

Chapter Five: Schooling and Ruling

5.1 Foreign educational institutions in Macedonia, 1870–1912

ALONGSIDE THE STRUGGLE to establish and expand their own religious jurisdiction in Macedonia, as described in the preceding chapter, the external Balkan States attempted to reinforce and support their respective positions through the establishment of educational institutions. Vast sums were spent by the governments of Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia to finance campaigns aimed at attracting children from the Macedonian Christian population to their respective Greek, Bulgarian and Serb schools. Religious jurisdiction was utilised in support of ethnographic and statistical data. The Balkan States recognised that through the establishment of schools in Macedonia, they could strategically use the number and location of ‘their’ schools as evidence to demonstrate to Europe that their particular population was inhabiting Macedonia, or specific regions of the land, in accordance to their territorial aspirations. Statistics could also be incorporated into the production of ethnographic maps; and, ultimately through the process of foreign education the Balkan States hoped to create ‘Greeks’, ‘Bulgarians’ and ‘Serbs’ of Macedonian schoolchildren.

Foreign education in Macedonia at the turn of the nineteenth century was a dangerous and divisive element. The Balkan States intended for education to be used for the advancement of their political aims in Macedonia. As such, education was used as a primary tool in the struggle for Macedonia, according to the historian E. Kofos, ‘the interested countries, as a first step towards supporting their influence over the region, concentrated in fomenting among the inhabitants of Macedonia the national consciousness of their choice’.¹ The school curriculum was not solely intended to provide an education. Instead, the purpose of the schools was far more

¹ E. Kofos, *Nationalism and Communism in Macedonia*, Thessaloniki, 1964, p. 22.

sinister, the historian D.M. Perry claiming that they were often 'hotbeds of national agendas'.²

Macedonian children found themselves the central object of the educational campaign as a result of belonging to the dominant majority group, but were not the exclusive target for assimilation by the foreign school systems. Vlah association to the Patriarchate Church, and the implications of a potential loss of Vlah support to the Greek cause in Macedonia, caused the Patriarchate to specifically focus upon attracting Vlah children to Greek schools. Each of the Balkan protagonists sought to open the greatest number of schools and attract the highest number of students; and it was of no real significance from what ethnic group they originated, although necessarily derived from the Christian population.

Educational activities sponsored by the Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian governments had divisive consequences for the unity of the Macedonian people, with every attempt made to replace one domination with another and to instil a new sense of identity upon Macedonians. Macedonia was transformed into an arena where rival parties battled for the minds of generations of children.

Greek Patriarchate schools

IN THE PERIOD between the abolition of the Macedonian Archbishopric of Ohrid and the establishment of the Bulgarian Exarchate, the Greek Patriarchate enjoyed unhindered religious domination in Macedonia, and the establishment of the first foreign schools occurs during this period. According to the historian A. Trajanovski Greek Patriarchate schools were established predominantly in urban centres, with few founded in the countryside villages.³ Following the establishment of the Bulgarian

² D.M. Perry, *The Politics of Terror: The Macedonian Liberation Movements 1893-1903*, Duke University Press, 1988, p. 28.

³ A. Trajanovski, *Crkovno-Uobilishnite Opsbtini vo Makedonia* [The Parish Educational Councils in Macedonia], Skopje 1988, p. 62.

Exarchate (1870) and the Congress of Berlin (1878), Greek educational activities significantly increased in Macedonia. Greek Consulates in Macedonia played a central role in the educational campaign and were instrumental in founding ‘a large number of different educational institutions and organisations whose underlying purpose was the efficient propagation of the Greek language, Greek literacy and consciousness’.⁴ The historian, H. Poulton, stated that organisations were formed for the purpose of advancing Greek interests in Macedonia, and they cooperated with the Greek Foreign Ministry, the Patriarchate and the Greek State school system.⁵ Among the larger of these organisations was the Athens-based Association for the Propagation of Greek Letters (1874), Committee for the Reinforcement of the Greek Church and Education (1886), Epicurus Council of the Macedonians (1903), and the Melas Infantile Chamber (1904). Based in Constantinople, there were other Greek organisations of a similar nature: Greek Philological Association (1861), Macedonian Phil-Educational Brotherhood (1871), Hellenic Literary Association (1874), and Educational and Philanthropic Brotherhood or Love Each Other (1880).

Greece recognised that along with the formation of the Bulgarian Exarchate and its expansion into Macedonia, the establishment of Bulgarian schools was clearly on the agenda. As a reaction, Greek educational activity took on a sense of urgency and sought to maximise the opportunity to expand its own educational system. The Russian Consul in Solun reported in 1873 that the

Greeks take advantage of this weakness on the part of the Bulgarians to set up societies for the dissemination of the Greek alphabet and letters in Macedonia; they train young Greeks to occupy the posts of teachers; open new schools, give aid in the form of money and books to the existing Greek schools ... The Seres society is under the secret chairmanship of the Metropolitan there, whereas that in Salonika – under the secret chairmanship of the Greek Consul; the two of them have contacts with the society in Athens, from where they receive money and books; what is more,

⁴ M. Apostolski, D. Zografski, A. Stoyanovski, G. Todorovski, editors, *A History of the Macedonian People*, Skopje, 1979, p. 136.

⁵ H. Poulton, *Who are the Macedonians?* London, 1995, p. 59.

they have patrons in Constantinople, Vienna and Odessa from among the Greeks living there.⁶

Over the next 20 years, Bulgarian education rapidly spread throughout Macedonia. To counteract the Bulgarian advance, the *Ethnike Hetairia* (National Society) organisation was founded in Athens in 1894. The historian L.S. Stavrianos points out that its central supporters were drawn from officers of the Greek army and wealthy Greeks. During the early years following its formation, it subsidised Greek schools in Macedonia,⁷ and according to the contemporary commentator, I. Ivanich, funding was also drawn from the Greek government and the Syligos.⁸

Assessing the number of Greek schools in Macedonia during the period 1877-1904 is relatively difficult due to the conflicting and inconsistent nature of available figures. The compiler of statistical data, D.M. Brancoff, contended that according to the Greek Minister M. Delyannis, in 1877 there were 256 Greek schools with 10,968 pupils.⁹ The Greek Syligos for the same year claimed 638 schools with 32,885 pupils¹⁰, while, the commentator, G. Chassiotis in his book *Public Instruction among the Greeks* (1881), stated that in 1878 the number of Greek schools in Macedonia was 421

⁶ Russian diplomatic report dated 8 June 1873 from the State Historical Archive of the Leningrad District, V. Bozhinov and L. Panayotov, editors, *Macedonia: Documents and Material*, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, 1978, p. 298.

⁷ L.S. Stavrianos, *The Balkans Since 1453*, 1966, pp. 520-521. The Greek historical figure Ion Dragoumis understood the beneficial role of schools to Greek aspirations. Through education students were enabled to 'sense that they belonged to an entity greater than the kingdom. In an age of irredentist nationalism, Dragoumis was its most conscious and vivid exponent in Greece. He preferred the worlds of Byzantium and the Ottoman Empire to classical Greece because they were more relevant to his nationalist visions. Dragoumis was convinced that Greece possessed enough schools but of the wrong kind. The gymnasia seemed to him to be a little more than factories for producing civil servants. The kingdom did not need any more schools but the Greeks outside its frontiers did. He conjured up a romantic vision of a one-room schoolhouse with a single teacher spreading nationalist ideas among the Greeks of Asia Minor and Macedonia'. The historian, G. Augustinos, *Consciousness and History: Nationalist Critics of Greek Society 1897-1914*, Colombia University Press, 1977, pp. 111-112.

⁸ I. Ivanic, *Makedonia i Makedoncite* [Macedonia and the Macedonians], Vol II, Belgrade, 1908, p. 394. A Greek organisation, the Syligos outwardly professed to be literary and scientific organisations, intended to advance education amongst Greeks. The Syligos was supported financially by wealthy Greeks, but the organisation was in fact politically motivated and sought as its primary aim to support Patriarchate attempts to expand throughout the Orthodox Balkans and assimilate the non Greek Orthodox Christian populations under Ottoman rule.

⁹ D.M. Brancoff, *La Macedoine et sa population chretienne* [The Christian Population of Macedonia], Paris, 1905, p. 63.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 63.

with 20,682 pupils.¹¹ The commentator, V. Colocotronis presented figures based on official Greek data for the Solun and Bitola vilayets of 1,011 schools (with 1,463 teachers) and 59,640 pupils for 1902.¹² According to the 1953 *Greek Encyclopedia* there were 973 schools (with 3,335 teachers) and 55,633 pupils in the Solun and Bitola vilayets in 1904 and a further 402 schools in the Skopje Vilayet with 22,367 pupils—a total of 78,000 pupils in 1,375 schools.¹³

Skopje Vilayet figures for Greek Patriarchate schools are unusual, as few contemporary Greek commentators make claim to the vilayet. V. Colocotronis failed to mention figures for the Skopje vilayet and the contemporary commentator, A.T. Spiliotopoulos, stated that Greeks made no claim to the Skopje vilayet where they had only 5 schools and 327 pupils.¹⁴ The highest claim to Patriarchate schools was from the historian C. Nicolaides. In the 1895 school year he claimed 83,810 Greek school students (not including the Skopje vilayet).¹⁵ Official Greek statistics for 1896 published in the *Glas Makedonski* newspaper in 1897, conflict with those advocated by C. Nicolaides. According to the newspaper, in the Bitola and Solun vilayets there were 907 Patriarchate schools (with 1,245 teachers) and 53,693 students (30,000 less than claimed by C. Nicolaides).¹⁶ It is interesting to compare official Greek government educational statistics for the year 1908 as cited by the Serb commentator I. Ivanic. According to Ivanic, in the Bitola and Solun vilayets the Greek government claimed a total of 998 Patriarchate schools with 1463 teachers.¹⁷ A comparison with

¹¹ Ibid, p. 65.

¹² V. Colocotronis, *La Macedoine et l'hellenisme, etude historique*, Paris, 1919, p. 614 as cited by L. Mojsov, *The Macedonian Historical Themes*, Belgrade, 1979, p. 70.

¹³ *Neoteron enciklopedikon lexikon – Illiu*, Vol XII, Athens, 1953, p. 821, as cited in L. Mojsov, *ibid*, p. 70.

¹⁴ A.T. Spiliotopoulos, *La Macedoine et l'Hellenisme*, 1904, as cited by D. Dakin, *The Greek Struggle in Macedonia 1897-1913*, Thessaloniki, 1966, p. 20.

¹⁵ C. Nicolaides, *Macedonien*, Berlin, 1899, pp. 141-142.

In contrast, D.M. Brancoff, citing Greek sources, claims that in the early 1900s there were 613 Greek schools (with 951 teachers) and 32,476 pupils. D.M. Brancoff, *op. cit.* p. 69.

¹⁶ *Glas Makedonski*, 5 January 1897, Year IV, Number 9, p. 1. According to the article the total budget for the Patriarchate school system in 1896 was 706,524 Francs in the Bitola vilayet and 451,317 Francs in the Solun Vilayet.

¹⁷ I. Ivanic (1908), *op. cit.* pp. 394-396.

Greek data for 1904 represents a reduction of approximately 400 Greek schools in Macedonia.

Table 5.1: Number of Patriarchate Schools and Student Enrolment in Macedonia According to Greek Sources, 1877–1904

	(1)Delyannis	Chassiotis	Nicolaides	Colocotronis	Greek
	(2) Syllogos				Ency.
Year	1877	1878	1895	1902	1904
Schools	(1) 256 (2) 638	421	1,433	1,011	1,375
Pupils	(1) 10,968 (2) 32,885	20,682	83,810	59,640	78,000

Bulgarian Exarchate schools

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF the Bulgarian Exarchate in 1870 and its jurisdiction in north-eastern Macedonia (Veles Eparchy) facilitated the implanting of Bulgarian schools alongside churches. Later with the formation of the Bulgarian State in 1878, and the Congress of Berlin, Bulgarian educational propaganda further broadened in Macedonia as the Exarchate and the Bulgarian government conducted a joint effort in realising this plan. The contemporary commentator R. Von Mach explained that obstacles designed to thwart the expansion of the Exarchate school system came from the Patriarchate-influenced Ottomans and dated back to the Russian-Turkish war, when all Exarchate schools were placed under the supervision of the Greek Bishops (this remained the case until 1881). Supervision of the schools was later withdrawn from the Greek Bishops and transferred to a Turkish Commission (this was seen as a victory by the Bulgarian Exarchate), whilst Patriarchate schools remained independent of any outside supervision. It was not until 1891 that

Exarchate schools were declared independent of the Turkish commissioners and the Exarchate took control of its own educational affairs.¹⁸

According to the historian T.R. Georgevitch financial support was granted to the Exarchate from within the Bulgarian state budget, with the Exarchate creating a special department for this purpose – the ‘Skolsko Popechiteljstvo’ (School Department).¹⁹ The Bulgarian government played a leading role in spreading educational propaganda throughout Macedonia. Stoilov, the President of the Bulgarian government, advanced an explicit Bulgarian program in Macedonia in 1882. It was based on instilling in Macedonians the feeling and consciousness that they were Bulgarian and that further, ‘the Principality is the most natural and active guardian of Macedonia’.²⁰ In pursuit of this objective the Bulgarian government aimed at developing Bulgarian schooling on as wide a scale as possible. In support of this goal a sum of 100,000 levs was expended in 1881; by 1885 the figure had increased to 574,874 levs and was continuing to increase annually.²¹ According to Bulgarian Exarchate data, there was a systematic increase in the number of schools and student enrolment in Macedonia across the years 1886 to 1902.

