

# **WORLD PAN-MACEDONIAN ASSOCIATION**

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## **A Critique of Consequence**

### **Concerns over the feasibility of special advisor to ELIAMEP Dr. E. Kofos's suggestions for a solution to the Macedonian naming dispute between Athens and Skopje**

November 2010

Dear Dr. Kofos,

In regards to the Rose-Routh seminar you gave in Skopje on October 20, 2010 at NATO's Parliamentary Assembly vis-à-vis the imbroglio Greece has with its northern neighbor, and in regards to recent news reports coming out of Skopje attributed to you, we the Worldwide Pan-Macedonian Associations would like to offer you our comments. We feel that the Pan-Macedonian Associations, as the bastions of Hellenism in Macedonia, should be an important voice and an inseparable figure in the academic, political, and historical discussions on the name issue with our neighbor. We are the representatives of millions of Macedonians in Greece and the Diaspora; we are diachronic, and independent of all political parties.

We respect your efforts over the last five decades in dealing with Skopje's Macedonism however we must strongly object to the ideas that you and your colleagues in ELIAMEP have promoted to the citizens in Greece and the Diaspora, to various foreign ministers of the Hellenic Republic, and most recently to politicians and journalists in Skopje.

Throughout your thesis you un-necessarily refer to that state as “Republika Makedonija” instead of FYROM. By doing so you are legitimizing their claims to be called “Republika Makedonija”. Calling them as such you are describing them in the context they want to be perceived.

### **The problem with a separate geographic qualifier for the name of a country:**

The geographical qualifier that is suggested in your thesis will ultimately be disastrous for Greece because it implies that there is a whole entity named Macedonia that is geographically divided - by force as is taught in the FYROM. Need anyone be reminded that “Vardarska Makedonija” was born from Pan-Slavic irredentism? You leave the door open for us to continue to be “Egejska Makedonija” in their eyes - just another geographic region of...Macedonia under occupation. Their country will be a STATE and Greece will only have a region that supposedly will be in another sphere geopolitically. By suggesting a geographic qualifier, you are subjecting the 2.5 million Macedonian Greeks to continued dangers. Apart from wondering why there is a need for a qualifier, we publicly ask why you suggest that there needs to be a geographic qualifier for them and an ethnic qualifier for us. Are they not Slavs as we are Greeks? Finally any name that has a separate qualifier from “Makedonija/Macedonia” will be dropped and Makedonija/Macedonia” will be the finality. This has happened already with “the FYROM”: “FYR” is also a separate qualifier and Skopje has broken

countless times the Interim Accord they signed in the quest to circumvent it and unilaterally push for “Republika Makedonija”. For just a single example, one has to look at the old flag that still adorns practically every social, political, and religious gathering in the State and its Diaspora – something that is against the Interim Accord.

Instead of creating “Macedonian” identities in Skopje at NATO’s Parliamentary Assembly you should have told them in no uncertain terms that no state should be allowed to use a term ethnologically that belongs to another nation culturally and historically for centuries. In our case it should be perceived as an obvious attempt to appropriate everything Macedonian.

### **Solutions to a breakthrough, or creation of a linguistic labyrinth?**

With all due respect, we would like to critique your views as advisor to ELIAMEP and the Greek government. In your essay for ELIAMEP titled “The Current Macedonian Issue between Athens and Skopje: Is there an Option for a Breakthrough?”, and in your Rose-Routh Seminar speech in Skopje last month, you propose “food for thought” for future “aspirant mediators” on the issue and suggest a complex legalistic approach which is difficult to follow by international bodies let alone by the common person. Apart from the name of the country, you suggest that a possible solution would be to use the Slavic terms in an un-translated and non-transliterated form for the name of their ethnicity, language, and culture. The noun would be “Makedontsi” and the adjective would be “Makedonski” from the Slavic/Bulgarian language. For the Greek terms you state that “Makedones” for the noun, and “Makedonikos” for the adjective “might apply” and you suggest that these also should be transferred into other languages as is. However, in the Rose-Routh Seminar you go ahead and transliterate some of them using Slavic suffixes: “makedonsko vino” for their wine (in Italian/Spanish) as if the world should learn to inflect adjectives in Slavic!

