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A PART OF THE HISTORY OF ANCIENT MACEDONIA

Povzetek

DEL ZGODOVINE STARE MAKEDONIJE

Neposreden povod za ta prispevek je ponovno odpiranje »makedonskega vprašanja« kot del zarotniškega pojmovanja zgodovine, ki že 2500 let ne zapušča vsakodnevnih političnih scene in tako kvari mednarodne odnose na tem občutljivem delu Evrope.

Raziskave na tem področju streme k odkrivanju zgodovinske resnice o dejstvu avtohtonosti makedonskega naroda, njihove narodne identitete in kontinuitete obstoja, njihovega doprinosa k svetovni civilizaciji in tudi tega, kar se dotika makedoncev in njihovega upora proti zgodovinski zlorabi makedonskega vprašanja. Ta prispevek je posvečen vprašanju ali imajo posamezne politične entitete izključno pravico do monopola nad zgodovinsko dediščino, saj današnja mlada generacija ni dovolj seznanjena o zgodovinskih dejstvih.

Predniki Grkov so v 11. stol pr. Kr. prišli na Balkan ne z imenom Grki ampak kot Dorci in še celo 400 let kasneje v Homerjevi Iliadi in Odiseji v 7. stol. pr. Kr niso bili imenovani kot Grki, ampak kot Ahajci, Egejci ali Danajci in šele kasneje nastopijo kot Heleni in Grki. Temeljno zgodovinsko vprašanje je, zakaj ime Makedonija ni takoj neposredno povezano s tem, kar sodobni zgodovinarji napačno označujejo kot »helenizem«. Heleni so prvič v stoletja dolgi zgodovini administrativno osvojili Južno Makedonijo dokaj kasno, šele po prvi balkanski vojni leta 1912, po Pogodbi v Bukarešti, 13. avgusta 1913.

Part of the history of Ancient Macedonia vs. Hellenism

Greeks predecessors came to the Balkans in the 11th century B.C. without this name, but in fact came as Doric [1], and were not given this name even 400 years later in the 7th century B.C., but as Achaiá's, Aegean or Dania's [2, 3], and later appears as Helenians or Greeks [4]. The basic historical question is why the name of Macedonia is not immediately connected with what some modern historians wrongly referred to as Hellenism? The Helenians for the first time in their centuries-old history administratively conquered the southern part of Macedonia as late as after the First Balkan War in 1912, by Bucharest Agreement, 13 August 1913.

The concept of "Hellenism" was introduced in historiography by the German historian Droysen [5], and later was accepted by other authors such as Ferguson [6], Heuss, Launey [7], Beloch [8] and others. A starting point for these authors was their assumption that Macedonian history and culture belonged to the "Hellenic corpus". These assumptions were made without giving consideration to the archetypal prehistory of the Central Balkans and its culture which spread to the south, east and west.

The spread of cultures is confirmed by the presence of Mesolithic archetype art present in “Ancient Europe” with its cultural epicenter located in Lepenski Vir, which existed between 7,000 – 6,000 B.C. Here Mesolithic sacral architecture, monumental stone sculptures, clay model houses, etc. have been found. Clay model houses have been found in Porodin and other localities as well. When these people lived in clay houses, people in other parts of Europe still lived in caves, natural shelters, or in modest huts and tents and, from the scant findings, still engraved their art in bone and horn [9]. According to Neolithic engravings found in Macedonia, the more advanced cultures drew their art onto rocks, like the samples found in Kratovo depicting maps of stars, symbols now utilized by Christianity and other artistic motifs [10].

The artistic talent of this culture is also supported by some of the oldest artefacts like the small plank discovered by Hourmoyziades [11] in Kostur in Dupjak locality in the Kolosojanitsa archaeological site dating back to 5260 B.C. This small tablet with writing in the linear alphabet is believed to be of Macedonian origin. This and other such archaeological artifacts existing in Macedonia are deemed to be the oldest written records of archetypical nature depicting the Macedonian culture and civilization of the time; an age old culture that not only existed but was spread to other regions and continued to exist over time.

