

RICHARD CLOGG
editor

Minorities in Greece

Aspects of a Plural Society

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Clogg; Chapter 1, Kallistos Ware; Chapter 2, Charles Frazee;
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CULTURAL ILLEGITIMACY IN GREECE: THE SLAVO- MACEDONIAN 'NON-MINORITY'

ANASTASIA KARAKASIDOU

A case study narrative

The 1 September 1959 issue of the conservative Athenian newspaper *Sphaira* carried an article describing what it called a 'very peculiar' ceremony that was held in the village of Atrapos (formerly Krapeshtina¹) in the Florina district on 10 August of that year. In the words of the account, 'the simple population of the village, in front of God and people, swore that from now on they will stop using the Slavic idiom in their speech and that they will speak only the Greek language'.²

According to this article, the villagers had become so encumbered by the influence of repeated Slavic invasions that they had borrowed from the language of the outsiders and had made their own language, albeit one with a strong Slavic idiom.³ The 'descent' of the Atrapiotes is described as clearly Greek. But the so-called 'simple' people of Atrapos now took a heroic decision to rid themselves and their language of every Slavic influence. Henceforth, they would speak only the Greek language, 'clear'; the account said, 'like the ice cold waters of their village'.

Even before dawn on the Sunday morning of the ceremony, the village streets were already filled as all the villagers, children included, made their way to the village church. This was a historic day in Atrapos. After the Doxology, the focus of the ceremony turned to the village school yard, filled with a capacity crowd. On one side of the yard were the Atrapiotes, across from whom stood one hundred representatives from other area villages, as well as military and political leaders.

Above the congregation, the Greek flag flew proudly. The military band struck up the national anthem. Those among the elderly men who had been 'Macedonian Fighters' (*Makedonomakhoi*⁴) could not constrain their tears. The village president spoke, thanking the officials (*episimoi*) who had come to the ceremony. Then he asked his fellow villagers to take the great oath.

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Silence fell as the villagers each raised their right hand and repeated after their president:

I promise in front of God, men, and the official authorities of our State, that I will stop speaking the Slavic idiom which gives reason for misunderstanding (*parexigisi*) to the enemies of our country, the Bulgarians, and that I will speak, everywhere and always, the official (*episimi*) language of our country, Greek, in which the Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ is written.

After the oath, the village teacher addressed the congregation. He was described by another observer⁵ as a local villager, a 'national worker', a descendant of a Macedonian fighter priest, and a spiritual guide who had inspired his co-villagers to take the Greek language oath. Now he told them:

We have decided, with pride, all together, to stop speaking the foreign idiom which has no relation to our very Greek descent. In this way, we offer honour and gratitude to those Greek co-patriots who gave us our freedom with their blood. Long Live the King! Long Live the Greek State! Long Live our Undefeated Army!

Following this, another villager spoke in his own 'simple' words about the importance of the oath. A child then recited a poem, and the Prefect (*Nomarch*) of Florina closed the ceremony with a patriotic speech and congratulated the people of Atrapos on their decision. After the ceremony, the heroes' monument of the village was crowned with wreaths, and popular songs and dances were performed by the Cultural Association 'Aristotle'.⁶

Reading this account some thirty years later, the question that has haunted me the most has been, 'Why?' For what reason did the people of Atrapos take this oath? What exactly was this 'otherness', the source of all their 'misunderstandings' with their neighbours? The question of whether the people of Atrapos were obliged to take this oath or did so voluntarily is one that I leave to the polemicists.

Transforming identity, constructing consciousness: nation-building on the Florina frontier

*The Greeks appointed me president. I fooled them.
I am a Bulgarian, and I will die a Bulgarian.
(A village president from Korestia)⁷*

At the turn of the century, the Florina area was located in what Evangelos Kofos has called the central zone of Macedonia.⁸ Vouri has argued that this so-called 'problematic' central zone of Macedonia was inhabited by three

categories of people, classifiable on the basis of their national religious allegiance (or a propensity to show such allegiance).⁹ There were *Ellinizondes*, or Orthodox people clearly possessed with Greek leanings; *Voulgarizondes*, or Orthodox people who were ostensibly indifferent to Bulgarian Exarchist religious propaganda but who secretly possessed Bulgarian leanings; and *Skhismatikoi*, or those with overt Bulgarian leanings who followed the Bulgarian Exarchate that had been established by the Ottoman authorities in 1872 and openly opposed Hellenism.¹⁰ The Greek-speaking element in this zone was concentrated in urban centres where it participated in the religious, administrative, social, and education sectors of life, thus presenting to the outside world a 'Greek-like' (*Ellinophanis*) picture of the area.¹¹

In 1886, the vast majority (78.4 per cent) of the population of the Florina district (*kaza*) was aligned with the Ecumenical Patriarchate. By 1900 this figure had dropped to barely half (50.9 per cent; see Table 1), suggesting perhaps that Bulgarian propaganda had achieved great success in attracting 27.5 per cent of the Florina population. While Bulgarians considered vernacular language or notions of 'racial descent' to be the indices of national consciousness among the population of this central zone, the Greeks to the south took religious affiliation, participation in the Greek educational system, and knowledge and use of Greek as a second language to be the defining characteristics. Greek letters, transmitted through religion, education, and language, were considered the 'true civilization of the Orient'.¹²

Yet such arguments warrant a more in-depth analysis. Existing documentation, as I will show, makes it apparent that one cannot accept *a priori* assumptions about the existence of a Greek national heritage and a Greek national consciousness in this region prior to its incorporation into the Greek state.¹³ All the more doubtful is the assumption that follows from such premises, namely that the area's inhabitants accepted such concerns as a primordial given and simply followed them as a natural course of action.

For example, in his 1925 report on the 'shades' (*apokbroseis*) of the district's population, the Prefect of Florina observed a continuing 'Bulgarian' presence in the area. He concluded that 'the Schismatics have acquired and retained a Bulgarian consciousness. The Patriarchists [on the other hand]

Table 1: Demographic evolution of the Christian population of the Florina kaza, Monastir sancak, 1883-1900

Year	Orthodox		Schismatics		Total
	Number	%	Number	%	
1886	23,730	78.4	6,538	21.6	30,268
1900	17,455	50.9	16,855	49.1	34,310

Source: Vouri (1992) 25

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live in a psychic world of timidity, but with the hidden longing and everyday wish *to shake off the Greek yoke*' (emphasis in original).¹⁴ His words echoed those of his predecessor, written in 1922:

The situation with regard to national sentiments cannot be said to be pleasant. The population of the Prefecture which is, in its majority, foreign speaking and *from another nation* (*alloethneis*; emphasis added), does not look with delight on any kind of improvement in our national matters.¹⁵

It is clear that Greek national identity did have a continual presence in Macedonia since the turn of the century, due in no small part to the efforts of Greek educators and priests. But it is equally apparent that Greek national *consciousness* (or the hegemony of the nation and its implied legitimization) took much longer to develop and achieve deep roots. The mere fact that a portion of the population spoke Greek as a second language at the turn of the century did *not* mean that they possessed Greek national 'sentiment' (*phronima*) or consciousness either. Rather, identity and consciousness changed over time in response to the material circumstances in people's social, economic, and political milieux.

Identity, consciousness, and social collectivities

Human beings engage in social life guided by a particular set of assumptions concerning the social collectivities of which they are a part. We hold in our minds certain notions about what those collectivities are, and what our roles are or should be in such a context. In addressing such issues, a distinction must be drawn between identity, on the one hand, and consciousness on the other.

Notions of identity (*taftotita*) are oriented around normative categories held in the minds of actors in regard to both themselves and to others. These are ideal-type constructions, in Weber's sense of the term, as they define certain types of people and the pattern of behaviour one expects such individuals to exhibit. Identity is therefore subjective and autonomous; it changes over time, conditioned by the changing perceptions of actors operating in fluid social fields.

More specifically, when considering issues of ethnic identity, one must distinguish between its internal and external characteristics. The former include notions of shared descent and a common culture, while the latter entail relationships both with other ethnic groups as well as with the state.¹⁶ Ethnic groups possess a distinct group identification, but this develops only in conjunction with, and in reaction to, their affiliation with a wider political field, namely that of the state.¹⁷

Consciousness (*syneidisi*), on the other hand, is a phenomenon of quite a different order. It entails a realization of the dominant structures that govern

or frame action in the particular social milieu in which individuals live and interact. It develops in response to externally imposed material and ideological conditions. Consciousness does not necessarily mean an understanding of the hegemonic dominance of those structures over one's life, but rather a general awareness of and subscription to imposed definitions of the world in which one lives.

Consciousness, therefore, includes a set of values and meanings that help one make sense of and articulate world-views. National consciousness, by extension, provides a set of signs common to the community of the nation, according to which the members of that community conceive of themselves and perceive 'others'. The construction of nations necessarily entails the construction of national consciousness. Both identity and consciousness are constructs created through processes of inclusion and exclusion.¹⁸

Since it had been the agents and representatives – both formal and informal – of the Greek state that had encouraged, organized, and promoted the ritual ceremony described at the outset of this chapter, it is important to understand how such agents perceived the relative degree of 'otherness' manifested by the area's local inhabitants. Let us therefore pause to examine the diverse composition of the area's population in the first half of the twentieth century – as evidenced in the official archives of the Greek state administrators.¹⁹

The 'national' tapestry of post-1913 Florina: a view from the state

The statistics provided in the Historical Archive of Macedonia/General Directorate of Macedonia (HAM/GDM) on the national and linguistic composition of forty-nine villages in the Florina region²⁰ were probably collected by Greek administrative authorities stationed in Florina immediately after the area's incorporation into Greece in 1913. In these statistics, villages and towns were grouped into one of seven categories depending on their perceived national leanings (see Table II).²¹ It is significant to note that only three villages were described as solely Greek, but in two of these three the local vernacular was listed as Bulgarian, while in the third it was Koutsovlach.²² Only two towns, Florina and Amindeo, the two largest commercial centres in the area, appear to have had a Greek-speaking population, but even here, these were mixed communities of both Greeks and Bulgarians whose inhabitants spoke both languages.²³

Factoring out Turks and focusing only on the Christian population, while 38.6 per cent of Christians were described as 'Greek', none were monolingual in Greek (see Table V). Put another way, there were no monolingual Greek speakers among the Florina population during the period 1911–15. Of those multilinguals who were described as 'Greek' and could speak Greek, 52.8 per cent also spoke Bulgarian, 32.5 per cent also spoke Koutsovlach, and 14.7 per cent also spoke Albanian. On the other hand,

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Table II: National groups inhabiting 49 Florina villages, 1914 (by village)

<i>National groups</i>	<i>No. of villages</i>	<i>%</i>
Greeks, Turks, Bulgarians	4	8.2
Greeks, Bulgarians	11	22.5
Greeks	3	6.1
Greeks, <i>Roumanizondes</i> ¹	3	6.1
Bulgarians, Turks	3	6.1
Turks	13	26.5
Bulgarians	12	24.5
Total	49	100.0

Source: HAM/DGM, File no. 53

Note:

- 1 Romanian propaganda agents had been active among the Vlach populations of the Balkans. The term *Roumanizondes* was used in these archives in reference to those Vlachs who did not declare themselves 'Greek' (as many tended to do), but were instead inclined to Romanian national identity.

the overwhelming majority of Christian population (59.4 per cent) were described as 'Bulgarians', as many as 70 per cent of whom were monolingual in Bulgarian only. These, according to official Greek government archives, were the political and linguistic realities that the Greek state faced when it assumed national control over the Florina region in 1913.

Ten years later, on 13 January 1925, the office of the Prefect in Florina sent to the General Directorate of Thessaloniki a statistical report on the 'various shades' of the prefecture's population.²⁴ In this document, distinctions were drawn on the bases of religious belief (Schismatics 52.1 per cent and Patriarchists 23 per cent), linguistic affiliation (Vlachophone Greeks 5.8 per cent and Vlachophone Romanians 0.7 per cent), and the apparently

Table III: National groups inhabiting 49 Florina villages, 1914 (by population)

<i>National group</i>	<i>No. of people</i>	<i>% of total population</i>
Bulgarian	20,189	42.1
Turk	13,860	29.0
Greeks	13,111	27.4
<i>Roumanizondes</i>	695	1.5
Total	47,855	100.0

Source: HAM/GDM, File no. 53

Table IV: Language spoken in 49 Florina villages, 1914

<i>Language category spoken</i>	<i>No. of people</i>	<i>% of total population</i>
Bulgarian	23,800	49.7
Turkish	13,860	29.0
Bulgarian-Greek	4,750	9.9
Koutsovlach-Greek	2,275	4.8
Koutsovlach	1,370	2.8
Albanian-Koutsovlach	900	1.9
Greek-Albanian	900	1.9
Total	47,855	100.0

Source : HAM/GDM, File no. 53

residual categories of indigenous Greeks (3.4 per cent) and refugees (15 per cent; see Table VI).

Perhaps more interesting than the numbers provided in this document is the discussion of the categories of 'Schismatics' (*Skbismatikoi*) and 'Patriarchists' (*Patriarkhikoi*). The report's author maintained that the vast majority of the prefecture's population were indeed Slavic speakers. Moreover, he went on to assert that even 'the Patriarchists' were not a solid group of reliable Greek supporters. He claimed that while they had been supporters of the 'Greek idea' prior to 1912, these Patriarchists did not have a consolidated and unshakeable national consciousness, and that there was a very real danger that they would move back to the Schismatics and again change their sentiments.