Furthermore, we need not remind you that in Slavic, the gender suffixes are -ski (male), -ska (female), and -sko (neutral) for the adjectives. Additionally, the plural noun is “Makedontsi” but the singular is “Makedonets”. As you are aware, Greek also has gender suffixes for nouns as well for adjectives. You are unclear if all or just one of the Slavic/Greek suffixes and the plural/singular cases for each language should be used. Are you suggesting that the world learns how to inflect in Slavic and Greek or are you suggesting that these terms be copy-pasted everywhere thus disregarding the delicate linguistic rules that define a language? More specifically, is ELIAMEP prepared to create new grammatical and linguistic rules for all languages of the world? In English it is easier as there are no genders for nouns, and adjectives are not inflected but you can't only rely on the English perspective especially for languages which are highly inflected and their adjectival form possesses various cases. On the other hand, the phrase “the Makedonskianization of new immigrants” sounds tongue-tied and ridiculous even in English.

Even so, will the English say “the makedoniki woman” or will they say “the makedonikan woman” for the woman from Greece's north? In English will it be “the makedonski book” or “the makedonsko book” - or will the suffix be applied only to languages that inflect? If it is the former, then you are suggesting that the world learn Slavic, if it is the latter then you are suggesting that some languages replace their own suffixes for the Slavic ones. How on Earth could a Greek express a phrase such as “tis Makedonskikis protevousas” (“of the Makedonski capital”)? Will it be that - or the grammatically incorrect “tis Makedonski protevousas”? How would a Greek pronounce the term “the Makedontsi”? Will it become “oi Makedonstides” for men and “oi Makedontsisses” for women - or will it simply be the grammatically incorrect “oi Makedontsi”? How is ELIAMEP going to teach and ensure that the

French would say “la capitale Makedonski et le vin Makedonski” instead of “la capitale Makedonskienne et le vin Makedonskien”? Similarly, will the French say “les Makedontsi” for both genders instead of “les Makedontsiens” for men, and “les Makedontsiennes” for women?

Furthermore, there is also the problem of the plural and singular forms of the Slavic noun “Makedonsti”. The silliness is highlighted in the Spanish version of the phrase: “We went to the Makedonski(an?) capital of Skopje and we met many Makedonsti(an?) children and an older Makedonets during a conference for Makedonski(an?) youth.” “Viajamos al capital Skopje y encontramos los muchos niños Makedontsis y a la otra gente Makedonets qui atendieron una conferencia de juventud Makedonski.”

Finally, we want to know what will happen to the established term “Macedonian” that has been used throughout history (from ancient until current time) to describe the northern Greeks, including yourself. You mention this as the “fourth dimension” in your thesis yet you offer no solution for this. One hundred years from now, when someone is reading Plutarch, Hammond, and Dakin among others in English, will they know the term?

You have mentioned in your ELIAMEP thesis that once the two sides agree, they will jointly ask the world to adopt these linguistic rules. The problem with this is that while ELIAMEP would think they gave the solution to the problem and enjoy the congratulations of the world, the Skopjans will make absolutely sure that the media outside their country use the term “Macedonian” and not “Makedonski”. It is our strong opinion that it is virtually impossible to impose this internationally, and ensure that Skopje will not promote to change it. We have highlighted this in various languages to make it clear that we believe Skopje will reject this cumbersome new linguistic entity and implore that everyone call them “Macedonian” – and a linguistically exasperated world will agree. The same thing has been done with the equally cumbersome “the FYROM”. We would ask you to be clear on all concepts above because we are honestly confused.

