Chapter Three: Bitola

3.1 Rural and urban landscapes

AS A REGION, Bitola serves as a useful sample within which to reconstruct the finely-grained detail of Macedonian life in this period. Bitola is (and was) at the heart of the Macedonian experience, and it so happens that life within this province is reasonably well documented.

Having examined the ethnic–make up of Macedonia and conflicting accounts of the population structure on a general level in the preceeding chapter, by comparison, Chapter Three will present a finely textured account of the highly contested Bitola region. The economic, religious, political and ethnic structure of the region will be explored in order to understand the real–life conditions under which Macedonians lived at the local level in both the urban and rural environments. Village social structure, status systems and ritual celebrations are also drawn upon to provide an insight into the defining character of the Macedonian people and the fabric of their village life.

Located in the western part of Macedonia, the Bitola region is situated in the central part of the Pelagonia plain. The Pelagonia plain expands over the regions of Prilep, Bitola and Lerin. The Bitola plain consists of 582 square kilometres of land; however, the total size of the Bitola administrative region, including Pelister Mountain and the Mariovo district, is 1,798 square kilometres. The plain lies at approximately 600 metres above sea level, and the highest point in the region is Pelister Mountain at 2601 metres. In the Mariovo hills the mountains range between heights of 1,000 and 1,500 metres. As such the Bitola plain is encircled by high mountain ranges which directly impact upon the climate. The region experiences cold winters with snowfall

covering the land throughout winter, when the temperature is known to fall below minus 30 degrees celsius. During the warm summer months the temperature can reach up to 40 degrees celsius, although the nights become milder due to the surrounding mountain ranges. Rain is most frequent from October to March, with maximum sunshine in the months of July and August. The least amount of sunshine occurs during the winter months, in December and January.[1] The major river is the Crna, with approximately 70 kilometres of it running through the region. Other river systems connected to the Crna include the Shemnica, Dragor (flows through Bitola town) and Bela (through Mariovo). There are numerous streams and creeks flowing out of the surrounding mountain ranges linking to the Crna River. A large marsh existed in the south central part of the Bitola Pelagonia Plain and was known as *Blato*, stretching approximately 20 kilometres long and up to five kilometres wide.[2]

The Bitola region boundaries used in this study are not identical to the administrative unit of the Bitola *kaza* in the Ottoman period. The administrative boundaries of the Bitola *kaza* varied at different times. In the 1873 Ottoman population census, the Bitola *kaza* was recorded as containing 180 villages.[3] The prominent Bulgarian ethnographer and compiler of Macedonian population statistics, V. Kanchov, counted 266 villages in the Bitola *kaza* in 1900.[4] Another Bulgarian compiler of Macedonian population data, D.M Brancoff, claimed 120 villages for the Bitola *kaza* in 1905.[5] A 1913 Serb military report compiled immediately after the Second Balkan War claimed 123 villages in the Bitola *kaza*.[6] These discrepancies

[1] G. Lumburovski, ed. *Bitola,* Ljubljana, 1985, p. 12.
[2] The marsh was drained in the early 1960s.
[3] J. Jordanov, editor, *Makedonia i Odrinsko - Statistika na Naselenieto ot 1873g,* [Macedonia and Adrianople - Population statistics of 1873], Sofia, 1995, p. 106 (reprinted edition in original form with a Bulgarian translation by the Macedonian Scientific Institute in Bulgaria). Original title *Ethnographie Des Vilayets D'Adrianople, De Monastir et De Salonique* Courrier D Orient, Constantinople, 1878.
[4] V. Kanchov, *Makedonia Etnografia i Statistika,* [Macedonia, Ethnography and Statistics], Sofia, 1970 (1900), p. 542.
[5] Brancoff also includes the 14 villages from the Giavato *nahia.* D.M. Brancoff, *La Macedoine et sa population chretienne*, [The Christian Population of Macedonia], Paris, 1905, pp. 166-175.
[6] Report number 6260 dated 20 August 1913 by D.G. Alympich, from G. Todorovski, editor, *Srpski izvori za istorijata na Makedonskiot narod 1912–1914,* [Serbian Sources on the History of the Macedonian People], Skopje, 1979, p. 223.

show the degree of variability involved. The boundaries of the Bitola region as used in this study comprise a total of 135 villages and correspond to the Bitola administrative boundaries as used in the Republic of Macedonia from the 1940s to 1994. This definition of the Bitola region fairly accurately encompasses what is traditionally considered as 'belonging to the Bitola region'.

The Bitola *kaza* of the late Ottoman period encompassed a larger territory and included villages otherwise associated with the Demir Hisar, Prilep and Lerin regions. As such an administrative division such as a *kaza* may overlap with a religious territory (an eparchy) causing some confusion as to which region a particular village belonged. For instance, a 1909 Exarchate document from the Bitola Pelagonija eparchy refers to the village of Klabuschishta as a Bitola village *('Bitolsko selo')*, even though it is in fact a Lerin region village.[7] For the purposes of this study the Bitola region is recognised as containing three distinct categories of villages – the Bitola Pelagonia plain villages (known to the locals in everyday language as *poleto,* 'the plain'), Upper villages (known to the locals as *Gornite sela*) of the Pelister Mountain and Baba ranges and the Mariovo district *(Mariovo or Marioto)*. This 'zoning of village districts' is essentially based upon recognising the diversity within each of the three sub-districts and the varying economic, political, religious and ethnic conditions. Villages are designated as small (up to 29 homes), medium (30–60 homes) large (61–100 homes) and very large (more than 100 homes).

[7] Bulgarian Exarchate document number 01.0007.0060/0183-0186, dated 15 October 1909. Commenting on Greek educational data the newspaper *Glas Makedonski* similarly points out that Patriarchate schools were designated as belonging to certain eparchies and not to particular *kazas*. *Glas Makedonski*, Year IV, Number 9, 5 January 1897, p. 1. Following the extension of Greek rule over southern Macedonia Klabuschishta has been officially renamed as Poliplatanos.

Figure 3.1: Bitola region in Macedonia

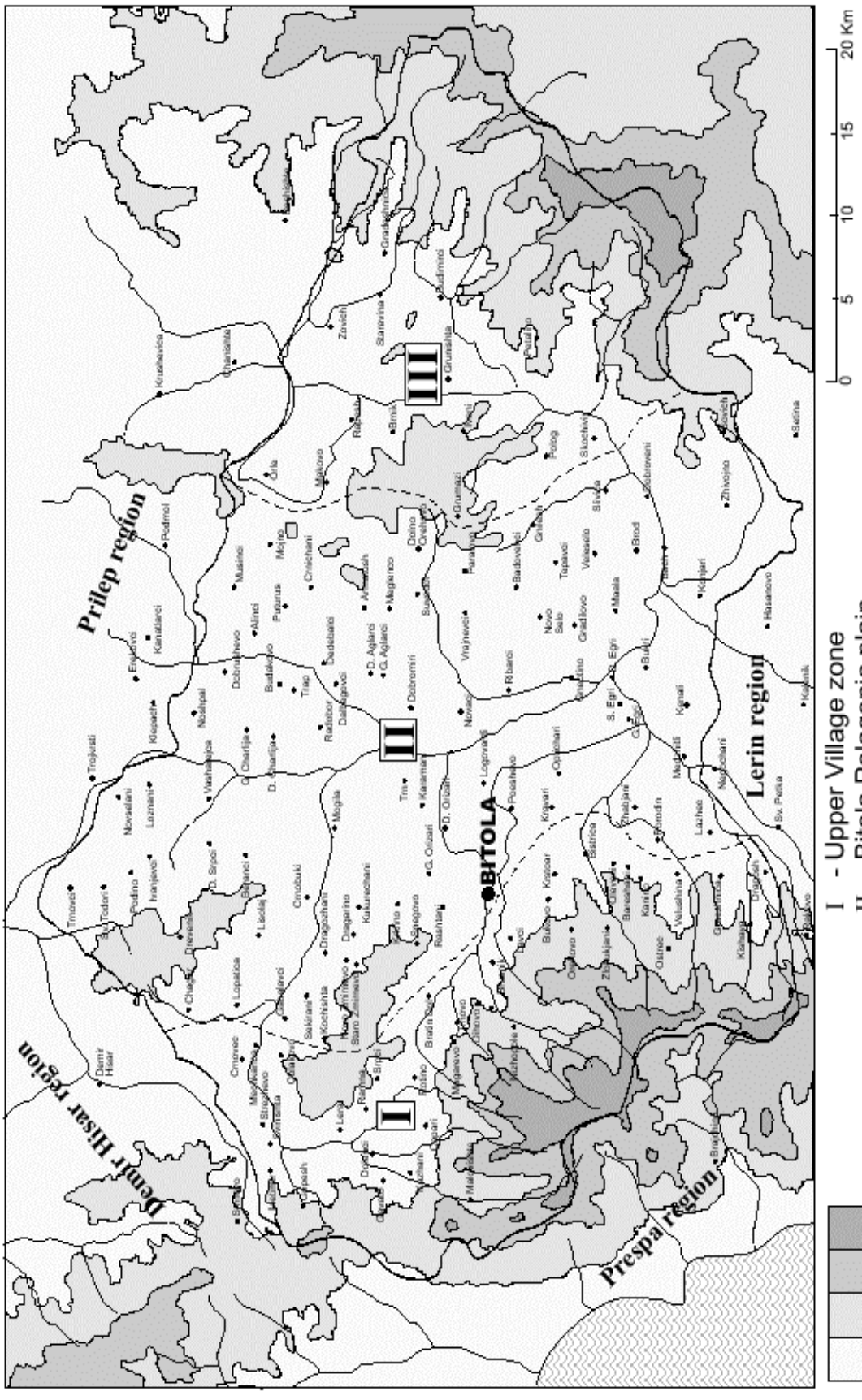

Figure 3.2: Topographical map of Bitola region

Pelagonia plain

BY FAR THE largest of the three zones, the Pelagonia plain is also one of the largest and most fertile plains in Macedonia. In our period, 62 per cent of all Bitola region villages were located on the Pelagonia plain (83 villages from a total of 135). Amongst the largest of villages along the plain was Mogila, with over 200 homes.[8] Typically villages along the plain comprised between 30 and 60 homes at around the turn of the century. There were also several extremely small villages containing less than 10 homes, such as Armatoush and Metimir. Homes were similar in appearance, constructed of mud brick, square or rectangular designs consisting of one main room, covered with a pitched roof and supported by a large post erected in the centre of the room. Most homes did not have an internal ceiling; those that did were constructed of cane mixed with earth before being whitewashed. A village home may house a dozen or more family members and often three generations lived under the one roof.[9] Depending on the 'wealth' of households, farm animals were either kept separately in a small barn outside, in close proximity to the home, or the home was divided by an internal wall separating family members on one side *(kykata)* and animals such as cows, horses, donkeys and sheep on the other *(pondila)*.[10] The average home along the Pelagonia plain had several small windows approximately 60 x 60 centimetres in diameter with wooden shutters.[11] The fireplace was the central point of the home, being where the cooking was conducted and heating supplied during the bitter cold winters. Above the fireplace a chimney led out through the ceiling. In the poorer homes a fire was simply lit in the middle of the room, and an opening in the roof enabled the smoke to escape (the opening in the ceiling was known as

[8] The measuring tool for the size of villages differs according to the commentator, sometimes it was the number of homes, other times the number of inhabitants. Respondents often experienced difficulty estimating the number of people in their village during the period under examination (and this was also the case when asked to estimate the current village population). No such difficulties existed, however, when responding to the question regarding the number of homes in the village.

[9] Large numbers offered a 'sense of security' during the turbulent environment of late Ottoman rule. Most village homes on the Bitola plain also kept two or three dogs, even though sheep herding was not their primary livelihood.

[10] Pigs and chickens never shared the same roof with people.

[11] Windows were similar in homes in the upper village and Mariovo districts.

badjzhata).[12] Four rectangular-shaped large stones were positioned around the fire and known as *klanici*.[13] Furniture was at a minimum. During construction of the home a recess was left in an internal wall to be utilised as a cupboard.[14] Cooking utensils consisted of earthenware, copper and clay pots known as *grnchina*. [15]

Each village had its own church located on the fringes of town, with a cemetery situated beside it. Wheat was the dominant product of the Bitola Pelagonia plain, followed by tobacco, beans and peppers. Livestock was generally limited to working animals, and few households maintained more than 10 or 15 head of sheep. The characteristic feature of Bitola plain villages was that they were predominantly agricultural settlements, the bulk made up of *chiflik* feudal estates. Working the land on behalf of a feudal landlord known as the *beg*, villagers lived under an entrenched system of labour exploitation which placed them in a position of servitude. As Macedonians constituted the majority group of the rural population, it was they who were primarily subjected to the backward and corrupt *chiflik* agrarian system. Villages along the Pelagonia plain offered greater security from Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian armed bands and Albanian Muslim bandits, but there was no security from the persecutions and violations committed by a cruel *beg*.

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[12] Mihailo Kleshtev (born Gorno Aglarci 1934), interview conducted in Melbourne on 1 November 1999. Mihailo married Dragica Vasilevska from Vrajnevci in 1956, and later moved to Gini Male in Bitola in the early 1960s where he built a new family home. He arrived in Australia in 1964. Regarding typical Macedonian village homes see K. Tanchevski, *Tipovi i enterieri na selskite kujki vo Bitolskiot kraj*, [Characteristics of village homes in the Bitola region], Bitola, 1981, and also M.E. Durham, *The Burden of the Balkans*, London, 1905.

[13] K. Tanchevski, op. cit. p. 562.

[14] A villager would construct his own home with the help of relatives and friends from within the village.

[15] Earthenware pots were often made by village women (who would sing specific songs whilst making them). Copper pots were purchased from the Bitola marketplaces and clay pots used to cook stews could also be purchased from travelling salesmen known as *grnchari*. Water was stored in a clay drinking vase known as a *bardina (barde)*. There were never enough spoons for everyone - spoons were made of wood, most people made their own, while some purchased them in Bitola. The meal table was roughly the size of a modern kitchen table, but constructed of timber and hand made. At the head of the table sat the eldest male member of the household, and beside him sat other adult males of the household. The eldest female adults also sat at the table, whilst the younger women with young children sat at a smaller wooden table. The eldest males sat upon small wooden three legged stools; but there were never enough stools for all the adults, so others sat on a mud brick stool that was constructed alongside the wall. The one main room was both a kitchen and bedroom. Beds consisted of straw mattresses that lay on the bare earthen floor and were rolled up when not in use. Every home had a large wooden chest known as *kofchek* (or *cheza*) that contained the finest clothes, blankets and other items of value. Mihailo Kleshtev interview, op. cit. and Dragica Kleshteva (born 1934 Vrajnevci, Bitola region), interview conducted 1 November 1999. Dragica lived in Vrajnevci until her marriage to Mihailo Kleshtev in 1956.

An analysis of the ethnic characteristics of Pelagonia plain villages (Table 3.1) reveals that Macedonian villages constituted the major ethnic element in the district. These were numerically followed by Turks who were more likely to live in a shared Macedonian Christian-Turkish Muslim village than inhabit a village exclusively. Albanians inhabited only two villages, Drevenik and Snegovo. The two sole Albanian villages were situated along the highest points on the Pelagonia plain; both sat at 1100 metres above sea level and were located respectively on the northern and western fringes of the plain. In comparison to the majority of villages on the plain, Drevenik and Snegovo were non-*chiflik* villages. Vlahs were completely absent from the plain, and this was in accordance to their non-agricultural traditions. Jews were not known to be rural inhabitants and none are recorded as living in any village within the three Bitola districts. Gypsies were also exclusively urban dwellers.

Migratory labour known as *pechalba* provided men with an opportunity to work abroad and return with substantial income which was otherwise impossible to secure by remaining in the village. Although *pechalba* was a long-held tradition in the region, towards the final stages of Ottoman rule working abroad substantially increased in popularity, yet was not as widespread along the Pelagonia plain as in the upper villages (and in other mountainous regions of Western Macedonia). Pelagonia plain villages were generally under the heaviest economic strain of the three Bitola zones.

Table 3.1: Bitola Pelagonia Plain Villages

Pelagonia Plain	**Ethnic Make-up**	**Size of village**	**Metres Above sea level**	**Agricul-tural land in hectares**	**Grazing land in hectares**	**Forest land in hectares**	**Land status**
Aglarci Dolno	Macedonian	Sm-M	582	286	14		*Chiflik*
Aglarci Gorno[16]	Macedonian	Sm-M	590	286	14.7		*Chiflik*
Alinci	Macedonian	Sm-M	604	327	41	4.4	*Chiflik*
Armatoush	Macedonian	Sm	840	104	367	6.6	*Chiflik*
Bach	Macedonian	Med	620	1138	547	1.5	*Chiflik*
Baldovenci	Macedonian	Sm	690	NA	NA	NA	*Chiflik*
Beranci	Macedonian	Med-L	640	1028	785	15	*Chiflik*
Bilyanik	Macedonian	Sm-M	580	535	58	-	*Chiflik*
Brod	Macedonian	Large	740	1274	630	0.7	*Chiflik*
Budakovo	Turk/Mac	Med	525	476	14.7	-	*Chiflik*
Bukri[17]	Macedonian	Small	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*Chiflik*
Chagor[18]	Macedonian	Small	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*Chiflik*
Charlija Dolno[19]	Macedonian	Med	582	950	56		*Chiflik*
Charlija Gorno	Macedonian	Small	583	950	56		*Chiflik*
Crnichani	Macedonian	Med	690	523	607		Mixed
Crnobuki	Macedonian	Large	600	1042	434		*Chiflik*
Dalbegovci	Macedonian	Small	592	491	31		*Chiflik*
Dedebalci	Macedonian	S-M	592	939	203	-	*Chiflik*
Dobromiri	Macedonian	Med	575	1062	31	-	*Chiflik*
Dobroveni	Macedonian	Med	580	433	994	1.7	Mixed
Dobrushevo	Macedonian	Large	594	1475	38	39	*Chiflik*
Dragarino	Macedonian	Small	615	139	233	-	*Rayatsko*
Dragozhani	Macedonian	S-M	590	268	904	-	*Rayatsko*
Drevenik	Albanian	Large	1100	586	312	707	*Rayatsko*
Egri Gorno	Macedonian	S-M	580	N/A	N/A	N/A	*Chiflik*
Egri Sredno	Macedonian	S-M	900	N/A	N/A	N/A	*Chiflik*
Egri Dolno	Macedonian	Large	572	N/A	N/A	N/A	*Chiflik*
Gabalavci	Macedonian	Small	660	349	291	8.7	*Chiflik*

[16] Both Gorno and Dolno Aglarci are recorded as having the same amount of agricultural and grazing lands, according to M.Panov, *Enciklopedia na selata vo Republika Makedonija*, [Encyclopedia of the villages in the Republic of Macedonia], Skopje, 1998.

[17] During the First World War a number of villages such as Bukri and others in the district were deserted due to heavy fighting. In Gorno Aglarci, military trenches were constructed through the middle of the village and the entire village population left the village for their own safety. A number of villages in the district, as far as Suvodol, were vacated during the war. The inhabitants of Gorno Aglarci all moved to Prilep during the fighting and returned after the war to rebuild their lives. The devastation of some villages meant that the inhabitants were never to return. There is no doubt about the intensity of the fighting that took place in the district, as many years later villagers were still digging up human bones in their fields.

[18] Village destroyed during the Ottoman period.

[19] Gorno and Dolno Charlija are both recorded by M. Panov op. cit. as having the same amount of land holdings.

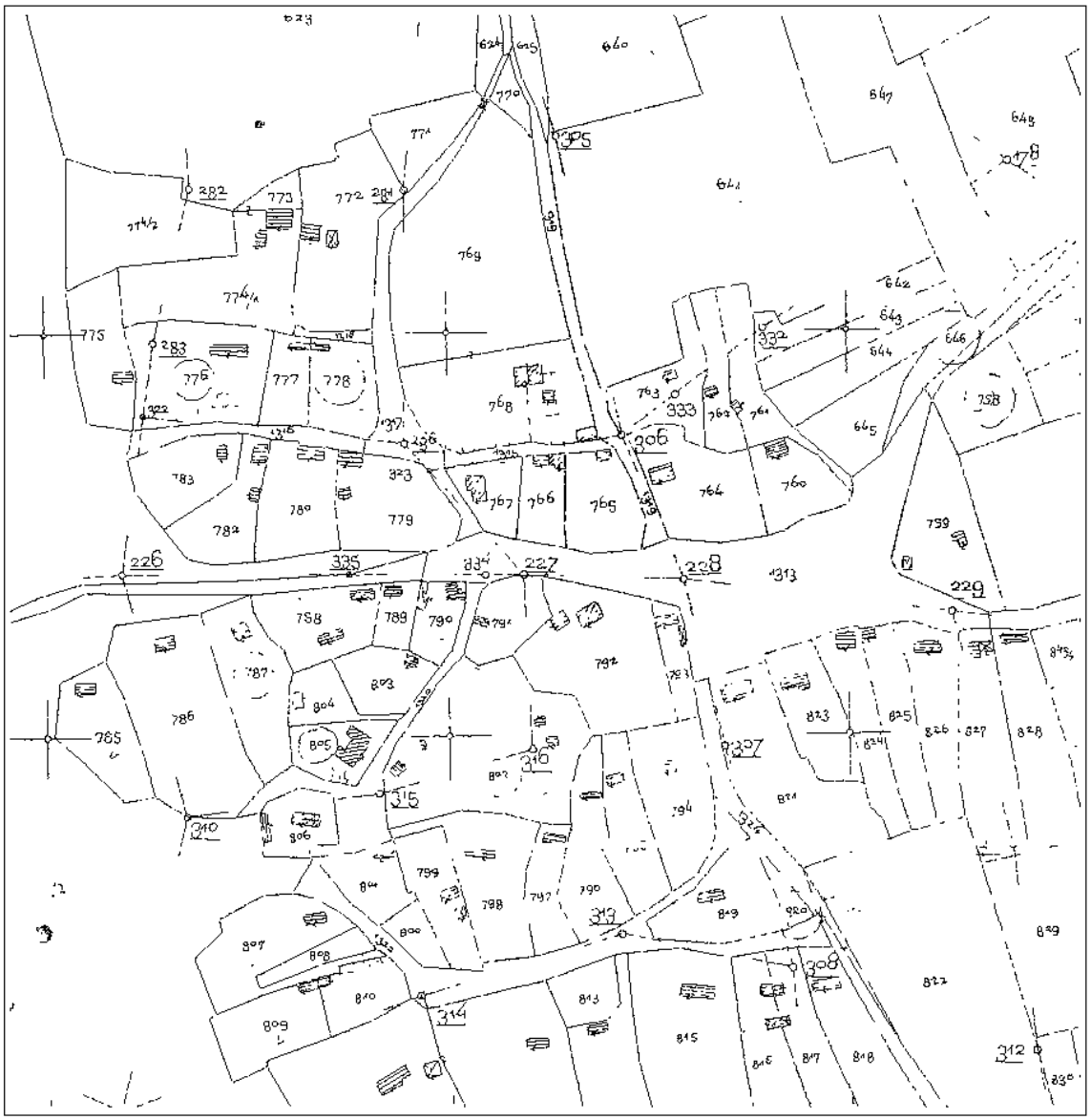
Gnilesh	Macedonian	Sm-M	840	356	1653	54.6	Mixed
Gnotino	Macedonian	Sm	577	1441	106	-	*Chiflik*
Gradilovo[20]	Macedonian	Sm-M	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*Chiflik*
Ivanyevci	Macedonian	Med	630	898	597	98	*Chiflik*
Karamani	Macedonian	Med	570	670	25	-	*Chiflik*
Kochishta[21]	Macedonian	Small	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*Rayatsk*o
Konjari[22]	Mac/Turk	Sm-M	610	1060	569	8.4	*Chiflik*
Kravari	Macedonian	Small	587	160	-	-	*Chiflik*
Kenali[23]	Turkish	V-Lrg	588	2705	117	48	*Chiflik*
Krklino	Macedonian	Med	670	491	415	22	Mixed
Kukurechani	Macedonian	Large	680	1466	227		*Chiflik*
Lazhec	Maco/Turk	Large	595	1036	111		*Chiflik*
Lisolay	Macedonian	Med	700	754	1148	17	*Chiflik*
Logovardi	Macedonian	Med	576	1527			*Chiflik*
Lopatica	Macedonian	Small	576	694	1338	329	*Chiflik*
Loznani	Macedonian	Med-L	600	563	219	32	*Chiflik*
Maala[24]	Macedonian	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*Chiflik*
Medzhitliya	Turkish	Large	587	N/A	N/A	N/A	*Chiflik*
Meglenci	Macedonian	Small	740	297	494	17	*Chiflik*
Mogila	Macedonian	Large	582	1712	340	9	Mixed
Moyno	Macedonian	Small	710	1475			*Chiflik*
Musinci	Turk/Maco	Large	630	943	132	14	*Chiflik*
Noshpal	Macedonian	Med	588	921			*Chiflik*
Novaci	Macedonian	Med	576	980	111		*Chiflik*
Novoselani	Macedonian	Small	610	374	84		*Chiflik*
Obershani	Macedonian	Large	589	588			*Chiflik*
Optichari	Macedonian	Med-L	578	1530	140		*Chiflik*
Orehovo Dolno	Mac/Turk	Med-L	720	385	1189	344	*Chiflik*
Orizari Dolno	Macedonian	Med	577	598	8.6		*Chiflik*
Orizari Gorno	Macedonian	Med	577	264	88		*Chiflik*
Paralovo	Macedonian	Small	820	321	523		*Chiflik*
Podino	Macedonian	Sm-M	680	341	130	115	*Chiflik*
Poeshevo	Macedonian	Sm-M	578	670			Mixed
Porodin	Turkish	Med	600	1154			*Chiflik*
Puturus	Macedonian	Small	670	446	167		*Chiflik*
Radobor	Macedonian	Sm-M	531	752			*Chiflik*
Rastani	Macedonian	Small	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*Rayatsko*
Ribarci	Macedonian	Small	550	538			*Chiflik*
Rotino	Macedonian	Med-L	1020	373	585		*Chiflik*
Sekirani	Macedonian	Small	625	280	935		*Chiflik*
Slivica	Macedonian	Small	610	346	792		*Chiflik*
Snegovo	Albanian	Small	1100	N/A	N/A	N/A	*Rayatsko*

[20] Village deserted as a result of military conflict from World War I.
[21] Kochishta village was destroyed by a foreign paramilitary band in 1907.
[22] Following Ottoman rule Konjari village was renamed Germijan.
[23] Following Ottoman rule Kenali village was renamed Kremenica.
[24] Village deserted as a result of military conflict from World War One.

Suvodol	Macedonian	Small	650	581	280		*Chiflik*
Sveti Todori	Macedonian	Sml-M	660	510	224	339	*Chiflik*
Tepavci	Macedonian	Med-L	750	683	506		*Chiflik*
Trap	Macedonian	Sm-M	573	581			*Chiflik*
Trn	Macedonian	Sm-M	573	1059			*Chiflik*
Trnovci	MM + MC	Med	620	664	202	232	Mixed
Vashareyca	Macedonian	Med	584	537	86.4	22.3	*Chiflik*
Veleselo	Macedonian	Small	700	201	426	6.1	*Chiflik*
Vraynevci	Macedonian	Small	660	506	376		*Chiflik*
Zhabyani	Maco/Turk	Sm-M	585	269	53	6.4	Mixed
Zhivoyno	Macedonian	Med	710	1218	1500	-	*Chiflik*
Zmirnevo Novo	Macedonian	Large	595	80	211		*Chiflik*
Zmirnevo Staro	Turkish	Small	850	N/A	N/A	N/A	*Rayatsko*

Source and notes: Ethnic composition, *chiflik* status and existence of particular villages during Ottoman rule derived from interviews conducted and local knowledge; as well as, including additional data, from: M. Panov, *Enciklopedia na selata vo Republika Makedonija,* Skopje, 1998; D.M. Brancoff, *La Macedoine et sa population chretienne,* Paris, 1905; V. Kanchov, *Bitola, Prespa i Ohridsko,* Sofia, 1970 (1891); and, V. Kanchov, *Makedonija Etnografia i Statistika,* 1970 (1900), Sofia. Regarding the *chiflik* status of land, conflicting data has been identified between various sources and the writer has opted for what he considers the most reliable. In addition often a village might be partially *chiflik* land, where this has been identified the village is designated as mixed.

Figure 3.3: Novaci - Layout of typical Pelagonia plain village



Source: Bitola Land Titles Office (1932)

Mariovo

ETHNICALLY HOMOGENOUS, THE Mariovo district was comprised exclusively of Macedonian villages. No Turkish, Albanian or Vlah villages existed in any part of Bitola's Mariovo district.[25] The central village in the district, and the largest, was

[25] Both the Bitola and Prilep districts of Mariovo were populated exclusively by Macedonians.

Gradeshnica, containing between 150 and 200 homes and in 1905 as many as 1,200 inhabitants.[26] Typically villages contained between thirty and sixty homes in Mariovo, with Petalino the smallest village in the district, with fewer than 10 homes. Material used for the construction of homes in Mariovo differed from those along the plain. Stone was readily available in the hills and mountain ranges and slate roofs were the norm. On the Pelagonia plain, homes were single storey, whereas in Mariovo there was a mixture of single and double storey dwellings. The ground floor was utilised to store items such as grains and to house farm animals, whilst family members resided upstairs. The interior and exterior of homes in both the Bitola plain and in the Mariovo hills were simple constructions and were not adorned by any architectural detail. Although the district was made up of a multitude of hills ranging between 1,000 and 1,500 metres, the terrain was not so rugged as to have high-density settlements (as generally found in typically mountainous areas).

Mariovo district villages contained an abundance of agricultural and grazing land compared to Pelagonia plain villages. The majority of villages in the Mariovo district constituted *chiflik* land. The main agricultural produce consisted of barley, rye and corn.[27] Due to plentiful grazing fields, sheep breeding was popular. The historian M. Zdraveva maintained that households commonly held a minimum of 250–300 sheep, with as many as 100,000 sheep and goats held throughout the Bitola and Prilep areas of Mariovo.[28] Generally the Mariovo district was seen as economically similar to villages on the plain, with *pechalba* migrations on a similar level but with the added advantage of significantly larger sheep holdings.

[26] D.M. Brancoff, op. cit. p. 148.
[27] Rye bread was commonly consumed in the Mariovo district.
[28] M. Zdraveva, *Territorial changes in the Balkan Peninsula after the Berlin Congress and its effect on the economic life of Macedonia,* Skopje, 1981, p. 180. In the middle of the nineteenth century, according to D. Silyanovski editor, *Makedonia kako prirodna i ekonomska celina,* [Macedonia as a natural and economic unit], Sofia, 1945, p.312, there were 9,000,000 sheep (as well as 2,000,000 goats) in Macedonia. By 1907 this figure reduced to a combined figure of 5,312,413 sheep and goats in the land.

Isolated from urban Bitola, there was virtually no regular Ottoman Turkish presence in the area. Following the brutal suppression of the Ilinden Rebellion of 1903 and the subsequent disarray of the Macedonian Revolutionary Movement, the district suffered a general lack of security. These conditions exposed villages to the intimidation of foreign armed bands, especially hostile Greek bands who subjected the population to politically-motivated violence, forcing entire villages to adopt the religious jurisdiction of the Patriarchate.

Table 3.2: Bitola Mariovo District Villages

Mariovo	**Ethnic Make-up**	**Village size**	**Metresa bove sea level**	**Agricul-tural Land in hectares**	**Grazing Land in hectares**	**Forests in hectares**	**Land status**
Brnik	Macedonian	Sm-M	740	578	815	62	*Chiflik*
Budimirci	Macedonian	Med	800	737	1903	1936	*Chiflik*
Chegel[29]	Macedonian	Small	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*Chiflik*
Gradeshnica	Macedonian	V-Lrg	800	1471	2046	4755	*Chiflik*
Grumazi	Macedonian	Small	1090	223	639		*Chiflik*
Grunishta	Macedonian	Medium	800	352	1229	190	*Rayatsk*o
Iveni	Macedonian	Small	940	289	1973	75	*Chiflik*
Makovo	Macedonian	Med-L	700	954	1409	185	*Chiflik*
Orle	Macedonian	Small	830	220	593	830	*Chiflik*
Petalino	Macedonian	Small	800	N/A	N/A	N/A	*Chiflik*
Polog	Macedonian	Med-L	940	196	867	71	*Rayatsko*
Rapesh	Macedonian	Med	700	1119	791	98	*Chiflik*
Skochivir	Macedonian	Large	600	313	3836	4729	*Chiflik*
Sovich	Macedonian	Sm-M	1080	N/A	N/A	N/A	*Chiflik*
Staravina	Macedonian	Med-L	850	1042	1357	3547	*Rayatsko*
Zovic	Macedonian	Sm-M	680	644	1287	257	*Chiflik*

Source and notes: Ethnic composition, *chiflik* status and existence of particular villages during Ottoman rule derived from interviews conducted and local knowledge; as well as, including additional data, from: M. Panov, *Enciklopedia na selata vo Republika Makedonija,* Skopje, 1998; D. Damcevska-Petreska and V. Kushevski, editors, *Nikola Petrov Rusinski Spomeni,* Skopje, 1997; D.M. Brancoff, *La Macedoine et sa population chretienne,* Paris, 1905; V. Kanchov, *Bitola, Prespa i Ohridsko,* Sofia, 1970 (1891); and, V. Kanchov, *Makedonija Etnografia i Statistika,* Sofia, 1970, (1900). Regarding the *chiflik* status of land, conflicting data has been identified from various sources and the writer has opted for what he considers the most reliable.

[29] Chegel was situated close to Polog and was an exclusively Macedonian Christian village. No data is available regarding the demise of the village.

Figure 3.4: Makovo - Layout of typical Mariovo village

Source: Bitola Land Titles Office (1932)

Upper villages

SITUATED ALONG THE slopes of Mount Pelister were some of the largest villages in the Bitola region. Several villages contained a thousand or more inhabitants; notably, the Vlah villages of Nizhopole, Magarevo, Trnovo and Malovishte had a combined population of approximately 7,000 people.[30] The Macedonian villages of Capari, Gavato and Bukovo also contained over a thousand inhabitants each. Albanian villages typically were not as large as Macedonian and Vlah villages in the district; each village contained no more than a hundred homes each,[31]

[30] V. Kanchov, 1900, op. cit. p. 539. Malovishte was the smallest of the four villages with approximately 800 inhabitants in 1900. Ibid, p. 539.

[31] Stojan Spasevski (born 1922 in Graeshnica village, Bitola region), interview conducted in Melbourne on 30 March 1999 and 18 February 2002. Stojan's great-grandfather Yoshe Churchievski moved to Graeshnica from the village of Sveti Todori.

with a combined population of approximately 1,750 people.[32] The ethnically mixed village of Kazhani (Macedonians and Albanians) was the smallest village in the 'upper zone' with fewer than a hundred people. Villages in this zone were generally high density settlements (as was typical in mountainous areas) in comparison to the Pelagonia plain and the Mariovo district, situated between 640 and 1140 metres above sea level.

