**OPINION**

**of the Cyrillo-Methodian Research Centre**

**on the occasion of the**

**„CHARTER OF MACEDONIAN LANGUAGE“**

**adopted by the Assembly of MASA on 3 December 2019**

Adopted on 3 December 2019 by a meeting of MASA, the “Charter of Macedonian Language" is another attempt to obliterate the connection between the modern official language of the Republic of North Macedonia and its Bulgarian roots and origin by manipulating historical facts and concealing truth.

The problem with the "Macedonian language" appeared in the 1960s-1970s in the context of Serbian propaganda. So far, as evidenced by the work of the National Revival public figures born in the lands of the present-day Republic of North Macedonia such as Yoakim Karchovski, Theodosius of Sinai, Kiril Peychinovich and Miladinovi brothers, the locals have called their language "Bulgarian" and this is explicitly noted on the cover pages of their works. One of the first to use "Macedonian" instead of "Bulgarian" to define the character of the Slavic-speaking population in the lands of present-day North Macedonia is Georgi Pulevski who had fallen under strong Serbian influence. Although in the following years Macedonists increased, in general, they remained a marginal group without influence and with "Macedonian" and "Bulgarian" identity changing according to circumstances. For this reason, defining the language in which the "*Macedonian revivalists*" of the 19th century were writing as "*Macedonian*", after they themselves called it "Bulgarian", is a gross forgery.

Among the reasons for adopting this law on language, modern ethical standards of present-day Europe are craftily intertwined such as: *“Language as a manifestation of the humane is an integral part of the common cultural heritage and the collective memory of every nation", "Macedonian is also spoken by members of other ethnic communities in the state", "The right to a language is a synonym of the natural and basic human right to speak, to study and protect one’s own language and the language of one’s country”* with a blatant distortion of the truth about the ethnic origin of both the language and the population of the state of North Macedonia.

Thus, among the scientifically recognized facts „*genealogically, the Macedonian language originates from the Indo-European language family and belongs to the group of Slavic languages, in the subgroup of South Slavic ones*“, there is no specification that this is the Bulgarian group of South Slavic dialects unlike the Serbian group.

With regard to “*the development of the written Macedonian language relies on at least two autochthonous alphabets, the Glagolitic and the Cyrillic alphabet, and the modern alphabet is based on Old Slavic, Cyrillo-Methodian and Old Church Slavonic Cyrillic, and has a rich written (Ohrid, Lesnovo), Old Church Slavonic, apocryphal, folk and literary-art tradition“* which is perceived solely and only as "Macedonian" tradition, there is neither a mention of the existence of the Bulgarian state, of which the present-day lands of the Republic of North Macedonia were then part and in which that language was adopted as the official language of the state and the church, nor that both alphabets, Glagolitic and Cyrillic, were used throughout the Bulgarian speaking territory; that the rich "*writing tradition*" has been inextricably linked to the Bulgarian one and is only part of the entire Bulgarian literary tradition from the Middle Ages to the present day. The spread of the Slavic writing system in the territory of the present-day Republic of North Macedonia was recorded in the Hagiography of St. Clement of Ohrid, written in Ohrid by Archbishop Theophilact of Ohrid. It explicitly stated that Kliment was sent to this part of the Bulgarian state by the Bulgarian ruler Knyaz Boris and at all times had the full material and moral support of the Bulgarian state.

The distortion of historical facts does not bypass the names of well-known and recognized by the entire Slavisitics scholars such as the Slovene Vatroslav Oblak, who, according to the declaration of MASA, proved that: *the Macedonian language spoken in the Macedonian areas where the Macedonian Slavs lived, especially in the Thessaloniki region, was exactly the language that through the Cyrillo-Methodian translations of the Holy Scriptures introduced the Slavs into the Christian world.*" In his study, Oblak reasons the groundlessness of the Pannonian theory on the origin of the earliest written Slavic language, and on the basis of a study on the speech of two villages from the Thessaloniki region - Suho and Visoka - proves that the language of Cyril and Methodius is based on their native dialect: the Thessaloniki dialect of the Bulgarian Slavs, defined by the scholar as "Macedonian Bulgarians" or "Bulgarians from Macedonia".

Recognizing “*the late codification*” of contemporary Macedonian standard language which "*evolved despite lacking solid social and political frameworks*" as part of "*generally accepted knowledge*" and in search of one's own identity, the document cites the names of people who wrote in "*folk Macedonian speech patterns*”- Grigor Parlichev, Kuzman Shapkarev, Marko Cepenkov, Miladinovi brothers, Rayko Zhinzifov - people who repeatedly and clearly declared their Bulgarian identity and the Bulgarian nature of the language in which they spoke and worked.

The use and substitution of the historical truth about these Bulgarian Revival public figures and writers, Bulgarian national enlighteners, people with invariably ***Bulgarian*** identity and activity for the ***Bulgarians*** in Macedonia, is another attempt to manipulate and distort the truth by creating *own Macedonian* roots where they do not exist.

The opinion of MASA states that “*the standard Macedonian language was codified by the organs of the People's Republic of Macedonia in May 1945, and this official codification was preceded by several individual and group undertakings for the codification of the Macedonian alphabet and spelling…*” but here, for "unclear" reasons, the political aspects of this codification are omitted: the Comintern Resolution of 1934 as well as the two decisions of the famous meetings of the Anti-fascist Assembly for the National Liberation of Macedonia on 2 August and 2 September 1944, in the monastery "St. Prochorus of Pcinja”.

It is quite natural for the 21st century that the speeches in the Republic of North Macedonia are included in the modern European linguistic atlas and in the Slavic linguistic atlas but the maps of these atlases only prove the integrity of the Bulgarian-speaking territory as it has been preserved to this day.

The attempt, with concepts of the XX and XXI centuries, to explain realities back in time to the IX century, the substitution and manipulation of the historical facts, the blatant lies about persons who have proved their Bulgarian self-consciousness throughout their lives cannot change the truth: the contemporary official language of the Republic of North Macedonia is a product of political reasons, not of linguistic development, and is a regional Bulgarian literary norm created on the basis of Bulgarian dialects from Macedonia and codified by a government decision in May 1945.