¹⁸ R. Von Mach, *The Bulgarian Exarchate: Its History and the Extent of its Authority in Turkey*, London, 1907, pp. 24-25.

¹⁹ T.R. Georgevitch, *Macedonia*, London, 1918, p. 152.

²⁰ M. Apostolski, D. Zografski, A. Stoyanovski, G. Todorovski, editors, op. cit. p. 138.

²¹ Ibid, p. 138.

The Polish commentator, Włodzimierz Trampczyński, *Albania i Macedonia*, Warsaw, 1903, stated that the national assembly in Sofia set aside 400,000 levs annually (catered for through the national budget) for the opening of Bulgarian schools in Macedonia. The ethnologist, J. Pshchulkovska-Simitchieva, *Naselenieto i uobilishtata vo Bitola i Bitolsko kon krajot na XIX i pochetokot na XX vek* [The population and schools in Bitola and the Bitola region at the end of the XIX and beginning of the XX centuries], Bitola, 1981, p. 674.

Table 5.2: Number of Exarchate Schools and Student Enrolment in Macedonia
According to Bulgarian Sources, 1886–1912

School Year	Solun Vilayet			Bitola Vilayet			Skopje Vilayet			Total Students
	Schools	Teachers	Pupils	S	T	P	S	T	P	
1886-1887		200	6,689	120	179	6,917	96	137	4,709	18,306
1891-1892	137	290	8,226	174	271	7,821	105	173	5,023	21,070
1894	199		12,158	188		10,473	105		5,429	28,060
1896-1897	221	428	14,252	234	361	14,210	184	292	9,455	37,917
1899-1900	278	486	14,838	273	421	15,161	190	314	9,974	39,973
1901-1902	318	563	17,169	288	436	17,127	211	360	10,816	45,112
1911-1912	360									63,763

Source and notes: Official Bulgarian Exarchate statistics as published by D.M. Brancoff, *La Macedoine et sa population chretienne* [The Christian population of Macedonia], Paris, 1905, p. 69, except for 1894 Exarchate school data, obtained from R. Von Mach, *Makedonskoto Prashbanje* [The Macedonian Question], Skopje, 1990, pp. 139-141, (original title *Macedonische Frage*, Vienna, 1895). According to 1911-12 Exarchate data there were 1,143 schools operating in Macedonia with 1,776 schoolteachers, G.P. Genov, *Neiskiot Dogovor i Blgaria* [The Treaty of Neuilly and Bulgaria], Sofia, 1935, pp. 143-145, as cited in L. Mojsov, op. cit. p.75.

Statistics by Bulgarian commentators were generally consistent with official Exarchate statistics. In Table 5.2, the 1894 figures derived from R. Von Mach's 1895 publication (citing Exarchate statistics), closely correspond with Bulgarian sources such as G.P. Genov who claimed 30,314 pupils and 557 schools (808 teachers) for the 1894-95 school year (a difference of 47 schools and 2,254 students).²² An unusual but significant discrepancy between two sources citing Exarchate School Inspector Reports involves the non-Bulgarian source (A.T. Spilitiopoulos) surprisingly claiming a far higher figure than official Bulgarian statistics. Citing official Exarchate records

²² G.P. Genov's statistical educational data was broken down into the following, 126 schools (197 teachers) and 6,394 pupils in the Skopje vilayet, 238 schools (350 teachers) and 12,963 pupils in the Solun vilayet, and 193 schools (261 teachers) and 10,957 pupils in the Bitola vilayet. G.P. Genov, *Neiskata Dogovor i Blgaria* [The Neuilly Treaty and Bulgaria], Sofia, 1935, pp. 143-145, as cited in L. Mojsov, op. cit. p. 75.

for the 1896-1897 school year, he claimed 843 Bulgarian schools with 64,432 students.²³ The International Carnegie Commission also claimed 843 Exarchate schools, but with 46,432 pupils²⁴, whereas for the same school year the Exarchate claimed 37,917 pupils.²⁵ Data obtained by A.T. Spilitiopoulos for 1896-1897 were much higher than Exarchate figures, however, for 1902 it was significantly lower than Exarchate figures - claiming 592 Bulgarian schools with about 30,000 pupils, whereas the Exarchate claimed 859 schools with 45,112 pupils.²⁶ Citing Exarchate statistics, a Macedonian source claims in the Exarchate educational sphere in the school year 1899-1900 there were 1,053 elementary and grade schools in Macedonia attended by a total of 39,454 children,²⁷ corresponding with Exarchate data published by D.M. Brancoff. Immediately before the Balkan Wars, official Bulgarian Exarchate statistics for the 1911-1912 school year claimed 1,143 schools (1,776 teachers) and 63,763 pupils.²⁸

Serbian schools

UNDER THE SERBIAN regency a 'cultural committee' was formed in Belgrade in 1868 whose chief aim was the opening of Serbian schools in Old Serbia and Macedonia. Armed with textbooks, Serb schoolteachers were active in Macedonia and, with the financial support of the Serbian government, commenced opening schools in the northwestern regions. According to the contemporary commentator, S.

²³ D. Dakin, op. cit. p. 20.

²⁴ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Report of the International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars*, Washington, 1914, p. 27. The figure of 46,432 pupils includes 14,713 children in Exarchate kindergartens.

²⁵ In contrast, the lowest figures are drawn from the newspaper *Glas Makedonski* [Macedonian Voice], 5 January 1897, Year IV, Number 9, p. 1, citing Exarchate school records and claiming 445 schools, 671 teachers and 24,113 students (these figures only apply to the Bitola and Solun Vilayets).

²⁶ Cited in D. Dakin, op. cit. pp. 19-20.

²⁷ M. Apostolski, D. Zografski, A. Stoyanovski, G. Todorovski, editors, op. cit. p. 138.

²⁸ Statistics by G.P. Genov, as cited in L. Mojsov, op. cit. p. 75.

The highest figures for Bulgarian schools in Macedonia are from the historian, Christ Anastasoff, who claims that there were 1,373 schools (with 2,266 teachers) and 78,854 students (he claims these figures only apply to the parts of Macedonia which fell under Greek and Serbian rule after the Balkan Wars). From C. Anastasoff's address before the 19th Annual MPO Convention (September 1, 1940), MPO (Macedonian Political Organisation), *An American Symposium on the Macedonian Problem*, MPO, 1941, p. 48.

Gopchevich, up to 1873 the Serb educational campaign in Macedonia saw 77 schools established.²⁹ Initial Serb progress was later hindered during the Serb-Turkish War (1876-78) when the Ottoman authorities closed all Serb schools in Macedonia. They were not permitted to reopen until 1885.³⁰

Even allowing for Serb designs suffering a setback, Serb educational activity was not of the same magnitude as Bulgarian and Greek efforts. It was only after the Congress of Berlin, when Serbia was forced to look southwards for an outlet to the sea, that Serbian activity intensified. Declaring the inhabitants of Macedonia to be Serbians, Serbia pursued a 'Greater Serbia' policy in Macedonia. However a Serbian educational system in Macedonia without its own church was in an inferior position in relation to the Greeks and Bulgarians with their Exarchate and Patriarchate churches. Serbia relied on its friendly relations with the Greek Patriarchate for the spread of its schools, however the Patriarchate appears to have been unwilling to accommodate the Serbs in strategic areas, particularly in central and southern Macedonia.³¹

The historians D. Djordjevic and S. Fischer-Galati stated that in 1886 the Serbs created, on Bulgarian and Greek prototypes, the Society of Saint Sava

²⁹ S. Gopchevich, *Stara Srbija i Makedonija* [Old Serbia and Macedonia], Belgrade, 1890, pp. 313-315.

³⁰ G.M. Terry, *The Origins and Development of the Macedonian Revolutionary Movement with Particular reference to the Tayna Makedonsko-Odrinska Revolutsonerna Organizatsiya from its Conception in 1893 to the Ilinden Uprising of 1903*, Unpublished MA thesis, University of Nottingham, 1974, p. 61.

³¹ In Bitola, the Greek Patriarchate church permitted a Serbian language service on only one day of the year (the celebration of Saint Sava) for the students of the Serb school. Serbian teachers in Bitola appealed to the Greek Metropolitan Joakim to permit a regular Serbian language service, however the Metropolitan rejected all their requests. K. Bitoski, *Dejnosta na Pelagonskata Mitropolija 1878-1912* [The activities of the Pelagonija Archiepiscopal Diocese 1878-1912], Skopje, 1968, p. 256. The establishment and continued operation of Serb schools were in some instances linked to lobbying of local Ottoman functionaries. For instance, a Serb school was established in Bogomila in 1895 as a direct result of the actions of the regional Kaimakam. In 1897 a Serb school was established in Prilep and in commemoration of the event the Serb priest Alleksa Kochovitch conducted a service to bless the school and prayed that the Ottoman Sultan have a long and healthy life. The commentator, M.V. Vesselinovitch, *Statistika, Srpski shkola y Turskoj (y Staroj Srbiji i Makedoniji) za 1895-96 shkolsky godiny* [Serb school statistics in Turkey (Old Serbia and Macedonia) in the 1895-96 school year], Belgrade, 1897, pp. 9 and 31.

Association whose purpose was to open schools in designated areas of Macedonia.³² It was similar to Greek and Bulgarian organisations – the historian, M.B. Petrovich, stated that ‘it was supposedly a private organisation but actually a front for the Serbian government’.³³ Over the next two years Serbian Consulates were opened in Solun and Skopje (1887) and in Bitola (1888). In March of 1887 the Serbian Ministry of Education formed a special section for ‘Serbian churches and schools outside of Serbia’. This section was soon transferred to the Foreign Ministry and given the designation ‘PP’ (*‘poverljivo prosvetno’* literally meaning ‘confidential cultural’) but normally referred as ‘the propaganda’.³⁴ Thereafter from 1890 onwards the sole responsibility for the opening of Serbian schools in Macedonia was handed to the Foreign Ministry in Belgrade and the consulates in Macedonia; ‘in this way the opening of schools was greatly facilitated’.³⁵

³² D. Djordjevic, and S. Fischer-Galati, *The Balkan Revolutionary Tradition*, Colombia University Press, 1981, p. 177. T.R. Georgievitch describes the Society as an association founded ‘with the object of helping to preserve and educate the Serbian people in Turkish territory’. Op. cit. p. 175.

³³ Petrovich M.B. *A History of Modern Serbia 1804-1918*, Vol II, 1976, p. 496. Petrovich claimed that ‘four fifths of the society’s budget for its school and seminary came from the governments budget’ (p. 498). H.N. Brailsford, a journalist and relief worker in Macedonia, stated ‘the Serbian movement is a purely official agitation, guided and financed in Belgrade’. H.N. Brailsford, *Macedonia: Its Races and their Future*, London, 1906, p. 105. Brailsford spent five months in Macedonia during the winter of 1903-1904. Together with his wife, they worked on behalf of the British Relief Fund after the Ilinden Uprising. Brailsford’s well-known and often quoted work, treats the Macedonians as belonging to the Bulgarian nationality.

³⁴ M.B. Petrovitch, op. cit. p. 496.

³⁵ T.R. Georgevitch, op. cit. p. 175.

Serb Consuls played a central role in the opening of schools in Macedonia. Numerous Serb diplomatic reports attest to this fact. In an official report by Kosta Hristich, the Serb Consul in Solun, to the Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs (dated 26 May 1889, report number 48), it is stated, ‘whatever amount of schools we open will be a forward step’ but that ‘material and financial assistance is required, which unfortunately at the moment is not sufficient’. K. Dzhambazovski, editor, *Gradja za Istoriju Makedonskog Naroda (iz Arhiva Srbije)* [Material on the History of the Macedonian people (from the Serbian Archive)], Vol IV, Book III, (1888-1889), Belgrade, 1987, p. 438. Furthermore, a Consular report by Stojan Novakovic (dated 20 April 1888, report number 80) outlines a proposal for the printing and distribution of Serbian school books in Macedonia in order to guarantee a supply of material and preventing Serbian schools in European Turkey ‘from being without our books for even a day’. Ibid, p. 126.

T.R. Georgievitch claimed that Serb schools were popular and ‘this number (*of schools*) was still insufficient, and the people urgently demanded more’. He designated the principal townships where schools were opened. In the Veles region – Veles town, Bashino Selo, Belovishte, Bogomila; Ohrid region – Borovac, Venchani, Leshani; Skopje region – Banajni, Porech, Chucher, Kuchevishte; Kitchevo region – Kitchevo town, Organci, Prechista; Tetovo region – Tetovo town, Organci, Leshak; and the towns of Gostivar, Debar, Egri Palanka, Zletovo, Klissura, Kratovo, Krushevo and Kumanovo. T.R. Georgevitch, op. cit. p. 177. M.V. Vesselinovitch similarly claimed ‘*y vilayetima Bitolskom i Solunskom narod je neprestano trazbio i molio da my se dopuste srpske shkole*’ (‘in the Bitola and Solun Vilayets the people are impatiently awaiting and pleading for the establishment of Serbian schools’). M.V. Vesselinovitch, op. cit. p. 5.

The historian T.R. Georgevitch presented detailed figures for Serbian schools in Macedonia. In 1891, he claimed, there were 117 Serbian schools (with 140 teachers) opened in the vilayets of Bitola, Skopje and Solun. In 1896 Georgevitch claimed 159 schools (with 240 teachers), and, in 1901, 226 elementary schools, four boys' high schools, one theological college, and three high schools for girls.³⁶ The Carnegie International Commission presented official Serbian statistics for the 1895-1896 school year, enumerating 157 schools with 6,831 pupils, but pointing out that 80 schools, comprising 3,958 pupils, were situated in Serbia proper and not Macedonia.³⁷ Data from the Carnegie International Commission corresponds to figures provided by M.V. Vesselinovitch in his examination of Serbian schools in Macedonia during the 1895-96 school year.

