in the education race for Macedonia, but the race fielded other parties, which either did not operate on the scale of the “big three” or courted specific minorities. Romania cultivated Romanian-language education for the Vlach people in the south and west of Macedonia. The Orthodox Vlachs spoke a Latin language akin to Romanian, but they had many Greek speakers in their ranks and were often counted as Greeks. As with the advances made by the Bulgarians, Romanian recruitment of Vlach students came at the expense of the Greeks. Realistically, Romania could not hope to acquire an island of territory on the far side of Macedonia; therefore, it treated its Vlach brethren as a bargaining chip for future negotiating purposes.¹²³ Overall, the education race represented an

opportunity for the Romanian government but a bother for the Vlachs of Macedonia. The Vlachs had existed and prospered as a small, scattered, and thoroughly invisible minority. Education and nationalism forced them to proclaim loyalties and pay the price for doing so.

The Albanians were considered by some to have been strategically deprived of education by the sultan in order to provide a “lawless barrier against the West.”¹²⁴ At best, this is a statement specific to the northern highlands. In the south of Macedonia and in the neighboring *vilayet* of Yannia, a good deal of interest existed in the education of the Albanian population. In 1879, the Society for the Printing of Albanian Writings was established in Constantinople and began encouraging the translation and publication of textbooks in the Albanian language. Consisting of Catholic, Orthodox, and Muslim Albanians, the society’s members set up an Albanian school in Korçe in 1885.¹²⁵ The Porte and the Greek Patriarchate coordinated efforts to suppress Albanian national education and steer the Albanians to religious or state schools. Still, the dream of education in the Albanian language persisted and proved to be a unifying force in the Albanian population.¹²⁶ Despite the inability of the Albanians to establish a large number of Albanian schools, they proved adept at manipulating Ottoman state schools for their own interests, including appealing for instruction in Albanian within those schools.¹²⁷

The Jews of Macedonia were not targets in the educational competition for Macedonia, but their community underwent a struggle for more secular education during this time period. With communities located primarily in Thessaloniki and some provincial centers, those Jews involved in commercial enterprise were, like their Greek counterparts, influenced by the ways of Western Europe and sent their children to study there. Some of those who received an education abroad became advocates of secular education and challenged the authority of the conservative rabbis who prevailed in the large Jewish community in Thessaloniki.¹²⁸ After 1873, leading rabbis were sympathetic to secular education, enabling the community to prosper in the late nineteenth century.

Protestant missionaries continued to teach, if not preach, at schools in the region. Like the Greeks, Slavs, and Armenians, the Albanians benefited from the American missionaries’ belief that all people should have the right to be educated in their own tongue.¹²⁹ Protestant schools continued to be mutually beneficial for the missionaries and the peoples of the Balkans. Well-attended schools allowed the Protestants to claim success. Concurrently, enrolment in Protestant

schools gave to those interested a higher standard of education tailored to their needs and in their language. The American Missionary Board had primary schools in several towns around Macedonia and secondary schools in Samokov, Thessaloniki, and Bitola. Still, these schools were relatively few in number, and they generally tended to serve the elites. Journalist Frederick Moore described the American school in Bitola as “a sort of select seminary for the better classes,” with a student body of Greeks, Vlachs, Bulgarians, and Albanians.¹³⁰ While it was not their intent, the Protestant schools produced graduates who were dissatisfied with the status quo.

When it came to education, the Ottoman authorities were not simply pursuing a strategy of divide-and-rule. They had granted more schools to the Christians in accordance with modernizing reforms. After becoming sultan in 1876, Abdulhamid II restored the cynical policy of supporting the weaker against the stronger when it came to the politics of education in Macedonia and the Balkans. Nonetheless, the state did at the very least try to attract and retain the loyalty of its Muslim subjects in Macedonia. Prohibitive measures against Albanian-language schools were coupled with the construction of state schools that replaced traditional *madrasahs* as the main site of education for Muslims.¹³¹ Some of the urban state schools resembled the high-profile Christian and foreign schools in respect to their amenities and their capacity to produce disaffected students. For example, the state gymnasium in Bitola in 1903 had boarding facilities, a few non-Muslim students, and a militant student body that demonstrated a strong sense of solidarity against the abusive practices of the staff.¹³² Ottoman reports show that the Porte was also perfectly aware of threat posed by nationalist propaganda being disseminated in Christian schools and of the tactical appointments of leading national advocates to teaching positions that had everything to do with politics and nothing to do with teaching abilities.¹³³

