

*Academician Taki Fiti,
President of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts*

FIFTY YEARS OF THE MACEDONIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS

Dear Mr. Gjorge Ivanov, President of the Republic of Macedonia,

Dear Mr. Talat Xhaferi, President of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia,

Dear Mr. Zoran Zaev, President of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia,

Dear Ministers,

Distinguished Guests Academicians, Presidents and High Representatives of Associations of Academies and of Foreign Academies of Sciences and Arts,

Dear Members of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts,

Excellencies, Representatives of the Diplomatic Corps in the Republic of Macedonia,

Dear Rectors,

Dear Deans,

Distinguished Professors, Scientists and Associates of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts,

Distinguished Representatives of the Macedonian Orthodox Church and of the other religious communities in the Republic of Macedonia,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear friends,

The establishment of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts 50 years ago is an act of crucial importance in the spiritual continuity of the Macedonian cultural and scientific history.

On 22 of February 2017 it was 50 years of the adoption of the Law on the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts in the Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia, and these days it has been 50 years since the solemn establishment of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts. Although the formal act of the Academy's establishing took place in 1967, we proudly emphasize that the roots of the Macedonian and Slavic cultural and spiritual continuity go way back, in a time dimension measured in centuries. For, the mission of Ss. Cyril and Methodius, the historical events that have enabled Ohrid, with the famous Ohrid Literary School, to become the center of the Slavic educational and enlightening activity in the second half of the 9th century, which, afterwards, expanded throughout all Slavic countries, has deeply changed our contribution to the treasury of the European culture and civilization. Furthermore, the Ohrid Archbishopric, with its millennium existence, has made a special contribution to the nurturing of St. Clement's tradition in the entire spiritual life of the Macedonian

people. Thus, the Slavic civilization, with its original values, has become a part of the other civilizations that existed for centuries in these regions.

The true Macedonian revival begins in the middle of the XIX century, with a pleiad of our cultural and national activists – linguists, educators, writers, collectors of folk creation, masters-builders, etc. These processes and events at the beginning of the 20th century resulted in the founding of the Macedonian Scientific and Literary Society in Saint Petersburg, led by two eminent Macedonian revivalists – Dimitrija Chupovski and Krste Petkov Misirkov. The emergence of Misirkov's work *On Macedonian Matters*, as the first scientifically based vision of the uniqueness of the Macedonian language and the rich scientific and literary, cultural and publishing activity of the Society in general, was the main event that has marked the dawn of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

This continuity will remain and will be maintained in the period between the two wars, with a number of creators in the field of literature, fine arts, music, philology, economics and law sciences, medical sciences, technical sciences, etc.

The anti-fascist National Liberation War of the Macedonian people and the members of the other communities in the Republic of Macedonia is a sublimite of our century-old ideal for the constitution of a modern Macedonian state. Thus, the era of rapid educational, cultural and economic development of the Republic of Macedonia has begun. Just a few years after the Second World War, in 1949, the first state university of Ss. *Cyril and Methodius* was established, within which, in less than two decades, a solid personnel potential has been created, which has enabled rapid development of the higher education and scientific activity in our country. It was, without a doubt, an event of exceptional importance for the establishment of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

All these are significant reflections of our culture and science, moments that belong to their time, but which are in fact also trans-temporal, because they glow with their universality and which, for this reason, organically have flown into the foundations of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

Ladies and Gentlemen, distinguished guests,

Immediately after the establishment of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, a period of rapid development, diversification and enrichment of its scientific and artistic work and artistic creation followed. Initially, the structure of the scientific, research and artistic activity of the Academy was dominated by the humanities and the social sciences (language, literature, history, etc.), which is understandable, inter alia, due to the fact that these issues are an integral and important part of the mission of all modern national academies. Later, with the increase in the number of departments of the Academy, from three to six, and especially after 1986, with the formation of the first two research centers (one in the field of energy, the other in the field of genetics), it has come to a balance in the structure of the scientific research within the Academy.

Today, according to its integral concept, structure and functioning, the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts possesses all the necessary features of a modern

national academy of European type, and, of course, performs the three basic functions characteristic for the European national academies: creating space for scientific and social dialogue (so called, communication space), scientific, research and artistic creativity and advisory role.