According to contemporary commentator I. Ivanich during the 1901-1902 school year there were 42 Serbian schools in 35 places in the Bitola vilayet, 28 schools in 15 places in the Solun vilayet, 98 schools in 83 places of the Skopje eparchy and 14 schools in 12 places in the Veles district.³⁸ In total, according to Ivanich, there were 182 Serbian schools in Macedonia during the 1901/02 school year; for the same period Georgievitch counted as many as 226 schools. Both Georgievitch and Ivanich agree that there were 300 Serb schools in European Turkey at about the turn of the century, however Ivanich specifies that 185 elementary schools were outside Macedonia and located in Kosovo. Subsequently there were 118 Serbian schools in Macedonia, a figure which generally corresponds to estimates from non-Serb sources.

³⁶ T.R. Georgevitch, op. cit. p. 175. Georgievitch went on to state that by 1900 there were 300 Serbian schools in European Turkey.

³⁷ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, op. cit. p. 27.

³⁸ The figures for the Bitola vilayet include one incomplete secondary school for boys, and another for girls – both were located in Bitola. In the Solun vilayet, two public schools, one complete secondary school and one higher girls school in Solun, and in the Skopje vilayet a boys teacher training school in Skopje, two civilian schools and one incomplete secondary school. I. Ivanich outlined that he did not personally compile these figures – instead they were compiled by Velemir Joksic – a Serb teacher in Macedonia at the turn of the century. I. Ivanic, *Makedonija i Makedonci* [Macedonia and Macedonians], Vol I, Belgrade, 1906, pp. 310-311.

Serbian influence reached its peak in Macedonia in the mid-1890s, later losing ground to the Bulgarian Exarchate.³⁹

Table 5.3: Number of Serb Schools in Macedonia According to Serb Sources, 1876–1901

	Gopcevic	Georgievitch	Veselinovich	Ivanich (1) Gegv'itch (2)
Year	1876	1891	1895-1896	1900-1901
Schools	77	117	76	182 (1) 226 (2)

Romanian schools

ROMANIAN EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY commenced in 1865 when Joan Radulescu and Dimitrie Bolintineanu founded Romanian schools amongst Vlah communities in Macedonia. Supported by the ‘Macedonian Romanian Organisation for Intellectual Culture’ based in Bucharest, it was led by public figures in the political life of Romania and aimed at disseminating Romanian national propaganda. Their case was based on the Vlah language, which they considered to be akin to Romanian. According to the historian, I. Arginteanu, the Bucharest-based organisation was ‘instrumental in the growth of schools and education in Macedonia’.⁴⁰ Furthermore, with the support of the Romanian church, the first teacher training college opened in Bucharest in 1865. The first students were twelve Vlachs from Epirus and in 1867 another group of Vlachs were recruited from Macedonia, Epirus and Thessaly.⁴¹

³⁹ H. Poulton, op. cit. p. 64. Poulton states that ‘Serbian influence reached its peak about 1896 and had waned by the turn of the century’.

⁴⁰ I. Arginteanu, *Istoriya na Armm Makedoncite (Vlasite)* [A History of the Macedonian Vlachs], 1988, p. 189. Originally published in Romanian as *Istoria Romanilor Macedoneni*, Bucharest, 1904. I. Arginteanu claims that in the first few years’ existence of the ‘Macedonian Romanian Organisation for Intellectual Culture’ over 60,000 books were distributed to Romanian schools in Macedonia (p.190).

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 187. Subjects taught at the teacher training college included – languages (Latin, French and Romance), history, mathematics, geography, art and music.

The energetic Apostol Margarit was to lead the Romanian struggle in Macedonia from 1868, directing it against Greek influence upon Vlachs. A born propagandist, an active and able organiser, he worked towards opening Romanian schools and churches in European Turkey. From 1868 to 1878 he taught in Romanian schools, and for the next 20 years he was head of Romanian propaganda activities and inspector of all schools.⁴² The Romanian government put aside special subsidies for the assistance of Vlach schools in European Turkey, financially supported Margarit and other Romanian activists. According to the Romanian historian, Arginteanu, in 1899 there was a total of 34 Romanian schools in Macedonia.⁴³ According to official Romanian government data during the 1904-1905 school year, this figure had grown to a total of 72 Romanian schools in Macedonia, with 94 male teachers and 53 female teachers (147 schoolteachers in all) financed by the government at a cost of 265,361 (Serbian) dinars.⁴⁴ Greek government statistics for 1904 indicate the existence of 49 Romanian schools, 145 schoolteachers and 2002 students, whilst Bulgarian government statistics for 1907 indicate 38 schools with 117 schoolteachers and 2070 students.⁴⁵ In 1905, D.M. Brancoff claimed 43 schools (9 secondary and 34 primary schools with 125 teachers) and 2,207 students.⁴⁶ The historian, Stavrianos, claimed that in 1912 Vlach schools 'reputedly' numbered over 30, with an enrolment of approximately 2,000 Vlach students.⁴⁷

The educational struggle in Macedonia was fundamentally waged between Bulgaria and Greece. Serbia was the third player and the Romanian educational campaign is considered to have followed on as the fourth. Romanian educational

⁴² I. Ivanic (1908), op. cit. p. 408.

⁴³ I. Arginteanu, op. cit. p. 189.

⁴⁴ I. Ivanic (1908), op. cit. p. 418.

⁴⁵ Ibid, pp. 419-420.

⁴⁶ D.M. Brancoff, op. cit. pp. 146-247.

⁴⁷ L.S. Stavrianos, *Balkan Federation (A History of the Movement Toward Balkan Unity in Modern Times)*, 1964, p. 139. It is interesting to note during the Balkan Wars the 'Macedonian – Romanian Society for Intellectual Culture' proposed a solution to the 'Macedonian problem' by advocating an autonomous Macedonia. After the First World War a delegation was sent to the Versailles Peace Conference restating the call for an autonomous Macedonia, with an independent Vlach canton in the Pindus region. H. Poulton, op. cit. p. 62. Note: the Pindus Mountains are located at the meeting of the borders between Macedonia, Greece and Albania. The mountains are a traditional home to the Vlachs.

institutions, although specifically directed at Vlachs, may have even surpassed the number of Serb schools, according to a confidential 1896 Serb diplomatic report by the Emissary in Constantinople, Doctor Vladan Djordjevic. The report states,

Even the third national propaganda campaign which is being conducted in Macedonia is not Serbian, but incredibly Romanian! - though there are under 200,000 Kutzo-Vlachs in Macedonia, the propaganda machine of this mere handful of people which used to speak a distorted Romanian and could only read and write Greek, separated from the Kingdom of Romania by entire compact nations and their national states, has far greater success to boast of already on the national and even the political plane, than we have.⁴⁸

Romanian education did not enjoy the successes of the Greek and Bulgarian schools, as they only sought to open schools for members of the Vlach community. The Romanian government never seriously maintained any territorial ambitions in Macedonia. Its policy was generally aimed at creating leverage with the Bulgarians, (as Romania entertained her own designs on Bulgarian territory in the Dobrudja region). Romanian efforts to establish schools in Macedonia were primarily directed towards the Vlach population and there is no evidence suggesting that they actively competed for non-Vlach children.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Report Number 268 - Dated September 22, 1896. The report was for the Serbian Minister for Foreign Affairs. V. Djordjevic, *Srbije i Turska 1894-1897* [Serbia and Turkey 1894-1897], Belgrade, 1928, p. 57. Similar comments were made in a diplomatic report by Kosta Hristich, Serb General Consul in Solun, in a letter dated 26 May 1889 – *Mi se ne samo s nyima, no chak ni sa Vlashkim shkolama ne mozemo porediti*. K. Dzhambazovski, editor, op. cit. p. 437.

⁴⁹ Romanian educational activities, although maintaining a political agenda, were unlike Bulgarian, Serb and Greek schools, as they were not aimed at attracting non-Vlach students. Vlach education focused upon Vlachs only, and aimed at emancipating them from Greek influence. Romanian propaganda clashed directly with the Greek cause in Macedonia. Earlier, 'Greek schools influenced Vlachs to be pro Greek, but with the formation of Romanian schools the Vlachs became pro-Romanian'. Konstatin Nicha (born 1919 in Bitola), interview conducted in Bitola on 30 March 2000. Konstantin Nicha is an active member of the Vlach community in Bitola and is a well-known retired medical doctor. Ivanich also considered that Vlach schools were primarily involved with attracting Vlach children. I. Ivanich (1908), op. cit. p. 422. As the Greek position had most to lose with the spread of Vlach education, they ardently opposed the opening of Vlach schools. The first Vlach school opened in Macedonia, was in the village of Trnovo in the Bitola district by the Bucharest educated Dimitrie Atanasecu in 1864. The Greek Archbishop Benedict in Bitola opposed the establishment of the school, and instructed the Patriarchate village priest to visit every home in the village whose children attended the school and threatened the parents with excommunication from the church if they did not withdraw their children. The Greek Church succeeded in closing down the school by driving Atanasecu out of the village. Atanasecu travelled to Constantinople and there obtained approval from the Ottoman authorities to reopen the school. In 1867 another Vlach school was opened in the village of Gopesh, the Greek Archbishop Meletie similarly attempted to close the school by declaring the teacher (Dimitrie Cosmescu) as 'a rebel and dangerous agitator'. I. Arginteanu, op. cit. pp. 186-187.

Catholic and Protestant schools

EARLY CATHOLIC ACTIVITY in Macedonia became evident following the Crimean War (1856), and emerged during the subsequent period when Macedonians intensified their struggle against the domination of the Constantinople Patriarchate. In 1879 a detailed plan for the development of Catholic activity was drawn up by the emissaries Paolo Purlang and Giovanni Battista Botca (who visited Macedonia in the same year) and was founded on 'respect for the vernacular language and local customs'.⁵⁰ As such, Catholic education did not serve as an instrument of assimilation, as it did not intend to change the ethnic identity of Macedonian students. The historian S. Dimevski argues that the establishment of missionary centres in Bitola and Solun was aimed at supporting the founding of Catholic education institutions in Macedonia. With financial aid from France and Italy, Catholic missionaries opened schools in Solun and Bitola where teaching was conducted in the French and Italian languages. In the 1890s, French Lazarists operated the secondary school 'L'ecole des Lazaristes', which had a total of 140 students. Other schools in Solun included 'L'ecole de Monsieur Bertrame', 'La societee operaria' and 'L'ecole des coeurs de Calamaris'.⁵¹ In the late 1890s Italian Catholics operated the 'Scuola Nazionale Italijana', also in Solun. Instruction was in Italian and it was upgraded as a commercial/trade school with subjects including mathematics, trade, correspondence, administration and geometrics.⁵²

Catholic schools were also founded in Macedonian countryside villages where Catholicism had been adopted, particularly in the central southern regions of Kukush, Doiran and Enidzhe Vardar.⁵³ However in the large urban centers such as Bitola and Solun, the ethnic make-up of the students, was diverse, particularly in Solun,

⁵⁰ M. Apostolski, D. Zografski, A. Stoyanovski, G. Todorovski, editors, op. cit. p. 139.

⁵¹ S. Dimevski. *Makedonskata Borba za Crkovna i Nacionalna Samostojnost vo XIX vek* [The Macedonian Struggle for Ecclesiastical and National Independence in the XIX century], Skopje, 1988, pp. 243-244.

⁵² Ibid, p. 244.

⁵³ Ibid, p. 246. In the Gevgelija region in 1890 there were 771 adherent Catholic households in 12 villages with 10 operational Catholic schools (p. 246).

Macedonia's principal trade and commercial centre. Student enrolment data reinforces the cosmopolitan nature of the city, highlighting the strong presence of Jews (Table 5.4). The appearance of students from Western European countries can be attributed to diplomatic staff, representatives of foreign banks and businesses.⁵⁴

Table 5.4: Student Statistics by Nationality for the Catholic Boys (Christian Brothers) and Girls School (*Francusko uobilishte na milosrdni sestri*) in Solun, 1891

Students by Nationality	Boys School	Girls School
Albanian		1
Austrian	40	6
Belgium	2	
'Bulgarian'	32	21
English	5	4
French	19	11
German	2	5
Greek	23	20
Jewish	52	72
Polish		2
Romanian		1
Total Students	175	143

Source: Dimevski, S. *Istorija na Makedonskata Pravoslavna Crkva* [A History of the Macedonian Orthodox Church], Skopje, 1989, p 754.

Unlike the Solun Catholic boys and girls schools, the Bitola Catholic school was embraced by the Turks of Bitola, who enrolled their children because of its French language instruction.⁵⁵ Overall, Catholic education in Macedonia was not widespread. Schools were sustained in the major centres, but enrolments declined at the end of the nineteenth century.⁵⁶ Of the rural schools established in villages where

⁵⁴ According to official Ottoman data there were 1,265 foreign citizens (682 male and 583 female) residing in the Solun vilayet in 1899 compared to 56 foreign citizens in the Bitola vilayet (33 male and 23 female). The historian, K. Karpat, *Ottoman Population 1830-1914*, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985, p. 161.

⁵⁵ J. Pshchulkovska-Simitchieva, *Naselenieto i uobilishtata vo Bitola i Bitolsko kon krajot na XIX i pochetokot na XX vek*, op. cit. p. 671.