A limited supply of good quality agricultural land in the upper villages resulted in fewer *chiflik* estates. The main agricultural products in the district were corn, rye and barley. As with the Mariovo district, the upper villages notably had highly developed sheep breeding systems and ideal pastoral conditions in the mountainous landscape. However, due to regular raids by Albanian bandits, sheep numbers were constantly being depleted and alternative forms of economic survival were pursued.[33] Some worked on nearby *chifliks*, others worked as tradesmen,[34] while others became traders such as those from Kazhani who purchased goods such as fish and apples from Prespa to resell elsewhere.[35] A market operated in the village of Malovishte and traded twice a week on Thursdays and Sundays.[36] Outside of urban Bitola the only industrial businesses operating were in the villages of Dihovo and Magarevo. The historian, D. Dimevski, states that in 1896 the Magarevo factory employed 220 people and was operational 24 hours a day.[37]

Although villages in the upper zone generally enjoyed greater prosperity compared to those in Mariovo and along the plain, the single most contributing factor for their economic success was their superior rate of *pechalba*. Towards the end

[32] According to Kanchov, Zlokukani contained 500 inhabitants, Kishava 700 and Ostrec 550. Op. cit. (1900), p. 536.
[33] G. Dimovski-Colev and B. Pavlovski, *Nepokoreni* [Rebellious], Bitola, 1982, pp. 57–58. Both authors are prominent historians of the Bitola region.
[34] Ibid, p. 58.
[35] D. Konstantinov, M. Konstantinov, and K. Cingarovski, *Letopis na Bitolsko Lavci* [Chronicles of Lavci, Bitola region], Bitola, 1966, p. 22.
[36] G. Dimovski-Colev and B. Pavlovski, op. cit. p. 58.
[37] D. Dimeski, *Makedonskoto Nacionalnooslobodhitelno Dvizheyne vo Bitolaskiot Vilayet 1893–1903* [The Macedonian National Liberation Movement in the Bitola Vilayet 1893–1903], Skopje, 1982, pp. 92–93.

of the nineteenth century every home in the village of Lavci had at least one male working abroad, and by the beginning of the twentieth century a process of discarding traditional village costumes for modern European clothing began.[38] Equally in Vlah villages, which were the most affluent of all upper villages, *pechalba* was particularly popular.[39] The relatively well-to-do nature of Macedonian and Vlah villages with high rates of *pechalba* was apparent by the size and quality of homes.[40] In contrast there was no tradition of *pechalba* in Albanian villages, where sheep breeding constituted their primary livelihood.[41]

Upper villages faced a similar predicament, but not as grave as the isolated Mariovo district in regard to incursions of foreign armed bands aimed at encouraging particular religious adherence. Equally, if not more distressing, were Albanian Muslim bandits, who were a constant threat to Christian inhabitants of the upper villages. Albanian extortion and violence was a constant source of distress to Christians in the district.

Upper villages were generally larger than those along the plain and in the Mariovo district. There was also greater ethnic diversity in this zone.[42] Exclusively Macedonian villages account for the majority, 22 of 36 villages, and Macedonians lived in mixed villages with Albanians (5), Vlahs (2) and Turks (1). Without exception both Albanian and Vlah villages were non-*chiflik* and often situated in isolated locations on high ground. Approximately 18 per cent of all upper villages were *chiflik*, and in every instance these villages contained Macedonians either as sole inhabitants or sharing with Turks.

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[38] D. Konstantinov, M. Konstantinov and K. Cingarovski, op. cit. pp. 5 and 24.
[39] G. Dimovski-Colev and B. Pavlovski, op. cit. p. 58. Apart from maintaining small-scale vegetable gardens, Vlahs were the least likely group found amongst the upper villages to engage in any significant agriculture. Ibid, p. 60.
[40] Although larger and well built, the homes were nevertheless constructed of the same materials (stone and slate) as homes in the Mariovo district.
[41] Stojan Spasevski interview, op. cit.
[42] A sub-group within the district is located at the Giavato Pass (the entrance to the Prespa region) and is made up of ten villages. These are Metimir, Gopesh, Lera, Ramna, Srpci, Dolenci, Gavato, Kazhani, Capari and Malovishte.

Figure 3.5: Lavci - Layout of typical Upper village

Source: Bitola Land Titles Office (1930)

Table 3.3: Bitola Upper District Villages

Upper villages	Ethnic Make-up	Village size	Metres above sea level	Agri cultural Land (ha)	Grazing land	Forest land (ha)	Land status
Bareshani	Mac	Med	640	375	159	124	*Rayatsko*
Bistrica	Mac	Sm-M	650	419	98	2.1	*Rayatsko*
Bratin Dol	Alb/Mac	Small	830	362	494	4.8	Mixed
Brusnik	Mac	V-Large	860	305	295	245	*Rayatsko*
Bukovo	Mac	V-Large	720	913	591	146	*Rayatsko*
Capari	Mac	V-Large	1010	892	609	1612	*Rayatsko*
Crnovec	Alb/Mac	Med	650	647	334	324	*Rayatsko*
Dihovo	Mac	Large	830	501	218	446	*Rayatsko*
Dolenci	Mac/Turk	Large	790	218	82	421	*Chiflik*
Dragosh	Mac	V-Large	700	363	236	512	*Rayatsko*
Gavato	Mac	V-Large	850	340	185	1608	*Rayatsko*
Gopesh	Vlah	V-large	1140	51	132	703	*Rayatsko*
Graeshnica	Mac	Large	700	417	381	1059	*Chiflik*
Kanino	Mac	Med	640	259	161	96	*Rayatsko*
Kazhani	Alb/Mac	Small	860	364	123	315	*Rayatsko*
Kishava	Alb	Large	860	324	304	1913	*Rayatsko*
Krstoar	Mac	Sm-M	760	214	96	40	*Rayatsko*
Lavci	Mac	Large	760	231	492	149	*Chiflik*
Lera	Mac/Alb	Med-L	750	290	540	397	*Rayatsko*
Magarevo	Vlah	V-Lrg	1040	254	201	609	*Rayatsko*
Malovishte[43]	Vlah/Mac	V-L	1140	153	668	1675	*Rayatsko*
Mechkarica[44]	Mac	Small	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*Chiflik*
Metimir	Mac	Small	820	238	115	168	*Chiflik*
Nizhopole	Vlah/Mac	V-Large	1030	225	4230	200	*Rayatsko*
Oblakovo	Mac	Large	1100	209	333	156	Mixed
Oleveni	Mac	Small	650	301	148		*Chiflik*
Ostrec	Alb	Large		364	471	848	*Rayatsko*
Orehovo	Mac	Large	1060	385	1189	334	*Rayatsko*
Ramna	Mac/Alb	M-L	820	310	267	112	Mixed
Rotino	Mac	Med	1020	373	585		Mixed
Srpci	Mac	Large	640	1500	789	186	Mixed
Strezhevo	Mac	Sm-M		N/A	N/A	N/A	*Chiflik*
Svinishta	Mac	Small		N/A	N/A	N/A	*Chiflik*
Trnovo	Vlah	V-Large	960	203	217	193	*Rayatsko*
Velushina	Mac	V-Large	720	807	382	358	Mixed
Zlokukani	Alb	Large	980	113	1180	605	*Rayatsko*

Source and notes: Ethnic composition, *chiflik* status and existence of particular villages during Ottoman rule derived from interviews conducted and local knowledge; as well as,

[43] Kanchov claims there was only a handful of 'Bulgarian' homes in the village, the overwhelming majority were Vlahs.

[44] No data available, Mechkarica village has been uninhabited since the periof between late Ottoman rule and the First World War.

including additional data, from: M. Panov, *Enciklopedia na selata vo Republika Makedonija,* Skopje, 1998; V. Kanchov, *Bitola, Prespa i Ohridsko, Sofia,* 1970 (1891); V. Kanchov, *Makedonija Etnografia i Statistika,* Sofia, 1970 (1900); D.M. Brancoff, *La Macedoine et sa population chretienne,* Paris, 1905; and, G.Dimovski-Colev and B. Pavlovski, *Nepokoreni,* Bitola, 1982. Regarding the *chiflik* status of land, conflicting data has been identified between various sources and the writer has opted for what he considers the most reliable. In addition often a village may be partially *chiflik* land, where this has been identified the village is designated as mixed.

Table 3.4: Ethnic Composition and Land Status of Villages in Bitola Region by Districts of Pelagonia Plain, Mariovo and Upper Villages

	Pelagonia plain		**Mariovo**		**Upper villages**		**Bitola region total**	
	No	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Total number of villages	83	61.5	16	11.9	36	26.7	135	100
Ethnic make-up								
Macedonian	71	85.5	16	100	22	61.1	109	80.7
Mixed Macedonian - Turkish	6	7.2	0	0	1	2.8	8	5.9
Albanian	2	2.4	0	0	3	8.3	5	3.7
Mixed: Macedonian - Albanian	0	0	0	0	5	13.9	5	3.7
Turkish	4	4.8	0	0	0	0	4	3.0
Vlah	0	0	0	0	3	8.3	3	2.2
Mixed: Macedonian - Vlah	0	0	0	0	2	5.6	2	1.5
Land status								
Total *chiflik* villages	68	81.9	13	81.3	8	22.2	89	65.9
Non *chiflik* villages	7	8.4	3	18.8	22	61.1	33	24.4
Mixed *chiflik* / non *chiflik*	8	9.6	0	0	6	16.7	14	10.4

Note: Numbers do not total 100 owing to rounding.

Photo 3.1: Traditional Mariovo-style Home

Photo 3.2 Home in Dolno Orehovo. The home is typical of the style found on the Pelagonia plain but is constructed of stone due to the village being situated on the fringes of the Mariovo hills

Bitola: the urban scene

BITOLA HAS EXISTED as an urban centre since the fourth century BC, when it was known as Heraclea Lynkestis. Occupying a strategic geographical position, it was a central city under the reign of King Phillip II of Macedonia, with a population of 3,000 people. During Roman rule its strategic importance was elevated with the construction of the famous Via Egnatia roadway (constructed 148 AD) which connected it to the west to the port at Drach on the Adriatic coastline, and south east to Solun and Constantinople. During the Byzantine period in the Middle Ages the city was fortified. In 1385 it was conquered by the advancing Ottoman. The fate of the town would be similar to other Macedonian urban centres - it was subjected to intense Muslim colonisation and Islamicisation. Consequently the town took on the appearance of an Asiatic city and early travel writers noted its Oriental influences.

An Ottoman census of 1468 (census number 993 and 988) confirms the rapid Islamic predominance of the town, registering 278 Muslim families to 160 Christian families.[45] The town continued to grow steadily and in 1519, according to the Ottoman census of that year, there was a total of 1,086 families.[46] The Venetian ambassador Lorenzo Bernardo documented that in 1591 Bitola was made up of 1,500 homes, of which 200 were Jewish.[47] The famous Turkish travel writer Evliya Chelebi noted in 1662 that there were 3,000 large and small homes in Bitola, as well as 900 shops; Ottoman sources recorded the town as containing between 10,000 and 12,000 inhabitants in 1718, rising to 30,000 by 1783.[48] In 1836-1838, according to Ami Bue,

[45] M. Sokoloski, editor, *Turski Dokumenti - Opshirni Popisni Defteri od XV vek* [Turkish Documents - Detailed Census Registers from the XV century], Vol II, Skopje, 1973, p. 145. The editor of this particular volume of early Turkish documents points out that in the original document the total of non Muslim families are not recorded under the category 'Christian families' but under the term 'GEBR'. The definition of this Persian word is given as 'adherent of the Zaratystra religion', or 'those who worship fire'. In official Turkish census data it is symbolical of the word 'unbeliever'. It is clearly evident that it refers to Christians, as the detailed nature of the published documents provides the personal names of individuals together with their fathers' name, and these are distinctly Christian.
[46] P. Stavrev, *Bitola,* Bitola, 1999, p. 71.
[47] V. Bozhinov, and L. Panayotov, editors, *Macedonia - Documents and Material,* Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, 1978, p. 105.
[48] P. Stavrev, op. cit. p. 71.

there were 35,000 inhabitants in Bitola.[49] By the beginning of the twentieth century when Macedonia found herself the object of intense rivalry between the Balkan States of Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia, Bitola became one of the most contested towns and regions. Population estimates ranged anywhere from 37,000 to 65,000 people.

As elsewhere, ethnographic data on the Macedonian population notoriously reflected the expansionist foreign policies of the Bulgarian, Greek and Serb governments. Rivalry among the protagonists was clearly expressed through their ethnographic maps and purportedly academic publications. An amusing example demonstrating the Serb Bulgarian rivalry for Bitola has Gopchevitch claiming there were 20,000 Serbs and no Bulgarians in the town, whereas Kanchov claimed 10,000 Bulgarians and no Serbs! Despite the unreliability of data in relation to general population statistics and those of individual ethnic groups, particularly Christians in Bitola, a conclusion can nevertheless be drawn that Christians constituted approximately half of the overall urban population. There appears to be a consensus on this by Bulgarian, Greek and Serbian ethnographers.

Table 3.5: Balkan Estimates of Bitola's Religious Population, 1890–1909

Bitola	**Serbian 1890**	**Bulgarian 1900**	**Greek 1909**
Christian	21,850 (43.8 %)	19,500 (52.7 %)	32,000 (49.2 %)
Muslim/Jews	28,000 (56.2 %)	17,500 (47.3 %)	33,000 (50.8 %)
Total:	49,850	37,000	65,000

It is also generally considered that at the beginning of the twentieth century the Turkish element in Macedonian urban centres, including Bitola, was well into a state of decline as a result of unstable political conditions and uncertainty for the future. At the same time the Christian Macedonian element was increasing as people were moving out of villages and into the relative security of the town.[50]

[49] Ibid, p. 71.

[50] V. Arsic*, Crkva Sv. Vilikomychenika Dimitrija u Bitolj (Povodom Proslave njene stogodishnice 1830–1930),* [The Church Saint Dimitriya in Bitola, Celebrating its one hundred years, 1830–1930], Bitola, 1930, p. 17. This publication appeared in Bitola in 1930 when Bitola was under Serb rule and the Macedonian church was placed under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Orthodox church. The publication is in Serbian; M. Zdraveva, op. cit and

The ethnic nucleus of Bitola town was made up of Turks, Macedonians, Vlahs and Jews.[51] Albanians and Gypsies constituted the smallest ethnic minorities in the town.[52] Macedonians and Vlahs composed the Christian element in Bitola. Literature of the period often records Macedonians as 'Bulgarians' and Vlahs as 'Greeks'; this incorrect assertion was based on religious adherence to Exarchate and Patriarchate churches respectively. Loose labels of identification linked to religious affiliation was a re-curring problem in contested Ottoman Macedonia. In Bitola, Serbs and Bulgarians were drawn from Consular officials, teachers and priests. Similarly the Greek community in the town was virtually non-existent, and was drawn from Greek Consulate staff and religious and educational officials. Gopchevitch claims they numbered 50 people in 1890; both Kanchov (1900) and Brancoff (1905) put their number at 100. Greek sources claim a much larger community, based on adherence to the Patriarchate church. Greek ethnographers claim all Vlahs as the central Greek element in the town, as well as Macedonian Patriarchate adherents.

The complexity of ethnic identification is evident in oral accounts. Born in 1893, Hristo 'Caki' Dimitrovski lived in Bitola under Ottoman rule until he was nineteen years of age. The immediate neighbours beside his parents' home were a Macedonian family associated with the Serb party. Hristo recalled 'they were no different to us, my father was associated with the Bulgarian Exarchate, but we all

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p. 181 and M. Apostolski, D. Zografski, A. Stoyanovski, G. Todorovski, editors, *A History of the Macedonian People,* Skopje, 1979, p. 109. New Macedonian arrivals from surrounding villages in the district were most often settling in *maali* around the fringes of the town, with popular destinations being Geni *male*, Smilevski *bair*, Poeshevsko *maalo*, Bela Cheshma and others. G. Dimovski-Colev, *Bitola - Istoriski Pregled,* [Bitola - Historical Overview], Bitola, 1981, p. 48. It appears that certain areas in Bitola took on the names of the villages from where people came. Note Smilevski *bair* and Poeshevski *maalo* – no doubt both areas are named after the villages of Smilevo and Poeshevo. The term *bair* is similar to a *maalo*.

[51] Konstantin Nicha (born 1919 in Bitola), interview conducted 30 March 2000. Konstantin Nicha is active in the Bitola Vlah community and a well-known, retired medical doctor in the city; Hristo 'Caki' Dimitrovski (born 1893 in Bitola), interview conducted in Bitola 21 March 2000. When interviewed, Hristo was the oldest living person in Bitola. His grandfather moved to Bitola from Novaci village in 1862, the same year his father Nikola was born. Hristo was conscripted into the Serb army during the First World War and served in the battles at the Solun Front; and Slobodan Ilievski (born 1943 in Bitola), interview conducted in Melbourne on 15 January 2002. Slobodan could trace his family tree back four generations to his grandfather's grandfather, Ognen, who moved to Bitola after buying a *chiflik* on the outskirts of the town. Ognen came from an unknown village on the Bitola plain.

[52] Konstantin Nicha interview, op. cit., Hristo 'Caki' Dimitrovski interview, op. cit, and Slobodan Ilievski interview, op. cit.

spoke Macedonian and culturally we were indistinguishable from one another - we all knew what we really were'.[53] The neighbour on the opposite side to the Dimitrovski household was a Vlah associated with the Greek party, 'but they did not speak Greek at home: they were not Greeks – they were Vlahs; everyone knew that'.[54] Although the three neighbouring homes were associated with different 'political parties', Hristo stated that 'we all lived well between ourselves, as most people did'.[55]

While the term *maalo* in Ottoman Macedonia referred to a section of a town (a town quarter), it could mean a group of several small streets or even a single street (for instance *Shirok Sokak maalo* - known in post-Ottoman Bitola as *Korzo*). In the fifteenth century Bitola was made up of seven *maali*. Six were inhabited exclusively by Muslims, and were known as *Demirdzhi Yusuf i Ismail*, *Kara Hamza*, *Burekdzhi Ali*, *Alaedin*, *Tabak Devlethan* and *Sarach Daut*. The one Christian *maalo* was known as *Dabizhiv*. The Christian quarter was the largest of the six and the Muslim quarters contained an unknown percentage of Islamicised Macedonian Christians, of whom some are identifiable. For instance, *Saruch Vasil* (Saruch is clearly a Muslim name and *Vasil* a traditional Macedonian Christian name) is recorded as an inhabitant of the *Kara Hamza* quarter and *Kasim, sin na Todorche* (*Kasim* is a Muslim name, whilst *sin na Todorche* signifies 'son of *Todorche*' (*Todorche* being a traditional Macedonian Christian name) in the *Sarach Daut* quarter.[56]

When the Ottomans originally captured Bitola, the sole inhabitants were Macedonian Christians. Large numbers of Jews began arriving in Macedonia at the

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[53] Hristo 'Caki' Dimitrovski interview, op. cit.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid. Similar remarks were also made by other interviewees from Bitola, reflecting that generally people co-existed harmoniously. Slobodan Ilievski interview, op. cit. Vera Tanevska (born 1924 in Bitola), interview conducted 24 March 2000. Vera was born and raised in the Arnaut male part of Bitola where traditionally the majority of the population was Turkish. Vasil Petrov (born 1911 in Bitola), interview conducted in Bitola on 1 April 2000. Vasil's father Giorgi moved to Bitola in the late nineteenth century from the village of Tepavci on the Bitola plain.
[56] From 'Bitolska nahia, ophirni popisni defteri broj 993 i 988 od 1468 godina' [Bitola nahia, detailed census registers numbers 993 and 988 in 1468], M. Sokoloski, editor, *Turski Dokumenti - Opshirni Popisni Defteri od XV vek* [Turkish documents - Detailed census registers from the XV century], Skopje, 1973, pp. 141-145.

end of the fifteenth century and Vlahs did not appear in Bitola until much later in the eighteenth century. The growth of the town is apparent by the rise in the number of *maali*; in the mid-seventeenth century the number of Muslim *maali* grew to 17 and there was an unspecified number of Christian *maali*.[57]

The names of *maali* in the seventeenth century bore no resemblance to those of the fifteenth century.[58] According to an official Ottoman tax *defter* for absent Christian tradesmen of Bitola for the years 1841/1842, there were ten Christian *maali* registered in Bitola and all but one bore the name of a priest (*Pop Risto Mechka*, *Pop Anastas*, *Pop Trajche*, *Pop Risto Dragor*, *Pop Vasil*, *Pop Dimitri*, *Pop Jorgaki, Pop Naum*, *Pop Atanas*, and *Crkva*).[59] At the end of the nineteenth century there were at least fifteen *maali* in Bitola. Most were distinctly Turkish Muslim in name and differed from those recorded in the fifteenth, seventeenth and mid-nineteenth centuries.

Although particular areas of Bitola were associated with certain groups, the city was not strictly divided into separate groupings, as 'members of all groups were dispersed throughout most of the city'.[60] Vera Tanevska recalled that her grandmother Vasa was born in approximately 1850 and raised in *Arnaut Male* where the main ethnic group was Turkish. Vera was aware that there were no hostilities or conflicts between the two groups.[61] The Albanian Justref Metovski moved to Bitola

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[57] From an Ottoman tax document dated 17 to 27 December 1639, M. Sokoloski, editor, *Turski Dokumenti za Istorijata na Makedonskiot narod - Seria I, 1607-1699, Tom III, od Januari 1636 do krajot na 1639,* [Turkish Documents on the History of the Macedonian people - Series I, 1607-1699, Vol III, from January 1636 to the end of 1639], Skopje, 1969, pp. 204-205.

[58] Seventeenth century Muslim *maali* in Bitola bore the names: *Softe Hodzha, Yakub-beg, Sinan-beg, Karadzha-beg, Azab-beg, Kara Oglan, Tabak Kara, Bostandzhi, Emir, Ogul-pasha, Chaush Ali, Husein Subashi, Bali Voyvoda, Dimishki-beg, Firuz-beg, Ine-beg and Kasim Chelebi.* Ibid, pp. 204-205.

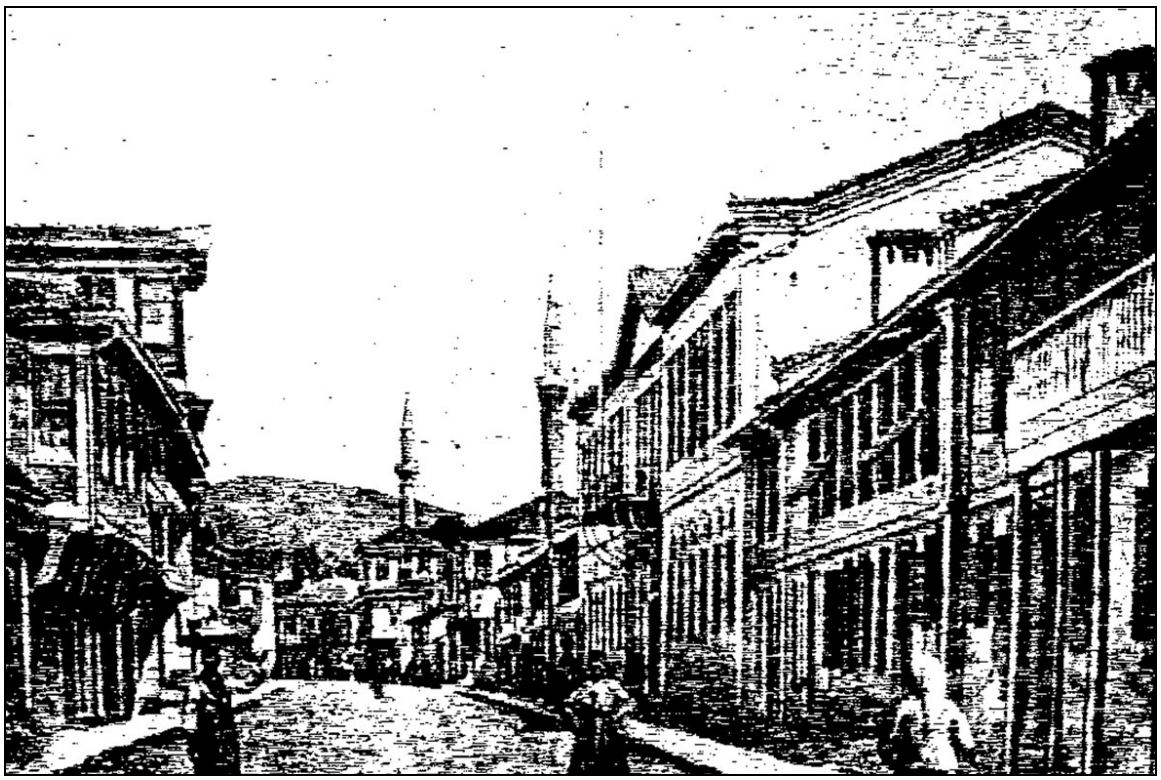
[59] The *defter* represented a census of names and the tax categories of individuals, mainly tradespeople, who had left the Bitola region and from whom the authorities were unable to collect the personal tax known as *dzhizie. Defter za iminjata i dzhizieto na rayata od Bitola i Bitolskata kaza koja zaradi trgovija se naogja vo drugi mesta (12) 56/7 1840/41 i 1841/42 godina* [Register of names and *dzhizieto* of the *raya* in Bitola and the Bitola kaza who are in other places as a result of trade (12) 56/7 1840/41 and 1841/42], D. Gjorgiev, editor, *Turski Dokumenti za istorijata na Makedonija - Popisi od XIX vek,* [Turkish Documents of the History of Macedonia - Census' of the the XIX century], Book II, Skopje, 1997, pp. 13-46.

[60] Hristo 'Caki' Dimitrovski interview, op. cit. Vasil Petrov interview, op. cit. and Vera Tanevska interview, op. cit.

[61] Vera Tanevska interview, op. cit.

in 1915 and settled into the overwhelmingly Macedonian Christian area of *Gini Male.*[62] Although Christian minorities also inhabited Muslim dominated *maali,* and Muslim minorities were found in Christian dominated *maali,* it appears that they generally co-existed relatively peacefully. However, as Hristo Dimitrovski stated, 'there were certain areas in Bitola where Turks and Muslims in general wouldn't enter after dark, and the same applied to us, we avoided certain Muslim areas'.[63]

Illustration 3.1: Nineteenth-century streetscape in central Bitola *(shirok sokak)*



[62] Justref Metovski (born 1908 in Resen), interview conducted in Bitola on 23 March 2000. Justrefs family moved to Bitola from the town of Resen because 'it was a bigger city, there were more opportunities'.
[63] Hristo 'Caki' Dimitrovski interview, op. cit.

Table 3.6: Ethnic Character and Location of Churches in Bitola *Maali,* circa 1900

Maalo/Male	Ethnic composition	Churches
Arnaut Male	Albanians, Turks and Macedonians.	
At Pazar	Gypsies	
Bair (Bayro) Male	Macedonians and Gypsies	
Bela Cheshma	Macedonians	
Badem Balari	Turks and Macedonians	
Chifte-furna	Macedonians	Sv Bogorojca church 1871
Chinarot	Turks	
Evrejsko Maalo	Jews	
Gini Male	Macedonians	Sv Nedela church 1863
Kachak Male	Predominantly Turks, some Macedonians	
Kazak Cheshma	Turks	
Madgar Male	Turks and Macedonians	
Mechkar Male	Macedonians	
Shirok Sokak Male	Turks, Vlahs and Macedonians	Romanian church 1900-1910 Catholic church 1854 Protestant church 1874
Vlashka Male	Vlahs	Sv Dimitrija 1830

Source and notes: Designating the ethnic make up of *maali* is predominantly derived from local knowledge in Bitola.

Jews concentrated in an area known as *Evrejsko malo*.[64] Gypsies predominantly lived in the *Bajro* area, sharing it with Macedonians. Albanians lived in *Arnaut male*, together with Turks and Macedonians. Vlahs were mostly found in *Vlashka mala* (also known

[64] Vasil Petrov interview, op. cit; Vera Tanevska interview, op. cit; and Hristo 'Caki' Dimitrovski interview, op. cit.

as *Grchka mala*) near the Patriarchate–controlled Sveti Dimitrija church.[65] Turks were dispersed throughout much of the city but were found in larger concentrations in the *maali* of *Kazak Cheshma*, *Chinarot*, *Shirok Sokak*, and *Kachak Male*. Macedonians were most concentrated in *Geni Male*, *Bela Cheshma*, *Bayro* and *Mechkar Male*. All four Macedonian concentrated *maali* contained at least one Exarchate school; two Exarchate schools (four schools) and single Patriarchate schools operated respectively in *Bayro* and the upper and lower parts of *Geni Male*.[66]

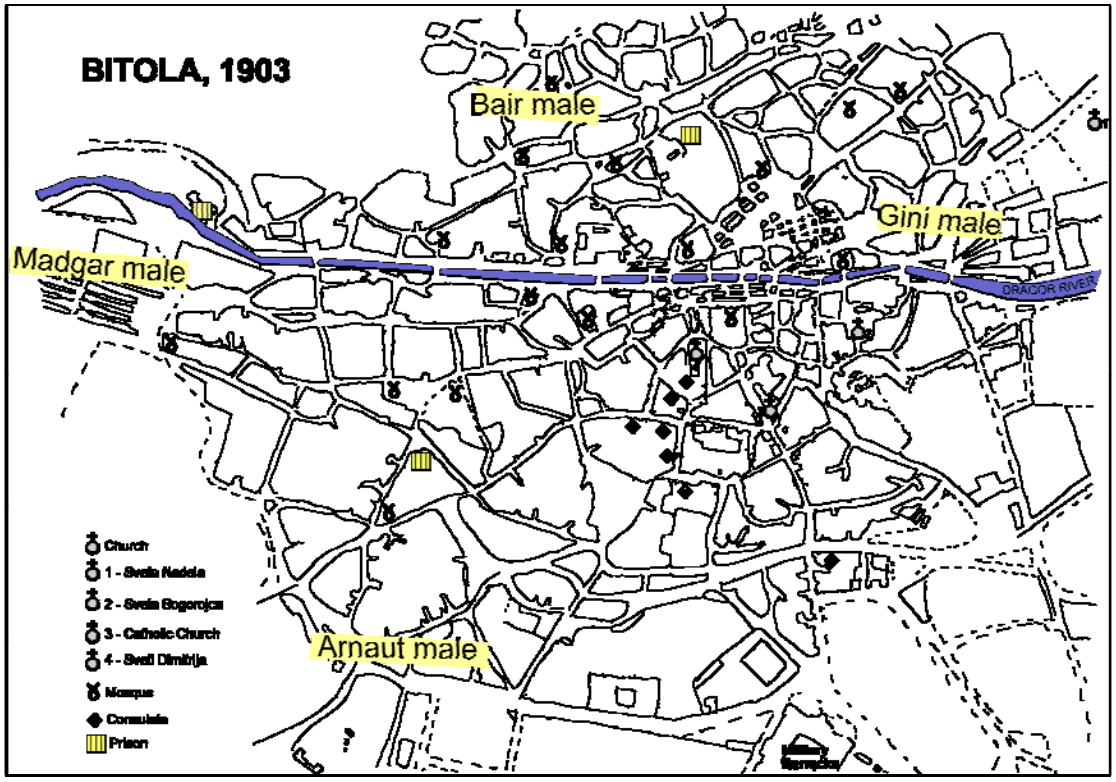
Fifteenth-century Turkish census data listed seven priests residing in Bitola in the year 1468[67] and, according to 'the stories of the old folk of Bitola, legend has it that there were once 72 churches in the town and each church had its own water mill'.[68] Bitola is also known by the name Manastir (English – 'monastery') and it is believed that this was connected to the many churches and monasteries in the town before Ottoman domination. It is a commonly held view that many of Bitola's mosques were built upon the foundations of destroyed churches. For instance, local legend has it that Isak Mosque (1508) was constructed upon the foundations of the church of Saint George *(Sveti Giorgi)*.[69] Mosques were constructed from the earliest

[65] Vasil Petrov interview, op. cit. Note: *Vlashka maalo* was also known as *Grchka maalo* (Greek *maalo*) reflecting the pro-Greek element of a section of the Vlah inhabitants.
[66] V. Kanchov (1900), op. cit. pp. 389-394 and the historian K. Bitoski, *Dejnosta na Pelagonskata Mitropolija 1878-1912,* [The activities of the Pelagonija Archiepiscopol Diocese 1878-1912], Skopje, 1968, pp. 107-108.
[67] M. Sokoloski 1973, op. cit. pp. 143-144. In addition two other males are designated as being sons of priests.
[68] Giorgi Dimovski-Colev (born 1923 in Bitola), interview conducted in Bitola on 13 March 2000. A lifelong resident of Bitola, Giorgi Dimovski-Colev is also a prominent local historian. Slobodan Ilievski stated that seventeen monasteries existed in Bitola before the Ottomans, Slobodan Ilievski interview, op. cit. Hristo 'Caki' Dimitrovski stated that there were dozens of churches in Bitola at the time of the Turkish arrival. Hristo 'Caki' Dimitrovski interview, op. cit.
[69] P. Stavrev, op. cit. p. 56. See also V. Arsic, op. cit. p. 17. According to Father Ruben Boiceski officials of the Macedonian Orthodox church (Pelagonia-Prespa Eparchy, Episcol seat in Bitola) are aware of several sites in Bitola where there once stood Orthodox churches, but were destroyed under Ottoman rule. One known former church site in the *voblasta* part of Bitola *(pod kasarna)* has had a home erected upon it for many years. In the last decades of the twentieth century the home has been owned by a Turkish family. In the early 1990s a cross appeared on one of its external walls and the owner of the home painted over it, but it reappeared the next day. Again the Turk painted over it, yet it continued to reappear. Soon after the family moved out and the home has remained unihabited at the beginning of the twenty-first century, yet the image of the cross remains. In the vicinity of the Sveta Nedela church, on a hill beside the Jewish cemetery (at a location known as *Krkadash*), 40 Macedonians were executed by the authorities during Ottoman rule. A church was later erected on the site and known as *Sveti Cheterieset Machenica* ('Saints Forty Martyrs'). The Ottoman authorities later destroyed the new church. Notes of interview with Father Ruben Boiceski (born Krivogashtani 1968), Parish Priest, Sveti Ilija church Footscray (Melbourne), Melbourne 21 January 2002.

period of Ottoman rule in the town corresponding to Muslim colonisation. An array of significant Muslim structures were constructed in the sixteenth century, including Isak Fekiy Bey Mosque (1505–1506), Isak Mosque (1508), Hadzhi Bey Mosque (1521–1522), Kodzha Ahmed Efendi Mosque (1529), Yeni Mosque (1558–1559) and Khazi Haydar Mosque (1561–1562). At the end of the 1880s there were 24 mosques in Bitola, according to the Ottoman geographer and publicist Sami-Bey Fraschery.[70] By 1912 there were 32 mosques in Bitola,[71] and even though mosques were built throughout the course of Ottoman rule, churches were not. When the *Sveti Dimitrija* cathedral church was established in 1830 it was the sole church in Bitola at that time. Under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate church, *Sveti Dimitrija* served as a bastion of Greek propaganda and remained the sole Patriarchate-controlled church in Bitola until the end of Ottoman rule.[72] Under Exarchate jurisdiction were the churches of *Sveta Nedela* (1863) and *Sveta Bogorojca* (1870). Other churches in Bitola were the Romanian Orthodox church *Sveti Konstantin i Elena* (established between 1905 and 1910), a Catholic church (1854) and a Protestant church (1874). All three were located in the central part of town. For the religious needs of the Jewish population there were three synagogues as well as three Jewish schools.[73] Alongside the infiltration of church organisations, the governments of the Balkan States also financed the establishment of Greek, Bulgarian and Serb educational institutions.

