



**REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**  
**President**

**Address by the**  
**President of the Republic of Macedonia,**  
**His Excellency Dr. Gjorge Ivanov,**  
**on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of MANU**

**Skopje, October 10, 2017**

**Distinguished President of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts,  
Academician Taki Fiti,  
Distinguished Academy Presidents,  
Distinguished members of MANU,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Dear friends,**

Today we are celebrating the 50th anniversary since the establishment of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

I was thinking for a long time whether I should start this address with the works of Ss. Cyril and Methodius, or those of St. Clement and Naum of Ohrid. I could have mentioned our enlighteners Zografski, Dimitar and Konstantin Miladinov, Zinzifov, Prlichev, Pulevski, Cepenkov, Shapkarev, Chupovski... Instead, I decided to begin this address by mentioning a man who, as just a few know, was the visionary of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts. That person is the codifier of the reality of Macedonian literary language – Krste Petkov Misirkov.

In 1903, Macedonians started their famous, but unsuccessful linden uprising. Reflecting on the reasons for that, Krste Petkov Misirkov blamed Macedonian intelligentsia for three things: lack of unity, distance from the people and premature decisions, the price of which was ultimately paid by the people. Misirkov bitterly noted that the people were betrayed by their intellectuals and that Macedonian intelligentsia should bear a great part of the responsibility for the failure of the uprising.

In that time of turmoil and catharsis, what was necessary was a new beginning and new trust between the people and its intelligence milieu.

It was Misirkov who shaped the contours of the new covenant between Macedonian intelligentsia and Macedonian people.

He wrote that *“science and literature are the most important factor for the development of a people. It is the degree of development of science and literature that determine the culture of a people.”* Intellectuals, according to Misirkov, should be a living popular encyclopedia, with reliable and verified information in all scientific areas and artistic disciplines. The task of intellectuals is to clarify issues that are most important for the people, especially those related to self-identification and self-realization. The only motive that should lead them in that endeavor is the realization of their moral debt. And that moral debt is nothing else but a moral responsibility towards the people and the homeland they share.

The great Blaze Koneski, seen by Macedonian citizens as the second Misirkov, will also recognize the historic importance of this call, continuing the work of his predecessor. As first President of MANU, opening the first session of the Academy on October 10, 1976, Koneski said the following:

*“The feeling of responsibility is the basic feeling within us at this moment. The Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts stands before you and before the entire public, ready to commit to whatever is expected of it.”*

Through Koneski, the pledge of Misirkov is enshrined in the very foundations of MANU. It is a covenant between the Macedonian Academy, Macedonian citizens and the Macedonian state.

The establishment of MANU is a moment of finalization of a stage in the development of Macedonian science and culture, and the beginning of a new stage. MANU was established with great expectations regarding its contribution to the scientific and cultural development of Macedonia, it being the biggest channel for participation of Macedonia in the vast field of cultural competition among peoples.

### **Esteemed participants,**

Fifty years have passed since that day. In these fifty years, MANU stayed faithful to its pledge.

As the highest ranking scientific and art institution, MANU provided great contribution in building the modern Macedonian state. It has been continuously motivating and developing scientific thought and working on the safeguard and promotion of arts. MANU has had top achievements in the areas of linguistics, literature and art, social sciences, medicine, technical, natural and biotechnical sciences. The opus of the Academy is more than impressive and represents a Macedonian contribution to world science and art.

Very often, academies are a fruit of independence. However, in our case, the Academy was not only a predecessor, but also paved the way to independence. The Academy encourages and performs studies on issues of great significance for Macedonian national culture and the general development of our country.

But today, the covenant between MANU and Macedonian citizens is current again. Our state and our society stand before two great challenges.

The first challenge is the race against time. We are deep within the second decade of the third millennium. If, in the past, an academic citizen was expected to know something about each and every area and everything about one area, today this is simply not possible. The tree of knowledge produces new scientific disciplines that our predecessors could not even dream about - nanotechnology, biotechnology, quantum computing... Faced with such accelerated specialization, universities increasingly resemble multiversities, and professors who have to learn new things every day, almost seem like students.

As humanity, we are on the verge of a fourth industrial revolution that will make a symbiosis of the physical, digital and biological world. This is a revolution of smart factories that, making their independent decisions, will raise the production processes at the level of perfection. While technology is communicating more and more without human mediation, man is communicating less and less without technological assistance. As we speak, there is an ongoing serious global debate on the limits to artificial intelligence. Some are convinced that the outcome of that debate will determine the future of humanity. There is a potential to improve the quality of life, but also danger from an increased inequality and social tensions.