⁵⁶ According to S. Dimevski, the Catholic primary school in Bitola during the early 1890s contained an enrolment of 80 students, 62 were Macedonians of the Orthodox Christian religion and 18 were Catholics. S. Dimevski, 1988, op. cit. p. 258. The ethnographer, V. Kanchov, claims that by the turn of the century there remained only one local Catholic family in Bitola comprising of three members and that school enrolments

Catholicism was adopted, most were later replaced by Bulgarian schools as the early successes of the Catholics were lost to the Bulgarian Exarchate.⁵⁷ The Serb, Ivanich, claims that in 1897 there were 22 Catholic schools in Macedonia, with 45 schoolteachers and 811 students.⁵⁸

Protestant schools were established in Macedonian Protestant villages primarily in the Strumica, Gevgelija and Kukush regions, as well as in the towns of Razlog and Bansko, and in the major centres of Bitola and Solun. The Protestant girls and boys school was opened in Bitola in 1896, with two classes functioning and an enrolment of 14 children.⁵⁹ A girls high school also operated in Bitola and was attended by 34 students. Although 29 students were from Bitola, there were only 8 Protestant homes in the town according to I. Ivanich⁶⁰, whilst V. Kanchov claims a total of 34 Protestants in Bitola (native inhabitants).⁶¹ As with the Solun Catholic school in Table 5.4, it appears that the Protestant school in Bitola also drew students from various backgrounds and from the families of consular staff and other foreigners involved in business and trade. The remaining five students comprised one Vlah from Krushevo, two Albanians from Korcha⁶² and two Serbs from Prishtina (Kosovo). According to a 1913 Serb military report the language of instruction at the school was a combination of English and 'Bulgarian'.⁶³ Whether the language in the Bitola school was actually Bulgarian or Macedonian is difficult to confirm, however the language of instruction at Protestant schools in the Strumica region villages was Macedonian according to the Macedonian Protestant interviewee, Jovan Izev.⁶⁴ The

were minimal. V. Kanchov, *Bitola, Prespa i Ohridsko* [Bitola, Prespa and the Ohrid region], Sofia, 1970 (1891), p. 382.

⁵⁷ H.N. Brailsford, op. cit. p. 73.

⁵⁸ I. Ivanich (1908), op. cit. p. 304.

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 308.

⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 308.

⁶¹ V. Kanchov (1891), p. 382.

⁶² Korcha is also known in Macedonian as Gorica.

⁶³ From a Serb military report dated 20 August 1913 (Number 6260), G. Todorovski, editor, *Srpski Izvori za Istorijata na Makedonskiot Narod 1912-1914* [Serbian Sources on the History of the Macedonian People 1912-1914], Skopje, 1979, p. 221.

⁶⁴ Jovan (John) Izev (born 1943 in Koleshino village, Strumica region), interview conducted on 4 June 2002 in Melbourne.

number of Protestant schools in Macedonia around 1900 is unclear; there is no specific data available, although commentators of the period generally consider Protestantism to follow on after Catholicism in popularity or conversions in Macedonia. D.M. Brancoff, the compiler of statistical data, provided combined educational data for Catholic and Protestant schools and cited a figure of 26 schools with 56 schoolteachers and 775 students.⁶⁵

5.2 Teachers, students and language

TRADITIONALLY CHURCHES AND monasteries were centres of learning and culture in Macedonia. Throughout Ottoman rule and the period of monopolised religious jurisdiction of the Greek Patriarchate (and Greek education), in various forms Macedonian schools continued to function and provide instruction in the 'people's language' (*narodna jazik*). Basic literacy was taught by priests and monks, and as teachers their tutoring was religiously orientated. Classes were commonly held in churches and monasteries, located away from the main roads and sometimes in remote locations, distanced from Turkish or Greek influence. They were known as *kelijni* schools.⁶⁶ During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries *kelijni* schools spread into villages and urban towns.⁶⁷

During the course of the nineteenth century the religious-based *kelijni* schools undertook a gradual transition into secular institutions, administered through the establishment of independent Macedonian church-educational councils. The

⁶⁵ D.M. Brancoff, op. cit. pp. 246-247.

⁶⁶ A. Trajanovski, op. cit. pp. 108-109. Prominent monasteries operating as cultural-educational centres included Sveti Arangel Gavril Lesnovski, Sveti Prohor Pchinski, Sveti Joakim Osogovski, Sveti Jovan Bigorski, Sveti Jovan Veterski, Sveta Bogorodica-Treskavec, Poloshkiot Manastir (Tikvesh region), Slepchenskiot Manastir, Sveta Prechista-Kitchevska, Sveti Atanas Leshochki, Sveti Naum (Ohrid lake) and others. Ibid, p. 109.

⁶⁷ However the establishment of modern Greek Patriarchate schools were generally more attractive to urban Hellenised Vlachs and to the Macedonian middle class.

democratic nature of the councils was threatened by the Patriarchate, and later also by the Exarchate, as both institutions sought to place these councils under their own control. In the 1860s a number of church educational councils were to break off relations with the Patriarchate and to employ Macedonian schoolteachers who had previously been educated in Greek schools and had worked in the Patriarchate school system as teachers. The leaders of the mid-nineteenth century Macedonian renaissance were Patriarchate-educated intellectuals such as Grigor Prlichev, Dimitar Miladinov and amongst others Kuzman Shapkarev who were to lead the struggle against the Greek Patriarchate church. Every effort was made by the Greek bishops to persecute the teachers and to close down the schools. For instance, the Prilep schoolteacher Jordan Hadzhi Konstantinov-Dzhinot was slandered before the Ottoman authorities as ‘a rebel’ by the Greek Bishop of Bitola before being imprisoned and exiled, and the school was subsequently closed (1860).⁶⁸ In 1862, two schoolteachers and prominent Macedonian cultural figures, the brothers Dimitar and Konstantin Miladinov, were denounced to the Ottomans by the Patriarchate Bishop as ‘Russian agents’. Both were imprisoned and would later die in a Constantinople prison. The Greek Patriarchate fervently opposed any threat to its domination and was handed a religious and educational monopoly in Macedonia by the Ottomans.

The earliest foreign schoolteachers were, therefore, Greek teachers who arrived along with Patriarchate jurisdiction after the Macedonian Ohrid Archbishopric was abolished. Greek Patriarchate schools were predominantly established in the cities and large villages, whilst the outlying areas were largely

⁶⁸ The craftsmen of Prilep appealed to the Grand Vizier for the release of their teacher. The following is an extract from the letter. ‘...the indescribable bitterness and sorrow that has befallen our town. Immersed in sorrow and infinite grief, both the children and the adults bemoan the misfortune that has struck us, that is, the closure of the school and the imprisonment of the teacher without any lawful reason...Envy, malice and evil have succeeded this time in overcoming justice, that is, our religious shepard who is not one of our people and the language of whom we do not know, and unfortunately, we stress this again, who instead of supporting our school and leading us along the right track, has become the main cause for the desolation of our school and the grief of the people in general...’ H. Andonov-Poljanski, *Documents on the Struggle of the Macedonian People for Independence and a Nation-State*, Vol I, Skopje, 1985, pp. 210-211.

ignored.⁶⁹ When Patriarchate domination was challenged in Macedonia with the formation of the Bulgarian Exarchate in 1870, and followed by the Congress of Berlin in 1878, it became clear that the process of establishing schools and attracting students was developing into a contest. With the systematic entry of the Bulgarian Exarchate and the Serbian school systems in Macedonia, they would replicate the process of attracting Macedonian students and train them to become schoolteachers within their respective school systems.⁷⁰ Consequently village schoolteachers were overwhelmingly Macedonians, usually from the same region and sometimes from the village itself. According to Bulgarian Exarchate documents from 1898-1899, Marko Cvetkov from Bitola was the appointed teacher in Dolno Charliya,⁷¹ Todor Stojanov from Radobor was appointed the teacher in Dobrushevo,⁷² and C. Nikolov from Dobrushevo was appointed the teacher in Ribarci.⁷³ Interviewees recalled that in the villages, Exarchate teachers were exclusively Macedonians, the only exception being the Exarchate teacher in Krpeshina (Lerin region), who was Bulgarian.⁷⁴ It was a similar situation in Patriarchate schools in the Bitola region. In every instance the teacher was a local Macedonian, apart from a Greek teacher who worked in the Paralovo monastery complex.⁷⁵ In Serb schools in northwestern Macedonia there likewise was a predominance of Macedonian teachers employed by the Serbian education system. From an 1888 Serb Consular report regarding schoolteachers in Macedonia, eight of nine teachers were from Macedonia.⁷⁶ The single non-Macedonian teacher, Spira Radivojevich from Prizren, was a schoolteacher in Tetovo.

⁶⁹ A. Trajanovski, op. cit. p. 43.

⁷⁰ The monastery situated above Paralovo in the Bitola region was utilised as a central Greek school in the region, training locals to become teachers. Ilija Najdovski's father received his education there from 'a real Greek, he was the real propaganda, after they made my father a Greek teacher, they sent him back into his own village'. Ilija Najdovski (born 1920 in Suvodol, Bitola region), interview conducted 28 March 2000 in Novaci.

⁷¹ Bulgarian Exarchate document number 01.0491.0001.0204/0681-0681, dated 14 September 1899.

⁷² Bulgarian Exarchate document number 01.0491.0001.0233/0719-0719, dated 14 October 1899.

⁷³ Bulgarian Exarchate document number 01.0491.0001.0235/0721-0721, dated 14 October 1899.

⁷⁴ Velika Spirova (born 1911 in Krpeshina, Lerin region), interview conducted on 19 January 2002.

⁷⁵ Ilija Najdovski interview, op. cit. The teacher for Gorno and Dolno Aglarci was from the neighbouring village of Dedebalci, the teacher in Makovo village was from the nearby Mariovo district village of Chanishte, and the teachers in Lazhec, Novaci and Suvodol were native to the respective villages. Data obtained from interviews conducted. Furthermore, the Patriarchate schoolteacher in Lavci was from Lerin. D. Konstantinov, M. Konstantinov, and K. Cingarovski, *Letopis na Bitolsko Lavci* [Chronicles of Lavci, Bitola region], Bitola, 1966, p. 30.

⁷⁶ K. Dzhambazovski, editor, op. cit. pp. 316-321.

Otherwise the Blace (Tetovo) teacher was from Raosoka (Debar), the Kumanovo teacher from Veles, and the teachers from Tetovo, Belovishte (Tetovo), Galitchnik, Vratnice (Tetovo), Kumanovo and Borovec (Ohrid) were all native inhabitants of their respective villages.⁷⁷

By the turn of the century Serb teachers were sent to Macedonia from Kosovo and found themselves unwelcome in Macedonian towns and villages where they replaced existing local Macedonian schoolteachers. Unfamiliar with the Macedonian language, customs and local mentality Serb educational progress was hampered and antagonism developed with the native local teachers due to being denied employment.⁷⁸ These factors may have also influenced Macedonian teachers transferring to the Exarchate school system, as was the case with Vasilije Ikonovitch from the village of Lazaropole.⁷⁹

Data drawn from interviews indicate that village teachers conducted classes in the Macedonian language. One interviewee, Petko Atanasovski, from Makovo village (Bitola region) stated, 'how could we learn another language, especially Greek, if the teacher could not speak to us in Macedonian to explain what was going on?'⁸⁰ In the Bitola region villages, teachers were all Macedonians. Everyday communication between the teachers and the villagers was in Macedonian, regardless of whether they were Greek or Bulgarian teachers. According to Ilija Najdovski from Suvodol, both his father and grandfather were Greek schoolteachers in the village. He stated that their day-to-day relations with other villagers was conducted in 'our language' and that in 'family life the only language used was our Macedonian language; Greek was not spoken at home'.⁸¹ Furthermore, the schoolteachers' command of the official

⁷⁷ Ibid, pp. 316-321.

⁷⁸ B. Svetozarevich, *Srpskata i Bugarskata Crkonna-Ucibilishna Propaganda vo Tetovo i Tetovsko 1860-1903* [Serbian and Bulgarian Religious and Educational Propaganda in Tetovo and the Tetovo region 1860-1903], Skopje, 1996, pp. 64-65.

⁷⁹ K. Dzhambazovski, editor, op. cit. pp. 316-317.

⁸⁰ Petko Atanasovski (born 1913 in Makovo, Bitola region), interview conducted on 14 March 2000 in Makovo.

⁸¹ Ilija Najdovski (born 1920 in Suvodol, Bitola region), interview conducted on 28 March 2000 in Novaci.

language of the educational institution in which they were employed is questionable and this was recognised by Greek and Serb school inspectors in Macedonia at the end of the nineteenth century. Yoani Merkuli, a Greek school inspector working in the Bitola region in 1885, reported that in the Patriarchate elementary schools many teachers ‘could barely read, let alone speak the Greek language’.⁸² Even the Serb General Consul in Skopje, Manojlovich, claimed in 1889 that most teachers in Serb schools ‘did not understand the Serb language, and used the Macedonian language instead’.⁸³ Consequently inferior instruction of foreign languages resulted in pupils being poorly equipped in their knowledge of the Greek, Bulgarian or Serb languages.

In the Bitola region, an interviewee, Aca Kotevska, born in 1911, stated that the Greek language was considered foreign, but promoted as ‘a cultured language’.⁸⁴ The Patriarchate school in Lavci attempted to instil a ‘Greek spirit’ into the Macedonian children and was characterised by advocating a negative view of all non-Greek peoples.⁸⁵ At the beginning of the twentieth century in the village of Suvodol there were ‘approximately ten people in the village who knew some Greek; even though more than ten people had attended the Greek school in the village, they could not all speak the language’.⁸⁶ The father of the interviewee, Kosta Markovski, was a student of the Greek school in Suvodol; ‘although he knew some Greek, he was not fluent—his everyday language was Macedonian’.⁸⁷ In the village of Gorno Aglarci, Naumche Giorgiovski attended the Greek school (before it was replaced with a Bulgarian one), but was never fluent in the language. ‘It was too difficult for him, no one in the village was literate in Greek, even though the school had existed for many

⁸² K. Bitoski, op. cit. pp. 100-101. As cited from Bitoski, *‘odvaj mozhat da chitat, a kamo li da zboruvaat na Grckii jazik’*.

