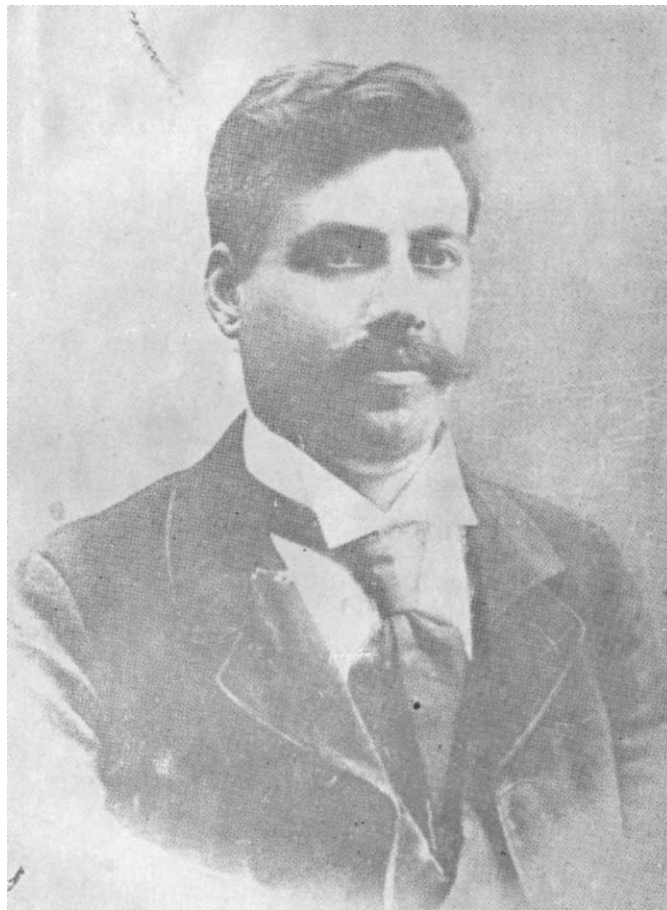


GOCE DELČEV
HIS LIFE AND TIMES

**HRISTO
ANDONOV
POLJANSKI**



Goce Delčev

»He prepared us for freedom« (Said by the French of Voltaire.)

GOCE DELČEV (1872—1903) is an important figure in recent Macedonian history. The hundredth anniversary of his birth reminds us of the need to turn our attention to presenting a more authentic and affirmative picture of his personality, his short life and his great work for the Macedonian national liberation movement at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries.

Goce Delčev appeared on the Macedonian historical scene at a time when all the social, economic and political conditions necessary to raise the hopes and efforts of centuries towards freedom and equality to a higher level were present. He was a product of this time: his stature was conditioned by the legitimate historical development of contemporary Macedonia. He gave to this development its particular progressive stamp; he stirred it into action and placed it on the highest principals; he breathed the revolutionary spirit of the age into it; he placed it at the crossroads of history.

Goce Delčev devoted the whole of his short life to the Macedonian liberation cause, thus exciting the imagination of several generations of Macedonians. His name became a symbol in the struggle for freedom waged by progressive Macedonian generations. He took to himself all the aspirations in the struggle for freedom, democracy and independence. He achieved this because he was a true popular leader, an outstanding tribune for Macedonian independence and self-determination, and a brave fighter for the national and social rights of all oppressed peoples.

THE SCOPE OF RESISTANCE

Goce Delčev lived and worked in stormy times, in an era when Macedonia found herself at a crossroads between self-realization and revolution. The desire for freedom grew into an effort to find, through resistance and revolution, the only way out; to canalise the struggle for national and social justice.

In Goce's time Macedonia was part of the Ottoman Empire. She was dependent on the social, political and economic situation of this imperial unit. Macedonia held a central position in the empire and the highroads leading from Europe to Asia passed through her. For this reason Macedonia served as a base for natural resources and as a market for European industrial goods, and was thus drawn into the sphere of European capital. The growth of the commercial life of the country reflected this factor. Macedonia was also the focus of imperialist interest and was involved in the plans of imperialist states for widening their spheres of influence and strategic and political positions. We find this reflected in the relationship of these states to the Macedonian question and the Macedonian national liberation movement. The Balkan states took no small part in this and their bourgeois dynasties were major supporters of the expansionist politics which affected Macedonia.

Under the system of the Osmanlis Macedonia was suppressed both nationally and socially. All Macedonian social forces were caught up by these bonds: the village population, the workers, merchants, craftsmen and the intelligentsia. The various ethnic and national groups found themselves in a similar situation, but the Macedonian villagers, being the majority of the population (80%), were affected to the greatest degree. This group was the most suppressed and exploited. Under the feudal and absolutist regime it was not even master of its own land. The largest and most fertile plots of land belonged to members of the ruling group, the so-called *cifliksajbii*¹). In these estates the majority of the villagers (known as *cifligari*²) and their stock and agricultural tools were part of the property. This system of ownership existed throughout Macedonia. According to their duties and relationship to the estate and its holder the villagers were divided into several categories and were burdened with many duties, compulsory gifts and a whole series of other exploitative measures. Apart from these villagers there were other free peasant smallholders who were, however, also exposed to robbery and injustice. This exploitation went hand in hand with pressure from the feudal oligarchy, the lawlessness of the Turkish authorities and unlimited piracy. This system represented national and political tyranny.

The remaining elements of Macedonian society also found themselves in a difficult position. The Macedonian urban classes became weaker as from the seventies of last century because of the penetration of inexpensive European goods and the opening of the railways in Macedonia. The former relationship of the Macedonian merchants with the Macedonian and Balkan internal markets was changed, being replaced to a great extent by external trade. This affected the prosperity of the Macedonian economy and was reflected in the situation of Macedonian social groups.

The Macedonian intelligentsia also found itself suppressed and humiliated. This intelligentsia originated in the ranks of the lower middle classes and could devote itself only to teaching as the remaining professions in the administration were not open to them. The lower middle classes in Macedonia were politically, economically and nationally oppressed. The forms this oppression took were varied. Above all many dues, taxes and rates were demanded of them. This affected the whole population and was linked to political tyranny and despotism the aim of which was to choke any attempt at political or national recognition. The abuses of the corrupt Turkish administration opened up new dimensions of

tyranny and despotism. Throughout the country personal insecurity and political, economic and national oppression existed.

During the last decades of the nineteenth century the situation became even more explicit. In the villages there was an increase in the number of impoverished peasants who were exploited economically and were politically without rights. They found the solution to their situation in the liquidation of the system of lordship. Class differences were present in the towns and began to affect existing social groupings. We find this reflected in the disintegration of the merchant and craft groups. The more radical elements could no longer endure the despotic regime of political tyranny and economic, national and social oppression. Therefore, in such a situation, the most aware levels of the intelligentsia became pioneers in their attempts to found a new political and national awareness. They penetrated to the core of the political, national and social suppression of their people and introduced a public action for the formulation of liberation aims. The aim of liberation was seen to be revolution which revealed the way to the greatness of the resistance and self-discovery.

We see the germ of this self-realization on the Macedonian political scene as early as the ninth and tenth decades of the nineteenth century. This was the period when Macedonia began to proclaim its revolt openly, a reaction to the continued system of rule by masters. This revolt and the rebellious atmosphere in Macedonia passed through several phases, a notable register of rebellions and revolutionary moods and projects. They were expressed in the many forms taken by the escalation of rebellion and resistance, both spontaneous and organized, to the phanariots³) and the exarchate⁴) during 1876, 1878 — 79 and 1880—81. During the eighties and the beginning of the last decade of the last century the situation became more explicit as is seen in the rebellious mood of the middle school youth in the gymnasiums, and in the organization of revolutionary groups, associations and committees. The Macedonian movement achieved increasingly a fixed revolutionary content in the struggle with the exarchate, for self-government in the administrative districts, in personal initiative and revolutionary action. By the first years of the nineties attention was already being given to the theoretical definition of the revolutionary effort and its organizational formulation. The tendency within the Macedonian movement towards organizational development was given an even greater impetus by the work of Goce Delčev which marked off a new era in the history of Macedonia and the Macedonia national liberation movement.

KUKUŠ: HIS BIRTHPLACE AND ENVIRONMENT

Goce Delčev began his life in Kukuš, a small picturesque town in coastal Macedonia⁵), 35 kilometers from Salonika, in one of the richest regions of Macedonia. As a result of its geographical position this town played an important role as a natural centre for political, economic and cultural activities in the area.

We still cannot be sure of the origin of the name Kukuš. This uncertainty arises from the fact that the name of the town changed during various periods of history. The whole town region was important during both ancient times and the middle Ages. During the region of the ancient Macedonian emperors the region contained settlements and towns and when the Slavs migrated to the Balkan peninsular they also colonized this area. It became part of Samuel's Macedonian kingdom and later fell to Byzantium. By the beginning of the thirteenth century the region was known as Zenska tvrđina or, more commonly, by the Slavonic name Zensko. It retained this name during the Turkish period until the end of the seventeenth century when we find the first references to Kukuš. In the middle of the eighteenth century Kukus developed into a town. It was an agricultural and craft centre, and became at one and the same time an agricultural and manufacturing centre and a centre for crafts and trade. The activities of the merchants were not only limited to the town itself but covered the whole region. The economy of the town was also characterized by its development into a weaving centre on the basis of scattered manufacture.

We can trace the economic progress of the town up to the last three decades of the nineteenth century when the penetration of European goods began to have an adverse affect on the craft communities. Trade in corn and industrial products did not, however, decrease and in fact showed improvement.

The economic development of the town contributed to its development as a Macedonian national centre. We see this above all in the growth of education, the revival in political activity.

A national life grew up in the town and this enabled the citizens to take the social initiative and create an atmosphere congenial to the elevation of cultural and national life. By 1825 a well ordered school already existed. In 1835 a large church with stone inscriptions in Slavonic was built, a witness to the beginning of the Macedonian revival. During this period we see the first efforts in the struggle with the phanariots and against Greek educational influence. In this struggle Kukuš stood at the head of the Macedonian revival.