Table V: Languages spoken by declared Greeks, 1914

<i>Language category spoken</i>	<i>No. of people</i>	<i>% of total population</i>
Bulgarian	5,111	39.0
Bulgarian-Greek ¹	3,250	24.8
Koutsovlach-Greek	2,000	15.2
Koutsovlach	950	7.2
Albanian-Koutsovlach	900	6.9
Greek-Albanian	900	6.9
Total	13,111	100.0

Source: HAM/GDM, File no. 53

Note:

¹ Concentrated in the mercantile centres of Florina and Amindeo

Table VI: 'Sl

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Source: HAM

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Table VI: 'Shades' of the Florina population, 1925

Category	No. of people	% of total population
Schismatics	28,673	52.1
Patriarchists	12,628	23.0
Refugees	8,230	15.0
Vlachophone Greek-leaning	3,176	5.8
Indigenous Greeks	1,862	3.4
Vlachophone <i>Roumanizondes</i>	416	0.7
Total	54,985	100.0

Source: HAM/GMD, File no. 90, Confidential Letter, Protocol no. 6

The same year (1925), Salvanos, Chief of Staff of the Tenth Army Division of Western Macedonia, wrote a study on the 'ethnological composition' of the Florina area and the possibilities for resettling refugees there.²⁵ In it, he recognized that only a minority of the region's population had a pure Greek consciousness which had been strengthened through Greek propaganda during the Macedonian Struggle. Salvanos noted that the Slavophone population was divided among those with fanatical Greek sentiments (*Ellinophrones*), fanatic Bulgarian sentiments (*Voulgarophrones*),²⁶ and those who were indifferent to nationality, being concerned only with maintaining their lives and livelihoods.²⁷ The latter, he maintained, call themselves 'Macedonians' (*Makedones*), and constituted the bulk of the region's population (making up between one-half and three-quarters of any given village's population). The Bulgarian fanatics usually constituted one-quarter to one-half of a village's population, but sometimes made up entire villages. The Greek fanatics, on the other hand, were widely but thinly dispersed throughout the region, being represented in each village by only one to five families. Only four of the thirty communities surveyed were composed entirely of *Ellinophrones*.

Ten years later still, in 1935, on the eve of the Metaxas dictatorship, Athanasios Souliotis-Nikolaidis, then Prefect of Florina, sent a letter to a government minister which included a table listing the number of families in each of ninety-three villages in the Florina Prefecture, and ascribed to each of these families certain national sentiments or leanings.²⁸ There were two major categories in the table: one referring to families with 'foreign morale' (with specific sub-categories of Slav, Romanian, and Albanian), the other referring to those families that were 'foreign speakers' (that is, Greeks in national consciousness but speakers of Slavic, Vlach or Albanian).²⁹ Of the 11,683 families listed, 56.3 per cent were accredited by the Prefect with a Slavic national consciousness, while 41.3 per cent were 'foreign speakers' with Greek national consciousness (Table VII). Of the prefecture's ninety-three

villages, sixty-five had mixed Greek-Slav populations, ten were inhabited entirely by Slavs, eight entirely by Greeks, and four entirely by Vlachs (Table VIII). Thirty-two per cent of these mixed villages were comprised of 80 per cent or more Slavs, while only 3 per cent were made up of 80 per cent or more Greeks.

Several things are clear from these official Greek sources. First, while there was a Greek presence in the Florina area prior to 1913, it was not as strong as that of the Slavs. Moreover, to the extent that a Greek national consciousness existed among Slavic-speakers of the region prior to 1913, these documents indicate that it was not a solid, unchangeable, immutable phenomenon. I would like to suggest that the controversies and debates currently raging along such lines inadvertently misdirect attention from a much more important historical and political phenomenon: that is, the inordinate success of Greek nation-building processes in Macedonia as compared to similar processes in other nation-states of the Balkans. In Greek Macedonia, the vast majority of people of Slavic descent eventually came to define themselves as 'Greek'.

How did this great achievement of nation-building come about? How were Greek national identity and consciousness constructed and projected among this diverse local population? Through what media did the hegemonic forces of Greek nationalism conquer the hearts and minds of this diverse local tapestry? It is to these issues that we now turn.

Emigration, deportation, and refugee resettlement, 1913-35

In the light of the above evidence, the motivations behind the policies and practices of Greek government administrators in the Florina region during

Table VII: National consciousness of the population in 93 villages of the Florina Prefecture, 1935

Category	No. of families	%
'Foreign sentiment'	6,863	58.7
<i>Slav</i>	6,578	56.3
<i>Romanian</i>	216	1.8
<i>Albanian</i>	69	0.6
'Foreign speakers' with Greek sentiment	4,280	41.3
Total	11,683	100.0

Source: Archives of Athanasios Souliotis-Nikolaidis, Prefect of Florina, File no.2/II, Document no. 51, 6 August 1935 (Lithoksoou 1992)

Table VIII:
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Table VIII: National groups inhabiting 93 villages of the Florina Prefecture, 1935 (by village)

National category of inhabitants	No. of villages	%
Greek and Slav	65	69.9
Slav	10	10.8
Greek	8	8.6
Romanian	4	4.3
Greek and Romanian	2	2.2
Albanian, Greek, and Slav	2	2.2
Albanian and Greek	1	1.0
Albanian, Greek and Romanian	1	1.0
Albanian	0	0.0
Total	93	100.0

Source: Archives of Athanasios Souliotis-Nikolaidis, Prefect of Florina File no. 2/11, Document no. 51, 6 August 1935 (Lithoksoou 1992)

the decades following incorporation become more clear. The 1920s was a period marked by out-migration,³⁰ displacement and deportation, as Greek government policy was geared towards the systematic removal of all *Voulgarophrones*, coupled with a voluntary exchange of populations between Greece and Bulgaria.³¹ There are also reports of deportation and internal exile involving individuals from the districts of Thessaloniki, Serres, Kastoria, Florina, and Grevena. Those targeted for removal from the region were labelled as dangerous threats to public order, owing to their involvement in propaganda activities of the Bulgarian 'committee members' (*komitadjides*).³² The preferred places for resettling these displaced persons were in the island areas of the country and especially on Crete.³³

By the later 1920s, the Greek authorities had taken steps to curtail voluntary emigration to Bulgaria, fearing that these people would migrate and begin a campaign against the Greek state. The Prefecture of Florina stopped issuing passports to local inhabitants wishing to travel abroad.³⁴ Émigrés to Bulgaria or other suspect destinations faced even greater hurdles if they attempted to return to Greece. State officials instructed local authorities to investigate the 'sentiment' (*phronima*) of such individuals, their activities both before and after emigrating, and the extent of the properties they owned in Greece.³⁵ The 1928 census reported that only 38,562 Slavophones remained in the Florina Prefecture.

Many of those deported or displaced were replaced (as were the Turks who left Greece after the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923) in their local communities by resettled Greek refugees (*prosphyges*) from Asia Minor and

Thrace. Refugee settlement in the Greek Macedonian countryside was actively encouraged, for the purpose of strengthening a Greek presence in the area. Such, apparently, were the concerns of the Prefect of Florina when in 1925 he asked in a letter to his superiors whether the 'refugee masses' could 'influence in an assimilationist way the foreign-speaking element?'³⁶ In the short term, the strategy had little success. Few refugees spoke metropolitan Greek, most communicating with each other in Pontic Greek or in Turkish. Turkish, moreover, was sometimes used as a common *lingua franca* for refugees and local Slavo-Macedonians, many of whom spoke Turkish as well as Slavic. In 1925, Greek military officials argued that it was imperative to provide economic incentives to encourage the settlement of Greek-speaking refugees, especially those arriving from Thrace, in Greek Macedonia (HAM/GDM (see note 25)). It was hoped that this would help to 'condense' the area's population, then still largely living in compact Slavo-Macedonian communities. Resettling Greek-speaking refugees in such villages was seen as essential.³⁷

Nevertheless, it had by then also become clear that wherever refugees were resettled, intra-community disputes over land ownership were almost inevitable. Mavrogordatos noted that 'Slavo-Macedonian natives reacted strongly and often violently to the massive settlement of Greek refugees and to their occupation of fields they had themselves coveted or even cultivated in the past'.³⁸ Certainly, Slavo-Macedonians were not the only ones to resent the arrival of refugees or the loss of long-envied, highly coveted productive property to the newcomers. Yet by 1928, fourteen of 104 villages in the Florina Prefecture were dominated by newly arrived refugee settlers; an additional twenty-one villages had small numbers of refugee families settled among Slavic-speaking locals (*dopioi*).³⁹ My own survey of the Florina Prefecture in 1993 found Slavic speakers (or their descendants) present in well over half of the area's ninety villages (see Table IX).

Bulgarian propaganda

A leading factor in these involuntary displacements and deportations was that Bulgarian propaganda in the area apparently continued to gain ground after the region's incorporation into Greece. As early as 1922, the Greek military were doing their best to halt the activities of the Bulgarian propagandists and the spread of a Macedonian autonomist movement.⁴⁰ While some reports attribute most incidents to isolated occurrences perpetrated by bands of *Komitadjides*,⁴¹ the fact remains that this autonomist movement was quite active in the area at the time.⁴² It had made significant inroads among both the Slavic-speaking and Turkish populations of the region by expanding its political platform to include the question of Thrace,⁴³ and the Greek authorities were convinced that the group's ultimate goal was eventually to partition Macedonia and Thrace between Bulgaria and Turkey.⁴⁴

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Table IX: Composition of villages, Florina Prefecture, 1993

Composition	No. of villages	%
'Locals' (<i>dopioi</i>)	53	58.9
Slavic speakers	45	50.0
Vlachs	5	5.6
Arvanites	3	3.3
'Refugees' (<i>prosfighes</i>)	15	16.7
Pontic Greek	14	15.6
Thrakioties	1	1.1
Mixed	21	23.3
Slavic-speakers, Pontic Greeks	12	13.3
Slavic-speakers, Arvanites	3	3.2
Slavic-speakers, Vlachs	2	2.2
Slavic-speakers, Gypsies	1	1.1
Slavic Speakers, Pontic Greeks & Arvanites	1	1.1
Slavic-speakers, Pontic Greeks & Gypsies	1	1.1
Slavic-speakers, Arvanites, Pontic Greeks & Thrakioties	1	1.1
Unknown	1	1.1
Total	90	[100*]

Source: author's survey, 1993

Note

* Numbers given do not appear to total 100 due to rounding.

Such conclusions were based on the rhetoric of the Bulgarian Committees themselves, as evidenced in their propaganda leaflets distributed among the population of Greek Macedonia. For example, in March 1922 there was convened in Serres a Congress of the Macedonian Committee which issued a proclamation to the peoples of Macedonia protesting against what it called the 'Greek occupation' of Macedonia. It stated that, despite a thirty-year struggle, they had not yet achieved a victory and that therefore 'one country [i.e. Macedonia] is still divided and occupied by a regime worse than that of the Ottomans'.⁴⁵ According to these revolutionaries, the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) was the only force fighting for the liberation of all the people of Macedonia – Bulgarians, Turks, Greeks, Jews and Vlachs – without discrimination. Greece was regarded as an enemy against which all oppressed peoples should unite in common opposition.⁴⁶

Understandably, the Greek authorities went to great lengths to investigate the activities of suspected Bulgarian sympathizers. Bands from Bulgaria, Albania, and Serbia (see below) were constantly slipping across the Greek border to conduct propaganda activities. Only during harsh winters, such as

the one of 1922, did their activities in the Florina area subside.⁴⁷ As a result, the Greek government kept up a constant vigil over its borders, guarding them with both army regiments and the Gendarmerie. These soldiers were brought to the area from Southern Greece because recruits native to the area were considered 'bad guardians' of the borders and very untrustworthy.⁴⁸

A major incident that serves to illustrate how extreme outbreaks of violence occurred in the area relates to the so-called 'Dynamite Attempt' in the town of Florina on 16 November 1925.⁴⁹ The bombing occurred in the coffee shop *Diethnes* in central Florina just after nightfall. Around 6.00 pm, two otherwise unarmed men entered the door and tossed hand grenades into the coffee shop, injuring two children in the explosion. The suspects then fled, allegedly towards the Albanian border, where many *komitadjides* found sanctuary from Greek authorities. The following day, the Gendarmerie of Florina conducted an investigation. Ten individuals were arrested and sent to Kozani to be tried by Military Court, while another forty-seven people were arrested on suspicion of collaborating with the *komitadjides*. The Commission on Public Order judged the latter to be dangerous threats to society and exiled them to the islands of Skyros and Andros for a period of six months.⁵⁰

At the same time, other propaganda was coming in from Serbia, channelled through the consulate of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, as Yugoslavia was then known, in Thessaloniki. These efforts reflected Serbia's growing interest in the Slavic speakers of Macedonia, whom they claimed in fact to be Southern Serbs. By 1925, Serbian agents were reportedly very active in the Florina area, urging the population to register themselves as Serbian citizens.⁵¹ The Greek authorities were understandably alarmed by these developments. One report claimed that many Slavic speakers in the area had become hostile towards any 'Greek idea' and were now 'running' for Serbian protection, hoping to have Serbia act as an intermediary on their behalf with the Greek authorities.⁵²

To counter these foreign efforts to gain control of Greek Macedonia, the Greek government attempted to present a picture to the outside world that the region was definitively 'Greek'. One incident in particular serves to illuminate the anxiety of the Greek authorities. In 1926, the International Commission for the Study of Minorities in Macedonia toured the area. Government authorities directed teachers to hold Greek festivities (*epideixis*) in the schools for the benefit of the visiting investigators. Teachers also told schoolchildren that the Minister of Education would be travelling along the Edessa-Florina railway, and that in order to please him they were to line the railroad tracks, holding Greek flags in their hands and singing patriotic marches. Students were also instructed that if approached by members of the Commission on the streets or at the railway station and asked if they knew any language other than Greek, they were to answer no. The event was reported as a great success.⁵³

In conjunction with their attempts to portray the inherent 'Greekness' of the area to outsiders, the Greek authorities also actively suppressed all social and political movements aiming at the autonomy of Macedonia. Despite the fact that the area had been part of Greece for more than a decade, a large proportion of the local population was still hostile to Greek sovereignty and conditions in the region were far from tranquil. The Greek state attempted to consolidate its control over the area through a dual approach involving surveillance and repression on the part of the military and the police,⁵⁴ on the one hand, and institutionalized forums of national education on the other.

