

May  
2012

# *forumZFD*

“Cultural Historical and spiritual heritage of macedonia – challenges, opportunities and prospects”

Presented papers and conference proceedings

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8 May 2012, Skopje



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**Event:**

Scientific conference entitled "Cultural, Historical and Spiritual Heritage of Macedonia -- Challenges, Possibilities and Prospects"

**Venue:** Cifte Amam, Skopje

**Time:** 8 May 2012, 11:00-14:00h

**Organizers:**

National History Institute,

Institute for Cultural and Spiritual Heritage of Albanians,

Association of Historians in Macedonia,

Association of Albanian Historians, and

Association of History Teachers in Macedonia

**Supported by:**

German organization Forum Civil Peace Service and local NGO Training Center for Management of Conflicts

**Speakers:**

Prof ScD Todor Cepreganov,

Mr Skender Asani,

Prof ScD Natasha Kortlar,

Prof ScD Sefer Tahiri,

Prof ScD Maja Angelovska Panova,

Prof ScD Izaim Murtezani and

Prof ScD Mire Mladenovski

**Moderator:** Mr Albert Hani

**Project coordinators:** Mr Ardian Limani and Ms Maja Angelova Panova

presentations are translated in to English from Albanian and Macedonian by: Elmedina Shafi And Natasha Ilievska

## II. Summary

On 8 May 2012, from 11:00h to 14:00h, a historic event was held in Cifte Amam in Skopje, which put at the same table historians and the institutions that study the past. Because we believe that this event deserves special attention, we have decided to send you a brief resume of the developments at the scientific conference held yesterday and entitled "**Cultural, Historical and Spiritual Heritage of Macedonia -- Challenges, Possibilities and Prospects**".

This event was organized on the initiative of the National History Institute, the Association of Historians in Macedonia, the Association of Albanian Historians and the Association of History Teachers in Macedonia and with the support of the German organization Forum Civil Peace Service and the local NGO Training Center for Management of Conflicts.

The most eminent professionals who are dealing with studying the past and who have a great influence on the future prepared speeches, whereby they wished to directly convey their messages of optimism about the creation of interethnic and interreligious relations, as well as about the need for enhanced dialogue between historians, which has lately been in the limelight in social and political terms.

The conference began with the speech of the National History Institute manager, respected Prof ScD Todor Cepreganov, and it was entitled "**In Between Multiculturalism and Multiconfessionalism**". He, as an author of numerous textbooks and history works, gave an interesting review of the use of history in our reality, as well as its close ties with the development of intercultural and interreligious relations. At the end of his speech, Mr Cepreganov said: "I wish to believe that all of us who have gathered here today are here for the purpose of taking part in a dialogue between religions and cultures, the sole reply of which is that, as long as we talk, we can find a solution to all the discrepancies, as well as that multiculturalism and multiconfessionalism are a reality in every society, so we need to show mutual respect and tolerance for these. Regardless of how harsh our reality is, there is no other alternative here and now but the readiness to talk."

The second speech was entitled "**Historical Past -- Bridge for the Future**" and it was of Albanian Historians' Association Chairman Skender Asani. He is the author of many scientific works and history books that deal with the past of the Balkan nations and who is a prominent NGO activist who has contributed greatly to the building of peace in the state. His speech focused on the need of dialogue for the past between intellectuals and historians, freeing the historians from the burden of politics, as well as the need to focus more energy on a more effective research of the past things that the communities that live in this region have in common. Mr Asani said in his speech: "For the purpose of reflecting the multiethnic and multiconfessional character of Macedonia, it is crucial to strengthen the intellectuals' communication, because they should carry and nourish the values of tolerance, which have actually existed always and in all historical periods."

The third speech was of Association of Historians of Macedonia Director Natasha Kotlar and it was entitled "**Scientific and Social Function of History**". As a person acquainted with the Balkan history, Ms Kotlar decided to choose for her speech a title that correspond to our reality and the difficulties in interpreting history as an interdisciplinary science that has a role and great impact on the society. Regarding the combination of sentiments related to personal identity and those related to science, Ms Kotlar stressed: "A historian is an individual human beings. Like all other individuals, he/she, too, is a social phenomenon and both a product and a conscious or unconscious spokesman of the society to which he/she belongs and it is precisely with this second trait that he/she approaches historical facts."

The fourth speech focused on how significant historical events could cause major interethnic intolerance merely because of wrong media coverage. This speech was given by Prof ScD Sefer Tahiti, who is a famous journalist, columnist, communication expert and an associate of the Institute for the National, Cultural and Spiritual Heritage of the Albanians. His speech was entitled "**Media Coverage of Cultural and Historical Heritage**". In his speech, Mr Seferi presented the two sides of the media coverage, as well as the different perception of the same things in dependence of ethnic affiliation. He said: "The social dynamics and the complicated situation, which is

accompanied with great tension, have influenced the media to create two parallel realities of the past and the cultural heritage..."

The fifth speech was made by Ms Maja Angelova Panova and was entitled: "**Religions and Spiritual Heritage as a Unification and Tolerance Factor**". As a representative of the National History Institute and a well-known activist for promotion of peace and tolerance through interethnic dialogue, she underlined the need to share the knowledge that "... basically, regardless of the provenance of religions, pacifism and ethnic values, such as equality, love, respect, and tolerance among people prevail in all religions..."

The penultimate, sixth speech was that of Folklore Institute Professor Izaim Murtezani, entitled "**Folklore and Identity**". This speech talked about the joint traditions, customs and values among the communities living in Macedonia. He said: "...we need to affirm the critical perception of culture. Instead of constructing the national myth, we need to deconstruct it or at least have a critical attitude toward it."

Last, but not least, was the interesting and dynamic presentation of Professor Mire Mladenovski, who, as chairman of the Association of History Teachers in Macedonia and a person who appreciates the necessity of history for the development of intercultural relations, is working hard and is promoting the common points of the communities that live in Macedonia. His speech was entitled "**Cultural-Historical Heritage in Lectures**" and it focused on the difficulties in teaching history in schools. Mr Mladenovski emphasized the need for a better understanding in his speech and said "...the key role of every history teacher who talks about cultural heritage in his lectures is to create a positive view on cultural heritage among his students, understanding of its material and primarily spiritual values and thus adopting a just attitude toward every person."

The conference ended with a very interesting discussion among the attendees and the speakers, who once again confirmed and publicly expressed the need for optimism that many positive things that are common for us all could be found in the past and that these could contribute to improving the interethnic and religious relations of the communities living in Macedonia.

At the conference, which was moderated by Forum Civil Peace Service Deputy Manager Albert Hani, gratitude was extended to the organizers of this event, coordinators Ardian Limani and Maja Angelovska Panova, the attendees, as well as to the Cifte Amam manager, who gave the gallery area to our disposal for this event. At the end, there was a small and modest cocktail for all those present.

The organizers of this event plan to issue all the speeches in the report on this event, which will be distributed soon.