[70] Sami-Bey Fraschery, Ch. *Dictionnaire universelle d'historie et de geographie.* I-IV. Constantinople, 1889-1898 as cited in V. Bozhinov, and L. Panayotov, op. cit. p. 442.
[71] From a Serbian military report (number 6260) by D.G. Alympich, dated 20 August 1913, G. Todorovski, op. cit. p. 223.
[72] For a historical account of the Sveti Dimitrija church see V. Arsic, *Crkva Sv. Velikomychenika Dimitrija Y Bitolj (povom proslavenjene stogodishnjice 1830-1930)*, Bitola, 1930.
[73] J. Pshchulkovska-Simitchieva, *Naselenieto i uchilishtata 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, 1980, p. 672.

Figure 3.6: Bitola town map, 1903



Prominent religious rituals celebrated in Bitola were the central Christian celebrations of Christmas, *Vodici*, Easter and *Duhovden*, however, other holy days commonly celebrated in villages did not pass unnoticed in Bitola.[74] As each village celebrated its respective saint's day Macedonian Christians of Bitola celebrated *gradski Veligden* ('city Easter'). Easter was celebrated as the town's saints day and was considered equivalent to a saint's day village celebration.[75] On *gradski Veligden* a church service was held in the *Sveta Nedela* church and the celebrations drew Macedonians from all over the city and nearby villages; as one interviewee, Vera Tanevska, noted, 'it was just like a village celebration and was celebrated in the *Gini Male* square'.[76]

[74] Vasil Petrov interview, op. cit. Vera Tanevska interview, op. cit.
[75] Vera Tanevska interview, op. cit.
[76] Ibid.

Homes in Bitola generally abutted directly onto the road, and those that did not typically had a high fence erected along the front boundary. Although commonly associated with Muslim homes, in urban centres such as Bitola both Muslims and Christians lived behind high barriers. Most homes were attached dwellings on small blocks of land, typical of high-density European urban living. With the influx of Macedonians from the surrounding countryside villages into Bitola, Macedonians were often buying the homes of departing Turks at the end of the nineteenth century. The interior design of Turkish homes contained variations from traditional Macedonian dwellings, and newly constructed Macedonian homes during this period adopted these elements.[77] The principal distinguishing feature of homes in late nineteenth century Bitola was based on economic status; affluent families constructed large and impressive residences compared to the smaller attached homes of the masses. Amongst the lower classes there was limited variation in the exterior appearance of homes. Affluent Macedonians had elaborately designed and colourful ceilings skilfully crafted by tradesman from towns as far as Lazaropole and Galitchnik in the Debar region.[78] The homes of wealthy Jews also contained similar interior features such as high ceilings (approximately 3 metres) of elaborate timber construction.[79] A distinctive feature in Orthodox homes in Bitola was the presence of at least one religious icon adorning a corner or wall of a room – these were traditionally handed down from generation to generation.[80] The typical Macedonian home in Bitola was dominated by home made items considered essential and practical, with a distinct absence of luxuries that offered no practical use.[81]

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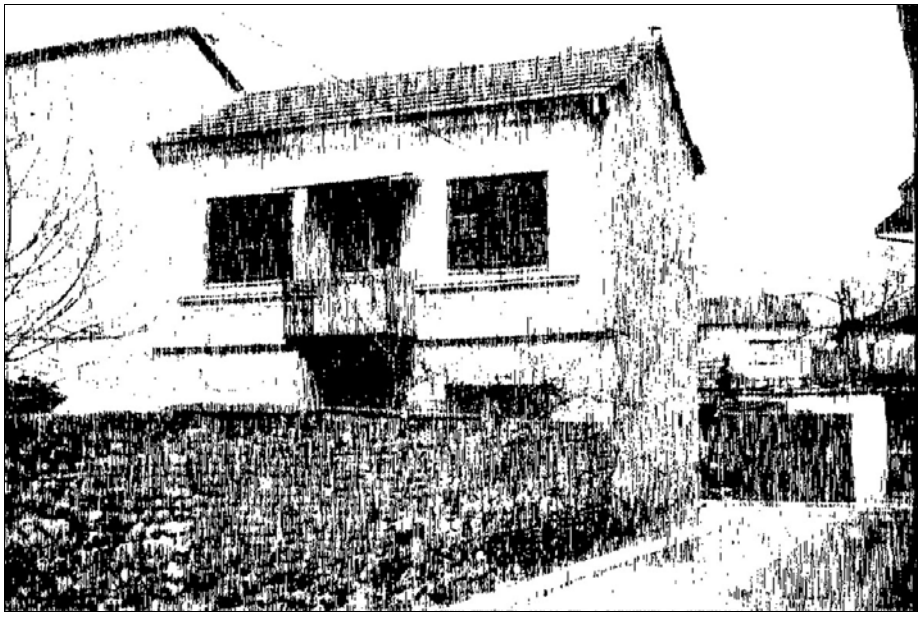
[77] A. Svetieva-Anastasova, *Nekoi Sogleduvajna za vnatreshnoto ureduvajne na Bitolskata kujka od krajot na XIX vek do osloboduvajneto* [Aspects of the interior design of Bitola homes from the end of the XIX century to the liberation], Bitola, 1981, p. 540.
[78] Ibid, p. 542.
[79] Kole Eftimov (born 1924 in Carev Dvor, Resen region), interview conducted in Bitola on 20 March 2000. Koles family moved to Bitola in 1927 after his father had previously purchased a hotel in the city from income acquired through *pechalba* in the United States.
[80] A. Svetieva-Anastasova, op. cit. p. 542.
[81] Ibid, p. 545

Illustration 3.2: Macedonian home in Bitola *(Gini Male)*



Ottoman civil administration

AT THE END of the nineteenth century the bulk of the Turkish population was situated in the urban centres of Macedonia and was engaged in two main areas of occupation, as government employees or as small business operators. As employees of the Empire, Turks constituted the bulk of officials employed in the military and civil service, in the form of tax collectors, as postal officials, customs officials, and elsewhere.

Bitola was the central town in the Bitola vilayet (known as the Manastir vilayet to the Ottomans) and the vilayet was one of six that made up European Ottoman Turkey.[82] Similar to a province, each vilayet contained a range of civil administrators, with the most important being the civil governor who was known as a 'vali', and had the rank of a 'Pasha'.[83] Larger vilayets were usually sub-divided into two to four sections known as *sanjaks* or *mutesarrifats*, and they each had a governor who also

[82] The six vilayets were Manastir (Bitola), Selanik (Solun), Uskub (Skopje - but sometimes also referred to as the Kosovo Vilayet), Edirne (Adrianople), Iskodra (Scutari) and Janina (Epirus).
[83] A Pasha was equal in rank to a military general.

ranked as a 'Pasha', but was known as a 'mutessarif'. The next administrative division in size was a *kaza* and was governed by a 'kaimakam' (prefect). The 'kaimakam' ranked as a *bey* (or *beg*), and was equal to a military colonel. The smallest district was known as a *nahie*, it was governed by a 'mudir' (sub-prefect) and consisted of a group of between five and ten villages.[84]

In Bitola as in other central towns of each province, there stood a government building known as a *konak*. Distinguished by its size, the *konak* was often larger than many of the surrounding buildings and was guarded by armed sentries. As the seat of government the representative of the state was found there and he acted as the supreme authority of the state. It is from the *konak* that 'justice [was] dispensed, grievances rectified, and every civil order inquired into'.[85] Organs of the vilayet administrative structure were comprised of 19 separate bodies (most were sub-departments). These included: (1) Finance and administration *(defter-darlik)*; (2) Correspondence *(Tahrirat kalemi)*. The general secretariat *(mektubcilik)* was also responsible for the official Vilayet printing house; (3) Foreign Affairs *(Hariciye odasi)*; (4) Education *(Moarif dairesi)*; (5) Electoral registry *(Tahriri nufuss dairesi)* Formed alongside the introduction of the census law of 1886; (6) Taxation registry; (7) Tithe committee; (8) Treasury; (9) Agriculture and trade *(Ziraat ve ticaret odasi)*; (10) Chamber of trade and agriculture *(Ticaret ve* ziraat *odasi)*; (11) Forestry and mining; (12) Public works department; (13) Passport office; (14) Titles office; (15) Vakuf committee *(evcaf)*; (16) Statistical registry; (17) Sanitary inspectorate; (18) Veterinary registry; and, (19) Vilayet archive.[86]

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[84] H.N. Brailsford, *Macedonia Its Races and their Future*, London 1906, p. 6. Brailsford's work on Macedonia is a well known and often quoted work. A journalist by profession, Brailsford spent five months during the winter of 1903/1904 in Macedonia together with his wife working on behalf of the British Relief Fund after the Ilinden Uprising.

[85] T. Comyn-Platt, *The Turk in the Balkans*, London, 1906, pp. 24-25. An Englishman, Comyn-Platt lived in Turkey for two and a half years and travelled on a 'journey of some months in Macedonia'. *The Turk in the Balkans* is based on the eye-witness accounts of his travels and knowledge of the Ottoman Empire.

[86] D. Dimeski, op. cit. pp. 75 - 76.

Civil servants were notorious for their corruption and hunger for wealth, as they became accustomed to the system of master and servant. Chaos prevailed: at times the Sultan himself was unable to maintain order in the distant Balkans from his royal palace in Constantinople. The administration of European Turkey was in the hands of territorial pashas. Amassing large estates, exerting total control over what was to become their own territorial domain, some effectively broke away from the State and operated as despotic rulers in their own little kingdoms. Ali Pasha of Janina became so uncontrollable that the Ottoman army was sent to crush him. Passvan Oglou, pasha of Vidin, prepared to march an army onto Constantinople when his independence was threatened. And the pasha of Scutari openly rebelled against the Empire.[87] The historian and contemporary commentator B. St John noted in the middle of the nineteenth century that every Ottoman official functioned as though he were a Sultan to those below him.[88]

Unlike the early Ottomans who were known for their discipline, by the nineteenth century corruption had become firmly instilled in the Empire as a way of life. The normal route for advancement to a much-prized posting was through one of the Ministries. To obtain an administrative post, it was a requirement that someone be bribed in order that the appointment be achieved. Upon appointment it was then accepted that they would 'recoup themselves by bribes and presents for the price which they paid for their posts'.[89] All posts from the highest to the lowest were sold for money, including pashaliks and kadiaships which were 'knocked down to the highest bidder'.[90] The contemporary commentator I. Ivanov stated in 1895 that a

[87] H.N. Brailsford, op. cit. p. 3.
[88] B. St John, *The Turks in Europe*, London, 1853, pp. 166-167.
[89] H.N. Brailsford, op. cit. p. 5.
[90] B. St John, op. cit. p. 21. The immediate effect of a purchased pashalik is that the pasha begins his administration with a violent oppression and that the pasha plays an instrumental role in the levying of the taxes. Fraser stated that 'if a man pays a high official 5000 Pounds for a post worth 500 Pound, both understand that the money will be recouped by squeezing somebody else'. J.F. Fraser, *Pictures From the Balkans,* London, 1906, p. 154.

kadiaship commonly sold for between 200 and 300 lira and a mutesariflik up to 500 lira.[91]

In the case where a significant sum had been spent purchasing the post of pasha, the purchaser was then continually obliged to send presents to maintain himself in his post.[92] In the early 1890s the Bitola valia was paying the influential Dervish pasha, a military marshal and close advisor to the Sultan, 3,000 lira annually – and a further hundred or more bureaucrats in Macedonia were obliged to make annual payments to the pasha.[93] J.F. Fraser, having travelled extensively through the Balkans at the beginning of the twentieth century, recognised that corruption had become an ordinary and natural thing, and things were such that the only person in the Empire who had no need to pay for his dignity was the Sultan: 'everybody beneath pays in some way or another'.[94]

Ottoman officials were generally lowly paid; C. Eliot, the Secretary at the British Embassy at Constantinople (1893-1898), noted that subsequently it was an accepted practice that officials were allowed the opportunity to make money through other means available.[95] At the same time they had to perform their official duties, the most necessary and important function being the collection of funds to be sent to the Ottoman Treasury in Constantinople. A former resident of Turkey, T. Comyn-Platt, who travelled through Macedonia at the beginning of the twentieth century, commented that a combination of low salaries and Treasury demands resulted in

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[91] I. Ivanov, *Polozenieto na Blgarite v Makedonia* [The situation of the Bulgarians in Macedonia], Sofia, 1895, p. 29.
[92] B. St John, op. cit. p. 24. B. St John added that a *firman* had been made forbidding all officials from receiving presents. However in the Ottoman territories in the Middle East, an Ottoman official was still permitted to receive the following, two sheep, twelve and a half pounds of butter, fifty eggs and two fowls. This could only be received once from a friend. However some of the local functionaries considered that they could receive a cantar of butter, if divided into small quantaties, and spread out over several days. B. St John compared this to European Turkey where it would be looked upon with contempt, as everything there is conducted on the system of *bakshish* (giving of gifts, i.e. payment made as a gift).
[93] I. Ivanov, op. cit. p. 29.
[94] J. F. Fraser, *Pictures from the Balkans*, London, 1906, p. 156. Regarding Ottoman corruption, H.N. Brailsford states, 'corruption is universal and inevitable' op. cit. p. 5.
[95] C. Eliot, *Turkey in Europe*, London, 1965 (1900), p. 137.

Ottoman officials functioning as little more than 'financial agents'[96], whereby tax gathering was the remedy and cure for the Ottoman, but a huge burden on the Macedonian Christian. The practice of bribery in the Ottoman Empire was rampant and from time to time the Ottoman government issued formal edicts intending to put an end to the practice. The edicts were never taken seriously, for even the Sultan's court was actively engaged in the practice.[97] Bribery and corruption affected all levels of Ottoman administration and was not limited to monetary bribes; lower-level officials routinely accepted bribes in the form of eggs, butter, chickens, sheep, and other material items.

Ottoman administrative positions were exclusively held by male Muslims. The only exception was where Christians held positions in advisory councils known as *idare medzhlisi* and these were connected to each of the vilayet administrative bodies. An advisory council consisted of approximately ten Muslim official functionaries and four-elected non-officials, two Muslim and two non-Muslim. Stringent conditions applied making eligibility to stand for the positions based upon economic status. But these positions were typically in the hands of individuals loyal to the Patriarchate or Exarchate churches. In many respects the advisory councils played a symbolic role, as the valia was authorised to veto any decision he disapproved of.[98] Another field open to Christians and non-Muslims was the gendarmie. Ottoman reforms in the Rumelia vilayets in 1896 specified a maximum of 10 per cent of any gendarme regiment could contain non-Muslim members.[99]

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[96] T. Comyn-Platt, op. cit. p. 22. The author equates tax gathering in the Ottoman Empire as being like extortion.

[97] The contemporary commentator, E.F. Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, London, 1909, pp. 43–44. E.F. Knight suggests that whilst allowing the navy to deteriorate, the Sultan appears to have connived at the embezzlement by his Minister of Marine of ten million sterling, which was to have been devoted to naval expenditure.

[98] Ibid, pp. 70-73.

[99] Ibid, pp. 70-73. Dimeski adds that due to the substandard and irregular wages morally undesirable elements were recruited (op. cit. p. 77). In 1885 the Bitola vilayet contained four battalions of gendarmes with 400 men each.

Over 30,000 soldiers belonging to the Third Ottoman Military Corps were dispersed throughout the vilayet. The headquarters of the Third Corps was in Bitola and there was a constant military presence in the town that was supported by a large military administrative apparatus.[100] As an important military, trade and administration centre, Bitola also became the site of foreign diplomatic branches for the powerful European states and developed a reputation as the 'city of consulates' (*konzulski grad*).[101] Austria established the first Consulate in 1851, Britain soon followed, then France and in 1860 a Russian Consulate opened with Mihail Alexandrovitch Hitrovo its first Consul General. Later Bitola was to see an Italian Consular presence before Macedonia's interested neighbours Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania opened Consulates from where they sought to expand their propaganda activities. Although instrumental in sowing division and discord as well as enflaming political intrigues, consuls and their families did bring a 'sense of Europe' to Bitola, 'influencing wealthy local Christian families with their lifestyles and European clothes and modern way of life'.[102]

[100] In 1896 there were 39 infantry battalions with a total of 30,850 soldiers, 8 cavalry battalions of 1250 men, 35 battalions with 127 heavy cannons and 2,570 artillery men and one logistics unit with 400 soldiers. Ibid, p. 80. The enormous Ottoman army barracks were constructed in 1837 (known as the 'white barracks') and 1844 (the 'red barracks'). Later in 1848 a military and art school was constructed in the vicinity of the barracks and during the reign of Abdul Kerim Pasha (1895-1901) a large military hospital was constructed.

[101] The interviewee Hristo 'Caki' Dimitrovski referred to the city as *'grad na begoyte i konzulite'* - 'city of *begs* and consuls'. Op. cit.

[102] P. Stavrev, op. cit. p. 40. See also D. Grdanov, *Bitola i Heraklea niz Hronikata na Vekovite*, [Bitola and Heraclea through the Chronicles of the Ages], Bitola, 1969, pp. 28-29.

Illustration 3.3: One of several consulate buildings in Bitola

Commercial activity

URBAN NON-CIVIL SERVANT Turks were most prevalent in small business activities, predominantly as tradesmen,[103] and to a lesser degree in small-scale commercial ventures.[104] Turkish small business operators established themselves in

[103] E. Bouchie de Belle, *Makedonija i Makedoncite* [Macedonia and the Macedonians], Skopje, 1992, p. 95, original title *La Macedoine et les Macedoniens*, Paris, 1922. E. Bouchie de Belle found himself in Macedonia as a member of the French military immediately after Ottoman rule (during the First World War). He spent a total of three years in Macedonia in the regions of Ostrovo, Lerin, Bitola, Prilep and finally in Skopje where he tragically died in 1918. *La Macedoine et les Macedoniens* was not published until four years after his death.

[104] The Turk was not renowned for his enterprising business skills, according to C. Eliot, Secretary at the British Embassy in Constantinople from 1893 to1898: 'he is not much of a merchant; he may keep a stall in a bazaar, but his operations are rarely conducted on a scale which merits the name of commerce or finance'. Op. cit, p. 92.

urban centres in support of the needs of the Turkish population, and introduced new oriental crafts into Macedonia.[105] A particular craft related to Muslim custom was the manufacture of wooden-based clogs, known as *nalandjẓhi*, for the use of Turkish women. Elaborately decorated clogs were produced for the wealthy and at the beginning of the nineteenth century, according to the historian, M. Konstantinov, there were 10 *nalandjẓhi* stores in Bitola exclusively operated by Turks.[106] Other businesses catered for the culinary tastes of the Turkish community. Notable amongst these was the manufacture of *halva, boẓa*[107] and coffee. In the early nineteenth century these trades were exclusively operated by Turks – in 1825 one *oka* (measuring system, one *oka* is equivalent to 1.282 kilograms) of *halva* sold for 72 coins and one *oka* of coffee for 20 *grosh.*[108]

In the nineteenth century, Bitola was the next most important commercial hub in Macedonia, second to the principal-city and chief port, Solun. In 1827 Bitola contained approximately 1,093 ateliers and shops.[109] By 1837–1838 the number of small businesses had slightly increased to approximately 1,100.[110] During this period Muslims dominated small business in Bitola in all trades, with Orthodox Christians accounting for only 13.2 per cent of all business operators and Jews constituting 4.2

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[105] D. Silyanovski, opt. cit. pp. 263–264, M. Apostolski, D.Zografski, A. Stoyanovski, and G. Todorovski, op. cit. p. 86.

[106] M. Konstantinov, *Zanaeti i Esnafi vo Bitolsko* [Trades and Guilds in Bitola], Bitola, 1966, p. 40. A pair of *nalani* was selling in 1825 for between 14 and 19 coins. The *nalandjẓhi* stores were in close proximity to one another, grouped together near *saat kula* (the Bitola clock tower). Konstantinov also states that the gunsmith trade *(pushkarskiot)* was exclusively in Turkish hands and that it was born in the early eighteenth century with the production of Kremenki rifles for use by the Ottoman infantry. Towards the end of the nineteenth century there were four gunsmiths operating in Bitola (selling and repairing rifles and pistols). Ibid, pp. 40–41. However it should be noted that according to the historian, K. Vakalopolous, *Modern History of Macedonia 1830 – 1912*, Thessaloniki, 1988, in 1856 there were 6 Christian gunsmiths in Bitola and 3 Muslim gunsmiths. See Table 3.7.

[107] *Boẓa* is a thick flour based drink which has also been adopted by Macedonians and commonly sells in cake shops. Bitola is renowned as producing the finest *boẓa* in Macedonia.

[108] M. Konstantinov, op. cit. pp. 30 and 32.

[109] Ibid, p. 22.

[110] From 'Defter na nedvizhniot imot vo Bitola 1837/38 godina' [Register of property in Bitola 1837/38]. This register was a complete inventory of real estate in the city of Bitola in 1837-1838, and included the total number of small buisnesses and the religious adherence of the business operators. D. Gjorgiev, A. Sherif and L. Blagadusha, editors, *Turski Dokumenti - Popisi od XIX vek* ['Turkish Documents – Census' of the XIX century], Book I, Skopje, 1996, pp. 153–219.

per cent of all businesses.[111] Trades with the highest number of Muslim Turks by occupation were tailors (11.9 per cent), silk manufacturers (9.9 per cent), shoe/slipper makers (7.1 per cent), grocers (5.6 per cent), textilers (4.9 per cent), painters (3.9 per cent), barbers (3.4 per cent) and goldsmiths (3.4 per cent).[112] By the middle of the nineteenth century small business and trade had reached its peak in Bitola and in 1856 there was a total of 1,875 ateliers and shops.[113]

The craft industry in Bitola was made up of numerous guilds – consisting of Muslim, Christian or Jewish members – each headed by a president. By the 1850s Christian movement into the commercial craft industry was expanding, and of the 68 guilds in 1856, 41 were Christian, 19 Turkish and 8 Jewish.[114] There were few fields of occupation remaining where Muslims constituted the dominant factor, for example the tailoring industry, previously the largest Muslim field of business, was completely overtaken by Christians by 1856. The diminishing role of Muslims in business continued into the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

[111] Ibid.
[112] Ibid.
[113] K. Vakalopoulos, op. cit. p. 140.
[114] Ibid, p. 140.

Table 3.7: Guilds of Bitola, 1856

Guild	Affiliated Firms	Denominations of affiliated firms
Food Trades		
Flour Millers	15	5 Christian, 10 Jewish
Mill Employees	23	Christian
Butchers	18+	11 Christian, 7 Jewish, many Turkish
Bakers	75	Christian
Fishermen	9	Christian
Greengrocers	86	Christian
Grocers and Fruiterers	133	100 Christian, 13 Turkish, 20 Jewish
Chick Pea Sellers	19	Christian
Vintners	153	Christian
Hoteliers	?	
Innkeepers	?	
Cooks	13	Turkish
Coffee House Keepers	29	Christian, Turkish
Confectioners	?	Christian, Turkish
Yoghurt Producers	5	Christian, Turkish
Halva Producers	?	Christian, Turkish
Ice Cream Producers	?	Christian, Turkish
Barley and Oats Merchants	38	20 Christian, 18 Jewish
Craft Industry		
Cotton carders	10	Christian
Weavers	3	Christian
Hatters	3	Christian
Dyers	40	Christian
Tailors	186	Christian (73 European)
Embroiderers	10	Christian
Ribbon makers	49	28 Turkish, 21 Jewish
Furriers	25	Christian
Tanners	7	Christian
Cordwainers	68	Christian (7 Europeans)
Clog makers	20	10 Christian, 10 Turkish
Saddlers	13	Turkish
Metal Workers		
Coppersmiths	20	Christian
Blacksmiths	19	Christian, Turkish
Keymakers	?	Christian, Turkish
Farriers	28	Turkish
Tinkers	7	Christian, Turkish
Tinsmiths	10	Jewish
Card makers	4	Christian
Small bell makers	4	Christian
Goldsmiths	30	26 Christian, 4 Jewish
Gunsmiths	9	6 Christian, 3 Turkish

Other trades		
Quilt makers	36	6 Christian, 30 Turkish
Bag and Strap makers	6	Christian
Rope Makers	6	Christian
Pack saddle makers	16	Christian
Saddlers	52	Turkish
Carpenters and joiners	27	Christian
Leather goods manufacturers	12	Christian
Chairmakers	16	Christian, Turkish
Turners	16	Turkish
Coopers	8	Christian
Brick makers	15	Christian
Pharmacists	37	20 Turkish, 17 Jewish
Chandlers	7	Christian
Tobacco Merchants	27	Turkish, Jewish
Timber and Charcoal merchants	20	Christian, Turkish
Lime sellers	4	Christian
Barbers	17	Christian, Turkish
Itinerant workers	34	Christian

Source: K.A. Vakalopoulos, *Modern History of Macedonia 1830–1912*, Thessaloniki, 1988.

By the beginning of the twentieth century Christian participation in small business and trade further widened. Christian business and trade was divided between the two sole Christian ethnic groups, Vlahs and Macedonians. Vlahs were renowned as shrewd business operators and many of the largest businesses such as fur traders and textile manufacturers derived from this minority. The Danvash, Ikonomou, Sonti and Katsuyani families were amongst the most prominent and wealthy.[115] Macedonians were predominantly found amongst small business operators and tradesmen, and spread throughout most trades.[116] Towards the end of Ottoman rule, particular trades such as bakers, tailors and hairdressers were almost exclusively in Macedonian hands.[117] Notable Macedonian business and merchant families in Bitola included the Rizovci, Dafkovci, Kiprovci and Spanakovci. The Robevci family was also well known through its involvement in general practice and medicine.[118]

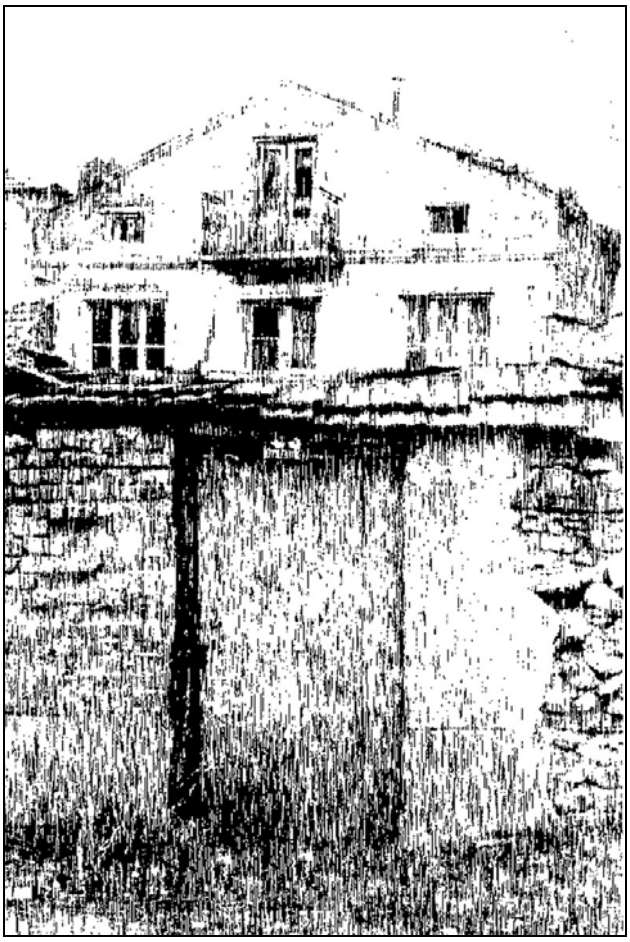
[115] Konstantin Nicha interview, op. cit.
[116] Hristo 'Caki' Dimitrovski interview, op. cit. Vasil Petrov interview, op. cit.
[117] M. Konstantinov, op. cit. p. 66.
[118] Kole Eftimov interview, op. cit.

The historian A. Assa refers to Bitola as a significant Jewish centre in Macedonia.[119] Amongst the wealthiest Jews were merchants, industrialists and moneylenders.[120] Konstantin Nicha recalled that a prominent Jewish family in Bitola was the Chelebon family.[121] Jews were the only ethnic group in Bitola town that was not found in the rural villages of the region. According to one interviewee, Vasil Petrov, they were 'born for trade; they did not work in agriculture'.[122]

Turks were mainly small business owners operating stalls and involved in a wide spectrum of trades. Many Turkish *begs* lived in Bitola and owned property in the town from which they drew rental income, in addition to that received from their *chifliks* in the villages.[123]

[119] A. Assa, *Makedonia i Evrejskiot Narod* [Macedonia and the Jewish People], Skopje, 1992, p. 66. (Originally published in Jerusalem, 1972).
[120] The eminent Macedonian historian, A. Matkovski, *A History of the Jews in Macedonia*, Skopje, 1982, p. 57.
[121] Konstantin Nicha interview, op. cit.
[122] Vasil Petrov interview, op. cit.
[123] Ibid.

Illustration 3.4: Jewish home in Bitola



Gypsies were most prevalent as blacksmiths, and this trade continues to be associated with them at the beginning of the twenty-first century in Bitola. Gypsies also commonly worked as porters and carriers.[124]

Specialty markets operated at various locations in the town. These included: *zhitni pazar* (cereals market); *ribni pazar* (fish market); *pekmez pazar* (jam market); *emish pazar* (fruit market); *odun pazar* (firewood and coal market); *ovchni pazar* (sheep market); *at pazar* (horse market); *mas pazar* (dairy goods market); *lenski pazar* (flax and rope market); and *solski pazar* (salt and spice market).

[124] Ibid. As carriers, Gypsies carried goods on their backs, and later developed small carts that they wheeled around the town delivering goods for payment.

As a thriving commercial centre in a strategic location,[125] Bitola was linked by roads (although often inadequate) in all directions to other market towns and ports. However, the establishment of railway connections to Skopje and Solun in the late nineteenth century provided local trade with efficient access to major ports and the European interior. As a result of access afforded by railway links there was a marked increase in goods exported from Bitola. For instance, in 1893 total exports accounted for 30,000 Turkish lira, whereas in 1897 exported goods increased to 68,000 Turkish lira (an increase of 226 per cent). The major exported goods consisted of 5,200,000 kilograms of cereals (28,000 Turkish lira), 600,000 kilograms of flour (6,000 Turkish lira), 265,000 hides of leather and furs (20,000 Turkish lira), rope and textile (8,000 Turkish lira), and timber, paprika, fish, beans, and underwear (6,000 Turkish lira).[126] Industry in the Bitola Vilayet was concentrated in Bitola town, where 23 manufacturing companies operated out of a total of 35 in the vilayet.[127] Throughout the whole of Macedonia, Bitola accounted for 27.7 per cent of Macedonian industry and the majority of companies in 1904 were involved in foodstuff manufacturing. Approximately 10 flour mills operated, two beer factories, a sweets factory (manufacturing Turkish Delight, *lokum*), two textile factories in Dihovo and a soap factory.[128]

With the Ottoman economy in a state of continual decline from the 1870s onwards as a result of debts owed to Western European nations, the Muharrem Decree of 1881 was forced upon Ottoman Turkey. Consequently Ottoman finances and the economy were to be influenced by Western Europe, which saw her European

[125] Ancient Bitola was a centre of trade and the city has maintained this function throughout the course of its history until the end of Ottoman rule. The eventual Balkan Wars and division of Macedonia had an economically devestating effect upon the city and its function as a centre of trade. Although Greece and Bulgaria fought intensely for the town it was to fall under Serbian rule and became a frontier town effectively cutting it off from its historical commercial routes into Southern Macedonia and most importantly to Macedonia's principal city and seaport, Solun.
[126] D. Dimeski, opt. cit. pp. 91-92.
[127] Industrial operations outside Bitola were located in Prilep (4), Ohrid (2), Krushevo (2) and one each in Sorovich, Resen and Kozhani. Ibid, p. 100.
[128] Ibid, pp. 97-100.

creditors regulate imports and exports from the Empire.[129] The Decree aimed that 'the Empire should be a source supplying West European industry with raw materials and a market for the placement of its industrial products'.[130] European goods penetrated Macedonia to the detriment of manufacturers and local craftsmen, and at the end of the nineteenth century up until the Balkan Wars, Macedonian commercial centres such as Bitola were in decline amid a worsening economic situation.[131] A systematic increase of imported goods continued to arrive from Austria, Britain, Germany, Belgium, Russia, Italy, France, Switzerland and Greece.[132]

As well as introducing new commercial activities into Macedonia, Turks made some impact into the agricultural sector in Macedonia. Although respondents from mixed Macedonian-Turkish villages indicated that Turks worked the land in an identical manner to Macedonians, they did not consider that they introduced any new farming techniques, but spoke of Turks as having a strong work ethic.[133] However, certain products were newly introduced to Macedonia such as rice,[134] and others which previously were grown to a limited extent, were now more widely cultivated. These included tobacco, cotton, sesame, opium poppies, maize, saffron, aniseed, chickpeas and certain green vegetables.[135] The basic difference between Macedonian

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[129] M. Zdraveva, *Territorial changes in the Balkan Pensinsula after the Berlin Congress and its effect on the economic life of Macedonia*, Skopje, 1981, p. 184. For a detailed account of Ottoman dependence on West European financiers see D.C. Blaisdell, *European financial control in the Ottoman Empire: a study of the establishment, activities, and significance of the administration of the Ottoman public debt,* New York, 1929.

[130] M. Apostolski, D. Zografski, A. Stoyanovski, and G. Todorovski, op. cit. pp. 132-133.

[131] M. Konstantinov, op. cit. p.75.

[132] D. Dimeski, 1982, op. cit. p. 94. The ripple effects of the economic decline of the Ottoman Empire were firmly felt in Macedonia. Trade fairs had been held in Macedonia as far back as the middle-ages and reached their pinnacle during the early to mid nineteenth century along with Ottoman economic growth (M. Zdraveva, op. cit. p. 183). Under the Ottomans numerous fairs operated from at least the end of the eighteenth century in Seres, Prilep, Doiran, Struga, Enidzhe Vardar, Petrich and Nevrokop (M. Apostolski, D. Zografski, A. Stoyanovski, and G. Todorovski, op. cit. p. 109). In the past the Prilep fair reportedly attracted as many as 100,000 people from destinations including Venice, Austria, Greece, Smyrna and other provinces in European Turkey (M. Zdraveva, op. cit. p. 183). With the economic decline of the Ottoman Empire fairs were no longer attracting crowds as they once were and some such as the Prilep fair ceased operating altogether.

[133] Macedonians from mixed villages commented that Turks were capable workers and considered them to be on par with themselves. It is interesting to note that urban Turks are sometimes described by commentators of the period as not being inclined towards hard work. See E. Bouchie de Belle, op. cit. p. 95.

[134] D. Silyanovski, op. cit. p. 264.