Repression and violence, 1935-49

By the time of the Metaxas dictatorship (1936-41), conditions in the region apparently justified harsher, more repressive actions on the part of Greek authorities. It was during this period that prohibitions against the use of Slavic languages (either in public or private) were first implemented. Violators were subjected to steep fines,⁵⁵ forced to drink castor oil, or in some cases even beaten. Night schools were set up in which adult men and women were taught Greek.⁵⁶ Individuals were obliged to change their names from Slavic forms to Greek ones. There were also stepped-up activities surrounding ritual commemorations of Greek national holidays. Local inhabitants were obliged to display a Greek flag in homes and shops on local and national holidays. Some even embarked on house-painting campaigns in which the homes of area residents were white-washed and decorated with blue trim to resemble the colours of the Greek flag.⁵⁷

In 1941 the Axis forces occupied Greece. While the Germans tended to concentrate in the towns, their Bulgarian allies, who were allowed to occupy Western Thrace and part of Macedonia, moved more fluidly through the countryside, stepping up their nationalist propaganda in the process. The occupation created a sharp polarization among the area's inhabitants, some collaborating with the occupiers, others resisting by allying themselves with either Greek nationalist forces or the communist-led National Liberation Front (EAM) and its National Popular Liberation Army (ELAS).⁵⁸ Slavo-Macedonian participation in the Greek resistance forces of the ELAS was strong.

Following the Axis occupation, conditions in the Florina countryside approached a Hobbesian state of nature. Mark Mazower⁵⁹ has noted that Greek national forces persecuted communist partisans more than they did former collaborators with the Germans. Many Slavo-Macedonians endured great hardships at this time. As one respondent put it: 'I didn't want to go with the Bulgarians. I wanted to protect my country and so I joined ELAS. What did they want me to do? In return for my patriotism they sent me into exile'. Many Slavo-Macedonians who were not exiled eventually allied

themselves with the communists, who at one point held out the promise of a future independent Macedonian state, during the Civil War (1947–49).⁶⁰

Armed conflict was particularly fierce in the mountains of western Greek Macedonia. Combatants on both sides of the civil conflict burned villages, executed opponents, and abducted children. After the communist defeat, many Greek communists and Slavo-Macedonians alike fled to Yugoslavia and beyond, taking with them as many as 28,000 children,⁶¹ who were resettled in various parts of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

Reconciliation and reconstructing the nation, 1949–59

The 1950s were a period of reconciliation in the Florina area. The most fanatic Slavs, so to speak, had left Greece and those who remained had a vivid memory of the retribution and destruction that had been inflicted upon them since 1913 and during the Second World War and the Civil War. Their overt peacefulness reflected their willingness now to integrate themselves into Greek society.⁶² As many of those Slavo-Macedonians imprisoned after the Civil War were then being released and returning to their native communities, the Greek authorities and their local agents once again stepped up their efforts to promote a Greek national consciousness among the area's inhabitants.⁶³

By 1959, the year of the language oaths, the Bulgarian threat had disappeared from the political arena. But the principal axis of conflict and contest had by then shifted to one involving Greece and Yugoslavia. It is important, however, to contextualize developments in Greece in the light of events taking place across the border. The creation of the Yugoslav Socialist Republic of Macedonia in 1944 was akin to a nation-building process. The Slavic vernacular spoken in that southernmost region of Yugoslavia and in north-western Greece became the standardized Macedonian language for that new republic. Regional authorities also stepped up their own efforts to present themselves as a separate 'nation', distinct from neighbouring Serbia and Bulgaria. A national 'Macedonian' history found its roots in this period, as scholars attempted to link the ancestry of the region's present population to the glorious legacy of Alexander the Great, Cyril and Methodius, and other illustrious historical personages that would help legitimize the existence of a separate 'Macedonian' nation in the present day.⁶⁴

However, a lingering consciousness – or perhaps a subconsciousness – of Slavo-Macedonian identity continued to persist among much of the local population. Consider a story related to me by a *Graecoman*⁶⁵ and former president of a village in the Florina area:

One day, while *en route* to a nearby village on an administrative errand in the company of a Greek [i.e. non-local] policeman, the

Graecoman ploughing his farmer was summoned by policeman as gave him two

The policeman making fun of mouth, and tongue.

As the man grabbed the chair. 'Don't you I will beat you

Such a vignette is late as the 1950s to illustrate the assimilation. Second, it abused their power perhaps most importantly stigmatized *Graecoman*

While they ideologically acted as protective the abuses of power assimilation. These as those of village those of the region from other parts made them more so complex process of

What were the was a complex process of affiliations among the state was able to national culture of means were agent of Hellenism consciousness of existence defined as being been total? Or of expressions of conflict when, why and the role of the agents of education in part

Graecoman and the Greek encountered a local farmer out ploughing his fields. Having difficulties with a recalcitrant ox, the farmer was cursing the beast in Slavic. The Greek policeman summoned him over to them and began writing a fine. When the policeman asked the man for his name, the latter, in confusion, gave him two different names.

The policeman became angry and asked if the man were making fun of him. He then grabbed the man, forced open his mouth, and extinguished his burning cigarette on the farmer's tongue.

As the man screamed in pain, the Graecoman village president grabbed the Greek policeman by the throat and lifted him up in the air. 'Don't you ever let me catch you doing that again', he warned. 'I will beat you to pulp (*tha se spaso sto ksilo*).'

Such a vignette is revealing in several aspects. First, it demonstrates that as late as the 1950s the Slavic vernacular was still widely used by the local population. Second, it points to the ways in which Greek policemen sometimes abused their power and terrorized the local Slavic-speakers. Third, and perhaps most importantly, it is indicative of the mediating role played by interstitial *Graecomani* as local agents of the Greek state.

While they identified with Hellenism, some *Graecomani* at least also acted as protective patrons for their local neighbours, guarding them against the abuses of power that occasionally appeared in the course of national assimilation. These bilingual Greek and Slavic speakers filled positions such as those of village president, teacher, or priest, or of local officials. Unlike those of the regional or prefectural administrators, who came to the area from other parts of Greece, the personal experiences of the *Graecomani* made them more sensitive to the subtle and delicate nuances involved in the complex process of national assimilation.

What were those nuances? Given what by all contemporary accounts was a complex picture of religious and national (not to mention ethnic) affiliations among the region's population, how was it that the Greek state was able to construct a national consciousness, or a common national culture of co-existence if you will, in this area? Through what means were agents of Greek national identity able to project a hegemonic Hellenism among the local population, re-orienting their consciousness of existence primarily to a broad field of social interaction defined as being part of the Greek nation-state? Has this hegemony been total? Or do competing definitions of identity and contesting expressions of consciousness still manifest themselves, and if so where, when, why and how? To understand these issues, let us examine the role of the agents or 'importers' of national consciousness, and the role of education in particular.

The importers of national consciousness

Social scientists now widely recognize that identity and consciousness are constructs, the products of human agency. Both are established and defined in opposition to something they are not, an 'other' as it were. In attempting to understand the construction of national consciousness in the Florina region of Greece, we will examine the activities of those who might be referred to as the 'agents' or 'importers' of national consciousness.

According to Greenfeld,⁶⁶ the adoption of a national identity or consciousness by a given population is linked to the interests of those influential individuals or groups that import it into a given area and promulgate it among the local society. In the process, such agents often change their identity, consciously or not, because their own structural positions within local society become transformed as the locale becomes linked with a larger economic, social, and political arena. By brokering or mediating the importation of a national-level identity and consciousness among an ethnically diverse population at the local level, such agents invest themselves with a powerful form of social or political capital, the value of which is linked to their structurally interstitial positions between (nation) state and locale.

Yet there is an important analytical distinction that needs to be made between 'internal' and 'external' agents of national identity and consciousness. In the Florina countryside, the former consisted primarily of school teachers, priests, large landowners, and merchants. The prestige that such elite personnel enjoyed in their social milieux was transformed into power when they became mediators of state and local relations. In the light of this, it comes as little surprise to find that it was the teacher (the son of the priest) who 'persuaded' the villagers of Atrapos to take their language oath. He used the power vested in him by the state to transform local notions of identity.

At the same time, there were also 'external' agents of national consciousness, including bureaucrats, government officials, tax collectors, policemen, and army personnel. Yet while their influence was often profound in densely populated administrative and commercial centres, in the countryside it was primarily the interstitial *Graecoman* local elites that played the most critical roles. There, the function of education was of prime importance in Hellenizing the region's Slavic-speakers. In all the archives that I have examined there is one consistent theme: the educational system was intended to serve a national purpose; it was a focal institution of national conversion.

The role of education

Vouri has argued that, in the 1870s, the promotion of Greek letters as a symbol of high culture in the region was very much a policy of the Greek

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nation-state to the south.⁶⁷ Accordingly, the rhetoric they adopted to promote irredentist policies was disseminated through Greek education and through allegiance to the Greek Patriarchate, the two defining characteristics of one's 'Greekness'.⁶⁸ The Greek language was a tool of communication that people from Macedonia learned in order to secure a position in the structural division of labour.⁶⁹

But through several generations the acquisition of a Greek education, in conjunction with the incorporation of the region into Greece in 1913, made those with 'Greek letters' the unconscious agents of Hellenism and Greek national consciousness – an issue to which I shall return below. While the idea of Hellenism found roots among many Vlachophones and Slavophones in the area before 1913, it was the subsequent creation of national consciousness – through education – that eventually made the area unquestionably 'Greek'.

One must distinguish here between two distinct yet interrelated national collectivities. The first, dominant during the years preceding incorporation in 1913, relied heavily on the Greek Church and Greek national educational policies to attract members; the second, which rose to dominance after 1913, used more overtly and covertly coercive methods of state integration. The Hellenic community at the turn of the century was territorially poorly defined. Rather, it was a largely 'imaginary' and ideological community that found its definition in the alleged superiority of Greek culture and letters. The community of the Greek nation-state, on the other hand, was territorially concrete. At the same time, however, the Greek nation-state not only made allusions to an imaginary community among members of a high culture, but also (following the region's incorporation) provided the bureaucrats, army, police, administrative personnel, and 'national' teachers to disseminate the notion of membership in a national collectivity – and the inherent superiority of that collectivity – among the local population.

In both cases, however, education was a focal institution of conversion. As Vouri⁷⁰ put it, there existed a 'dialectical relation between the aims of education and national goals'. On the level of policy formulation and the subsequent creation of ideology, it was believed that when the aims of education were attained and the population learned Greek language, letters, and civilization, they would eventually come to conceive of themselves as Greeks.⁷¹

Thus one sees that, at the turn of the century, educational activities were conditioned by nationalist ideologies. The educational and religious institutions of that time took as their mission the transformation of national consciousness among the Christians of Macedonia. But this enterprise continued to be most successful only in urban areas, owing mainly to the fact that formal schooling had little practical utility for Slavic-speaking agriculturalists in the central zone, where the region of Florina was situated.

Greek government archives indicate that in 1913 only sixteen out of forty-nine villages in the Florina district had functioning schools and kindergartens.⁷² It is significant that in all sixteen villages with Greek schools a

Table X: Schools and kindergartens, Florina District, 1913

School type	No. of schools	Total no. of students	Males	%	Females	%
High school	5	437	376	86	61	14
Girls' high school	2	141	0	0	141	100
Primary	11	180	119	66	61	34
Kindergarten	16	622	321	52	301	48
Total	34	1,380	816	59	564	41

Source : HAM/GDM, File no. 53, 'Statistics on Greek Schools'

portion of the population did declare themselves to be Greek.⁷³ Not one of the villages listed as populated by 'Bulgarians' had a school.⁷⁴ Higher educational institutions, such as the *Astikes Skholes* (high schools), existed in only five towns and villages. With the exception of Florina, all of these communities were inhabited by Vlachs, the majority of whom declared themselves to be 'Greeks', while a few identified themselves as *Roumanizondes* or those with Romanian national sentiment.⁷⁵

The fact remains, however, that by 1925 the achievements of Greek educational institutions in the area were minimal. As the Prefect of Florina reported to the General Directorate of Macedonia,⁷⁶ schools did not function properly for a number of reasons, including a lack of materials, facilities and capable teachers. Nor did they make efforts to provide a special linguistic programme for 'foreign speakers'. Instead, children throughout the region were taught with the same textbooks used in Athenian schools. Moreover, local authorities often brought charges against parents who neglected to send their children to school, thus creating an 'aversion to Greek letters [and] impatience and hatred towards the Greek administration'.⁷⁷ The Greek schools thus functioned only formally, and children learned to read and write Greek only with the greatest of difficulties.

The Prefect maintained that teachers in the area were poorly trained and had no ambitions. Their pedagogy created no 'civilizing influence' and failed to construct a Greek national consciousness among the students. He suggested that, in order to solve this problem, a new cohort of teachers would have to be recruited from among the best in southern Greece, those who not only possessed adequate knowledge but would also be capable of fostering the creation of national sentiment (*phronima*) among their local students. In order to attract such teachers, it was suggested that the government offer moral and financial incentives and arrange for easier promotions. Schools, the Prefect cautioned, should be real schools, with an authority that would enable their students to graduate with 'consciousness and pride that they

could not only speak like Greeks'.⁷⁸

For villagers in the outside world was an exchange, local schools whom they would were apparently area high schools. *Didaskalei* grade graduates enabled many in positions simply to their diplomas.⁸⁰ pointment' (*apog* and Greek education.