If a comparison is to be made between the writing found in Macedonia with that found on the soil of Elada, then it is best to resort to the systematization of the alphabets done by the glossologist Mpampinioti [4]. According to Mpampinioti, the hieroglyphic alphabet found in Crete from about 2000 to 1750 B.C., was used in a form of seal or stamp. Linear A also found in Crete was used from 1700 to about 1450 B.C. Both alphabets, as of yet, have not been deciphered. There is also Linear B found in Crete, Pylos and Mycenae; this alphabet, already deciphered, was used between about 1450 and 1200 B.C. The syllabic alphabet of Cyprus appeared around the 6th to the 4th century B.C., while the Phoenician alphabet appeared in the 10th century B.C.

From what we have shown above, it follows that the oldest writing on the soil of Elada is at least 3000 years younger than that found in Macedonia and at least 2000 years younger than the “Vinča” alphabet.

Again, based on our findings, it appears that the cultures found in Macedonia were far more advanced than those found in Elada. It follows then that it is possible for the more advanced cultures to be imposing themselves on a less culturally advanced people. And not only by their better organization and more advanced weapons but rather by their superiority from a material, social and cultural aspect.

The Macedonian conquests in Europe, Asia and Africa were achieved by Macedonian kingdoms and not by any Hellenes. In fact if we look at history closely we will find that Elada was never united. What modern historians today call Elada were a number of individual independent city states, each with their own government, military and political system. The Macedonian Dynasties of the Antigonids, Seleucids and Ptolemais, on the other hand, established Macedonian kingdoms each with its own government and with a single ruler at the top. None of these kings was a “Hellenic” monarch and the tradition established and maintained in those kingdoms was Macedonian and not Hellenic.

Looking at this another way, none of the so-called “Hellenes” had anything to do with the strategic role of creating the Macedonian Empires on the three continents. The hoplite unit of 700 heavily armed and armoured soldiers belonging to the Corinthian Alliance, which Alexander took with him, remained in the shadows during Alexander’s entire campaign. Alexander took these soldiers not as fighters but more as hostages and guarantors of peace in Elada and for non-combat duties like securing roads, Papazoglou [12]. The only Hellene in Alexander’s camp was Eumenes of Cardia, from a city located on the western coast of the Thracian Herones. Eumenes’s role in Alexander’s campaign was as personal cabinet chief of the king responsible for making records in the military logs. Eumenes was not liked by the Macedonians, particularly by Craterus. Eumenes was sacked by Antigonus in 315 B.C.

The succeeding cultures in Europe, Asia and Africa appeared by merging the dominant Macedonian factor with the Eastern components to form one successive primary component that can only be described as a Macedonian civilization. What many historians refer to as the “Hellenistic Period”, spanning from Alexander the Great’s death to the total takeover of the Ptolemaic Dynasty by Rome in 30 B.C., can best be described as the “Macedonian Period” because there was no “Hellenic influence” during the so-called “Hellenistic Period” contrary to what some modern Greeks claim today.

While some authors position the “Hellenistic Period” from the end of Alexander to 30 B.C., we position the “Macedonian Period” to begin at Philip II’s time, more precisely from the time the City States were defeated in the battle of Chaeronea in 338 B.C., to the time of the Arab penetrations into Europe. Foundations laid by the Macedonians during ancient times gave birth to a unique Macedonian cultural heritage in the form of institutions including libraries established by the Macedonians, which in time became global knowledge centre essential to the formation of our modern civilization.

Macedonia’s rapid rise under Philip II’s reign

Philip II (*Filippos*) ruled Macedonia during the period from 359 to 336 B.C. Soon after becoming king, Philip put an end to Dynastic rivalries in his kingdom and took control of the military and state functions and turned them into professional institutions. His excellent statesmanship and military knowledge transformed his kingdom from a backwater country into a superpower in a relatively short time.