[135] M. Apolstolski, D. Zografski, A. Stojanovski, and G. Todorovski, op. cit. p. 85. Tobacco growing was to become one of the largest industries in Ottoman Macedonia.

and Turkish systems of work was that Turkish women, unlike Macedonian women, did not work the fields.[136] Turks also introduced new working animals to Macedonia. The buffalo was brought from Asia Minor and the use of the camel also spread. [137] New animal husbandry techniques were introduced to Macedonia during the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries with the influx of Yuruks, a nomadic Turkic sheep-breeding people from Asia Minor. Whereas Macedonian sheep breeders would leave their villages for periods of weeks, grazing their herd along high mountain ranges, the Yuruks settled in mountain villages at lower altitudes and herded their sheep along lower lying areas. They predominantly settled a large area expanding from the Halkidik Peninsula in a northerly direction to Plachkovica Mountain (on the eastern side of the Vardar River). The territory is considered to be amongst the driest climate in Macedonia and was similar to that in Asia Minor from where the Yuruks originated.[138]

3.2. Life on the land

Chifliks, begs and taxes

THE INTRODUCTION OF of the *chiflik* agricultural system in Macedonia was a radical change from the *Timar-Spahi* system which had been in place since the beginning of Ottoman rule. Under the *Timar-Spahi* system, the supreme owner of the land was the Ottoman Sultan, whilst the immediate owner was the *raya*. Between the two there was a small-scale feudal landlord known as a *Spahi*, who in return for

[136] Respondents from mixed Macedonian Turkish villages stated that Turkish women did not work the fields. Bouchie de Belle makes the same observation (op. cit. p. 97) and also draws a comparison between urban and rural Turkish women pointing out that the urban women played an active role in their husbands small businesses.

[137] M. Apostolski, D. Zografski, A. Stoyanovski, G. Todorovski, op. cit. pp. 85-86. There are no traces of camels remaining in Macedonia at the beginning of the twenty-first century; however the buffalo has remained.

[138] D. Silyanovski, op. cit. pp. 264–266. Regarding the territorial settlement of the Yuruks in the southern regions of Macedonia, some historians and commentators of the period consider it to be a matter of strategic colonisation aimed at driving a wedge between the Macedonian population spread on both the eastern and western sides of the Vardar river. Silyanovski doubts the strategic colonisation theory and considers that conditions there were closest to those in Asia Minor. Following the Balkan Wars and the population exchanges between Greece and Turkey in the 1920s, the majority of the Yuruks returned to Turkey and their villages became uninhabited.

military service 'received a fief out of the state land but without the right to dispose of it, and a strictly defined income in the form of feudal rent from the *rayas* living on his fief'.[139] Christian peasants were able to exercise rights under the *Timar-Spahi* system as the relationship between the *Spahi* and the peasants was under 'the direct control and protection of the state'.[140]

With a weakening of the Ottoman State from the seventeenth century, including military defeats, territorial losses and a general decline in government authority and control, this 'created a suitable situation for the usurpation of the small-scale military fief by the more powerful large scale military lords'.[141] Whereas previously the Ottoman government set stringent conditions for the *Spahi*, now large parcels of land were freely handed out to friends of government officials, at first secretly, and later were auctioned off to the highest bidder.[142] These parcels were known as *chifliks*, and unlike the *Spahis* who administered the land as lease-holders, *chifliks* became private property of the new owners whose children could legally inherit the land.[143] The first recorded *chifliks* in Macedonia appear from the beginning of the seventeenth century. Their establishment was often opposed by Macedonians, as was the case in Mogila (a Bitola region village) in 1621 when the villagers violently attacked the *chiflik* and its owner Kerim.[144] The expanding *chiflik* system and the *Timar-Spahi* system operated simultaneously until the mid-nineteenth century when

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[139] M. Apostolski, D. Zografski, A. Stoyanovski, and G. Todorovski, op. cit. p. 82.
[140] Ibid, pp. 82-83.
[141] Ibid, p. 88.
[142] D. Pop Giorgiev, *Sopstvenosta vrz chiflicite i chifligarskite agrarno-pravni odnosi vo Makedonia* [Proprietorship of *chifliks* and labour agreements in Macedonia], Skopje, 1956, p. 62. The historian, D. Pop Giorgiev's *Sopstvenosta vrz chiflicite i chifligarskite agrarno-pravni odnosi vo Makedonia* is based on his doctoral study conducted in the early 1950s.
[143] Omer *Aga* was a large *chiflik* holder in Gorno Aglarci at the end of the nineteenth century. When he died the entire *chiflik* was inherited by his spouse Hayrula, following her death the *chiflik* was inherited by her children, sons Ismail Efendi, Besim Efendi, Kenan *Aga* (not specified whether he was a son), and daughters Aisha Hanum and Gulishak Hanum. Details derived from five original Ottoman Land Titles dated 21 July 1906, Volume 52, Document 20, Number 91; Volume 52, Document 29, Number 100; Volume 52, Document 31, Number 102; Volume 52, Document 34, Number 105; and, Volume 52, Document 38, Number 109;
[144] D. Pop Giorgiev, op. cit. p. 64.

the *Timar-Spahi* system came to a complete demise.[145] The following legal definition of *chiflik* is derived from Article 131 of the Ottoman Land Laws:[146]

> Chiflik, in law, means a tract of land such as needs one yoke of oxen to work it, which is cultivated and harvested every year. Its extent is, in the case of land of the first quality from 70 to 80 dunims; in the case of land of the second quality from 100 dunims, and in the case of land of the third quality from 130 dunims. The dunim is 40 ordinary paces in length and breadth, that is, 1,600 pics. Every portion of land less than a dunim is called a piece (*kita*). But ordinarily speaking 'chiflik' means the land of which it is comprised, the buildings there, as well as the animals, grain, implements, yokes of oxen and other accessories, built or procured for cultivation. If the owner of a chiflik dies leaving no heir or person having a right of tapou, the chiflik is put up to auction by the State and adjudged to the highest bidder. If he leaves no heir with right of inheritance to the land and the buildings, animals, grain, and so on pass to the other heirs, then the land is granted to the latter on payment of the equivalent value, as they have a right of tapou over the land possessed and cultivated as subordinate to the chiflik, as stated in the chapter on Escheat. If they decline to take it, the land by itself, apart from such property and goods as devolve upon them, shall be put up to auction and adjudged to the highest bidder.

A significant portion of agricultural land in Macedonia came to belong to powerful Turkish feudal landlords, known as *begoi* (*beg* or *begot* denoting individual landlord, however, also known as *aga*). Villages situated along the fertile plains of Macedonia were typically under the proprietorship of a Turkish *beg*. It was not unusual for a village to have two or more *begoi* owning the land and often ownership also included the village homes.[147] The *beg* operated a profit-sharing system with the villagers; they worked the estates supplying their own agricultural implements and draught animals, whilst the *beg* supplied the seed.[148] In a position of servitude,[149]

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[145] D. Pop Giorgiev, op. cit. p. 69.

[146] R.C. Tute, *The Ottoman Land Laws with a commentary of the Ottoman Land Code of 7th Ramadan 1274,* (No date or place of publication), pp. 119–120.

[147] The contemporary commentator, A. Razboinikov, *Chifligarstvoto vo Makedonija i Odrinsko* [The *chiflik* system in Macedonia and Adrianople], Solun, 1913, p. 132.

[148] According to the contemporary commentator, B. Tatarcheff, the beg supplied the seed. *Turkish Misrule in Macedonia,* New York, 1905, p. 177. The French contemporary E. Bouchie de Belle, who spent a total of three years in Macedonia with the French military during the First World War claims that the peasant was required to supply the seed (op. cit. p. 50). Other contemporary commentators stated that the *beg* was the supplier of seeds – H.N. Brailsford, op. cit, p. 51, A. Razboinikov, op. cit. pp. 40-41 and C. Eliot, op. cit. p. 328. Vane Tanchevski from the village of Lopatica (Bitola region) was of the opinion that in his village the *beg* provided the seed and working animals. Vane Tanchevski (born 1935 in Lopatica), interview conducted in Melbourne on 6 March 2002. Vane Tanchevski was able to name five consecutive generations of male ancestors on his father's side. Vane's father was Bosilko, his father was Angele, his father was Tanche, his father was Dime, and his father was Stojan. Vane Tanchevski arrived in Australia in the mid-1960s. It was common practice for the *beg* to provide the seed. However in some instances he took back the seed initially handed to the peasant, at

villagers were liable to extensive demands in the form of unpaid labour on the *beg's* private farm and in his mill, and forced to chop wood for him and transport his produce to the marketplace.[150] Although villagers were to receive one half of the produce from the *chiflik*, after taxes and other contributions were paid, there was little left for the villager, just enough to maintain a 'miserable existence'.[151] The *beg's* primary concern for the village was the payment of taxes and contributions.[152] As Macedonian Christians constituted the dominant element of the rural population, they were directly exploited by the *chiflik* system of agriculture.[153]

Mountainous villages had limited and often poor quality land,[154] instead relying on sheep breeding and animal husbandry for their economic survival. Villages without agricultural fields on plains, or only limited land, were excluded from the *chiflik* land system. In mountainous regions such as Debar, Reka and Gostivar in

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harvest when he took his share of the produce. Depending upon the agreement between the *beg* and peasant, the peasant may be required to provide the seed, but took back seed from the harvest. Responsibity for providing seed and whether there was a requirement for it to be returned was regulated by local custom, if there was no agreement in place between the peasant and *beg*. D. Pop Giorgiev, op. cit. p. 133.

[149] The contemporary commentator, I. Ivanov, *Polozhenieto na Blgarite vo Makedonia,* [The Situation of the Bulgarians in Macedonia], Sofia, 1895, p. 30. Commenting on the relationship between the villagers and the *beg*, Zivko Dimovski (born 1929 in Gorno Aglarci, Bitola region), stated, 'we were slaves to the *aga (beg)*". Interview conducted 17 March 2000 in Gorno Aglarci.

[150] H.N. Brailsford, op. cit. p. 51. *Begs* often demanded that Christians display great respect towards them in their greetings. Mile Derushovski (born 1927), from the village of Kuratica (Ohrid region), recounted the following story that occurred sometime towards the end of Ottoman rule. 'My father was returing home from church one morning and happened to come across the *beg* on the path. Because he did not greet the *beg*, as the *beg* expected to be greeted, he took off his belt and hit my father. The *beg* instructed my father that in future he should always greet him with the words '*mnogu ti godini aga"* ('may you have a long life aga').' Notes of interview, 1 December 2001.

[151] Vlado Jankulovski (born 1921 in Novaci, Bitola region), interview conducted in Novaci on 11 March 2000. Vlado Jankulovski is from the prominent Tantarovci family in the village. His father Jovan lived to 104 years-of-age (1870-1974) and his father before him, Jankula was originally from the nearby village of Dobromiri. Jankula moved to Novaci after buying land in the village and later married Mitra, who was also from Novaci.

[152] Stojche Petkovski (born 1920 in Makovo, Mariovo district of Bitola region), interview conducted in Makovo on 18 March 2000. Stojche Petkovski is from the Tanevci family, he has never moved out of the village and continues to herd a small amount of cattle over the Mariovo hills at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

[153] Commenting on his stay in the *chiflik* village of Chegel, the revolutionary leader from the IMRO (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation), Nikola Petrov Rusinski, stated that he found the 'same misery as in other *begovski chifliks'*. Commentary by D. Pachemska-Petreska and V. Kushevski, *Nikola Petrov Rusinski - Spomeni* [Nikola Petrov Rusinski - Memoirs], Skopje, 1997, p. 248.

[154] Stojche Petkovski stated that no *chifliks* existed in the villages on the north side of the Crna River in Mariovo (Rapesh, Chanishte, Dunya, Beshishta, etc. This part of Mariovo is known as 'Old Mariovo' - *Staro Mariovo*) because of the poor quality agricultural land. He further added 'if the land was no good for growing wheat, the Turks were not interested and the land would never become *chiflik* soil'. Old Mariovo villages primarily engaged in sheep breeding. Stojche Petkovski interview, op. cit.

Western Macedonia there was not a single *chiflik* village,[155] whereas most villages along fertile plains were operated under the *chiflik* land system.[156] Turkish landlords constituted the ruling class in Macedonia outside of the major urban centres, however, by the beginning of the twentieth century a minority of wealthy Christian businessmen also emerged as feudal landlords. Macedonian *chiflik* owners included the well-known 'Bomboli' family from Prilep[157] and the Strezovi family in the Resen region.[158] Christian *chiflik* landlords constituted 7.15 per cent (158 individuals) of all feudal landlords in the year 1900 in the part of Ottoman Macedonia that today is the Republic of Macedonia. Half of all Christian landlords operated estates under 75 hectares.[159]

[155] A. Razboinikov, op. cit. p. 35.
[156] I. Ivanov, op. cit. p. 30.
[157] Giorgi Dimovski-Colev interview, op. cit.
[158] Most villages in the Resen region were not burdened with *chiflik* estates. Of the limited *chiflik* estates, the Strezovi family were the only non-Muslim landlords. S. Radev, *Simeon Radev - Rani Spomeni* [Simeon Radev - Early memoirs], Sofia, 1967, p. 47. The Bitola Pelagonia plain village of Skochivir was also a *chiflik* village under the ownership of a Christian landlord. The Macedonian Christian village inhabitants were not subjected to the 'degradation' that Muslim *chiflik* owners were renowned for subjecting Christians to. From the memoirs of Nikola Petrov Rusinski, D. Pachemska-Petreska and V. Kushevski, op. cit. p. 248. The Grunchevitch brothers from Ohrid were *chiflik* owners in the Ohrid region village of Konjsko. The village was populated by Macedonian Christians and contained 360 inhabitants (V. Kanchov, op. cit. p. 552). The brothers owned 70 hectares of cereal growing agricultural land and 12 hectares of forest. Seven village families worked for the Grunchevich brothers. Jachim Ristevitch from the Macedonian Christian village of Peshtani was also a *chiflik* owner in Konjsko village. Jachim Ristevitch owned 75 hectares of agricultural land and 84 hectares of forest. Twenty-seven families worked the Ristevitch *chiflik*. In total 34 families worked 145 hectares of agricultural land and 96 hectares of forest. From a 1914 Serb interior ministry report by J. Kirkovich, outlining the general conditions in the Ohrid region. Report number 4958, G. Todorovski, op. cit. p. 405. According to the encyclopaedia of villages in the Republic of Macedonia, in 1998 Konjsko village had 355 hectares of agricultural land, 574 hectares of forest and 780 hectares of pasture. M. Panov*, Enceklopedia na selata vo Republika Makedonija* [Encyclopaedia of villages in the Republic of Macedonia], Skopje, 1998, p. 156.
[159]Of a total of 2029 *chiflik* landlords in the part of Macedonia that constitutes the modern Republic of Macedonia, 158 landlords (7.15 per cent) were Christians with half operating estates under 75 hectares in size at approximately 1900. The vast majority (91.85 per cent) of landlords were Turks. D. Pop Giorgiev, op. cit. pp. 118–119.

Table 3.8: *Chiflik* Ownership, 1900

Chiflik **(hectares)**	***Chiflik*** **ownership 1900**				**Total**
	Turkish	**Christian**	**Vakaf**	**Church or monastery**	
Up to 25	703	50	4	2	759
25 - 50	497	51	1	2	551
50 - 75	212	21	1	5	239
75 - 100	139	11	-	1	151
100 - 150	129	9	-	3	141
150 - 200	68	6	-	-	74
200 - 300	82	3	-	2	87
300 - 400	66	3	1	-	70
400 - 500	24	2	-	-	26
over 500	109	2	-	-	111
Total	2,029	158	7	15	2,209

Source and notes: D. Pop Giorgiev, *Sopstvenosta vrz chiflicite i chifligarskite agrarno-pravni odnosi vo Makedonija,* Skopje, 1956, p. 119. Note: the data provided in this table only refers to that part of Macedonia which in 2004 constituted the independent Republic of Macedonia (25,713 square kilometers or 38 per cent of Macedonia).

The majority of *chiflik* estates were small to medium holdings, with some *chifliks* as small as 1 to 3 hectares.[160] Razboinikov details the number of *chifliks* for the year 1910 but only includes villages under the religious jurisdiction of the Bulgarian Exarchate. Of a total of 2,325 villages in Macedonia, Razboinikov claims that 1,838 were 'Exarchate villages', and that 552 villages were fully *chiflik* land, 336 villages contained a combination of *chiflik* soil as well as land owned by the villagers themselves and 920 villages did not contain any *chiflik* soil.[161]

The Bitola Pelagonia plain and the Bitola Mariovo district were overwhelmingly made up of *chiflik* land, whilst the upper villages along Pelister Mountain contained a greater proportion of non-*chiflik* land owned by the villages

[160] From a 1914 Serb interior ministry report by J. Kirkovich, report number 4958. G. Todorovski, op. cit. pp. 402-406.

[161] A. Razboinikov, op. cit. p. 35. It should be noted that Razboinikov's data regarding land status in Exarchate villages comes to 1,808 villages, slightly short of the figure of 1,838 villages.

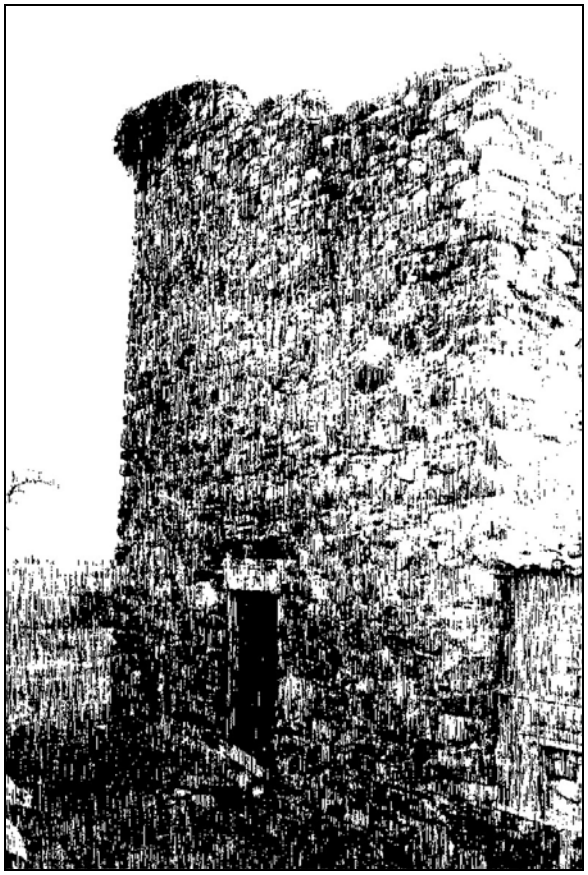
and known (in Christian villages) as *raytsko* land.[162] *Chiflik* villages were also characterised by the presence of a Turkish tower in each village *(Turska Kula)*, with some villages containing two or even three towers. The tower was used by the *beg* when he occasionally travelled to the village, usually when threshing of grains was performed.[163] The tower was otherwise utilised as longer-term accommodation by the *beg*'s representatives known as *kaaite* (normally Turks, but also Albanians) who spent periods during summer in the village monitoring the work performed on the *chifliks*.[164] Macedonian villagers viewed the tower as a symbol of the *beg*'s authority and oppression and resented its presence.

[162] The term *rayatsko* land no doubt has been derived from the Turkish word 'Raya' denoting non-Muslim inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire. Rayatsko land does not include land purchased from *begs* at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century.

[163] Ljuba Stankovska (born 1923 in Gorno Aglarci, Bitola region), interview conducted in Dedebalci on 15 March 2000. Ljuba Stankovska married into Dedebalci village in the 1940s. Stojche Petkovski interview, op. cit. Trajan Micevski (born in 1930 in Novaci, Bitola region), interview conducted in Novaci on 22 March 2000. Trajan Micevski is from the Maznikashovci family, one of the oldest families in the village. According to Todor Veljanovski the *beg* visited the village 'once or twice a year'. Todor Veljanovski (born 1930 in Dolno Aglarci, Bitola region), interview conducted in Bitola on 2 April 2000. Todor Veljanovski was a primary schoolteacher in the Bitola region villages.

[164] Trajan Micevski interview, op. cit. Trajan Micevski believed that the *begs'* representatives may have been known as *seizi*. The tower was not inhabited all year round, the *begs'* representatives appear to have stayed in the tower during the harvesting season only. According to the memoirs of Stefan Dimitar Janakievski (born 1879), an IMRO unit under the command *(voivoda)* of Petre Lisolaycheto used the Turkish tower in the village of Lisolay to conceal themselves whilst engaging in an operation in the village prior to the Ilinden Rebellion. Stefan Dimitar Janakievski memoirs as cited in T. Gorgiev, *Po Tragite na Minatoto* [Tracing the Past], Skopje, 1967, p. 14. In the 1960s T. Giorgiev conducted interviews and compiled oral histories of elderly Macedonians that served in the Macedonian revolutionary struggle during the Ottoman era. The largely unknown book, *Po Tragite na Minatoto*, contains a collection of thirty memoirs.

Illustration 3.5: A partially erect Turkish tower, Lazhec village



The Ottoman collection of taxes was a major point of conflict between Macedonian Christians and the Ottoman authorities dating back as far as the fifteenth century. Certain early revolts against Ottoman rule in Macedonia were directly related to the collection of taxation.[165] The most despised tax was the 'blood tax', which involved the kidnapping of young male children. This abhorrent practice did not

[165] The earliest form of struggle against the Ottoman system was due directly to the economic exploitation of the Macedonian agricultural class. Unable to endure the unjust taxes and contributions, many villagers and sometimes, entire villages, migrated to isolated areas, usually in the mountainous regions away from the main roads and the taxman. As this process grew, the Ottoman authorities' revenue collection began to reduce and efforts were taken to return the people to their former inhabited places. This was not always successful, so in order to compensate this loss the authorities began to seek increased payments from neighbouring villages which brought further misery to the Macedonian population. Instances exist where entire villages refused to pay taxes to the Ottomans, in the Ohrid region a number of villages displayed their protest by not paying taxes for three years. An official Turkish document dating from the year 1571 described their actions as a 'revolt'. M. Minoski*, Osloboditelnite Dvizhejna i Vostanija vo Makedonia (1564 –1615)* [Liberation Movements and Rebellions in Macedonia (1564–1615)], Skopje 1972, pp. 58 and 76.

cease until the beginning of the nineteenth century, and there is evidence that this practice was most common in Macedonia and Albania.[166]

Taxation was the primary source of income for the Ottoman government. It was often unfairly assessed and it left the people in constant fear of new and increasing taxes.[167] Of the numerous taxes collected by the Ottoman authorities, by far the most common and heaviest tax was the tithe, also known as *dekati* or *dime*, but generally known by Macedonians as *desetok*. It was based on agricultural production and the legal limit was 10 per cent on agricultural produce.[168] Officially, according to

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[166] A. Pallis, *In the Days of the Janissaries (Old Turkish Life as Depicted in the 'Travel Book' of Evliya Chelebi),* London, 1951, p. 34. Every four years strong healthy well-built young male children, usuall around 10-12 years-of-age, were forcibly taken from their parents. Taken to Turkey, they were indoctrinated in Islam, received specialised education and attended the Imperial Military School of the Sultan. By adulthood, they were trained as the elite fighting force of the Ottoman army, the Janissary Corps. They were often sent back to their land of origin and were infamous for their brutality and cruelty The Ottomans adopted this strategy throughout the Christian lands they possessed in the Balkans. Aimed at preventing the seizure of their children, Macedonian families were known to arrange marriages for their 8 - 9 year olds, as the Ottomans were reluctant to take married children. Another form of resistance was the painful task of amputating one or more fingers from their child, the child would then be rejected by the Ottomans. At the beginning of the twenty-first century traditional Macedonian folk songs continue to be sung about children forcibly taken from their parents. A particular song about a mother's pain on losing her child, tells the story of the childs return many years later as an adult to his village of origin. Whilst brutalising the villagers, his mother recognises him through a birthmark, and rejoices that her son is alive. However, as he can only speak Turkish, he is unable to understand her Macedonian tongue, and kills her with his sword without realising he has murdered his mother. There is also evidence that this practice continued throughout the course of Ottoman rule in various forms. The British General Consul in Bitola, Charles Blunt, reported in a diplomatic report in 1896 of the removal of a boy from his adoptive Christian family by the Vali of Bitola. Blunt states, 'the boy still remains in the Vali's house and it appears, is about to be or has been already made a Mussulman'. British Foreign Office, Public Record Office 373 FO 294/22. Dated 9 February 1896 (obtained from the Archive of Macedonia).

[167] Ilias *aga* purchased the *chiflik* in Yankovets village (Prespa region) in 1874. The villagers contributed 15 grosh per year for use of the land. Ilias *aga* applied to the administrative council in Bitola for permission to raise the payments from 15 to 50 grosh per household on a monthly basis. The council approved for Ilias *aga* to extract 120 to 420 grosh anually from each household, according to the prominent Macedonian historian, L. Lape, in *The Razlovtsi Uprising of 1876,* Skopje, 1976, p. 129. In the Bitola region there were significant increases to taxes during the years 1875-76. War taxes for the village Gavato rose from 12,976 grosh to 21,600 grosh, in Stezhevo from 2,869 grosh to 4,200 grosh and in Capari from 7,870 grosh to 15,680 grosh. G. Dimovski-Colev, and B. Pavlovski, *Nepokoreni* [Rebellious], Bitola, 1982, p. 49. The historian, D.M. Perry, states that for the vast majority of peasants the chief point of contact with the government was through the tax collector. D.M. Perry, *The Politics of Terror: The Macedonian Liberation Movements 1893-1903*, Duke University Press, 1988, p. 26. A bodyguard accompanied the Ottoman tax collector when attending Visheni village in the Kostur region. M. Prstnarov, *The History of the village Visheni (The English translation),* No date or place of publication, p. 47. The two English women, G.M. MacKenzie and I.P. Irby, who travelled through Macedonia in the nineteenth century, also attest to tax collectors being accompanied by armed guards. 'We ourselves saw the tax gatherer swooping down on the villages, accompanied by harpy-flocks of Albanians armed to the teeth'. *The Slavonic Provinces of Turkey in Europe*, London, 1866, p. 21.

[168] Agricultural tax was rarely collected at the prescribed rate, another 1 per cent was collected for the increase in the agricultural treasury, 0.5 per cent on public schooling, and 0.5 per cent on supporting the military – the 10 per cent tithe tax in reality was a 12 per cent tax.

the law the collection of tithe was invited through auction or public tender by private individuals (payable through a lump sum to the government) to collect one-tenth of the forthcoming harvest and other agricultural produce.[169] The surplus over the offer was to be the profit of the tax gatherer. The tax gatherer, together with the local officials, conducted valuations of each peasant's next harvest.[170] Valuations were customarily excessive, and although avenues were open for him to appeal, he did not do so, as 'he is well aware by experience that their decision would be against him, and he therefore makes the best arrangement as to the valuation that he can, without wasting time on appeal'.[171] If individuals refused to accept an excessive valuation, they would not be permitted to gather their harvest until the authorities gave their consent, and consent normally was not given until the tax levied was paid. Therefore if the tax levy remained unpaid and the peasant's harvest turned to ruin, he was still unable to avoid the tax gatherer. In the service of the tax collector were the local police officers, known as *zaptiehs,* who did not hesitate to seize and sell the peasant's cattle and property.[172]

Each family worked a specified area of the *chiflik* estate and was required to meet a set quota prescribed by the *beg* or his representative.[173] Specific parcels were

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[169] These were normally the local *beys*. It was generally known beforehand who the successful bidder would be, and under whose patronage, according to the nineteenth-century commentator, B. St John, *The Turks in Europe*, London, 1853, p. 32.

[170] The tax gatherer visited the peasants' crop together with the peasant and the local official, whereupon he made a valuation and advised on the amount of tax to be paid. An arrangement was also made for the peasant to make payment to the local authorities. The historian, and long serving nineteenth-century, English consular official in Constantinople, E. Pears stated, 'in all probability it is just in consideration of such a private arrangement that his tender has been accepted': E. Pears, *A Description of the Turkish Government*, New York, 1905, p. 24.

[171] Ibid, p. 24. Brailsford considers that 'to complain would be not only useless but dangerous'. Op. cit. p. 46. On the other hand, rich Muslims, owners of large estates, 'who consequently ought to pay larger sums, pay far less than his due, and moreover is allowed to defer payment'. B. Tatarcheff, op. cit. p. 175.

[172] E. Pears, op. cit. p. 26. Generally the collection of the tithe was conducted through the manner described. In some instances the local authorities did not receive a sufficent offer to contract out the collection of the tax. In such cases, the local officials perform the task. In other areas, as noted by the English commentator, J.F. Fraser, who travelled through Macedonia at the beginning of the twentieth century, such as where a railway line was in construction, the taxes were collected by the Department of Public Debt, 'representatives of the foreign bondholders, competent men as a rule, certainly just, who avoid the bloodsucking which is elsewhere so general'. J.F. Fraser, *Pictures from the Balkans,* London, 1906, pp. 157–158.

[173] Petko Atanasovski (born 1913 in Makovo, Mariovo district of Bitola), interview conducted in Makovo on 14 March 2000. Petko Atanasovski has been a lifelong resident of Makovo village, his grandfather Atanas settled

thus allocated to particular families and were in a sense 'inherited', to be worked on by the sons.[174] Wheat was the most popular grain grown on the *chifliks*. During harvesting the wheat was gathered in large bundles known as *snopye* and 'from every 100 bundles the beg took 10 as a tax payment'.[175] There was a specified area in Gorno Aglarci known as *chairo*[176] where the *desetok* tax was paid, however, the threshing of the wheat grain was to be completed before the 10 per cent tax transaction was complete. The option of paying the *desetok* in cash was available if one chose to keep the wheat.[177] The remaining 90 per cent of the wheat threshing was conducted in each individual family property and 'the *beg* enjoyed being in the village at this time and was known to command the villagers to bring him food so that he may eat whilst watching the work being done'.[178] When the work was completed half of the threshed grain was made as a payment to the *beg*[179], 'but it was not a tax, it was a rental payment'.[180]

One informant, Cvetan Jankulovski of Novaci, believed that a further tax was also paid on the remaining half of the produce and that this caused further animosity

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in Makovo from the nearby village of Chegel. Vane Tanchevski interview, op. cit. Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit. Nikola Giorgievski (born 1927 in Gorno Aglarci, Bitola region), interview conducted in Gorno Aglarci on 17 March 2000. A member of the Spasevci family, Nikola Giorgievski recalled that as a child Gorno Aglarci contained 32 homes. According to Petko Atanasovski, villagers were compelled to achieve the set quota of work. If this did not occur the villager was required to obtain a loan from the *beg* (usually in wheat) and repay him with extra labour. Petko Atanasovski interview, op. cit. Traditionally Macedonians referred to Ottoman officials and wealthy older male Turks by the term *beg* or *aga*. Due to this long-standing tradition, it was apparent during the collection of oral histories that there was no differentiation made (in name) between an official Ottoman tax collector, a *chiflik* owning *beg,* or a wealthy Turk as *beg.*
When the *beg* visited Gorno Aglarci, he was known to ride his horse through the fields to observe the villagers working on the *chiflik*. Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit. According to Nikola Giorgievski, there were three, or possibly four *begs* that owned the *chiflik* estates in Gorno Aglarci. Nikola Giorgievski interview, op. cit.

[174] E. Bouchie De Belle, op. cit. p. 51. When a family became too large to work limited parcels of land, the *beg* allocated further portions to be worked.

[175] Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit.

[176] *Chairo* refers to a level wide-open space.

[177] Stojche Petkovski interview, op. cit. The historian Vakalopoulos stated that the tithe was paid in cash after 1850, however interviewees typically believed that that payment of *desetok* was commonly made in wheat. According to the historian, Pop Giorgiev, when tax gatherers sought *desetok* payment in cash, they quoted the highest possible market price. Op. cit. p. 154.

[178] Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit.

[179] Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit. N. Giorgievski interview, op. cit.

[180] Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit. Atanas Vasilevski similarly described villagers in Vranjevci as being 'renters' *(kiradzhii)*. Atanas Vasilevski (born 1928 in Vrajnevci village, Bitola region), interview conducted 16 March 2000 in Bitola.

towards the *beg.*[181] *Meto beg* in Lopatica village 'took whatever he could; he split the agricultural produce 50/50 with the villagers, but he also wanted more in the form of a cash payment of one or two coins from each family'.[182] Petko Atanasovski, another interviewee, stated that one-quarter of the total harvest collected by each family was all that remained. It was a difficult task for the villager to predetermine what tax would be paid as they 'were not always standard, sometimes they were higher and other times lower than anticipated, it was an unstable system'.[183] People felt pressured to comply with the wishes of the *beg*, because 'if you caused him any trouble you would get a smaller slice of your dues (wheat), and people had very little anyway; he would have left them to starve'.[184]

Therefore it comes as no surprise that during the liberation of the eastern Macedonian town of Razlovtsi (the Razlovtsi Uprising of 1876) there was a direct attack upon the Turkish landowners in the town. The historian M. Pandevski explains that the people of Razlovtsi destroyed the *begs'* account books and deeds in a burning house, 'thus ending their dependence on and submission to the Turkish authorities in a symbolic and dramatic way'.[185]

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[181] Vlado Jankulovski interview, op. cit.
[182] Vane Tanchevski interview, op. cit.
[183] Petko Atanasovski interview, op. cit.
[184] Ibid. It is interesting to draw a comparison with the *rayatsko* village of Kradzheyvo in the Gorno Dzhumaya region (since Bulgarian rule the village and region have undergone name changes, the village is now known as Balgarchevo, and the city of Gorna Dzhumaya is known as Blagoevgrad). Villagers primarily engaged in sheep breeding and trade (there was no tradition of *pechalba*), and the village was situated up on a hill. A *chiflik* was situated below the hill along the plain, there was a small settlement known as *Chiflichko Maalo*, but considered a part of Kradzheyvo (it eventually became its own village). A beg lived in the *maalo* and even though Kradzheyvo was a *rayatsko* village every home was forced to provide a days work on the *chiflik* (per annum) according to the number of inhabitants in the home. It didn't matter who performed the work, as long as each person, elderly or infant was accounted for. There was no sharing of the wheat, the work was considered as the tax payment for each household. As many as two thousand people inhabited Kradzheyvo at approximately 1900 and they did not consider the *beg* cruel or exploitative. In relation to work performed for the *beg,* Vasil Tilev recalled that his grandfather Giorgi would say, *'eden den za begot, a tsela godina za familiyata, a posle toa tsela godina bez pari za komunizmot'* ('one day for the beg, a year for oneself , and afterwards a full year without money for communism'). Vasil Tilev (born 1952 in Gorna Dzhumaya), interview conducted in Melbourne on 20 January 2002. Vasil Tilev left Bulgaria in the early 1970s after illegally crossing the border into Greece. After a short stay in Western Europe, he migrated to Australia. Vasil is from the 'Dobravci' family *(soi)*, named after the village Dobrava where his grandfather, Giorgi, was born (before he moved to Kradzheyvo village).
[185] M. Pandevski, *Macedonia and the Macedonians in the Eastern Crisis,* Skopje, 1978, p. 44.