These archive system, as established not attaining the local Slavic-speaking consciousness among who did send the homes, at their parties weddings, and in the country – an obstacle the fact that education were willing to schools.

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By the time of the region remained worked in the Ecumenical Hellenize Western enacted language argued, lay in the appearance, so that

could not only speak and write the Greek language but [could] feel and think like Greeks'.⁷⁸

For villagers living in their own communities where intercourse with the outside world was limited to personal networks of marriage and economic exchange, local school-teachers represented the principal civil servants with whom they would come into regular contact. But many of these teachers were apparently of low intellectual calibre. Most were mere graduates of area high schools, although a few had graduated from Educational Academies (*Didaskaleia*).⁷⁹ Some, in fact, were themselves only fifth- and sixth-grade graduates appointed to teaching positions under Law 1197, which enabled many inexperienced, ill-trained, or fraudulent teachers to obtain positions simply by swearing oaths and signing statements that they had lost their diplomas.⁸⁰ The books in the schools only served to create 'disappointment' (*apogoitefsi*) and 'aversion' (*apostrophhi*) towards Greek letters and Greek education.

These archives readily indicate that by 1925 the Greek educational system, as established in the newly incorporated areas of Macedonia, was not attaining the goals for which it was intended. The assimilation of the local Slavic-speaking population and the creation of a Greek national consciousness among them was still a long way off. Even those Slavic-speakers who did send their children to school continued to speak 'Bulgarian' in their homes, at their public meetings, in their associations, and at their festivities, weddings, and holidays. They showed no signs of love towards their new country – an observation particularly true of the older generation.⁸¹ Despite the fact that education had been made compulsory through law, many parents were willing to pay fines instead of sending their children to Greek schools.

All these archives consistently recommend several measures to remedy this discouraging situation: (1) to bring in the best-qualified teachers from the south and to provide them with incentives, bonuses, and special promotions until the local Slavic population produced its own indigenous Greek-trained teachers; (2) to emphasize education among the very young (that is, kindergarten) and among women (night schools and schools on Sundays); (3) to provide free higher education for those Slavophone children who want to go on to the educational academies; (4) to establish night schools for the elderly in every village; and (5) to make elementary education compulsory.

By the time of the Metaxas dictatorship, the linguistic situation in the region remained at crisis proportions. In 1938, an Athenian teacher who worked in the Edessa area wrote a confidential report evaluating efforts to Hellenize Western Macedonia and stressed the importance of the recently enacted language prohibitions.⁸² The importance of these prohibitions, he argued, lay in the fact that on the surface they provided for a uniform appearance, so that visitors to the area and local inhabitants alike would see

Females %

61	14
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and feel that it was part of Greece. More importantly, on a deeper level 'the young children will finally understand that they live in Greece, and *that the Greek lessons are not taught in schools as foreign lessons*' (emphasis in original).⁸³

His observations grasped the twofold significance of the language prohibitions: on the one hand they contributed to the consolidation of a particular nexus of external characteristics of (national) group identity; on the other, they were efforts geared towards the internalization of national concepts and group characteristics, especially in the hearts and minds of the young and ideologically malleable.

Although reports from the 1920s suggested that schools in the area were falling short in their national mission because of scarcity of educational materials, disrepair of facilities, poorly qualified teachers, and irregular attendance, after the 1950s education came to assume a more prominent and successful role in influencing the national identity and consciousness of the region's population. The explanation lies in the fact that by then most avenues of economic and social mobility had been restricted to education. Many parents came to realize that their children had little chance of improving their relative socio-economic position if they continued to learn only Slavic. A form of linguistic self-censorship came to be imposed in the home, with many parents discouraging their children from speaking Slavic. To the extent that the latter continued to learn the language, they did so primarily through their grandparents, who at the same time learned Greek from their grandchildren.

Clearly, it took several generations for the Greek language and Greek national consciousness to take hold among the Slavic-speaking population of Greek Macedonia. By and large, those among the local population who received Greek schooling did tend to redirect their identity, sympathies, and loyalties to the Greek nation-state. But the fact remains that such individuals were few in number, at least until the 1950s. It was only after the Second World War – and especially with the advent of free higher education in the 1960s – that education became both more widely available and also an increasingly important resource through which families and individuals could pursue concrete economic interests. It was only then that the assimilationist goals of the Greek national educational system came to achieve their intended results. Yet even these accomplishments were predicated on the earlier removal of the most 'fanatic Slavs' from the area, leaving few options to those Slavic-speakers that remained. Today, most of the school children no longer speak Slavic, and the vast majority of the Slavic-speaking (and formerly Slavic-speaking) population identify themselves with the Greek national collectivity.

The inordinate success of nation-building in Greek Macedonia (especially when evaluated against the experience of other Balkan countries) was due in no small part to the ability of the agents of Hellenism to bring about an

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internalization of certain normative frames of reference in the minds of a population. Having identified educators as the agents or importers of Greek national consciousness in the Florina area, let us pause to consider several arenas in which such new national concepts, values, and notions of collective membership took hold among the local population. We must examine the tools and mechanisms through which such concepts were internalized by them. This brings us to a discussion of language, holidays, and rituals.

The internalization of national concepts: language and ritual

While language is an external marker of identity, it is also a principal medium through which internal characteristics of identity are framed and expressed. Linguists have long recognized that language, as a medium of cultural communication, embodies a structured pattern of concepts that affect or even determine our interpretation of the world around us.⁸⁴ It enables us to communicate with those who cohabit our social milieu. Its diversity, its 'borrowed idioms' so to speak, are testimony to the fluid character of those social fields. With the shift from a Slavo-Macedonian vernacular to a Greek one, a new set of semantic categories was imported into local culture and internalized in the minds of the local population.

During the late Ottoman period, the Greek language was considered an expression of 'high culture' in the Balkans. The countryside was a patchwork of numerous ethnic groups, many with their own vernaculars. Greek-speakers were concentrated primarily in cities and towns, and Greek was the *lingua franca* of administration and commerce regardless of one's ethnic or national affiliation. Those Christians who aspired to upward mobility within the Ottoman Empire were obliged to acquire a facility in Greek.

The Sultan's *firman*, which established the Bulgarian Exarchate in 1870, provided that any Christian community in which two-thirds of the inhabitants so desired could withdraw from the jurisdiction of the Greek Patriarchate and place itself under the authority of the Bulgarian Exarchate.⁸⁵ In effect, the *firman* precipitated a national struggle between two emergent nation-states over the population and territory of Macedonia. In the early phases of this struggle the contest was expressed in ecclesiastical terms, but later this façade dropped and the mutually opposed interests of the two secular states clashed together more openly. Yet throughout this period of contest, language was regarded by the Bulgarians as a – if not the – principal indicator of national identity, while the Greeks (as noted above) stressed religion, education, and a knowledge of Greek, although not necessarily as one's first language or native tongue.

The Slavo-Macedonians were caught in a no-man's-land between the converging frontiers of Greek and Bulgarian nationalism. Their language is of the Slavic family, and has a close affinity with Bulgarian. Bulgarian

nationalists, of course, claimed that the Slavo-Macedonian vernacular was simply a dialect of Bulgarian, an assessment echoed by their Greek counterparts, who disparaged it and stigmatized it as a 'non-language', a mere 'idiom' of Bulgarian, or a 'gypsy language' (*gyphatika*).

Beyond the debates that currently rage over the status of the Macedonian language or non-language⁶⁶ lie more fundamental issues. Through the political positioning of Greek and Bulgarian nationalists at the turn of the century and Greek and Macedonian nationalists at the present day, Slavo-Macedonians and their vernacular were relegated to a 'low' cultural status *vis-à-vis* their elite, nationally-based neighbours. Consider a story, proudly related to me by a Florina man of Arvanitis (Albanian) descent,⁶⁷ of how one day he heard some labourers outside his house speaking in Slavic. Finding this personally irritating, he went outside and asked them, 'Why do you speak this language? Don't you speak Greek?' Or consider the phrases often repeated to me during coffee shop and restaurant conversations: 'We give the wrong impression when speaking that language', or 'it is not proper to speak that language'. As Tambiah⁶⁸ remarked, language does not only serve as a mere communicative device, but also has 'implications for educational advantage, occupation, and historical legitimation of social precedence'. Whether through self-censorship or externally imposed prohibitions, the Greek language gradually gained dominance among the Florina region's population over the generations.

Swearing an oath before God and before the authorities of the State – God's secular parallel in this symbolic imagery – the people of Atrapos, as I described at the outset of this chapter, vowed to use a language different from that to which they had been accustomed. But in so doing, amid all the elaborate pageantry or decorum⁶⁹ of this ritualistic ceremony, the so-called 'simple' people of Atrapos were accepting – or at least recognizing – the superiority of the Greek language over the daily vernacular they had learned at home as children and through which they had communicated all their lives. At the same time, they began to change the linguistic medium through which they internalized their cultural concepts. By acquiring a 'national' language, they acquired the means to understand and internalize national concepts.

Yet language, as such, is but one of many tools of communication employed by humankind. We live within a daily poetics of personhood.⁷⁰ As we strive to present ourselves in everyday life,⁷¹ we act in different arenas: concrete settings in which the contests between influential bearers of competing paradigms are played out.⁷² The power of rituals, as Mary Douglas⁷³ has noted, lies in the manner in which, as an act of communication, they express, emphasize, and construct agreement upon that level of social structure which is relevant to (or, we might say, dominant in) a given social field. In such contexts, actors are made aware of a greater or lesser range of inclusiveness. As highly structured frames of action through which the normative

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values of moral facts – as defined by the dominant social structure – are given voice, internalized, and reinforced among participants, ritual action is akin to a process of sublimation.⁹⁴ One might also view ritual as a mechanism for hegemony.

Interpreting the ritual language oath

It may be constructive to return, for a moment, to the language oath ceremony recounted at the outset of this chapter. I interpret this ritual – and the narrative accounts of it – as an important moment in Greek nation-building in the Florina area. A closer look at the setting of the ritual, the structure of its action, and the symbols employed in it offers a poignant insight into the processes through which Greek national consciousness was constructed and internalized among the local population. The Atrapos language oath may be interpreted as a rite of purification, held under the legitimating efficacy of both mystical or supernatural power (that is, God) and secular authority (that is, representatives of the Greek state).

Nation-building often invokes the supernatural in order to legitimize its secular existence. The oath itself both opened and closed with the invocation of the Holy Name of the Christian God. While the oath was explicitly framed in terms of a national mission, the Greek language also became a source of secular patriotism and supernatural pride, for it was portrayed as the language of the Holy Gospel, the Greek Church, the Greek state, and the Greek nation. The 'pure' Greek language and its corresponding 'high culture' was thus juxtaposed with a 'low culture' Slavic idiom that had been 'borrowed' from an invasive, polluting, foreign force. As the Greek language is depicted as 'pure', it stands in opposition to a Slavic idiom that is somehow 'dirty' or 'polluting'. The polluting idiom is dangerous,⁹⁵ as it causes misunderstandings that threaten the national social fabric.

It was the teacher, a local symbol of the 'high culture' of the nation, who proclaimed that the 'foreign idiom' bore no relation to the villagers' 'very Greek descent'. The invocation of kinship, descent, and reproduction completes a transformation of Greekness from a 'high' culture to which people aspire into a natural, inalienable part of these villagers' lives. Whereas the oath itself culminated with divine references to God, the teacher's homily concluded with very secular cheers dedicated to the pillars of the Greek nation: the king, the state, and the army.

The pronouncements of the Prefect at the end of the ceremony conferred legitimacy upon the proclamation made by the village teacher just moments before: that the once 'polluted' villagers, now emerging from a state of liminality into a newly 'purified' status, were newly affirmed 'Greeks'. The once culturally anomalous Slavophones are thus converted into patriotic heroes of the Greek nation-state. As Victor Turner⁹⁶ put it: ritual is akin to a process of 'sublimation', establishing a proper relationship between involuntary

sentiments and the requirements of the social structure in such a way as to convert that which is socially *obligatory* to something personally *desirable*.

Converging frontiers of Greek and Macedonian nationalisms

State-building, or rather state integration, in northern Greece was a conquest of fields: both real estate and those 'abstract cultural domains where paradigms are formulated, established, and come into conflict'.⁹⁷ The domain of national consciousness has been one such field of contest. In the 'colonization of consciousness',⁹⁸ people are re-made 'by redefining the taken-for-granted surfaces of their everyday worlds'. Yet the normative paradigms that compete in this field not only govern behaviour or action; they also provide an ideational rhetoric with which such action is cloaked in legitimacy. National consciousness is created or established through a process of hegemony, an internalization of the concepts and normative frames of reference of the nation so that they become accepted without question as a 'natural' state of things.

Issues of identity and consciousness are intimately tied to definitions of a social collectivity, regardless of its size. In the case of a national collectivity, the internal characteristics of ethnicity (in other words, a common descent and culture) are collapsed with those of the nation. Their significance fades as definitions of one's self become overwhelmingly oriented to notions of the national collectivity. Descent is no longer traced from a remote ancestor who settled in the area. Instead, a more grand and more mythical descent is claimed from figures more remote and yet more concrete: those of the nation's deities.

The transformation of ethnic identity into national consciousness can occur at various speeds, depending on the particular social and economic conditions of the case at hand. For those individuals tied more closely to the power structures of the newly dominant state society, such transformations occur quite rapidly. For others, they happen more slowly, or not at all. Yet such transformations are always orchestrated through the work of agents.