In the eighteen forties new initiatives were taken in the development of education and the work of the school in the town. Dimitar Miladinov, an important figure in the Macedonian revival, became involved in these activities in the autumn of 1840. He placed education in the town on a firm basis. He also taught here in 1857 in company with Rajko Zinzifov, the well-known Macedonian writer. Both of them turned their attention to perfecting the work of teaching. They fought against Hellenism and taught in the national language. In 1858 efforts were made in the town to introduce a Slavonic language into the church service and plans were made to open a Slavonic gymnasium. However, this was opposed by the Greek patriarchate which was against any attempt to use the Slavonic language in the church or in education. In this way it strived to carry out the policy of the assimilation of the Macedonian people into a greater Greek state. The people of Kukuš reacted to this spiritual and political suppression and decided, on 12th July 1859, to turn to the Roman Pope and ask for his patronage and union with the Catholic Church. The Vatican received the request favorably and already by October the first union district⁶) had been formed. The union allowed the people of Kukuš to use the national language in their rituals. This chapter in the history of Kukuš represented a great step forward in terms of independent activity, a movement which was to have considerable consequences and importance. It was the first independent initiative in the struggle for independence.

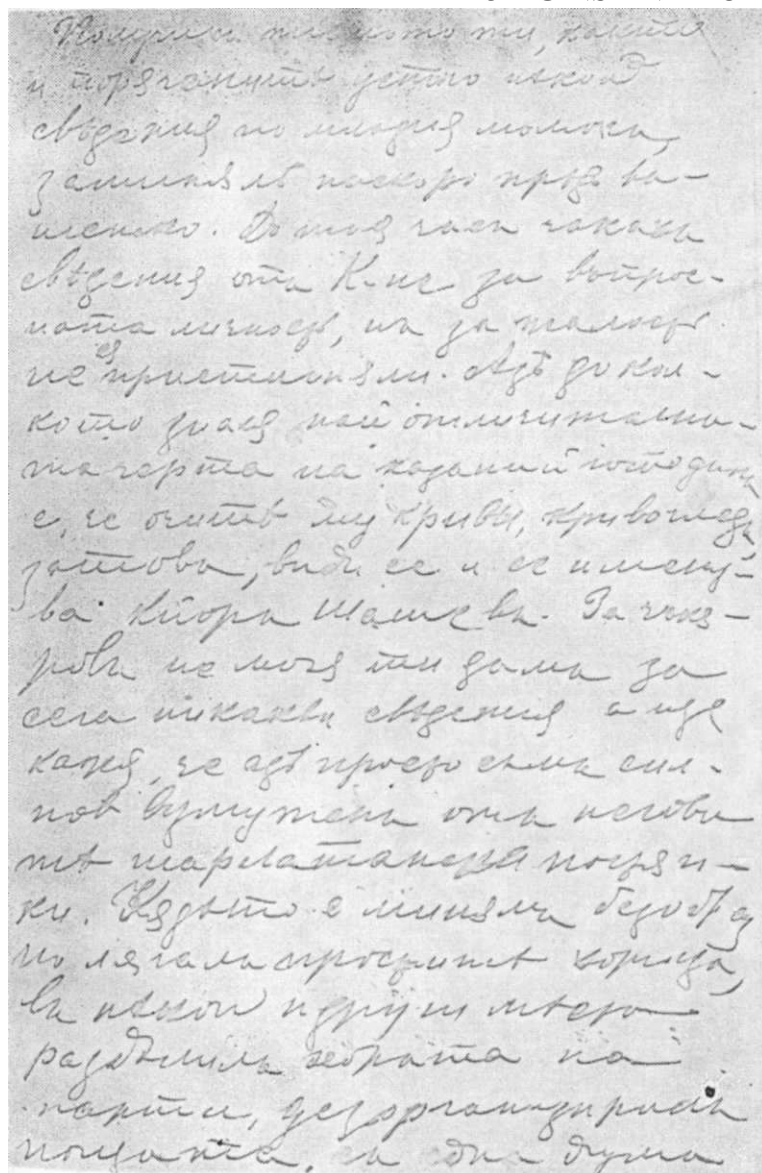
The action of the people of Kukuš disturbed the Greek patriarchate which attempted to win them back to the Greek Church. A compromise was made by which the Bishop of Kukuš was to be Partenij Zografski, a well — known figure in the Macedonian revival and author of the first text-books in Macedonian. He was appointed bishop in November 1857, and the majority of the citizens returned to Orthodoxy as the conditions for the introduction of national education were improved. However, this work once again became a danger to the phanariots who forced Partenij to leave Kukuš in 1865. The renewed power of the Patriarchate in church and school matters threw the people of Kukuš into revolt and, in 1874, they again turned to union with the Catholic Church.

All these actions of the people of Kukuš are proof of their desire for freedom, their determination to remain faithful to their autonomous origins and national compactness. We see this reflected in the spread of the educational network, the opening of schools, reading groups and other educational instaurations. Works from world literature penetrated the schools and reading groups thus contributing to the population's educational progress, and their cultural assertion.

The effort of the people of Kukuš to free themselves from Greek influence and their brave step in accepting the Union was courageous revolutionary actions. It was for this reason that a French consul in Salonika named the town a »Political Nest«.

Goce Delčev was born into this atmosphere which was not without importance in the development of his personality.

FAMILY ORIGINS AND ACTIVITIES

A facsimile of a handwritten letter in Cyrillic script. The text is written in a cursive hand and is somewhat faded. It appears to be a personal letter, possibly from Goce Delčev, discussing family matters and local events. The text is arranged in approximately 20 lines, filling most of the page.

Facsimile of Goce's letter of 25th May, 1898

Goce Delčev came from an important Kukuš family. The Delčev family considered itself to be one of the oldest in the town. We find the first traces of this family in the middle of the eighteenth century. It was founded by Delčo, about whom we have little information. It is not known what his wife was called. They had a son called Dimitar (Mitre), one of the most respected citizens of Kukuš. His wife Marija came from the Salonika district. The child of that marriage was Nikola Delcev, Goce's father. Nikola Delčev was born on 28th April, 1844, in Kukuš. He was himself a craftsman and came from a family of craftsmen. His fixed estate consisted of a house, a workshop, five to six ares of vines and seven to eight ares of cultivated fields. He ran a cafe and an inn. Apart from this he also owned sheep lands with several hundred sheep. His economic situation was typical of the Macedonian social group of craftsmen and traders who played such an important part in the economic, social and political life of Kukuš during the fifties and sixties of the nineteenth century.

Goce Delčev's mother, Sultana, was born somewhere between 1845 and 1850 in the village of Murarci in the Kukuš district. This village was progressive and had preserved its folk tradition. The Janev Nurdziev family was well-known in the village and to it Sultana belonged. Her modesty and gaiety caught the attention of Nikola Delčev. We are not sure of

the date of their wedding. As a mother she displayed the characteristics typical of all Macedonian mothers. The family consisted of five daughters and four sons.

Georgi (Goce) Delčev was born in 1872 on 23rd January by the old calendar and 4th February by the new, in Kukuš. It was his mother who gave him the nickname Goce which was very common in Kukuš and used in place of Georgi. In time this name became a synonym for courage and honesty in Macedonian political terminology.

Between the ages of two and three Goce was often ill but the phase passed and he grew into a lively child.

Goce Delčev's early years, until he started school (1872—1879), were passed in a period of upset and uneasiness. He found himself in the centre of the uprisings which took place in his native town. The struggle against the phanariots was continued. A new factor also appeared at this time — the Exarchate with its pretensions which the people of Kukuš resisted. Thus the first revolutionary elements in the town can be found. Ivan Hadzi Nikolov wrote in his Memoirs that he considered an uprising in Kukuš in September 1875, following the example of the uprising in Bosnia-Herzegovina. At the beginning of 1875 he appealed to others of a like mind with the aim of organizing an uprising and attacking Salonika. This was the first spontaneous effort in this direction, the first step towards a revolutionary mood and movement. The mood continued and grew to some extent during the years 1877 to 1879. A certain number of people from Kukuš and the surrounding villages took part in the Kresnensko-Razlosko uprising of 1878/79.

In the academic year 1879/80 Goce Delčev entered the first grade of the secondary school in Kukuš. He was an attentive, enthusiastic and exemplary pupil. He found his company among older boys, particularly those who were most aware of the world around them. Through them and the school Goce Delčev became interested in books. We can confirm from a list of the books to be found in the school libraries in Kukuš that the great works of world literature were there. The reading room in the town also contained such literature. We can presume that secret revolutionary pamphlets also circulated.

Delčev's education at primary and secondary schools took place in this atmosphere in Kukuš. It had an effect on his educational and intellectual growth. In 1886/87 he completed third grade in the Kukuš secondary school and his intention was to move to Salonika to complete his education, but his father, wanted him to follow in the family work. A year later, however, he became convinced of his son's inclinations and agreed to send him to Salonika to continue his education. This began a new chapter in Goce's life.

SALONICA: NEW PATHS IN EDUCATION

During the nineteenth century Salonika was an important Macedonian economic, political and cultural centre. At the end of the eighties the town had 195,000 inhabitants which made it the second town after Istanbul in terms of population in the Ottoman Empire. The growth of the town was due to its links with the hinterland which attracted the whole of Macedonian internal and external trade. The town was outstanding for its educational and cultural centers, in particular its secondary schools, which became the focus of cultural and educational life. During the academic year 1880/81 the Cyril and Methodius boys' gymnasium was opened. It was to become one of the best-known centers of education in Macedonia. The best teachers worked in this school attracting pupils not only from the south but from the other parts of Macedonia. It was here that Goce Delčev decided to continue his education.

Goce Delčev became a pupil of the Cyril and Methodius boys' gymnasium in the autumn of 1888. This experience opened his eyes to a wider and more developed world, to a lively economic and cultural life.

On his arrival at the gymnasium Goce Delčev was placed in the fourth grade where his fellow pupils came from various parts of Macedonia.

The school course covered a wide field including the Classics, Turkish and French, literature, natural mathematics and other subjects. The teaching staff was varied and mostly first rate. The majority of teachers came from Macedonia, although a few of them were faithful servants of the Exarchate and Bulgarian government. This latter group often made fun of the Macedonian teachers accusing them of »poor Bulgarian patriotism«.

The standard text-books were used for instruction. The library was well stocked with books including the best known works of world literature and manuals on other subjects.

Goce Delčev treated his school work with attention and seriousness. He became particularly interested in mathematics and the theory of Darwin. His knowledge of Turkish was thorough and superior to that of the other pupils. He was independent and disciplined. As time passed he became so involved in his work that he became one of the best pupils. When he finished sixth grade he was awarded the works of A. S. Pushkin as a prize.

Both in and out of school Goce was a keen reader. He carried his interest in literature outside the classroom. Besides the school library he also made use of the opportunities for receiving books from abroad through the foreign post offices which then worked in Salonika. In this way Goce Delčev became familiar with the works of Darwin, Pisarev, Flammarion and other socialist writers. One of his contemporary's points out Goce's interest in socialist literature in his memoirs and says: »His reading of such booklets led other pupils to the conviction that Delčev was inspired by socialist ideas«. This shows how wide was the range of Goce's interests in the gymnasium. He was sympathetic towards everything progressive, noble and revolutionary.