### **Historical inaccuracies:**

Dr. Kofos, you erroneously imply that the name issue between Athens and Skopje is somehow a continuum of the “Macedonian question” of over 100 years ago. You do mention that the “traditional” question as you called it was over territory but you fail to mention who was contesting the territory. You thus give the impression to third parties that Greeks fought “Macedonians” for control of “Macedonia” and this is historically wrong. As the Treaty of Bucharest 1913 can attest to, and as is reported by the Carnegie Report into the Balkan Wars - essentially as history teaches us - it was the Greeks, Bulgarians, and Serbs that each fought over the spoils of the fallen European Ottoman Empire. There was never a Macedonian ethnic identity then. If there was one, the Manifesto of Krushevo would have specified it. All “Macedonian” revolutionary movements were either Greek or Bulgarian, and it was the clash of these two ethnicities (after imperial Russia promoted the break-up of the Ottoman Empire) that defined the apogee of late 19th to early 20th Century Greek history. The current problem has nothing to do with a “Macedonian question”. It is the birthchild of a Pan-Slavic Communist dream that tangibly started in the 1930's and officially in 1944 with Yugoslav expansionist aims.

In addition, there was never a “Vardarska Makedonija” officially. The region of what is the FYROM today started as Paeonia/Dardania in antiquity and ended up as Vardarska Banovina before Josip Broz

Tito chose to create the “People's Republic of Macedonia” in 1944. “Vardarska Makedonija” is the irredentist name used by communists and Macedonists since to imply it is part of a “divided whole”.

Dr. Kofos, Greeks don't “perceive” that the ancient Macedonian identity is a basic ingredient of our Hellenism - we know it to be through an unbroken Hellenic element and presence in Macedonia since antiquity. Perception is a word that implies a view not necessarily accepted by others. It leaves the door open for the interpretation that it may be a collective delusion. This is argued by Macedonism, which is the actual delusional force that is attempting to usurp everything Macedonian as being non-Greek. Unfortunately for Macedonists, our history is attested to by many and it is official.

Moreover, your statement in Skopje that “Makedones” is the historical name by which the Greek-speaking people of the ancient Macedonian kingdom identified themselves” bewilders us. Were the ancient Macedonians simply Greek-speaking? As you are very much aware, Macedonism teaches its youth that the ancient Macedonians were not Greek and that were simply Greek-speaking or Hellenized. Your speech in Skopje has done nothing but cement this theory. Nearly, 400 classicists of worldwide repute would disagree with you (<http://macedonia-evidence.org/obama-letter.html>).

### **The declaration of the Greek people:**

The members of the Council of Hellenes Abroad (SAE) in their 2007 Chicago Convention as well as the Hellenic American National Council unanimously adopted the Pan-Macedonian Association's Resolution regarding the issue of the name of the neighboring state. More recently, AHEPA during their worldwide convention in Montreal, Canada in July 2010 also lent its support to the same Pan-Macedonian resolution. In addition, approximately one hundred Macedonian organizations state that they declare they will not accept the inclusion of the term “Macedonia” in the name of the FYROM. They request that the Greek government abandons its policy of a geographic designation and to include in the negotiations on the question of the name of the country, the issues of its nationality and its language, so that the use of the term “Macedonia” is prevented. They call on the government to reject the opening of accession negotiations between the FYROM, and the EU and NATO respectively, and between the FYROM and other international organizations to which our country has the right of veto, before solving the problems of ethnicity, nationality, and language. Besides these are the views of the vast majority of our compatriots in Greece: All the opinion polls on the name show that the Greeks do not accept the word “Macedonia” in the name of the neighbor.