What really gets extinguished in the process of transforming group identity into national consciousness is the memory of distinctiveness. As definitions of the relevant collectivity change, so, too, do the memories of kinship and descent. Through nation-building and national integration, people acquire a new memory, that of the imagined nation.⁹⁹ As memory becomes nationalized, the whole system of what was important in the past is forgotten. With the Slavo-Macedonians, however, we still see today an active resistance to participation in the Greek national collectivity. Other individuals remain quiet about the whole issue, taking their membership in the Greek nation-state as a 'matter of fact', but still continuing to talk about their group's past distinctiveness and differences.

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The advent of free education in the 1960s precipitated a sharp rise in the number of Slavo-Macedonians in Greek secondary schools and universities. The promise of upward mobility was held out to all, but the discrimination faced by many Slavo-Macedonians in their quest for employment (especially in coveted state-sector jobs or in the civil service) left many sharply alienated. National enculturation efforts continued to have a strong conservative tone, often stressing a love for the monarchy that appealed to many native Greek-speakers in the Florina region. In fact, when Constantine, the former King of Greece, returned to the country from exile for a 'personal' visit in August 1993, his first stop was Florina.

From 1967 to 1974, Greece was under the dictatorship of a military *junta*. This was a period marked by harsh suppression of leftists and discrimination against Slavo-Macedonians, and the borders with Yugoslavia were closed once again. The Church re-emerged as a strong nationalist force, and a new puritanical bishop, Kandiotis, was appointed Metropolitan of Florina, and began to cultivate Greek Orthodox fundamentalism.

The democratization of the Greek polity following the fall of the *junta* brought significant changes to western Greek Macedonia. The borders were reopened, and seasonal migrant labourers from Yugoslavia helped boost the economy of north-western Greece, while Yugoslav tourists on day shopping trips became a common sight in downtown Florina. When PASOK, the Greek socialist party, came to power in the 1980s, Slavo-Macedonians began to find jobs in the civil service sector, contributing to the creation of an elite stratum within their ethnic cohort. Many, however, found their opportunities for advancement still limited, and new signs of protest and resistance began to emerge by the late 1980s. Political activists began to lobby for 'human rights' and the official recognition of a Slavic-speaking ethnic minority in the region. They called for the teaching of the local Slavic vernacular in local schools, an end to discrimination in employment and promotion, and a return of 'political refugees'. The latter consisted of those Slavic speakers who had fled to Yugoslavia after the civil war which ended in 1949 to escape repression and subsequently had been forbidden to return.

The break-up of Yugoslavia, however, once again ushered in a period of mounting tensions and crisis. Border controls have been tightened, much to the dissatisfaction of many Slavo-Macedonians with relatives on the other side of the frontier. Human rights activists in the Florina region have stepped up their organizational and lobbying efforts, while police and security forces have increased their own vigilance. Protesters against government policy in Macedonia have been arrested, tried, and imprisoned, and intellectual critics of Greece's growing nationalistic fervour have faced broad public condemnation. Even Greek diaspora groups with strong patriotic sentiments have entered the fray, taking up the Greek national cause both in Greece and abroad.

I submit that there are three basic groupings of people among those of

Slavo-Macedonian descent in present-day Florina. First, there are those who possess an internalized sense of their Greekness and consistently express the same in their public and private lives. Among such individuals, Greek nation-building has been most successful and the construction of a national consciousness is more or less complete. The superscription of a national identity and its corresponding consciousness has effectively erased memories or sentiments of those ethnic characteristics that once distinguished them from their neighbours. 'We have been Greek since the time of our remote ancestors (*anabam babadam*)', a Florina man told me. 'The only similarity we have with the people across the border lies in language. We know what we are and we don't need any strangers to come and tell us. Macedonian means Greek.'

Second, there are those who possess a continuing inward sense of their distinctiveness and more or less openly declare and promulgate their consciousness as such. Many members of this group have been alienated from the Greek nation-state owing to the harsh assimilationist policies of the past and continuing economic underdevelopment.¹⁰⁰ As one respondent described them, 'these are marginalized people who had lost members of their families during the Civil War and retain the hatred. The word Greek (*Ellinas*) means enemy to them. They don't talk about their beliefs, but about their family histories. That's the kind of dialogue that goes on.'

It has been individuals from among this cohort that have led the high public profile lobbying efforts for 'Macedonian minority rights' in Greece, as well as the petitions brought before the European Court and the Council for Security and Co-operation in Europe.¹⁰¹ It was also those among this group who in January 1993 established the Macedonian Movement for Balkan Prosperity (*Makedoniki Kinisi gia tin Valkaniki Evimeria*). The overt agenda of this organization calls for respect for the freedom and human rights of the indigenous Macedonians in Greece according to the law, the constitution, and the professed ideals of the EEC, the CSCE, and the UN. They do, however, have connections with their brother activists across the border and abroad. They are regarded with great suspicion by both the Greek authorities and by Slavo-Macedonians with Greek national consciousness, both of whom label them as 'Skopians' or 'agents of Skopje'.¹⁰²

Finally, there are those whose internal sense of distinctiveness is expressed more independently, though in conjunction with a consciousness of their conditions of existence within Greek civil society. Their external expressions of identity are oriented towards the Greek state, but not necessarily towards the Greek nation or the notion of Hellenism. Such individuals recognize and accept their differences from the 'Greeks', defending what they regard as a legitimate cultural distinctiveness. Yet while many – quite unjustly – also bear the label of subversive and unpatriotic 'Skopian agents', most in fact also distance themselves from the rhetoric and imagery being promulgated from across the border, as well as from that of local Macedonian Movement

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for Balkan Prosperity activists. Identifying with neither Greek nor Macedonian nationalism, those in this group might best be considered the 'national homeless'.¹⁰³

Such individuals are today caught, as it were, between the converging frontiers of contesting Greek and Macedonian nationalisms. In public arenas, from coffee shop conversations to rituals to interaction with others both inside and outside government administration, they strive to display their membership of the national collectivity. In more intimate, private settings, however, they express slightly different, more nuanced views.

As one of these 'national homeless' put it, the present controversy over Macedonia and the Slavo-Macedonians in Greece:

is the fault of the near-sighted politics of Greece. You go to Australia and nobody harasses you because of your language or your dances. A Macedonian is somebody who speaks the language and has the traditions (*itbi kai ethima*). I respect the Greek constitution, but they don't give me my human rights. I don't want to go 'over there' [i.e. to FYROM]. But we cannot say that there is homogeneity [here]. I am not the same as the Skopians. But don't call me a gypsy because I speak that language. In what century do we live? Do not discriminate against me. They [i.e. the Skopians] are worse. They ask for autonomy. I would become a Turk before I become an autonomist. It is insulting to the name of God to curse the language of another person. Wherever non-homogeneity is recognized, people prosper. Discrimination divides people.

These words, interestingly, come from a man who was once a *Graecoman*. In Greece, growing anxieties over deteriorating political conditions in the Southern Balkans have fostered growing intolerance towards the perceived 'cultural anomalies' of this group of 'national homeless'. Their expressions of distinctiveness are often misconstrued as those of national difference. At the same time, national activists and propagandists on the other side of the border and farther abroad,¹⁰⁴ as well as some of their sympathizers in the Florina area, play up those distinctions for their own purposes. As pawns in an escalating contest, this group has become trapped, so to speak, between a rock and a hard place. Many are proud of their ethnic heritage. But at the same time their collective sentiments continue to be denied legitimacy by Greek and Macedonian nationalists, who persist in ascribing to such individuals views, attitudes, and loyalties that are not their own.

It may be that present-day tensions in Macedonia are, in fact, best interpreted from the perspective of continuing national conflict. Yet there has been little concern or appreciation for how this protracted century-long contest over Macedonia has been perceived by local inhabitants caught up in the struggle, how it has affected them, and how they themselves have reacted to

it. Nation-building begins with a vision, and follows with a programmatic plan. But even the best-laid plans, it is said, may go awry. Such are the dialectics of social life. Until we can move beyond the level of vulgar polemics, we will not be able to understand the present conditions of national consciousness in this region, much less formulate effective responses to the dialectical processes of nation-building.

Acknowledgements

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Notes

(NB: HAM/GDM = Historical Archive of Macedonia/General Directorate of Macedonia)

- 1 As was common throughout the region, the village name was changed to its present Greek form in the late 1920s; see Dimitris Lithoxoou, *Meionotika zitimata kai ethniki syneidisi stin Ellada. Atasthalies tis Ellinikis istoriographias* (Athens, 1991), 63-4.
- 2 For another account of the same ceremony, see *Ellinikos Vorras*, 11 August 1959. Similar oath ceremonies took place in the village of Kria Nera near Kastoria, *Kastoria*, 8 September 1959, and in Kardja near Ptolemaida, *Ellinikos Vorras*, 8 July 1959. See also K. Ioannidis, *About the Assimilation of the Slavophones* (Florina, 1960).
- 3 Such a scenario poses important historical questions concerning the historical 'Greekness' of Macedonia that have yet to be adequately addressed in Greek historiography. One cannot help but wonder what happened to those invaders. Apostolos Vacalopoulos, *The Origins of the Greek Nation: The Byzantine*

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 - 9 Vouri, *ibid.*
 - 10 *Ibid.* 52.
 - 11 *Ibid.* 47.
 - 12 *Ibid.* 49.
 - 13 In 1913, onia was divi and Bulgari 1988. Each aimed at in donia into r cies of the C on transfor Slavic-speak
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Period, 1204-1461 (New Brunswick, NJ, 1970), 2-12 maintained that the Slavs were 'peaceful' peasants or shepherds who were Hellenized completely by the time of the Ottoman 'conquest' in the fourteenth century. Assertions of this sort, however, fail to explain the continuing use of Slavic language, along with other overt characteristics of ethnicity, in Greek Macedonia into the twentieth century. These issues will be addressed in detail below.

- 4 The term 'Macedonian Fighters' refers to the combatants who fought on the Greek side during the bloody 'Macedonian Struggle' that was waged between Greece and Bulgaria for control over this predominantly Slavic-speaking region during the period 1904-8.
- 5 The account in this paragraph follows that in *Ellinikos Vorras*, 11 August 1959.
- 6 According to oral accounts from Florina, the Cultural Association 'Aristotle', named after the ancient philosopher, was founded in 1941 with the purpose of promoting to the outside world the Greekness of the area. This took place during the German occupation when the Bulgarians, allied with the Germans, were again active in the area, trying to win the hearts of the area's Slavic speakers and presenting a 'Bulgarian' picture of the area to the outside world (see below).
- 7 HAM/GDM, File no. 90 (Propagandas: 1924-1925), Letter of the Prefect of Florina to the General Directorate of Macedonia in Thessaloniki, Confidential Protocol no. 6, Florina, 13 January 1925.
- 8 Evangelos Kofos, 'Dilemmas and orientations of Greek policy in Macedonia, 1878-1886', *Balkan Studies*, XXI (1980) 45-55. This 'central zone' of Macedonia was defined as a region with a 'polyglot, mixed Christian population, mostly Slavic-speaking in the countryside and Greek- and Vlach-speaking in the urban and semi-urban centres, with pockets of Albanian-speaking Christians'. The northern zone of Macedonia was defined as one with a clearly Slavic population who readily allied themselves with the Exarchate. The southern zone was regarded as a purely Greek one, Sofia Vouri, *Ekpaidefsi kai ethnikismos sta Valkania. I periptosi tis Voreiodytikis Makedonias 1870-1904* (Athens, 1992).
- 9 Vouri, *ibid.*
- 10 *Ibid.* 52.
- 11 *Ibid.* 47.
- 12 *Ibid.* 49.
- 13 In 1913, following the Second Balkan War, the geographic region of Macedonia was divided between neighbouring Greece (51 per cent), Serbia (34 per cent), and Bulgaria (15 per cent), Konstantinos Vakalopoulos, *Kathimerini* 17 July 1988. Each of these countries subsequently launched assimilationist campaigns aimed at incorporating the population of their newly acquired parts of Macedonia into their respective nation-states. In this chapter, I address only the policies of the Greek government and its regional administrators and their effects on transforming the ethnic identity and national consciousness of the local Slavic-speaking population in what became Greek Macedonia.
- 14 HAM/GDM, File no 90 (see Note 7 above) 4.
- 15 HAM/GDM, File no. 87 (Police Activities - Propagandas: March-December, 1922), Letter from Krionas, Prefect of Florina, to the Leader of the Revolution, Florina, 16 December 1922, 2.
- 16 Steven Harrell, 'Ethnicity, local interests, and the state: Yi communities in south-west China', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, XXXII (1990) 515-48.
- 17 Morton Fried, *The Notion of Tribe* (Menlo Park, CA, 1975).
- 18 There are, of course, additional factors to take into consideration in any well-rounded analysis of identity and consciousness. These include, for example, the