There is no evidence of diferring tax categories based on Exarchate or Patriarchate religious affiliation as compiled from oral accounts. Separate tax categories applied to Muslims and Christians as two independent groups.[186]

Due to the heavy tax burden imposed and the threat to wheat supplies for the coming year, Macedonian villagers had little choice but to learn how to adapt to the situation at hand, and made every effort to maximise their supply. During the period between harvesting and threshing they made every attempt to conceal wheat from the *beg,*[187] often under the cover of night.[188] In Petoraci the *beg* suspected what was occuring and sent a young Turkish man to oversee Christians threshing the wheat and to 'monitor that they accurately declare a correct amount of produce and do not steal extra for themselves'.[189] In Lopatica, villagers believed the *beg* was aware of the practice of not declaring all the wheat, but 'he turned a blind eye to it'.[190] The IMRO openly promoted this practice amongst the rural population in order to ease the weight of taxation contributions.[191]

Much depended upon the personal character of the *beg*. Some treated the villagers relatively fairly. For instance, in the village of Brod there were four *begs* who controlled the *chifliks* and they often competed with each other to attract the best

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[186] Unfortunately there was no documentary tax data available to the writer for the period after 1870, however there was no conflicting information obtained from respondents regarding this matter.
[187] Mihailo Todorovski (born 1921 in Dolno Orehovo, Bitola region), interview conducted on 30 March 2000 in Makovo village. Mihailo moved to the village of Makovo in 1948, his wife is from Novaci village. Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit.
[188] Mihailo Todorovski interview, op. cit.
[189] Kocho Duakis (born 1934 in Petoraci village, Lerin region), interview conducted 20 January 2001 in Melbourne. Kocho Duakis is from the Dujakovci family, Kocho's father was Ilo, his father was Nase, his father was Petre and before him there was Mitre. Kocho explained that it was through Petre that the family was to obtain the name Dujakovci, *'kolku visok, tolku shirok – Dujak'*. Petoraci has been renamed Hrizohori by the Greek authorities.
[190] Vane Tanchevski interview, op. cit. Vane recalled hearing stories from the old folk about people hiding wheat in *bardina* (drinking vases).
[191] M. Minoski, *Vnatreshnata Makedonska Revolucionerna Organizacia od Osnovajneto do Ilindenskoto Vostanie* [The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation from its Inception to the Ilinden Rebellion], Skopje, 1993, p. 50.

workers in the village to work on their estates.[192] Stories handed down indicate some *begs* were not unnecessarily oppressive whilst others were incorrigably greedy, with no regard for their *chiflik* workers.[193] Sometimes families were forcibly removed from villages by the *beg* and relocated to other villages[194] and the expelled family would be replaced with another.[195] There were a number of reasons for expulsions – for example if the *beg* took a disliking to a particular family, if a family were not working the *chiflik* land hard enough, or when a family was growing too large and was at the point where it would divide itself into separate households. When the family of Stefan Trajchevski's mother was dividing itself into separate homes *(deleyne)*, his uncle was not permitted by the *beg* to remain and moved to the neighbouring village of Makovo. Ljuba Stankovska was aware that she has distant relatives in Kravari who were expelled from their native village Vashareyca by the *beg*[196] and Atanas Srbinovci was driven out of his native village Chegel by the village beg and relocated to Makovo.[197] Vane Tanchevski recalled playing around a destitute house in the village (Lopatica) as a child which was originally inhabited by the Pashovci family who were driven out of the village by the *beg,* who then set fire to the home.[198] Other families in the villages of Strezhevo and Utovo orginally hailed from Lopatica before being driven out by the village *beg.*[199] In some instances this process could continue from one village to another, such as the case of Petre and Stojan, two brothers from Petalino. Initially driven out of their native village, they relocated in Grunishta where they remained for a few years until they were expelled once again and moved to

[192] Ilija Josevski (born 1947 in Brod, Bitola region), interview conducted 21 January 2002 in Melbourne. Ilija stated that the four *begs* lived in the nearby village of Malo Konjari (Turkish village). There was a Golemo Konjari village close by and it was a mixed Macedonian-Turkish village. These two villages later became one village and appear on modern twenty-first century maps as Germijan. The homes in Brod were not owned by the *begs* and no towers existed in the village, which at approximately 1912 consisted of approximately 170 homes.

[193] Nikola Giorgievski interview, op. cit. Stojche Petkovski interview, op. cit.

[194] Nikola Giorgievski interview, op. cit. Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit. Stefan Trajchevski (born 1913 in Dolno Orehovo, Bitola region), interview conducted on 01 April 2000 in Dolno Orehovo. Stefan Trajchevski has been a life long resident of the village and is from the Tanevci family.

[195] Stefan Trajchevski interview, op. cit.

[196] Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit. Ljuba Stankovska explained that it was her grandmother's uncle *(vujko)* that was expelled from Vasharejca.

[197] Petko Atanasovski interview, op. cit. Atanas was Petko's grandfather.

[198] Vane Tanchevski interview, op. cit.

[199] Ibid.

Alinci. Their victimisation did not cease and after two years in Alinci they were driven out again, this time moving to Armatoush. But this was not to be their permanent home either. After being driven out of the village they finally arrived in Dolno Orehovo, remaining there without any further expulsions.[200]

The *beg Meto* treated the Lopatica villagers as if they were 'his personal possessions, like servants'.[201] A well-known story in the village revolves around Meto *beg* approaching a villager one particular summer during the harvest season whilst the *beg* and his family were staying in the village *kula* (tower) and summoning him to bring his bulls and wooden cart to the *kula*.[202] The villager was instructed to transport the *beg*, his wives and children to a nearby river in the forest where they would have a recreational day out. During the journey the villager was under strict instructions not to look at the *beg's* wives. After dropping them off at the river the villager was made to wait until late in the afternoon, several hundred metres away, to prevent him from gazing at the women. The *beg* spent the day hunting wildlife and upon their return to the village, other villagers were made to prepare and deliver dinner to the *beg's* family at the *kula*.[203]

Begs were renowned for their economic exploitation of Christian villages; however, in many instances they also treated their workers with contempt and behaved in a sadistic tyrannical manner. In times past the old people of Dolno Orehovo told stories of hangings that occurred beside the *beg's* tower.[204] Similarly, in Lazhec, villagers are aware of hangings occuring.[205]

The abhorrent treatment of Christian women displayed a lack of morality and religious tolerance, and was one of the central points of conflict between Macedonian

[200] Stefan Trajchevski interview, op. cit.
[201] Vane Tanchevski interview, op. cit.
[202] Meto *begs* permanent home was in Bitola.
[203] Vane Tanchevski interview, op. cit.
[204] Stefan Trajchevski interview, op. cit.
[205] Stojan Spasevski interview, op. cit.

Christians and Muslim rule. In Dolno Orehovo the *beg* would at times visit the village during Macedonian *sred selo* (village square) celebrations. 'He would come to eat and drink, people were fearful of him, not just because he could expel you from the village, but from having women forcefully taken and placed in his harem.'[206] A notorious Albanian *beg* named Lyocho owned a *chiflik* in Ramna and intended to organise a workforce exclusively made up of women and girls from Srpci to work the *chiflik*. The men of Srpci were outraged at his intentions and Kote Obednikovski, Riste Gulabovski and Tane Shakovski refused to allow Lyocho's plan to come to fruition. Instead they murdered him outside the village of Ramna and joined Giorgi Sugarev's IMRO cheta.[207]

The villagers of Graeshnica particularly despised Sadik, the village *beg*. He lived in the village and 'was a tyrant who paid particular attention to the women'.[208] On one occasion Sadik sent his courier Adem to the home of Lazo Olevski requesting that his wife attend Sadik's home the following day to perform some work *('da zhnija kaj negovata kuyka')*. Disgusted by Sadik's intentions, Lazo sought an alternative arrangement. The following day whilst Adem was travelling to the neighbouring village of Kishava, Lazo Olevski, together with his co-villager Mile Sarievski, captured Adem at a place known as *Kuchkin Dolo (Sharkoyca)*. They tied and tortured him terribly before murdering him for 'injustices perpetrated against the villagers'.[209] Lazo Olevski and Mile Sarievski left their homes after this incident to become revolutionaries belonging to the IMRO. Sadik's disregard for Christians continued – but the final straw came after he organised the murder of two brothers from the village belonging to the Terzievski family. Their brother Filip responded by

[206] Stefan Trajchevski interview, op. cit.
[207] G. Colev-Dimovski, and B. Pavlovski, op. cit. p. 51. A *cheta* is a paramilitary unit or detachment.
[208] Stojan Spasevski interview, op. cit.
[209] Ibid. Stojan Spasevski heard this story directly from Lazo Olevski who lived in the village until he passed away in 1955.

murdering Sadik and his son. The remaining members of Sadik's family left the village and were never to return. Filip Terzievski became an IMRO revolutionary.[210]

It was not surprising that the IMRO stood firmly for a reconstruction of the agrarian land system in Macedonia, and in the case of despotic and cruel *begs*, the organisation often sought to deal with such individuals in their own way (as their was no effective legal alternative). An example of IMRO dealing with such a matter occurred in the Enidzhe Vardar region where the *beg* Ali Chaush ruled over Christian Macedonians in the village of Melnici with a terrifying brutality. His evil doings stretched out to neighbouring villages as well. Attempting to Islamicise and add a young woman named Lesava to his harem, the local IMRO leader, the legendary Apostol Petkov Voivoda, refused to tolerate the oppressive Ali Chaush further and issued an official death warrant for the *beg*. Ali Chaush was murdered soon after by two members of Apostol Petkov's *cheta* and his body concealed where it would never be found. The disappearance of the *beg* brought a great sense of relief to Macedonian villagers who were liberated from the constant misery he inflicted. As a warning to others, Apostol Petkov sent a letter to the *begs* in the district. It wrote, 'All you *begs* which have raised your heads and terrorise the innocent population, if you do not cease with your lawlessness, you will also disappear one day, just as the bloodthirsty Ali Chaush has disappeared'.[211]

It was not just the *begs* that ill-treated Christian villagers and women. Their representatives, known as *kaaite,* were sometimes brutal and cruel, subjecting

[210] Ibid. Lazo Olevski and Filip Terzievski were secret representatives of IMRO in the village prior to the incidents described. Petre Sarievski also became a full time IMRO revolutionary. Stojan Spasevski stated that there were approximately ten men from the village that joined the ranks of the IMRO as full time fighters for the liberation of Macedonia.

[211] Memoir of Giorgi Kostov Trajanov (born 1877), from T. Giorgiev, op. cit. pp. 46–47. Giorgi Trajanov was a member of Apostol Petkov's *cheta*, and it was he, along with another member, Risto, who murdered Ali Chaush. In order to protect themselves certain *begs* commenced using Christian middle men in their dealings with *chiflik* villages under their control, the IMRO opposed this and appealed to Christians to refrain from engaging as representatives for the *begs*. D. Pop Giorgiev, op. cit. pp. 154–155. Christian middle-men were appointed by the *beg* from the village of Bonche in the Prilep region; he employed two Vlah brothers from Prilep who ran the *begs* affairs in the village (they also spent periods over the summer living in the village tower). Trajche Toseski, born 1956, Bonche, Prilep region, Notes of interview 10 January 2002 Melbourne.

Christian villagers to physical abuse. In the village of Armatush the *kaaite* were notoriously cruel, and following a despicable incident (at around the end of the nineteenth century) a group of male villagers took an oath in the village cemetery promising to kill the *kaaite ('ovie pci mora da gi jadime, da ne ostanime zhivi ako ne gi zakolime')*. Subsequently the three *kaaite* were brutally killed with axes by the five men who then permanently left the village, with each settling in five separate respective villages.[212]

Kaaite in Novaci generally stayed for a period over summer, especially towards the end of the working season.[213] On occasions they were known to terrorise people and if they harboured any suspicions towards an individual (for any reason) they would not hesitate to apprehend the individual and incarcerate him in the tower for as long as they wished. During the late 1890s in revolt at the oppressive nature of their presence, a group of male villagers vandalised and set fire to the tower. Jovan Jovanovski (from the Bozovci family) and his son Nikola were singled out and imprisoned in the tower without any court ruling or accepted legal procedures. Both were physically beaten. Nikola was released soon after, however Jovan was chained and hung upside down and beaten with rifle butts. His release was negotiated with sheep traded for his freedom.[214]

Meanwhile, *kaaite* in Lopatica were full-time residents in Bitola and stayed in the village *kula* for short periods during summer with their families. Villagers were forced to cook for them. Often, specific dishes were demanded and the village *kmet*

[212] Nikola Giorgievski interview, op. cit.
[213] The tower in Novaci was located where the village primary school is situated (at the end of the twentieth century).
[214] Cvetan Jovanovski interview, op. cit. In a particular Prilep region village denoted as 'K' (by the historian D. Pop Giorgiev) the village *kaja* was known to conduct kangaroo court sessions at the tower whilst he played the role of judge. He brought villagers before his court on various charges. The *kaja* prosecuted individuals and forced them to pay fines and also punished them by beating individuals with a wooden rod. D. Pop Giorgiev, op. cit. p. 151.

(headman) was responsible for organising a rotation system so that everyone in the village took turns at cooking.[215]

Taxes of a non-agricultural character included the personal wealth tax known as *vergia* (or *vergi*). The *ihtissab* or *rusonmat* taxes were various indirect taxes such as tolls charged by guards on mountain passes, stamp duty, tax on private commercial transactions, a traders' tax based upon the value of their stock, and a fisheries tax, amongst others. The capitation tax *(harac)* was imposed on all adult male non-Muslims and stood at 60 piastres a year.[216] Other taxes included a special head tax for male non-Muslims in lieu of military service, and, although their Christian subjects did not receive education from the Ottomans, they were obliged to pay an education tax.[217] Personal taxes included the *bedel*, which was payable for every newborn Christian male (equivalent to seven shillings per annum). When a child turned fifteen his family was required to pay the *hidjaret* tax, which commenced from six shillings per annum upwards depending on the means of the family. For each male individual aged from eighteen to sixty, four to six shillings yearly was payable, which was provided for the maintenance of Ottomans who pass through his village or town.[218]

There were various additional taxes directed at Christians, taking the form of contributions for different needs of the state, and paid a year in advance. Taxes of this nature were sought when there was a state emergency, however, an emergency was declared by the Porte once a year, with urgent demands then 'sent to every Vali

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[215] Vane Tanchevski interview, op. cit.

[216] K. Vakalopoulos, op. cit. p. 124. Interviewees were most familiar with the *desetok* tax, although Cvetan Jovanovski from Novaci recalled that there were other taxes collected for the animals (stock) and a particular tax was known as *ariat*. Vane Tanchevski believed there was no tax payable on animals, but Meto *beg* (in Lopatica) 'took any small amount he could get" The *beg* was known to ask for payment to be made with sheep and would say *'ajde tuka porastile vo moj chiflik'* ('Come on, they grew up on my *chiflik*'). Nikola Giorgievski was aware of taxes known as *vergia* and *beglik*, but was uncertain of their purpose.

[217] The historian, D.M. Perry, op. cit. p. 26. Regarding military service in the Ottoman army, Perry states that Christians were barred from serving in the Ottoman military by law until the eighteenth century and thereafter by custom.

[218] B. Tatarcheff, *Turkish Misrule in Macedonia*, New York, 1905, p. 178.

ordering him to remit money to Constantinople'.[219] A further range of contributions and taxes were forcibly imposed upon Christians for a variety of reasons and were collected as ordinary tax. Another tribute or tax that was forcibly imposed was the *derudeshiluk*. It was paid to local *beys* or bandit chiefs for protection from the plunder of bandits. The *derudeshiliuk* was demanded of the entire village:

> often a village is summoned to pay it within two or three days, or even hours, and if it does not, it is liable to be attacked by the *beys* bravoes [men], pillaged and burnt; its cattle, horses, and sheep are driven away, and perhaps some of the richest men or their children are carried off to the mountains, and only released on payment of large sums.[220]

This practice was particularly prevalent in the western part of Macedonia where the oppression and banditry was not directly from the Ottoman, but by Albanians in the service of the Ottomans.[221]

Desetok tax constituted the single largest portion of total Ottoman tax revenue in the Bitola and Ohrid regions. In 1855 it comprised of 72.65 per cent of total revenue in the Bitola *pashalik* and 67.48 per cent in the Ohrid *pashalik* in 1855.[222] The high proportion of *desetok* tax in the Bitola region was due to the fertile Pelagonia plain providing for large-scale agricultural production in the region. Actual tax collected, compared to that paid into the treasury, would inevitably have been of a

[219] Ibid, p. 176.
[220] Ibid, p. 169.
[221] As Muslims, Albanians enjoyed special privileges that allowed them to plunder and terrorise local Christians without fear of retribution from the Ottoman authorities. The local authorities very often shared the plunder and ransom collected by Albanians. Ibid, pp. 169–170; N. Limanoski, *Izlamizacijata i ethnichkite promeni vo Makedonija* [Islamisation and ethnic changes in Macedonia], Skopje, 1993, pp 73–74; H.N. Brailsford, op. cit. pp. 47–49; and, G. M. Terry, *The Origins and Development of the Macedonian Revolutionary Movement with Particular Reference to the Tayna Makedonsko-Odrinska Revolutsionerna Organizatsiya from its Conception in 1893 to the Ilinden Uprising of 1903*, Unpublished MA thesis, University of Nottingham, 1974, p. 55.
[222] K. Vakalopoulos, op. cit. p. 124.

Sanjak	**Tithe**	***Vergi***	***Ihtissab***	***Harac***	**Customs Duty**
Bitola	11,405,000	1,428,400	1,109,000	1,756,000	
Ohrid	4,927,000	673,300	552,000	448,100	700,000
Korcha	3,377,000	260,800	269,500	241,7000	

greater amount.[223] The method of tax farming adopted by the Ottomans was on a number of occasions abolished by imperial decrees, but continued to endure due to two specific reasons. Firstly it obliged the local Muslim gentry to remain loyal, as the profits they made maintained them as 'passive and tolerant malcontents'.[224] Secondly, the system was maintained because the bureaucracy also profited from it.[225]

It was the Christian subject, the Macedonian peasant, who worked his crop from sunrise to sunset, who felt the full effect of the corrupt Ottoman administration, and this was passed down to him in the form of a burdensome taxation system which left him often incurring debts.[226] The Macedonian did not expect justice from the authorities: even if a case went before the court, Christian evidence was never accepted against a Muslim.[227] There was no objective judiciary that could assess his grievances and overturn or modify the assessment of the tax collector.[228]

Christians believed that they would not receive a fair hearing from the Ottoman legal system.[229] Due to a dispute with the *beg* arising from the payment of

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[223] St John also expresses the same opinion and provided the following example. 'Instead of fowarding the tribute they raised to Constantinople, they seized the greater part for themselves, and only sent, as a kind of bribe for impunity, a small portion to headquarters. I know an instance of a district from which was annually levied the sum of 400,000 piastres, whilst only 38,000 found their way to Constantinople.' Op. cit, p. 27. Brailsford sums it up like this: 'The tax collector defrauds his master as well as his victims'. Op. cit. p. 41.

[224] H.N. Brailsford, op. cit. p. 45.

[225] Brailsford states that 'if a tax farmer has been notoriously tyrannical, he can always be made to disgorge a portion of his plunder as hush money, and of the difference between the legal tithe and the sum actually collected, I suspect that a very fair proportion goes into the pockets of the officials'. Ibid, pp. 45–46.

[226] The commentator, B. Tatarcheff, claims that many of the peasants were never able to repay the amounts owed, and consequently their obligations to the money-lender increased with an additional 30 per cent interest added to the debt. Op. cit. pp. 177–178.

[227] J.F. Fraser, *Pictures from the Balkans*, London, 1906, p. 156. Fraser states, theoretically, by law the evidence given by a Christian against a Moslem is is accepted, but in practice it is not.

[228] E. Bouchie de Belle, op. cit. pp. 61–62.

[229] Tatarcheff explains that 'if two witnesses can be found who will declare before the administrative council that a certain Christian owes money and is solvent, he is instantly thrown into prison; the ordinary legal formalities are ommitted, and any appeal to justice is illusory. Many native Christians, who really owe nothing at all, are compelled to remain in prison by the order of the collector. Deprived from work, their families suffering from hunger, they are obliged to pawn even their household utensils, or borrow money at an exorbitant rate of interest'. Op. cit. p.176. If the peasant or his family has nothing to sell which can pay the tax collector, he must join the gangs which 'are said to be repairing the roads'. H.N. Brailsford, op. cit. p. 47. Brailsford further points out that he could never discover what these gangs actually do for the roads showed

taxes, Jankula Jankulovski from Novaci did not pursue the matter with the legal authorities as 'he had no confidence in them'.[230] According to Petko Atanasovski from Makovo, 'people did not trust the Turkish judiciary; they had no faith in the system, because they were Muslims'.[231] Vane Tanchevski similarly stated, 'although technically one could appeal to the authorities, and could go to the Mudir in Bitola, it was of no use'.[232]

The judicial administration in Ottoman Macedonia came under the responsibility of the Minister of Justice. Unlike Western Europe where one system of jurisprudence existed in a given jurisdiction, in the Ottoman State at the beginning of the twentieth century, two systems co-existed. The first of the two systems was the *Shariah*, religious law based on the sacred law of the Muslim religion. The Muslim of the Ottoman Empire accepted the Koran as the supreme guide in all matters, legal as well as religious.[233] Contemporary commentators of the period accept that the *Shari* law would have been quite adequate if it had been administered to an exclusively Muslim population, however, in the Christian lands that it ruled it was inappropriate for it to be administered on Christian subjects, or on a mixed Muslim and Christian population.[234] The law was formulated in the interests of the Muslim rulers, and not for the Christian subjects. It left the Christian 'absolutely without protection'.[235] There was no equality before the law. A Muslim could rarely be punished for a crime perpetrated against a Christian, as evidence provided by Christian witnesses was

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little evidence of their labour. G.M. MacKenzie and I.P. Irby explained that a poorly constructed new road (the 'Imperial') between Solun and Voden was constructed with the forced labour of villagers. Although a new tax was raised in order to pay the workers, the responsible Pasha put the money in his own pocket. Op. cit. p. 57.

[230] Vlado Jankulovski interview, op. cit.

[231] Petko Atanasovski interview, op. cit.

[232] Vane Tanchevski interview, op. cit.

[233] The contemporary commentator and historian, E. Pears, points out, 'he is aided in its interpretation by certain "traditions", and by recognised collections of ancient legal texts and decisions, called *fetvas*, of special questions, the most important collection being one which was largely compiled in the early days of Islam from the Pandects of Justinian'. Op. cit. p. 19. The commentator and historian, C. Eliot, stated that 'this law is religious only in the sense that it is derived from religious works'. Op. cit. p. 133.

[234] This view was generally held by contemporary commentators of the time, see B. St John, *The Turks in Europe*, London, 1853; E.A. Freeman, *Ottoman Power in Europe*, London, 1877; and, T. Commyn-Platt, *The Turk in Balkans*, London, 1904.

[235] E.A. Freeman, op. cit. p. 75.

inadmissible in a sacred court. Although in theory the Christian was entitled to protection under the law, in practice this did not occur because 'the witness of an infidel cannot by the Mahometan law be taken against the true believer'.[236] In this environment Muslims committed murders against Christians 'every day, and as long as the victims are rayahs the authorities take no notice'.[237] Muslim courts would not hesitate to rigorously punish a Christian who had injured a Mulsim whilst acting in self-defence or in the defence of another.[238] MacKenzie and Irby, two nineteenth century travellers in Macedonia and the Balkans, noted that these vexations would not end until the Turkish governors punished Muslims with rigid justice, however, this they would not do 'inasmuch as there rule depends for support on the interest which the Mussulman element has in perpetuating it'.[239] As such the Christian found himself outside the protection of the law, consequently he sought to purchase certain rights, the security of his life, his property, and the exercise of his religion, by the payment of tribute.[240]

The second system of law in the Ottoman Empire was the general Civil law that was adapted from the Code Napoleon. It was used by both Christians and Muslims; however, its law courts were terribly corrupt with the wealthy class from both creeds manipulating outcomes through bribery.[241]

Village private land ownership

ALTHOUGH THE MAJORITY of villages along the Pelagonia plain and in the surrounding region were *chiflik* villages, it was nevertheless common for Macedonian Christians in *chiflik* villages to possess limited holdings of their own land. Privately

[236] Ibid, p. 75. Freeman suggests that the only hope for a Christian in an Ottoman law court was to bribe the judge and hire Muslim witnesses (p. 76).
[237] G.M. MacKenzie and I.P. Irby, op. cit. p. 76.
[238] Ibid, p. 76.
[239] Ibid, p. 113.
[240] E.A. Freeman, op. cit. p. 77.
[241] H.N. Brailsford, op. cit. p. 40.

owned land was known as *rayatska zemya* ('Rayatska land'), no doubt deriving from the Turkish term used in the Empire for non-Muslim subjects, *Raya*.

In the Pelagonia plain sample villages of Gorno Aglarci and Novaci, a small number of individuals, no more than 10 per cent of families, owned *rayatska* land. Approximately ten families in the *chiflik* village of Novaci owned *rayatska* land around 1912[242] (there was approximately 60 homes in the village). Similarly, in Dobrushevo, of approximately 80 homes in the village, only 5 or 6 owned *rayatska* land and these were smallholdings of between 5 and 15 *dekari*.[243] The situation was similar in the other villages of Vrajnevci, Suvodol[244] and Makovo, as well as in the mixed Macedonian-Turkish villages of Dolno Orehovo, Lazhec and Petoraci. According to the English Consul in Bitola, *rayatska* parcels were generally small-scale holdings, under 1.5 acres in size.[245]

Rayatska land did not include land purchased from *begs* as a result of late nineteenth - and early twentieth-century *pechalba*, but only signified land owned before this period. For instance, although the Kleshtev family possessed considerable land holdings in Gorno Aglarci at the end of the nineteenth century (purchased from the *beg* as a result of *pechalba* earnings), Ljuba Stankovska did not consider the holdings to constitute *rayatska* land, instead pointing out specific parcels which did constitute *rayatska* land.[246] It is clear that some families owned private land for generations during Ottoman rule whilst the bulk of the village land was *chiflik* soil. [247]

[242] D. Pachemska-Petreska and D. Kushevski, op. cit. p. 243.
[243] Ibid, p. 256. One *dekar* is equivalent to 1000 square metres of land.
[244] In Suvodol, only four homes out of a total of approximately 30 owned *rayatska* land. Kosta Markovski (born 1930 in Suvodol, Bitola region), interview conducted on 20 March 2000. Kosta Markovski could recount six generations back commencing from his father Tole, Anasto, Marko, Petko, Trajche and Marge (Marge moved to Suvodol from Krklino village, Bitola region). Kosta Markovski is from the Margevci family.
[245] G. Dimovski-Colev and B. Pavlovski, op. cit. p. 44.
[246] Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit.
[247] Ibid.

Regarding the acquisition of *rayatska* land, Nikola Giorgievski was of the view that *begs* may have sold parcels of land to villagers where he considered the land to hold inferior soil.[248] Vane Tanchevski was aware that three families in Lopatica owned *rayatska* land, two were Popovci families (priests) and the third was the Dimitriovci family, and according to the stories in the village 'the *beg* sold the land because he was in need of money'.[249] According to Vasil Tilev from the *rayatsko* village of Kradzheyvo Gorna Dzhumaya region[250], the village was formed as a result of a male ancestor on his mother's side who was given land along the uninhabited hillside as a wedding gift by the village *beg* from the neighbouring village of Dilanzino.[251] Later, after his three sons married, the single home on the hillside expanded to four homes and over time it continued to grow into a large village.[252] These vivid stories concerning land obtained from the *begs* is an interesting sign of how rare and difficult it was for the peasantry to prise acreage off the local elite.

The land was intrinisic to peasant culture. Village fields were scattered around the village in all directions and within the boundaries of the village fields there existed distinct areas, each labelled with its own name. The fields represented a way of life to the villager that had been handed down from generation to generation. The importance of the fields was reflected in a personal relationship between the villager and his land. He referred to each parcel by a specific name. This personal connection was not exclusive to men, but was also apparent with women and reflected the system of labour employed with working the land. It was not the sole domain of males, but was equally shared between both sexes. Distinct areas of Gorno Aglarci village fields were made up of the following: *Adzhica, Belo Pole, Branenica, Brazda,*

[248] Nikola Giorgievski interview, op. cit. *Rayatsko* land (in amongst *chifliks*) was often utilised to grow vegetables and *'furanzhni kulturi'* (*'furazh'* - forage, fodder, provender). D. Pop Giorgiev, op. cit, p. 134.
[249] Vane Tanchevski interview, op. cit.
[250] Kradzheyvo has been renamed by the Bulgarian authorities as Bulgarchevo and the city of Gorno Dzhumaya as Blagoevgrad.
[251] The Bulgarian authorities have renamed Dilanzino as Zelendovo.
[252] Vasil Tilev interview, op. cit.

Cheshma, Dolni Nivi, Domuzica, Golinye, Kalnabara, Krusha, Krushi, Malo Lozye, Pesoci, Poroiniche, Preku Reka, Slozovi, Trnka/Trnki, Tymba and *Tymbe.*[253]

A neighbouring villager, commenting upon the Gorno Aglarci fields, would refer to them collectively as *'Aglarchanski nivi'* ('Aglarski land'). However a villager of Aglarci saw a deeper structure within his own village and only referred to 'Aglarski land' in general terms when speaking to someone from another village. Otherwise he referred to specific sub-sections of the land. Each part had its own characteristics, for example *Dokoici* had good earth and *Branenica* had ample water (due to its proximity to the Crna River). The peasant saw the land as constituting a living entity and treated it with respect. When a villager possessed a parcel of land outside of the village's agricultural boundaries, it was simply referred to as *Armatoushka* (in Armatoush village) or *Dobromirska* (in Dobromiri village), signifying the neighbouring village name, but not the corresponding sub-section label used in the neighbouring village. Thus the relationship between the peasants and the land was also geographical – the further the distance from home, the less likely the peasant would give the land an affectionate name. The size of some of these parcels is given in Table 3.9.

[253] Bitola Titles Office records. Dated 1932 - Kat Opshtina, Gorni Aglarci, Broj 22 List Broj 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Razmera 1:2500

Table 3.9: Kleshtev Family Land Holdings (Acquired through *Pechalba*) in the Village of Gorno Aglarci, approx. 1912

Village sub-section	Land Parcels	Land Size (Pogoni)
Porojnica	Poroinicheto	3
Pesoci	Slogoy (do rekata)	5-6
Pesoci	Yazo	12
Pesoci	Tumbata	7
Pesoci	(?) Kaj pato do dzhadeto	3-4
Pesoci	(?) Tornovo mofche	12
Preku Reka	Branenica	5
Preku Reka	Dokoici	30
Preku Reka	Popoica	7
Preku Reka	Brazda	1
Patche Dobromirsko	Dobromirsko patche	6
Patche Dobromirsko	Dobromirsko patche	7
Patche Dobromirsko	Branenica	12
Patche Dobromirsko	Kalnabara	2
Patche Dobromirsko	Kalnabara	3
Patche Dobromirsko	Peshinata	10
Patche Dobromirsko	Ogradata	3
Patche Dobromirsko	Lozyeto	1
?	Gaskarka	5
?	(Kamen) Crvenica	5
?	Podupki	5
?	Kaj Dabjato	2
?	Na rekata (Meglenska)	5
?	" "	5
?	Na chairo (nad Joskovci)	2
?	Na chairo	2
?	Kraj Dzhade	2
?	Kraj Dzhade	2
Approximate land holdings in Gorno Aglarci		165 Pogons

Source and notes: Ljuba Stankovska interview.[254] One *pogon* is equivalent to 2000 square metres of land.

[254] According to the recollections of Ljuba Stankovska (Kleshteva) who worked much of the land whilst in her teens during the 1930s, before marrying out of the village (into the neighbouring village of Dedebalci). A great bulk of the land outlined in tables 3.9, 3.10 and 3.11 was confiscated by the state (Yugoslavia) in the late 1940s during the nationalization programme. Total land holding for the Kleshtev family was in the vicinity of 350-360 pogons. Having spent ten years in America on *pechalba* Petre from Rakovo village purchased approximately 15 acres of land 'for a hatful of gold coins' from a Turkish family in Gorno Kleshtina. The plots were known by specific names, *Buka* in Dolna Kleshtina, *Leska* near the graveyard in Kleshtina, *Kula* near the *Damchea Vodenitsa*, *Panoata Niva* at the upper end of Gorno Kleshtina and *Livadata* in Dolna Kleshtina. In the late 1920s

Table 3.10: Kleshtev Family *rayatsko* Land Holdings, approx. 1912

Village	Land parcel	Land size (pogoni)
Dolno Aglarci	?	7-8
Gorno Aglarci	Lozjeto	1
Total approximate *rayatsko* land holdings		9 Pogons

Source: Ljuba Stankovska interview.

Table 3.11: Kleshtev Family Land Holdings (Acquired Through *pechalba*) Outside the Boundaries of Gorno Aglarci, approx. 1912

Village	Land Parcels	Land Size (Pogons)
Armatoush	Armatoushka	7
Dedebalci	Dedebalska	?
Dobromiri	Dobromirska	1
Dobromiri	Dobromirska	6
Dobromiri	Dobromirska	7
Radobor	Radoborska	5
Radobor	Radoborska	5
Dolgobevci	Dolgobevska	5
Total approximate land holdings		36 Pogons

Source: Ljuba Stankovska interview.

Boundaries between villages were not always clearly discernible to the outsider, but villagers themselves were well aware where their village fields ended and where the neighbouring village-land started. The boundary between Gorno Aglarci and the villages of Meglenci, Suvodol and Armatoush was clearly defined by a road known to the locals by the name *drumo*. On the other hand the boundary separating Gorno Aglarci from Dolno Aglarci, Radobor and Trn was not obvious, as there were no distinguishing physical features marking it. In some instances a river, creek or road

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Petre and his family were dispossesed of practically all their land which was given to colonizing *prosfigi* families by the Greek government which did not recognise Turkish titles. K. Sapurma, and P. Petrovska, *Children of the Bird Goddess*, Politecon Publications, 1997, pp. 28-29. *Children of the Bird Goddess* is an autobiography of Kita Sapurma that spans over a century and explores the lives of four generations of Macedonian women commencing from the Ottoman era to the Macedonian struggle for independence during the Greek Civil War. It is one of the few books dealing with Macedonian village life and culture from the perspective of women.

marked the boundary, in others it may have been a tree, a rock or even a *potka* (a small erect mound of earth standing approximately one foot high).[255]

Fencing was not erected around property holdings. Between each parcel of land there was a space approximately one foot in width that was not worked; this represented the limits of each parcel. This particular method was utilised on fields where wheat, cereals and other grains were grown. Parcels exclusively used for grazing did not have a gap between properties, instead, large rocks were placed at intervals along the boundary. Parcels of land along the Bitola plain were generally rectangular in shape and on each corner it was common for *potki* to be erected.[256] Boundaries of specific land parcels are described in official Ottoman Turkish land titles according to who owned adjoining parcels. One such parcel in Gorno Aglarci is described as bordering with Toshe Cvetko on the eastern side, a road on the west, Hadzhi Raif Efendi on the north and Hurshids fields to the south.[257] This system denoted a landholding tradition where property rarely changed hands.