Quality and Effectiveness of Education

What of the quality of education during the education race? With hundreds of schools competing for pupils, one might assume that it would have been high, in order to attract new students. However, that was not necessarily the case. In his 1951 study, H. R. Wilkinson made the following comment:

If the number of schools functioning in this region at the end of the century had been an indication of cultural progress, then surely Macedonia must have been a region of enlightenment and scholarship without parallel in Eastern Europe.¹³⁴

The best that can be said about the quality of education in Macedonia during the education race is that it varied. Students studying in larger towns could expect a relatively high quality of education and had the option of attending a secondary school. But most people in Macedonia lived in villages and did not go on to attend a secondary school. While some villages had well-supplied primary-school buildings, others held classes in churches or in private homes with few resources.¹³⁵ For example, around 1900, Exarchate village schools in the Melnik area reportedly still had first graders writing on trays of sand and older students using ink made from soot.¹³⁶ Students might face long walks to school and, as esteemed as education was, daily chores still took precedence. Many did not enjoy a full school day, attending lessons before or after fulfilling their duties at home and completing their lessons in the fields and pastures.¹³⁷ Typically, rural children might only attend school in such an offhanded fashion for a few years—just long enough for them to acquire basic literacy and mathematical skills, and to grasp the glory of “their” national history from stories told by the teacher and through the magic of the printed word.¹³⁸

Generally, the best teachers taught in the towns. Typically, those sent to the villages had not graduated at the top of their classes, although some were leaders of political movements. Village teachers were more likely to lack formal teacher training; many had no qualifications other than having come through the given school system themselves. They were often more interested in politics and resorted to teaching out of an obligation to their given movement or because teaching was the only job they could obtain; consequently, they were often absent from class. Traveling through southern Macedonia in 1900, G. F. Abbott encountered a Greek village-school teacher about whom he said: “Teaching was only a relaxation to him: politics were the serious occupation of his life.”¹³⁹ Abbott met another Greek teacher who was seeking a teaching post in lieu of anything better to do: “... a second Greek master on the lookout for a post, which, however, being an unambitious and unversatile youth, with not taste or talent for a parliamentary career, he easily found a few days later.”¹⁴⁰ Abbott’s observations, along with those of other turn-of-the-century witnesses, further illustrate the political role of teachers and the large scale of the campaigns being waged by the competing nations and organizations. Quality of pedagogy was, by and large, a secondary concern. Teaching had become little more than politics enacted by scholastic means.

How effective was education in genuinely building national feelings amongst the indigenous populations of Macedonia? By 1903, the educational struggle had been going on for fifty years and had intensified over the previous two decades. Most of the competing parties benefited from the *millet* system and the reform initiatives in the empire which granted Christian *millets* the right to educate themselves. They also profited from the Porte's divide-and-rule strategy that resulted in the establishment of more schools and the employment of more teachers. Yet, had the peasant masses of Macedonia shown no interest in education, there would have been no education race. The demand for education was driven by modernity. Increasing numbers of people recognized the economic advantages of education and were eager to take their children out of the fields and workshops and put them in classrooms to learn valuable math and literacy skills. Schools soon became status symbols for villages. Gymnasium education was held in high regard. The Exarchate's gymnasium in Thessaloniki was in itself a site of pilgrimage for Slavs in Macedonia; during their visits some were moved to tears at the sight of the school's modern facilities.¹⁴¹ Poor families made considerable sacrifices to send a child to a gymnasium; for instance, the older siblings of one Greek boy pooled their savings and salaries to put their younger brother through one of Thessaloniki's leading Greek gymnasiums.¹⁴² Education was valued and teachers were revered. In Bulgaria, village teachers were called *Kandilo* (candle), since they were said to light the path of learning for the children.¹⁴³ In the villages of Macedonia, the teacher alone constituted the entire intelligentsia. Thus, teachers came to symbolize the modernity the peasants cherished and were able to wield considerable influence over the population.

The people of Macedonia hoped the teacher-apostles would guide their children down the path to prosperity. However, what they got, whether they wanted it or not, was large doses of nationalism in their children's lessons. The environment was ideally tailored to the propagation of nationalism. The schools provided a setting for student inquiry and learning, which, for the bright or rich, could be continued in larger towns or abroad. For the teachers, the schools were a legitimate venue to engage young Ottoman Christians in stories of past national glory, contemporary injustices, Western revolutionaries, and visions of a future state free from Ottoman authority. By drawing on historical antecedents, by cultivating self awareness of religious and linguistic differences, and by setting future goals, teachers helped imagine nations into existence by aligning the given national present with the past and the future. The status that teachers

enjoyed allowed them to agitate and propagandize outside the classroom through speeches, plays, and informal conversation. The networks of schools and connections to the “free” states beyond the Ottoman frontier helped the teachers generate national visions. Moreover, school systems provided the networks to build parallel governmental structures and prepare for revolution. The problem was that there were several competing education systems coveting the same territory and the same students. Teachers themselves became targets, and some found themselves teaching by day and fighting by night.