At this time Goce Delčev also felt the effects of the first revolutionary waves. There were rebellions in the gymnasium and revolutionary ideas took hold. In time secret groups and conspiratorial rings were formed by the pupils. Goce Delčev belonged to one such ring. His activity developed to such an extent that he became the leader of this group in 1890. At its meetings literature of a revolutionary type was read and talks on Macedonian liberation given. In this way, both inside his group and outside Goce Delčev learned the alphabet of rebellion and came to support the most progressive and revolutionary ideas. However, in common with the other revolutionaries, he understood the basic axiom of revolutionary movements by which it is impossible to build liberation and revolution on empty concepts. He realized that revolution demands experienced and capable revolutionaries. It was for this reason that Goce decided to leave the Salonika gymnasium and continue his education in some military academy where it was possible to develop military skills. Towards the end of the academic year 1890/91 Goce Delčev, then a pupil in the sixth grade, made his decision to leave the gymnasium and go to a military academy and in doing so he attracted others of his fellow pupils to follow the same course.

When he finished sixth grade Goce Delčev left for his native Kukuš and in July 1891, after a brief rest, he continued to Sophia and the Military Academy there. His parents were surprised by this step but he managed to convince them of the truth of his decision. One of his contemporaries reported what Goce's mother said of his departure: »They are going to Sophia to learn to be officers and to free Macedonia«.



Goce Delčev with Efrem Cuckov and Kl. Sapkarev



Jane Sandanski



Goce's armed band in Ali Botus, 1903

MILITARY PREPARATIONS

Goce Delčev laid great importance on the need for military preparedness. At this first was in the form of youthful enthusiasm and it later vanished though it left ineradicable traces.

On his arrival in Bulgaria Goce Delčev entered a new environment quite different from that in Turkey. Yet, even after thirteen years of the new state, traces of the past remained. This was the period when the St. Stambolov regime (1887—1894), which supported the interests of the Bulgarian merchant and industrial bourgeoisie, was in power. This regime was not based on any wide social agreement; it had the character of a dictatorship. At the head of the government stood Prince Ferdinand Koburgotski who came to the throne in 1887. He was the complete master of the situation. The people saw in his person a servant of foreign imperialism.

Goce Delčev began his education at the Military Academy, where he was officially accepted on 11th July, 1891. The academy gave group lectures and special training. The subjects taught included those of a general educational nature and military subjects. Goce Delčev was an average pupil both in class and during training. When out of school he mixed with friends from Kukuš and others. It was here that he became friends with Husein Tefikov, a Bulgarian Muslim from the Rodopi, whom fate was to make his opponent near Banica in 1903.

At the end of Goce's first year, in May 1892, the exams and exercises were taken outside the barracks. Goce received exemplary marks, yet he had become disillusioned with the school. For this there were many reasons. Some of his contemporaries linked his disillusionment with the fact that he then thought that the intelligent forces from Macedonia would be more useful in their native places than in Bulgaria. Peju Javorov, Goce's first biographer, interpreted Goce's mood of the time with the help of the opinion which Goce expressed to his friends that »... I could hardly find any group capable of understanding me and my indignation. Why didn't I stay in Salonika; why didn't I finish gymnasium; why didn't I become a teacher! «

During the academic year 1892/93 Goce Delčev made even greater efforts to master his subjects and the training. He continued to be exceptional for his modesty, quietness and virtue. During his free time he devoted himself to various activities as, for example, ensuring supplies of newspapers and books through secret channels because their free circulation was not permitted. It was thought that he exchanged books the contents of which were outside the given norms with friends of like mind. Goce read and distributed books both of a socialist and a general nature. When not at school he mixed with Macedonians. However, his movements became more and more suspicious to the school authorities; he was caught carrying books and on other errands several times.

Goce's last year at the Military Academy (1893/94) was very strenuous as he had to attend instruction, exercises, practical sessions and exams. It was a year of anxiety and unease. Goce was not only involved in his work at school but also in the situation in his enslaved fatherland. By June he had completed his exams which he passed with good marks. After that military ranks were awarded. However, in the meanwhile changes had taken place in the internal political life of Bulgaria. In May the dictatorship of St. Stambolov, which was no longer in accord with the interests of Prince Ferdinand, was demolished and Konstantin Stoilov, a representative of the conservatives, became president. The Bulgarian bourgeoisie continued to dominate, only the methods of government changed. The new government postponed the distribution of ranks to new officers from the Military Academy as part of its economic plan. This led to revolt among the older cadets at the academy. As a result of these circumstances someone wrote anonymous letters of a compromising nature to the Minister of War and the head of the Military Academy. This led to a general enquiry and the imprisonment of a certain number of »suspicious« cadets. All these cadets were close associates of Goce Delčev's. During the search books of a doubtful character were found and

it was »established« that Goce Delčev was the source of the supply. Thus under suspicion Goce assumed to himself the »guilt« for writing the anonymous letters. In fact Goce made this »confession* because he wished to express his bitterness at the injustice committed. He wanted to break off his career as an officer and return to Macedonia. However, the authorities themselves were not convinced of his guilt and put him in prison. An order was issued expelling Delčev and the other imprisoned cadets from the Military Academy as from 16th September, 1894. Peju Javorov considers that Goce was expelled »as socialists Goce himself confessed that he was caught reading socialist books.

Goce received this decision with pleasure as it enabled him to realize his desire to serve the Macedonian cause. Thus this period of his life, which had been so disturbed, ended. It left Goce with a firm faith in himself and the conviction that he must devote himself to the liberation of Macedonia.

IDEOLOGICAL PREPARATION

Goce Delčev's intellectual development passed through several phases. In Kukus he acquired his basic education which he continued in Salonika where he also entered into the world of science, literature and socialism. At the military academy his horizons widened to cover many questions from the field of philosophical, socialist and political doctrine.

Delčev was deeply influenced by the educational ideas of the eighteenth century, the great French bourgeois revolution, the revolutions of 1830 and 1848, the lessons of the Paris Commune of 1871 and Russian revolutionary and democratic literature.

Delčev's interests covered a wide range. Koce, his contemporary at the Military Academy VI, wrote in his memoirs that Goce »apart from the lessons also read various books mostly of a social nature, books in Russian or translated into Bulgarian. Under his pillow you could always find the works of Marx, Engels, Kautsky, Shelgunov, Chernishevski, Dobroljubov, and Herzen. Not all at once, one by one they brought him the books from the town or he brought them himself. He read them over a short time and then returned them. At the same time they brought him the Socialist newspaper, or he got hold of it himself, and some socialist books«. This report, and other sources, speaks for Goce's interest in scientific socialism and shows that he read Marx and Engels and was influenced by their ideas. He had the opportunity to become acquainted with many major works including The Communist Manifesto, The Civil War in France, The Development of Scientific Socialism and others.

Goce was particularly attracted to the ideas of the Russian revolutionary democrats N. A. Dobroljubov, N. Chernishevski, A. Herzen and D. I. Pisarev. Under their influence, especially that of D. I. Pisarev, Goce succeeded in building his own revolutionary-democratic conception. Peju Javorov tells us that Goce knew D. I. Pisarev by heart. The Soviet historian V. I. Zuev underlines the fact that Goce knew the works of these progressive Russian writers and was particularly influenced by D. I. Pisarev. He was also influenced by the Russian popularists.

We can also find elements from other revolutionary and socialist ideas in Delcev's ideological make-up. The Italian historian M. Paccor considers that Goce was affected by Giuseppe Mazzini, the ideologist of the Italian national liberation movement. Other revolutionary, utopian-socialist, Utopian- communist and anarchist ideas also influenced him. We find traces of all these ideas in Goce though the ideas of Blanki, P. Kropotkin, M. Bakunin and S. Mihailovic Kravcinski — Stepnjak had the greatest impact.

Blanki attracted Goce with his extreme revolutionary ideas, S. Kravcinski — Stepnjak with his popularist and revolutionary ideas. Goce knew and had read »The Nihilist Battlefield« by the latter writer and included it in the list of revolutionary literature which he sent through Macedonia.

Delčev was also influenced by the ideas of the revolutionary democrats and socialists from Macedonia, in particular by Spiro Gulapcev, Dimitar Blagoev, Dimo Hadzi Dimov and Vasil Glavinov.

All these revolutionary-democratic and socialist elements influenced Goce Delcev's ideological development to a greater or lesser extent. They were decisive in his orientation as a socialist and revolutionary democrat. He turned towards the most progressive, scientific view of the world, towards the social rules of the movement and the correct directions of the national liberation cause.

Goce Delčev attached great importance to knowledge of the revolutionary, national liberation and liberation movements of other peoples. To this end he studied the lives of outstanding members of other liberation movements. He showed interest in all the revolutionary movements of the nineteenth century, particularly that of the Italians, and in partisan activity. He also studied the Bulgarian national liberation movements of the eighteenth seventies. He held Garibaldi, Washington, La Fayette, Botev, Levski and other great figures in great respect.

Goce Delčev built up his conception of a revolutionary when still at the gymnasium in Salonika and active in his revolutionary ring. He developed these ideas further while at the Sophia Military Academy where he mixed mostly with groups of Macedonians which were agreed that the national and social liberation of Macedonia must be based on independence and self-determination. In Bulgaria Goce came across numerous »Macedonian Associations« and »Macedonian Committees« formed by the many Macedonian emigrants. According to Gorce Petrov these associations achieved no practical results on the Macedonian question as an independent factor during the period of their existence. At the beginning these groups had a purely revolutionary aim but in time they were forced to turn towards the politics of Greater Bulgaria by which the Macedonian question would be solved through the presence of the 200,000 strong Bulgarian army.

This situation in the Macedonian liberation movement was quite evident to Goce Delčev. He was himself interested in any events which arose from the objective treatment of the Macedonian question and forwarded its independent and autonomous development. One such case was Spiro Gulapcev's support for a Balkan federation with Macedonia as a separate political unit. Dimitar Blagoev took a similar position. He echoed the idea of »Macedonia for the Macedonians« but within a Balkan federation.

Finding himself in such an atmosphere Goce Delčev turned to those Macedonian circles which represented Macedonian interests with honesty and dignity. For this reason he became connected with Kosta Sahov, whose activities made him one of the important figures in the history of the Macedonian cause. He was well known for publishing such newspapers as *Makedonija*, *Borba*, and *Glas Makedonski*. He was president of the Macedonian Literary Association and worked on *Losa*, the association's journal. Delčev's contacts with him and other members of the association were to be an important influence. Krste Petkov Misirkov tells of Goce's links with this association and says that all the important revolutionaries such as Delčev were the pupils of this first generation of Macedonians.