A rural life

THE PRINCIPAL AGRICULTURAL products in Macedonia during the nineteenth century were wheat, cotton and tobacco.[258] The typical agriculture along the Bitola Pelagonia plain villages was predominantly wheat – but corn, rye, oats, and barley were also grown. The most popular vegetables making up the staple diet were garlic, onion, leek, beans, peppers and tomatoes. In *chiflik* villages vegetables were grown in small portions of the *chiflik* land. Bread was a mixture of wheat, rye, and maize, whilst

[255] Mihailo Kleshtev interview, op. cit. According to official Ottoman land laws relating to the demarcation of village boundaries, 'if the fixed and distinguishing ancient boundary marks of towns or villages have disappeared or are no longer distinguishable, there shall be chosen from among the inhabitants of the neighbouring towns or villages, trustworthy persons of mature years who shall go to the spot and through mediation of the religious authority the four sides of the ancient boundaries shall be fixed and new marks shall be put where necessary'. R.C. Tute, op. cit. p. 118.
[256] Mihailo Kleshtev interview, op. cit.
[257] Ottoman Land Title dated 21 July 1906, Volume 52, document 38, number 109.
[258] M. Zdraveva, op. cit. pp. 178-179.

in the Mariovo district rye bread was common. A villager's diet was predominantly vegetarian and drawn directly from the land. Pelagonia plain villages maintained small numbers of sheep holdings, far less in comparison to Mariovo and the Pelister upper villages, where sheep breeding was a traditional practice.[259] Sheep provided multiple benefits for the villager. As a source of income young lambs could be sold and they also provided the villager with a supply of meat and dairy products such as milk, cheese and yoghurt (part of the basic diet). Wool produced from sheep was used for the manufacture of clothing for the entire family, as well as all the blankets in the home.

Generally meat was reserved for special occasions, most often for religious celebrations. Traditionally a turkey was killed at Christmas, and a lamb on Easter Saturday and *Duhovden*, while a pig in October provided the meat supply for the cold winter months.[260] There were also strict religious periods throughout the year when meat was not consumed. These included six weeks before Christmas, six weeks before Easter, three weeks before *Petrovden* and the two weeks before *Bogorojca Golema*. Meat was never eaten on Fridays and most abstained on Wednesdays as well. During periods of religious fasting peasants also abstained from consuming dairy products. Everyone, regardless of age or sex, strictly observed fasting periods.

Villagers used the most basic of agricultural implements. Equipment used in the typical Macedonian village in the Bitola region during the late nineteenth century under Ottoman rule largely remained unchanged until the 1940s. The animal-driven plough continued to be the instrument used to work the fields. In the Ottoman era villagers used a wooden plough known as a *ralo*. The instrument that ploughed

[259] The typical villager in Gorno Aglarci maintained a minimum of twenty to thirty sheep, whilst in the Mariovo district the average villager maintained at least two hundred sheep.

[260] Villagers also kept chickens but rarely killed them for consumption, instead using their eggs as a part of their diet. It is interesting to note that during the construction of *Saat Kula* (Clock Tower) in central Bitola during the nineteenth century, sixty thousand eggs were gathered from the Bitola region villages and mixed with the mortar during the building of the 35 metre high tower. D. Grdanov, *Bitola i Heraclea niz hronikata na vekovite* [Bitola and Heraclea through the Chronicles of the Ages], Bitola, 1969, p. 32.

through the earth was of steel construction (it did not turn the earth over, it only ploughed through it).[261] Other instruments were the *motika* (hoe), *villa* (pitchfork) and *griblo* (rake). All were constructed of metal, had wooden handles, and were purchased from gypsy blacksmiths in Bitola. Working animals were crucial for the villager to be able to work the land. Every household, even the poorest, had at least one or two working animals (horse, bull), whilst a wealthier household could have a dozen or more such animals. To lose such a creature through illness or accident was a tragic event for the home and the loss was considered a great misfortune.

[261] Later in the 1920s and 1930s steel ploughs became available and these turned the earth over when being driven through the earth. The steel plough was known as a *'plugh'*. Tractors appeared after the Second World War and were first used on state operated estates.

Table 3.12: Agricultural Calendar in the Bitola Region, approx. 1900

Month	Activities (Men, Women)		Celebrations
January	Indoor work making mattresses of straw, straw handbags and cane ceilings. General maintenance around the home, and of farming equipment.	Make clothing for the family, trousers, socks, jumpers, etc. (Indoor work).	*Badnik* Christmas – (killing a turkey)
February	As above.	As above.	*Vodici.*
March	Sowing of tobacco and vegetables.	Sowing of tobacco and vegetables. Collect cow manure, mix with hay and create bricks to be used as fuel for winter fire.	
April	*Shamak* gathered by villagers near *blato*.		Easter – (killing a lamb on Easter Saturday)
May	*Shamak* gathered near *blato*. 1. Weeding of the crops. 2. Sowing and planting of corn, melons, etc.	1. Weeding of the crops. 2. Sowing and planting of corn, melons, etc.	
June	1. Digging the fields. 2. Removing/cutting the wheat.	1. Digging the fields. 2. Removing/cutting the wheat.	*Duhovden* – (killing a lamb)
July			
August			
September	Planting the wheat.	First day of wheat planting, the women cook *maznik* and *zelnik*. Clean the wheat seeds. Clean and wash wool at Crna River in preparation for winter clothes manufacturing.	Wedding celebrations
October	Killing a pig (winter meat). Collection of soap – *'Rusa Sreda'*		Wedding celebrations
November			Wedding celebrations
December	Indoor work making mattresses of straw, straw handbags, and cane ceilings. General maintenance around the home, and of farming equipment.	Collecting dried tobacco leaves (indoor work).	

In the central Pelagonia plain region, local male villagers utilised the natural resources available from the large swamp known as *blato*. Surrounding villages had direct access to cane that was increasingly used for the construction of ceilings during the latter stages of Ottoman rule. Lengths of cane *(trska)* were tied together (so as to roll out like a blanket), and formed a ceiling in the home (to be whitewashed afterwards). Rolls were prepared and taken to the market places in Bitola and Prilep to be sold. Cane helped to supplement the earning capacity of these villages. The manufacture of cane ceilings was performed over the winter months.[262] Other products manufactured by men during the winter period included carry bags known as *zimbili*, made from a straw–like weed found in the *blato* known as *shamak*. *Shamak* was also used for the manufacture of sleeping mats known as *raguzini*. Both bags and sleeping mats were made over the winter months and were sold at the Bitola market either to a wholesale trader, or to the retail market by the villager himself.[263]

During the summer months the water level of the marsh dropped and men from the surrounding villages came to collect a particular grass known as *shavar,*[264] to be used as stock feed for the winter months. There was an abundance of carp in the swamp which men fished and either used as a source of nutrition or sold in Bitola or to villages which did not have access to the *blato*. Central Pelagonia plain villages as far as the fringes of the Mariovo district, such as Suvodol and Vrajnevci, utilised the *blato*, whereas the Mariovo villages did not have access to these resources.[265]

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[262] Interviewees could recall cane ceilings being manufactured and becoming popular during the 1930s and 1940s. During field research conducted in Bitola the author came across a 'ceiling roll' of cane on the road side near the village bus terminal.

[263] Mihailo Kleshtev interview, op. cit. Trajanka Talevska interview, op. cit.

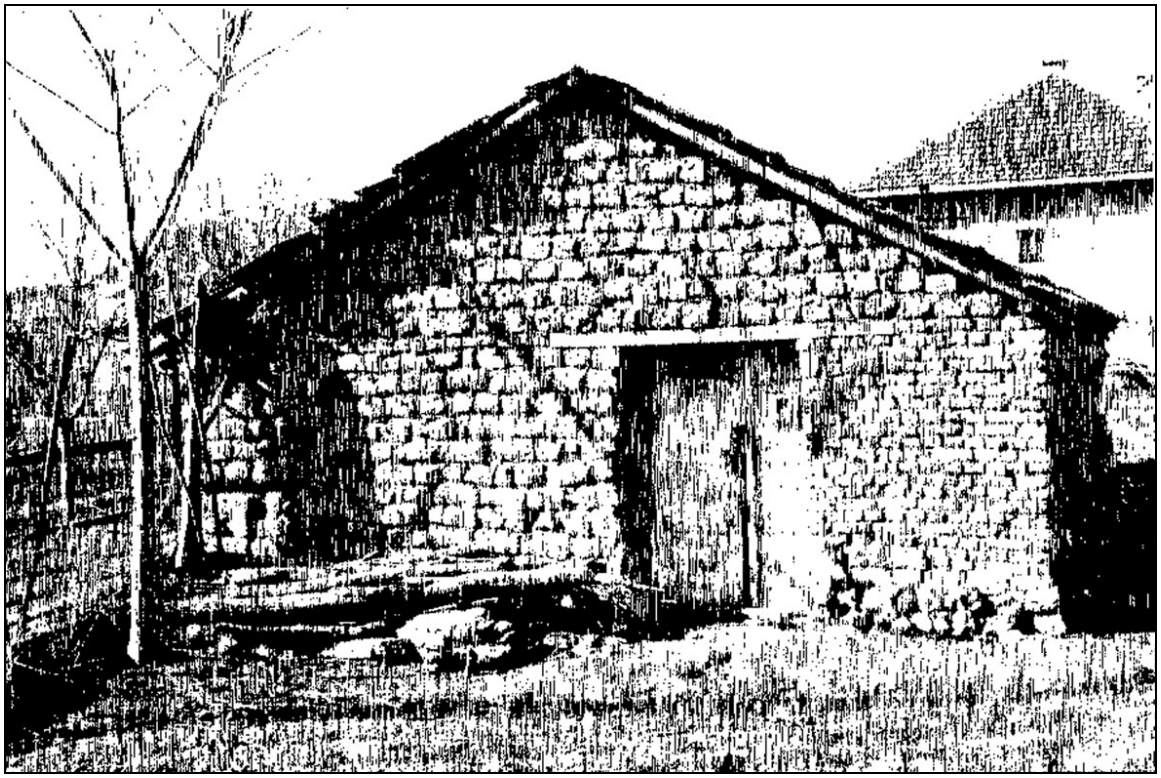
[264] *Shavar* grass grew to approximately two feet in height.

[265] Kosta Markovski interview, op. cit. Atanas Vasilevski interview, op. cit.
Villagers in Makovo purchased cane rolls, *raguzini* and other *Blato* products from the Bitola marketplace. Petko Atanasovski interview, op. cit. In 1959/1960 the *blato* was drained by the authorities and large tracts of agricultural land was subsequently made available. A state firm *(Zik Pelagonia)* took over the administration of agricultural production and created numerous employment opportunities for the local villagers. It has had a particularly positive effect on the village of Novaci, which contains its central base for the collection of agricultural goods. Cane Micevski (born 1938 in Novaci, Bitola region), interview conducted 22 March 2000 in Novaci. Cane Micevski is from the Maznikashovci family, one of the oldest families in the village.

Winter indoor work performed by women involved the making of clothing. As one saying put it, 'winter was the cocoon for the women's handiwork'.[266] Clothing for all family members was made from wool throughout winter. Women wore hand-loomed and embroidered outfits, caftans, vests and aprons, in the colours of red, black, white, green and pastel yellow.[267] Men wore trousers of thick-cloth with a sash or waist belt, and a sheepskin coat in winter. Men wore caps and, unlike their western counterparts, it was considered a mark of disrespect if a man remained uncovered in the presence of a stranger. 'Far from removing his head gear as a courteous greeting, he would, supposing he were uncovered, promptly replace it as an act symbolical of respect.' [268] Women wore an apron-like garment. Younger ones wore bright colours, whilst older women wore a combination of white dominated by black. A scarf was worn around the head by young and old alike and was decorated by colourful embroidery and at times with coins. Often a large decorated silver buckle was worn across the waist. The texture of male and female garments was coarse and rough – as raw wool was commonly used. Children were also similarly dressed, as were the adults.

[266] K. Sapurma, and P. Petrovska, op. cit. p. 59.
[267] Ibid, p. 60. Older women wore white and black for mourning.
[268] A. Goff and A. Hugh, *Macedonia: A Plea for the Primitive,* London, 1921, p. 28. It is interesting to note that mid-nineteenth century Ottoman tax data also gave a physical description of the individual taxpayer. Practically all adult Macedonian males in the Bitola region wore a moustache. D. Gorgiev, editor, *Turski Dokumenti - Popisi od XIX vek* [Turkish Documents - Censuses of the XIX century], Book II, Skopje, 1997, pp. 11-115.

Illustration 3.6: Mud brick outer building, Novaci village



3.3 Structure and social systems in a typical Bitola region village

THE MACEDONIAN HOUSEHOLD was based on a patriarchal system. It was a male-dominated society where it was common for three generations of the one family to live in the one, often small, home. The typical household comprised the patriarch and his wife, his sons and their wives, and their children. Daughters, once married, left their family home and joined the home of their husbands. At the passing away of an elderly patriarch, the eldest son took his place. In relation to the inheritance of land or of a son moving into a home of his own, the divison of agricultural land was the sole responsibility of the patriarch and his decision was final.[269] All members of

[269] Entire families worked their land together and only divided it into smaller parcels when the family became too large. Agricultural land was typically inherited amongst sons only. Over a period of time this process created smaller parcels of land and a hundred years after Ottoman rule numerous small plots abound. At the

the household gave great respect to the family patriach. The prominent Macedonian scholar Tome Sazdov, considers the patriachal family as being the 'only nucleus of independence under Turkish rule, impervious to the attacks of the overlord'.[270]

The role of the *kmet* (village headman) was that of official representative of the village, including all dealings with the authorities. He might also deal with any disputes arising with neighbouring villages and even mediate in disputes between villagers themselves. Necessary qualities for a male (the position was exclusive to males) to be appointed *kmet* of the village required at minimum a basic level of literacy, that he be a respected member of the village community, and preferably that he be relatively affluent (by village standards). It was important that he was able to represent the village well in all dealings with outsiders. For instance, if an Ottoman or other official arrived in the village, he would be directed to the *kmet's* home and it was up to him to discuss any matter of importance on behalf of all the villagers. Typically the *kmet* was an older male member of the village, most often over 50 years of age and his appointment was made by a majority vote in a democratic election. Elections were conducted in the open in the village-square, usually on or close to the religious day of *Gurgovden* (23 May). Only males were eligible to vote, generally the patriarch of each family *(domaikinot)* as well as other older males.[271] Votes were cast openly

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end of the twentieth century villagers on the Pelagonia plain have commenced a difficult process of trading parcels amongst one another in order to combine parcels into the formation of single larger land holdings.

[270] T. Sazdov, *Macedonian Folk Literature,* Skopje, 1987, p. 41. T. Sazdov is a former professor at the School of Philology at the University of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Skopje, Macedonia.

[271] This group of older men ('village *domaikini*') comprised the village council. The village council thus did not comprise of elected officials. Although they directly voted for the *kmet*, *goidar* and *polyak* they were also free to gather at any other time and discuss any other village issues. During the Ottoman period over the warmer months they gathered out in the open along the fringes of the village-square, and during winter they appear to have used the *trem* (church hall). Following the Balkan Wars and the division of Macedonia, the Bitola region fell under Serb rule and the new administration placed high priority on education (Serbian language education) and constructed a large number of schools in the countryside. A school was built to accommodate every four to five villages. In villages where new schools were built, these buildings were to be utilised for village council meetings (during the period 1913 to 1941).

Along the central Bitola plain region the Serbs constructed schools in Novaci (for the children of Ribarci, Logovardi and Bilyanik), Gorno Aglarci (for Dolno Aglarci, Meglenci and Dobromiri), Dedebalci (Dolgobevci, Trap, Crnichani and Puturus) and Dobrushevo (Budakovo, Noshpal, Erekovci and Alinci).

During the Second World War, Bulgarian occupation of the Bitola region emphasized a need for education amongst the peasant population. More schools were built in the villages as Bulgarian teachers arrived following

through the raising of hands when two or more candidates nominated for the position. The successful candidate was appointed for a period of one year. Ljuba Stankovska believed that the *beg* did not exert any influence on the appointment of the village *kmet*.[272] It is not clear whether this was the case in all villages, although Bouchie de Belle agrees that the *kmet* was appointed through a democratic process and this was the norm in exclusively Macedonian villages.[273]

Although the *kmet* held the highest position in the village, in the Ottoman official hierarchy he was at the lowest point. Every village had its own village seal issued by the Ottoman authorities and kept in the possession of the *kmet*. As the first point of contact for the village *beg*, the *kmet* was provided with the opportunity to develop personal relations with him. Andon Delov was the *kmet* of Armenoro (Lerin region) in approximately 1900 and due to developing friendly relations with the village *beg* he was granted special privileges.[274] Most notably, he openly carried a firearm in the village. Andon Foudoulis (Delov) described his grandfather as 'a Christian *aga* in the village'.[275]

Employed by the villagers as a watchman of the fields, the primary role of the *polyak* was to ensure that animals were not laid to pasture on the village fields. His role also involved maintaining general security of the village lands. The village council appointed the *poljak* by democratic election. A *poljak* was normally a poor member of the village who may have had insufficient land and several children at home. Each member of the village made payment to the *polyak* in proportion to their land

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Bulgarian troops. Consequently since the end of the war most villages have school buildings and these have commonly been used for village council meetings over the winter months.

[272] Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit.

[273] E. Bouchie de Belle, op. cit. p. 61. In contrast Andon Foudoulis (born 1919 in Armenoro, Lerin region), interview conducted 2 November 1999 in Melbourne; Vane Tanchevski (Lopatica) interview, op. cit. and Cvetan Jovanovski (Novaci) interview, op. cit., believed that the Ottomans did exert influence on the appointment of the village *kmet*. Having returned from serving as a Ottoman soldier in the middle of the nineteenth century Dime Tanchevski was appointed *kmet* of Lopatica village. Dime was the great great grandfather of Vane Tanchevski. Vane Tanchevski interview, opt cit.

[274] The village has been renamed by the Greek authorities as Armenohori.

[275] Andon Foudoulis interview, op. cit. The *kmet* Andon Delov was born in approximately 1860 and was fluent in Turkish.

holdings. Payment was often made in wheat whilst wealthier village members paid their dues in cash.[276] In other instances, particularly in Macedonian *chiflik* villages, the villagers were not always free to democratically elect a *poljak* as often the *beg* would intervene and appoint a Muslim to perform this task. Muslim *poljaks* were always armed, were frequently Albanians, and were intended to be a deterrent to IMRO *cheti* utilising villages as safe havens. Muslim *poljaks* were often another source of oppression for Macedonian villagers.[277]

Village labour was essentially required to work the fields along the Pelagonia plain, so men were unable to take their animals grazing individually on a daily basis. Instead the village council elected a *goidar* to perform this function. Depending on the size of the village (and the number of animals) there could be one, two or three *goidari* employed. Every morning during the summer months, and in the mild winter days, a male member of each home gathered the animals and herded them to a designated place where the *goidar* awaited. The *goidar* took care of cows, horses, and donkeys and in some villages the pigs, however, normally a village employed another *goidar* who exclusively maintained pigs. A *goidar* was never required to look after sheep.[278] *Goidari* were often poor men, and, as with elected *poljaks,* received payment for services in wheat (sometimes cash) from individual households in proportion to the number of animals maintained.[279] A prospective *goidar* normally nominated himself for the position by approaching the *kmet* and expressing his intention. The *kmet* would

[276] Mihailo Kleshtev interview, op. cit.; Vane Tanchevski interview, op. cit.
[277] The IMRO often targeted notorious Muslim *polyaks* to be killed and this would bring relief to victimised villages and maintained IMRO's reputation amongst the population. See I. Katardzhiev, editor, *Spomeni - S. Arsov, P. Klashev, L. Dzherov, G.P. Hristov, A. Andreev, G. Papanchev, L. Dimitrov* [Memoirs - S. Arsov, P. Klashev, L. Dzherov, G.P. Hristov, A. Andreev, G. Papanchev, L. Dimitrov], Skopje, 1997.
[278] In the Bitola plain villages 3 to 5 houses in the village would group together, usually on a blood basis, and one male would take responsibility for grazing the sheep. Such a person was known as an *ofchar*. As most villagers in the Bitola plain did not depend upon sheep breeding as their primary livelihood they were able to group themselves as they did not possess what was considered large numbers of sheep. For example, a household with 40 to 50 sheep would group them with others, even those with up to 100 sheep would do so. However, there were those who had larger numbers, as did the Kleshtev family, with 200 sheep, they did not combine theirs with any other household. Mihailo Kleshtev interview, op. cit.
[279] Apart from the payment received for his services herding the animals, when any one of the villagers animals in the care of the *goidar* happen to breed, the *domaikinka* of the household would cook maznik or pitulici and these would be presented to the *goidar* to celebrate the event.

announce a meeting and gather the village *domaikini* to jointly decide on the matter. Once appointed his term was for a period of six months from *Gurgovden* (May) to *Mitrovden* (November). The appointment could be extended or renewed for another six-month period only, from *Mitrovden* to *Gurgovden*. Agreements between the village and the *poljak* or *goidar* were verbal agreements.[280]

The elected positions of *kmet*, *polyak* and *goidar* exclusively comprised male members of the community and reflected traditional Macedonian patriarchal culture. Women played no part in village appointments, men were the decision-makers regarding public matters, and eligibility to vote for village appointments was exclusive to males. The highest public profile attainable by a woman was as a *basmarka* (medicine woman) or *bayach* (holy woman). Both roles were monopolised by women: they could be performed by men, but rarely so.[281] The primary role of the *basmarka* was to lift evil curses from individuals who might be ill, from a family who had experienced a run of misfortune, a villager's farm animals (if they were suffering from disease) or from an epidemic affecting an entire village.[282] The anthropologist J. Obrebski, conducting field research in the Macedonian village of Voltche (Gostivar region) in the 1930s, examined village rituals and social structure. Obrebski noted that prior to lifting a curse, the *basmarka* had to diagnose the sickness and discover its source, whether it be 'from God, evil spirits or witchcraft'.[283] The *basmarka* utilised a collection of rituals in her work, manual acts and secret spells. She did not necessarily need to see the sick individual in person, but might only need to see and feel a piece of their clothing. Similarly, with farm animals afflicted by disease, a leather strap from

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[280] Mihailo Kleshtev interview, op. cit.

[281] Bosilka Cvetkovska (born 1910 Dedebalci, Bitola region), interview conducted in Dedebalci on 2 April 2000. Bosilka is the village *bayach* and also serves as the bayach for the neighbouring villages.
Regarding male *basmari,* Dragica Kleshteva recalled that her grandfather Tale Vasilevski, (from the Tchkorlevski family) although not an 'official' *basmar*, he did nevertheless perform a limited amount of *basmarstvo* upon his extended family members. Tale only treated throat conditions (swelling of glands, tonsilitis) and performed his work only at night during a full moon. Using a yellow pencil he rotated it in a circular motion around the inside neck area whilst speaking secret words. Dragica Kleshteva interview, op. cit.

[282] Bosilka Cvetkovska interview, op. cit.

[283] The anthropologist, J. Obrebski, *Ritual and social structure in a Macedonian village*, Research Report No. 16, Department of Anthropology, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 1977, p. 15.

a working animal was sufficient.[284] Her work was considered a public function and was highly respected: she 'saves' the people.[285] Receiving only symbolic payments for her work, her true reward was the elevation of her status.

> She attains privileges otherwise denied with men. She does not have to stand up to greet them. At any social gathering, such as a wedding reception, she may mingle freely with men, sit at their table, drink brandy with them and converse with them as an equal. If she so wishes, she may even indulge in profane language otherwise used only by men.[286]

According to Trajanka Talevska, both the *basmarka* and *bayach* were substitutes for medical doctors which were non-existent in the rural villages in earlier times.[287] Ljuba Stankovska stated that 'in earlier times *basmarki* were respected the way we respect doctors today. The *basmarka* was the most respected woman in the village'.[288] Velika Spirova had never met a qualified medical practitioner until she migrated to Australia in 1939.[289]

The status of the *bayach* in village life exceeded even that of a *basmarka*. A greater Christian orientation is linked to the skills of the *bayach* as she was considered to be in communication with the saints. Individuals visited with a range of problems that might include health issues, troubles at home and even one's love life. The *bayach* relied on divine visions and dreams for answers, and sought a positive outcome to their problems by directing them to visit a certain church or monastery, drink water from a particular natural spring (usually found in a monastery), make an offering to the saints and prayer.[290] A *basmarka* attained her skills through inheritance, not training; a *bayach* acquired her role following divine instructions received usually in a

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[284] Bosilka Cvetkovska interview, op. cit.
According to Velika Spirova, the *basmarka* in the village of Krpeshina (Lerin region) only required a piece of clothing and did not need to see the sick person. The piece of clothing would remain with the *basmarka* for a short period of a few days and when returned to its owner it would have healing powers. Velika Spirova interview, op. cit.
[285] J. Obrebski, op. cit. p. 15.
[286] Ibid, p. 16.
[287] Trajanka Talevska interview, op. cit.
[288] Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit.
[289] Velika Spirova interview, op. cit.
[290] Bosilka Cvetkovska interview, op. cit; J. Obrebski, op. cit. pp. 16–17.

series of dreams or visions.[291] A *bayach* did not accept payments for her services, but would accept a donation towards a small meditation chapel built in her yard and to which she retired to for her visions.[292] A *bayach* received great respect from the villages as her home

> develops into a centre of religious thought and moral reflection expressed in traditional terms. Her main concern was not so much the preservation of the existential values cherished by the villagers but with the fundamental normative values of peasant society. The main and constantly recurring theme of her teachings has been the sacred nature of the society's mores and the imminence of supernatural punishments for bad conduct.[293]

It was not uncommon for an elderly *domaikinka* (woman head of the house - matriarch) to have basic *basmar* skills utilised as remedies for family members for common ailments such as a headache.[294] Dragica Kleshteva knew of three elderly women in her village who practised some *basmarstvo*, but these were not considered to be true *basmari*. Dragica's mother Velika treated family members when inflicted with headache. She would tie a piece of string around the individual's forehead and rub a piece of soap between each ear and temple. This was followed by further massaging the middle of the forehead with the soap before removing the string and again wrapping it around the person's head to measure whether there had been any change in the circumference.[295]

Marriage

AS SUMMER WAS the busiest working period of the year, weddings were traditionally held in autumn when the work began slowing down before winter. Girls normally married outside the village and it was males who traced their lineage within

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[291] Bosilka Cvetkovska interview, op. cit.

[292] Bosilka Cvetkovska interview, op. cit.; J. Obrebski, op. cit. p. 16. It is interesting to note that *bayachi* are still popular in Macedonia at the beginning of the twentieth century. In the village of Kravari (Bitola) in the summer of 1989 at 7.30-8.00am the author saw a group of approximately fifteen people waiting to see a renowned *bayach* at her home. The tradition of *bayachi* in Macedonian village life is very old and powerful. There are also Macedonian *bayachi* in Australia at the begining of the twenty-first century, some are known to have meditation chapels in their back yards.

[293] J. Obrebski, op. cit. p. 16–17.

[294] Dragica Kleshteva interview, op. cit.; Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit. Mara Tancevska (born 1933 in Sekirani, Bitola region), interview conducted in Melbourne on 6 March 2002. See also J. Obrebski, op. cit.

[295] Dragica Kleshteva interview, op. cit.

the village. Due to the tradition of marrying outside the village, the village was not a group of blood relatives.[296] The Orthodox Church strictly forbade marriage between relatives for up to several generations and marriage with a member of the *numko's* (godfather) or *dever's* (bestman) family was treated in the same manner as a close blood relative.[297]

Courtship was not the norm in Ottoman Macedonia. Parents normally arranged marriages for their children and such arrangements were unquestionably accepted. Through word of mouth parents would make it known that they had a daughter of the marrying age; often a go-between was used, known as a *stroinik*. The potential father-in-law (the family patriach) would first inquire about the family reputation (*domaikinstvo* - that they are good people) and if considered suitable would then make arrangements to meet her father and ask questions about their land or stock holdings. If all went well, the potential bride and groom would meet for the first time on their wedding day.[298] In the late 1800s whilst on *pechalba* in Wallachia, two Macedonian men from Rakovo and Bitusha (both villages from the Lerin region) struck a close friendship and decided that as each had a son and daughter of marrying age they should become in-laws.[299] Both men wrote home to their families with the news that there would be a wedding upon their return and gave instructions for preparations to commence. The day the groom Petre and his clan arrived at the brides (Cveta) home in Bitusha it was 'the first time the bride and groom had laid eyes on each other'.[300]

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[296] It appears that later in the twentieth century some villages commenced marrying within their own village and became protective about allowing their girls to leave the village. Examples include Kuratica in the Ohrid region and Smilevo in the Demir Hisar region.
[297] *Numko* refers to godfather and *dever* is the bestman.
[298] Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit., Mara Tancevska interview, opt. cit.
[299] Both villages are now in the political boundaries of the Greek state, Rakovo has been renamed as Krateron and Bitusha is now officially known as Parori.
[300] K. Sapurma and P. Petrovska, op. cit. p. 36.

Table 3.13: Male Macedonian Orthodox Christian interviewees from the Bitola region

Name	Year of birth	Place of birth	Father	Mother	Grand-father	Grand-mother
Hristo 'Caki' Dimitrovski	1893	Bitola	Novaci	Prilep	Novaci	Novaci
Vasil Petrov	1911	Tepavci	Tepavci	Paralovo	Tepavci	Skochivir
Vasko Altiparmak	1912	Dolenci	Dolenci	Ivajnefci	Dolenci	Dolenci
Stefan Trajchevski	1913	Dolno Orehovo	Dolno Orehovo	Dolno Orehovo	Dolno Orehovo	?
Petko Atanasovski	1913	Makovo	Makovo	Orle	Chegel	Dolno Orehovo
Cvetan Jovanovski	1914	Novaci	Novaci	Orizari	Novaci	?
Ilija Najdovski	1920	Suvodol	Suvodol	D. Aglarci	Suvodol	Orle
Stojche Petkovski	1920	Makovo	Makovo	Mojno	Makovo	Brnik
Vlado Jankulovski	1921	Novaci	Novaci	Radobor	Dobromiri	Novaci
Mihailo Todorovski	1921	Dolno Orehovo	Dolno Orehovo	Dolno Orehovo	Dolno Orehovo	Paralovo
Stojan Spasevski	1922	Graeshnica	Sv Todori	Graeshnica	Sv Todori	Graeshnica
Atanas Kotevski	1923	Vrajnevci	Vrajnevci	Paralovo	Vrajnevci	?
Nikola Giorgioski	1927	Gorno Aglarci	Gorno Aglarci	Puturus	Gorno Aglarci	Dedebalci
Atanas Vasilevski	1928	Vrajnevci	Vrajnevci	Vrajnevci	Vrajnevci	Vrajnevci
Zivko Dimovski	1929	Gorno Aglarci	Gorno Aglarci	Podmol	Gorno Aglarci	? (not from the village)
Kosta Markovski	1930	Suvodol	Suvodol	Puturus	Suvodol	Dobrushevo
Trajan Micevski	1930	Novaci	Novaci	Vrajnevci	Novaci	?
Todor Veljanovski	1930	Dolno Aglarci	Dolno Aglarci	Radobor	Dolno Aglarci	Dobrushevo
Mihailo Kleshtev	1934	G. Aglarci	Gorno Aglarci	Klepatch (Prilep)	Gorno Aglarci	Novaci
Vane Tanchevski	1935	Lopatica	Lopatica	Kukurechani	Lopatica	Lisolaj
Stojan Vasilevski	1937	Kukurechani	Kochishta	Krstoar	Kochishta	Mogila
Trajan Popovski	1939	Lazhec	Lazhec	Graeshnica	Lazhec	Graeshnica
Slobodan Ilievski	1943	Bitola	Bitola	Doiran (Doiran region)	Bitola	Bitola
Ilija Josevski	1947	Brod	Brod	Brod	Brod	Brod
Vasil Slavevski	1954	Dolno Orehovo	Dolno Orehovo	Makovo	Dolno Orehovo	Paralovo

Notes: Data regarding parents' and grandparents' place of birth was not obtained by the writer from interview conducted with Giorgi Dimovski-Colev (born 1929 in Bitola). The parents of interviewees born after 1940 were likely to have been born after the end of Ottoman rule in 1912.

Table 3.14: Systems of Marriage, Bitola region, 1870–1912

	Married within village	**Married outside village (less than 5 kilometres)**	**Married outside village (5–10 kilometres)**	**Married outside village (over 10 kilometres)**
Respondent's Father	3	8	5	6
Respondent's Grandfather	3	7	3	4

Source and notes: From 22 interviews in the Bitola region of interviewees born to 1940 (exluding Giorgi Dimovski-Colev interview). Five respondents were uncertain from which village their grandmother originated.

Just as the Turks were notorious for kidnapping Christian girls to be taken as brides (or placed in a harem), Macedonian men were also known to engage in the practice. Instances of kidnapping occurred when parents would not give their daughter to a family who sought her as a daughter-in-law.[301] Sometimes men chose the girl they wished to marry but were not brave enough to kidnap her; they would pay an individual who specifically hired out his services for the kidnapping of brides.[302] Stojche Petkovski stated that 'many marriages in the Turkish period occurred like this', and continued even after the Ottomans had left.[303] Once kidnapped and held overnight (at the male's home), it was rare for the girl to be taken back by her distraught parents.

[301] Stojche Petkovski interview, op. cit.
[302] Ibid.
[303] Ibid. Stojche Petkovski's sister in law (wife's sister) was kidnapped against her will in the early 1920s and married a man in the neighbouring village of Rapesh. Even though her marriage was 'unconventionally' arranged, she did remain with him.

Role of women

WOMEN GENERALLY WERE in an inferior position within the patriachal village social system, and depending upon age and ties to the men were unofficially allocated a position within the status system of the family home. Female subordination was evident by the naming system allocated to women. A young bride was referred to as *nevesto* (literally meaning 'young wife') and later would be known by a modified form of her husband's name; for example, the wife of Kole became *Koleytsa*, Mendo's wife became *Mendoytsa*, Pavle's wife became *Pavleytsa*. With a dozen or more family members in the home, the new bride was subordinate to everyone, her mother in law, her father in law, her husband, her brothers-in-law and her sisters-in-law. It is she who would approach her father in law with a jug of water and bowl so he might wash his hands; she would then do the same for all other adult males in the home.[304] She would emerge out of a subordinate position when she became established as the head-woman of an independent joint family household, and the 'status she achieves becomes complementary and comparable to that of her husband'.[305] She would no longer work the fields or attend to the farm animals, she would not be required to care for young children (an older daughter-in-law would stay home to perform this function) and would instead be the organiser of everyday household work.[306] Her responsibility would also include the observance of holy days and 'in the organisation and performance of household ritual she acts as the supreme authority, superceding the position of the masculine family head, be it her husband or son'.[307] As a

[304] If there is no young bride in the home this task would be performed by the eldest daughter. Dragica Kleshteva interview, op. cit. and Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit.
[305] J. Obrebski, op. cit. p. 7.
[306] Dragica Kleshteva interview, op. cit.; J. Obrebski, op. cit. pp. 12-13.
[307] J. Obrebski, op. cit. p. 13. Adult men in the central and western parts of the Pelagonia plain played an active role in the traditional ritual performed on a particular day known as *Rusa Sreda* (29 May). Riding their horses or donkeys to a site, on a hill above the village of Baldovenci, they dug into the earth beside the river extracting a grey coloured clay-like material which was gathered into sacks and transported back to the village. The material was known as *uma* and deposited into a barrel, water added and left to set for a period of time. Once it had sufficiently hardened, the women of the household moulded the *uma* into round balls, left them to dry and used it as soap. Mihailo Kleshtev was aware the practice persisted well into the twentieth century (to the early 1960s) even though soap was readily available throughout the region. Mihailo Kleshtev interview, op. cit.; Ilija Josevski from Brod was also aware of the practice and stated men from Brod as well as the surrounding villages engaged

consequence, in the sphere of village religious ritual activities women played the dominant role and were the keepers of traditional village rituals and customs.