Philip II expanded his frontiers to the east and liberated Amphipolis (357 B.C.), Metona (354 B.C.), Pidna, Potidea and other cities on the Aegean Coast, thus gaining access to the Mediterranean Sea. His military build-up and influence in the region radically curbed Athenian influence in its domestic policy towards Macedonia. With his military might, and as an influential diplomat, Philip was also able to pacify neighboring tribes such as the Illyrians, Peonians, Tribalians, Thracians, Thessalians, Olinthians and Epirians. In parallel with Philip’s increase in authority in the region, a pro-Macedonian movement was also emerging in Elada.

In regard to his domestic policy, Philip II carried out military, social and political reforms. He neutralized separatist tendencies in his ancient aristocracy and put it under his control. At the same time he abolished the local dynasties in the northern parts of Upper Macedonia, including the ones in Orestis, Lynceus and Elimeia, and strengthened the unity and power of the people in Macedonia. Additionally he introduced financial reforms and promoted his own gold currency, "the Macedonian stater". In this way he undermined the value of the Persian and Athenian currencies. By doing so he contributed to the development of Macedonian trade with other economic sectors and bolstered the security of Macedonia. Philip also made large investments in road, port and city construction and in building new fortresses. For example, in 344 B.C. he built the city of Heraklea (*Hrakleian*) in a suitable strategic site in Pelagonia near present-day Bitola, while the cities of Philippi and Philippopolis were built in Thrace in 356 B.C.

During his reign, Philip II carried out major reorganization in his army and introduced new strategies and tactics for battle. By employing various formations and combined actions he developed new fighting techniques, one being the Macedonian phalange, which employed sixteen to twenty foot long spears or pikes known as sarissas. The phalange became a major elite force whose fighting abilities were unparalleled in the then world. The phalange consisted of units of infantrymen positioned in formation of 16 rows each armed with sarissas in addition to the usual arms. The cavalry was also an important component that carried out surprise attacks and various other maneuvers. The Macedonian military along with the Macedonian navy and merchant fleet, with bases in the Thermaic Gulf, contributed immensely to the security and economic development of the Macedonian coast.

Improvements also attributed to Philip II were military discipline, training soldiers and innovation in military armaments. He introduced the siege engine, unknown before his time, as well as made use of dogs during military campaigns. Bloodhounds and watchdogs were used mainly in the mountains of Thrace, Illyria and Elada to track the enemy.

During his military reorganization Philip reintroduced the concept of equal rights and privileges applicable to all soldiers, an ancient Macedonian Argued tradition. Privileges were no longer a luxury of the aristocratic cavalrymen; they applied to every soldier equally.

Philip II was supreme commander, judge and archpriest. All important issues were addressed by the army assembly which in turn acknowledged the king with acclamation, addressed issues of inheritance and acted as the Supreme Court in cases of high treason. This central power exercised by Philip was well summed up by Demosthenes (384-322) of Athens when he said "Philip of Macedon was an army leader, treasurer, politician and diplomat, all at the same time. No one had irritated Europe so much as this son of Amyntas".

Besides being a powerful leader, according to Demosthenes, Philip was also an irritant of Europe. This eternal antagonism between Macedonia and most City States, except for Sparta, manifested itself again during the Holy War in Middle Elada when the Phocians plundered the Oracle of Delphi and their military terrorized the entire region. Being unable to handle the situation, the City States turned to Philip for help. The Macedonian intervention in 352 B.C. was a magnificent victory. By pushing the Phocians out Philip managed to extend his Macedonian influence in Thessaly down to Thermopylae.

In the following eight years Macedonia's frontiers expanded from the Adriatic Sea to the Black Sea and the intrusive cities in Chalcidice surrendered one by one to Macedonian control. All this brought great economic loss to Athens and damaged its trade and prestige. Regarding this, Demosthenes, the greatest orator and leader of the anti-Macedonian party in Athens, in 348 B.C. expressed himself and his aggressive Athenian attitude towards Macedonia by composing his "First Philippic", openly attacking Philip by calling on all Hellenes to take arms against the "Macedonian barbarians". He also openly affirmed that anyone who was not a Hellene was a barbarian, confirming once again that the Hellenes of the time did not consider the Macedonians to be Hellenes. Animosities followed in spite of the "Philocrates Peace agreement" concluded between Athens and Macedonia in 346 B.C.