Media coverage:

- [http://www.mtv.com.mk/al/al/lajme/magedoni/10630/video\\_sinkronizimi\\_dhe\\_bashkepunimi\\_mes\\_institucioneve\\_je\\_merren\\_me\\_histori,\\_imperativ\\_i\\_kohes.aspx#.T6lOlfTsqCs.facebook](http://www.mtv.com.mk/al/al/lajme/magedoni/10630/video_sinkronizimi_dhe_bashkepunimi_mes_institucioneve_je_merren_me_histori,_imperativ_i_kohes.aspx#.T6lOlfTsqCs.facebook)
- <http://alsat-m.tv/lajme/vendi/130968.html>
- <http://www.vesti.alfa.mk/default.aspx?mld=36&egld=6&eventId=49659>

### III. Presentation papers

#### *Presentation paper Nr. 1*

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#### **"Between Multiculturalism and Multiconfessionalism"**

**Todor Chepreganov, PhD**

"Everything valuable in religions must not be denied,  
but everything invaluable should not be accepted  
unreservedly."

The claim that multiculturalism is a glorification of cultural pluralism, because every society consists of different ethnic and cultural groups, is a par excellence modern-day phenomenon. Still, this claim carries several contradictions. They primarily refer to its basis, which, although treating multiculturalism as an important segment in the globalization process, it still relies on the national state and the majority or dominant population in it. Secularism or secularization basically means separating the church from the state and freedom of expression. Sociologically speaking, secularism has at least three dimensions: a) abandoning a religious community, but not a religion, b) the process of dissolving the theists' conscience, and c) abandoning religion.

Modern theologies have accepted secularization as a democratic process only partially. Faith is the basis of every religion. Theologically speaking, it does not only mean religious confession, but also religious content conveyed through tradition. Alluding to the introduction of the culture of religions subject, Professor Chimikj insisted on acknowledging the differences between religious and believers' culture. Namely, religious culture covers the knowledge of the phenomenon of religious culture, which may certainly be monitored, determined and taught scientifically. In other words, this is knowledge of the content in which one does not have to believe or incorporate in one's own behavior.



On the other hand, the believers' culture, which is another name for religious studies, implies faith, values and acting in compliance with certain religious principles. This is even more so given that religious culture is not merely a way of thinking, but also a way of living, acting and valuing things. Based on the authority of God, it spreads through its own experience and self-aware testimony.

Multiculturalism, just like multiconfessionalism, has two aims in the area of state politics. The first is to support the harmonic relations between the diverse ethnic groups, especially the majority and the minority groups, as well as to acknowledge the rights of various social movements and groups that contain no racial and/or ethnic traits. The second aim is to define the relations between the state and the national minorities, ethnic groups and other social movements. Still, these formal solutions do not put an end to the multicultural controversies. Following the example of the developed western states (the United States, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom and so forth), the replies to these and similar requests primarily fall within the political, legal and administrative field. According to French sociologist A. Semprinia, this is not a real equality. Equality primarily means expansion of the public area to provide the functioning of the legal and administrative instruments, which means that adoption of laws is an essential, but not a sufficient condition for equality.

The modern pluralist societies carry at least two paradoxes in their multiconfessionalism and multiculturalism. Namely, the Western European states have been somewhat disturbed, which has caused the rocking of the former confessional and secular-humanist status quo position and has created mental blockades on both sides, refusal for a dialogue, ghettoization, cultural resistance and so forth. Such a model puts priority on the different sorts of collective identities (racial, ethnic, religious, and so forth), as well as on the requests for their acknowledgement. The final result of such tendencies (the Balkan is a paradigm of this) is the establishment of societies of numerous monocultural and other sorts of ethnicities, which renders this insistence/model a supra-paradox because such discrepancies and differences would be abolished because they would not tolerate each other.

The second paradox is the necessity of coexistence of religions in the post-Socialist societies. An example of this are the Orthodox, Catholic and Islamic religions, which are a spiritual bridge that primarily link the divine with the human and then people among themselves. However, in historical terms, these religions have much too often been the sword aimed against the other religions and later the religions related to a given state or ideologies.

Every state certainly uses religion as an instrument to attain its own means in its own manner and thus gives it certain concessions. Friar Marko Orsholikj has stressed that "when religion was the a priori supporter of the government and when the religious communities were not separate from religion, theology from ideology and religion from everyday politics, the religion and its institutions easily became a sword and lost the authentic role of a bridge."

In the liberal model of multiculturalism there are three crucial elements in terms of religion. First, there must be clear and firm constitutional limits to the individual freedom of religion; second, the church (or any other religious community) and the state must be separated, that is the state must not be seen as belonging to a certain religious group; and, third, there must be an equal treatment of the religious groups and conditions must be enabled for them to practice their religion.

In systems in which there are discrepancies among religious doctrines, all should agree that the state must wield its power in compliance with the public reasons that everyone could understand and practice, rather than on the basis of a private religion.

According to Toma Veresh, the modern world is not characterized merely by the divergent views of the collocutors, but primarily by the fact that no collocutor could know everything that this partner does. This is why dialogue between religions and cultures is inevitable today. Still, for dialogue to succeed, it must not be interpreted as a competition, race, soccer game, an arena fight or an insistence to impose the view that one's own religion and philosophy are right. An atmosphere must be created for people to be allowed to talk freely, because only then will the talks attain their goal. The use of cheering passions, such as applause or booing, may be suitable for a sports game or a

party rally. Where there is noise, people cannot think and where people cannot think, there is no reason to attend such events. (J. Fallout)

I wish to believe that all of us that have gathered here to participate in a dialogue between religions and cultures will show that the only answer here is that, as long as we talk, we can find solutions to all the misunderstandings and that multiculturalism and multiconfessionalism are a reality in every society, so they should be respected and tolerated.

Regardless of how cruel our reality is, here and now there is no alternative to the readiness to talk.

#### *Presentation paper Nr. 2*

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### **“Historical past, the bridge for the future”**

#### **Skender Asani, MA**

To reflect the multicultural and multi religious reality of the Republic of Macedonia, is too much important the intellectual communication, who have to be conductors and feeders of values of tolerance and mutual cooperation that has function along different historically periods, I'll distinguish the revolutionary organization of Albanians and Macedonians of 1887, the Albanian - Macedonian cultural organization placed in Sarajevo, established on 1898, cooperation on preparations for the Krusheva's uprising, and the highest point was achieved with creating a mutual institutions of this Republic, close cooperation during 1912-1913 especially the cooperation between VMRO and the Committee of Kosovo, in the period between two world wars.

A special responsibility and role will play those relations that our Renaissance has left to us, through which historically difficulties have passed through the history. Let's use like a brand and wealth this historical relations like a bridge between Albanians, Macedonians, Turks and others communities

To be an intellectual mean to be active in social life, to take the civic responsibility in integrative orientations, to be part of protecting of cultural values, like a wealth that have to be protected and cultivated.