Education was instrumental in the propagation of nationalism, but the degree to which the teachers were able to influence students and their families is a disputed point. In 1903, most residents of Macedonia were still peasants, whose primary loyalty was to family and village. The peasants’ main concerns were survival and prosperity. The flow of goods and ideas into the deepest recesses of Macedonia throughout the nineteenth century had helped convince the peasants of education’s practical value. Nationalist utopias might have sounded all very well, but most peasants had more realistic concerns. Indeed, for practical reasons, be they financial or strategic, many families opted to send their children to various schools. As Brailsford describes:

It is not uncommon to find fathers who are themselves officially “Greeks” equally proud of bringing into the world “Greek,” “Servian,” “Bulgarian,” and “Roumanian” children. The passion for education is strong and the various propagandas pander eagerly for it.¹⁴⁴

Brailsford’s example is not unique. G. F. Abbott encountered families where each member professed a different nationality. He comments: “Verily no country ever was in such sore need of a herald’s office, or of a lunatic asylum, as Macedonia.”¹⁴⁵ But later in his book, Abbott found a practical explanation for the split families—money: “Patriotism in too many cases can be described as purse-deep.”¹⁴⁶ Abbott noted that the going rate for national loyalty in Eastern Macedonia in 1900 was six Turkish pounds a month.¹⁴⁷ Life and death were also factors in one’s proclaimed loyalty in Macedonia as John Foster Fraser depicted in his conversation with an innkeeper:

“What are you?” I asked the innkeeper in a village near Koritza, on the borderland of Macedonia. “Well, sir,” he replied. “I find it best to be a Greek.” There was a Greek “band” in the neighboring hills.¹⁴⁸

As this passage illustrates, survival dictated allegiance, which is perhaps why families were seemingly divided and why parents sometimes sent different children to different schools. After all, it was a time of great uncertainty. Maybe the parents reasoned that one day the borders would change. Then at least one of their children might lead the family to a more secure and prosperous like in the land of the victors. Besides, choosing a school or a nationality in turn-of-the-century Macedonia was rather like choosing a political party: one could always switch later. As Fraser writes:

Nationality in Macedonia is a matter of fear, politics and religion. Race has nothing to do with it. Language does not help you much, because most Macedonians are bilingual, and they change their tongue when they change their party. Again, you meet peasants with Hellenic or Bulgarian sentiments who can speak nothing but Turkish.¹⁴⁹

Mixed identities and shifting loyalties remained the norm in Macedonia at the dawn of the twentieth century. It seems that the only people with firm national convictions were the propagandists from outside states.

The fact that many in Macedonia apparently enrolled their children in schools for purely practical reasons would seem to seriously mitigate the significance of teachers and education in Macedonia during the late-nineteenth century. Greek historian Basil G. Gounaris maintains that nationalist agitators took advantage of pre-existing “social cleavages” and political instability to propagate their respective causes. He finds the success of the national education campaigns to be “a highly questionable issue.”¹⁵⁰ These points considered, one is left wondering whether the national education campaigns won any genuine converts at all.

However, although national education campaigns may not have created legions of followers, they did prove to be very successful in producing teachers. For this reason, education was the key factor in the nation-building process in Macedonia. Education produced a middle-class intelligentsia, some members of which formed revolutionary vanguards that were willing to organize and revolt against the old order. Schools provided settings for like-minded young people to congregate and become influenced by nationalist thought. These students acquired middle-class sensibilities and revolutionary convictions which put them at odds with the establishment. As an educated middle class, they were indeed a minority, yet they were a respected, elite minority, who could obtain teaching jobs which helped them to propagate

nationalism and organize revolutionary movements. It mattered less that they did not inspire truly large numbers of adherents to follow them into battle. Indeed, the Greek *Philiki Hetaria* and the Bulgarian revolutionaries had, at best, only regional mass support, but that was all they needed. Heroic defeats provoked Great Power intervention and made the rebels martyrs of causes which subsequently acquired more of a mass following.