Goce Delčev's acquaintanceship with Kosta Sahov was such that they met often. Sahov introduced Goce to other Macedonian activists and presented him as a man who regarded the Macedonian question and the liberation cause seriously. The interest which Goce aroused is best seen in his meeting with Ivan Hadži Nikolov who came to Sophia in July 1892, to look for someone to head the revolutionary organization for the liberation of Macedonia with the help of Kosta Sahov. The only person Sahov saw in this position was Delčev. There followed a series of discussions which Goce was able to attend because the academic year had come to an end. However, Goce was only able to devote himself to the cause after his expulsion from the military academy. Then he saw in his new circumstances a chance to realize his plans and devote himself to the liberation of his country. He expressed his loyalty to the cause of liberty in the following way: »Our enslaved position in Macedonia tells me what I should do: I must take the same stand as all the suppressed, as did others such

as Levski under even more uncomfortable conditions than exist in Macedonia now as we have a formal obligation on the part of the great powers which we must try and make them put into effect. It would be unforgivable for us who have been raised to a higher spiritual level to suffer others to liberate us«.

Goce Delčev made this pronouncement directly before leaving for Macedonia. In it he clearly expressed his conception of national liberation which was to gain new substance through his subsequent activities. His involvement was made easier by the fact that, in October 1893, the Macedonian Revolutionary Organization was founded in Salonika. The initiative for this came from a group of important Macedonian activists who came from the ranks of the enlightened Macedonian intelligentsia and who considered that the conditions for such a revolutionary act were ripe by the ninth decade of the nineteenth century. Among them we find such names as Dame Gruev, Ivan Hadži Nikolov, Petar Pop Arsov, Dr. Hristo Tatarcev, Andon Dimitrov and Hristo Batandžiev. This group held several meetings and made the decision to form the revolutionary organization early in 1894. They gave the organization the title: The Macedonian Revolutionary Organization, and formed a central committee.

The formation of the organization was a truly great chapter in the history of Macedonia. The organization developed its activity aimed at revolutionizing the enslaved Macedonian people to a notable extent although within a limited sphere. At the beginning it moved carefully, working conspiratorially and agitating only among the urban population. Its activity was directed towards agitation and propaganda. However, as time passed the need for new directions such as the development of new organizational forms and mass participation in the movement was felt. This tendency towards a wider sphere of activity was, to a great extent, achieved through the work of Goce Delčev and other leaders in the Macedonian movement.

TO THE REVOLUTIONARY BATTLEFIELD



Goce Delčev as a military cadet with a group of friends



Gorče Petrov



Damjan Gruev

As soon as Goce Delčev decided finally to return to his native country and after he was given a teaching post in Novo Selo (near Štip) he left Bulgaria, arriving in Štip towards the end of October, 1894. Štip was then the economic and cultural centre of the eastern part of Macedonia. It was here, in this centre of Macedonian revolutionary activity, that he met Dame Gruev who had been made head teacher in the town. They both of them became active not only in spreading education but also in propagating the revolutionary idea and widening the network of the organization. Even at their first meeting they exchanged ideas on the position of the revolutionary cause. Goce Delčev stated his own revolutionary conception clearly. When asked by Dame Gruev why he had returned to Macedonia Goce answered: »Why? Is there anywhere other than Macedonia for a Macedonian? Are there an unhappy people than the Macedonian people? Is there anywhere a wider field for work than in Macedonia? ... We must educate and organize the people to arm it, inspire faith in its strength so that it can understand how it can escape from slavery and misery. We must open its eyes. « Goce's revolutionary statement left a strong impression on Dame Gruev who wrote in his memoirs: »Delčev made an immediate impression with his openness and honesty. ... His ideas already resembled ours. And he had been infected by socialist doctrine; he fell under the influence of revolutionary literature in Bulgaria and came independently to the conclusion that we must build a revolutionary organization for the liberation of Macedonia. «

With his revolutionary predisposition Goce Delčev stepped onto the Macedonian revolutionary stage. He was engaged as teacher at the school in Novo Selo which was very close to Štip and in the same revolutionary unit. The unit was divided between Dame Gruev, who was responsible for activities in the town, and Goce Delčev, whose responsibilities lay in the surrounding villages. Thus Goce was engaged in educating the young and agitating for the revolution. These activities were interrelated and complementary. Soon almost the whole

town and the surrounding villages were included in the organization network. This was achieved thanks to Goce Delčev's involvement and his feeling for the mood of the masses, which enabled him to stimulate a revolutionary awakening and turn the people to the cause of freedom.

Goce Delčev taught several subjects during the academic year 1894/95. From a certificate dated 25th June, 1895, we know that among other things he taught geography, natural history, geometry and French. His work as a teacher was thorough and disciplined and he treated his pupils with great strictness. Inspired by a rich culture and education he made a great effort to present the material in an interesting and attractive way.

Goce Delčev also turned his attention to adult education. Evening and weekly classes were held in the school for this purpose. Besides the regular courses secret readings from newspapers and revolutionary literature were given.

Together with his work as a teacher Delčev spread the idea of revolution among the adults and prepared them for the revolutionary cause.

Goce Delčev's greatest concern was to build up the organization network in the villages around Štip and the more distant areas. His aim was to create a healthy nucleus, to ensure a firm basis for the revolutionary organization. He was particularly interested in opening up communication channels and border points on the Bulgarian-Turkish border through which arms and literature could be brought into the country. For this work he had to travel very often and did not spare his efforts or his health. Thanks to this he was able to bring most of the eastern part of Macedonia to the cause and create an organized stronghold of revolution.

Goce Delčev did not limit himself only to the region of eastern Macedonia but began, in the spring of 1895, to spread the revolutionary idea in other areas. For this reason he travelled over the following territory from the middle of April onwards: Štip — Ovče Pole — Veles — Salonika — Kukuš — Dojran — Gevgelija — Strumica — Radoviš. Wherever he went he formed revolutionary committees and sowed the seed of revolution and liberty.

In the academic year 1895/96 Goce Delčev moved to Štip as head teacher and there continued his revolutionary activities. He continued the work of strengthening the border points, the revolutionary committees and other forces in the field. His many travels in these regions enabled him to create healthy revolutionary centers.

He also travelled to Bulgaria in order to equip the organization with arms. He tried to find sources from which the materials necessary to the revolutionary cause could be bought. This took him to Sophia in February 1896, where he investigated the lie of the land concerning the supply of armaments. He hoped for some help from the Macedonian Association and the Macedonian Committee. However, the Macedonian Committee, which was formed in March 1895, had grown into an agent of the Bulgarian court and its policy of expansion concerning Macedonia. This committee was renamed the Supreme Macedonian Committee⁷). It was from this committee that Goce wanted to find out the attitude towards the Macedonian movement and the question of armaments. At that time the president of the committee was Danail Nikolaev. At his meeting with him Goce presented the essential facts of Macedonian revolutionary activity based on the principle of independence but ran into opposition from the general. The latter agreed to free certain material but only under fixed conditions. These conditions would ensure the complete control of the movement in Macedonia by the Supreme Committee. The committee's prerogative would be so great as to give it the final voice in any decision to call an uprising or in any other important question concerning the activities of the organization in Macedonia. Goce Delčev categorically rejected these demands. His firmness arose from his defense of the independence of the Macedonian cause. His answer to these demands was as follows: »We do not agree with what you think of Macedonia. You know what I mean by we: the peasants, the Macedonian population, the people. We cannot play politics nor allow others to do so in Macedonia. Our struggle means life or death for us. We shall not allow others to decide whether we should live or die, and when. The people will decide when to rebel. We will not permit ourselves to

be commanded from here, to be brought into a game of rebellion as you tried to do last year. . . . We consider we should receive brotherly aid from you, from the committee and our emigrant groups. You must understand that we do not want patrons and, even less, lords. « This energetic sincerity expressed by Goce, then 24 years old, in the defense of independent Macedonian interests irritated General Nikolaev who refused to enter into further contact with »the internal revolutionaries«. Peju Javarov commented on Goce's stand in the following way: » . . . The general remained aghast at this child who presumed to give him advice. « Krum Hristov considers that: »Thus for the first time Goce Delčev proclaimed the independence of the Internal Organization in the face of the Sophia supremacists«. Goce himself was to retain his impressions of his meeting with General Nikolaev for a long time after his return to Stip. In a letter sent to Nikola Zografov in February 1896, he wrote: »The committee made such an impression on me and led to such a cooling of my enthusiasm that I do not see that they will help and am afraid that it will damage the cause. There are people who think like us (not completely, there are sensitive differences), I made sure of that myself, but the fish smells from the head and this applies to the supremacists. «

After his return to Štip Goce Delčev continued his work for the revolutionary organization of consolidating the liberation movement. In the middle of April 1896, an event occurred which led to the discovery of a consignment of bombs from Štip to Bitola and the arrest of Done Stojanov Tošev (Dončo Štipjančeto), one of the organization workers. This affair threw suspicion on Goce Delčev, too, and he was imprisoned. In May 1896, he was taken to the infamous Skopje prison known as Kursumli An where he spent a short time. He was released on the condition that he did not take up his former work again or return to Stip. From here the road led to Salonika at the beginning of the summer of 1896. The congress of the Organization, which is rightly considered to be the founding congress of the Organization as the decisions it came to were to have a decisive influence on the subsequent development of the Macedonian national liberation movement, was held in this town. Delegates from throughout Macedonia took part in it. The congress solved the important question of the field of the organization's work. A review of the work to date was the first item of discussion. In this context it was decided to establish a new organizational structure and a more concrete ideological-political programmed. With this in mind the congress authorised Goce Delčev and Gorče Petrov to formulate a new constitution and set of rules. It was also decided to divide the territory of Macedonia into seven revolutionary districts (centred on Salonika, Bitola, Skopje, Štip, Strumica, Ser and Adrianopole). A new central committee with its seat in Salonika was elected. At the same time an External Representation, the function of which was to represent the Organization abroad, was set up with its centre in Sophia. Among the principles proclaimed was that of autonomy. The name of the organization was also discussed. The congress gave it new name: the Secret Revolutionary Organization of Macedonia and the Adrianopole Region (TMORO). The congress condemned the nationalist tendencies of the Balkan bourgeoisies and their governments in relation to Macedonia. Goce Delcev was chosen for the Central Committee.

After the congress Goce Delčev and Gorče Petrov started work on the constitution and rules of the organization. These documents were completed in 1896 and accepted by the Central Committee.