This is the reason for having a mutual meeting points, which have produced many prominent names in historical events, where historians have to approach historically resources, to refer to them in very elegant way and to know to approach these events in very critical way, which makes the historical events to be effective or non effective. So the cooperation between historians and scientific institutions through dialogue which is accomplished in different fields makes possible and guarantee the success of goals for social welfare, which reflects the interethnic stability. This is the reason why this conference is held, this have to be seen in very wide dimension and I think that to be a historian in this political situation needs like first to have very strong national consciousness and to be open to cooperate with other cultures.

It is important for a new historians to know the roots, not simply genetic roots of the nation , to know the history, hardly to study it and to not do it just in surface, because the intensity of the historically events is like that, that you have to react right in the moment.

I think that history and historiography in general have to go in compliance with interest of integrating cultural values, with interests of euro-west institutions, and I have the chance here to go back to our past and to the issues of wrong interpretation of the history, for some political reasons. No doubts there are elements that absolutely are not coming from the aberration of the academics. These are coming from the pathologically cooperation between certain political segments and academic circles , and here politics , but like first institutions that are dealing with history , have to be so careful to act, to react towards different circles who still are living or working in offices full with dust , which are preparing projects for vulnerability of interethnic and inter religious relations in the Republic of Macedonia, who have forget that in plebiscitary way citizens are for Euro-Atlantic integration of the country. Our historically past have to be useful like an important factor of stability, an important interlocutory of all intellectual dialogue, which have to reflect too much institutional maturity, visible emancipation, like a precondition

to past by major historical challenge, which will exceed major traumas of the history and its needed vision to administrate emotions of the past with the persuasion to arrive standards that are asked from the values and norms of European integration, to build a multiethnic country and to respect the tradition , culture, language and habits of each-other.

More important than politicians and institutions is the role of intellectuals wherever they are acting, in scientific institutions, civil society, or in private sector, their role has to be considered like a bridge of cooperation between ethnic communities. Their active engagement is seen like a hope to not go back to the painful historically past of the nations that survived the mess of the turmoil's of the time.

I want to greet this meeting organised from Forum ZFD, for the opportunity to create a dialogue, but I think that starting from this meeting we have to act in the way to draw out the attention and the influence of the politic in history, or academically circles have to know, to think and to predict that the history you cannot do with political emotions, history can be done with a clear, objective and scientific opinion.

This is the reason why people that are dealing with science, people that are dealing with history, to devote to that work in objective way. History is not five years! History is not one hundred years! History is thousand years and we don't have to permit shows that comes from certain circles that are interested to bring back interethnic tensions in Macedonia, especially we don't have to permit the academically part because they are not representing political interests, but the interest of society in general.

Values of cooperation and ethnic and religious welfare that our Renaissances left to us from the XIX- XX century, to build the future with sacrifice and work, makes us hoping in one vision to make bright future.

Future has in itself the hope, desire, energy and power for changing the situation in this land. It's needed just one propulsion for changing our today's situation in another totally different situation, which is more clear and better for all citizens. This propulsion is the interethnic, economic welfare and Euro-Atlantic integration of the country

## **“Scientific and Social Role of History”**

**Natasha Kotlar Trajkova, PhD**

### **Association of Historians in the Republic of Macedonia**

Studying history is never a unilateral process. Its basic role is to provide a deeper understanding of the past and the reality, too, by realizing their correlation. History can be legitimized scientifically only when it is freed from the task of being the vassal of the existing political, national, ideological or any other non-scientific cause. As we all know, the scientists' general theses are either definitions or adopted rules for the use of a language or aimed at shaping and organizing future thoughts and are therefore exposed to verification, modification and denial. This description can apply to the historians' work, too. Scholars, especially those dealing with social sciences and historians, are jointly working on the different areas of a same study: the study of humans and their surrounding and the people's influence on their environment and vice versa. The initial procedures of a physicist, geologist and historian differ greatly in the separate methods. Still, both the historians and the natural scientist are very close in their basic aim to explain their idea and to pose questions and give answers as their basic procedure. Every historian, just like every other scientist, constantly asks the question "Why?". Studying history is a process of studying the cause and the correlation between the individual and the general. This requires knowledge and caution, because, as Professor Powicke says, "the aspiration to interpret history is so deeply rooted that, unless we have a constructive approach towards the past, we are drawn either into mysticism or cynicism." History is "a selective system" not only of cognitive, but also of causal orientations towards the reality. Just as the historian picks only the facts that are relevant for his needs from the vast ocean of facts, so he draws only the historically significant causes and effects from the multitude of these. His ability to fit all these

within his frame of rational explanations and interpretations is a historic necessity. According to Professor Butterfield, "studying past with looking at the present with one eye is the source of all sins and wisdoms in history... This is the core of the term 'non-historical.'"

According to Edward Hallett Carr, history begins when people begin to think about the passing of time not as a natural process, but as a sequence of events in which people deliberately take part and on which they may act consciously. History represents the people's long fight with their minds in order to understand their environment and act in compliance with it.

History, as the historians' research process and as past facts that they explore, is a social process in which individuals are included as social beings, whereas the imaginary antithesis between the society and the individuals is merely a distracting factor. The reciprocal process of interaction between the historians and their facts (the dialogue between the present and the past) is not a dialogue of abstract and isolated individuals, but of the current and past society. Therefore, we may say that history is a record of what a certain time believes is worth recording of some previous time. We comprehend the past merely in the light of the present, but we can understand the present only in the light of the past. Thus, history plays a double part: it enables the humankind to understand the past society and to enhance its dominance in the current society.

Every human being in every stage of history (or even in prehistoric times) is born in a given society and is shaped by this society from early age. For example, the language that every person speaks is not an individual heritage, but a social contribution of the group that the person is growing in. Both the language and the environment contribute to the shaping of a person's thoughts, because every person's first words are copied from the other members of the society. When we are talking abstractly about the tension between freedom and equality or individual freedom and social justice, we often tend to forget that abstract ideas cannot wage wars. Battles are not fought between individuals and societies as such, but between groups of individuals in a society, during which each group fights to impose the social policy that suits it and hamper the policy that harms it. Every society that has lost confidence in its ability to progress towards the

future will soon stop being interested in its past. Our interpretation of history reflects our understanding of the society. The past, the present and the future are interrelated in the endless chain of history.

Every historian is an individual human being. Just like other individuals, he/she is a social product and a voluntary or accidental spokesman of the society that he/she belongs to. The historical facts belong precisely to the latter.

The work of a historian can neither be fully understood nor really appreciated unless the standing point of the historian is comprehended first. This very standing point is rooted in the social and historical soil where he was bred. Even before starting to write history, the historian is the product of that history. An objective historian is that historian that penetrates as deep as possible into the reciprocal process and the interaction of facts and values. Only the person who has found and has accepted a sense of direction in history can write history. From the current point of view, people do no longer tend to increasingly focus on understanding their environment and acting in compliance with it, but on understanding themselves and acting in compliance with this. Of all the previous times, the present one is most conscious in historical terms. The contemporary humans are aware of themselves to an unprecedented degree, so they are aware of history, too.



## **“Presentation of the cultural heritage in the media”**

### **Sefer Tahiri, PhD**

In Macedonia cultural heritage discovered in different locations, especially in Skopje's Fortress, is becoming field in which big influence has politics, not just that one of cultural institutions, but also the one of different proveniences, combined with a historical issues and the civilizations that in different period of time have passed and left trace in Balkan areas.