In Macedonia, the education race produced the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO),¹⁵¹ which organized and carried out the Ilinden Uprising of 1903. Most of IMRO's founders and principal organizers were graduates of the Bulgarian Exarchate schools in Macedonia who had become teachers and inspectors in the system that had educated them. Frustrated with the pace of change, they organized and networked to develop their movement throughout the school system that employed them. The schools were an ideal forum in which to propagate their cause, and the leading members were able to circulate to different posts, to spread the word, and to build up supplies and stores for the anticipated uprising. As it became more powerful, IMRO was able to impress upon the Exarchate its wishes for teacher and inspector appointments in Macedonia. But the organization had an uneasy relationship with the Bulgarian government and, as the date of the planned uprising drew near, IMRO frequently found itself at odds with the powers in Sofia, perhaps fatally so. The 1903 uprisings had all the hallmarks of a national revolution, yet unlike the Bulgarian revolt and the Greek Revolution, IMRO's heroic defeat did not spark the necessary Great Power intervention that would ensure statehood.

The Finish Line

The education race for Macedonia did not produce a clear winner. Most sources acknowledge that the number of Bulgarian Exarchate schools grew exponentially in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, but the numbers of their rivals grew too. Furthermore, by the turn of the century, Bulgarian unity had been undermined by IMRO. Population statistics from the era are "virtually meaningless," as they vary considerably and can be easily dismissed for bias and exaggeration.¹⁵² Ottoman census figures were taken on the basis of religion,¹⁵³ a process that counted Slav converts to Islam as Muslims, even though they may have spoken Slavic. What is more, Ottoman registries only included men.¹⁵⁴ In their investigation into the origins of the 1912-13 Balkan Wars, the writers of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace's report on

the causes of the 1912-13 Balkan Wars produced different national tables to show the “divergence in estimate and calculation” by the respective national census gatherers.¹⁵⁵ Bulgarian statistics claim that Bulgarians made up 53% of Macedonia’s population; Serbian statistics state that Serbs comprised 71%; and Greek statistics show that Greeks made up 38% of the population.¹⁵⁶ Of course, each group had different criteria for achieving a favorable result. Serbians considered anyone exhibiting Slavic cultural traits, such as participation in a *slava* festival, to be a Serb. Bulgarians made claims based on physiological and linguistic similarities to those in the Bulgarian Principality. To the Greeks, all those who were under the authority of the Patriarchate were considered Greeks, regardless of whether or not they spoke Greek.¹⁵⁷ Thus, many Christian residents of Macedonia were counted as Serbian, Bulgarian, and/or Greek, depending on who was in town conducting the survey.

School statistics should provide more concrete statistics, but one must consider that pupil numbers varied from school to school. Inconsistencies between different sources can also be found in sources cited by modern historians. For instance, Douglas Dakin states that in 1902 there were about 1,000 Greek schools with some 70,000 pupils and 592 Bulgarian schools with 30,000 pupils.¹⁵⁸ Contrarily, Nadine Lange-Akhund cites a French source dated “toward 1900” which reports 613 Greek schools with 32,476 pupils and 781 Bulgarian schools with 39,973 pupils.¹⁵⁹ It is therefore very difficult to formulate precise conclusions regarding the results of the education race; however, more general conclusions are possible.

On the whole, the education race remained, as it began, a two-party struggle between the Greeks and the Bulgarians. Serb results were limited, as their campaign could not be fully coordinated with that of the Greeks, and the Bulgarians successfully countered their monetary incentives. The Greeks solidified their hold in the south and, despite internal divisions, stemmed the southward advance of the Exarchate. Yet, bearing in mind that they had previously had a near-monopoly on education, the Greeks lost considerable numbers to the Exarchate. Territorially, the Bulgarians had the upper hand throughout central and northern Macedonia, with the Greeks remaining strong in the south. According to the maps of the 1899 survey of rival educational forces in Macedonia by German cartographer von Mach, the Bulgarian schools predominated in north and central Macedonia between the Sar and Nidza Mountain ranges, with an average of twenty schools per district as far south as Kastoria, Thessaloniki, and Serres. The

Greeks were strongest in the south, with some schools in the central towns such as Ohrid, Bitola, and Strumica. The Serbs had an average of five schools per district across the north, with a noteworthy enclave of Vlach schools in the southwest of Macedonia.¹⁶⁰ Von Mach's work provides a general territorial breakdown consistent with most of the works cited in this study. However, there were dozens of local exceptions and a number of contested areas, which remained as such into the twentieth century.

The 1903 Ilinden Uprising and the subsequent Macedonian Struggle did not mark the end of the educational struggle for Macedonia. Teachers from rival national groups continued to propagate nationalism within classrooms throughout Macedonia, but from mid-1903 they worked in an environment of terror and violence. Due to their highly visible occupation, teachers were easy targets. Tit-for-tat assassinations became an almost daily occurrence in Macedonia. Many of the assassins and victims were teachers.

¹ Macedonia here refers to geographic Macedonia, which extends from the Aegean Sea to the Shar Mountains in the north and from the Pindus Mountains in the west to the Nestos River in the east. During the period covered in this study, the territory was under the control of the Ottoman Empire and comprised the administrative districts (*vilayets*) of Kosovo, Manastir, and Selanik.

² There was no shortage of educational politics surrounding the Muslims and Jews of Ottoman Macedonia, but the majority of the territory's population was Christian Orthodox; therefore, the focus here will be on the race to secure their loyalty.

³ See: Miroslav Hroch, "From National Movement to Fully-formed Nation: The Nation-Building Process in Europe," *New Left Review* 198 (1993).

⁴ Joseph Szylowicz, "The Ottoman Education Legacy: Myth or Reality?" in *Imperial Legacy: The Ottoman Imprint on the Balkans and the Middle East*, ed. Carl Brown (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 289.

⁵ Robin Okey, *Eastern Europe 1740-1980: Feudalism to Communism* (London: Hutchinson, 1982), 78. Language was considered to be the "natural" determinate of a nation. Therefore, linguistic boundaries should determine national and state boundaries.

⁶ Benedict Anderson, "Western Nationalism and Eastern Nationalism: Is There a Difference That Matters?" *New Left Review* 9 (2001): 40.

⁷ Mary Jo Maynes, *Schooling in Western Europe: A Social History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985), 62-63.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 62.

⁹ Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 28.

¹⁰ C. M. Woodhouse, *Modern Greece: A Short History* (Boston: Faber & Faber, 1998), 130. These included such men as King Ludwig I of Bavaria and Tsar Alexander I of Russia.

¹¹ R. J. Crampton, *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, 75. The Exarchate was not an independent church. The Exarch had rank between an archbishop and the patriarch. The Greek Patriarchate still took precedence over matters of doctrine and had the right to procure Holy Oil.

¹² *Svoboda*, January 1870; Mercia MacDermott, *The Apostle of Freedom: A Portrait of Vasil Levsky against a Background of Nineteenth Century Bulgaria* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1967), 176. Karavelov once wrote: "For us, without freedom there is no education, and without education—no freedom."

¹³ Crampton, 85.

¹⁴ G. F. Abbott, *The Tale of a Tour in Macedonia* (London: Arnold, 1903), 81.