- notions of 'fake' consciousness or identity (i.e. that which is deliberately contrived to achieve some end or purpose) such as that manifest by the 'Bulgarian' village president quoted at the beginning of this section. There is also the issue of 'false' consciousness or identity. By this we refer to an incorrect awareness of one's position in a social collectivity; a condition that develops when one perceives oneself as a member of a collectivity but lacks an awareness or understanding of those traits, conditions, or factors which, objectively speaking, place that individual outside of, or in opposition to, that collectivity. While I recognize such distinctions, limitations of space and the restrictive nature of the present analysis preclude an extended treatment of these issues in this chapter.
- 19 It is important to note that the data on Macedonia collected by Greek state administrative personnel that still survive today in government archives do not refer to the ethnicity of the area's inhabitants *per se*. Rather, the classifications employed and the social divisions made can be more properly termed 'national categories', as they refer to the perceived ideological inclinations towards particular nation-states in the region (such as Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Turkey). Failure to distinguish between these 'national' classifications and the 'ethnic' composition of the population has contributed to a conceptual muddle on the part of many historians dealing with Macedonia, a topic I have dealt with elsewhere, Karakasidou, 'Fields of Wheat, Hills of Shrub: Agrarian development and the dialectics of ethnicity and nationalism in northern Greece, 1870-1990', PhD, Department of Anthropology, Columbia University, 1992 now published as *Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood: Passages to Nationhood in Greek Macedonia 1870-1990* (Chicago 1997), and 'Politicizing Culture: Negating ethnic identity in Greek Macedonia', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, XI (1993) 1-27.
 - 20 HAM/GDM File no. 53 (Population Statistics of the Educational Districts of Vodena, Karatzova, and Gevgeli, 1911, 1913, 1915), Table A: Florina District: Ethnological census of the population's inhabitants.
 - 21 According to the same statistics, of the 400 people living in Krapeshtina (that is, Atrapos) during 1911-15, 225 (56 per cent) had been labelled by the authorities as 'Bulgarians', and 175 (44 per cent) as Greeks. The village itself, however, was entirely 'Bulgarian-speaking'. As of 1935, Krapeshtina had a total of 92 families, of which 66 (72 per cent) were of Slavic 'mórale' (*phronima*), while the remaining 26 (28 per cent) were 'foreign-speakers' of Greek 'sentiment' (see Dimitris Lithoksoou, 'Two unpublished documents about the history and consciousness of the Slavo-Macedonian minority during the pre-Metaxas period', *Ektos Orion*, 6 June 1992, 36-47 (in Greek)). In a letter dated 1934, First Lieutenant Stefanos Grigoriou reported that only one family in the village was Greek, while all the rest were 'Bulgarians'. The sole family with Greek consciousness was that of the local priest, yet even then the Greekness of this family was only ranked at 'Grade C' (*ibid.* : 39).
 - 22 In the three Greek-Romanian villages, the languages spoken were Albanian-Koutsovlach, Koutsovlach-Greek, and Greek-Albanian. If these statistics are aggregated by the population of each of the national ethnological categories employed (Table III), we find that 'Bulgarians' made up the single largest category in the region (42.1 per cent), followed by 'Turks' (29 per cent) and 'Greeks' (27.4 per cent), and finally 'Romanians' (1.5 per cent). In terms of the language categories spoken in these villages (Table IV), the largest cohort is again 'Bulgarian' (49.7 per cent), followed by 'Turkish' (29 per cent).
 - 23 It should be borne in mind that a large number of Hellenized Vlachs from Monastiri (Bitola) settled in Florina immediately after the Second Balkan War in 1913, bringing to the area a large Greek-speaking commercial population.

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- 24 HAM/GDM, File no. 90 (Note 7 above), 1.
- 25 HAM/GDM, File no. 108 (Reports of the Third Army Division), report entitled, 'Study of the ethnological composition of the Division's area and the possible settlement of refugees there,' Salvanos, 9 April 1925.
- 26 It is important to note that Salvanos distinguished several (though slightly confusing and apparently overlapping) sub-categories among those people with Bulgarian leanings. These included: those with Bulgarian sentiments, fanatic Bulgarians, *Voulgarophrones* (Slavophones with fanatic Bulgarian 'sentiments'), [very] fanatic *Voulgarophrones*, fanatics with Bulgarian feelings, extreme *Voulgarophrones*, non-dangerous *Voulgarophrones*, and very dangerous fanatic *Voulgarophrones*.
- 27 HAM/GDM, File no. 108 (see note 25) 2. Salvanos recommended that it was the third category that the government should focus its propaganda efforts on, attempting to win them over by taking advantage of their indifferent 'psychic leanings'. They were uneducated, he maintained, and Greece must be on guard to prevent them from being influenced by the Bulgarian money and propaganda that was reportedly being sent in from Bulgarian nationalists in the United States (for Bulgarian propaganda activities in Greek Macedonia during the 1920s, see below).
- 28 Archives of Athanasios Souliotis-Nikolaïdis, File no. 2/II, Document no. 51, 6 August 1935 (cited in D. Lithoksoou, 'Two unpublished documents').
- 29 The (national) category of 'Romanian' referred by this rubric to those ethnic Vlachs under the influence of Romanian nationalist propaganda. These should be distinguished from those Vlach-speakers who felt Greek in national identity and were therefore listed under the category of 'foreign speakers [with Greek national consciousness]'.
- 30 As early as 1913 there appeared reports in the Archives of the General Directorate of Macedonia that Slavic-speakers from Macedonia were migrating to America through the ports of Thessaloniki and Piraeus. The Greek state regarded this trend with anxiety, particularly because it was leading to a reduction in conscription quotas (HAM/GDM, File no. 70 (Emigration from Macedonia), Telegram from the Prefect of Florina, Agorastos, to the Directorate of Interior Affairs in Thessaloniki, 11 November 1913). Within a year, however, the Greek authorities had begun to take a direct role in overseeing these population movements.
- 31 Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans: Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 1983), 136; S. P. Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities: Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey* (New York, 1932). By 1919, according to W. H. McNeill (*The Metamorphosis of Greece since World War II* [Oxford, 1978]), 46,000 Greeks from Bulgaria had resettled in Greek Macedonia, while 92,000 Slavs had moved from Greek Macedonia to Bulgaria. See also R. Pearson, *National Minorities in Eastern Europe, 1848-1945* (London, 1983).
- 32 By 1925, a major in the Gendarmerie went so far as to recommend, pending government approval, the deportation of those families found guilty of such activities even in preliminary investigations (HAM/GDM, File no. 90, Letter from Major M. Lambrakis, Commander of the Florina Gendarmerie Command, to the High Gendarmerie Command of Macedonia, Confidential, Secret, and Personal, Florina, 20 October 1925, Protocol no. 147/1774 [Confidential Section]).
- 33 HAM/GDM, File No. 79 (Displacements, deportations: February-May 1914). Similarly, Mavrogordatos (George Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic: Social Coalitions and Party Strategies in Greece 1922-1936* (Berkeley, Calif. 1983), 248), and Kargakos (Sarandos Kargakos, *From the Macedonian Issue to the*

- Deadlock of Skopje* (Athens, 1992), 100) also mention that Slavic speakers from villages in Thrace near the Bulgarian border were exiled to Crete in an effort to neutralize Bulgarian propaganda in Thrace. Although there is no available concrete information on conditions in the Florina region specifically, reports from Bulgaria maintain that, in certain communities of the Kilkis Prefecture in Central Greek Macedonia, police gave local inhabitants what amounted to a time limit for making the conversion to Hellenization. Those failing to do so faced deportation within twenty-four hours (HAM/GDM, File no. 79, Letter from Sofia, Preporets, 28 March 1914). At this time, authorities in the Prefecture of Thessaloniki were obliging 'Bulgarian' families to sign declarations that they recognized Hellenism and 'the sovereignty of the true Christian religion of the Patriarchate and that they would all send their children to Greek schools' (ibid.).
- 34 HAM/GDM, File no. 70, Letter from the Prefect of Florina to the Prefecture of Thessaloniki, 25 July 1929, Protocol no. 10915. When applicants attempted to circumvent such barriers by filing their petitions in Thessaloniki rather than in Florina, that prefecture adopted a similar policy, claiming that such petitions were motivated by 'familiar national reasons' (HAM/GDM, File No. 70, Confidential letter from the Prefecture of Thessaloniki to the Prefect of Florina, dated 29 July 1929, Protocol No. 44). It should be pointed out that such actions were in direct opposition to the policies outlined for directorate, judicial, financial, and law enforcement authorities in Macedonia by the General Director of Macedonia, Themistoklis Sofoulis. The latter had urged restraint and impartiality on the part of administrators, who were to extend 'fatherly conduct' to all people 'without regard to religion, race, and language, within the spirit of equal entitlement to citizenship and the protection of the law, which is the basis of Greek liberal government' (HAM/GDM, File no. 78 [Reports on Public Security: February-December 1914], Letter from the General Directorate of Macedonia in Thessaloniki to the Director, Judicial, Financial, and Police Authorities of Macedonia, 17 April 1914, Protocol no. 18817).
- 35 If the property of such applicants was found to have been confiscated by the Greek government, their applications to return were to be denied. If such property were intact, they were still to be denied permission to return for fear that they would bring information and intelligence to the *Voulgarizondes* in Greece (HAM/GDM, File no. 85 [Bulgarian Immigrants: 1925, 1928, 1929], Letter from the Border Sector to the Tenth Army Division of Veroia, Florina, 12 January 1929, Protocol no. 27/5). These findings were to be forwarded to the Ministry of the Exterior (HAM/GDM, File no. 84 [Bulgarian Propaganda - Bands: December 1921-1922], Confidential letter from the General Directorate of Kozani and Florina to the Prefectures of the Area, Kozani, August 1922, Protocol no. 6005). The Greek consular authorities in Bulgaria were ordered to screen applicants for return immigration meticulously. Many, it was reasoned, only pretended to be Greeks who had been displaced and forcibly expatriated by the Bulgarians, while in reality they were pure Bulgarians who had been deported by Greek military authorities. (HAM/GDM, File no. 85, Letter from Sofia to the General Directorate of Macedonia, 23 August 1922, Protocol no. 3636. For examples of the type of information collected on individuals who wished to return to Greece, see HAM/GDM, File no. 85.)
- 36 HAM/GDM, File no. 90 (see note 7), 7-8, Letter from the Prefect of Florina to the General Directorate of Thessaloniki, 13 January 1925.
- 37 Ladas, *Exchange of Minorities*, 106-7; Salvanos, HAM/GDM, File no. 108 (see note 25) 10.
- 38 Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic*, 249.
- 39 I must highlight here a significant distinction in the manner in which the term

'local' (*dopioi*) is applied in western and central Greek Macedonia. In the Florina area, *dopioi* is a term used by Greek speakers (refugee or otherwise) to refer to the Slavic-speaking population. In the area of central Greek Macedonia where I have also conducted field research, *dopioi* is a term used by all villagers (refugee and non-refugee alike) to refer to Greek speakers living in the area prior to, or at the time of, the refugees' arrival.

- 40 This propaganda was reportedly orchestrated by a self-proclaimed 'Bulgarian-Macedonian Committee', said to be centred in Lausanne (Switzerland). The Committee allegedly controlled an operating budget of ten million gold pieces collected from contributors in America and Europe (HAM/GDM, File no. 87, report entitled 'About the General Situation of the Propaganda Movement in Macedonia', from the Ninth Army Division, signed by D. Dialetis [Colonel of the Infantry], 4 October 1922, Staff Office no. 2, [Confidential] Protocol no. 138. Active members of this Committee were referred to in Greece as *Komitadjides*. 'Bulgarians' in America who had emigrated from the Florina villages of Layeni (present-day Triandaphyllia), Neret (Polypotamos), Kotori (Kato Idrousa) and Karapesnitsa (Atrapos) were accused of 'bad-mouthing' Greece and collecting funds for this Macedonian autonomous movement (HAM/GDM, File no. 88 [Propaganda, December 1923-January 1924], Letter from the High Directorate of the Gendarmerie of Macedonia to the General Directorate of Macedonia, 18 April 1924, Protocol no. 68/2).
- 41 HAM/GDM, File no. 84, Report from the Higher Military Directorate of Macedonia to the General Directorate in Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki, 23 May 1922, (Confidential) Protocol no. 1323. Some reports also suggested arms were being distributed. New recruits were alleged to have been taken by *Komitadjides* agents, armed with knives and guns, to secret hide-outs where they were obliged to swear an oath never to betray the movement to Greek authorities at any cost (HAM/GDM, File no. 87, Confidential Letter from the Ministry of Internal Affairs to the Gendarmerie Headquarters, Athens, 9 November 1922, Protocol nos 3338, 3458, 3471). One concrete example of *Komitadjides* activities in the Florina region concerns a cavalry captain of the Bulgarian army, originally from the village of Verbeni (present-day Itia), who controlled a band of forty-five members from his district. Band members would hide inside Serbian territory and occasionally cross the border to propagandize the area's inhabitants for the independence of Macedonia, promising them arms for an uprising. This band was reportedly part of a larger band of 1,000 members who were armed and paid by a Central Committee headquartered in Petritch, Bulgaria. Their weapons caches were hidden in villages of the Florina area while they themselves pretended to be farmers. They restricted their movements to night activities, but had local guides who helped them move through the area in darkness. All *Voulgharophrones* of the area, including those serving in the Greek army, were reportedly dedicated to the Bulgarian committee and followed its ideas. These soldiers, according to one major, should be replaced immediately with troops from Old Greece because they made poor border guards and could not be trusted (HAM/GDM, File no. 90, Report from the Gendarmerie Directorate of Florina to the High Gendarmerie Directorate of Macedonia, Florina [signed by K. Lambrakis, Major Commander], 24 October 1925, Confidential Section, Protocol no. 154/7/14).
- 42 Letters addressed to Slavic-speaking villages in the Edessa area did arrive from Bulgaria, Romania, and especially America. They were intercepted by the Director of the Telegram Office, who forwarded them to other authorities to be opened, read, censored, and resealed. In this manner, the Greek authorities attempted to exercise control over the information entering the region as well