The Constitution presented the political programmed of the Macedonian liberation movement. It set out the tasks of the organization: to realise the given revolutionary aim, to introduce the people to a knowledge of the revolution and its spirit, to prepare and arm the people for a general uprising. A complete outline of the heirarchical order from the local committees to the Central Committee was worked out.

On the basis of the Constitution the Rule Book was also prepared. In it the duties of the Central Committee and the village, district and regional committees were given. Attention was given to the questions of correspondence, secret post, the secret police and other organs of the revolution. Precise details of punishment and the measures to be taken concerning armaments and other material necessities were given. The Central Committee was appointed

as responsible for the high duties involved in directing the whole revolutionary movement. The duties of every member of the organization were worked out in detail.

These important basic documents made a great contribution to the formation of the new organization of the Macedonian movement and to its development as a mass movement. From then on the organization was based more and more on the force of the masses. The influence of the poor peasantry became greater thus giving the organization the character of a people's movement. Goce Delčev, in common with other leaders of Macedonian liberation movement, made particular efforts in this direction. The Soviet historian V. I. Zuev underlined the importance of this with the following words: »Goce Delčev turned not inconsiderable efforts towards transforming VMRO into a mass revolutionary organization capable of leading the fight in Macedonia«.

After the Salonika congress Goce Delčev continued to engage in the work of consolidating the ranks of the revolutionary organization. He deliberately turned his attention to ensuring the border regions in eastern Macedonia. For this purpose he moved to Bansko (Pirin Macedonia) in September 1896, where he combined his work as head teacher with his work for the cause. Throughout this part of Macedonia, too, he formed committees and widened the network of the organization. He remained there until the middle of November 1896. He made this area a stronghold of independent Macedonian revolutionary activity.

IN DEFENCE OF TRUTH AND FREEDOM

During the second half of November 1896, Goce Delčev moved to Bulgaria where he became actively engaged in the proper representation of the cause of Macedonian liberation, in defense of the truth of the Macedonian situation and liberty. In the meantime the Central Committee in Salonika considered appointing a representative for the organization abroad in accordance with the articles of TMORO. The Central Committee considered Goce Delčev the best choice for the work and he was appointed. Gorče Petrov wrote the following about this event: »Delčev's leaving Razlog allowed him to go to Sophia. The Central Committee chose him to be its representative there and he stayed until 1902. Delčev was thus the first illegal activist and among the most important engaged in this work. He was also the first representative of the Organization in Bulgaria.«

As time passed the amount of work for which the External Representation was responsible was so great that in March 1897 Goce Delčev requested that an additional representative be appointed. Gorce Petrov was elected to this duty.

Together Goce Delčev and Gorče Petrov built the institution of the External Representation into a truly Macedonian people's representation. The Macedonian Organization could not have found a more favourable pair than these two to take over such an important function and to make of it an impenetrable stronghold of the Macedonian struggle for independence, a representative and defender of the Macedonian cause. This act by which the Central Committee of TMORO placed such native creators of Macedonian policies and defenders of Macedonian interests in such an important position in the very centre of supremacism where the anti — Macedonian politics of invasion were being inspired and shaped proved to be very shrewd. These policies consisted of attempts to infiltrate into Macedonia and take over the revolutionary organization from within. The task of the External Representation lay in eliminating this appetite for invasion and, at the same time, in affirming the Macedonian liberation movement with extraordinary effort and dignity.

The main direction taken by the External Representation consisted of efforts to hinder every anti-Macedonian action by followers of Bulgarian expansionism and supremacism. At this time the Bulgarian bourgeoisie and Bulgarian court were taking an active chauvinist and expansionist stand inspired by the desire to fulfil the »eternal dream and ideal of a Bulgaria according to San Stephanos. The existence of the Supreme Committee was then exploited to a considerable extent and it became an agent of these policies offering »help« to the Macedonian movement and thereby screening expansionist aims and acts. Linked to this were

the efforts made to provoke »premature rebellions and uprisings« which hid the desire to fulfill the »Bulgarian national ideal«.

In this political kaleidoscope Goce Delčev and Gorče Petrov had the duty of defending the truth of the Macedonian cause. We can understand just how many difficulties faced them, what persistence and honesty were needed to defend the pureness of the Macedonian cause.

As external representative Goce Delčev developed varied activities. For the most part he concentrated on practical activities concerned with ensuring material needs and supplying the Organization with arms, munitions, literature and revolutionary papers, sending recruits to the country, ensuring the border points and the condition of the revoltiuntry cause in the districts and regions of Macedonia. An important part of his work lay in his relations with the supremacists and their activities in Macedonia. As the Macedonian revolutionary movement developed all other activities became linked to this.



Sultana Delčeva



Nikola Delčev



Kukuš — Goce Delčev 's birthplace

Armaments and the alphabet of the revolution were Goce Delčev's main worries. His correspondence from the end of 1896 to 1902/1903 abounds in material devoted to his selfless desire to succeed in his efforts. For him armaments represented an important and essential element in the revolution. He gave his proclaimed ideas a material form and thus succeeded in organizing a network of centers for the supply and transport of arms and munitions to Macedonia. He achieved this with a system characterized by risks, difficulties, hindrances, cunning and careful persistence.

Goce Delčev also took great efforts to supply the Organization with bombs and other explosives. He and Gorče Petrov worked together on this. Because of the difficulties involved they came to the idea of arming Macedonia by independent means. With this in mind they decided the solution lay in opening a workshop for bombs and other explosives in the village of Sablja in Osogovska planina (eastern Macedonia). They did this in the spring of 1897. This workshop was known as the »factory« or the »Sablja factory«. With the help of an Armenian, a founder, who had been released from work by the Armenian revolutionary committee various types of bombs and explosives were produced. The »factory« worked for almost a year until it came under suspicion from the Turkish and Bulgarian authorities and closed down. This was a typical promethean effort in the underground work devoted to the Macedonian cause.

Linked with the problem of armaments was the question of creating an armed force for the Organization. This became particularly necessary in November, 1897, when the Turkish authorities discovered the existence of the revolutionary force of the Organization through the discoveries it made after the so-called Vinicka affair from which a large number of the regions in eastern Macedonia suffered. At this point organizational activity changed to a period of revolutionary struggle, to the forced engagement of all revolutionary initiatives actions. This change meant the creation of armed division on a wider scale. Therefore the Central Committee of the Organization passed a series of fourteen instructions according to which permanent armed bands were formed in the revolutionary districts and regions. These were the basic forces of the revolution. Immediately after this the question of building up a healthy, trained and disciplined military force properly prepared for the revolutionary cause arose. For this reason the »cetnicki institut« was formed. Goce Delčev played a major part in the passing of these instructions and the work of coordinating the cetnicki institut. Now, at last, the confrontation between the two opposing forces became clear: the Macedonian revolutionary organization faced the power of the Osmanlis.

Goce Delčev continued his efforts to place the organization of the revolutionary forces on a firmer foundation during 1898, 1899 and 1900. Apart from this he also looked after the supply of arms and munitions to the revolutionary regions. He became so occupied with this activity that he was recognized as the head of all the armed bands in Macedonia and was given such a position by the Central Committee of the Organization. With the aim of organizing all the revolutionary forces Delceev began to inspect the revolutionary regions, particularly in eastern Macedonia, as from January, 1900. Besides inspecting the regions Goce Delčev also tried to attract not only people capable of leading the armed bands but also intellectuals who could play a large part in directing the Organization along general ideological and revolutionary paths to the Organization. He was able to attract a large number of Macedonian socialist and other revolutionary democrats to the Organization. He also turned his attention towards the education of the revolutionary forces and the enslaved masses. He took as his starting point the idea that the revolution should be made in the minds of people, that an educated people, an educated mass through whom revolution can be achieved more successfully, must be created. He felt the need to create a Macedonian revolutionary literature which could serve as a means of educating the enslaved people. He once said: »The acceptance of the revolutionary idea on the part of the masses will be easier if we create a Macedonian literature for mass circulation«. For this reason he attempted to supply Macedonia with revolutionary literature. He engaged Atanas Razdelov, a

revolutionary democrat from Berovo in eastern Macedonia, who published booklets of a revolutionary type as early as 1895. Razdelov attempted to contribute to the awareness of Macedonian slavery by means of popular writings. He published a whole series of books which Goce Delčev sent throughout Macedonia. They helped to raise the revolutionary spirit of the masses and give them a proper understanding of the Macedonian liberation movement and the basic character of the Macedonian revolution. Goce also distributed revolutionary literature by other authors thus making an important contribution to the education of the masses and elevating their revolutionary initiative.

All these activities register the rising energy of the Macedonian revolutionary organization. The movement became increasingly a mass movement, a state within a state. Its growing strength represented a danger to the government of the Osmanlis which began to take steps against the activists of the Macedonian revolutionary organization in 1901 when, in January, all the members of the Central Committee in Salonika were imprisoned following some discoveries. This was a severe blow to the Organization. It left the External Representation as the only higher organ of the revolutionary movement. In this situation Goce Delčev and Gorče Petrov sent a circular letter between 8th and 14th March, 1901, to the revolutionary regions to confirm the situation which had arisen as the result of the imprisonment of the Central Committee. They pointed out the measures which should be taken in each region and insisted on a change to temporary decentralization, the strengthening of discipline and other activities in the work of the Organization.

A considerable part of Goce Delčev and Gorče Petrov's activities was devoted to the struggle against supremacism and the actions of the supremacists in Macedonia. Goce considered the supremacists to be a greater danger to the Macedonian organization than the Osmanlis regime. He based his view on the actions of the supremacists aimed at mastering the Macedonian movement and destroying every attempt to find an independent direction. Every independent act hampered the supremacists and their Bulgarian expansionist masters. In his famous work, *The Macedonian Liberation Movement on Bulgarian Soil*, Gorče Petrov underlined that »the Macedonian liberation movement, as a cause with pretensions to an independent existence, as a national ideal, is not to the taste of the politicians. These politicians, whatever their party or beliefs, amuse themselves with the cause only in so far as it can be exploited in terms of government and party relationships or for personal benefits«.