In parallel with this technological revolution starting with smart phones, through smart factories and smart cities, we will be witnesses of a fundamental transformation of entire systems of production, management and governance. Talent

and knowledge will be the new capital necessary for production. But, the question that imposes itself today is whether we will be active participants or mere passive spectators of these inevitable processes.

One thing is clear, though: We need an integrated response that includes all stakeholders – both science and state and society.

The task of MANU is to be a driving force of this process in Macedonia, in order for us not to be caught off guard by these inevitable changes.

The task of MANU is to prepare young generations who will themselves prepare Macedonia for these new trends.

The center of interdisciplinarity in Macedonia should be right here, in MANU.

MANU should be our gateway to the fourth industrial revolution.

However, in this process of transformation, we must not lose sight of what fundamentally defines us as people – the freedom of conscience, communication with other people and creativity. Let us not forget that art is the soul of Macedonian society. Macedonian art, on the other hand, is part of the cultural DNA of humanity in general. Therefore, we need to take care of our rich cultural heritage.

I believe that this is not a mission impossible for MANU. I am aware of the human potential this highest academic institution has, and I am convinced that MANU is up for that great task.

We are also aware, though, that the Macedonian Academy cannot do this on its own. Sustainable development of our society is only possible through investment in research and development by our state.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The second challenge is related to the first one. Man has never had so much knowledge and so little wisdom. Due to the urgency of the moment, decisions are often made hastily, very often without enough thought or analysis.

In our society, in which politicians often think only through the prism of the next elections, it is the role of Academicians to think about the future generations. Therefore, we need a functional partnership between state and science, between decision makers and experts, all in order to make wise decisions and create science based policies. Or, as MANU defines it: *increase the influence of the wise and the wisdom of the influential.*

Exactly ten years ago, Academician Cvetan Grozdanov said that MANU must not only be a decorative ornament on top of the statehood of the Republic of Macedonia. As President of the Republic of Macedonia, I fully agree with his position. Therefore, in these past few years, when the Republic of Macedonia was facing a migration and a political crisis, I had frequent meetings with the Presidency of MANU. Those meetings were an important part of the process of shaping and adoption of policies and decisions that we later implemented as a country. As President and Supreme Commander, I drew from the wisdom of the people present here, in this room, and for that I am truly thankful.

It is the responsibility of MANU to persist in contributing, through its scientific thought, to the promotion of the overall development of the Republic of Macedonia and the flourishing of the entire Macedonian society.

At the same time, it is the responsibility of the state to consult MANU on essential issues related to the socio-economic, political and cultural development. For, this is the *raison d'etre* of this, and of any other Academy: to be a counsel of the wise, a living encyclopedia that will impartially clarify the most important issues for society and state. Something that it is already doing.

Recently, the Academy published the *Priorities for the future development of the Republic of Macedonia*. The first step towards the resolution of a problem is facing the reality of having a problem. However, instead of merely noting, MANU goes a step forward and proposes specific solutions. Those solutions should assist the development of democratic political culture, rule of law, restoring public decency in the public space, respect for the ethnic, religious, linguistic and ideological diversity, promotion of the public use of reason. Those solutions could help us overcome polarization and deep divisions in Macedonian society.

**Dear friends,**

As we are celebrating this great day, the Macedonian state and Macedonian citizens stand before great challenges for which we must seek solutions. Those solutions, on the other hand, must not step away from the principles of our existence and persistence. One of those principles was best expressed by the great Blaze Koneski, who said, back in 1986:

*“To us, more than to many others around the world, language – along with everything it has created, written or spoken, represents the closest we can be to our ideal homeland. It is, in fact, our only complete homeland.”*

We must not forget that Misirkov also speaks through these words of Koneski, as speak all the other enlighteners, teachers and builders, scientists and artists who invested themselves in MANU.

In this challenging period, the eyes of Macedonian society are set on MANU. The expectations to see the Academy as the voice of reason and wisdom are greater now than ever before. MANU is expected to provide its contribution to the building of a society based on wisdom - itself being a collection of knowledge, morality and empathy.

I honestly believe that in the years and decades that follow, MANU will remain faithful to Misirkov's pledge. That means, to show unity regarding the essential issues of importance to the state; closeness and openness towards citizens, as well as wise solutions and decisions on important issues that might determine the future of our descendants.

**Thank you.**