- ¹⁵ Martin V. Pundeff, "Bulgarian Nationalism," in *Nationalism in Eastern Europe*, ed. Peter F. Sugar and Ivo J. Lederer (London: University of Washington Press, 1969), 123.
- ¹⁶ Vemund Aarbakke, *Ethnic Rivalry and the Quest for Macedonia* (Boulder, CO: Eastern European Monographs, 2003), 64-65. While the Ottomans curtailed the Exarchate's ability to maintain schools in Macedonia, it stopped short of forcing the Exarchate to relocate to Sofia. For the Bulgarians, the Exarchate provided spiritual unity in the absence of political unity. Likely, the Porte did not wish to completely alienate and anger the Bulgarians for fear of provoking more conflict and another intervention by Russia.
- ¹⁷ Ibid., 82.
- ¹⁸ H. N. Brailsford, *Macedonia: Its Races and Their Future* (New York: Arno Press, 1971), 118.
- ¹⁹ Robert Kaplan, *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey through History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 64.
- ²⁰ Douglas Dakin, *The Greek Struggle in Macedonia, 1897-1913* (Thessaloniki: Museum of the Macedonian Struggle, 1993), 22. Dakin does not cite the source of this information, give an exact date, or state which Exarch made this statement.
- ²¹ Aarbakke, 64.
- ²² Ibid., 66.
- ²³ Pundeff, 124.
- ²⁴ "Bulgarians in Macedonia," *The Times*, January 5, 1880.
- ²⁵ Joseph Swire, *Bulgarian Conspiracy* (London: Hale, 1939), 16.
- ²⁶ Aarbakke, 73. Aarbakke describes efforts prior to 1883 as 'haphazard' by comparison.
- ²⁷ Mercia MacDermott, *Freedom or Death: The Life of Gotse Delchev* (London: Journeyman Press, 1978), 60, 62.
- ²⁸ Aarbakke, 73.
- ²⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁰ "The Present Conditions of Macedonia," *The Times*, November 4, 1881.
- ³¹ "Brigandage in Macedonia," *The Times*, November 28, 1884.
- ³² "The Balkan Peninsula," *The Times*, October 22, 1887.
- ³³ Aarbakke, 73.
- ³⁴ Pundeff, 128. Stambolov went so far as to propose a union with the Ottomans to create a Turkish-Bulgarian empire, with the sultan becoming Tsar of Bulgaria.
- ³⁵ *Nationalism and War in the Near East*, ed. Lord Courtenay of Penwith (New York: Arno Press, 1971), 97. Authored by an anonymous diplomatist.
- ³⁶ Ibid.
- ³⁷ Duncan M. Perry, *Stefan Stambolov and the Emergence of Modern Bulgaria 1870-1895* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 152-153.
- ³⁸ Ibid., 144.
- ³⁹ Ibid., 152.
- ⁴⁰ "Bulgaria," *The Times*, August 7, 1891.
- ⁴¹ "M. Tricoupis in the Balkan States," *The Times*, January 30, 1891.
- ⁴² "Bulgaria," *The Times*, August 7, 1891.
- ⁴³ "Bulgaria and the Macedonian Railway System," *The Times*, June 8, 1892.
- ⁴⁴ R. W. Seton-Watson, *The Rise of Nationality in the Balkans* (New York: Fertig, 1966), 130.
- ⁴⁵ "The Balkan States," *The Times*, July 21, 1890.
- ⁴⁶ Aarbakke, *Rivalry*, 69.
- ⁴⁷ "The Balkan States," *The Times*, July 21, 1890.
- ⁴⁸ Crampton, 110.
- ⁴⁹ Perry, 167. Panitsa's final cry was: "Long live Macedonia and Bulgaria."
- ⁵⁰ Pundeff, 130. Pundeff argues that Stambolov's "cautious" policy "led the revolutionary elements in Macedonia to pursue an independent course of action." This is a slight overstatement, as the revolutionary organization in Macedonia owed its existence to Stambolov's policies.
- ⁵¹ Perry, 239.
- ⁵² Nadine Lange-Akhund, *The Macedonian Question, 1893-1908* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 32.
- ⁵³ Ibid., 33.
- ⁵⁴ Stephen Constant, *Foxy Ferdinand, Tsar of Bulgaria* (New York: Watts, 1980), 179.
- ⁵⁵ "The Bulgarian Bishoprics," *The Times*, January 7, 1898; Lange-Akhund, 30. The Bulgarians had demanded more bishoprics just before the war and threatened to mobilize if the demand was not met.
- ⁵⁶ "Macedonia," *The Times*, February 10, 1898.

- ⁵⁷ “The Situation in Macedonia,” *The Times*, April 14, 1898.
- ⁵⁸ Andrew Tosheff, *The Bulgarian-Serbian Debate* (Sofia: Royal Printing House, 1932), 67, cited in Anastasia N. Karakasidou, *Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood: Passages to Nationhood in Greek Macedonia, 1870-1990* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 112.
- ⁵⁹ Lange-Akhund, 32.
- ⁶⁰ Dakin, 21.
- ⁶¹ Lange-Akhund, 32.
- ⁶² Brailsford, 101-102. Brailsford comments: “The legend that Alexander the Great was a Greek goes out by one road, and the rival myth that Alexander was a Bulgarian comes in by the other.”
- ⁶³ Keith Brown, Brown, *The Past in Question: Modern Macedonia and the Uncertainties of Nation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 88. Brown cites the Greek writer, Nikolas Ballas, who described that in Krushevo after 1870 the Exarchist movement was producing children who were fanatical Bulgarians.
- ⁶⁴ Brailsford, 42.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 200. The Greek Bishop of Bitola explained to Brailsford that Slavic servants, who had been acquired in great numbers as prisoners of war, lacked the mental capacity to learn Greek. As a result, the Greek masters were forced to learn the servant’s language to make things function: “Little by little they forgot their own language, and the ‘Bulgarophone Greek’ of modern Macedonia is the result.”
- ⁶⁶ Evangelos Kofos, “Dilemmas and Orientations of Greek Policy in Macedonia: 1878-1886,” in *Macedonia Past and Present* (Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1992), 135-136.
- ⁶⁷ Dakin, 117-118.
- ⁶⁸ Aarbakke, 72.
- ⁶⁹ Kofos, 50.
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 143. Kofos notes that girls’ education was to be made a priority.
- ⁷¹ Karakasidou, 96. These books included some printed in Slavic with Greek characters.
- ⁷² Brown, 39. Other languages were seen as heretical.
- ⁷³ Kofos, 143. The Greek State established its own autocephalous church in 1833.
- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁵ Aarbakke, 81.
- ⁷⁶ Brailsford, 196.
- ⁷⁷ Kofos, 22. The Patriarchate did not post its best men to Macedonia. Kofos states that Patriarchate prelates in Macedonia exhibited “an astonishing incompetence to grasp the changes occurring in their midst. Others tended to be concerned with safeguarding their own privileges, paying little attention to the national interests of their folk.”
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁹ “The Situation in Macedonia,” *The Times*, April 14, 1898.
- ⁸⁰ Karakasidou, 97.
- ⁸¹ Aarbakke, 77.
- ⁸² Abbott, 83. Richard Bentley and Richard Porson were esteemed eighteenth-century classicists who held chairs at Cambridge University.
- ⁸³ Brailsford, 203.
- ⁸⁴ Aarbakke, 80.
- ⁸⁵ Woodhouse, 181.
- ⁸⁶ Keith R. Legg and John M. Roberts, *Modern Greece: A Civilization on the Periphery* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 31. Through the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Trikoupis alternated as prime minister with his rival, Theodoros Deliyannis, who put irredentism ahead of modernization.
- ⁸⁷ Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 69. Greece’s poor economy prompted some 350,000 Greeks, mostly young men, to emigrate between 1890 and 1914.
- ⁸⁸ Jerry Augustinos, “The Dynamics of Modern Greek Nationalism: The ‘Great Idea’ and the Macedonian Problem,” *East European Quarterly* 6, no. 4 (1973): 449. Many of *Ethniki Hetairia*’s members had family ties to Macedonia.
- ⁸⁹ L. S. Stavrianos, *The Balkans Since 1453* (New York: Rinehart, 1958), 521.
- ⁹⁰ Lucy Garnett, *Turkish Life in Town and Country* (New York: Putman’s, 1904), 243. In Garnett’s words, for their deeds, the teachers were “... idolized by the scholars and their mothers.”
- ⁹¹ Karakasidou, 90-91.
- ⁹² Dakin, 119-120.
- ⁹³ Aarbakke, 80.
- ⁹⁴ Dakin, 135.

- ⁹⁵ John S. Koliopoulos, *Brigands with a Cause: Brigands and Irredentism in Modern Greece 1821-1912* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 224-225. To Melas and the other Greek officers, brigands were an ill-disciplined but indispensable force. Melas had the Greek guerrilla forces wear local brigand dress to impress the population and gain the trust of the local brigands in the ranks.
- ⁹⁶ H. R. Wilkinson, *Maps and Politics: A Review of the Ethnographic Cartography of Macedonia* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1951), 51.
- ⁹⁷ Micheal Boro Petrovich, *A History of Modern Serbia 1804-1918* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), 495.
- ⁹⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹⁹ Tim Judah, *The Serbs: History, Myth and the Destruction of Yugoslavia*, 67. Austrian diplomats purposely tried to direct irredentist Serb nationalism toward Macedonia. In 1881 the Austrians and Serbs signed a secret agreement in which Austria supported Serbia's expansion into Ottoman territory on condition that Serbia would suppress intrigues against Austrian territory, specifically Bosnia.
- ¹⁰⁰ Aarbakke, 88.
- ¹⁰¹ Wayne S. Vucinich, "Serbian Foreign Policy, 1903—1908" (doctoral dissertation, University of California, 1941), 94.
- ¹⁰² Hugh Poulton, *Who are the Macedonians?* (London: Hurst, 1995), 63.
- ¹⁰³ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Division of Intercourse and Education. *Volume 5: Report of the International Commission to Inquire in to the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars* (Washington: The Endowment, 1914), 27.
- ¹⁰⁴ Poulton, 63, The "Ekavian" dialect was closer to Bulgarian than other Serb dialects and became standardized Serbian after independence in 1878.
- ¹⁰⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁶ Victor Roudometof, *Collective Memory, National Identity and Ethnic Conflict: Greece, Bulgaria, and the Macedonian Question* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), 92. "Pro-Macedonian" activists and Serbian authorities came to an agreement on this in 1886.
- ¹⁰⁷ Lange-Akhund, 58-59.
- ¹⁰⁸ Aarbakke, 88.
- ¹⁰⁹ Frederick Moore, *The Balkan Trail* (New York: Arno, 1971), 188.
- ¹¹⁰ Vucinich, 96.
- ¹¹¹ "The Situation in Macedonia," *The Times*, April 14, 1898.
- ¹¹² Aarbakke, 92.
- ¹¹³ Karakasidou, 183n6.
- ¹¹⁴ "Macedonia," *The Times*, December 8, 1899.
- ¹¹⁵ Duncan M. Perry, *The Politics of Terror: The Macedonian Liberation Movement, 1893-1903* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1892), 89-90.
- ¹¹⁶ Mercia MacDermott, *Freedom or Death*, 150. The two villages had been under the Patriarchate before becoming Serb.
- ¹¹⁷ Aarbakke, 90.
- ¹¹⁸ Michael Boro Petrovic, *A History of Modern Serbia, 1804-1918* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), 501.
- ¹¹⁹ Ibid., 497. The Greeks also feared that a coordinated strategy would push the Bulgarians and the Porte closer together. Even when the Serbs did gain favour with the Porte in the late 1890s, they were still hampered by the lack of their own *millet*.
- ¹²⁰ Heathcote to Blunt, Salonica, 8 April 1898, FO 195/2029/305, The National Archives [TNA], quoted in Brown, 61.
- ¹²¹ Poulton, 64.
- ¹²² M. Edith Durham, *The Burden of the Balkans* (London: Nelson, 1905), 176.
- ¹²³ Stavriaons, 521. The likely scenario would be Romania trading its interests in Macedonia with Bulgaria in exchange for territory on the Black Sea coast. The Romanians also lobbied for an autocephalous church in the Ottoman Empire like the Bulgarian Exarchate.
- ¹²⁴ Moore, 226.
- ¹²⁵ Stavro Skendi, *The Albanian National Awakening 1878-1912* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), 134.
- ¹²⁶ "The Situation in Macedonia," *The Times*, April 14, 1898. This report from Bitola in 1898 notes that the Albanians were only united in their demand for Albanian language schools.