- as to collect intelligence on the membership and activities of the Bulgarian bands. Such letters reportedly called on people to disobey government orders so that anarchy would once again break out in Macedonia. The Bulgaro-Macedonian Committee of America also sent money to the area through fund-raising activities. Greek authorities regarded such strategies as an attempt to poison the minds of the population – regardless of ‘race’ or religion – against the Greek state and eventually evict the latter from Macedonia (HAM/GDM, File no. 87, Letter from the Prefecture Office of Pella to the General Directorate of Macedonia [Confidential], Edessa, 26 November 1922, Protocol no. 5621).
- 43 After the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, Thrace also became a contested area. Under the terms of the Treaty of Bucharest (August 1913) following the Second Balkan War, it was given to Bulgaria (Jelavich, *History of the Balkans*, 99). The Treaty of Neuilly (November 1919), which concluded the First World War for Bulgaria, gave Thrace to Greece, stipulating first a brief interim period of joint Allied administration (ibid., 125). Greek administration finally took full control in 1920. The Treaty of Lausanne (July 1923), which as noted above set the terms of a compulsory repatriation of nationals between Greece and Turkey, stipulated that roughly 124,000 Muslims would remain *in situ* in Thrace (Tozun Bahcheli, ‘The Muslim Turkish Community in Greece: Problems and prospects’, *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, VIII (1987) 109–20). At that time, more than two-thirds (67 per cent) of the region’s population were Muslims. By including the Thracian Question in its political platform, the Committee sought to work for its independence and eventual incorporation into Turkey. According to official Greek sources, the Bulgarian Committee to Assist the Slavs of Macedonia was established in 1918 and staffed by seven of the best-known *Komitadjides* leaders. It consisted of two sub-groups, one focusing its activities on Macedonia, the other on Thrace. The Macedonian group published two newspapers, *Kambana* and *Preporets*. Their principal goal was to persuade the European powers that Macedonia should be made an autonomous region under British protection, since it was neither Greek nor Turkish. Their proclamations were written in Bulgarian, Turkish, Ladino (the language spoken by the Jewish population of the region), and Greek (see HAM/GDM, File no. 82 [‘Greek Military Mission to Bulgaria: November 1918–August 1919’], Sofia, 23 December 1918).
- 44 HAM/GDG, File no. 87, Dialetis report (see note 41). In 1922, the then Minister of the Interior, Krokidas (who later became Prime Minister), believed that the propaganda coming out of Bulgaria no longer aimed at ‘civilizing’ the Slavophones of Macedonia by proselytizing them through education and religion. The Bulgarians, he concluded, had come to see that their efforts to this end had made no progress in ‘reinforcing the sentiments’ of the *omophyloi* [those of the ‘same race’] in Macedonia and Thrace, [and therefore had] changed plans and established a revolutionary organization, directed by a Central Committee in Sofia, that sought autonomy for Macedonia and ultimately aimed at annexing it through violence (HAM/GDM, File no. 87, Letter from the Ministry of the Interior to the General Directorates and the High Gendarmerie Commands in Macedonia and Thrace, Confidential, Athens, 17 October 1922). Krokidas went on to add that the Bulgarians had established a network of agents in Macedonia through which they sent in bands to recruit followers from among those Slavophones who were displeased with the Greek administration.
- 45 HAM/GDM, File No. 87, Proclamation of the Serres Congress of the Macedonian Committee, March 1922.
- 46 Ibid. For more on the activators of IMRO at the turn of the century, see Evangelos Kofos, *Nationalism and Communism in Macedonia* (Thessaloniki, 1964)

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and *The Macedonian Struggle in Yugoslav Historiography* (in Greek) (Thessaloniki, 1987); Duncan M. Perry, *The Politics of Terror: The Macedonian Liberation Movements, 1893-1903* (Durham NC, 1988); and S. Pribichevich, *Macedonia: Its People and History* (Philadelphia, 1982).

- 47 HAM/GDM, File no. 87, Krionas letter (see note 15).
- 48 HAM/GDM, File no. 90, Lambrakis letter (see note 32). In order to defeat the *Komitadjides*, several extreme measures were adopted, including offering up to 5,000 drachmas for the head of a committee member. It was believed that such methods would enable the Greek authorities to take advantage of the 'avaricious' people living in the Serbian and Albanian frontier areas (HAM/GDM, File no. 90, Strictly Confidential letter from D. Stavrianopoulos of the Third Army Staff [Second Office] to the Second Army Division, Second Office in Larisa, entitled 'About Komitadji Movements in the Area of Florina', Veroia, 5 December 1925, Protocol no. 7523/1974). In addition, a number of agents and trusted civilians were appointed in certain villages to follow Serbian and Bulgarian propaganda and to convey that information to the Greek authorities (HAM/GDM, File no. 90, Lambrakis letter [see note 32]).
- 49 A Bulgarian cavalry captain (this was the same officer mentioned earlier in note 41 as controlling a band of Bulgarian propaganda agents in the Florina area) and five of his men infiltrated the village of Koutsoveni (present-day Perasma) and forcibly took over the house of a local inhabitant. During their stay, they told a local villager (apparently a police informer) that they were there to create agitation in Greece, to burn houses and to plant bombs. Their goal, it was said, was to present Greece to the outside world as a country ruled by anarchy and oppression. In this way they hoped to prompt the intervention of major European powers and get them to redraw international borders and to make the region part of Bulgaria (HAM/GDM, File no. 90 Letter from the Prefecture of Florina to the General Directorate of Macedonia, Confidential, Protocol no. 266, Florina, 30 November 1925). The same source maintains that this band was planning to conduct similar operations in Serbian Macedonia in an attempt to form a broad-based separatist movement involving people in Albania, Greece, and Serbia. As the Prefect of Florina put it, 'because the Slavophone population of any district is completely deprived of civilization there is nothing to prevent them from believing the exaggerated promises of the *Komitadjides* [for] autonomy of Macedonia' (HAM/GDM, File no. 90, Report co-signed by the Prefect of Florina and the investigator who eventually presented the bombing case to the Military Court of Kozani, Confidential Protocol no. 262, Florina, 25 November 1925, 2).
- 50 *Ibid.*, 4. The Prefect also maintained that this sentence had a positive effect on the villagers of the area, for they believed that ten of those arrested were certain to be executed. He believed that a good way to purge local villages of the most fanatical Bulgarians was to have them sign a declaration agreeing to emigrate voluntarily to Bulgaria (*ibid.*, 7).
- 51 Serbia also supported the publication of a newspaper in Bitola (Monastir) by 'fanatic Bulgaro-Macedonians' called *Yiousna Svesda* (Southern State), which was distributed throughout Macedonia. The Deputy General Director of Thessaloniki, B. Makris, suggested that the Prefects of Pella and Florina confiscate these newspapers at the post offices so that they would not reach what he called 'indigenous Slavophones' in those areas (HAM/GDM, File no. 73 [Greek Embassies - Consuls: 1924-1929], Letter from the General Directorate of Thessaloniki/Directorate of Internal Affairs to the Offices of the Telegraph and Post and to the Prefects of Pella and Florina, Strictly Confidential, Thessaloniki, 22 June 1925, Protocol no. 742).

- 52 HAM/GDM, File no. 85, Personal and Confidential Letter from the Third Army Corps Staff (Second Office) to the Ministry of the Military (General Army Staff), Thessaloniki, 5 May 1925, Protocol no. 660/637.
- 53 Metaxas Archive, File no. 36, 'The attempt to Hellenize Western Macedonia and the results achieved during the last two years (Confidential)', Yiorgos Papadopoulos, Elementary School Teacher, 22 July 1938, 7.
- 54 In 1922 conditions in the Greek Macedonian countryside were chaotic and anomalous. Refugees from Asia Minor and elsewhere in Turkey began to settle in the region but had no secure means of making a living. Those Turks who still remained in the area were subjected to attacks and raids, and their homes and properties were looted and plundered. Moreover, 'Turco-Albanian bands' were reportedly active in many parts of the region, one such bandit group even engaging the Greek army in combat east of Aghios Germanos in the Prespes area on 1st October 1925 (HAM/GDM, File no. 90, Stavrianopoulos letter; see note 48). More bandits roamed the Veroia district, while other criminal elements were active in the Edessa area. Part of this general disorder was attributed to the fact that most police stations were manned by navy scouts who had little knowledge or experience in dealing with such problems. Any Slavophone policemen whose superiors deemed them 'reactionary' and unfit for local service were transferred to other parts of the country (HAM/GDM, File no. 87, Confidential letter from the Ministry of the Interior to the Gendarmerie Command; see Note 44). In general, the situation was so extreme that the best men from among the police had to be assigned to the region because the Florina Prefecture was considered to be inhabited by 'other-speakers' who were vulnerable to anti-Greek activities (HAM/GDM, File no. 87, Krionas letter; see note 15).

Conscription policies were imposed upon the local population of Macedonia immediately after the region was incorporated into the Greek state. Local conscripts were assigned to other, clearly 'Greek', districts of the country, but found themselves the objects of derision and humiliating taunts from Greek-speaking soldiers. For this reason, the then Minister of the Exterior, L. Hatzikyriakos, urged in 1925 that the military command post Slavophone conscripts to their home districts. In this manner he hoped to foster a *philotimo* and love of the Greek motherland among the indigenous population of the region. For security purposes, however, he also advised that Greek-speaking soldiers should also be assigned to serve alongside their 'foreign-speaking' counterparts (HAM/GDM, File no. 90, Letter from Minister of the Exterior L. Hatzikyriakou to the General Army Staff, Athens, 31 October 1925).

The proposal was deemed inappropriate by the Sub-Directorate of Edessa, however, which believed that only by sending 'young *Makedones*' soldiers to other parts of Greece would they create a sense of patriotism and would a love for the country be instilled in their hearts (HAM/GDM, File no. 87, Krionas letter; see note 15). In addition, such local conscripts were not considered reliable guards against Bulgarian propaganda and terrorist attacks. As he put it: 'it is not possible for Greek civilization to become perceptible in this district of old *Rayah* ideology and absolute backwardness' (ibid.). If a conscript were to be posted to his local area, he would be unable to forget his memories of the past and his antagonism towards Greece. He concluded that only by assigning Slavophone conscripts to other parts of the country would the assimilation of the area's population be facilitated.

The Greek military presence in the Florina region was also increased during the 1920s, and it was suggested that Florina be made the base of an infantry regiment (ibid.). At the same time, the Gendarmerie were reinforced with 1,000 additional men in 1925. The High Gendarmerie Command of Macedonia still

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considered the force insufficient, and petitioned their superiors in Athens to dispatch to the area the best officers in the Gendarmerie and to provide them with monthly allowances. They also requested that cars and telephones be provided for the most important police stations (HAM/GDM, File no. 90, Letter from the High Gendarmerie Command of Macedonia to Gendarmerie Headquarters, Section B in Athens, Confidential-Personal, Thessaloniki, 18 March 1925, Protocol no. 180/40, signed by Colonel High Director S. Karambelas). It is interesting to note here that military and Gendarmerie personnel were making policy suggestions – and eventually shaping government policy – towards the Slavophones of the area. For example, the High Director of the Macedonian Gendarmerie Command, Colonel S. Karambelas, suggested that vacant teaching positions in the region should be filled with teachers and priests from Old Greece, if possible. He also pressed for the immediate replacement of those teachers who he felt were unfit to serve the purposes of national education. He urged that crop watchers be replaced with men from Epirus or Old Greece, because their mission was vital to national security concerns (ibid.). Major Lambrakis also suggested that the crop-watching be purged of all people whose [ethnic] descent rendered them suspect (HAM/GDM, File no. 90, Lambrakis letter; see note 32). Another example comes from Major D. Stavrianopoulos, who urged that 'outsiders' (i.e. those from other parts of Greece) should not be brought into the ranks of the Gendarmerie for fear the local population would begin to complain about pressures from a harsh administration. He also requested that teachers and priests in the border region be given additional financial support and that *Voulgharizondes* village presidents and village council members should be removed from office and replaced with others more sympathetic to Greek sovereignty (HAM/GDM, File no. 90, Stavrianopoulos letter; see note 48).

- 55 Local respondents maintained that in many cases, the fine amounted to 'half an ox', obliging local farmers to sell their draft animals (i.e. their means of production) in order to pay the fine.
- 56 Metaxas Archive, File no. 36 (see note 53), 6.
- 57 Ibid., 4.
- 58 John Iatrides ('As others see it: American perceptions of Greece's "Macedonia problem"'). Paper presented at the Modern Greek Studies Symposium, Berkeley, Calif., 1993) has made the same observation on the basis of US State Department reports.
- 59 'The Cold War and the appropriation of memory: Greece after Liberation', *East European Politics and Societies*, IX (1995) 272–94.
- 60 Under the guidance of Yugoslav Communists, the Slavo-Macedonians of Greece were organized into their own brigades (NOF) within the Democratic Army (see Anastasia Karakasidou, 'Fellow Traveller, Separate Roads: The KKE and the Macedonian Question', *East European Quarterly* (1993) 453–77; Evangelos Kofos, *The Impact of the Macedonian Question on Civil Conflict in Greece (1943–1949)*, Occasional Paper no. 3 (Hellenic Foundation for Defense and Foreign Policy, Athens, 1989)). For more on the Greek Communist Party and its position on the Macedonian Controversy, see Alekos Papapanagiotou, *To Makedoniko zitima kai to Valkaniko kommounistiko kinima 1918–1939* (Athens, 1992).
- 61 Kharalambos Sotiropoulos, *The Anti-National Policy of the KKE in Macedonia*, (Athens, 1964). Interviews conducted in the Florina area suggest that, contrary to public perceptions, many Slavo-Macedonian parents sent their children voluntarily albeit reluctantly with the retreating communists, fearing reprisals on the part of victorious Greek nationalists for their support of the communists during the Civil War.

- 62 US intelligence reports also draw the same conclusions; see Iatrides, 'As others see it', 6.
- 63 One example of these efforts lies in the visit King Paul and Queen Frederika made to the area in 1962 (cf. Thanasis Germanidis, Zoe Kotta, and Litsa Markou, 'Florina Chronology: 1962-1992', *Etairia: Periodical Publication of the Society of Letters and Arts*, XI (1992) 63-77 (in Greek), at p. 63. The Queen baptised many village girls in the area, giving them her own name. She also contributed to their future dowries by depositing money in bank accounts opened in their names.
- 64 For some examples of Macedonian national historiography see *A History of the Macedonian People*, produced by the Institute of National History in Skopje in 1979 and Dragan Taskorski, *Radjanjeto na Makedonskata Nacija* (Skopje, 1967).
- 65 *Graecomani* (plural: *Graecomani*) was a term used by Slavic speakers in Greek Macedonia to refer to those of their number who came to identify themselves as 'Greeks'. The term means one who has a mania for Greece. For present purposes, it is important to note that those Slavic speakers who identified with Greece as *Graecomani* did not necessarily have an unchanging national consciousness.
- 66 Liah Greenfeld, 'The Formation of the Russian National Identity: The Role of Status Insecurity and *Ressentiment*', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, XXXII (1990) 549-91.
- 67 Evidence of this may be found in the establishment of the 'Association for the Dissemination of Greek Letters' in Athens in 1869, which focused its activities on the central and the more problematic zone of Macedonia. Its members were well aware of the weak representation of 'real' Greeks among the population of Macedonia. The 'Council for the Reinforcement of Greek Religion and Education', established in 1887, replaced the 'Association for the Dissemination of Greek Letters', and its personnel were appointed by the Ministry of the Exterior (Vouri, *Education and Nationalism*, 87). The Council dubbed educators working in the region 'national enlighteners', particularly those working in high schools, while high school superintendents were referred to as the 'right revolutionaries' (*ibid.*, 164-5).
- 68 *Ibid.*, 52.
- 69 As Vouri (*Education and Nationalism*, 65) maintained, Vlachophones and Slavophones of the Monastir (Bitola) and Florina (Lerin) areas did learn Greek, but only for purposes of providing a means for their livelihood. Moreover, most were indifferent to the prospect of Greek national education. Thus in the 1870s the efforts of Greek nation-state educators in Macedonia focused on the more developed urban centres of Ottoman Macedonia, where Greek and Greek-speaking elements were more numerous. By the 1880s, however, there came a realization that Greek schools should be spread throughout the countryside in order to counter the rapidly growing influence of Bulgarian nationalists, who were recruiting many local residents to the cause of the Schismatics. At that time, an important new factor had entered into play as the Greek state began financing schools and Greek education took on an overtly nationalist character in competition with Bulgarian propaganda (*ibid.*, 71-7). The same policies continued through the 1890s, but by the turn of the century it had become apparent that Greek education was achieving successes only in large urban areas and the money earmarked for Slavophone communities was largely being wasted as such locales developed 'neither Greek letters nor Greek sentiment' (*ibid.*, 94).
- 70 *Ibid.*, 71.
- 71 Vouri has also emphasized the ramifications of the decision to teach the

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katharevousa (or 'purifying' Greek) in Greek schools (ibid., 103). After the turn of the century evidence began to mount that this language was incapable of facilitating the assimilation of foreign-speaking students or of making them more ideologically inclined towards the Greek nation-state. Instead, a communicative gap was created (ibid., 124). While recommendations had been made to replace the teaching of classicizing Greek with the vernacular (*dimotiki*), they were not acted upon. The books used in Greek schools were not rewritten to take into consideration the needs or circumstances of the local student population who were not native Greek speakers. (As I will discuss below, the same recommendations were made by teachers and administrators in Greek Macedonia during the 1920s.) In contrast to this purist ideology that guided Greek educational efforts in Macedonia, Bulgarian agents were providing more focused, simple instruction in the local vernacular in which students were indoctrinated politically and learned in the classroom that being Macedonian meant being a Bulgarian. Throughout the two decades prior to incorporation, Greek teachers were predominantly of local origin (that is, they were natives of the area). Specifically designed for the training of teachers, the *Didaskaleion* (Educational Academy) opened in Thessaloniki in 1876. Financed by the Greek community of Thessaloniki and by the Athens-based 'Association', the Academy enrolled high school graduates from communities throughout Macedonia. Its graduates took up teaching positions in Greek schools in the Macedonian countryside. Later, between 1883 and 1900, emphasis was placed on the establishment of higher educational institutions such as the *Astiki Skholi* (high school) and *Parthenagogeio* (girls' high school) in Florina. As early as the 1890s, for example the Monastir (Bitola) High School was obliged to dismiss a large number of teachers who had a poor level of knowledge (ibid., 128). By the 1920s, the issue of the place of origin of appointed teachers began to loom large. On the ideological level it was deemed important for such instructors to be natives of the area in order to foster the development of local agents of national activity throughout the countryside. Yet this led to major problems of a practical nature. Greek was not the native language of such teachers, and many in fact taught it poorly. Many children lost interest in schooling and attendance rosters dropped.

- 72 HAM/GDM, File no. 53, Table B' (Florina District: Census of Greek Schools).
- 73 HAM/GDM, File no. 53 (see note 72), Tables A' and B' list three more villages without schools but with a resident Greek population.
- 74 A total of thirty-four schools operated in the district, including sixteen kindergartens, eleven elementary, and seven high schools (see Table X). By February 1930, some twenty-seven new schools had been established in the educational district of Florina. In the entire region of Greek Macedonia, 321 new schools had been completed by that time, while another 189 were still under construction (HAM/GDM, File no. 61 'Educational District of Thessaloniki, 1929-1930-1931'), Tables of Completed and Under-Construction School Buildings in Macedonia and Thrace, February 1930).
- 75 In addition, two girls' high schools (*parthenagogeia*) were operating, one in Florina and one in a Vlach village.
- 76 HAM/GDM, File no. 90, Letter from the Prefect of Florina, 13 January 1925 (see note 7).
- 77 Ibid.
- 78 Ibid.
- 79 For example, of the twenty-one male elementary school teachers in the District of Florina, fourteen (66.7 per cent) were high school graduates, while twenty-one of twenty-six female elementary school teachers (or 80.8 per cent) were high school graduates (HAM/GDM, File no. 53, Table D' [Qualifications and

Salaries of Teaching Personnel]). As Major K. Lambrakis put it in his reports (HAM/GDM, File no. 90, Letter from Lambrakis) the teachers had no general knowledge, could not fulfil their education duties, and had no conception of their national mission. They often got involved in township affairs and were not preachers of 'national grandeur'. According to him, all the teachers of the prefecture should be replaced so that new ones could be hired from the ranks of excellent instructors with a developed Greek consciousness. Such teachers would have as their sole mission national progress and the 'quickest absorption of the Slavs by infusing in them the Greek idea by any kind of effort and means [so that they would] acquire the complete confidence of this agricultural population through proper and well understood propaganda in order to achieve their attraction to the Greek idea' (ibid., 4).

In 1925, the Inspector of Elementary Schools in the Educational District of Florina filed a report with the General Directorate of Macedonia in Thessaloniki (HAM/GDM, File no. 60 [Public Education in Macedonia: 1922, 1924, 1925], 'The Condition of the Elementary Schools and Kindergartens of the Educational District of Florina', in response to GDM command no. 20663 of 11 March 1924). The entire district, he maintained, was composed of foreign speakers: most were speaking the Slavo-Macedonian dialect (*Slavomakedoniki*). Only twenty-three (18.5 per cent) of the district's 124 primary school teachers and two (4.2 per cent) of the forty-eight kindergarten teachers had degrees in education, the rest being graduates of high schools or girls' high schools (*parthenogogeia*).

- 80 While the Inspector noted that enrolments were up (in 1924, 6,910 students were enrolled in area schools and the following year the number had risen to 7,072, with the number of male students roughly double that of females), few students attended school regularly (HAM/GDM, File no. 60: see note 79). Moreover, there were students in the third and fourth grades who were already twelve to fourteen years of age and who often went on to graduate without gaining any real education. He also complained that school buildings were in terrible condition, that the books used were inappropriate because they emphasized rote memorization, and that there were no supporting materials available to teachers. Little, he complained, had been accomplished in the realm of 'language education'. The 'Slavophone dialect' had not receded, and students continued to converse in their 'mother tongue' while playing at home and in the marketplace. Even teachers, he maintained, speak the 'indigenous dialect', while mothers and young children do not speak Greek at all. Even the settlement of Pontic Greek refugees in the area had apparently done little to promote the use of Greek. The inspector complained that the Pontics communicated with the *endopioi* in Turkish rather than in Greek (ibid.). Those students who did graduate remained in a foreign-speaking environment where 'the weakest cannot assimilate the powerful' (ibid., 8). In short, the inhabitants of the region had a 'racial hatred' towards the Greeks that prompted many to avoid Greek schools and Greek teachers, trying in every conceivable way to rid themselves of them (ibid.).

The Inspector called for the appointment of ten good teachers from 'Old Greece' (the original core of the Greek kingdom) in each school district. He advised that they should be provided with double salaries in order to foster the construction of national character. Only in this manner would local children be provided with a nationally oriented education. He admonished the government that it would be to Greece's benefit to make such sacrifices until local teachers began graduating from the educational academies in the next decade. Similar reports were also filed by education inspectors in the district of Veroia, Edessa, and Yianitsa (included in HAM/GDM, File no. 60), noting that the influence of

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 81 In some cases, into their comu for all but a few their postings, the Inspector i and even those from the Inspe of Thessalonik
 82 Metaxas Archi
 83 It was believed substantive res (between the a ing, writing, a women were a
 84 Cf. for exampl *Science*, LXXI *Reality: Select*
 85 Charles Jelavi *National State*
 86 Cf. Victor A. Balkan Perspe 1980s, eds. V 287-305.
 87 The term *Arv* Greek lands in als are distingi
 88 Stanley J. Tam XVI (1989) 3:
 89 See Erving G 1959).
 90 See Michael I *Cretan Mount*
 91 Goffman, *The*
 92 Victor Turner, *ety* (Ithaca, N
 93 *Purity and D* (London, 196
 94 Turner, *Dram*
 95 Cf. Douglas, I
 96 *Dramas, Fiel*
 97 Ibid. 17.
 98 Jean Comarod *ity, Colonialis*
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Greek schools in 'foreign-speaking' areas had been minimal, that people continued to speak 'Bulgarian', and that they were generally indifferent to the Greek schools.

- 81 In some cases, they were so opposed to the presence of Greek teachers moving into their communities that they refused to assist in finding them housing. Life for all but a few local teachers was unbearable, and some were obliged to desert their postings, thus forcing the schools to close. Only in some villages, claimed the Inspector in Edessa, were there people who were interested in education, and even those one could count on one hand (HAM/GDM, File no. 60, Letter from the Inspector of the Edessa Education District to the General Directorate of Thessaloniki, Protocol no. 1021, Edessa, 28 December 1924).
- 82 Metaxas Archives, File no. 36, Papadopoulos letter (see note 53).
- 83 It was believed that night schools offered the most effective means of achieving substantive results in Hellenization. Such forums were attended by both women (between the ages of fifteen and forty) and men (up to age fifty), *ibid.*, 5. Reading, writing, and history were the primary subjects of these schools, while women were also taught home economics (*ibid.*).
- 84 Cf. for example Edward Sapir, 'Conceptual Categories in Primitive Languages', *Science*, LXXIV (1931) 578-84; Benjamin Lee Whorf, *Language, Thought and Reality: Selected Writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956).
- 85 Charles Jelavich and Barbara Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920* (Seattle, 1993), 134.
- 86 Cf. Victor A. Friedman, 'Linguistics, Nationalism, and Literary Languages: A Balkan Perspective', in *The Real-World Linguist: Linguistic Applications in the 1980s*, eds. Victor Raskin and Peter C. Bjarkman (Norwood, NJ, 1986), 287-305.
- 87 The term *Arvanites* refers to Christian Albanian speakers who migrated to Greek lands in the fourteenth century and now reside in Greece. Such individuals are distinguished from Albanians proper, the nationals of that state.
- 88 Stanley J. Tambiah, 'Ethnic Conflict in the World Today', *American Ethnologist*, XVI (1989) 335-49.
- 89 See Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York, 1959).
- 90 See Michael Herzfeld, *The Poetics of Manhood: Contest and Identity in a Cretan Mountain Village* (Princeton, 1985).
- 91 Goffman, *The Presentation of Self*.
- 92 Victor Turner, *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Ithaca, NY, 1974).
- 93 *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, (London, 1966).
- 94 Turner, *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors*, 56.
- 95 Cf. Douglas, *Purity and Danger*.
- 96 *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors*, 56.
- 97 *Ibid.* 17.
- 98 Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa*, I (Chicago, 1991) 313.
- 99 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1983).
- 100 The Prefecture of Florina remains one of the most underdeveloped areas in Greece. According to Boeschoten (Riki van Boeschoten, 'Minority Languages in Northern Greece, Report to the European Commission' [manuscript]), there is hardly any industry in the prefecture, and 53 per cent of the active population is employed in what the European Union refers to as the 'primary sector'

- (agriculture and husbandry), 20 per cent in the 'secondary sector', and 27 per cent in the so-called 'tertiary sector'. Unemployment rates are high, peaking during winter months at up to 30 per cent.
- 101 Karakasidou, 'Politicizing Culture' (see note 19).
- 102 Such labels are commonly used by present-day authorities and citizens in Greece to refer to the people of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM).
- 103 I owe the original notion of this group to a very special friend in Florina, who must remain anonymous.
- 104 Loring M. Danforth, 'National Conflict in a Transnational World: Greeks and Macedonians at the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe', Paper presented at the 92nd Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington, D.C., 17-21 November 1993, and *The Macedonian Conflict: Ethnic Nationalism in a Transnational World* (Princeton, 1995).