⁸³ B. Svetozarevich, op. cit. p. 64. Furthermore, in 1900 the Serb Metropolitan of Skopje, Firmilijan, requested that the schoolteacher Teodosia Krstich be sent to Belgrade to learn the Serb language. Ibid, p. 64.

⁸⁴ Aca Kotevska (born 1911 in Suvodol, Bitola region), interview conducted 10 March 2000 in Novaci. Aca is from the Najdovci family.

⁸⁵ D. Konstantinov, M. Konstantinov, and K. Cingarovski, op. cit. p. 30. Schoolteachers in the Lavci Patriarchist school were Riste from Lerin and later Tashko (a Vlah who was the son of Priest Mihailaki) from the nearby village of Nizhopole.

⁸⁶ Ilija Najdovski interview, op. cit.

⁸⁷ Kosta Markovski (born 1930 in Suvodol, Bitola region), interview conducted 23 March 2000 in Bitola.

years.⁸⁸ The interviewee, Trajan Popovski, stated that several men in Lazhec could speak ‘broken Greek’,⁸⁹ whilst the interviewee, Atanas Kotevski from Vrajnevcı, stated that ‘those who had some grasp of the language, continued to speak to one another in our own language’.⁹⁰ It was similar in villages where Bulgarian schools operated. Teachers instructed in Macedonian and respondents were unable to recall older people from the village, who had attended Bulgarian school, being fluent in Bulgarian: an interviewee, Ljuba Stankovska, explained, that they utilised the Bulgarian alphabet in order to write in their own language.⁹¹

While village schoolteachers were Macedonians, more often the city and particularly the Exarchate higher schools ‘were staffed with teachers sent from Bulgaria on an explicitly nationalist mission’.⁹² At the elementary level, Exarchate schools were often considered Macedonian rather than Bulgarian. One interviewee, Hristo ‘Caki’ Dimitrovski, was born in 1893 in Bitola and clearly recalled his youth under the Ottoman Turks to 1912.⁹³ Hristo Dimitrovski attended Exarchate elementary school as well as four years of high school in Bitola. He explained that his teacher at high school ‘was one of ours, she didn’t teach us Bulgarian, we learnt Macedonian...However, there were other teachers who were politically orientated towards Bulgaria’.⁹⁴ An Exarchate school or class could be considered Macedonian or Bulgarian, ‘depending on the political attitude of the schoolteacher’.⁹⁵

Opposition to Bulgarian language instruction, particularly in Macedonian urban centres such as Solun, Skopje, Bitola and elsewhere, was the catalyst for the

⁸⁸ Nikola Giorgovski (born 1927 in Gorno Aglarci, Bitola region), interview conducted on 17 March 2000 in Gorno Aglarci. Nikola Giorgovski stated that his father ‘never learnt more than a dozen words in Greek, but could count in the Greek language’.

⁸⁹ Trajan Popovski (born 1939 in Lazhec, Bitola region), interview conducted on 14 March 2000 in Lazhec.

⁹⁰ Atanas Kotevski (born 1923 in Vrajnevcı, Bitola region), interview conducted on 12 March 2000 in Bitola.

⁹¹ Ljuba Stankovska (born 1923 in Gorno Aglarci, Bitola region), interview conducted on 15 March 2000 in Dedebalci. Ljuba Stankovska’s uncle, Torne, attended Bulgarian school in Aglarci and was able to write, but could not speak Bulgarian.

⁹² L. Mojsov, *The Macedonian Historical Themes*, op. cit. p. 75.

⁹³ Hristo ‘Caki’ Dimitrovski (born 1893 in Bitola) interview conducted 21 March 2002 in Bitola.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

first Macedonian student rebellions in the 1880s. In 1888 fourteen pupils were expelled from the Solun Exarchate high school ‘because they objected to being taught in the Bulgarian language and not in their native tongue’.⁹⁶ The famous Macedonian revolutionary figure and Exarchate school teacher Gjorche Petrov stated that in the early 1890s there was an open ‘separatist’ struggle amongst Macedonian teachers in the Exarchate school system, and that he himself spent more time in the class room speaking of the injustices of Ottoman rule instead of the official Exarchate program.⁹⁷

According to the historian A. Trajanovski, the language of teachers and students was brought up at the Exarchate Prilep Teachers Council meeting of 3 December 1894. The Bulgarian schoolteacher G.P. Rachev commented that ‘students do not possess basic Bulgarian language skills’, and that they ‘speak their own language amongst themselves, and use it in their communications with their teachers’. Rachev requested that ‘the Bulgarian language be used by every teacher during every subject’.⁹⁸ Similar problems persisted in the Serb and Greek school systems. The Serb school inspector Sima Popovich, visiting schools in the Tetovo region in 1894, reported that pupils poorly understood the Serb language.⁹⁹ The Greek Patriarchate school system similarly failed to achieve its aim of introducing the Greek language to Macedonian children in the Bitola region villages, according to a 1901 Greek Patriarchate letter by the Bitola Metropolitan Ambrosios.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ G.M. Terry, op. cit. p.62.

⁹⁷ G. Petrov, *Spomeni na Gjorche Petrov* [Memoirs of Gjorche Petrov], Book I, Skopje, 1950, pp. 13 and 34. In the memoirs of Simjan Simidzhiev (born 1875 in Velmevci, Ohrid region), he explains that he was a student in the Exarchate high school system and for three years a pupil of Gjorche Petrov (geography teacher). Petrov used the Exarchate school to propagate Macedonian revolutionary views, and not Bulgarian ideas. Amongst Gjorche Petrov’s students were Lazar Pop Trajkov, Pande Klashev and Giorgi Sugarev, they were all to become legendary *voivodi* of the IMRO (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation). Simjan Simidzhiev memoirs, T. Gorgiev, *Po Tragite na Minatoto* [Tracing the Past], Skopje, 1967, p. 38.

⁹⁸ A. Trajanovski, *Bugarskata Exarhija i Makedonskoto Nacionalno-Osloboditelno Dvizhejje 1893-1908* [The Bulgarian Exarchate and the Macedonian National Liberation Movement 1893-1908], Skopje, 1982, p. 72.

⁹⁹ B. Svetozarevich, op. cit. p. 64. In 1900 the high-ranking educational functionary, Nikola Petrovich, conducted his own inspection of Serb schools in Macedonia and concluded that teachers’ methods of instruction were inadequate. Ibid, p. 64.

¹⁰⁰ Cited from K. Bitoski, op. cit. p. 103. It is interesting to draw upon the autobiographical notes of the prominent Macedonian activist in Australia, Stojan Srbinov (1920-1990), regarding Greek education in his

The average age of Exarchate teachers in the Bitola region was 25 years. Riste Najdovski, the Greek elementary school teacher (first to fourth grade) in the village of Suvodol, was 20 years-of-age when he took up his position in 1885.¹⁰¹ A Bulgarian Exarchate school administrative document provides a further insight into the age of schoolteachers in the Bitola region. Within a staff complement of 19 teachers, one was below 20 years-of-age, eleven between 21 - 30 years, six between 31 - 40 years and one over 40.¹⁰² Schoolteachers in the Bitola region were predominantly male and there was a significant contrast between male/female schoolteacher ratios in urban Bitola compared to countryside villages. In Bitola there was a notable presence of female teachers. One of the largest Bulgarian schools in the region was the Central School in Bitola, employing seventeen teachers during the 1909–1910 school year. Only five teachers were males, and the remaining twelve teachers female. Male teachers were predominantly in their early thirties, whilst females ranged between 18 and 26 years-of-age. Earnings varied according to gender, with annual wages for male teachers ranging from 26 to 36 Turkish lira and female teachers between 15 and 22 Turkish lira. Only two teachers were married – both males, aged 32 and 31 respectively; the remaining fifteen teachers were all unmarried.¹⁰³

Schools in urban centres were often located in modern buildings specifically utilised for educational purposes.¹⁰⁴ Village schooling was generally conducted in a

native village of Buf, Lerin region. During the period between the division of Macedonia and the Second World War there were many instances where the children of Greek teachers sent to Buf acquired Macedonian language skills. In the period preceding the Greek Civil War (1946-1949) a particular Greek schoolteacher arrived from Crete to teach Macedonian children the Greek language. After a period of time spent in the village, the schoolteacher was transferred to another school in Lerin. Prior to leaving the village, the schoolteacher was noted as stating ‘we arrived here to teach you the Greek language, yet you first managed to teach our children your village language’ (*Neka da go spomeneme i toa deka nie doidovme tuka da ve ucime Grcki jazik, a vie uspeavte nashite deca pobrgu da gi nauchite na vashiot selski jazik*). Stojan Srbinov autobiographical notes, Melbourne, 1983.

¹⁰¹ Ilija Najdovski interview, op. cit. Riste Najdovski was Ilija Najdovski's father.

¹⁰² Bulgarian Exarchate document number 01.0491.0007.0151/0660-0661, dated 1 January 1911.

¹⁰³ Bulgarian Exarchate document number 01.0491.0007.0006/0018-0035, dated 17 May 1909.

¹⁰⁴ J. Pshchulkovska-Simitchieva, *Naselenieto i ucilishтата vo Bitola i Bitolsko kon krajot na XIX i XX vek*, op. cit. p. 672. According to the Polish commentator, Trampczynski, who visited Bitola at the beginning of the twentieth century the most impressive buildings in Bitola belonged to the American Protestant mission. Ibid, p. 672.

church outer building, known as a *trem*, as was the case in the sample villages.¹⁰⁵ In Lazhec (Macedonian-Turkish village) the Patriarchate school operated from a private home,¹⁰⁶ whilst in other instances large villages were known to have relatively modern school buildings. The village of Visheni in the Kostur district contained 1,280 inhabitants. An Exarchate school functioned in the village, and, according to D.M. Brancoff, in 1905 there were 101 students enrolled.¹⁰⁷ A new school had been built just before 1900. A modern construction, it contained a basement, three large rooms on the ground floor and four on the upper storey. The building contained a museum room with various objects and pictures written in Macedonian Cyrillic. It was render whitewashed on the interior and exterior and had a large verandah and balcony. The school was situated approximately ten metres from the village church.

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The school year in Bitola spanned from 1 September to 27 June.¹⁰⁹ In the villages the school year extended over a shorter period, neither a uniform start nor end date, but generally commencing from mid to late November and ending anytime between early and late May. In Bitola, the school year extended over a period of ten months, whereas in the villages it was approximately six months.¹¹⁰ The shorter school year was certainly linked to the agricultural life of the villagers.

¹⁰⁵ A *trem* is a simple structure located inside the church grounds and primarily used for religious rituals commonly associated with holy days and funerals.

¹⁰⁶ Trajan Popovski interview, op. cit. The nineteenth century Serb commentator M.V. Vesselinovitch also mentions instances of Serb schools operating in Macedonian villages from private homes, typically the teachers home.

¹⁰⁷ D.M. Brancoff, op. cit. pp. 182-183.

¹⁰⁸ M. Prstnarov, *The History of the village Visheni (The English translation)*, no date or place of publication, p. 10. Prstnarov notes that prior to the construction of the new school building there existed an older school building beside the church. The old school building had become neglected and dilapidated and 'looks rather like an old, unused stable. Nomad tradesmen such as gypsies and *kalaidjite* (copper utensil anodizers) stayed in this building' (p.10).

¹⁰⁹ The only exception was the two schools in Gorno Bair and Dolno Bair whose school year ended two weeks earlier on 13 June.

¹¹⁰ Compiled from Bulgarian Exarchate document number 01.0491.0001.0155/0513-0520, dated 1 January 1899.

Education in village schools was at an elementary level, with the main subjects being language, literacy, mathematics and religious studies. According to a Serb Diplomatic report of 1888, core subject areas in the Serb school system in Macedonia were language (Serb), grammar, mathematics and church history. Official schoolbooks included a Serb alphabet reader, a Slavic alphabet reader, a numeracy text and a Slavic language reader.¹¹¹ It is interesting to note that the Serb-introduced ‘Slavic’ alphabet readers were based upon the Macedonian language, with a generous sprinkling of Serbian words incorporated into the texts. Trampczynski noted in 1903 that Bulgarian readers in elementary schools were divided into two sections on each page - one in Macedonian and the other in standard literary Bulgarian.¹¹²

In the Bitola countryside there was only one instance of two opposing schools operating simultaneously in a Macedonian village – in the large upper zone village of Brusnik (with over a thousand inhabitants). Generally villages were small to medium settlements with one church, and in the sample villages examined there were no instances of two opposing school systems operating simultaneously. In Bitola town there were Greek, Serbian, Bulgarian and other schools and there is evidence of competition for students. Attracting students could involve unconventional methods, according to Hristo Dimitrovski. He recalled that as a young man in Bitola at the beginning of the twentieth century, ‘school teachers were a menace to be avoided’ and were capable of violently recruiting new students by ‘beating them in the streets, in order to force them to attend their respective school’.¹¹³ Commencing his education at the Bulgarian Exarchate school in Bitola, as a consequence of threats and violence Hristo Dimitrovski was to also attend Greek and Vlah education for

¹¹¹ Serb Diplomatic report, number 58/II, dated 15 August 1888, Constantinople, K. Dzhambazovski, editor, *Gradju za Istoriju Makedonskog Naroda (iz Arhiva Srbije)*, op. cit. pp. 165-166. According to the historian, I. Arginteanu, subjects in Vlah schools were Latin, Romanian, French, history, mathematics, geography, drawing and music. Op. cit. p. 187. A Bulgarian Exarchate document from 1909 outlines that 15 copies of the book *Zemjotresi vo Bugaria* ('Earthquakes in Bulgaria') were ordered and were to be distributed amongst Exarchate schools. Bulgarian Exarchate document number 01.0491.0007.0108/0417-0426, dated 11 November 1909.