By organizing numerous scientific and expert meetings (conferences, consultations, round tables, seminars, workshops, etc.), the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts creates a communication space for facing of the different views and opinions on important issues in the field of sciences and arts and the development of the Macedonian society, both among its members, and also, among famous scientists and cultural creators from the country and abroad. In the past 50 years, the Academy has organized nearly 500 scientific and festive gatherings, of which hundreds are international, as well as numerous debates on important issues of the development of sciences and arts. Part of these events take place in the house of *Urania* – the scientific and artistic center of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Ohrid, which continues the traditions of the famous Ohrid Literary School.

The second function, the scientific and research work and the artistic creation, in fact, is the center of the activity of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts. The number of completed research projects and projects in the field of arts within the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts is impressive – more than 800 projects. Some of these projects are long-term and they are mainly related to strategic issues of special national interest, and the number of fundamental and applied research in all areas of sciences and arts represented in the Academy is significant. They are all listed in the bibliographies of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, some of which are fully published in electronic form, and some are partially, by summarizing the main messages etc., and placed on our web site, making them available for the scientific, expert and wider public in the country and beyond. The increasing representation of the international dimension in the scientific and artistic work of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts is a new quality of the basic activity of the Academy. Namely, in the last few years, more than 60% of the published scientific papers refer to international journals, and the majority of them have been published in journals with impact factor. The works of our renowned writers and poets, members of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, have been translated and are translated into foreign languages, some of them even in more than 20 languages, and their work has been included into world anthology selections. The members of the Department of Art and the members of the Department of Linguistics and Literary Science have made an evident contribution in organizing and holding important international meetings and events, such as the Struga Poetry Evenings, the Racine Meetings, etc. Our prominent painters and sculptors from the older and younger generation have created and create top works of art that are regularly exhibited at home and abroad. It should be emphasized that our two research centers – the Research Center for Energy and Sustainable Development, which is also a center of excellence, and the Research Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology “Georgi D. Efremov”, which is the headquarters of the Network for Communication of Scientific Institutions in the area of molecular biology and genetic engineering from the Southeast European countries, and which is accredited laboratory in Europe for analyzes of genetically modified food, in the past years they have gained

high reputation in the region and beyond, and they have successfully continued to maintain that position to this day.

The Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, in its half-century existence and work, has developed a rich publishing activity. Since its founding to date, about 700 titles have been published – monographs, results from scientific projects, proceedings of scientific meetings, music editions, phototypic and jubilee publications, joint publications with other academies and scientific institutions, publications of solemn meetings, special editions of the departments of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, etc. The “Trifun Kostovski” Foundation has given an exceptional contribution to the publishing activity of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, and in its 19 years of existence the Foundation has enabled the publication of particularly important works in the field of arts and sciences.

The Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts proactively follows the changes and new trends in the field of advisory function of the modern European national economies, and in this context also the obligations arising from the project SAPEA – Science Advice for Policy by European Academies initiated by the European Commission in order to intensify the cooperation of the European academies within their advisory function. Through the publication of the results of our scientific and research work, their presentation to the wider scientific and expert public in the country, to the government officials, etc., the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts participates in the creation of the policies in the field of sciences and arts and in the overall development of the country. In addition, maintaining the independence and autonomy of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts in the implementation of the advisory function is our highest principle and priority.

In the past period the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts has developed rich international cooperation that contributes to the affirmation of the Macedonian scientific and artistic creation and to the increasing of the reputation of, both, the Academy and the Republic of Macedonia on an international scale. Today our Academy cooperates with more than 30 foreign academies and scientific societies and it is a member of the following associations of academies: the European Federation of Academies of Sciences and Humanities (ALLEA), the International Union of Academies (UIA), the Mediterranean Academy (MA), the Inter Academy Panel (IAP), the Inter Academy Council for Science (ICSU), the Inter Academy Council for South East Europe (IACSEE), the Danube Academies Conference (DAC). In the last few years the cooperation with the academies from the neighboring countries has been intensified, as well as with the *Leibniz* Scientific Society of Berlin, and within the so-called Berlin Process (Western Balkans Process – Joint Science Conference) is the cooperation with the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina, the Austrian Academy of Sciences, the French Academy of Sciences, with the academies of South East Europe, etc. This cooperation is increasingly being done through the application and work on joint scientific projects funded by the European funds and the funds of other international and financial institutions.