From the time when cultural, governmental or politic parties, tries to give dimensions of political actuality to the cultural and historical heritage, are created division, in stand that to be a symbol of union , it becomes the sphere that creates major divisions in ethnic lines between Albanians and Macedonians.

In this direction expect the public scientific debate, also the political one related to the cultural heritage, media have given a spirit to an interethnic fostering. In the time of rapid globalization when the world is made a “global village” referring to the theorist Marshal McLuhan, there isn't left space without fostering also from new media's or social networks like: facebook, twitter, different blogs, YouTube, which have a major power in the process of communication among people.

In Macedonia during two past decades , also in the communism, in different media are identified a big number of examples of non careful or deliberate reporting, in which there was not sense for intercultural, interethnic and inter religious relations in our society.

Media looks like they were competing for spreading stereotypes and creating a negative perception for those that they perceived like “the others”.

Complicated interethnic situation and social dynamic followed by a big number of strains, have influenced medias to produce (or to define), two “parallel realities” over

their ancient past and over the cultural heritage. Over a historic and actual reality in Macedonia, always there are two truths, Albanian truth and Macedonian one.

From the beginning of archaeological excavations, which related to the web site of this project have began on 14 may of 2007, there were present divisions and opposite points of view between Macedonian and Albanian scientists in this action, supported by the country or government.

Albanian electronic Medias permanently alarmed over the not including of eminent archaeologists from Albania and Kosovo in these excavations, thing that has been opposed by the Department for protecting of the historical and cultural heritage, which in his claim will pronounce that “behind the project will stay without any reserve the government of Gruevski”. This means that we can come to conclusion that these kinds of archaeological excavations realized from 2007 till today have ideologically, politically and ethnic aims.

Macedonians and Albanians media were treating and reporting about this project with opposite angels, referring to an official cultural politics and Macedonians media, this project had like aim to show the big potentials in such area and to rearrange it with a new content and relevant urbanization.

But referring to the media in Albanian language, there was another aim: manipulation with facts from the cultural heritage for conjectural political aims, and that these archaeological excavations which were done just from Macedonians teams, had like aim to hide facts that were discovered from different historical periods especially those from Illyrian civilization.

Albanian media have given space mostly to the Association of Albanian Historians and to different nongovernmental organizations that were arguing that researches in the Skopje’s Fortress have like aim to hide the Illyrian and Dardan culture and that Macedonian scientist had like aim to change the historical facts. In Macedonian media initiatives of Albanians intellectuals were seen with a suspicious eye, like they were with intentions to prevent the research process that discovers a new fact about the Macedonian identity.

The fact that media does the construction of the objective reality and that their content arrive to the wide audience, push different centres of the Macedonian political power, to find ways to make pressure toward them , in such a way to influence news making, with the goal to have the audience in their side.

In this way media are becoming the instrument for realizing of political goals, and in the same time during being the extended hand of the politics , the political influence is reflected also through reporting for cultural diversity and also for cultural heritage , because the media that are closed to the government were giving more time in quality and quantity aspects to the voices that were protecting the official cultural politics, while in media that were not governmental there were given space to the alternative opinion also related to the archaeological excavations , it historical and actual context and to the social, ethnic and politic dimensions, that produces this sensitive topic, that was reflected starting from the titles of the newspapers news and till the debates in Facebook. .

Politics and some institutions that legally have to take care for protection of cultural heritage in general, unfortunately helped and driven by medias, they politicized to much the archaeology, with that started to deal not just archaeologists but also and journalists.

The Macedonian intellectual elite was influencing the Macedonian government party to change the political course toward the cultural heritage and attempted to impose the idea that Macedonians have not the Slavic origin, such is learn with decades starting from the time after 1945 in history books, but that they have antic origin, like they started to speak from 2007 and later, those where giving these statements where Kuzman and with a “half of their voice” some others “scientist”.

Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts even will publish a book of a Macedonian author, that claims that today’s Macedonians have antic origin.

The politic of symbols, initiated from political, institutional, academics, nongovernmental, and media circles was an attempt to show to the world that antiquity is a value of Macedonian ethnic being.

In the lines with this politic was taken the decision to build a new building in the Skopje's Fortress. They were exactly Medias that provoked ethnic passions toward this decision.

Audience was not informed and there weren't public debates for this issue, also for Skopje 2014, respectively was not known nothing for the character of the object that was intensively build in "Kale" (Skopje Fortress), till the moment when Kuzman through one claim that was broadcasted in Macedonian Television and afterwards in ALSAT-M , when he said that will be build a church.

This moment caused a several ethnic and religious reactions in Macedonia.

Everyday reporting of the Medias, different comments from the politics, nongovernmental organizations, and Pasko Kuzman in the one side and from the Association of Albanian Historians form the other side, heated the atmosphere related to this project. In parallel there was going on a big debate in social networks, related to this object, notably after interventions of some of representatives of Albanian ruling party, mainly from Skopje, by interrupting proceedings during the night.

In the public debate, followed by a lot o emotions, venom, insult and hatred , was said that will be build a museum , museum church or just church. Was used a simple vocabulary that was passing the good taste, because of the threats and proclamations for revenge.

Referring to the research "Diversity reporting" done by Macedonian Institute of Media , journalists themselves alarmed that " no one is controlling hatred language that was spread like a fire in social networks" , as though it was a competitions who will find the most offended words or associations. In the virtual war without compromise were used calls for clean settle scores, photos from 2001 till photomontage.

After politic intervention in Fortress, there were formed two blocks, they who where supporting and the block that was against this object in Fortress, subsequently this verbal violence to pass in physical violence on 13 February 2011.

Debate full of insults was transferred to Fortress, because the supporting group and the group that was against has designated protest and against protest in the same date, in

the same hour. Neither police failed to prevent physical contact between Albanian and Macedonian participants in this incident.

After the violent incident, the polemical debate Albanian- Macedonian was back in Facebook. The situations was so serious that as the Ministry of Interior Affairs asked Facebook to delete 23 sites of the groups from Fortress, in which were manifested aggressive content and mainly they were profiles with negativity.

The worldwide British public radio BBC, reported that social networks served like a wick, according to example of so-called “jasmine” in Tunisia and Egypt, they were tool for protest organizing.

Like a recommendation for future, media have to be aware for the diversity issues , notably for cultural heritage issues, because in it isn't just the actuality and reporting just events and facts from the reality, but it comes to different civilizations and different historical periods, which have impacted in these sites and to Balkans nations , so in time and space.

## **“Religions and Spiritual Heritage as a Unification and Tolerance Factor”**

**PhD, Maja Angelovska Panova, PhD**

**National History Institute**

The term spiritual is actually related to religion, a religious concept or some kind of a religious ritual. Still, without a doubt this term essentially has a much more complex meaning. As a matter of fact, it is no accident that Tibetan priest and master Xual Kul interprets this term as "an activity that leads the human beings to some kind of progress in terms of the current situation, regardless of whether it is physical, emotional, social or intuitive." The phenomenon of religion lies in the fact that, although it is static and not exposed to evolution, it still encourages positive thoughts among individuals, which could result in personal, religious, and therefore social progress.