Goce Delčev and Gorče Petrov fought with all their strength to defend the principles of the Macedonian movement, eliminate all external interference and prevent provocation inside Macedonia. They fought against the actions of the Supreme Committee, which, thought it had changed its leadership, had not changed its policies towards the Macedonian Organization, now given the name the Internal Organization⁸) because it defended the interests of the internal Macedonian cause founded on the principle of independence. Goce Delčev and Gorče Petrov vigorously opposed the attempts of the supremacists to infiltrate Macedonia. With this aim in mind Goce Delčev fought particularly against the attempts of Boris Sarafov, a Macedonian supremacist and adventurer, to infiltrate an armed force into Macedonia. He followed the same principle in his relationships with the Bulgarian general Ivan Cončev who was outstanding as a leader of the supremacists. Boris Sarafov himself wrote about Goce's principle concerning those who joined the armed bands in his memoirs. Goce told him: »We will not permit an officer to belong both to the Organization and the Committee. If you and Cončev enter the country you will be met by the opposition of the Organization«. Dimo Hadži Dimov, an outstanding Macedonian activist, interprets this in the following way: »As long as my shoulder carries a gun Macedonia is closed to Bulgarian officers«.

Goce Delčev also defended his principle before the congresses of the Macedonian associations. At the seventh congress, held on 7th April, 1901, he defended the viewpoint of the Internal Organization. He said: »The Internal Organization is not just trying to supply the people with arms but to free them from their enslaved spirits. He continued to talk of the efforts of Sarafov to enter Macedonia and why the Internal Organization opposed this as it

meant meddling from outside in its affairs. He stressed that the secret Macedonian organization would vigorously oppose any of the outrages of the Supreme Committee committed against it.

In these struggles with the supremacists the Macedonian revolutionary organization succeeded in holding a firm position and transforming itself into a pure revolutionary organism. It strove to ensure its independence and preserve its position as the prime mover in the struggle for national and social liberation. It continued its struggle effectively after 1909, following the proper path for a liberation movement. In this way the organization began to take on the character of a government. We can see this in its decisions to boycott the Turkish courts, to arm the people completely, to take over the schools from the Exarchate, to behave in a correct and democratic manner towards the other nationalities and ethnic groups in Macedonia, to reject every kind of chauvinism and small town nationalism, to spread the idea of self — government and continue the struggle against all propaganda. Goce Delčev took a leading part in this activity and directed the actions of the revolutionary forces. In August, 1901, he undertook a major inspection of the revolutionary regions in most parts of Macedonia with the aim of seeing the situation in the field.



Goce Delčev

THE GREAT EXPEDITION

Goce Delčev began his inspection of the revolutionary regions in eastern Macedonia and then moved on to other regions. The first point was in Radoviš and the surrounding area. Here he completed a revision of the region, organized channels for the transport of arms and gave directions in the case of the appearance of supremacist bands. During the first days of September, 1901, he left for the Tikveš district. He stayed some days in Negotino and reviewed the position of the Organization and the movement. Then he went to Kavadarci where he looked over the situation of the region, checked the accounts of the Organization, the supply of arms and other matters. He stayed longest in the village of Vataša near Kavadarci. Apart from reviewing the position of the village he also showed interest in the organization of the surrounding villages. For this reason he held discussions with the leaders of the villages and gave them directions and guidelines for future activities. He insisted on the creation of a military police force as one form of a popular force. He held an open meeting in the local school during which he disclosed the whole situation in Macedonia and insisted that all the liberation forces must be united.

From the Tikveš area Goce Delčev moved to Prilep and then to Bitola. Wherever he went he carried out a review of the movement and brought order to the ranks of the Organization. The largest part of his work was concentrated on the Bitola revolutionary circle, and he stayed there about 20 days. Here he held organizational meetings where they debated the condition of the district and the movement, the effectiveness of the propaganda, armaments and similar matters. In this important Macedonian centre Goce Delčev had many meetings with the leading activists of the district and succeeded in meeting Dame Gruev who was then in Bitola prison. He exchanged opinions with Gruev on the position of the Organization. He also held a meeting with the leaders in the town and surrounding area where they discussed the direction of future activity. His stay in Bitola contributed to making the revolutionary movement healthier.

Goce Delčev then moved to the Castoria revolutionary region in the south west of coastal Macedonia somewhere around 20th November, 1901. At first he stayed in the village of Konomly where he reviewed the situation of the cause. Here he formed an administrative body the function of which was to resolve disputes and thus completely prevent recourse to the Turkish courts. Delcev developed similar bodies in other villages (Smrdeš, Čerešnica, Zagoričani etc.). Wherever he went he looked into the position of the Organization and the people, the question of armaments, court authority, treachery, morale and similar matters. He held meetings and spread the idea of revolution. At one such gathering in the village of Zagoricani he said: »The dearest thing for a people is to be free. For this you must break the chains of slavery and destroy the Turkish tyranny«.

From Castoria Goce Delčev moved to the Fiorina district. Here, too, he visited a large number of villages and everywhere, together with the inspection of the situation, he tried to give the people faith in themselves, in the revolution and freedom. He held open meetings and brought together the national forces in their struggle against the Osmanlis system and all forms of external meddling.

Delcev planned to visit the other Macedonian regions (Voden, Gevgelija, Strumica, Kukuš, Ser, Drama, Adrianopole) but he was prevented from doing this because he had to attend the division of the financial gains from the kidnapping of the American missionary Miss Stone which had been carried out by Macedonian revolutionaries in order to get the ransom. He also had to give his attention to other activities for the revolutionary organization. In spite of this Goce's journey through most of Macedonia contributed to strengthening the movement and spreading the revolutionary idea in the minds of the people. Peju Javorov wrote: »The Macedonian people saw in his person their closest, most loyal and most loved teacher, friend and son. From near and far people went to him and asked for hope, truth, everything . . . «.

In February, 1902, Goce Delčev returned to his old duties in the External Representation in Sophia. He was then engaged in the distribution of Miss Stone's ransom, in strengthening the

revolutionary districts, the supply of arms and munitions, in working out the principles of the *Delo* and *Pravo* newspapers which defended the interests of the Internal Organization. In addition, together with Gorče Petrov, he continued his struggle with the supremacists and their attempts to infiltrate Macedonia. On the subject of his efforts to defend Macedonian interests in the face of the demand by the supremacists that they be given joint responsibility with the Internal Organization we have his answer: »What you demand is amusing. Responsibility is not something which we can take off and give you like a piece of clothing. It is a right which has been gained by effort and capabilities proven, by sacrifices made in the interest of the people. Come to Macedonia. We shall present you to the people and you will convince it of the necessity of what you want and, if it comes to like you, it will give you its trust and responsibility for it.« Goce defended his categorical position in all his subsequent activities in the External Representation and outside it. He was particularly active in preventing any supremacist from entering Macedonia. With this in mind the External Representation sent directions to all the revolutionary districts in Macedonia to take energetic measures against any attempts by the supremacists to enter the country and to return any such armed band. This was done. The attempts by the supremacists to enter the country failed. However, when they did not succeed, the supremacists provoked uprisings in Gornadžumaja (Pirin Macedonia) in September and October 1902. These »uprisings« were not widespread and included only a few villages. The population had to suffer the consequences of these unsuccessful attempts.

Goce Delčev and Gorče Petrov were able to make a point out of this adventure and continued their efforts to make the organization healthier, to enforce resistance, to arm their forces and develop selfdiscipline and faith in the revolutionary cause of liberty.

IDEAS OF LIBERATION

During his work as a revolutionary Goce Delčev showed himself to be a true revolutionary democrat, a typical popular leader. Besides his direct involvement in the formation of the revolutionary movement he was also active in spreading the idea of liberation and thus became an outstanding ideologist of the Macedonian national liberation movement.

Goce Delčev spread the idea of liberation through meetings and contacts with the revolutionary forces. We find his basic contacts in his correspondence.

Goce Delčev built up his ideological platform on the basis of everything most progressive in humanity as seen in the specific atmosphere which existed in Macedonia towards the end of last century and the beginning of this. As time passed his ideals developed a specific form which he expressed in his just view of the Macedonian national liberation struggle.

Delčev expressed his ideological starting point in the following words: »I am an anarchist in spirit, a social democrat by conviction and a revolutionary by my work«. With this statement he sought to give assurance to the internationalist and popular leader whatever his ideological conception and the essential factors which limited him as a patriot.

The greatness of Goce Delčev's ideas lies in the fact that he broke away from a narrow concept of national freedom and achieved the stature of an international thinker interested in humanity and its common problems. He took his stand on the following maxim: »I understand the world to be only a field for the cultural competition of nations«. This high expression of humanism was based on the harmony to be found in the conditions of a free world and among a free people.

We can find extreme revolutionary and democratic ideas in Goce Delčev's conception. There were built up under the influence of socialist, revolutionary and anarchist learning. We can at times liken them to some of Blanc's ideas. For example, Goce expressed the thought that ». . . Power is a symbol of self-deceit, of violence and robbery. . . « and, »Hound out the

rulers, hate and rebel against every lord«. He also approaches Blanc in his conception of the essence of terror and terrorism.

In his ideas Goce was a radical supporter of the historical initiative of the masses, the revolutionary essence of the struggle. He said: »If tyranny is violence, use revolution and violence against violence«. Liberty could only be born through revolution. In him this achieved a sublime form through his great deeds and aims. He gave particularly important expression to this when he said: »The moral revolution in the mind, heart and spirit of an enslaved people is the greatest task«. Linked to this are two components of revolution which he took as starting points, the individual and the mass. From this he was able to build a whole system of mass revolution. He considered the individual as the first step towards the collective and the revolution in the full meaning of the word. This found expression in his direct involvement in the Macedonian revolutionary battlefield where he stood out as a strategist and tactician.

Goce Delčev gave the Macedonian liberation struggle a clear definition with his ideas of liberation. He began building his conception as early as 1895. He believed that the success of the liberation struggle depended above all on its basic nucleus, the people, as the moving force in history. The acceptance of the people depended on the social and economic conditions and thus its political consciousness. In Goce's words »The people must wake up from their deep sleep of five centuries which has left the Macedonian with little consciousness of human justice. If not the whole people then maybe a part of it. . .« It was for just this reason that Goce pleaded logically that the consciousness of freedom be elevated.

This concept contains the idea that the Macedonian masses must be organized. The essence of this appears in the leitmotif: »The organization of the Macedonian people is necessary to overcome their slavery, not to trade«. This was Goce's decisive principle. He elaborates on it in his developed thesis that »Macedonia has its own interests and its own politics which belong to every Macedonian; whoever longs and works for union with Bulgaria or Greece is either a good Bulgarian or Greek but not a good Macedonians This categorical argument was made into law in the Constitution of TMORO of 1896. In one article of the Constitution it says: »Any Macedonian or native of the Adrianopole region may become a member of TMORO as long as he has not compromised himself by any dishonest act before the society and promises to make it his duty to be of use to the revolutionary liberation movement«.