¹²⁷ Isa Blumi, *Rethinking the Late Ottoman Empire: Comparative Social and Political History of Albania and Yemen 1878-1918* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2003), 121.

¹²⁸ Rena Molho, "Education in the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki in the Beginning of the Twentieth Century," *Balkan Studies* 34, no. 2 (1992): 260.

¹²⁹ Lewis Bond, "Kortcha and the Albanians," in *Reports and Letters of American Missionaries Referring to the Distribution of Nationalities in the Former Provinces of European Turkey*, ed. Vladimir A. Tsanoff (Sofia, 1919), 101. After learning that the Albanians in Korce could only receive schooling in Greek during a visit in 1896, Bond appeals in his report: "The people love their own language, which alone is spoken in their homes. Can't we do more for them, somehow?"

¹³⁰ Moore, 142.

¹³¹ Blumi, 115. Blumi argues that the high number of state schools constructed in the south owed more to the lobbying power of locals than to a centrally directed plan.

¹³² Benjamin C. Fortuna, *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State, and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 159.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 70.

¹³⁴ H. R. Wilkinson, *Maps and Politics: A Review of the Ethnographic Cartography of Macedonia* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1951), 119.

¹³⁵ Stoyan Pribichevich, *Macedonia: Its Peoples and History* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 19081), 109.

¹³⁶ MacDermott, *For Freedom and Perfection: The Life of Yané Sandansky* (London: Journeyman Press, 1988), 106.

¹³⁷ Karakasidou, 98; Irwin T. Sanders, *Balkan Village* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1949), 117. Sanders' account comes from his field work during the interwar period on a Bulgarian village in the Rila Mountains near the border with Macedonia. Little, it appears, had changed in some villages thirty years later.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ Abbott, 93.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 97.

¹⁴¹ MacDermott, *Freedom or Death*, 62.

¹⁴² Garnett, 238.

¹⁴³ Saunders, 132.

¹⁴⁴ Brailsford, 102.

¹⁴⁵ Abbott, 81.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 157.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ John Foster Fraser, *Pictures from the Balkans* (London: Cassell, 1912), 2-3.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 176.

¹⁵⁰ Basil G. Gounaris, "Social Cleavages and National 'Awakening' in Ottoman Macedonia," *Eastern European Quarterly* 29, no 4 (1996): 415.

¹⁵¹ The organization was known as the Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (MRO) and later as the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization and of Adrianople (IMROA). It is most commonly referred by its 1905 incarnate, IMRO.

¹⁵² Stavrianos, 517.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ Carnegie, 28.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 28-30.

¹⁵⁷ Stavrianos, 518.

¹⁵⁸ Dakin, 19-20.

¹⁵⁹ Lange-Akhund, 33.

¹⁶⁰ Wilkinson, 119-120.