¹¹² J. Pshchulkovska-Simitchieva, op. cit. p. 676.

¹¹³ Hristo ‘Caki’ Dimitrovski interview, op. cit. Hristo Dimitrovski recalled an incident when a schoolteacher beat a boy and threw him into the Dragor River in order to force him to attend Greek school.

short periods.¹¹⁴ In Bitola it was not entirely unusual for individual students to have attended more than one school system, even though their family might have been supporters of a specific party. ‘Within the space of a couple of years they could have studied at them all, Greek, Serb, Bulgarian and Vlah’¹¹⁵ and may not have necessarily returned to the school with which they originally commenced.

Official Bulgarian school documents contain a category for students who did not complete the school year – ‘*Chuzhda propaganda*’ (‘foreign propaganda’). The Central Exarchate School in Bitola recorded 6 students (five male and one female), failing to complete their education due to ‘*chuzhda propaganda*’.¹¹⁶ Exarchate enrolment records indicate significant student drop-out rates. Drop-out rates may also be associated with competition with family needs to work in family businesses (tradesmen and traders) or, in the case of village schools, working on the fields. Significant drop-out rates occurred in the Serbian school system in the Debar eparchy in North Western Macedonia. At the beginning of the 1901-1902 school year a total of 509 students were enrolled in 18 village schools, including Kitchevo town (26 students). By the end of the school year less than half the students remained (238) to sit their final exams, a reduction of 54 per cent.¹¹⁷

Parents might also have been reluctant to withdraw their children from a particular school, even though they may have preferred to do so. For instance, the British Consul general in Bitola, Charles Blunt, explained in 1896 that the Greek Archbishop of Bitola issued a pastoral order threatening families with excommunication if they sent their children to the local Bulgarian schools.¹¹⁸ The

¹¹⁴ Hristo recalled that whilst attending the Greek school, photographs were taken of his class after students were made to wear traditional Greek costumes.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Bulgarian Exarchate document number 01.0491.0007.0006/0018-0035, dated 17 May 1909.

¹¹⁷ Report number 109, by Debar-Veles Metropolitan Polikarp, dated 23 February 1903, from L. Lape, editor, *Izveshtaj od 1903 - na Srpskite Konzuli, Mitropoliti i Uchilishni Inspektori vo Makedonia* [Report of 1903 - Serb Consuls, Metropolitans and School Inspectors in Macedonia, Skopje, 1954, pp. 101-102.

¹¹⁸ British Foreign Office 294/22, letter number 35, dated 27 September 1896, by General Consul Blunt in Bitola (obtained from the Archive of Macedonia).

Greek Patriarchate was similarly opposed to Vlah schools. When a Romanian school opened in the village of Trnovo (Bitola region), the Greek Archbishop in Bitola instructed the village Patriarchate priest to visit every family in the village whose children attended the school and threaten them with excommunication from the church if they did not withdraw their children.¹¹⁹

One interviewee, Kosta Markovski, reported that his grandfather, Anasto Markovski (from Suvodol), sent his son Tole (born 1900) to the Patriarchate school in the village even though he was not a supporter of the Patriarchate party. He believed that it was the only opportunity for his son to have a better life, that he might possibly become ‘a teacher or a priest’.¹²⁰ In other instances teachers presented education favourably, encouraging parents to send their children to their school, ‘that they may be literate, so when the war comes, they will not have to fight’.¹²¹ A common perception amongst interviewees was that the Patriarchate exerted greater influence with the Ottomans compared to the Exarchate, and operated with the greatest financial resources enabling it to attract families to its churches and schools. Vasil Petrov was aware that the Patriarchate ‘targeted poor families in Mariovo and through the payment of money and food attracted their children to Greek schooling’.¹²² Methods were not dissimilar in Vlah villages, according to the interviewee, Konstantin Nicha. ‘Vlahs were bought to be pro-Greek and to send their children to Greek schools. The Greeks had lots of money and influence’.¹²³ The establishment of Serb propaganda in areas as far south as Resen was attributed to a range of incentives offered to families. The historian, R.J. Crampton, claims that Serb support ‘was usually obtained only after considerable expenditure of cash; children,

¹¹⁹ I. Arginteanu, op. cit. p. 186. The Vlah school in the village of Gopesh was also targeted by the Greek Archbishop, who declared the teacher, Dimitrie Cosmescu, as ‘a rebel and dangerous agitator’. Ibid, p. 187.

¹²⁰ Kosta Markovski interview, op. cit.

¹²¹ Statement from a Bulgarian schoolteacher in Gorno Aglarci. Recalled by the interviewee, Nikola Giorgovski, op. cit. Nikola Giorgovski’s father attended the Exarchate school in the village.

¹²² Vasil Petrov (born 1911 in Bitola), interview conducted on 1 April 2000 in Bitola. Regarding the Patriarchate targeting poor families in Mariovo, see the historian, D. Grdanov, *Bitola i Heraclea niz bronikata na vekovite* [Bitola and Heraclea through the Chronicles of the Ages], Bitola, 1969, p. 28.

¹²³ Konstantin Nicha interview, op. cit.

for example, were encouraged to attend Serb schools by the free provision of food, books and even clothes'.¹²⁴ The interviewee Hristo 'Caki' Dimitrovski summed up the competition for students and church adherents: '*se so podkupvajne na narod*' ('everything is possible when buying the people').¹²⁵ Atanas Kotevski made a similar statement: '*od maka se prodavaja lujgeto*' ('the people sold themselves due to hardship').¹²⁶

Out in the countryside, only a small percentage of villagers sent their children to school. According to Exarchate educational records (Bitola region) during the 1898-1899 school year 11 students were enrolled at the Gorno Aglarci school, 13 students at Logovardi and 15 at Ribarci (these were small – to medium – sized villages).¹²⁷ Larger or centrally located villages typically had a greater number of students in the schools: in Brusnik there were 25 students, in Dedebalci 39, and in Buf (Lerin region) 71 students.¹²⁸ Schools were at times shared between villages (and this could apply to the church as well), such as with Gorno Aglarci and Dolno Aglarci, whilst central villages attracted students from wider areas. For instance, there were no educational facilities in the Exarchate village of Petoraci (Lerin region) for Petre Duakov to send his son Nase. The nearest Exarchate school was located in the nearby village of P'pzhani, and Nase, along with a small group of children from Petoraci, attended the P'pzhani school.¹²⁹ Male children overwhelmingly made up the

¹²⁴ R.J. Crampton, *Bulgaria 1878-1914*, New York, 1983, p. 291.

¹²⁵ Hristo 'Caki' Dimitrovski interview, op. cit.

¹²⁶ Atanas Kotevski interview, op. cit..

¹²⁷ Catholic schools in the Kukush region contained similar student numbers, of the eight schools (in eight villages) there was no more than eight students in any one school - in Bogdanci there were 8 pupils, in Dolni Todorak 6, in Lelovo 6, in Mihailovo 5, in Morarci 5, in Novoselani 5, in Palyurci 8 and in Stojakovo 8. In Kukush town there were two Catholic schools with 165 students. S. Dimevski, *Makedonskata Borba za Crkovna i Nacionalna Samostojnost vo XIX vek*, op. cit. p. 246.

¹²⁸ Bulgarian Exarchate document number 01.0491.0001.0156/0521-0547, dated 28 October 1899.

Both Gorno and Dolno Aglarci had a combined total of approximately 350 people, Logovardi approximately 450, Ribarci approximately 180, Dedebalci approximately 250, Brusnik approximately 1000, and Buf (Lerin region) approximately 1500. Buf has been renamed Akrita by the Greek authorities.

¹²⁹ Kocho Duakis (born 1934 Petoraci village, Lerin region), interview conducted 20 January 2001 in Melbourne. Since Greek rule in Southern Macedonia P'pzhani village has been renamed Pappayanni(s).

student population in village schools; in the Bitola region female students made up only 1.4 per cent of the total student population in Exarchate schools.¹³⁰

Table 5.5: Location of Village Patriarchate and Exarchate Schools and Student Enrolment in the Bitola Region in 1905 According to D.M Brancoff (Bulgarian)

Village	Size of village	Zone	Macedonian Students		Vlah Students	
			Exh Schools	Pat Schools	Pat Schools	Vlah Schools
Bareshani	Medium	Upper	22			
Bistrica	Medium	Upper	15			
Boukovo	V. Large	Upper		40		
Brusnik	Large	Upper	45	27		
Budimirci	Medium	Mariovo	21			
Crnobuki	Medium	Pelagonia	11			
Dedebalci	Medium	Pelagonia	39			
Dihovo	Large	Upper		22		
Dobrushevo	Med-Large	Pelagonia	12			
Dolna Charliya	Medium	Pelagonia	17			
Dragosh	V-Large	Pelagonia		18		
Gavato	V-Large	Upper	92			
Gopesh	V-Large	Upper			80	180
Gorno Aglarci	Sm-Medium	Pelagonia	11			
Gradeschnica	Medium	Upper		45		
Karamani	Medium	Pelagonia	17			
Krstoar	Medium	Upper	28			
Kukuretchani	Large	Pelagonia	21			
Lavci	Large	Upper		25		
Lazhec	Medium	Pelagonia		10		
Lera	Medium	Upper	42			
Logovardi	Med-Large	Pelagonia	17			
Magarevo	V-Large	Upper			305	50
Malovishte	V-Large	Upper			160	136
Meglenci	Small	Pelagonia	7			
Mogila	Large	Pelagonia	21			
Nizhopole	V-Large	Upper			125	50

¹³⁰ Bulgarian Exarchate document number 01.0491.0001.0156/0521-0547, dated 28 October 1899.

Oblakovo	Med-Large	Upper	32			
Oreohovo	Med	Upper		26		
Poeshevo	Med	Pelagonia	17			
Radobor	Med	Pelagonia	16			
Ribarci	Med	Pelagonia	16			
Srpci	Large	Upper	213			
Staravina	Large	Mariovo		10		
Strezhevo	Sm-Med	Upper	135			
Svinishta	Sm-Med	Upper	30			
Trnovo	V-Large	Upper			230	15
Velushina	Large	Upper		20		
Zovic	Medium	Mariovo		15		
Total			897	258	900	431

Source and notes: Brancoff, D.M. *La Macedoine et sa population chretienne* [The Christian Population of Macedonia], Paris, 1905. Trnovo, Magarevo and Gopesh were exclusively Vlah villages. Macedonians constituted approximately 20 percent of the inhabitants of Nizhopole and were a smaller minority in Malovishte. Lazhec was a mixed Macedonian-Turkish village and Lera mixed Macedonian-Albanian. The Exarchate school in Brusnik was established in 1899 (Bulgarian Exarchate, document 01.0491.0001.0296/0930-0930, dated 01 April 1899).

According to D.M. Brancoff's data, there were a total of 45 schools in 39 Bitola region villages in 1905. Schools were most widely established in the upper village district, with over half of all schools found there (27 schools). There were 17 schools located in Macedonian villages (one village was a shared Macedonian - Albanian village) in this district, with ten under Exarchate administration and seven under the Patriarchate. In the five Vlah inhabited villages (three exclusively Vlah, two shared with Macedonians) there were two schools for every village - a total of 10 schools, with half belonging to the Patriarchate and half to the Vlah (Romanian) school system, reflecting the rivalry between the Greek and Vlah parties. Along the Pelagonia plain there was a total of 15 schools - 13 Exarchate compared to 2 Patriarchate schools. The Mariovo district had the least amount of schools, a total of three - two Patriarchate and one Exarchate.

Schools were least likely to function in mixed Christian-Muslim villages. There were only two such instances in 39 villages, these being Lera and Lazhec. In 22 exclusively Macedonian upper villages there were 15 schools, and one in a mixed Macedonian-Albanian village. Several factors may explain the high rate of schools in the upper village zone. The most obvious feature distinguishing the upper villages from the Pelagonia plain and Bitola Mariovo district is the absence of *chiflika* estates. A high rate of *pechalba* and exposure to the outside world may have made these villages more receptive to the establishment of educational institutions. Alternatively, as Greece and Bulgaria both lay claim to Bitola, control of the upper villages may have been related to strategic military considerations.

The ethnographer V. Kanchov claimed a total of 29 schools in the Bitola region in 1891, 16 fewer than enumerated by Brancoff in 1905. Eleven of the twenty-nine schools had disappeared altogether in 1905: Patriarchate schools functioning in 1891 in the villages of Rotino, Oleveni, Brusnik, Dobromiri, Novaci and Optichari did not appear on Brancoff's 1905 data. Similarly, Exarchate schools in the villages of Capari, Noshpal, Vashareyca, Loznani and Ramna did not appear on the 1905 data. The Patriarchate school in Dolno Charliya in 1891 was to come under Exarchate control in 1905.¹³¹ School data for 1908 by the Serbian contemporary commentator, I. Ivanich, citing official Greek government educational data, claimed 70 Patriarchate schools in the Bitola region villages with 131 teachers.¹³² This represents a significant increase in Patriarchate schools and must be viewed with caution. According to a 1901 Patriarchate document by the Bitola Greek Metropolitan Ambrosios, as cited by the historian K. Bitoski, numerous Patriarchate schools in the villages were schools in name only. The Metropolitan described such schools as *pretvoreni vo uchilishta dupki bez svetlost i bez osnovni elementi da se vikaat uchilishta* ('holes transformed into schools without light and the basic elements to call them schools').¹³³

¹³¹ V. Kanchov, *Bitola, Prespa i Obridsko*, op. cit. pp. 389-394.