In the spring of 340 B.C. Philip II began a campaign to subdue the Thracians in the lower basin of the Danube River and the Scythians and Triballians in Upper Mezia. His victorious achievements irritated the anti-Macedonians in the City States, particularly Athens, which could not accept the fact that it was losing its political hegemony in the Aegean world. As a result of this, Demosthenes began to look to the Persians for alliances and used Persian gold to instigate a war between Athens and Macedonia.

The inevitable clash between the Macedonians and the unified Hellenic military coalition (Athens, Thebes and others, except for Sparta) finally culminated on the plain of Chaeronea in Boeotia. In 338 B.C. Philip's Macedonians smashed the unified Hellenic army to pieces, from which it never recovered, thus subduing and putting the City States under Macedonian control. The Macedonians led by Philip II and by his young son Alexander achieved a decisive victory over the City States, a victory still symbolized by the magnificent monument the "Lion of Chaeronea".

This significant and decisive military victory over the City States coupled with Macedonia's economic superiority in the region led to the Selinski Congress, held in Corinth in 338/337 B.C., which formally put an end to City State independence as a whole and as individual poleis. Macedonian hegemony was thus established which was followed by general peace in the Balkans. During the clash between Macedonia and the City States, which included Athens and Thebes, the two most powerful enemies of Macedonia, Sparta remained neutral.

A magnificent statue was erected in Athens to honor Philip, while Alexander for his part was given the right of citizenship in the City States.

During his twenty-four year reign, Philip turned Macedonia into a modern state. He first concluded a "general peace" agreement between Macedonia and the City States, as well as among the City States themselves putting an end to all their rivalries. In this way sea traffic was freed enabling new opportunities for trade.

After concluding the peace treaties Philip appointed himself supreme military and political leader and confirmed the inviolability of private ownership. He also freed all the slaves and divided the land among all the farmers, in that way satisfying the demands of the pro-Macedonian party in Elada.

Since the Persian threat was a constant reminder, Philip made use of the Hellenic "alliance" at the Congress of Corinth, in 337/336 B.C., in which he was elected supreme ruler with absolute authority, to begin a war campaign against Persia.

After establishing full control of the City States, Philip returned to Macedonia and began preparations for war against Persia. In the spring of 335 B.C. he established his expedition force, consisting of 10,000 Macedonian soldiers, and placed them under Parmenio and (his son-in-law) Attalus's command to serve as an advanced guard in Asia Minor. The force crossed the Hellespont without any resistance and captured Troy. This is where Parmenio first received news that Philip was dead; murdered.

Philip's murder took place during the wedding ceremony of his daughter Cleopatra to king Alexander of Epirus. Philip was killed during the court festivities, during the athletic competitions, taking place in Aegae, the ancient Macedonian capital. After the crowd had filled the arena to the last seat, the ceremonial procession began to march. The procession consisted of participants carrying decorative statues of the Olympic gods and a magnificent statue of Philip sitting on his throne. Philip's appearance fired up the crowd with enthusiasm as he requested his bodyguards to follow. Then suddenly a young man unexpectedly approached Philip and stabbed him with a knife. That young man turned out to be Pausanias, a member of the Royal guard.

Philip's premature death at age 47 caused a crisis in the Balkans and in the entire European continent, particularly in the City States. His unexpected death cut short his long ambitions but left Macedonia in a lot better situation militarily and economically and a lot more powerful than it had ever been before. His achievements were simply magnificent.

Philip made Macedonia powerful, pacified the City States mostly by diplomacy and left a worthy successor to his throne, his son Alexander, whose glory would dwarf his own.