3.4 Religious rituals and celebrations

VILLAGE CELEBRATIONS AND festivities were held in the village square. As the central point of each village, the square comprised a large open space containing the central village well. Larger villages often had two such squares, one in each *maalo* (quarter); however, villagers traditionally gathered in one of the village squares and celebrated together. The village square played an important role in the lives of villages. Along with the village church it was the most socially significant area in the village. Otherwise known as the *sred selo* (literally meaning 'middle of the village') the term itself has come to be closely associated with 'celebration' or 'festival'.[308] Five times a year the village gathered as a whole to celebrate the principal religious celebrations of Christmas (*Bozhik*), Easter (*Veligden)*, Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles *(Duhovden)*, Epiphany of our Lord Jesus Christ *(Vodici)* - these are characterised from other religious celebrations as each are celebrated over three consecutive days - and the village saint's day.[309]

The celebration for the Patron Saint of the village was always held during the summer period and is a single day celebration.[310] The *sred selo* celebrations were important events to the village community and were attended by the entire village, young and old. Villages commonly had a bagpiper or drummer providing the music

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in the custom. Ilija Josevski (born in 1947 in the village of Brod, Bitola region), interview conducted in Melbourne on 21 January 2002.

[308] Preston Makedonia soccer club in Melbourne (Australia) holds an annual fund raising day at its home ground in a village-like celebration with food, a musical band and dancing in the wide open space of the soccer field. The day is promoted as a *sred selo* celebration. Other Macedonian-supported soccer clubs in Australia are known to engage in this practice.

[309] Every Christian village celebrated the religious day associated to its patron saint. Gorno Aglarci celebrated Petrovden, Vrajnevci - Mitrovden, Novaci - Sveti Atanas, Suvodol - Bogoroica, Meglenci - Sveti Nikola and Paralovo - Gurgovden.

[310] The village saints day is never in winter, although their can be two such saints days over a twelve month period. These are designated separately as the winter day and the summer one.

for dancing. Macedonian dancing involves forming a large circle with individuals joined by the holding of hands; however, in the late nineteenth century men and women danced separately, and depending on the number of musicians they either danced in two separate groups simultaneously or alternated with the same musicians.[311] Another important religious celebration, but not celebrated collectively, is the *domashna slava* (literally meaning 'home celebration'). It is a celebration for the patron saint of the family home and held once a year. It is a hereditary tradition handed down from father to son.[312]

Ritual celebrations occurred during the many holy days celebrated over the course of the Orthodox calendar. A series of specific ritual acts were linked to individual religious celebrations, and together with ritual folksongs the peasants strictly adhered to them, as they were 'indivisible from the life and work of the Macedonian peasant, bound up with his conception of magic, mythology and religion'.[313]

Two significant celebrations, Christmas *(Bozhik)* and Epiphany of Our Lord Jesus Christ *(Vodici)*, may be singled out for particular emphasis. Both days fall within the most revered Christian observances and continue to be celebrated at the

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[311] Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit; Trajanka Talevska interview, op. cit; Dragica Kleshteva interview, op. cit. The village-square was also a popular meeting place for young people, particularly during summertime. Fetching water from the central well or tap was the role of the young girls in the home. Young girls also joined adult women at the central well to do the laundry washing. In Gorno Aglarci the village well was used to wash everyday articles of clothing. Larger items such as blankets and *diftiks* (a thick heavy blanket) were washed at the Crna River in September, wool was also cleaned and washed in preparation for the making of clothes in wintertime. Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit.; Dragica Kleshteva interview, op. cit. Women and young girls were conspicuous around the central well, young boys were not too far away; however, adult men were noticably absent from the central well and could be found sitting in groups along the fringes of the square. The significance of the central water supply was expressed in a ritual act performed by a new village bride. At the family home of the groom on the day of her wedding she was required to bow three times before her father-in-law and mother-in-law, the *numko* (godfather) and the *dever* (best-man). This was followed by the wedding party walking into the village-square, where the villagers had gathered to witness the new bride 'give recognition to the well by bowing three times before it, demonstrating her respect to the water supply from which she will live off'. Dragica Kleshteva interview, op. cit. It is interesting to note that at Macedonian weddings in Australia it is common to see the bride and groom bow three times each to both sets of parents before taking their seats at the head of the main table.

[312] For instance a *domashna slava* celebrated may be Saint Nicholas day on 19 December of each year. Sons will compulsorily retain the *slava* after they are married and living in their own homes, however a daughter will not retain the *slava*, she will celebrate the *slava* of her husband's family.

[313] T. Sazdov, op. cit. p. 33.

beginning of the twenty-first century with specific ritual acts remaining. Long extinguished is the ritual celebration of *dudule*, conducted in periods of drought to bring on rain. Few respondents were able to recall witnessing the unique ritual act in the early part of the twentieth century.

Christmas

OVER THE THREE days of Christmas, Macedonian Orthodox Christian villagers in the Bitola region attended church services each day, later followed by a *sred selo* celebration. However, Christmas Eve (6th January) known as *badnik,* was characterised by a series of ritual acts. Family dinner on *badnik* was made up of traditional dishes such as *pitulici*, *zelnik* and *piftija.*[314] Each member of the household would cross themselves (in a Christian manner) before sitting down for dinner, and then would sit down as one, together with the *domaikin* (male head of household). At the completion of dinner all stood up in unison with the *domaikin*. The purpose of the ritual was that the hens have an abundance of chicks (*'Za kvatchkata da praj pilina'*).[315] After dinner on *badnik* the *domaikin* would give every member of the house a share of boiled chestnuts, potatoes, apples, pears, figs and other fruits.

A ritual performed on the plough during *badnik* was symbolic of village lifestyle. The plough was dismantled so that the metal instrument that cut through the dirt *(emish)* was separated. The *emish* was brought into the house and bread that had been baked into the figure eight was hung onto it. Beside it a candle was lit and kept burning for three days throughout the Christmas Holy days. On the ninth of January the bread was given as feed to the animals and the plough was re-assembled. This ritual was aimed at making the land prosperous.[316] People visited their neighbours and relatives in the village carrying with them small pieces of bread baked the size of

[314] *Pitulici* - similar to crepes; *zelnik* - a pastry cooked in a round dish; *Piftija* - jellied pork.
[315] Dragica Kleshteva interview, op. cit.
[316] Ibid. Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit.

golf balls and offered them to one another. In the evening a great bonfire was set ablaze in the village square and considered the highlight of *badnik* celebrations. Men stayed out until very late socialising, drinking *rakia* and wine, and children were permitted to stay out late.[317] They gathered around the bonfire singing *'Kolide babo kolide'*. Women did not attend the *badnik* bonfire. That evening the entire family would stay up late at home, playing games such as tying the feet together of the first person who fell asleep. Even children were permitted to do this to the older people, something that normally would never be tolerated.

Normally the floor of a village home was swept on a daily basis, however over the three days of Christmas it was not swept at all. Instead hay was thrown around the floor of the home and remained until the end of the third day of Christmas.[318] On January 9 the hay was gathered by the *domaikin* and fed to the animals. Apart from tending to the animals, no work was performed whatsoever over the three days of Christmas. It was forbidden to work on a religious day, and this was adhered to by all. The villagers feared what might happen if they went to work in the fields; they believed it to be a sign of disrespect to God and the saints, and one could expect Holy disapproval in the form of a misfortune befalling their home.[319] By displaying respect to the Holy days, people believed good health and blessings would come to their familes.[320]

On Christmas morning every family attended the church service. Afterwards when each family returned home, each individual gathered three twigs from the yard, and after having greeted the *domaikin* and *domaikinka* with the words *'na pomosh denot da e',* each threw the twigs into the home fire saying the words '*Zhenski Jagnina, Mashki*

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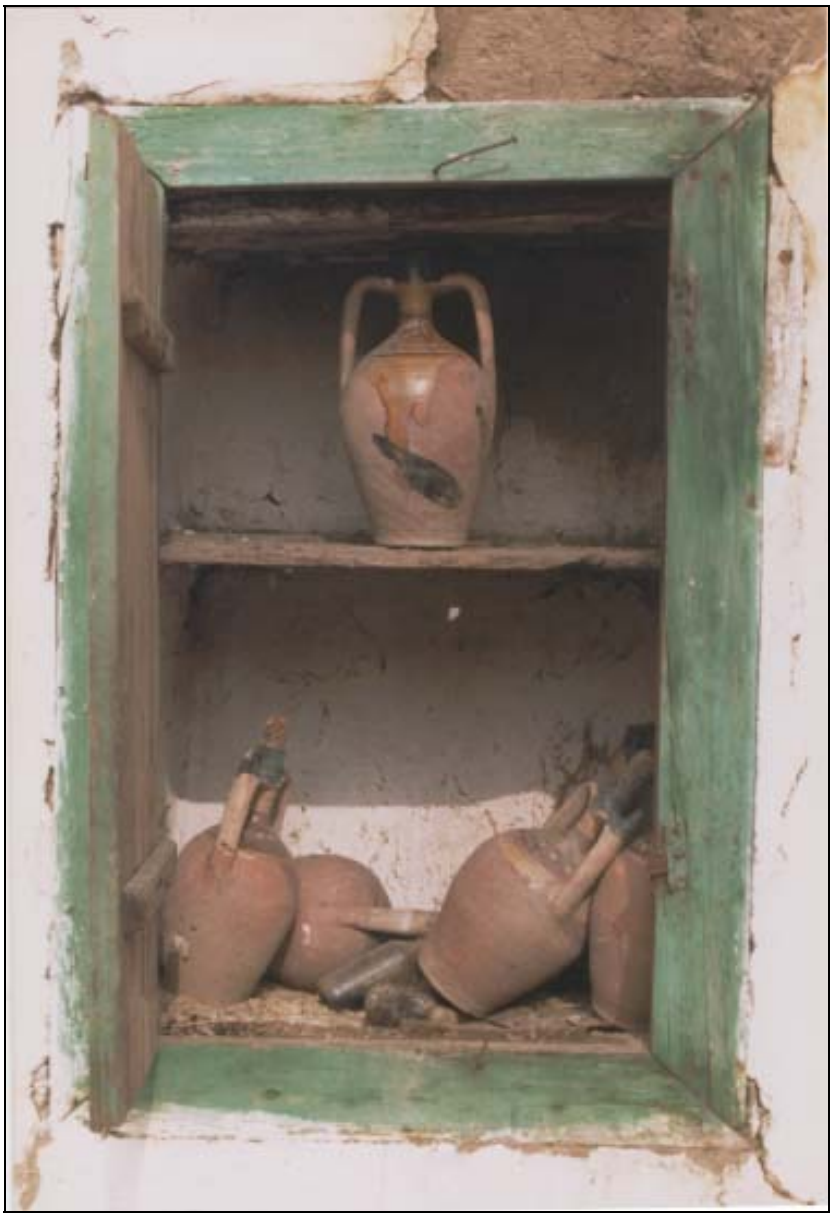
[317] *Rakia* - a home made distilled alcholic drink popular with Macedonians.
[318] Trajanka Talevska interview, op. cit. Trajanka Talevska believed that the hay was symbolical of the birth of Jesus Christ.
[319] There are numerous such stories of people who did not respect the Holy Days falling victim to unfortunate accidents that usually cost the life of a family member.
[320] These matters were taken very seriously and it is not entirely unusual even at the beginning of the twenty-first century to come across older *domaikinki* in Australia forbidding their families from working on Holy Days.

Dechinja' ('female sheep, male children'). On Christmas day the *domaikin* would visit friends and relatives in the village, and was served traditional Christmas dishes including *piftija* (jellied pork) and *storen rasol* (pickled cabbage). *Domaikinki* stayed home on the first day of Christmas. During the second and third days of Christmas, following the church service, entire families visited one another and each afternoon a *sred selo* celebration was held.

Over the Christmas holy days, in each home two branches from a basil *(bosilok)* plant were tied together into the shape of a cross and attached onto the top of a clay drinking vase *(barde)*. Every member of the household would drink from the vase on a daily basis from Christmas (7 January) until *Vodici* (19 January). The period between the birth of a baby and his/her communion *(molitva)* is known as *leonka*. The water in the barde was known as *leonka* water. As this custom ran from Christmas to *Vodici*, it symbolised the period between the birth of Jesus and his baptism *(Vodici)* by John the Baptist in the river Jordan. Celebrated over two days, the first day was known as *Mashki Vodici* (Mens *vodici*) and the second as *Zenski Vodici* (womens *vodici*).

Photo 3.3: Traditional clay drinking vases *(bardina)*



The Epiphany

ON THE FIRST day of *Vodici* (*Mashki* vodici) every Macedonian Orthodox community in the villages and large towns gathered for the 'throwing of the cross' *(frlajne na krstot)* into a lake or river. The priest would throw a cross into the water as a group of young men (always an odd number) prepared to dive in to retrieve it, with the successful person receiving various gifts for his success. As the water was considered blessed, people would leave with a bottle full and it would be used throughout the year to be rubbed into a part of the body where one experienced pain or discomfort during times of illness. Furthermore, if the working animals or sheep became inflicted with disease, the blessed water would be used in a similar manner.[321]

During the two days of *Vodici,* villagers attended church and on the first day entire families went to the village cemetery to light candles in remembrance of loved ones. After the Church service on the second day, all young unmarried girls gathered in the village square, joining in pairs to form a column. Two girls led the column and were known as *Golem Chelnik* and *Mal Chelnik*.[322] In formation they visited every house in the village; if possible they would enter all houses. *Golem* and *Mal Chelnik* would commence singing a song for every individual member of the household, with the column of girls joining in. Specific songs were sung only on *Vodici* and they usually did not exceed a dozen verses. When the singing was complete, the *domaikin/domaikinka* of the house made an offering of *rakia*, wine, cheese or flour. From the flour and other products *Chelnici* and their mothers baked bread, *maznik* and *zelnik*. The food and drink were taken to the village square where the entire village had gathered to celebrate. All the young girls involved in the *Vodici* singing then served food and drink to the villagers and the rest of the day was spent in great celebration with the village musicians playing tunes as the villagers danced.[323]

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[321] Dragica Kleshteva interview, op. cit. Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit. Velika Spirova interview, op. cit.
[322] To be a *Chelnik* was a great honour for a young girl, in particular to be the *Golem Chelnik*.
[323] Dragica Kleshteva interview, op. cit.

Various songs were performed in Vrajnevci village by young girls on *Vodici*:[324] One song was sung to a home that had sons and daughters of the marrying age:

Jankula zhito sejeshe	Yankula was planting grain
I na gulabi frlashe	And throwing to the pigeons
Oi gulabi sivi gulabi	Hey pigeons, grey pigeons
Kolvajte shto ke kolvajte	Peck what you may peck
Letajte shto ke letate	Fly where you may fly
Na esen da se vratite	Return in autumn
Imam kerka za mazhejne	I have a daughter for marriage
A I sin za zhenejne	And a son for marriage
Da dochekash za mnogu (godini)	May you welcome the New Year
Do godina po veseli	And the following year happier

Another song featured a bride who had not seen her family for some time:

Izlegla nevestitsa srede dvorje na naloni	The bride stepped out in the middle of the yard in her clogs
I so sonce razgovara	And spoke with the sun
Oi ti sonce, letno sonce	Hey sun, summer sun
Dali a vide moita majka	Did you see my mother
Moita majka, moj tatko	My mother, my father
Moite brajka, moite sestri	My brothers, my sisters
Da do cheka za mnogu (godini)	To welcome the New Year

Another song concerned a young bride:

Oi nevesto Donkoice	Hey bride Donkoice
Shto te poli omasheni	What dirty breast
A rakavi isukani	And sleeves folded
Oi ti zolvi, mili zolvi	Hey you sisters-in-law, dear sisters-in-law
Jas imam teshka kujka	I have a difficult home
Od mesejne, od pechejne	From kneading, from baking
I svekor I svekervaa prechekvajne	And from welcoming the in-laws
Da dochekash za mnogu (godini)	May you welcome the New Year

[324] Dragica Kleshteva interview, op. cit. Dragica Kleshteva stated that the songs sung in Vrajnevci were identical to those she heard in Gorno Aglarci, the village into which she married.

Dudule

DURING LONG PERIODS of drought, when the survival of vegetation and farm animals was in doubt, and the villagers were threatened, a rain ritual was performed, commonly known in the Bitola region as *dudule* or *vaidudule*.[325] In the Bitola region the ritual was conducted by a young orphan girl, no more than 13 or 14 years of age.[326] In other regions, such as Gevgelija, a young woman of the marrying age played the part of *dudule*.[327] Nevertheless the central figure was always female and often an orphaned girl or from a very poor family. Completely covered in leaves, including her head, arms and legs, the young girl would visit every home in the village. After knocking on the front door the inhabitants would come out into their front yard and sprinkle water on her as she sung *dudule* songs, believing that this would bring rain.[328] In different regions there were variations of *dudule* songs. These two versions were recorded by the Miladinovci brothers (a)[329] in the mid nineteenth century and Ivan Ivanic (b)[330] at the beginning of the twentieth century:

a.	*Odletala peperuga, oj lule, oj!*	A butterfly flew, *oj lule, oj*!
	Od oracha na oracha	From ploughman to ploughman
	Od kopacha na kopacha	From digger to digger
	Od rezhacha na rezhacha;	From cutter to cutter;
	Da zarosit sitna rosa	Fine dew to drizzile
	Sitna rosa beriketna	Fine fertile dew
	I po pole I po more	Upon the plain and sea

[325] Ljuba Stankovska, born in Gorno Aglarci, Bitola region, knew it as *dudule,* whilst Dragica Kleshteva, born in Vrajnevci, Bitola region, knew it as *vaidudule*. In other regions of Macedonia it has been also known as *dodole*, *ojlule*, *liljache*, etc. The anthropologist, M. Kitevski, *Makedonski Narodni Praznici i Obichaj* [Macedonian National Celebrations and Customs], Skopje, 1996, p. 109.

[326] Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit.

[327] M. Kitevski, op. cit. p. 109.

[328] According to T. Sazdov, op. cit. pp. 35–36, other rain songs were sung by a group of young girls, during dry summer periods. These songs were usually accompanied by ritual acts containing elements of magic:

Day mi, Bozhe, temen oblak,	Give me, Lord a dark grey stormcloud
Da zarosi sitna rosa,	That the fine rain might start raining,
Da zaprashi crna zemya,	That the black earth might be sprinkled,
Da se rodi zhito, proso,	That it might bear wheat and millet,
Da se ranat sirachinya,	That the orphans might be nourished,
Sirachinya, siromasi.	Starving orphans, starving paupers.

[329] M. Kitevski, op. cit. pp. 109–110.

[330] I. Ivanich, *Makedonija i Makedoncite* [Macedonia and the Macedonians], Novi Sad, 1908, p. 101.

Da se rodit s' beriket	Fertile birth
S' beriket voio-zhito	This grain in good harvest
Cheinicite do gredite,	Wheat to the beams,
Yachmenite do streite,	Barley to the eaves,
Lenoite do poyasi,	Flax to the waist,
Uroite do kolena;	Ditches up to the knees;
Da se ranat siromasi.	To feed the poor.
Darvete ne so sito,	Donate not with a seave,
Da je sitna godina;	For the year to be sated;
Darvete ne so oshnica,	Donate not with regret,
Da ye polna koshnica;	For the basket to be filled;
Darvete ne so yamache,	Donate not with cavity,
Da ye tuchna godina.	For the year to be brassy.

b.

Duduleva mayka	*Dudule* mother
Sret more stoye,	Standing in the middle of the sea
Boga si mole:	Pleading to God:
Dosh da zaverne!	For rain to fall!
Ej dudule, mili Bozhe,	Hey *dudule*, dear God,
Bog da ni dade,	May God give us,
Dosh da zaverne,	Falling rain,
Beriket da stane,	From the meadow mud,
Ey dudule, mili Bozhe,	Hey *dudule*, dear God,
Of livadzha kal,	From the meadow mud,
A of iadzhvi testo	And from silos dough
Ey dudule, mili Bozhe!	Hey *dudule*, dear God!

3.5 *Pechalba*

TEMPORARY MIGRATORY LABOUR known as *pechalba* was a widespread Macedonian custom during the nineteenth century. As early as the sixteenth century men had left their homes to find seasonal or longer-term work in Macedonia and abroad. The oldest tradition of *pechalba* in Macedonia is said to come from the town of Galitchnik in north western Macedonia. Otherwise the tradition was to become particularly widespread in the western regions of Ohrid, Bitola, Lerin and Kostur. The dramatic rise in the number of Macedonian men seeking work away from home between 1870 and 1913 was not solely an economic consideration, but was often forced through political circumstances. The underlying cause was the general political

insecurity in the country, linked to associated causes such as economic hardship, the taxation burden and the outlawry of Albanian Muslim bandits. Factors of a secondary nature that influenced the rise in *pechalba* include Macedonians buying back *chiflik* land and the process of chain migration.

The economic problem in late nineteenth-century Macedonia was a consequence of a decaying feudal system[331] that placed a significant portion of fertile land in the ownership of the powerful Turkish *begs*. Under these circumstances a large portion of the population did not have their own land to work, but were forced to work on *chiflik* soil. Even though *chiflik* soil was often in the most fertile districts, the methods employed at working the land were primitive, resulting in a failure to maximise agricultural output,[332] severely affecting the economic potential of the agricultural population. The *chiflik* system was one of exploitation of the peasant population; average annual earnings of a village household was approximately 25 pounds, however after taxes and other contributions the remaining amount was between 10 to 15 pounds,[333] which was barely enough to maintain a typical household.

Injustice commonly experienced at the hands of corrupt tax collectors was an annual source of misery that weighed heavily upon the population. In some instances the excesses of the tax collectors plunged individuals into financial ruin. Consequently there were those who saw greater potential working abroad and therefore avoiding becoming the victim of Ottoman corruption inside Macedonia.[334] The outlawry of Albanian Muslim bands also contributed towards Macedonians seeking employment outside of their villages and fields. Villages were plundered as bands stole livestock and looted possessions, possessions Macedonians could ill

[331] B. Tatarcheff, op. cit. p. 176.
[332] G.M. Terry, op. cit. p. 54; M. Apostolski, D. Zografski, A. Stoyanovski and G. Todorovski, op. cit. p. 133.
[333] B. Tatarcheff, op. cit. p. 177; H.N. Brailsford, op. cit. p. 52.
[334] Brailsford comments upon the position of the Macedonians in relation to Ottoman tax officials: 'the peasantry has abandoned the struggle with the tax collector…and lives by migratory labour'. Ibid, p. 50.

afford to lose. The most notorious method employed in order to 'extort' money from the unfortunate victims involved kidnapping individuals and keeping them until the payment of a ransom. At the beginning of the twentieth century, and having personally visited Macedonia, Brailsford commented that 'these exactions are a constant cause of migration, and the Ohrid villages only maintain themselves by sending their more enterprising members to labour in Austria'.[335]

At the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century the Ottoman-Turkish element was in a state of decline in Macedonia. Turkish landowners were selling *chiflik* land back to the local villagers, most often to those who had spent time abroad as *pechalbari*.[336] This occurred in the case of Anasto

[335] Ibid, p. 50. Furthermore, Brailsford gives the following account of the activities of the Albanian bands: 'Perhaps the worst scourge of these regions is the Albanian pastime of kidnapping, to which the tribes of Debar are especially addicted. The method is to capture stragglers, usually a solitary lad or an old man who is surprised cutting wood or herding sheep at a distance from the village. He is carried off to Debar and kept there until his ransom is paid. An enterprising *bey* will sometimes have several of these captives at once in his tower. They are sometimes fettered and driven out at sunrise with the cattle to labour in the fields till evening. I know one family in the Ohrid region to which this catastrophe has happened thrice within the memory of a young man who cannot have been more than thirty years of age. I knew another case in which the ransom demanded for a young boy was as much as 100 Lira (about 93 pounds). His family were no more than peasants, though of the wealthier class. Half the money was found by selling their flocks and their land, the other half was provided by the elder brother, who earned it by leaving his wife and children and working for five years in Constantinople'. Ibid, pp. 49-50.

[336] Lopatica was not renowned as a *pechalba* village, only a handful of men had gone abroad seeking work during the Ottoman era. Following the Ilinden Rebellion the village *pechalbari* travelled to Argentina and then to the United States in search of work. According to the interviwee, Vane Tanchevski, the village *beg* (Meto) knew that the end of Turkish rule was approaching. Meto *beg* said to the villagers *'eh tie giaurite ke go krenat kavgata, da ne chekale ushte dve godini da go prodajme imotot, nie znaeme deka ke begame sega, ama ke begame so ugurma (kavga) - ke ne brkat so pushki'* - ('those *gioaurs* will start the arguments, if they could only wait a couple of years for us to sell our possessions, we know we'll be leaving soon, and will leave in dispute, they'll drive us from here with their guns'). Eager to sell up the *chiflik* land Meto beg accepted deposits from some of the villagers, including Vane Tanchevski's grandfather, and handed over titles to the land before receiving the full balance. The villagers did not pay the remaining balance. During the final stages of Ottoman rule Meto *beg* would not visit the village and instead sent his wife to collect the remaining money. She was unable to collect any further money and was known to curse people because of it. Nevertheless, by the time Meto *beg* left for Turkey all the land was sold and the purchasers had legal titles to the land (no titles were issued to those who purchased the forest around the village. Later the Yugoslav government confiscated that land). Lopatica villagers sold everything they possessed including wool, cows, bulls, gold, coins from female traditional costumes, wheat and personal possessions in order to buy as much land as possible, including *chiflik* land in the neighbouring village of Chagor. When the *beg* was selling the village land in Chagor, Albanians from Drevenik offered more money than the Macedonians, but he refused to sell it to them as they had a history of harassing his *chiflik* workers and driving them away. Subsequently Macedonians from Lopatica owned so much land in both Lopatica and Chagor that they did not have the resources to work it all. Subsequently a large portion of the Chagor land was re-sold to a Macedonian from Zagoriche village who had returned from working in the United States. Vane Tanchevski interview, op. cit. The contemporary commentator, E. Bouchie de Belle stated that feudal landlords were anticipating the end of Ottoman rule from 1902 as a result of various revolts, Bulgarian and Greek

Kleshtev. Having worked in Romania for several years, he returned to his native village of Gorno Aglarci during the 1880s and purchased a substantial *chiflik* from the Turkish *aga.*[337] In many cases *pechalba* was directly linked to the realisation that *chifliks* were becoming available as Turkish landowners left gradually and villagers took the opportunity to buy back *chiflik* land which they always considered to belong rightfully to them.[338]

Buying *chiflik* land was the intention of the Delov brothers from Armenoro (Lerin region). Ilo (at 20 years of age) and Trajko Delov (28) left their village to work abroad with the aim of returning with enough money to buy *chiflik* land. The *pechalba* tradition in Armenoro took men as far as South America in search of economic advancement. Both Ilo and Trajko left Armenoro with a larger group of men from the village in 1894 and worked in Buenos Aires for several years.[339]

The rise in *pechalba* could also be explained by the news of foreign lands reaching the village through letters. The impact of these letters, describing the conditions and wages in the foreign lands, was a matter of great interest for the

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propaganda activities and the meddling of the European Powers. As of 1902 there was a sense of urgency associated with the sale of *chiflik* estates and thanks to those working abroad, villagers were able to purchase *chiflik* land. Op. cit. p. 52.

[337] Ljuba Stankovska interview, op. cit. He paid for the land with the gold coins that he returned with. Between the 1870s to the end of Ottoman rule in 1912 the Kleshtev family ammassed land holdings of approximately 360 *pogons*.

[338] Vane Tanchevski from Lopatica stated 'the *(chiflik)* land our people worked upon, they considered as theirs. They believed one day they would be the rightful owners. Vane Tanchevski interview, op. cit. Atanas Vasilevski recalled hearing fom his father that the village *beg* commented that once *chiflik* land had changed ownership the villagers worked the land harder than they did when it belonged to him. Atanas Vasilevski (born 1928 Vrajnevci, Bitola region), interview conducted 16 March 2000 in Bitola.

[339] Andon Foudoulis interview, op. cit. Andon Foudoulis stated that Argentina and Sveta Gora in Macedonia (timber cutting) were the most popular destinations for men from the village. Others also travelled to France to work on farms and to the USA were they were employed as labourers. K. Sapurma, and P. Petrovska, *(Children of the Bird Goddess*, Politecon Publications, 1997), describe a village farewell for a group of men in the Lerin region during the early part of the twentieth century (following the Balkan Wars). 'Each spring the young men who were leaving to work afar would all gather in the village square early on the morning of their departure. They took with them a few scant belongings: a change of clothes, a razor, a yellowing photograph, hearts filled with anticipation and one long last look at their loved ones they farewelled. The *teshko oro* would be played, echoing the heavy drumbeat and a slow deliberate melody. They joined together holding one another by the shoulders and arms and danced to the bitter melody of music and weeping. No emotion was shown on their sullen, ashen faces. The music was the way in which their feelings were generated, hence the name *teshkoto (teshko being 'heavy' in Macedonian)*. The dance of the heavy heart was a male dance and portrayed the feelings of pain in separation and tortous heartache' (pp. 20-21).

pechalbar's family as well as for the entire village. According to the United States Commissioner General for Immigration, such letters were 'read by or to every inhabitant of the village, or perhaps even passed on to neighbouring hamlets'.[340] An even greater impression was made when *pechalbari* returned to their villages and told fabulous stories of distant prosperous lands.[341] In one instance Trifun Hadzianev from the town of Voden, having left for New York at the end of the Ottoman era, returned to his hometown in 1923 bringing with him a film projector that provided his fellow townsfolk with a rare insight into American life.[342] One could only imagine the excitement moving images would have created amongst the townsfolk and the lasting impression left on the young men.[343]

The introduction of a railway system in Macedonia in the late nineteenth century provided a modern alternative to traditional forms of transport such as the horse and donkey, and provided greater access to major centres and ports**.** Funded by West European industrialists and governments (particularly Austrian), they were established to meet strategic economic needs. In 1873 the first railway in Macedonia was constructed between Solun and Skopje (243 kilometres) and the following year it was extended from Skopje to Mitrovica in Serbia (119 kilometres). It was not until 1894 that Bitola was connected by rail to Solun (218 kilometres) and in 1896 the Solun-Constantinople railway line opened.[344]

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[340] *Report of the Commissioner General for Immigration*, Washington, 1907, p.60 as cited in C.A. Price, *Southern Europeans in Australia,* Oxford University Press, 1963, p.108.

[341] Such stories were told to an exclusively male audience, often in the village-square. They left deep impressions upon the young listeners. C.A. Price states that 'with semi-literate peasant peoples intimate direct conversation and visible signs of success in the form of gold watches or brand new clothes and shoes have had even more spectacular effects than letters from abroad'. Ibid, p.108.

[342] I. Chapovski, *The Macedonian Orthodox Church of St. George – A Cultural and National History,* Melbourne, 1992, p. 18.

[343] The tradition of *pechalba* became such an integral part of village life that it was 'considered irresponsible' if a young man did not want to go abroad to work. K. Sapurma, and P. Petrovska, op. cit. p. 20.

[344] MPO (Macedonian Political Organisation), *Makedonski Almanac* [Macedonian Almanac], 1940, p. 67.
Note: The railway link between Bitola and Solun took three years to complete.
An interesting insight into the construction of the railway system in Macedonia was provided by the Austrian Rudolph Kindinger. Born in Macedonia in 1884, his father was employed by the European railroad company 'Chemins de fer orientaux' to oversee technical aspects of the railway construction between Skopje and Veles. A fluent Macedonian speaker, Kindinger remained in Macedonia until 1912, leaving with his family a month before the outbreak of the First Balkan War. According to Kindinger, construction on the railway line between

Increased opportunities to work abroad were also derived from the numerous shipping companies that established offices in Macedonian urban centres.[345] French, British, Italian and other companies competed with one another, attracting fares for transportation upon their respective vessels. Representatives of shipping companies were found throughout Macedonia and they advertised positive images in newspapers and appointed ticket agents to praise the New World.[346] Intense competition developed between shipping agencies with advertisements appearing in newspapers making various claims in order to attract *pechalbari,* such as 'ours is an honourable shipping company' and denying that they exploit men, 'as do other agencies and shipping lines which transport people to America'.[347] In their advertisements agents advertised for a wide range of workers required in both North and South America – including building and construction workers, tanners, farm workers, factory workers, printers, machinists, blacksmiths, tailors, etc. To further entice customers the Agence Maritime Muscombul claimed to provide 'the quickest and cheapest travel to America', as well as offering hotel accommodation and detailing the expected wages one could earn, 'dependent upon skills and experience earnings ranged between 31.5 grosh a day to 3150 grosh per month'.[348] However, fares to America were a substantial amount of money, roughly the average annual savings for the ordinary villager, so it was not uncommon for the *pechalbar* to borrow money or sell

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Skopje and Solun, was performed exclusively by Macedonians. Groups of men worked from sunrise to sunset throughout the summer period and received a daily cash payment. There was no shortage of men willing to do the difficult work and as part of their employment the workers were armed with Martini rifles. An interesting agreement was negotiated between Ottoman Turkey and European financiers of the project aimed at maintaining security over the investment. At five kilometre intervals along the railway, groups of Muslim watchmen (known as *gavazi*) lived in barrack style accomodation. Kindinger also remarked on the role of the Debar district Macedonian builders in support of the railway system in Macedonia, stating that railway stations, bridges, warehouses and other buildings could not have been built so skillfully and economically without the Debar region builders. R. Kindinger*, Isechoci od moite sekavanja pred, za vreme i po Ilinden (1903) vo Makedonija* [Scenes from my memories, before, during and after Ilinden (1903) in Macedonia], Skopje, 1970, pp. 153-154.

[345] The historian, K. Karpat, *The Ottoman Emigration to America 1860-1914*, Cambridge University Press, 1985, p. 188.

[346] C. Price, op. cit. p. 108.

[347] Newspaper advertisement for shipping agency 'Agence Maritime Muscombul' in *Vjesti* newspaper (printed in Constantinople) dated 27 January 1910. Issue Number 61, Year XX, p. 4. (Note: this was a Serb newspaper that was also distributed in Macedonia).