It is in terms of such general interpretation of the spiritual that we treat the issue of religions in Macedonia, that is, the Orthodox Christianity-Islam paradigm, as one of the potential unification and tolerance factors under diverse circumstances.

There is no doubt that all religions, regardless of their provenance, are based on pacifism and ethic values, such as equality, love, respect and tolerance among people. All these principles come to the surface primary in multicultural and multi-confessional societies.

Until 20 April 2010, in Macedonia there were registered 13 churches, seven religions communities, and five religious groups. Of them, conditionally speaking, the Christianity, that is Orthodox Christianity, Catholicism, and Protestantism, is the dominant religion in terms of the number of believers, religious facilities, organizational hierarch and the ritual practice.

Still, to talk about the current situation regarding the status of religions in Macedonia and their interaction, we first need to give a brief historical-cultural retrospective as the

initial point and the foundation in the process of building stable interreligious communication.

It would be stereotypical, but historically perfectly justifiable to conclude that Macedonia is a state with exceptional spiritual heritage and a specific synthesis of authenticities and diversities.

It is the country of Disciple Paul's missionary endeavor, the land of Slav literacy, affirmed with the activities of the brothers Cyril and Methodius, the holy Clement and Naum of Ohrid, and the land of the Bogomils' dualist ideas, which are civilizational advantages for a wider geographic area in the Balkans and the Western European states. It is here that monks have experienced the state of sikhia, promoted with Sikhism. Still, Macedonia is also the state of the Isa Beg-founded madrasah, an institution with a remarkable education performance, and a land of the Colorful (Alaxa) Mosque, which attracts people with its decorations and specific colorfulness. It was precisely in Macedonia, that is, in Tetovo, that the Arabati Baba built the teqe, where the dervishes of the Bektashi order still reside.

It is on this territory that the Sufi mysticism existed and still exists as an eternal source of emotional-spiritual harmony, as well as a cultural-education movement that has left as its legacy remarkable philosophical works, stories, poetry, music, and the famous Mevlevi order dance.

It is here that both Muslims and Christians jointly commemorate the day of St. Naum of Ohrid, who healed many people because of his healing abilities. This is confirmed in numerous myths and stories, as well as with the clearly differentiated cult toward this saint, who is respected by all the residents, regardless of their religion or ethnicity.

Macedonia's independence and the introduction of pluralism is a period typical for the believers' return to religion and the traditional spiritual values. It is as a result of this that currently there are 1,800 restored churches and monasteries and 600 mosques that are actively functioning in Macedonia. These are not only religious objects, but even more relevant representatives of the material culture that has been built and cherished throughout a lengthy cultural-historical period.

The historical-cultural predisposition for coexistence and sharing the benefits of the spiritual heritage in Macedonia is an integral part of the discourse of our present-day life, as well. Without a doubt, Macedonia insists on the freedom of religious expression and interreligious respect and tolerance. When it comes to Islam, the most suitable statement in these terms is that of the former Islamic Religious Community (IVZ) leader, Haxhi Jakub Selimovski, who said in an interview with DW: "The most religious Muslims in the entire region, which strictly abide by the Islam, are precisely the Muslims in Macedonia... The best preserved values and artifacts of the Muslims and Islam in the region are located here."

Still, let us review certain obvious examples that show how religions and thus spiritual heritage may be a unification factor, which is the topic of my speech.

The St. Nicholas church or the Hidir Baba Turbe in Makedonski Brod is still one of the numerous examples of a joint sanctuary and temple of both the Orthodox Christians and for Muslims. The fact that the images of Jesus Christ, St. Nicholas and the Bektashi saints Ali and Hidir Baba are put in the same place is impressive. On St. George Day the believers eat with one fork and drink brandy from one glass during the so-called love feast because, as Baba Ejup Rakipi from the Bektashi community says, these are souls that have no suspicion for the other souls.

There is also the typical example of the Sopiste Municipality, where there are 13 districts, seven of which are mostly populated by Macedonians, whereas five by ethnic Albanians. Over the past few years, the residents of this municipality have jointly celebrated Christmas and Eid-Bajram and they have respected each other's customs during the celebration of these religious holidays. This practice is spontaneous and held solely on the residents' initiative, so the mayor of this municipality believes that it should become a traditional celebration.

As for the initial steps at an institutional level, I will mention the introduction of the subject of religious ethics, which enables the primary-school pupils to be acquainted with the ethics of different religious teachings and the ethic principles and norms contained in the holy books. This all contributes to the individual students



decontaminating themselves from the potential prejudices and acquiring skills for dialogue, tolerance, respect and cooperation with those who belong to other cultures and religions.

The Kaliste 2004 and 2006 summer camps were a confirmation of the interreligious cooperation in Macedonia. These camps were attended by students of the Orthodox Theology Faculty and the Islamic Sciences Faculty, as well as representatives of the Catholic Church, the Jewish community and the Evangelist-Methodist Church.

The summer camps were a remarkable opportunity to familiarize the students with different religious aspects and share their joint theoretical and pragmatic experience. The cooperation between the two theological faculties has resumed ever since through the exchange of personnel and absolving Orthodox Christian and Islamic topics.

As for interreligious education, I would also like to mention the history of religions study group, organized within the INI (National History Institute) postgraduate studies, which, in additions to the issues related to Christianity, includes different topics in the area of Islam and Judaism.

At the end of this speech, as a conclusion and a message, I would like to quote former Canadian Prime Minister Lester Pearson's visionary statement made in the distant 1950, noting that humanity was moving toward "an era in which different civilizations must learn to live next to each other in peace and cooperation by studying history, ideals, art and culture of the others and by mutually enriching each other's lives."

Challenges and temptations have existed and will exist, but religions must at no point be used as an instrument for radical purposes because this fully contravenes their pacifism, ethic system and doctrine.

## **“Identity and folklore”**

**(By dioptré of retrospective and perspective of this semantic binomial)**

**Izaim MURTEZANI, PhD**

No doubts that identity today is one of the most exploited and frequented notion in the frames of human sciences. It with all his characteristics that are included on its content is reviewed from anthropology, philosophy, psychology, sociology, ethnology, and so on. In this context, especially is emphasized identity which refers to a certain ethnic community. One of the outstanding connoisseurs of this issue, the world known researcher Antony Smith says that ethnic identity ( ethnic communities) refer to a common name with which that ethnic groups identifies themselves, afterward the common myth for the descent, or common ancestors, and also the common memory related to the history (Smith, 1991:21) . Every ethnic community must possess common culture, based mainly in combination like language, religion, traditions, habits, wearing, music, crafts, architecture, and also the traditional food.