All this confirms that the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, during its five decades of existence, has affirmed and has confirmed as a spiritus loci and a treasurer of high values and achievements in the field of sciences and arts, created by

exceptional personalities and national figures, who, with their work, have incorporated themselves in the foundations of the Academy and that have affirmed our science and arts internationally. The present and future members of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts have the obligation and responsibility to preserve the reputation, authority and integrity of the Academy and to fulfill the pledge of our first President, Academician Blaze Koneski, who emphasized that the Academy, through time, will justify its *raison d'être*, if it does not allow “to be subdued to the routine and mediation, but will open a field for competition of those culturally active persons who do not see their vocation in securing privileges, but, above all, in creating real cultural values.”

For the results achieved in its work, the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts and its members, in the past 50 years, have been recipients of around 90 awards and recognitions from domestic and foreign institutions, including here the high award Order of the Republic of Macedonia for the contribution to the development of the scientific and research activity and artistic creation of significance for the Macedonian science and state, awarded by the President of the Republic of Macedonia. Today, as many as 22 members of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts have the status of foreign, corresponding, honorary members and honorary doctors of science of 60 foreign academies, scientific societies and universities. On the other hand, more than 120 prominent scientists and artists from abroad were and are members of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts (with the status of foreign members), including those with the highest world reputation.

Ladies and Gentlemen, distinguished guests,

The developing trajectory of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts undoubtedly confirms that since the first decades after the establishment, the Academy has entered the phase of its maturity and has grown into the cornerstone of the Macedonian science, language, culture and history and in one of the pillars and symbols of the statehood of the Republic of Macedonia. The merits and contribution of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts for the rapid and comprehensive development of sciences and arts, for the complete constitution of the Macedonian nation as cultural and political nation, and thus of the Republic of Macedonia as multicultural society, are undeniable. The rise of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts in this period is due to the enthusiasm and unquestionable creative effort of the members of our Academy, but also to the fact that, as the highest scientific and artistic institution, it has continuously maintained its independence and autonomy, even in the period of ideological and party monism, and has never succumbed to pressures for its instrumentalization and putting into service of the politics. The contribution of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts to the constituting of the Republic of Macedonia as an independent and sovereign state is indisputable. In the most critical years for the Republic of Macedonia, certain members of the Academy, through the Forum for Macedonia and through membership in the first Government of the independent Republic of Macedonia, have actively participated in the preparations for the very act of the country's independence, as well as in the design and conceptualization of the major and complex reforms of the political and economic system throughout the transition period.

Of course, another question is to what extent the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts managed to accomplish its mission. In the fifty years of existence and work, the Academy has also faced periods of weaknesses and obscurities, which are in the most direct connection with the situation in the Macedonian society, i.e. with the crisis periods of different nature – primarily of non-economic nature. It is a fact that there were episodes when the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, by not reacting most appropriately to the challenges of the time, has faced a certain disagreement with the political factor, especially when there were tendencies for the politics and the state to get involved in the autonomous spheres of the society – science, culture and education. In such conditions, the Academy was overshadowed, which has negatively influenced its scientific and artistic mission and dignity. Here, above all, I am referring to the political manipulation of the Academy's leadership during the 2001 conflict and the placement of the nebulous concept of "exchange of territories", the flare-up of the political and inter-party tensions with regard to mistakes, omissions and weaknesses incorporated in some entries in the Macedonian Encyclopedia and with the commencement of the lustration process, which was contrary to the Constitution, laws and international norms and human rights standards, and which also included part of the members of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts (deceased and live academicians). Concerning these obscurities and shadows, the reasons, consequences and damages from them, the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts has its clear views and assessments, placed in its documents, and especially in its latest, publicly available book *50 Years of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts*.

At the time of culmination of the political and social crisis of 2015-2017, which is a consequence of the extreme partisanship of the Macedonian society, the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts is often exposed to unprincipled and a priori criticism, without having any insight into its overall work. We are witnesses that the Academy is demanded to react to political events in which it does not participate, on a daily basis, and according to specific party and similar interests, and to engage in inter-party conflicts by taking sides. The Academy has responded and will respond to such pressures in accordance with its dignity of the highest independent scientific and artistic institution, of the guardian of freedom, of the scientific dialogue, of the culture of tolerance and the postulates of multiculturalism, constantly calling for peaceful and institutional resolution of all the problems the society faces. We constantly emphasize that the hasty reactions of a columnist type, with a daily political tone are not characteristic for the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, that the Academy speaks with the strength of the facts and arguments and that the basic activity of the Academy, the achieved results in the scientific and research work and the artistic creation are our identification in front of the domestic and foreign expert and scientific public, and beyond, in our society. On the other hand, it is also the fault of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts itself for this criticisms and perception of the Academy, because, despite the huge opus of completed scientific and research and artistic projects, it does not sufficiently affirm the results of its scientific and artistic production among the expert, scientific and wider public in the country. This is our weakness which we must overcome in the future.

The Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts will also deal with these problems in the future, with the strength of the scientific and artistic truth, rationality, tolerance and

other humane values, which will strengthen its vitality and readiness to meet the challenges of the new age.

Ladies and Gentlemen, distinguished guests,

Today we live in the world of great science, in an era in which science has become the main lever, i.e. *argumentum ad veritatem* of the development and progress of modern societies. The strong development of science, the new technological model based on information and communication technologies, the new wave of entrepreneurial restructuring of economies and societies, the globalization of the global economic activity, open up new perspectives for the economic and social development of individual countries and the world economy as a whole. But these processes, by their very nature, are contradictory. The latest global financial and economic crisis from 2007-2009 has shown the contradictions of the globalization and the dissatisfaction of people from it – the deepening of the disparities in the level of economic development and in the distribution of world income among individual countries, the destruction of the resources and of the environment on a global scale, the exhaustion of the strength of the existing development models etc. These processes have also resulted in other problems – refugees, migration crises, fencing the countries with walls at the beginning of the new millennium, strengthening of the regional and national protectionism, changes in the economic and technological power and in the geostrategic position and importance of entire regions and continents, etc. However, one thing is a fact – societies that tend to grow into societies and economies based on knowledge more easily deal with all of the abovementioned problems, challenges and risks that the modern world faces. Of course, the approximation to a development model based on knowledge assumes large investments in resources in education, science, research and development and in culture, followed by well-conceived and devised strategies for the development of these crucial spheres of the human spirit and civilization persistence (this is exactly what the Republic of Macedonia is missing at this moment). Hence, such processes, undoubtedly emphasize the special importance of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts for creating perspectives for a stable and prosperous existence of our country in the long run.

Ladies and Gentlemen, distinguished guests,

In the last few years the Republic of Macedonia has faced the most difficult political and social crisis in the period after its independence – a crisis of institutions, by violating the principles of the rule of law, with the phenomenon of “captured state”, by regressing in the processes of democratization of society and by slowing down on the path towards the Euro-Atlantic integration processes. The problems that are now in the focus of our reality will require major reforms, a lot of knowledge, energy and political will to overcome them. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that our commitment in the years ahead, the focus on the scientific and research activity and the artistic work of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, in cooperation with other scientific and research institutions in the country and with governmental experts, is to focus on the elaboration of issues and topics that are directly related with the sources of the current

political and social crisis, in order to offer possible solutions, approaches and policies for its overcoming. In the jubilee year, the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts published its Document *Priorities for the Future Development of the Republic of Macedonia* (Quo vadis res publica Macedonia), in which we discussed, in fact, how the Macedonian science views the present and the future of Macedonia, the Macedonian state and the Macedonian society. The messages of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts to overcome the problems in several key spheres of social life (development of democracy, rule of law and departisation of the institutions, reforms in the education and in the scientific and research and innovation activity, economic growth and development, energy and environment, the status of the art and culture, etc.), which have been included in a summarized form in this document, have already been published on the website of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, and thus presented to the general public. In the next period, also the issues related to the Euro-Atlantic integration processes of the Republic of Macedonia, their continuous and persistent scientific monitoring and elaboration and the active participation of the members of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts and of the academic community in the preparation of the accession negotiations with the EU, will remain high on the agenda of our Academy's priorities. Our goal is for the country to return to the right path of the Euro-Atlantic integration processes.