[348] Ibid, p. 4.

possessions in order to raise funds to work abroad.[349] No fewer than eight transatlantic shipping agencies operated in Bitola in 1906. Approximately half of the *pechalbari* managed to secure their fares and the others relied on loans administered through the agencies at a rate of 2.5–3.0 per cent interest calculated monthly.[350] In the Resen region villagers commonly borrowed money from a group of 10 businessmen situated in Resen town who were known as *policadzhi*. They regularly provided loans to *pechalbari* and travelled three times a year to Constantinople to collect money owed them.[351] There was no shortage of men willing to go into debt in order to finance their travel abroad.

Seasonal workers within Macedonia left their homes for periods of months, but *pechalbari* leaving for foreign lands were normally absent from their homes for much longer periods. It was common for men to be away for one or two years, whilst others for up to several years and more.[352] *Pechalbari* were predominantly married men aged between their late teens and 40 years of age.[353] The unmarried Trifun Kalcovski from the village of Brajchino (Prespa region) left for the United States in 1913 at the age of 16, whilst the married Anasto Kleshtev from Gorno Aglarci (Bitola region) spent several years in Romania during the 1870s, having left the village in his thirties. In some instances *pechalbari* did not spend the entire period in a particular country but moved around in search of work. Pando Stojkov from Lagen (Lerin region) started off as a *pechalbar* at the age of thirteen, initially in Anatolia (Ottoman Empire), then in Romania, Bulgaria and finally as a sawyer in Austria.[354] Having

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[349] Fares to the one destination varied between shipping agents. Fares ranged between 13 to 27 *napolyoni* for direct travel from Macedonia to North America, whilst a fare to South America was as much as 45 Turkish *lira*. D. Konstantinov, *Pechalbarstvo*, Bitola, 1964, p. 18.

[350] Diplomatic letter (number 33) by Dr Ranci from the Austrian Consulate in Bitola, dated 11 July 1906. D. Zografski, editor, *Avstriski Dokumenti 1905-1906* [Austrian Documents 1905-1906], Vol I, Skopje, 1977, p. 158.

[351] S. Radev, *Simeon Radev - Rani Spomeni* [Simeon Radev - Early Memoirs], Sofia, 1967, p. 48.

[352] It was not uncommon for men to return home intermittently.

[353]According to statistics published by K. Karpat regarding 'Age characteristics of the Ottoman migrants arriving in the United States in 1889' of a total of 202 men, 21 were under 15 years of age, 162 were between the ages of 15 and 40, and 19 were above 40 years of age. K. Karpat, op. cit. p. 197. An Austrian diplomatic report from 1906 states that *pechalbari* are generally made up of men aged 20 to 40 years of age. Letter by Dr Ranci dated 11 July 1906, D. Zografski, editor, cit. p. 158.

[354] Lagen has been officially renamed as Triandafilla by the Greek government.

returned to Macedonia he set off once more, leaving for America in 1903. After two or three years there he returned to his village, but stayed for only a short while and again made the long journey back to the United States where he stayed until 1914. When World War One was over he departed for the third time to America accompanied by his eldest son Dimitar, staying there for a further eight years, finally returning in 1928 to Macedonia.[355]

Districts and more specifically villages developed their own characteristic trades. Particularly famous was the town of Galitchnik in north western Macedonia, renowned for its builders and woodcarvers, with some of the finest iconistatis in the Balkans and beyond made from the skilled craftsmen of the town.[356] Other villages developed a reputation for market gardening, carpenters, masons, bakers, dairy goods or the provision of day labourers.[357]

The destinations where Macedonian men travelled in search of temporary work meant they could be classified into three categories: those who worked in various regions of Macedonia, those who sought work within the Ottoman Empire, and those who found employment outside the Empire. Due to limited cultivable land in the mountainous districts of Macedonia, and the tradition of land being divided amongst male heirs, villagers were forced to supplement their earnings by engaging in sheep breeding. Sheep herding was conducted on a seasonal basis, leaving in autumn for greener pastures and returning in spring.[358] A 'natural process' occurred where seasonal work was found in the *chifliks* and large towns of southern Macedonia, and

[355] I. Chapovski, op. cit. pp. 16-17. There were also those who left there wives and children in the village and remarried setting up a new life abroad.

[356] Rudolph Kindinger remarked that the Debar region builders were renowned for their skill 'and virtually no building, house or bridge throughout all of then European Turkey, especially in the Macedonian provinces, was built without them having a hand'. *('odvaj mozheshe da ima izgradba na zgradi, kujki ili mostovivo cela togashna Evropska Turcija, osobeno vo Makedonckite provincii, na koja shto ovie Debarski majstori ne beja zele uchestvo'*. Op. cit. p. 154.

[357] During visits to Belgrade (Serbia) in 1989 and 1996 I learned that Macedonians were renowned for operating bakery businesses, and that they have a long-standing tradition in the industry. Macedonian bakers in Belgrade are usually from the Tetovo region.

[358] Velika Spirova pointed out that men from the village of Nered (Lerin region) went sheep herding for extended periods as far south as Sveta Gora (Macedonia) over the winter months. Velika Spirova interview, op. cit.

the sheep herding was then handed down to the next eldest male in the family.[359] Seasonal work was performed in *chifliks* in the regions of Drama, Kavala, and the Halkidik Peninsula, while others went coke-burning in Katerini.[360]

In the mid-nineteenth century Constantinople was the most popular destination for Macedonian *pechalbari* from the Bitola region.[361] By the late nineteenth century a Macedonian colony established itself in the cosmopolitan metropolis on the Bosphoros. Estimates of the number of *pechalbari* in Constantinople vary; in a 1922 publication Draganoff stated that prior to the Ilinden Rebellion of 1903 the city hosted 2,500 workers from Lerin and 2,000 from Kostur,[362] whilst drawing on a source from 1890 Radev indicates that there were as many as 7,000 people from the Resen region alone.[363] Numerous Macedonians in Constantinople engaged in market gardening and in the dairy business, whilst in Anatolia timber-cutting was a popular means of earning money.[364] Constantinole was also a favoured destination for men from the wider Prespa region. Eftim Tantski from Carev Dvor (Resen district of the Prespa region) travelled to Constantinople in 1898 with a group of men from the

[359] D. Silyanovski, editor, *Makedonia kako prirodna i ekonomska celina*, Sofia, 1945, p. 266.

[360] Skopje, in northern Macedonia, was also a popular destination with internal *pechalbari* in the mid-nineteenth century. A 1846 tax register describes the number of Christians and Jews temporarily residing at Skopje inns and outlines various data such as, their place of origin, their name, physical description, profession (trade), age and tax category. 'Defter za profesijata, iminjata i dzhizieto na rayata - doidenci privremeno naseleni vo Skopje. (12)62 (1845/46) Godina'. D. Georgiev, editor, *Turski Dokumenti - Popisi od XIX vek* [Turkish Documents - Censuses from the XIX century], Skopje, 1997, pp. 116-160.

[361] 'Defter za iminjata i dzhizieto na rayata od Bitola i Bitolskata kaza koja zaradi trgovija se naogja vo drugi mesta (12) 56/7 (1840/1 i 1841/2)', (Register of names and *dzhizieto* (a tax) of the raya from Bitola and the Bitola kaza who are in other places because of trade), ibid, pp. 11–115. According to this Ottoman tax register Macedonians from the Bitola region travelled to the eastern limits of the Ottoman Empire as far as Damascus, Egypt and Jerusalem in search of work.

[362] P. Draganoff, *La Macedonie et les Macedoniens* [Macedonia and the Macedonians]. Paris, 1922, p. 28.

[363] S. Radev, op. cit. p. 47. Radev cites this figure from an 1890 issue of the newspaper, *Zornitsa*.

[364] P. Hill, *Macedonians*, Angus and Robertson, 1988, p. 686.
In the memoirs of S. Radev, he states that the large colony of men from the Resen region, in Constantinople, predominantly worked as market gardeners, and constituted the bulk of the people in the trade. The market gardens were situated on opposite sides of the city, but the men from Resen came together for religious celebrations in the Bulgarian church of 'Sveti Stefan'. The priest in the church was a native of Resen. S. Radev, op. cit. pp. 47-48. The revolutionary leader, Slaveyko Arsov, also outlines the high rate of *pechalba* in Constantinople, by men from the Resen region. The majority worked as market gardeners and only very young men and the elderly remained in the villages. Slaveyko Arsov memoirs from I. Katardzhiev, editor, *Spomeni - S.Arsov, P. Klashev, L. Dzherov, G.P. Hristov, A. Andreev, G. Papanchev, L. Dimitrov,* Skopje, 1997, p. 65. Slaveyko Arsov memoirs were originally published in P. Glushkov, *Vostanichkoto dvizhenje vo Jugozapadna Makedonija (do 1904 god.)*, Sofia, 1925, and were derived from the extensive memoirs collected by L. Miletich, and published in the series *Materijali za Istorijata na Makedonskoto Osloboditelno Dvizhenje.*

district and worked there for a period of six years as a market gardener, selling produce door to door.[365]

Pechalbari sought work in the neighbouring and European states of Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania and (to a lesser degree) Greece,[366] Austria-Hungary, Germany and France. Colonies of Macedonian *pechalbari* were formed in the neighbouring countries, with substantial numbers in the popular Bulgaria and Romania (Wallachia). Three generations of the Trpchevski family went to Romania in search of work. Trpche Trpchevski first went there in the 1870s, and upon his return to the village he purchased more land to add to the existing fields and built a larger family home. Around the turn of the century he took his son Cvetan with him to Romania, and later Cvetan was also to take his son Trpche along too. The Trpchevski men worked in the Caracal region, along with other men from their village. Macedonians also established businesses that operated as meeting places for other Macedonians. Trpche was to open a restaurant in the town with a fellow villager named Dobre; newly arrived *pechalbari* were directed to the restaurant and provided with valuable information to help them find work and accommodation.[367] Similarly Boris Kalcovski of Brajcino (Prespa region) obtained employment through a Macedonian-operated club in Detroit which led to four years' work with the one company.[368]

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[365] Kole Eftimov (born 1924 Carev Dvor, Resen district - Prespa region), interview conducted in Bitola 20 March 2000. Eftim Tantski was Kole's grandfather.

[366] Through interviews and discussions with Macedonians both in Australia and in Macedonia the writer is not aware of anyone's ancestors going to Greece to work during the Ottoman period. However, it may have been the case with Macedonians from the Southern districts close to the Greek border. H.N. Brailsford makes a reference to a Macedonian village having a tradition of *pechalba* in Athens. 'One little village has a traditional connection with the building trade of Athens, and nearly half of its families own houses in the Greek capital, which they have built with their own hands, and from which they draw a comfortable rent'. H.N. Brailsford, op. cit. p. 50.

[367] Although a great number of Blace's men went to Romania, it was not the sole destination. Others from the village were known to travel to Bulgaria in search of work. Bogdan Nedelkovski (born 1960, Blace Tetovo), interview conducted on 7 October 1999 in Melbourne. Macedonian *pechalbari* worked in various regions of Romania. There was also a colony in Turnu-Severin, where they established a Macedonian Society. The society sent a letter of support and financial assistance for the Kresna Uprising in 1879. Letter dated 7 January 1879, from, H. Andonov-Poljanski, editor, *Documents on the Struggle of the Macedonian People for Independence and a Nation-State*, Vol One, Skopje, 1985, pp. 286–288.

[368] Vancho Kalcovski (born 1942, Brajchino, Prespa region), interview conducted in Melbourne on 2 November 1999. Vancho Kalcovski lived in Brajchino village until he was 18 years-of-age. Several years earlier his brother Giorgi had left by illegaly crossing the border into the neighbouring state of Greece, and after a

Sokole Zhitoshanski (born 1878), from the village of Zhitoshe in the Krushevo district, left his native village in his early twenties in search of work in Bulgaria. Following a number of years there he returned to sell his home in the village (a mixed Christian and Muslim Turkish village) and purchased a larger home in Krivogashtani, which was a predominantly Macedonian Christian town. This new home, together with accompanying fields, was purchased from the local Turkish *Aga*. Soon after Sokole returned to Sofia, and was eventually to operate his own inn in the Bulgarian capitol. Similar to Trpche Trpchevski, Sokole's establishment was utilised as a meeting place for Macedonian *pechalbari* in Sofia.[369] The famous revolutionary leader Pitu Guli, from Krushevo, also spent a short period in Sofia in 1900. He too operated an inn that was used as a meeting place for Macedonian *pechalbari*, particularly for those from the Krushevo region, as well as for Macedonian political and revolutionary activists.[370]

Following the Ilinden Rebellion of 1903, the sizeable Macedonian colony of *pechalbari* in Constantinople began to be discriminated against by the Ottoman government and many were forced to move elsewhere. Thousands moved to North America.[371] Unlike the Balkan countries which failed to maintain records on immigration, and the Ottoman Empire which did not keep official figures,[372] the United States government did maintain records, although the country of origin was recorded only as 'European Turkey', a category larger than Macedonia. Nevertheless these figures do provide an approximation of the extent of emigration from Macedonia, particularly after 1878 and the Berlin Congress, when the territory of

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period in detention, came to Australia via Italy. Giorgi made Melbourne his home and later sponsored Vancho to Australia.

[369] Dragutin Ristevski (born 1935 in Vrboec, Krushevo region), notes of interview, 6 October 1999 in Melbourne.

[370] K. Topuzoski, *Pitu Guli (1865–1903) Zhivot i Potoa* [Pitu Guli (1865–1903) Life and Beyond], Krushevo, 1995, pp. 23–25.

[371] C.A. Price, op. cit. p. 314. A Macedonian *pechalbar* from the Resen district, working in Constantinople, stated to the contemporary commentator M. Durham, 'The Turks in Constantinople were very frightened of the bands. All Macedonians were ordered to leave at once. I had to go'. M. Durham, *The Burden of the Balkans*, London, 1905, p. 120.

[372] K. Karpat, op. cit. p. 181. K. Karpat claims that the Ottomans did not keep official figures on emigration because it was formally forbidden.

European Turkey was substantially reduced and because *pechalba* took on the form of a mass movement amongst Macedonians.[373]

The American statistical records on emigration from European Turkey enable observations to be drawn from the data.[374] *Pechalba* can be broken down into four distinct periods that correspond to the deteriorating political environment from 1870 to the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913.

1. *The period 1871–1878* is characterised by an insignificant number of people leaving European Turkey for the United States. According to the immigration records for the period 1871 to 1878, a total of 284 people arrived in the United States. During the 1870s, *pechalbari* were commonly working in the neighbouring states of Romania and Bulgaria (Table 3.15).

Table 3.15: Emigration *(pechalba)* from European Turkey to the United States, 1871–1878

Year	Number
1871	21
1872	34
1873	78
1874	21
1875	36
1876	46
1877	25
1878	23

2. The statistics for *the period 1878 to 1902* reflect the unstable political climate and are characterised by a gradual increase in emigration. From 1880 to 1889 a total of 1,380

[373] European Turkey after the Congress of Berlin was made up of Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo, Thrace and eastern Rumelia (Bulgarian territory that subsequently joined with Bulgaria in 1885). Of the minorities in Macedonia it was only Vlahs that embraced *pechalba*, Turks and Albanians in Macedonia were not renowned for working abroad.

[374] The American data used here is cited from the historian H. Andonov Poljanski, *The Attitude of the USA Towards Macedonia,* Skopje, 1983, pp. 40–42; and, K. Karpat, op. cit. p. 196.

people arrived in the United States; during the following ten years, from 1890 to 1899, 2,375 people arrived. The numbers dramatically increased at the beginning of the twentieth century, as 2,475 people arrived in America over a short period of three years from 1900 to 1902. Increased economic and political instability after the Russian-Turkish wars of 1876–1878 contributed to this increase of Macedonians seeking work abroad from 1878 to 1902. Following the Congress of Berlin there was a general increase in revolutionary activity throughout Macedonia (commencing with the Kresna Rebellion in 1878), and the unleashing of religious and educational propaganda by the Balkan States in Macedonia. However, the completion of the Bitola-Solun railway connection in 1894 did not appear to have encouraged *pechalba* to the United States as there was no significant rise in numbers until 1900/1901.

Table 3.16: Emigration *(pechalba)* from European Turkey to the United States, 1879–1902

Year	Number
1879	29
1880	24
1881	72
1882	69
1883	86
1884	150
1885	138
1886	176
1887	206
1888	207
1889	252
1890	206
1891	265
1892	227
1893	555
1894	278
1895	215
1896	169
1897	152
1898	176
1899	132

1900	393
1901	1,044
1902	1,038

3. *Following the Ilinden Rebellion of 1903* and the brutal repercussions the Ottoman army inflicted upon Macedonian villages, there was a large increase in people leaving Macedonia. Ottoman reprisals against the Macedonian people included over 10,000 houses being burned in 110 villages, leaving over 50,000 people homeless. (The destroyed villages were exempt from taxation, but in order to make up the expenses of the Ottoman State caused by the rising, taxes were raised elsewhere.[375])

Emigration continued during the turbulent years of 1904–1907 when the Macedonian population was subjected to an invasion of Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian bands from the neighbouring states. According to the American statistical data from 1903 to 1907, a total of 40,692 people arrived in the United States. However during the period from 1902 to 1907, there are estimates that as many as 75,000 people left Macedonia.[376]

Table 3.17: Emigration *(pechalba)* from European Turkey to the United States, 1903–1907

Year	**Number**
1903	1,529
1904	4,344
1905	4,542
1906	9,510
1907	20,767

4. The exodus of men became so great that in *1909* the Ottoman authorities banned emigration for all men under the age of thirty.[377] However, the ban does not appear to have been effective, as the following year emigration to the USA doubled. In the

[375] M.E. Durham, op. cit. p. 159.
[376] K. Karpat, op. cit. p. 191.
[377] Ibid, p. 187.

uncertain climate of the final years leading to the Balkan Wars *pechalba* continued in large numbers, but most continued to leave with the intention of returning to their homes.[378] In total, between 1908 and 1913, 81,752 people left for the United States.[379]

Table 3.18: Emigration *(pechalba)* from European Turkey to the United States, 1908–1913

Year	Number
1908	11,290
1909	9,015
1910	18,405
1911	14,438
1912	14,481
1913	14,128

[378] Trifun Kalcovski left his native village of Brajchino (Prespa district) as a 15-year-old boy to work in Pittsburgh USA. Trifun left the village with Petko Krinchev, a 35-year-old family friend from the village, both intended to work abroad temporarily and return to the village. However, Trifun did not return to Macedonia until he was in his eighties. In Macedonia the Kalcovski family received invaluable support from Trifun in the form of large packages with various household items and financial assistance which was used to build a new larger home on the family property. Vancho Kalcovski interview, op. cit.

[379] Up until the Balkan Wars America became the most popular destination for *pechalba*. However, when the gates were closed in 1924 the focus turned towards Australia. Macedonian *pechalba* to Australia confirms that the early arrivals came from those regions where the *pechalba* tradition was popular. Although generally Macedonians arrived in Australia after 1924, there was a small number who arrived earlier. A professor of Slavonic Studies, Peter Hill, considers that 'according to legend, the first Macedonians arrived in Australia before the end of the nineteenth century'. Having worked in Salonika or Constantinople and hearing of the discovery of gold they travelled to Australia to work at Kalgoorie and Broken Hill. P. Hill, *The Macedonians in Australia*, Hesperian Press, 1989, p. 12.
Stojan Kenkov from the village of D'mbeni in the Kostur region worked in Broken Hill from 1914 to 1933. Others from the same village (Boris Shmagranov and F. Kadiov) arrived before World War One, also from the same region, but from the village of Kosinec, were Numo Gulio and Vane Prcul arriving in Western Australia in 1908 and 1911 respectively. Ibid, p. 12. As noted, the tradition of *pechalba* was strongest in the regions of Ohrid, Bitola, Lerin and Kostur. The following data by C. Price (op. cit. p.23) confirms that the regional origin of Macedonians who entered Australia during the period from 1890 to 1940 predominantly came from Western Macedonia where the tradition of *pechalba* was strongest.

Macedonian Male Settlers in Australia 1890-1940

District of Origin	Number
Bitola-Ohrid	190
Lerin	670
Kostur	370
Other	60
Total	1,290

The most significant change in the lifestyle of the *pechalbar* upon his return to the village was the construction of a new family home. Data compiled from interviews in every instance demonstrates that *pechalbari* earned enough money to upgrade the family home and to purchase more land. All built new homes in their own villages, with the exception of Sokole Zhitoshanov who moved his family out of the ethnically and religiously divided village of Zhitoshani into the larger and predominantly Christian town of Krivogashtani. Aside from constructing new and larger homes, land was purchased (*chifliks*), usually from departing *begs*. Upgrading the home to accommodate an extended family was a practical move and a matter of improved lifestyle, however, the purchase of additional land provided the villager with his most essential need. After all, the primary industry in Macedonia was agriculture and by possessing their own land people took greater control over their own lives, would no longer be required to work on the *chiflik* soil and 'helped to provide a more secure existence for the future'.[380]

[380] P. Hill, 1989, op. cit. p. 10. H.N. Brailsford also makes the point that the conditions under which agriculture was carried out, particularly the system of land tenure, was 'of the first importance for the happiness of the people'. Op. cit. p. 51.

Table 3.19: Purchases Made upon Return to Macedonia by *pechalbari*

Name	Region	Country Worked	Period	Purchased upon return
Anasto Kleshtev	Bitola	Romania	1870s	*Chiflik* land and new home built
Trpche Trpchevski	Tetovo	Romania	1870s	More land and new home built
S. Kalcovski	Prespa	Romania	Late 1870s or early 1880s	More land and new home built
Sokole Zhitoshanski	Krushevo	Bulgaria	Late 1890s or early 1900's	*Chiflik* soil and new home built
Ilo Delov	Lerin	Argentina	1894	*Chiflik* soil and new home
Pande Tantski	Prespa	USA	Early 1900s	More land, water mill and hotel
Trifun Kalcovski	Prespa	USA	Left 1913	New home built[381]

Other outward signs of personal wealth resulting from working abroad might have included the purchase of more working animals for the fields. Although villagers did not dress in European-style clothing, they wore traditional clothing regardless of personal wealth.[382] However, the wealthy were distinguishable from others in that their clothing would be recently made or of a higher quality. Depending on the level of *pechalba* a particular village possessed, it generally affected whether the village as a whole was visibly distinguishable from other villages. In villages that did have a strong tradition of *pechalba,* such as Smerdesh in the Kostur district, there were

[381] Trifun Kalcovski did not return to Macedonia until he was in his eighties, but sent money back to his family with which they built a new home.

[382] The village of Lavci in the Bitola region (upper zone) was one of the first villages in the region to commence discarding traditional village clothing and adopt modern European dress during the early 1900s as a direct result of large scale *pechalba*.

numerous outward signs differentiating it from other villages.[383] Brailsford described Smerdesh as the richest village he had come across, with large and comparatively well-built houses, a thriving school, three or four shops and a large church.[384]

A negative aspect of the new wealth *pechalbari* returned with was the unwanted attention they attracted from Ottoman tax gatherers, and more specifically from Muslim bandits. In the Prespa region one such bandit was the infamous Turk 'Luman'. Together with his band he built a notorious reputation for pillaging villages, often targeting those who had returned from *pechalba*. Intimidation, coercion and kidnapping were used to extract money from people.[385] Albanian bandits known as *katchatsi* were also active in the Prespa region and often targeted the families of *pechalbari* in order to extort money from them. Lesman (a Macedonian) from Carev Dvor spent approximately 10–12 years in the United States. Around the turn of the century he returned home with considerable wealth and was soon afterwards kidnapped by Albanian bandits. Although a ransom demand was made to Lesman's family, he was nevertheless murdered.[386] Due to the pressures of banditry, many families, along with the Tantski family, moved out of their villages to the relative security offered in Bitola.[387] Another aspect affecting returning *pechalbari* was the increased price of *chiflik* land. In regions where *pechalba* was widespread, land prices reached artificial heights, for example a *dolum* (approximately 910 square metres) of good quality agricultural land which had a normal value of 2 silver lira, grew to a value of 5 to 10 silver lira.[388]

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[383] In the 1920s Smerdesh was renamed Krustalopigi by the Greek authorities.
[384] H.N. Brailsford, op. cit. pp. 50–51.
[385] Vancho Kalcovski interview, op. cit. Luman was later murdered by Macedonian revolutionaries from the IMRO (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation). The event was celebrated in the district.
[386] Kole Eftimov and Lesman's son were childhood friends. Later, Lesman's son explained to Kole Eftimov that he considered his father's murder may have also been politically linked to his support for the IMRO. Kole Eftimov interview, op. cit.
[387] Ibid.
[388] Diplomatic letter from the Austrian Consulate in Bitola, letter number 33, by Dr Ranci, dated 11 July 1906, D, Zografski, editor, op. cit. p. 160. A 'donym' of land is defined as constituting an area 40 paces long by 40 paces wide (910 square metres). It is also known by the name 'dulum'. *Pechalbari* were willing to pay high prices for land, according to Dr Ranci. *'Poradi faktot shto ovdeshniot selanec se gordee so svojata tatkovina i po mozhnost vo samoto selo, kade shto porano bil naematel i chifdzhija, saka da spechali sopstvena zemja. Taa zhelba e tolku prisutna shto vrednosta na*

Table 3.20: Agricultural Land Prices in Gorno Aglarci, 1906

Size of land in donums	Purchase price	Administrative costs
4	1052 grosh	40.15 grosh
4	1356 grosh	49.30 grosh
3.5	920 grosh	39.30 grosh
3	793 grosh	32.30 grosh
3	1184 grosh	53.00 grosh

Source: Ottoman Turkish land titles - Volume 52, Document 20, Number 91; Volume 52, Document 29, Number 100; Volume 52, Document 31, Number 102; Volume 52, Document 34, Number 105; and, Volume 52, Document 38, Number 109. All five titles are dated 21 July 1906.

Pechalbari often returned to Macedonia having acquired new skills that were utilised in business enterprises. As outlined earlier, Macedonians set up their own cafes and inns whilst working abroad and upon their return set up similar businesses in Macedonia. For instance, Pande Tantski from Carev Dvor left for the United States in 1901 (at 17 years of age) together with a group of five other men from his village. They travelled by train from Bitola to Solun, and from there embarked on the long voyage by sea. Pande initially worked with other Macedonians constructing railway lines in Detroit, and later found work in a warehouse. With his hard-earned savings he purchased a restaurant in Detroit, and operated it for six years before returning to Macedonia. In Macedonia, Pande purchased a substantial amount of *chiflik* land in the Prespa region, as well as a water mill located between the villages of Bela Crkva and Kozjak. He again returned to Detroit to work in the hotel and restaurant industry for approximately eight years. Upon his return to Macedonia in approximately 1918, utilising the skills acquired through his experience in the hospitality industry in America, Pande purchased a large hotel in Bitola, in partnership with another *pechalbar,* Paun Spirov (from the village Prostrajne in the

zemjata chestopati se plaka dvojno i trojno povejke.' ('Due to the fact that local villagers are proud of their fatherland as well as their own village, whereupon previously he lacked ownership and was a *chiflik* worker, he wishes to acquire his own land. The desire is so great that the value of the land often is paid for twice or three times more'). Ibid, p. 159.

Kitchevo region). Pande and Paun paid a Turk (from Kitchevo) 600 gold coins *(napoljoni)* for 'Hotel Kitchevo'.[389]

Industrial skills acquired abroad were less likely to be utilised in Macedonia, given that the Ottoman Empire was not an industrialised state. *Pechalbari* principally derived from the rural sector of the population, and as evident from the sample interviewed they overwhelmingly purchased *chiflik* land in their villages in order to continue their traditional agricultural way of life. Along with increased wealth, *pechalbari* brought back new skills and some utilised them through self-employment, but just as important was the greater sense of self-confidence, familiarity with new languages and alternative ways of life to which *pechalbari* were exposed.[390] Due to the scale of *pechalba* in Western Macedonia, it is likely that returning *pechalbari* had a positive effect on the general economy in the region.

There is also evidence indicating that their experiences abroad, particularly in the democracies of Western Europe and the USA – but also in the neighbouring liberated Balkan lands – were characterised by a taste of freedom outside of Ottoman subjugation which exposed them to new political ideas. Politicisation of Macedonian *pechalbari* is evident as early as the 1880s. An official diplomatic report by Stojan Novakovic in Constantinople, dated 16 August 1888, refers to '*pechalbari* postal couriers' who maintained a communication link between *pechalba* colonies in Constantinople, Bulgaria, Romania and Serbia with their families and villages. Novakovic states that certain individuals from the Ohrid region engaged in this activity, visited the Macedonian colony in Constantinople, and then travelled to

[389] The partnership operated the business successfully until 1931 when Pande bought Paun's share and continued to operate the business until 1948 when the property was confiscated by the communist Yugoslav regime. Kole Eftimov interview, op. cit.

[390] The contemporary commentator, E. Bouchie de Belle, stated 'periods spent abroad gave the villager greater experience and courage'. Op. cit. p. 52. A 1913 Serb military report suggests that *pechalbari* returned having gained 'some culture' *('po malo i kulture')*. Report number 6260, dated 20 August 1913, by D. Alympich, G. Todorovski, editor, *Srpski Izvor za istorijata na Makedonskiot Narod 1912-1914* [Serb sources regarding the history of the Macedonian people 1912–1914], Skopje, 1979, p. 221.

Romania spreading news that 'others will be heading for the Bitola and Prilep regions to agitate that Macedonia raises a rebellion against the Turks'.[391]

Simyan Simidzhiev (from the village of Velmevci in Ohrid region) adopted revolutionary views whilst on *pechalba* in Bulgaria where he mixed with other Macedonian *pechalbari* as well as Macedonian emigrants there who were involved in the IMRO. In Bulgaria Simidzhiev came to understand the 'seriousness of my duty towards the liberation of my people'.[392] Similarly Zhivko Kirov Yanevski from the village of Drenoveni (Kostur region) left his village due to economic considerations and worked in Burgas (Bulgaria) as a bricklayer.[393] Mixing with members of the Macedonian emigrant community who were active in the IMRO, upon his return to his native village he became an active participant in the revolutionary struggle working with the local commanders Vasil Chakalarov, Mitre Vlahot and Pando Klashev.[394] A report by the Serb Minister for Internal Affairs to the Minister for Foreign Affairs outlines the uncovering of a plan to blow up the Ottoman railway (at the Macedonian village Zibevchu) by five Macedonian *pechalbari* from Bitola (who resided in the Serb city Kragujevac).[395] A group of approximately 100 *pechalbari* from

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[391] Report number 37, dated 16 February 1888, Constantinople. 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, pp. 75-76.

[392] Simyan Simidzhiev memoirs, from T. Giorgiev, op. cit. p. 39.

[393] The Greek government has renamed Drenoveni as Kranionas.

[394] Zhivko Kirov Yanevski memoirs, T. Giorgiev. Ibid, p. 48. Emigrant Macedonian communities in the Balkan lands not only helped foster a political consciousness amongst Macedonian *pechalbari* but also were instrumental financial supporters of the revolutionary struggle. Ilija Stojchev Bozhinovski memoirs, from T. Gorgiev, ibid, p. 45. In the memoirs of the IMRO revolutionary, Slaveyko Arsov, he stated that the principal supporters of the IMRO in Resen were people who had travelled abroad. *'Vo Resensko, kako i po drugi mesta, semeto na Organizacijata se seeshe od gradot Resen, od posvesnite zhiteli, proshetani po tygi zemi.'* ('In the Resen district, as in other areas, the seeds of the Organisation were sowed in the city of Resen, through prominent citizens, who had travelled in other lands.') Slaveyko Arsov memoirs, from I. Katardzhiev, editor, *Spomeni - S. Arsov, P. Klashev, L.Dzherov, G.P. Hristov, A. Andreev, G. Papanchev, L. Dimitrov*, op. cit. p. 70. Further confirmation of the connection between *pechalba* and politicisation can be found in the following works. The former IMRO revolutionary leader, I. Mihailov, *Spomeni, Tom IV, Osvoboditelna Borba 1924-1934* [Memoirs, Vol IV, The Liberation Struggle 1924-1934], Indianapolis, 1973; K. Pandev and Z. Noneva, editors, *Borbite v Makedonia i Odrinsko 1878-1912 Spomeni* [Battles in Macedonia and Adrianople 1878-1912, Memoirs], Sofia, 1981; the historian, H. Andonov-Poljanski, *The Attitude of the USA Towards Macedonia*, Skopje, 1983; and I. Katardzhiev, editor, *Spomeni - I.H. Nikolov, D. Gruev, B. Sarafov, J. Sandanski, M. Gerdzhikov, H. Tatarchev*, [Memoirs - I.H. Nikolov, D. Gruev, B. Sarafov, J. Sandanski, M. Gerdzhikov, H. Tatarchev], Skopje, 1995.

[395] The report was directed to the Foreign Minister in order that the Turkish authorities were notified of the threat. Report number 15.832, dated 3 November 1889, Belgrade, K. Dzhambazovski, op. cit. p. 621.

Capari and surrounding villages (Bitola region) working in Katerini, returned to their villages at the outbreak of the insurrection in 1903 after having secured arms from over the nearby Greek border.[396] It was not uncommon for *pechalbari* to return home to assist in the revolutionary movement during the Ilinden Rebellion and afterwards, as was the case with Iliya Stoychev Bozhinovski from Armensko (Lerin) who travelled from the United States in 1907 and joined a cheta under the command of Krsto Londov.[397]

Increased political consciousness appears to have been a consequence of working abroad, widespread *pechalba* in the western regions might have a direct link to the intensity of the 1903 Ilinden Rebellion in the Ohrid, Bitola, Lerin and Kostur regions. Western Macedonia was a central focus point of the rebellion, and of 110 Macedonian villages attacked during Turkish reprisals, approximately 70 villages were located in the Ohrid, Bitola, Lerin and Kostur regions.[398]

Bitola provides a useful frame for understanding the anthropology of traditional Macedonian life in the late nineteenth century. The detail of everyday Macedonian life has in large part been ignored by other commentators, owing to their lack of focus on the insider's perspective.

As the following chapter shall demonstrate, the churches of the Balkan States attempted to expand their religious jurisdiction as widely as possible and outwardly to register Macedonians as Greeks, Serbs and Bulgarians respectively. Understanding the

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[396] G. Abadzhiev, editor, *Borbite vo Jugozapadna Makedonia po spomenite na Luka Dzherov i Lazar Dimitrov*, [Battles in south western Macedonia according to the memoirs of Luka Dzherov and Lazar Dimitrov], Skopje, 1952, p. 24.

[397] Iliya Stoychev Bozhinovski memoirs, T. Giorgiev, op. cit. p. 45. Politicisation did not always evolve independently or naturally. *Pechalbari*, particularly those in the neighbouring states were at times recruited for the purposes of advocating foreign political agendas in Macedonia. See diplomatic report by Stojan Novakovic, report number 84, dated 1 April 1889, Constantinople, K. Dzhambazovski, op. cit. pp. 371–372. The Greek authorities renamed Armensko as Alonas.

[398] Furthermore the western regions of Macedonia may have been more sufficently armed due to the greater wealth resulting from wide-scale *pechalba*. This needs to be thoroughly investigated, as there were other important factors that may have influenced the intensity of the rebellion in the western regions of Macedonia.

defining characteristics of Macedonians generally, and especially those in the Bitola region, is essential in order to measure the effects of denationalisation and assimilation strategies on Macedonian identity.