Like you can see most of the last mention things refer to the folklore, or traditional creativity. If you have a look in this aspect, so referring to folklore and to the other ethno-cultural ingredients, we can say freely that those identities – individual and collective – they represent specific forms of cultural narratives, or a whole symbolic system. While folklore like an essential pillar of national identity, in developed European countries, has concluded its active life, it managed to survive, even partially in its original form, especially here in Balkan Peninsula, of course as a result of specific events that have not stopped, that sometimes unfortunately had tragic dimensions. There were it is a crisis, any shift or transitions in different period of time, there as well is a ritual, said well known French ethnology Arnold van Zhenep (Gennep, 1981). Bahtini was referring to the borders like areas where are created authentic cultural values. With

a big number of nations, also a lot of problems in it today Balkan Peninsula response completely to the up mentioned references.

But who was the position and the role of folklore in Macedonia? Like an important determinant of ethnic identity, folklore or traditional creativity also in Macedonia has been given special importance. After the Second World War in the same time of establishment of scientific institutions, was established the Institute of folklore in Skopje (today know with the name Marko Cepenkov) which later will play big role in collection and studying of a folklore, especially to the Macedonians one. In the frames of mention Institute and to the others similar institutions, like museums, Albanian folklore had a symbolic position, and like its result in 2007 was established the Institute for Cultural and Spiritual Heritage of Albanians of Macedonia. Despite awkward institutional position of Albanian folklore in Macedonia, a part of it achieved to be published, especially from those who had a specific passion toward this kind of composition, but who were not dealing professionally with this field.

To the folklore was given particular care also in its studying. There were published a certain number of a scientific monographs in which where treated different problems. There have been also designated studies for ethno-cultural concordance between nations in Balkan. Like an example , just for the ballad for the bride that was part of the wall during building it, or the scarification of the new bride for building a architectonic building which possessed all Balkan nations were written thousands sites. Researchers of this popular ballade, depending on their ethnicity, tried to show that ballad is theirs, and that afterwards it was borrowed from the others. Not just in this case, also in studying of other ethno-cultural concordances was followed the ethnocentric way, respectively to show that there were superior nations, which were producing ethno-cultural values and others inferior nations were borrowing these ethno-cultural values. This kind of logic even if it was characteristic for passed centuries, also now is present. In view of proving the ethnocentric logic, an Bulgarian author Adela Peeva, in 2002 carries an ethnographic movie , with the title “ Who is this song? “. This song was sang in Turkey, Greece, Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia, Serbia and Bulgaria. Interlocutors in the movie, of course from all these ethnicities, become aggressive; even they wanted to

settle scores related to this song, especially when there was said to them that the song is not theirs, respectively to the nation that they were representing. This movie that carries a message in itself ends with the fire that was caused from the drunken singers of this song (Čolović, 2008: 7). Albanian writer Ismail Kadare, in function of this logic and in scientific approach said that nations of a Balkan didn't made war just with a sword but also with a pencil, he said like that " infightings for acquisitions of a spiritual values, sometimes have been no less wild than bloody infightings for borders" (Kadare, 2002:22 )

Identity and in the same direction folklore were putted in a situations, or new challenge especially in the case of forming a new independent states in the areas of Southeast Europe, after the fall of communism. Those moments caused new crises of identity; respectively new born states opened again the issues for a ethnic and state identities. The new situation, or passing from one stage to another one of developing of these states, set us to redefinition and review of the identity elements and following such logic came into scene concepts that went in function to strengthen the role of ethnicity in society. So these circumstances dig out a new discourse between ethnicity binomial and culture. Referring to such cases, Konrad Kostlin uses the term culture ethnicization, he added that exactly this culture ethnicization led toward discipline instrumentation, respectively of folklore (Lafazanovski, 2002:15).

Macedonia also was not immune toward this phenomena, like others ex-socialistic states. This new situations brought to the surface the game with a ethnic identities, and results with creating a new cultural values, going back to the glorious past, overemphasis of ethno cultural values, or building of a national myth. This is also like a result of the fact that after fifties of the XX century in Macedonia, which in that time was part of Yugoslavia, was happening the phenomena of denial of signs, symbols, models or rituals which were in close relation to the tradition, especially to the church one, which was ideologically opposite with socialist government of that time. A big number of rituals, carnivals and rites, in accordance with the ideological concept, then were considered like non socialist phenomena, because of "bourgeois ideology ".

As a result of this the role of bringing back of the spiritual traditions took the politic elite, for the pragmatic purposes. In 2006 was approved the new calendar of holidays in Macedonia. Mainly in the calendar dominated the holidays with Christian background. So beside some main Christian holidays that were part of the prior calendar, to the new calendar were added also a big number of a orthodox holidays, making this country like a country with more holidays in all Europe.

Approving this calendar it was good chance Macedonian elite in government to make a “famous” action, even the Macedonian Orthodox Church elders to be surprised. Macedonia in its holiday calendar included seven orthodox holidays, or the most important holidays of the Christian calendar. In celebration of different religious holidays was present also the prime minister, in that way telling that has brought back to the scene religious spiritual values. The logic of controlling the time form the political elite, it’s not a known case for the sciences that are studying the society. Meanwhile in advance another political party in function of controlling the area of Skopje, established monumental cross in Vodno. Researcher Comarof referring to such a situations, states that ethnicity looks like “Janus with two faces”, which in moment when speaks about collective “ego” denies “another” collective one (according to Putinja, Strefc- Fenar, 1997:173-138). Because of that there it is a reaction. Identities that are in contact, like they are in Macedonia, they feed each-other continuously.

So the way of bringing back of the spiritual traditions was going from one extreme to the other extreme. While socialism curtailed spiritual values, with a pagan and Christian worldview at the time of post socialism was doing a return of these values maybe more than have to. Such a case and other cases that were not mentioned speak that political elites uses the identity mechanisms, even with doing their instrumentation in function of their political survive. Italian researcher Emilio Gentile was right when he states that these demagogically tools derived from the need to search a new modus, having like a goal maintaining and make strengthen the legitimacy of the government toward the mass (Gentile, 2009: 45).

In this spirit, leading politic elites chose the certain corpus of symbols (borrowed from the history arsenal, folklore tradition), put them to the new social context – politic and in

this way starts to be created a new political mythology (ethnic). Now in contemporary politic anthropology is clear that creation of the political myths is a normal process, which more or less intensifies, depending on the social and political context. However politic myths are phenomena of crises that in critic periods of social life acquire a big area of massive communication, more than in periods of relative stability.

In between of the most important characteristics of the constitution of the folklore in culture tissue is also the principle of *authenticity* and *authority*. These principle like a result of the identity game that never finishes in Balkan, are strong walls that it's hard to destroy the artillery of globalization. Culture and folklore, from a lot of researchers, is perceived like a pep tourney that is happening between two principles, to the static one and dynamic one. So folklore represent conflict between stability, respectively traditions and the changes in culture, or innovations. Looking in a general plan, folklore is a representative of the conservative (because is based in old patterns and themes) and new one (because it in itself includes new circumstances and subjects). Folklore can be perceived like a dynamic process, respectively like a biological creation: it is born, lives and dies. Researcher Amin Maluf this situation had named like a tourney between vertical axis that was identified with tradition and horizontal axis that destroys tradition, which in this concrete case is identified with globalization (Maluf, 2003:34).

Today a lot of societies are in crossroad in the meaning of the organizational, structural and ideologically transformation. So we can say that beside universal tendencies that are personified with the process of globalization (ex. Building a European identity) based in economic tendencies and grounding with massive culture, more and more are getting stronger the tendencies of separate identities, mainly based in ethnic identity and ethnicity, personified with a process of a localism or particularism. Still is not clear the perspective of these two tendencies, more precisely of these two social processes in the meaning of how will be developed and what kind of social product will produced by their combination. Meanwhile in this process the role of folklore each time is related to reinforce of the ethnic identity and of course also with the localism.

In the end, like usually is the question if the reinforces ethnic identities can co exist in a multiethnic and multi religious society , notably when they have tendencies of

confrontation and domination, or we have to search for modalities for overcoming of the barriers that they produce between them. Of course those barriers can be overcome, but this means that the culture area to not be looked like a memory net, artifacts, museums or images of rules of just one national spirit in a certain territory , but like an area of communication, dialogue, meeting point and so on. Versus nationalistic model of culture perception, isolated and native and superior, is imposed the other model that is worthy for a democratic society. And this model means the need the culture to be individualized, demilitarized, nationalized, not to nationalized, and all these will be reduced in a basic need, in the need that culture to be humanized. So have to be build and promoted a critic perception toward culture. In stand of construction of national myth, have to be promoted its deconstruction, or critic attitude toward own myth. Folklore like a creation from the peoples in itself includes many stereotypes, notably toward each-other, in the ethnic and religious meaning.

Well-known researcher Maria Todorova with fully right perceives Balkan like a pledge of the one tradition of the stereotypes and prejudices, or said with one word of the past. She like a revolt for the past of these nations that strangulates their perspective, one of her books has named *“Rise in air of the pat”* (Todorova, 2010). As a result decontamination of ethno-culture from this layer of stereotypes will present a contribution toward humanization of this scientific discipline. So it is important to set free the culture from the emotional relation with nation and through nation with state and its territory.

Sigmund Bowman when he was speaking for the world after the fall of Berlin wall claims that communism and its ingredients beside all its disadvantages has acted also like corrective. Like a result Bowman asks intellectuals to be the west civilization conscience, to act like challenger, or its correctors. Dunia Rihtman Augustin (Croatian ethnology, which enlightens Croatians myth) says that she doesn't know how intellectuals can do it, but for ethno- anthropologists all the time there it is a way: the critic one, or the deconstruction of the myth, and above all the political one. This gives the possibility to them to join the alternative conscience of the society and separately to

the nation (Rihtman- Augustin, 2001:209)

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## **“Cultural and Historical Heritage in History Classes”**

**Mire Mladenovski, PhD**

In the contemporary world, multiculturalism, integration, globalization and similar terms imply unity, tolerance, mutual understanding and certainly cooperation. These cannot be attained overnight, but they are a result of a long-term process that is largely proceeding through their promotion with the education system. Education, as the cornerstone of future societies, has a direct impact on the younger generations' perception. The history classes, as an integral part of education, should be the pillow that promotes multiculturalism and the integrative processes.

Historically speaking, history, as a science and a school subject, has been used as a political tool for spreading intolerance and prejudices for a long time. The change of political course has always entailed the change in course of the history classes as well, that is the approach to studying the past. If we go through the past, we can see that history classes usually dealt with the so-called political or military history, whereas the other segments of the human past, such as culture, education, technological advancement, economy, social welfare, human rights, everyday life, and similar topics have been either neglected or superficially reviewed.

As a matter of fact, the political and military history is full of conflicts, misunderstandings and mistrust, so they directly affected the existence of intolerant relations between nations and renewal of conflicts, or, in a nutshell, creating great and permanent distrust among nations.

Culture and cultural heritage certainly focus on our joint past, common benefits, cooperation and the most conspicuous things that we have in common.

Macedonia is a treasury of cultural heritage, a place where different cultures have met and intermingled, so it is an ideal ground that may take advantage of this benefit.

However, in practice our curricula, textbooks and history classes in general focus more on political and military history, that is on the things that draw us apart, rather than on the things that bring us together, that is, culture and cultural heritage.

All this does not refer only to Macedonia, but I may freely say to the entire Balkan region in general.

In mathematical terms, culture and cultural heritage cover 10% the most in the Macedonian history curriculum. Basically, this is all reduced to the taxonomic enumeration of the so-called palpable or material cultural heritage, such as architecture, literature, artifacts, and monuments, but this time, too, they are treated separately for every ethnic community, although you must agree that culture and thus cultural heritage cannot belong to only one period, society, or community. Cultural heritage belongs to all times, communities and humankind in general. Otherwise, if we have a separate approach to cultural heritage, we will once again reach the vicious circle of division into "we" and "they", although we have witnessed for some time now that this brings no progress or benefit, but merely new divisions.

The study of cultural heritage cannot be covered by only one subject (history), but it should be a multidisciplinary study and be included in several subjects. Otherwise, it will boil down to theory, which prevents complete understanding of, "touching" and "consuming" cultural heritage.

The history classes cannot explain, that is, perfectly depict, the sound of the Macedonian lute, the smell of the wine-stuffed leaves, the scent of old buildings, the colorfulness of the artistic creations, the lyrics of the poetry, but the other subjects should and may do this. This is why multidisciplinary studies are essential here, as well as use of field work.

This is certainly not an easy task and it will be difficult to expect short-term and imminent results. Still, education itself is not a process that yields short-term results, so we must not expect easy and rapid benefits.

The impalpable, that is, immaterial culture, consisting of the social values, traditions, customs, languages, beliefs, and certainly everything that is more difficult to preserve, certainly undergoes constant changes.

The theoretical approach of studying cultural heritage in history classes cannot be complete or sufficient without practical work on the ground. The theory of studies showed a long time ago that theoretical lessons were short-lived, whereas all the practical things, that is, all that was seen, felt and experienced, left a permanent mark in the students' memory. This is why it is essential for the study to consist of excursions, study visits, research, students' project activities, whereby they could become closer and directly acquainted with the cultural heritage. This would be ideal once again if there are multidisciplinary studies on this matter. Thus far, given the situation in our education system, everything is left on the teachers' individual capacities and the possibilities of the schools, so there is a subsequent great diversity in the way in which cultural heritage is treated and studied. From passive classes reduced only to history to interactive approaches, consisting of combination of both theory and practice.

I believe that the positive practical approach in this area could and should be the standard, that is, the guideline for the future activities for studying cultural heritage in schools.

There are certainly numerous impediments to this, which are most often related to the poverty of our society, but there are always alternative ways, such as exploring the local cultural heritage, which can be attained much more easily.

Yet another thing that allows us to travel, visit, explore and experience things without great expenses is the fact that we are living in a technologically advanced era. The use of IT technology in classes has become habitual in our education system and it should be fully used in classes, especially when it comes to exploring the cultural heritage of our state, but also of the region, Europe and the world. Virtual trips are possible, but we are once again facing the same problem of spontaneity, that is, the lack of systematic solutions in the curriculum that would achieve this. Everything is left to the individuals and their potential, which certainly ranges from less successful to very successful.

