

World scholars call for end to 'Macedonia' misinformation

With an impressive move, 222 scholars from around the world, members of the best known academic institutes, have sent a letter to the US government asking President Obama "to clean up some of the historical debris left in southeast Europe by the previous U.S. administration" and put an end to the misappropriation of history by the government of Skopje.

The first few scholars were motivated by the article in the *Archaeology* magazine, and the letter Stephen G. Miller, Ph.D sent in response, which *Archaeology* did not publish.

Since then, the list of scholars that have examined the evidence has been growing and 222 scholars have undersigned the letter to President Barak Obama.

The letter was accompanied by the documentation available here.

More information about the Classical Scholars from around the world, and their effort to set history straight, is available by visiting the site at [Macedonia Evidence: The Scholars \(macedonia-evidence.org\)](http://MacedoniaEvidence.org)

The contents of the letter have as follows:

*The Honorable Barack Obama
President, United States of America
White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500*

Dear President Obama,

We, the undersigned scholars of Graeco-Roman antiquity, respectfully request that you intervene to clean up some of the historical debris left in southeast Europe by the previous U.S. administration.

On November 4, 2004, two days after the re-election of President George W. Bush, his administration unilaterally recognized the "Republic of Macedonia." This action not only abrogated geographic and historic fact, but it also has unleashed a dangerous epidemic of historical revisionism, of which the most obvious symptom is the misappropriation by the government in Skopje of the most famous of Macedonians, Alexander the Great.

Even before Alexander I, the Macedonians traced their ancestry to Argos, and many of their kings used the head of Herakles - the quintessential Greek hero - on their coins.

We believe that this silliness has gone too far, and that the U.S.A. has no business in supporting the subversion of history. Let us review facts. (The documentation for these facts [here in boldface] can be found attached and at: <http://macedonia-evidence.org/documentation.html>)

The land in question, with its modern capital at Skopje, was

called Paionia in antiquity. Mts. Barnous and Orbelos (which form today the northern limits of Greece) provide a natural barrier that separated, and separates, Macedonia from its northern neighbor. The only real connection is along the Axios/Vardar River and even this valley "does not form a line of communication because it is divided by gorges."

While it is true that the Paionians were subdued by Philip II, father of Alexander, in 358 B.C. they were not Macedonians and did not live in Macedonia. Likewise, for example, the Egyptians, who were subdued by Alexander, may have been ruled by Macedonians, including the famous Cleopatra, but they were never Macedonians themselves, and Egypt was never called Macedonia.

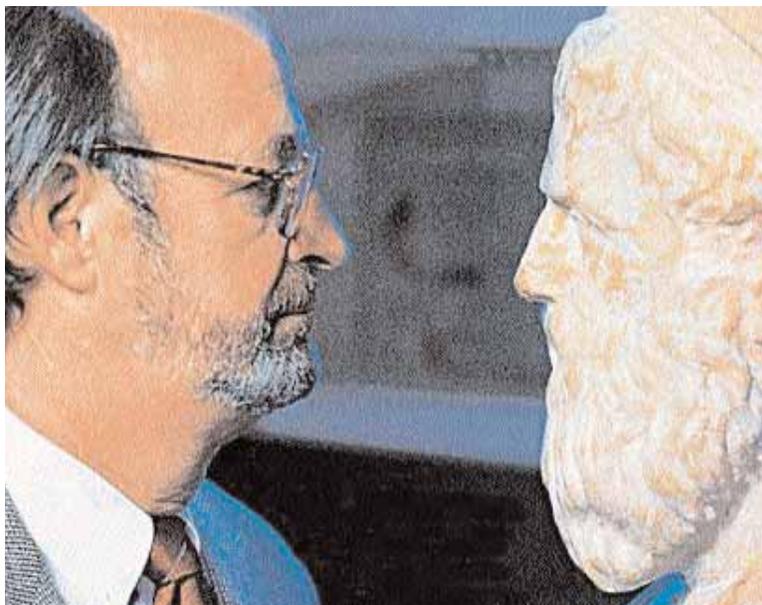
Rather, Macedonia and Macedonian Greeks have been located for at least 2,500 years just where the modern Greek province of Macedonia is. Exactly this same relationship is true for Attica and Athenian Greeks, Argos and Argive Greeks, Corinth and Corinthian Greeks, etc.

We do not understand how the modern inhabitants of ancient Paionia, who speak Slavic - a language introduced into the Balkans about a millennium after the death of Alexander - can claim him as their national hero. Alexander the Great was thoroughly and indisputably Greek. His great-great-grandfather, Alexander I, competed in the Olympic Games where participation was limited to Greeks.

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Euripides - who died and was buried in Macedonia - wrote his play *Archelaos* in honor of the great-uncle of Alexander, and in Greek. While in Macedonia, Euripides also wrote the *Bacchai*, again in Greek. Presumably the Macedonian audience could understand what he wrote and what they heard.

Alexander's father, Philip, won several equestrian victories at Olympia and Delphi, the two



most Hellenic of all the sanctuaries in ancient Greece where non-Greeks were not allowed to compete. Even more significantly, Philip was appointed to conduct the Pythian Games at Delphi in 346 B.C. In other words, Alexander the Great's father and his ancestors were thoroughly Greek. Greek was the language used by Demosthenes and his delegation from Athens when they paid visits to Philip, also in 346 B.C. Another northern Greek, Aristotle, went off to study for nearly 20 years in the Academy of Plato. Aristotle subsequently returned to Macedonia and became the tutor of Alexander III. They used Greek in their classroom which can still be seen near Naoussa in Macedonia.

Alexander carried with him throughout his conquests Aristotle's edition of Homer's *Iliad*. Alexander also spread Greek language and culture throughout his empire, founding cities and establishing centers of learning. Hence inscriptions concerning such typical Greek institutions as the gymnasium are found as far away as Afghanistan. They are all written in Greek.

The questions follow: Why was Greek the lingua franca all over Alexander's empire if he was a "Macedonian"? Why was the New Testament, for example, written in Greek?

The answers are clear: Alexander the Great was Greek, not Slavic, and Slavs and their language were nowhere near Alexander or his homeland until 1000 years later. This brings us back to the geographic area known in antiquity as Paionia. Why would the people who live there now call themselves Macedonians and their land Macedonia? Why would they abduct a completely Greek figure and make him their national

hero? of the geographic term "Macedonia" to cover southern Yugoslavia cannot. Even in the late 19th century, this misuse implied unhealthy territorial aspirations.

The same motivation is to be seen in school maps that show the pseudo-greater Macedonia, stretching from Skopje to Mt. Olympus and labeled in Slavic. The same map and its claims are in calendars, bumper stickers, bank notes, etc., that have been circulating in the new state ever since it declared its independence from Yugoslavia in 1991. Why would a poor land-locked new state attempt such historical nonsense? Why would it brazenly mock and provoke its neighbor?

However one might like to characterize such behavior, it is clearly not a force for historical accuracy, nor for stability in the Balkans. It is sad that the United States of America has abetted and encouraged such behavior.

We call upon you, Mr. President, to help - in whatever ways you deem appropriate - the government in Skopje to understand that it cannot build a national identity at the expense of historic truth. Our common international society cannot survive when history is ignored, much less when history is fabricated.

Sincerely