Goce Delčev was quite clear that the revolutionary cause must be built on independent principles and forbid any external meddling in its affairs. He said: »Internal affairs must remain the responsibility of people inside the organization«. From this arises the dignified cry: »Just let us keep the liberation movement and the Organization true — that is the first condition for success«. Or: »We cannot hope for foreign aid . . . for outsiders not to meddle in our affairs«.

Goce Delčev arranged the basic principles of the Macedonian revolution as through the prism of his revolutionary and democratic ideas. He considered that systematic agitation for the revolution should be carried on in Macedonia and that this would have freedom as its end result. He defined this concept in the following way: »The liberation of Macedonia lies in internal rebellion. Whoever thinks to liberate Macedonia otherwise is being untruthful both to himself and others«. We find here his belief in the power of revolution, in the ability of its protagonists to become conscious citizens who can take upon themselves this responsible role. Goce took into account the social, political and economic situation to give the Macedonian revolution concrete form. This is, in fact, the starting point for a bourgeois-democratic or popular revolution. Goce Delčev remained faith full to this creed and thus began to work towards the greatness of the Macedonian cause.

Goce Delčev was also the creator of the high ideals of the Macedonian revolution. He came the idea of creating a free state as early as 1895. This idea was given form in the expression: »We are fighting for freedom and an independent Macedonia with broad rights for the poor population«. We find the same thought, though more developed, in the cry: »I

want freedom for the Macedonian population and not for the country of Macedonia«. This is an expression of both the minimum and maximum for which the program aimed. The first principle is given in the first article of the Constitution of TMORO which says that the main aim consists of » . . . winning full political autonomy through revolution«. The highest principle is also set out here. Todor Pavlov defined this in 1946 when he said that Goce belongs to the ranks of fighters and patriots » . . . for the liberation of their country and the creation of a socialist Macedonian republic which would be a component part of the federal Balkan republic . . . «

Goce Delčev took the constitutional tradition of Macedonia as one of the starting points for his conception. For this reason he supported the unity of Macedonia and did not permit the division of her territory. If that could not be achieved he considered that »Macedonia will fall to some of the Balkan states or will be divided by them. Then we will be sweepers with half a shoe; better to be dead than allow that«.

Goce's stand on the question of the Macedonian national consciousness is also important. We must review his standpoint objectively from the point of view of the events in Macedonia towards the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. Like other leaders of the Macedonia movement Goce Delčev himself created the atmosphere in which he lived and worked. Todor Pavlov expressed this problem faithfully in 1946 when he stressed that Goce » . . . for all his revolutionary activity and great contribution to the formation and development of the Macedonian national (that is, the Macedonian-slav and not the Bulgarian or Serbian) consciousness he still did not find the opportunity to attend to this exceptionally important question . . . «

In truth Goce Delčev devoted his whole life to Macedonian freedom and independence. He did not turn to any national spirit, not did he serve any of the sources of propaganda, but devoted himself to the Macedonian cause. He remained faithful to the cause of his own people as a whole, as a struggle of all the peoples and ethnic groups in Macedonia. He clarified the idea of the unity of all those without rights in the struggle against tyranny for freedom and equality. For this reason he argued the case for federation as an essential step in the development of peoples and humanity.

Goce's doctrine contributed to the clarification of many points, mistakes and illusions, and directed Macedonian nationalism towards its logical historical path. In addition he held to his deep belief in democracy. As a humanist and revolutionary democrat he rejected all national hatreds. Peju Javorov confirms this: »A foreigner to all kinds of chauvinism he worked for everyone who suffers from tyranny. Before his heated and convincing words all national differences disappear in the name of self-governing Macedonia. Before his enthusiastic description of a federal republic on the Balkan peninsula all tribal hatreds disappear«. In this way Goce defined the Macedonian revolution, collecting together all the dissatisfied elements in the struggle for freedom and a more bearable life. In his work as an organizer Goce Delčev made no distinction between the other ethnic groups and the Macedonian people. As an argument for this position he stated the maxim: »I do not hate the Osmanlis as a people; I am making war on the tyranny of the Osmanlis as a ruling system.« In his work in the field Goce Delčev followed the principles given above. He advised that the progressive Turks and members of other groups who sincerely wanted to join the fight for freedom be attracted to the Organization. According to him this meant that « . . . our sufferings are equal under the Sultan and we are not fighting against the Turkish people. Macedonia will become a country for everyone who lives in injustice, for Turks and Arumanians, even for Greeks. The Macedonians will live in their republic as brothers to everyone«.

Everything that we have stressed shows just how outstandingly democratic Goce Delčev, the great national mover in the history of the Macedonian national liberation movement, was.

FATEFUL QUESTION

Goce Delčev took a firm stand on the question of the uprising. In order to undertake such an effort he considered that all possibilities should be taken into account, including the revolutionary facilities, so that local conditions could be harmonised, the self-confidence, knowledge and feeling of the masses known and the internal and external situation of Macedonia grasped. When these preconditions were all favourable then such a final step became a possibility. However, the supremacists opposed this and began to meddle in Macedonian affairs more and more towards the end of 1902 and the beginning of 1903. Having learnt nothing from previous premature uprisings they continued their policy of provoking uprisings for whatever they could gain, of solving the Macedonian question in the interests of foreign powers. They became ever more aggressive towards Macedonia. Their leader General Ivan Cončev expressed the desire to »solve the Macedonian question with the mediation of high circles in Bulgarian Hidden supremacists such as Ivan Garvanov informed the general: »You must take these bands of brigands from the inside«. It was just this harmful intention that the supremacists translated into action. They made use of the imprisonment of the Central Committee of the Internal Organization in Salonika to put Ivan Garvanov onto the committee and he succeeded in imposing resolutions foreign to the Macedonian cause. The first attempt at this took place in January 1903, when a congress of the Internal Organization was called to pass the resolution leading to an uprising in Macedonia. The External Representation and Goce Delčev knew of this resolution. So as to define the standpoint on this question a meeting of internal activists among whom were Goce Delčev, Gorče Petrov, Pere Tošev and Mihail Gerđžikov was held in Sophia at the beginning of January, 1903. At this conference the resolution of the Central Committee to call a congress and proclaim an uprising was discussed.

Two opinions arose, one defending the resolution and the other attacking it. Goce Delčev and Gorče Petrov vigorously opposed it. Goce considered it to be premature because the people were not prepared and the internal and external situations were not suitable. He went on to develop his thesis of mass uprising and the conditions for it. In this context he insisted on the need for eventual partisan actions mostly directed towards dynamiting key points. Gorče Petrov agreed with Goce in this. He developed the theme of »permanent rebellion« during the political and organizational preparation of the masses.

At this meeting the majority supported Goce Delčev and Gorče Petrov and sent an announcement to the Central Committee in Salonika noting the conditions needed for an eventual partisan action. Besides this congress of the Internal Organization the Salonika Congress was held from the 15th to 17th January, 1903. The congress was not complete as representatives from the whole of Macedonia were not present. However, a resolution was passed to call an uprising in the spring of 1903.

After the meeting in Sophia Goce Delčev left for Pirin Macedonia. He considered that the question of the uprising should be reviewed by the district congresses and therefore planned a meeting in this part of Macedonia where the problem could be solved. Towards 19th January, 1903, he set out with a group of his cofighters. By 25th January he had crossed the border and reached Bansko. Here he held a meeting with the local revolutionary forces at which he spoke of the aims of the Macedonian revolution and all its aspects. He insisted on strengthening the ranks and unmasked the harmful activities of the supremacists. From Bansko he went to Razlog where he also held meetings and strengthened the movement. On 31st January he left for Nevrokopsko. On 9th February he and his companions arrived in Kara-kjoj, a border village between the districts of Nevrokop, Ser and Demirhi-sar. This was supposed to be the meeting point for activists from the revolutionary district of Ser which included the Pirin and coastal regions of Macedonia. Here they received the information that the uprising had been decided upon by the Central Committee. The question of the uprising was discussed. The majority present were against it.

Goce Delčev left this area for Krcevo (Demirhisar region) on 19 th February. He remained here for quite a long period. During his stay he again took up the question of the uprising and planned to go to Salonika to investigate opinions there directly. At the same time he prepared to carry out dynamiting operation. The aim was to concentrate on the tunnel and bridge of the Angista. (Drama region). This operation was completed successfully on 1st April, 1903. It won considerable attention, even from diplomats and the foreign press.

After the Angista operation Goce Delčev found himself excited by its success and the response. He now prepared to leave for Salonika which he did on 17 th April disguised as a peasant. In Salonika he found accommodation in the physics laboratory of the gymnasium and here held meetings with important activists in the Central Committee of the Internal Organization. He met Dame Gruev, who had returned here from exile, several times. In his discussions Goce opposed the uprising because the internal and external situation of Macedonia was not suitable for such a large undertaking. He did not succeed in his efforts to prevent the uprising though he did have some of his views accepted. Thus, for example, the uprising was postponed from the spring (May) to a later date. It was also accepted that a high level of action by the armed bands should take place, i.e. that četnik-partisan actions be organized. In this we can note a partial rejection of the provocation by the supremacists because those who already belonged to the Internal Organization and the Macedonian socialists took affairs into their own hands thus giving the uprising a national character.

In Salonika Goce Delčev also had a meeting with the Macedonian anarchists,⁹⁾ a Macedonian revolutionary democrat group with anarchist tendencies, which aimed to strike individually against the Ottoman Empire and investors of foreign capital in it. They considered these two factors to be the cause of the enslavement of the Macedonian masses. They planned many attacks in Salonika (the Salonika outrages). Goce Delčev knew of this and worked to them to an end though he felt sympathy with the group. Just as he left Salonika secretly the outrages started and this led to a new storm in Macedonia.

BANICA: THE LAST DAYS



Goce Delčev 's sarcophagus in the church of St. Spas in Skopje

Goce planned to leave Salonika for Ali-Botuš where a congress of the revolutionary district of Ser was to be held to give his own opinion on the uprising. He travelled through Macedonia in secrecy. Pierre d'Espagne, the French writer, wrote that »Delčev passed through the Turkish ambushes in the Ser region like a legendary hero«. His journey took him to Banica where he intended to meet a group of activists from the region. Yet this was to be the end; it was here he met his »un-named executioner« as Pushkin expressed it.