Perhaps the key role of every teacher who deals with cultural heritage in class is to create a positive attitude toward cultural heritage among the students, to help them understand its material and primarily immaterial values and to thus create an appropriate attitude toward these.

The key skill that every teacher should possess and then convey onto his students is the ability to interpret cultural heritage. The final outcome should be greater respect and understanding for themselves, the region and the world as a whole.

The study of cultural heritage could not be complete unless a sense of respect for it and responsibility to preserve it for the future generations is developed in the meantime. This is a challenge in itself, given the time that we are living in and given that we are witnessing reverse processes. This is why we need to work on protecting the cultural heritage by building a correct attitude toward it. You have to agree that this is the key task of every conscientious history teacher.

At the end of the day, cultural heritage outlives and surpasses every individual life and every society, which is why it deserves special respect and a special approach. We should assume an attitude that should result in the belief of "cultural heritage is part of me and I am a part of it."

Actually, it is the historical and cultural heritage that gives the answer to the question that we often pose: **who we are, what we are and why we are as we are?**

## **IV. Background of the organizations that organized this event**

### **1. National History Institute**

The National History Institute (INI) was established on 20 July 1948 with a legislative act by the Government of the People's Republic of Macedonia at that time. It is the first specialized scholar institution that deals with studying the history and culture of the Macedonian nation, as well as the history of the other nations living in this region.

According to its hierarchy, the institute comprises a number of departments:

- Scientific-investigative activities department;
- Publishing activities department;
- MA and PhD studies department; and
- General, legal and financial matters department.

The scientific-investigative activities department consists of seven units that study the history of Macedonia and the other Balkan states by periods, beginning from the ancient times until the present day.

The INI has received a number of social awards and acknowledgements for its scientific-investigative work.

Since its establishment, this institute has established scholarly cooperation with more than 20 foreign scientific institutes. This cooperation is proceeding through scholars' study visits, organizing joint conferences, archives research, joint publications and work on joint projects.

### **2. Association of History Teachers of Macedonia**

**The Association of History Teachers of Macedonia (AHTM )** is an organization that is not part of any political parties, it is a nongovernmental and non-profit organization dealing with protection, advancement and development of history teaching in the primary and secondary education in Republic of Macedonia.

**Main Activities:** Preparation and implementation of projects, seminars, conferences and workshops for history teaching; To make advancement in cooperation between teachers in our country, in our neighbourhood, and in international level, through exchanges of information's and ideas, participation in international conferences, seminars, projects...; Development of peace, democracy, stability and to make advancements in interethnic relations in Macedonia and region; Cooperation with governmental and nongovernmental institutions and organizations in our country and with international ones, in the field of developing and increasing the history teaching level, with the aim to make it adaptable and in the same streams like in Europe and around the world;

Publishing of the magazine "Scout for history teachers", creating the web page of the association, and so on.

Compilation of additional materials for history ( collection of documents, historically maps, multimedia publications, and so on ) ; Improvement of the quality of the teaching materials and auxiliary tools of history. Organization of competitions for students in the subject of history.

### **3. Institute of Cultural and Spiritual Heritage of Albanians**

Institute of Cultural and Spiritual Heritage of Albanians placed in Skopje, is established with a decision of a Government of Macedonia on 27.03.2007 like a Public Scientific Institution.

The Institute is doing scientific research activities ne in these fields : Albanian language, Albanian literature, history of Albanians of Macedonia and demographic movements of them, ethnology, history of traditional art and architecture, intercultural, historical and linguistically relations of Albanians and Macedonians with others nations of region.

The Institute is doing those researches mentioned above through five sectors, where are distributed researchers. The Institute have 12 employees from different scientific fields.

Sectors of the Institute are:

-Albanian language sector

- Albanian literature sector
- Sector for the history of the Albanians of Macedonia and their demographic movements.
- Sector of ethnology, history of traditional art architecture
- The sector of intercultural, historical and linguistically relations of Albanians and Macedonians with others communities of the region.

Beside the scientific project the Institute is publishing also the scientific magazine “Albanological studies”.

This Institute has some national and international cooperation agreements with educational and scientific institutions.

#### **4. Forum ZFD , Macedonia**

Forum Ziviler Friedensdienst (forumZFD)

The Forum Ziviler Friedensdienst (Forum Civil Peace Service | forumZFD) is a German organisation that was established in 1996. It trains and sends peace experts to conflict regions where they work together with local partners to promote peaceful coexistence and non-violent conflict resolution.

forumZFD carries out projects of the Civil Peace Service in the Middle East, the Western Balkans, the Philippines and in Germany. In the Western Balkans, the focus is on projects working in the field of dealing with the past and on fostering dialogue between opposing parties. This includes school mediation projects, the support of civil society, reintegration of former combatants or enhancing media capacities for a more constructive way of dealing with the past.

[www.forumzfd.de](http://www.forumzfd.de)

#### **5. Training Center for Management of Conflicts**

Training Center for Management of Conflicts (TCMC) is Non-governmental organization (NGO) dedicated to promoting peace. We were established after the outbreak of the violent

conflict in Macedonia (end of 2001) as a response to the identified need to contribute to easing the process of reconciliation among of all ethnic communities. We operate as a training center that provides specialized trainings on Peacebuilding topics for different organizations. Our interactive and dynamic [training approach](#) represents a unique teaching style in the field of informal education.

TCMC implements its activities through organizing courses, seminars, workshops, tribunals, study trips, cultural and sport activities, publications as well as through sharing and exchanging information supporting our goals and values. We provide training services for other organizations that are interested in getting the best experiences from the training pool that operate with the following Peacebuilding topics: Democracy, Human rights, Dialogue, Reconciliation, Management of conflicts, Intercultural understanding, Mediation, Negotiation, Stereotypes, Prejudices, Non-violent communication, Leadership, Management, Organizational development and project cycle Management. So far, we have already provided more than 300 trainings for other organizations, governmental or nongovernmental.

VISION: Improvement of democratization and integration processes in Macedonia by creating safe places for dialogue, where groups and individuals can feel equal in their possibilities to share their opinions, as well as by fostering active participation of citizens in decision making processes.

[www.tcmc.org.mk](http://www.tcmc.org.mk)



## V. Invitation letter



To: \_\_\_\_\_

### INVITATION

The Institute of National History, the Institute for the Spiritual and Cultural Heritage of Albanians, the Association of Albanian Historians in Macedonia, the Association of Historians of the Republic of Macedonia, and the Association of History Teachers of Macedonia are organizing a scientific conference with the topic **“The Cultural, Historical and Spiritual Heritage in Macedonia – Challenges, Opportunities and Perspectives”**.

The conference will take place on May 8<sup>th</sup> 2012 (Tuesday) in Cifte Amam (Old Bazaar/ Carsija of Skopje), starting at 11:00 to 13:00 h.

Let's get started!

Please confirm attendance