¹³² I. Ivanich (1908), op. cit. p. 395.

¹³³ K. Bitoski, op. cit. pp. 101-102.

The Patriarchate might have been more interested in ‘counting schools’ as belonging to their jurisdiction rather than any real or effective educational institutions. The situation was similar with Patriarchate schoolteachers in the region. Although there were approximately 34 schoolteachers on the Patriarchate payroll in the Bitola countryside villages in 1901,¹³⁴ some had never taught a single pupil or stepped into a classroom. The Macedonian Dimitar Hristou (the son-in-law of one of the wealthiest villagers) from Velushina was on the Patriarchate payroll for ten years (twelve Turkish lira per annum) yet had never worked in that time. Similarly the Macedonian Vasil Traianou, the nephew of a leading villager (Jovan) from Dragosh, was a teacher without any pupils (he received ten Turkish lira per annum for his role).¹³⁵ Children as young as thirteen years-of-age were appointed as teachers. Metropolitan Ambrosios described them as, *‘deca koi ne znat da si go podpishat svoeto ime, a povejke od niv ne znaat nitu eden Grchki zbor’* (‘children who do not know how to sign their own name, and most of them do not know a single Greek word’).¹³⁶ Dozens of unqualified, but well-connected individuals (connected to village headmen, priests and influential villagers) managed to draw an income from the Patriarchate as ‘teachers’ and appear to have been used in the promotion of statistical educational data.¹³⁷

¹³⁴ Ibid, pp. 105-107.

¹³⁵ Ibid, pp. 102-103.

¹³⁶ Ibid, p. 102.

¹³⁷ Ibid, p. 101. Based on the fact that Macedonian children in the Bitola Patriarchate villages could not speak Greek. In 1901 Metropolitan Ambrosios set in place a wide-ranging program aiming at restructuring the Patriarchate school system in the Bitola region and planned that within five years each village would have a dozen children who could understand Greek. Ibid, p. 103.

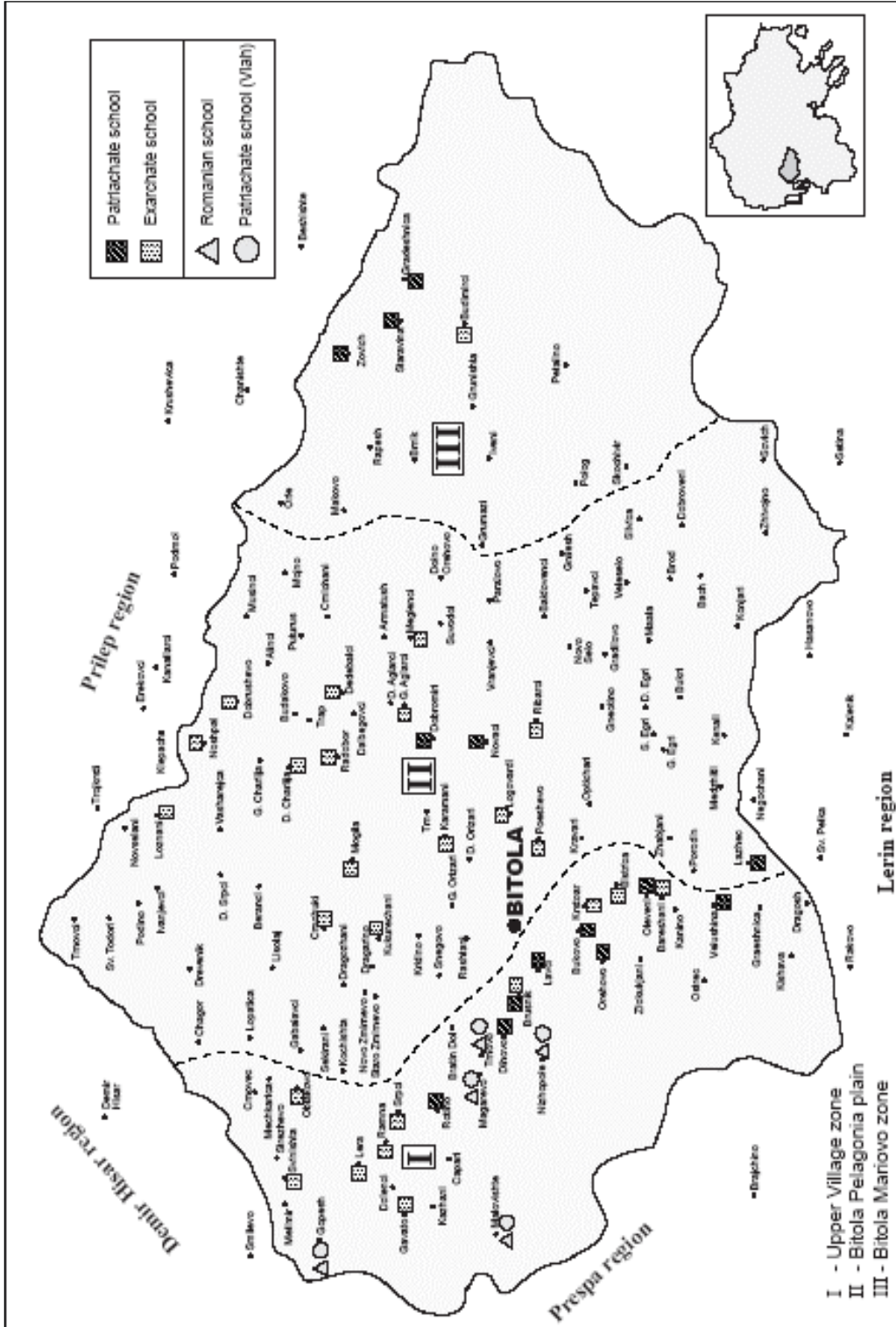


Figure 5.1: Location of Exarchate and Patriarchate schools in Bitola region villages

Table 5.6: Male and Female Student Enrolment at Exarchate schools in Bitola, 1909–1910

SCHOOL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Gorni Bair	21	11	32
Arnaut Male	17	15	32
Gorni Eni Male	146	157	303
Dolni Bair	147	103	250
Mechkar Male	31	17	48
Kyrt Deres	19	19	38
Bela Cheshma	82	54	136
Dolno Eni Male	28	25	53
Central Bitola	542	349	891
TOTALS:	1033	750	1783

Source: V. Kanchov, *Bitola, Prespa i Ohridsko* [Bitola, Prespa and the Ohrid region], Sofia, 1971 (1891), pp. 389-394.

Table 5.7: Age of Students in the Central Bitola Bulgarian School from Pre-School Class to the Fourth Grade During the 1909-1910 School Year

Age	Pre school		Class I		Class II		Class III		Class IV		Totals	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Under 5	25	20									25	20
6	20	15									20	15
7	30	25	2								32	25
8	7	8	42	34							49	42
9		1	16	14	12	21					28	36
10			18	7	38	38	20	16	3	1	79	62
11			6	3	44	34	42	13	10	21	102	71
12			2	1	21	12	44	18	30	20	97	51
13			4		8	2	14	12	39	10	85	24
14			1		5				13	3	19	3
15					4		1				5	
Over 15									1		1	
Total:	82	69	91	59	132	107	141	59	96	55	542	349

Source: Bulgarian Exarchate, Central Bitola Bulgarian School, Document number 01.0491.0007.0006/0018-0019, dated 17 May 1909.

Student enrolment records for the Bitola Bulgarian primary school (*Osnovno Uchilishte*) for the 1909-1910 school year specify there were a total of 47 students in the first and second grades. Sixteen students were male (aged between twelve and fourteen years) and thirty-one were female students (aged between eleven and eighteen). Females consisted of 70 per cent of all students at the school. In contrast to village schools where female students were almost non-existent, in Bitola female students accounted for 42 per cent of all students in nine Bulgarian schools ranging from pre-school to the fourth grade during the 1909-1910 school year.¹³⁸ Exarchate educational records also provide an insight into the socio-economic status of students' families.¹³⁹ From a total of 47 students, the overwhelming majority of 35 fathers were engaged in trades, followed by 5 agricultural workers, 3 labourers, 2 traders and 1 teacher or priest and professional (doctor, lawyer, etc.) respectively.

Table 5.8: Growth of Student Enrolment at the Nine Exarchate Schools in Bitola, 1886–1910

School Year	Male Students	Female Students	Total
1886-1887	464	118	582
1888-1889	400	140	540
1889-1890	472	230	701
1898-1899	616	519	1135
1909-1910	1033	750	1783

Source and notes: Data for the school years 1886/87, 1888/89 and 1889/90 are from Kanchov, V. *Bitolsko, Prespa i Obridsko*, Sofia, 1970 (1891), p. 385. Statistics for the school year 1898-1899 compiled from Document Number 01.0491.0001.0155 / 0520 dated 1 January 1899 (Bulgarian Pelagonia Exarchate - Bitola) and statistics for the school year 1909-1910 compiled from Document Number 01.0491.0007.0006 / 0018-0035 dated 17 May 1909 (Bulgarian Pelagonia Exarchate - Bitola). Regarding the number of total students for the 1889/1890 school year male and female student figures equate to a total of 701 students, Kanchov counts 762 students using the same figures.

¹³⁸ Statistical data compiled from official school reports from the Bulgarian Exarchate education system in Macedonia. Bulgarian Exarchate document number 01.0491.0007.0006/0018-0035, dated 17 May 1909.

¹³⁹ *Osnovno uchilishte* vo Bitola (Primary school in Bitola) – Bulgarian Exarchate document number 01.0491.0007.0006/0016-0017, dated 17 May 1909.

In the 1888-1889 school year there was a total of 35 schools in Bitola operated by seven different groups. Ten schools were operated by the Greek Patriarchate, nine by the Bulgarian Exarchate, three by the Romanian government, two by the Turkish authorities, four by the Jewish community, one by the Protestant mission and one by the Catholic mission. Of the 35 schools, three were high schools, two were operated by the Greek Patriarchate (one boys and one girls school) and one Romanian boys high school.¹⁴⁰ During the Second Balkan War when the Serb army entered Bitola, the Regional Commander of the Serbian High Command (D. Alimpich) compiled a report on the Bitola region, including educational institutions in Bitola. Substantial growth of educational institutions is evident; three high schools expanding to fourteen, including four teacher training colleges, (in period of 24 years from 1888-1912).¹⁴¹

Table 5.9: High Schools and Teacher Training Colleges in Bitola according to D. Alimpich (Serb), 1913

School	Turkish	Greek	Bulgarian	Serb	Romanian
Male High School	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Female High School	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
Teacher training school	Yes				
Male teacher training		Yes	Yes		
Female teacher training		Yes	Yes		

Sources and notes: Report dated 20 August 1913, Regional Commander D. Alimpich. G. Todorovski, editor, *Srpski Izvori za Istorijata na Makedonskiot Narod 1912-1914* [Serbian Sources on the History of the Macedonian People 1912-1914], Skopje, 1979, p. 221. Note - the Greek female teacher-training school and female high school were combined as the one school.

It was not unusual for students to change school systems at the completion of primary school in the rural sector. Secondary schooling was only available in urban centres, and unlike the villages there was a range of choices available. Solun was a

¹⁴⁰ V. Kanchov, 1970 (1891), op. cit. pp. 382-383.

¹⁴¹ Report dated 20 August 1913, by Regional Commander D. Alimpich. G. Todorovski, editor, *Srpski Izvori za Istorijata na Makedonskiot Narod 1912-1914* [Serbian Sources on the History of the Macedonian People 1912-1914], Skopje, 1979, p. 21.

popular destination for secondary education, particularly in the Exarchate high school. Ultimately those who pursued further education at the tertiary level found themselves in Belgrade and Sofia. Belgrade became popular due to an attractive scholarship program offered, though according to the historian M. Dogo many were to become disillusioned and moved to Sofia to continue their education.¹⁴² In Sofia, Macedonian student groups continued engaging in ‘separatist’ activities as they had done so in Belgrade. In particular a group of Macedonian patriots centred around the publication *Loza* were to be singled out for attention by the authorities. Others found their way to Petrograd in Russia, often after having spent periods in both Belgrade and Sofia.

There is no evidence to indicate that in the Bitola region the official language of the school impacted upon the language of the home or village. In the villages it was only a small portion of men (those who attended foreign schooling) who possessed a rudimentary knowledge of the Greek, Bulgarian or Serb languages. The spoken form of foreign languages taught through Exarchate and Patriarchate schooling appears to have had no impact upon the life of the villagers. However foreign alphabets were used in place of Macedonian with the literate few. Velika Spirova from Krpeshina (Exarchate school in the village - Lerin region) recalled that the few educated individuals from the older generation ‘spoke in Macedonian, but wrote in Bulgarian’.¹⁴³ Nikola Dimitrovski attended a Patriarchate school in Bitola in the 1870s to the sixth grade. Although he ‘couldn't read and write in Macedonian, he did so using the Greek alphabet’.¹⁴⁴ A school operated in Varjnevci village for approximately one year during 1902 - 1903. There the schoolteacher Anasto Dzhevro

¹⁴² M. Dogo, *Jazikot i Nacionalnosta vo Makedonija, Dozhivuvanjata i razmisluvanjata na nevooruzhenite proroci 1902-1903*, Skopje, 1990, p. 218. Original title, *Lingua e nazjonalita in macedonia vicende e pensieri di profetoi disarmati 1902-1903*, Milano, 1985.