On the 2nd of May, 1903, Goce Delčev arrived in the village of Banica (in the district of Ser, now Karie) which lies 15 ks. to the north of Ser. The next day two groups of revolutionaries from the region arrived. The total number of fighters was about twenty and they were all housed in the village. Meanwhile, Turkish troupe movements in the vicinity of Banica were noticed. The leader of these troupes was Tefikov from the garrison in Ser, a friend of Goce's from his days at the military academy in Sophia. Delčev and his friends were unaware of these manoeuvres which enabled the turks to surround Banica by the evening of the 3rd of May. Early the next day they began to encircle the houses where Goce's comrades were lodged. That morning Goce and the others were informed of the position and the alarm was raised. Goce ordered his forces to go out into the street and try and leave the village. However, the army caught up with them at the end of the village and when Goce gave the order to fire, and as soon as he fired his first shot, he was hit and wounded in the left side. During his last moments he only succeeded in saying, »Ah, boys, wounds . . .« After his death the others fought for his body. Dimo Hadži Dimov, one of those who took part in the battle, described the end in this way: »For fifteen hours we watched over the dead Goce as if it were Macedonia's grave. And for fifteen hours we were sick at heart«.

After the battle the Turks took their revenge and set fire to the village and bombarded it with their guns. Delčev's body remained where it was. Tefikov recognized Delčev and ordered his body to be taken to Ser. However, another order was received and his body remained in Banica and was buried there.

The events which led to Delčev's death were shrouded in secrecy. It is clear that treachery was involved and that the event was complicated by many interests and other factors. Therefore several versions of it exist. One thing is clear: until the archives in Istanbul, Sophia and Athens are open to inspection we shall not be able to clarify the problem fully. However, we can suppose that the supremacists had a hand in it because Goce Delčev, together with Gorče Petrov, Dimo Hadži Dimov and Jane Sandanski, was their bitterest enemy, an activist who unmasked their harmful activities in the Macedonian liberation movement. How otherwise can we interpret their vulgar delight on hearing of the death of Delčev and the statement by Cončev, Jankov and others of their leaders: »At last we are free of that dog«.

The news of Goce Delceev's death quickly spread through Macedonia. Goce's relatives heard of the event two days later. The loss of Delčev even reflected on his close friends and comrades. The Turkish government set great importance on his death as can be seen from the official announcement from the Porte to diplomatic representatives. Diplomatic circles in Istanbul and Salonika paid attention to this announcement. Most representatives informed their governments of the event and stressed the loss to the Macedonian movement.

Goce's death aroused interest in the foreign press. The Turkish press was the first to spread the news which was then taken up by the agencies and the daily press. *The Times of London* wrote that Delceev »was the true leader of the well-known Internal Organization and the mainspring of the entire movement«. The journalist and publicist John Mac Donald wrote in the *Daily News* that »Delčev was for many years the spirit of the revolution in Macedonia. . . the idol of tens of thousands of Macedonian villagers«. The Paris newspaper *Le Temps* considered Delceev »the young chief of the Macedonian revolution«. Italian, Austro-Hungarian, Bulgarian and other newspapers also devoted considerable space to Delceev's death.

The loss of Goce also aroused lively commentary in the Yugoslav press. All the more important Yugoslav newspapers set aside space for reports of his death and the great loss to the Macedonian movement. The Zagreb *Obzor* called Delčev »the energetic leader of the Internal Organization«. Slovenian and Serbian papers published many interesting details about Delceev's death and his revolutionary activities.

The space devoted to Delceev's life and work is witness to the interest of the press and diplomatic circles in the Macedonian liberation movement. Thus Goce Delčev's work also helped to spread the Macedonian ideal.



Memorial to Goce Delčev in Skopje

SYMBOL TO GENERATIONS OF MACEDONIANS

Goce Delčev's work and devotion to the Macedonian liberation movement were in the tradition of the Macedonian progressive generations. His work contributed to the subsequent development of the Macedonian liberation movement and the emancipation of the Macedonian people in an international context. He cleared the paths leading to the formation of a Macedonian national consciousness which is so powerfully expressed in *About Macedonian Affairs*, by Krste Petkov Misirkov.

The people of Ser became faithful followers of Goce's ideas and formed the left wing of the Macedonian movement after Ilinden during the Young Turk revolution and the subsequent struggles. The left wing was kept alive by the activities of Gorče Petrov, Dimo Hadži Dimov and other Macedonian activists who were worthy supporters of Goce's VMRO even between the two world wars.

The traditions which Goce laid down served to mark the way for the generations of Macedonian progressives in their resistance to all attempts to turn the movement in directions contrary to its aims. These traditions were expressed in the continuity of the Macedonian national liberation struggle, in the efforts of the new social forces led by the working class which, in the period between the two wars, became the true instrument through which the Macedonian people and other peoples expressed their desire for national and social liberation. We see this in the struggle to realize and surpass Goce's ideas which finally came about during the Peoples' Revolution in Macedonia which was carried out in combination with the other Yugoslav peoples. Under the new conditions Goce's ideals served to lead and inspire the new struggle. In the proclamations and other documents published by the Regional Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party for Macedonia during the National Liberation War and later by the Macedonian Communist Party we find the call to follow the

revolutionary heritage, to continue and surpass Goce's work, often present. This was also expressed in the popular use of Goce's name. In September, 1942, the Goce Delčev detachment of partisans was formed in Bitola. In 1944 a brigade of the same name came into being. Goce's flag also waved above partisan detachments in Aegean and Pirin Macedonia. His name was sung in the songs of the National Liberation War. On a higher level it was reflected in the documents of the first assembly of ASNOM (Anti-Fascist Parliament of the National Liberation of Macedonia) at which the first Macedonian government was created thus realizing and surpassing Goce's ideals. The New Macedonia within the framework of a socialist Yugoslavia became a monument to Goce's great work.

The Macedonian people paid Goce Delčev the respect he deserved in many ways and recongnized his importance for Macedonian history. His bones were brought to Macedonia from Bulgaria in October, 1946, and a monument to his memory unveiled in Skopje. Towns, streets, factories, institutions, firms and schools have been named after him. His name and work appear in folksong and poetry, monuments, paintings and drawings, and in scientific essays. In this way Macedonia recognizes and repays her debt to her visionary and leader.

CONCLUSION

Goce Delčev appeared on the Macedonian historical scene at a time when all the social, economic and political conditions for the development of the Macedonian national liberation movement were present. As a child of his times he, and other protagonists in the movement, succeeded in entering into the spirit of the enslaved masses of Macedonia and becoming their true voice and leader. The period in which he lived enabled him to direct his activities towards the progressive aspects of the Macedonian revolution and the path of self — and national realization. It was for this very reason that Goce Delčev completed his task and succeeded in feeling the pulse of the masses, awakening them from their dream, instilling faith in themselves and leading them to the light of freedom. His appearance was only an expression of the times in which he lived and worked.

When we speak of Goce Delčev and his times we should bear in mind that he lived for only 31 years (1872—1903) and worked for the Macedonian revolution for less than ten years (1894—1903). Thus the question of his contribution to Macedonian history and the drive to national and social liberation is important. In his life we can see a continual effort and desire to work towards freedom and to give the movement a proper sense and direction. Delčev did not act as a narrow nationalist and national revolutionary but as a true popular leader and typical revolutionary democrat. He had the socialist's view of the world and could thus rise above his times and give tone and sense consonant with the conditions to the atmosphere and historical development of Macedonia. He was a constant activist on the Macedonian revolutionary battlefield and in the defense of Macedonian truth and freedom against foreign meddling. It is for these reasons that his work has been awarded such an important place in the history of the Macedonian national liberation movement. The Soviet historian V. I. Zuev wrote as follows: »The Macedonian revolutionary democrat Goce Delčev must be given credit for transforming Macedonian revolutionary organization into a fighting centre, the centre of the national liberation movement and an active mass movements
The greatness of Goce's self-sacrifice for the Macedonian people and the other peoples in Macedonia has brought him recognition and honour. His contribution helped Macedonian progressive forces to complete their historic task and surpass his own ideals under new conditions thus enabling the creation of the Macedonian self-governing republic within the framework of socialist Yugoslavia which was free to follow a worthy course into the future.

- 1) Cifliksajbii — were large landowners, masters of real property. The word is derived from ciflig (ciflik), which means property and sajbjija, meaning owner; hence property — owner.
- 2) Cifligari — were peasants who worked on the ciflik, i.e. real property or estate.
- 3) Fanariotstvo — expressed the interests and aspirations of the Greater Greek bourgeoisie and its expansionist policy towards Macedonia. The word is derived from fanar, inhabitants of Greek origin in the quarter of Constantinople which bears the same name. With time this name came to be applied to all Greeks in order to signify their influence over the Orthodox Church in the Osmanli Empire and their imposition of political superiority over the other peoples. In Macedonia their influence was strong right up to the fifties and sixties of the 19th century. At that time the main aim of the Macedonian population was to stand out against the political influence of fanariotstvo.
- 4) Egsarhija (Exarchate) — a Bulgarian Church organisation, formed on 28th February, 1870, when the Bulgarian Church split away from the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Macedonia came under the jurisdiction of this Church organisation. In time the Exarchate began to impose its influence both in Church and political affairs, which gave rise to opposition among social forces in Macedonia.
- 5) This part of Macedonia is normally called Primorska (Coastal) or Aegean Macedonia. The meaning is the same — the coastal part of Macedonia. Recently the term Coastal Macedonia has been more frequently used but the term Aegean Macedonia is also current. Similarly there are the terms Pirin Macedonia, that is to say that part of Macedonia which is under Bulgaria, and the Socialist Republic of Macedonia, within the framework of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.
- 6) Unijati (Uniates) — were those Christian believers who recognised the Pope in Rome as the Head of their Church, while they retained all the rites of the Orthodox Church.
- 7) The members of this committee came in time to be given the name of vrhovisti (Supremacists), which meant that they were representatives of the 'Committee, that is to say of Vrhovizm (Supremacism) which expressed an ideology and viewpoint alien to the Macedonian liberation movement. Its tendency was to solve Macedonian affairs according to the interests and aspirations of the Bulgarian bourgeoisie and state.
- 8) In the struggle against Vrhovizm (Supremacism) and against all foreign meddling in Macedonian affairs the Macedonian revolutionary organisation stood out bravely, defending the interests of the Macedonian people in an independent struggle. In this struggle the activists in the Macedonian organisation were given the name vnatresni (Internals) in view of the fact that they were defending internal Macedonian interests. Henceforth the organisation came to be known as »The Internal Revolutionary Organisation«. (Vnatresna Makedonska Revolucionerna Organizacija), thus replacing TMRO with VMRO, which name it retained for a long time.
- 9) »Gemidzii« — the name is derived from gemija, a boat and gemldzija, a boatman, and was used to denote the participants in the assassinations in Thessaloniki. The gemidzii (boatmen) drew up their plans of action on the gemii (boats), hence the name gemidzii (boatmen).

Translator Alexandra Gjuzelova

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