Philip II was buried somewhere in Aegae, in a magnificent royal tomb.

Ancient Macedonian cultural accomplishments

Following in the footsteps of his predecessors in renovating his country, particularly in those of Archelaus (413-399 B.C.), Philip II fostered better conditions for the development of the Macedonian language, alphabet, philosophy, history, mathematics, medical sciences and other disciplines. Industrious and notable people also contributed to Macedonia's enlightenment, some voluntarily. This included notables from Ionia in Asia Minor, Elada, Sicily and other cultural worlds. Famous Macedonian and non-Macedonian academics of the time included Aristotle of Stagira, Artrijlat of Tas, Amarija, Aristobul, Zojl, philosopher and critic of Homer, historian Dinokritus, historian Kalistenis (who, being a chief of protocol and historiography, followed Alexander during his long campaigns), mathematician Leodam, famous physician Nicomachus (father of Aristotle), the icon-painter Polignost, famous Pythagoras of Abdira, father of the Sophists etc. [13].

Archaeological research in Trebenište near Ohrid, Beranci near Bitola and in Tetovo prove that at the end of the 6th century and at the beginning of the 5th century B.C., Macedonia was experiencing a new wave of cultural and artistic achievement, a mix of autochthonous characteristics and some imported from neighboring cultures [14].

During a more recent archaeological dig by Andronikus [15] in 1985 in the Vergina (Kutleš) locality, located near the River Bistritsa (Haliakmon) by Beroya, the royal necropolis

of Philip II was allegedly discovered. The structure was built at great depth and was well preserved. A complex of women's graves was also found. Philip II was known to have had eight wives: Fila, Audata, Filina, Ilimia, Nikesipolis, Meda, Cleopatra and Europa [16].

The walls of this necropolis were made of marble, decorated with scenes of the king's life, painted with bright colors still preserved and in good condition. This was a unique find, one of a kind from that period.

The vaults in this necropolis were filled with richly decorated items of ivory, dishes, furniture, items made of bronze, iron, silver and gold, bearing witness to the fact that Macedonia was well developed materially and spiritually. These findings are an important source of information to study the history of Macedonia. At least culturally, spiritually and materially, the Macedonians were not "barbarians" as Demosthenes would have us believe. On the contrary, the Macedonians were not only excellent leaders and brave soldiers; they were also nation builders and cultural icons of our modern culture. These findings bear witness to a civilization of a new epoch and to the fact that Macedonia, before anything else, was a cradle of the new culture of Europe.

Symbols

In addition to mythological and other symbolic expressions, mascots and emblems were also present in the Macedonian world. In the Osiris myth, regarding the origin of Macedon, it was emphasized that Macedon wore a wolf's head as an emblem while his brother Anubis wore the head of a dog. In the myth regarding the founder of the Argaed Dynasty, Perdiccas I had a goat with silver antlers as a mascot. In symbolism the goat defined the theological-philosophical and aesthetic-artistic expression of skillfulness, inclination to freedom and to enlightenment.

Goats guided people at the Delphic oracle to a place where money emerged from the womb of the earth and where they danced. Inspired by their dances people understood the divine importance of goats, but also of the money that emerged from the earth. To explain this "theophany" the Oracle was established.

The Delphic oracle, second to the leading Dordonian oracle, advised Perdiccas I to establish a city at the place where he found white goats with silver antlers. That city he founded was Aegae, the first capital of ancient Macedonia. Aegae was also called Milobot, a place for raising sheep (a word derived from the words "milon" meaning a flock of sheep and from the word "bosko" meaning to graze or to shepherd). Perdiccas experienced all this at the holy place he built for the Macedonians in the Holy Mountain in Pieria located under the roof of Mount Olympus.

The lion was also present in Macedonian symbolism (coats of arms).

The Sun was, as a universal symbol of Macedonian Royalty, adopted by the various Macedonian Dynasties. The Sun was a divine object not only because it was a source of light and heat but because of its importance in sustaining life. In iconography the sun's rays are portrayed as heavenly, having spiritual influence over the earth and over individuals. The sun's rays are illustrated by straight lines or by wavy lines. For example in one icon king Midas's hair was illustrated as the rays of the sun.

