HISTORICAL PROFILES / North Macedonia

National awareness and enlightenment

After four centuries of existence within the Ottoman Empire, the early 19th century in Macedonia was marked by the awakening of national awareness. Efforts to raise the national spirit through education brought about the publishing of books in the Macedonian language, the first ones dealing with religious themes. In the 1830s the first secular municipal schools were opened in towns such as Skopje, Veles and Prilep. In 1838 Macedonian language and literature was given a boost by the opening in Thessalonica of the first printing house to use Church Slavonic script by Hadzi Teodosij Sinaitski from Dojran. The emergence of prominent intellectuals had a profound impact on the struggle to introduce services in the Slavonic language in churches, which resulted in the appointment of the first archpriests to perform services for Macedonians in their native language in the 1860s. The Dictionary of Three Languages (Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish) by Gjorgji Pulevski was published in Belgrade in 1875.



Icon The Holy Seven Slav Teachers

1862



Dictionary of Three Languages

1875



Gjorgij Pulevski

1880s

Struggle for national liberation and autonomy

A crucial event in the political history of Macedonia was the establishment of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation (also known as the Secret Macedonia and Adrianopole Region Revolutionary Organisation). Its foundations were laid in Thessalonica on 23 October 1893 for the purpose of organising a resistance movement for liberation and the establishment of an autonomous state of Macedonia. The idea was to establish a new organisation with members who had been born or were living in Macedonia, so that its activities would not be taken advantage of by some other nation. After several unsuccessful rebellions at the close of the 19th century, the Ilinden Uprising organised by the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation began on 2 August 1903. Fighting in the areas of Krushevo, Neveska and Klisura resulted in the establishment of the Krushevo Republic. Although the republic lasted only ten days it had a government and other bodies and was the first republic in the Balkans.



Nikola Karev

End of the 19th centuty



Gjorche Petrov



Photograph of the Krushevo Revolutionary Squad

July, 1903

Partitioning of Macedonia

In the broader sense the Ilinden Uprising made a major contribution to forming a new democratic world in the Balkans. The Krushevo Manifesto, which announced the principles of the revolution, proclaimed in a profoundly democratic way equal rights for Macedonians, Turks, Albanians, Vlachs and all other ethnic groups living in Macedonia. But the outcome of the Balkan Wars in 1912 and 1913 had devastating consequences for Macedonian people. After victory over the Ottoman Empire by the Balkan Alliance, the ethnic territory of Macedonia was partitioned among its members Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece, a small portion having been assigned to Albania, in accordance with the Bucharest Peace Treaty of 10 August 1913. Despite all efforts to raise the issue of an autonomous Macedonian state the same division was confirmed by the Versailles Peace Treaty after World War I.



Type-writing machine

Early 20th century

Personal belonging of Dimitrija Chupovski



Flag of the St Petersburg Colony of Macedonians

1913

Standard