¹⁴³ Velika Spirova interview, op. cit.

¹⁴⁴ Hristo ‘Caki’ Dimitrovski interview, op. cit. Hristo stated that his father Nikola attended the Patriarchate school at the time ‘because there was no other alternative’. When Hristo was a child, his father sent him to the Exarchate school in Bitola.

at first taught the children the Greek alphabet, and later the Bulgarian alphabet; however, written words were Macedonian.¹⁴⁵

The most widely-spoken foreign language was not inculcated through foreign school systems, but by the rulers: the Ottoman Turks. Men learnt to speak Turkish as a result of dealing with Turks, as their workers, as inmates in prisons, and when conscripted as Turkish soldiers. It was generally considered to be a 'more useful language'. In Makovo there were approximately half a dozen men who could speak Turkish. Some had worked for Turks, whilst others, such as the uncle of interviewee Stojche Petkovski, became familiar with the language after having spent nine years as a Turkish soldier.¹⁴⁶ Kitan Shindevci from Gorno Aglarci also spent nine years as a Turkish soldier and was a fluent Turkish speaker.¹⁴⁷ The village headman (*kmet*) of Armenoro (Lerin region), known as Delo Shuperliyata, was also a fluent Turkish speaker.¹⁴⁸ Interviewee Trajan Micevski stated that a couple of men in Novaci knew some Greek words as a result of Patriarchate schooling but there were 'more in the village who knew Turkish'.¹⁴⁹ Vasil Tilev from the Gorna Dzhumaya region recalled hearing from his grandfather Giorgi that, apart from Macedonian, a number of men in the village Kradzhejevo spoke basic Turkish. His grandfather was one of them.¹⁵⁰ In mixed Macedonian - Turkish villages it was not uncommon for Macedonian men to have some familiarity with the Turkish language as a result of living side by side with Turks over an extended period of time. In Petoraci (mixed Turkish Macedonian village with an Exarchate church) Kocho Duakis stated that Turkish was the only

¹⁴⁵ *Letopisna Kniga na Osnovnoto Chetiri Godishno Uchilishte 'Kiril i Metodi' - Selo Vrajnevi* [Chronicles of the Four Year Primary School 'Kiril and Methody' - Vrajnevi village]. An unofficial record book, it was commenced in the 1950s and handed down to subsequent schoolteachers in the village. The quoted material was written in 1957 by the schoolteacher, Todor Veljanovski, who gathered data regarding the village school and other general information from elderly folk in the village in 1957. Similarly as with the Macedonian experience, as a result of a preponderance of Greek Patriarchate educational institutions, since the early nineteenth century, Vlachs had often used the Greek alphabet to write in the Vlach language. I. Arginteanu, op. cit. p. 172.

¹⁴⁶ Stojche Petkovski (born 1920 in Makovo, Bitola region), interview conducted 18 March 2000 in Makovo.

¹⁴⁷ Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit.

¹⁴⁸ Andon Foudoulis (born 1919 in Armenoro, Lerin region), interview conducted 2 November 1999 in Melbourne.

¹⁴⁹ Trajan Micevski (born 1930 in Novaci, Bitola region), interview conducted 22 March 2000 in Novaci.

¹⁵⁰ Vasil Tilev (born 1950 in Balgarchevo, Blagoevgrad region), interview conducted 20 January 2002 in Melbourne.

foreign language that certain people in the village knew.¹⁵¹ Similarly in the mixed Macedonian Turkish village of Lazhec (Patriarchate church and school) ‘there were some older men who knew a handful of Greek words and could perhaps count to 5 or 10, but more knew ‘Turkish’, according to the interviewee Trajan Popovski.¹⁵² Overwhelmingly in the sample villages, the highest levels of fluency in a foreign language, was Turkish. Knowledge of foreign languages was predominantly restricted to male members of the village.

Patriarchist schools operated in all five Bitola-region Vlah villages alongside Romanian schools. According to Bulgarian data there was a total of 900 Vlah students in Patriarchist schools compared to 431 Vlah students in Romanian schools in the villages of Nizhopole, Magarevo, Trnovo, Malovishte and Gopesh. As in Macedonian villages, Vlachs maintained their mother tongue, irrespective of foreign schools operating in their villages. In everyday communication in the village as well as in the language of the home, Vlah continued to be the spoken form, according to the Vlah interviewees, Konstantin Nicha and Simo ‘Hemtu’ Simonovski.¹⁵³ ‘Even in the most pro-Greek Patriarchist Vlah families it was usually only the male head of the household who could speak Greek, and this was usually the case with wealthy Vlachs. Greek was the commercial language of trade, and people looked after their financial interests’.¹⁵⁴

Commentators generally claim that the depth of political division in Macedonian society at the end of the nineteenth century pitted brother against brother and saw fathers send each of their sons to a rival school. H.N. Brailsford gives an example of a father who sent each of his three sons to rival schools.¹⁵⁵ The contemporary commentator E. Bouchie de Belle claims a villager sent his four sons

¹⁵¹ Kocho Duakis interview, *op. cit.*

¹⁵² Trajan Popovski interview, *op. cit.*

¹⁵³ Konstantin Nicha interview, *op. cit.* and Simo ‘Hemtu’ Simonovski interview, *op. cit.*

¹⁵⁴ Konstantin Nicha interview, *op. cit.*

¹⁵⁵ H.N. Brailsford, *op. cit.* p. 102.

to four different schools,¹⁵⁶ and the historian R.W. Seton-Watson makes a similar observation.¹⁵⁷ That children from the one family attended opposing schools within an urban environment is supported by the ethnographic data gathered in this work, although to attend different schools in the one village was unlikely to occur because there was rarely more than one school operating within a single village. Sending ones children to opposing schools was not a natural process, according to all interviewees, families were not divided by foreign propaganda: instead, an entire *soi* (extended family) aligned with a particular party. The historian R.W. Seton-Watson considered that as a consequence of attending rival schools it was not ‘uncommon to find three brothers in a single family professing three different nationalities’.¹⁵⁸ To contend that a father’s three sons would become ‘Greek’, ‘Bulgarian’ and ‘Serb’ as a result of attending these respective schools is to underestimate the ingenuity of people living in difficult circumstances.

Using such examples to portray Macedonian society as divided at its most basic level owes more to political considerations and prejudice, and is a misconception that fails to recognise alternative methods of self-preservation. As outlined in Chapter Four, in villages in the Mariovo district it was not uncommon for two members of the one family to claim allegiance to the Exarchate or Patriarchate in order to protect one’s family and village from the violence of the armed bands. Similarly, in urban centres, self-preservation techniques emerged as a result of the hostile political environment in which people lived.

¹⁵⁶ E. Bouchie de Belle, *Makedonija i Makedoncite* [Macedonia and the Macedonians], Skopje, 1992, p. 61. Original title, *La Macedoine et les Macedoniens*, Paris, 1922.

¹⁵⁷ R.W. Seton-Watson, *The Rise of Nationality in the Balkans*, London, 1917, pp. 129-130.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 129-130.

5.3 Statistical summary

ONE UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCE of this fierce rivalry for the minds of young Macedonians was a relatively well-schooled population. The total number of students claimed by the Patriarchate, Exarchate and Serb school system rivals in Macedonia totals 150,195. This works out at an average of 58 students per Patriarchate school, 56 per Exarchate school and 37 per Serb school. Once we add the Catholic, Protestant, Vlah and Turkish data the total number of students in Macedonia was 193,156, enrolled in 3,752 schools, at the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁵⁹ (Jewish educational statistics have been omitted due to the lack of available data.) Within a total population of approximately 2.2 million people student enrolment represented 8.7 students per 100 people.

According to official Ottoman data regarding literacy rates in the 36 administrative districts of the Ottoman State in 1894-1895, the percentage of illiteracy in the Bitola vilayet was 40 per cent (ranked 12th of the 36 districts). In the Solun Vilayet 39 per cent of the population were illiterate (ranked 17th) and the figure for the Skopje vilayet was 32 per cent (ranked 25th).¹⁶⁰ At the beginning of the twentieth century it was remarked that, 'if the number of schools functioning in this region at the end of the century had been an indication of cultural progress, then surely Macedonia must have been a region of enlightenment and scholarship without parallel in Eastern Europe.'¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ It is interesting to compare these figures with official Turkish statistics for 1894-1895 that claim a total of 1,195 schools in the three vilayets, compared to the above total of 3,752 schools. Coincidentally the number of students is remarkably close, 190,340 - a difference of approximately 3,000 students. The historian, K. Karpat, *Ottoman Population 1830-1914*, the University of Wisconsin Press, 1985, p. 219.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p. 221.

¹⁶¹ The geographer, H.R. Wilkinson, *Maps and Politics*, Liverpool University Press, 1951, p. 118. A lecturer in geography at the University of Liverpool, Wilkinson's important work details an impressive collection of conflicting ethnographic maps of Macedonia.

The oral testimony does not triangulate well with the published data. Respondents were asked, 'Were your parents, grandparents or anyone else in the village literate?' The overwhelming response to this question pointed to the vast majority of villagers being illiterate. Considering that Bitola was one of the most highly contested regions in Macedonia, it would appear that either educational figures were inflated by the rival parties to support partisan claims or that the quality of teaching in rural Macedonia was extremely poor.

It is interesting to compare the figure of 8.7 students per 100 inhabitants in Macedonia with Eastern and Western European nations at approximately the same period. Only Bulgaria had a higher number of students (in proportion to population) of the east European/Balkan States. Noteworthy also is that Macedonian figures were greater than those of Serbia, Greece and Romania - even though the three respective states had thrown off Ottoman rule decades earlier.

Naturally we should not confuse 'schooling' with 'education'. We have seen that the length of the school year was compromised by the economic needs of Macedonian families, and we have also noted the relative lack of experience within the teaching workforce. Nonetheless, the Macedonian school figures gave that society something of a comparative advantage among its peers.

Table 5.10: Total Number of Schools and Students Claimed by Respective Educational Systems in Macedonia at the End of the Nineteenth Century

Education System	Number of schools	Number of students
Exarchate	1,143	63,763
Patriarchate	1,443	83,810
Serb	226	8,432
Vlah	43	2,207
Catholic/Protestant	26	775
Jewish	?	?
Turkish	939	34,169
TOTAL:	3,820	193,156

Source and notes: Bulgarian Exarchate statistics are drawn from G.P. Genov, *Neiski ot Dogovor i Blgaria* [The Treaty of Neuilly and Bulgaria], Sofia, 1935, pp. 143-145, as cited in L. Mojsov, *The Macedonian Historical Themes*, Belgrade, 1979, p.75. Greek Patriarchate statistics are drawn from C. Nicolaidis, *Macedonien*, Berlin, 1899, pp. 141-142. Serb education statistics rarely provide data regarding the number of students, but rather the number of schools and teachers in European Turkey. The writer has utilised the following method: As the highest available figures for each of the Balkan States is being used - 226 schools being from T.R. Georgievitch, *Macedonia*, London, 1918. The number of students were calculated through an examination of M.V. Vesselinovitch's data in *Statistika Srpski Shkola y Turskoj (y Staroj Srbiji i Makedonija) za 1895-96 shkolsky godiny*, Belgrade, 1897, (one of the few Serbs who provide student numbers). For the school year 1895-96, Vesselinovitch claimed 77 schools with 2873 students - a total of 37.31 students per school. The writer has multiplied 226 schools by 37.31 students to come to the figure of 8432. Vlah education data is drawn from D.M. Brancoff, *La Macedoine et sa population chretienne* [The Christian Population of Macedonia], Paris, 1905, pp. 146-247. Data regarding Catholic and Protestant schools and students numbers has been derived from D.M. Brancoff, *La Macedoine et sa population chretienne*, Paris, 1905, (p. 247). Turkish school data is from a diplomatic report by the Serb General Consul (Kosta Hristich) in Solun dated 26 May 1889 from K. Dzhambazovski, editor, *Gradzhda za Istoriju Makedonskog Naroda (od Arhivot na Srbije)* [Material on the History of the Macedonian people (from the Serbian archive)], Vol IV, (1888-1889), Book III, Belgrade, 1987, p. 441.

Table 5.11: Students Per 100 Inhabitants in European States, circa 1900

Country	Population (millions)	Students	Students per 100 inhabitants
Saxe/Saxony (1900)	4.2	792,186	18.8
Prussia (1901)	34.5	5,681,593	16.4
Norway (1898)	2.2	332,373	15.1
Sweden (1901)	5.1	747,020	14.6
Holland (1900)	5.1	739,810	14.5
England (1900)	32.5	4,731,911	14.5
France (1900-1901)	38.5	5,550,284	14.3
Switzerland (1900)	3.3	471,713	14.3
Austria (1901)	26.1	3,692,350	14.1
Scotland (1900)	4.5	626,911	13.9
Hungary (1901)	19.3	2,577,050	13.3
Denmark (1898)	2.5	307,633	12.3
Belgium (1900)	6.7	793,915	11.8
Ireland (1900)	4.5	478,224	10.6
Spain (1901)	18.6	1,961,694	10.5
Bulgaria (1899)	3.7	345,887	9.3
Macedonia (1912)	2.2	193,156	8.7
Italy (1889)	32.5	2,682,590	8.2
Romania (1900-1901)	5.9	351,913	5.9
Serbia (1899)	2.5	100,961	4.0
Finland (1902)	2.5	99,931	3.9
Greece (1900-1901)	2.4	89,823	3.7
Russia (1898)	126.3	4,193,594	3.3

Source and notes: Brancoff, D.M. *La Macedoine et sa population chretienne*, Paris, 1905, p 75 (except for the inclusion of data for Macedonia which has been compiled from statistics as per Table 5.10).