Sun symbolism is also illustrated in petro-glyph art in Macedonia which dates back between 3400 and 1800 B.C. The Sun in these symbols is depicted as a circle with a cross drawn inside it. In some symbols a large hole is made in the centre where the cross lines intersect. This, according to the artist, demonstrates that the entire solar system is governed by the golden intersection law which is proven to exist in the solar oscillatory process by modern science, Tomić, Koruga [17].

The most beautiful symbol of the divine and life giving sun can be found on the golden urn in which Philip II's alleged remains were placed, which to modern archaeology and modern history is known as the Sun of Vergina (Kutleš).

The golden sun of Philip II the sun of Vergina (Kutleš)

As we stated earlier, archaeological excavations in Vergina (Kutleš) locality in the foothills of Pieria and in the district of Botiaia respectively have unearthed artefacts belonging to the material culture of the prehistoric Macedonian city Aegae. Here also rest the necropolises of the Macedonian kings Andronicus [15], excavated in 1969, 1979 and 1985. A golden intarsia (wood inlay) depicting a golden sun with sixteen golden, straight rays (eight long and eight short) is displayed on top of the cover of a golden urn alleged to hold Philip II's cremated remains. The golden sun here is a traditional symbol of the Macedonian Argaed Dynasty of Orestis (Kostur).

Another interpretation and probably the best so far of the sun symbol in Macedonian tradition is that given by Herodotus [1], which according to him represents freedom, the freedom that Perdikkas was awarded by his employer. Here is what Herodotus had to say: "He summoned the servants, the three descendants of Temenus, and ordered them to leave his country. They agreed but would not leave until he paid them their owed salaries which they earned. When the king heard they wanted their salaries, he became furious and, looking at a spot of sunlight on the floor coming through an opening in the roof, he pointed to it with his hand and said: 'There is your salary which you have earned, I am giving it to you'. The youngest Perdikkas, who happened to carry a sword, replied: 'Our king, we agree to take what you are giving to us,' then drew a circle around the sunspot on the floor, cut the piece out with his knife, took it and the three brothers left."

Divine symbolism was also displayed during Alexander's time when the Egyptian god Amon, portrayed by Alexander, was shown to wear ram horns on his head while Bucephalus, Alexander's horse, wore bull horns, probably depicting the Egyptian god Apis.

This kind of symbolism was also present in later years during the time of Seleucus I 312-281 B.C. Seleucus was one of Alexander's army commanders and when he became king of Asia he stamped his own coins. One of his coins, a silver tetra-drachma, displayed the head of Bucephalus as a divine sign. Stamped on the silver coin was also the inscription "Basileos Seleukos".

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Abstract

The direct reason for this paper is once again opening the “Macedonian issue” as a conspiring concept of history, which has not left the daily political world scene for 2500 years already, thus disturbing the international relations in this very sensitive part of Europe.

Research in this field aims at contributing to the realization of the historical truth regarding the autochthonous fact of the Macedonian people, their national identity and continuity, the contribution of Macedonia to the world civilization, but also regarding the Macedonians and their confronting the historical abuse of the Macedonian issue. This paper is devoted to the question of whether the separate political entities have the exclusive right to monopoly over the historical heritage, while the young generations are not educated enough with the historical facts.

Greeks predecessors came to the Balkans in the 11th century B.C. without this name, but in fact came as Doric and were not given this name even 400 years later in Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in the 7th century B.C., but as Achaia’s, Aegean or Danaians, and later they appeared as Helenians or Greeks. The basic historical question is why the name of Macedonia is not immediately connected with what some modern historians wrongly referred to as Hellenism? The Helenians for the first time in their centuries-old history administratively conquered the southern part of Macedonia as late as after the First Balkan War in 1912, by Bucharest Agreement, 13 August 1913.