### **Legal arguments and Greece's obligation to its people:**

We are aware of your arguments that no one can legally impose a nationality or name on a group of individuals and Greece has no legal precedence to request a change in the nationality of our northern neighbors. It is the reason why ELIAMEP (with your advice) has promoted the idea of un-translated Slavic words for their identity, and of “Vardarska Makedonija” for the name of the country. In other words, you are promoting that they OFFICIALLY call themselves “Macedonian” in their language, and that their country's name should be a Cold-War anachronism which was first coined by Josip Broz Tito. In other words, nothing has changed since 1944. You therefore believe that we have no legal recourse at all and have been fighting a losing battle and this bothers us greatly. These arguments are the same as what Skopje and its Diaspora use when they argue their points to various international bodies. Our arguments can be more eloquent and completely legally relevant than the concerns you and the recent Greek foreign ministers have raised. Firstly, why should we respect the wishes of a communist dictator that decided to extend “Macedonia” throughout all of Southern Yugoslavia as a

means to the future annexation of Greek lands? In reality and as is mentioned in your 2009 thesis for ELIAMEP, it is the original Greek identity of Macedonia that is being mutated over the last 70 years. Where is the legality in this and why haven't you promoted the modern historical truth to them and the world? Secondly, instead of baptizing them and asking them to accept terms which will hardly be internationally recognized by a non-Slavic world, ELIAMEP should be promoting their Slavonic and Bulgarian roots in their quest to find their identity in the modern world. We should not be telling them what they are but we can tell them what they are not based on who we are, and this does have legal precedence.

We wonder just what exactly is ELIAMEP's goal in all of this? Is it politically and tactically intelligent to offer the olive branch exposing a perceived soft base for the Greek argument, to a government and society that has been taught to hate Hellenism and to question the Hellenism of Macedonia and our identity? Since you are discussing identities, we would like you and ELIAMEP to clarify who has held the Macedonian identity the longest?

As a result, we are transparent in claiming to be the indigenous people of historic Macedonia and have been trying to exercise our rights under Articles 8, 9, 15, and 18 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2007. We have struggled to maintain our dignity as Macedonians against the intolerance of Skopje's Macedonism for six decades, and we are frustrated by supposedly pro-Greek groups like ELIAMEP, KEMO, and CDRSEE who are all supported monetarily or spiritually by non-Greek organizations and have been advising the Greek government on the matter. This has been happening without the participation and advice of the Macedonian Greeks and the Pan-Macedonian Associations. This is unacceptable and undemocratic. More specifically, Article 18 of the aforementioned UN declaration states very clearly:

#### **Article 18**

*Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous decision-making institutions.*

Who has elected ELIAMEP to represent us in this process? Why are we constantly avoided and branded as intolerant nationalists when we object to the machinations of groups such as the ones you are affiliated with? The Greek State has the obligation to promote the wishes of the Macedonian Greeks, and to educate the rest of the world about our identity. This is also very clearly stated in Article 15.1 of the UN declaration:

#### **Article 15**

*1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information.*

Dr. Kofos, there is no power and certainly no ELIAMEP supported by George Soros's Open Societies and other non-Greek sources that can override the will of the Hellenes and if you think that the Slavs will compromise if we give a little bit of our history and rights, you are deeply wrong. For 40 years they have dug their heels and said "NO...WE ARE MACEDONIANS! PERIOD." What our failed diplomacy has accomplished so far is inviting them to continue their maximalist policies. Now in the Rose-Routh seminar in Skopje you created a new "Macedonian" identity to suit their goals while you want us to give the stamp of approval to the ignorance, lack of effort, and relevance to the Greek national issues by the same politicians that brought the country to its knees.

Why now do you and your colleagues in ELIAMEP (including former Ambassador to Greece in the US Alexandros Mallias, and ELIAMEP Vice President Thanos Veremis) travel to Skopje and plead with them to accept that they are...“Macedonians” in their language? By doing so you try to appease an ultranationalist foreign element by creating identities for them which insult us. Consequently we would like more transparency by ELIAMEP.

Sincerely,

President of the Committee of World Pan-Macedonian Associations – Nina Gatzoulis  
Pan-Macedonian Associations USA-Dr. Antonios Papadopoulos, Supreme President  
Pan-Macedonian Associations of Australia-Demitris Minas, President  
Pan-Macedonian Association of Canada-Haralompos Moutousidis, President  
Pan-Macedonian Association of Europe-Archimandrite Panteleimon Tsormpatzoglou, President  
Macedonian Chapters of South Africa-Amyntas Papathanasiou, President