Ladies and Gentlemen, distinguished guests,

Allow me, on this occasion, to summarize the views and messages of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts in two, in my opinion, key issues for the Republic of Macedonia, which are now in the focus of interest of the political actors, of our expert and scientific public, the media and, in general, of the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia, for whom there are different opinions, views and understandings, and which are often also subject to unnecessary and unproductive politicization. The first issue and message concerns the construction of the Republic of Macedonia as a democratic, economically prosperous and multiethnic and multicultural European country. Our experience with the Macedonian multiculturalism tells us that focusing on the common values (such as: the permanent striving for freedom and democracy, equality and egalitarianism of all citizens that live in the Republic of Macedonia, peace and non-violent changes, respect for the diversity of all communities in the Republic of Macedonia – Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish, Roma, Bosniak, Vlach, etc., as a factor of unification, and not of divisions; strong loyalty of everyone to the common Macedonian state, etc.) and on their accomplishment, which has been a leitmotif in the history on the Macedonian space, creates a permanent basis for a social cohesion in our country and state. With good thought, through open, constructive and unifying debates, tolerance and mutual respect, we should seek and try to find in everything the inherent measure, as a basic principle in the mutual approximations and interactions, and in the mutual misunderstandings, always bearing in mind the social unity of the total community. It, the joint Macedonian state, should be in the first and foremost plan to everyone, as the highest factor of unification and interconnection. In fact, people of different ethnic and religious background have lived and survived for centuries in this area. The various

languages spoken and the various religions they belonged to were not an obstacle to the centuries-old common life in these areas. On the contrary, philosophically speaking, the identification with the Other, as well as of all ethnic communities with one another and one in another, is an immanent characteristic of the multiethnicity and of the multiculturalism. This and such identification is in convergence, and not in divergence with the Other and from the Other, preserving its own and inviolable Possession. If this was possible for centuries before, why shouldn't it be possible and achievable today – in a new and united Europe?

The other issue and message concern the idea of building new and united Balkans. The lessons of the Balkan historical past unambiguously point to the firm conviction that lasting peace cannot be ensured with any undemocratic solutions. The Republic of Macedonia, which in the past was the center of the suffering of the peoples of the Balkans, has the moral right to seek *new and united Balkans*. Our views on the future of the Balkans are based on the following principles: recognition of the borders of the Balkans and their inviolability; resolving all conflicts peacefully; mutual respect of the national, linguistic and other cultural differences and resolving all issues concerning the position and rights of the national, ethnic and other minority groups within the state, with full respect of the international law and the international standards; developing the concept of multiculturalism and interculturalism, preventing hate speech; open borders and freedom of flow of capital, people, ideas; development and enrichment of all forms of cooperation in science, education and culture, and joint research on the future of the Euro-Atlantic integration process of the states. We need to anticipate the time when all Balkan nations will be integrated into the great European family and when their representatives in the European institutions will sit on the same bench and will share the European values and standards in all spheres of their existence and development. Isn't that a sufficient motivation and incentive, our academies to be engaged in the realization of the vision of a new and united Balkans?

Accepting and supporting this concept, in the last few years the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts has strongly expanded and enriched the scientific and cultural cooperation with the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and with the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, and the intensification of the cooperation on a trilateral basis is on the horizon (MASA – SASA – BAS). In addition, we are dedicated to expanding the cooperation with the other neighboring academies – the Albanian Academy of Sciences, the Kosovo Academy of Sciences and Arts, and we are making efforts to establish cooperation with the scientific institutions from neighboring Greece. In this way, and with this approach, our Academy has given and will give special contribution to the development of the friendly relations, relations of mutual respect, understanding and tolerance with the neighboring countries, as well as in creating a favorable climate for easier overcoming of the open issues with our neighbors. The best confirmation for this is also the Agreement for Friendship, Good Neighborly Relations and Cooperation between the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Bulgaria, whereby the role and contribution of the two Academies in this process were particularly significant.

Ladies and Gentlemen, distinguished guests,

Regardless of the numerous problems and turbulences the Republic of Macedonia and, also, the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts faced, it is a fact that in the half-century of its existence the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts has affirmed as the highest scientific and artistic institution, due to the dedication of its members and their enormous scientific production. The achieved results are distinguishable and recognized in the domestic and global science and culture, which represent the Academy as an independent, well-built and permanent support to the scientific and artistic activity in our country. In this way, the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts has walked and will continue to walk in accomplishing of its mission and its vision – the Academy to give its full contribution to the inclusion of the Macedonian science and art in the modern European and world trends and the Republic of Macedonia to become an advanced society based on science and knowledge.

Let us congratulate ourselves the jubilee – 50 years of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts.