and nationalised their respective churches. The transition from occupation to independence was not without its own costs. The development of Hellenic identity was never registered correctly in modern Greek perceptions. Misreading the two separate traditions as a single identity for the non-Greek populations that have been living in the Greek periphery since the nineteenth century. The experience of a truly Hellenic culture in the Balkans has been associated with the survival of a non-Greek national state. Greece's misfortunes throughout this century might have led the non-Greeks to feel that the racist fear of invaders and occupation forces that political demagogues fail not to exploit.

In the Greek part of Macedonia, out of a present population of approximately 2.5 million, only 3,000,000 are also Slavic speakers. The exchange of populations with Bulgaria following the First World War and the flight of Communist guerrillas in 1949, who included in their ranks a considerable percentage of local ethnic Macedonians, deprived the area of autonomy of its supporters. The Slavic speakers who remained and still inhabit the north-western part of Greece are the loyalists who embraced the cause of the Greek state during the 1940-49 civil struggle. Today the memories of the civil war are beginning to fade, but the surviving inhabitants of the eastern half of Greek Macedonia, annexed by the Bulgarian forces during the period of Axis occupation (1941-44), still remember that traumatic experience. The very concept of territorial unification of the four Macedonias into an autonomous whole was expounded by the Bulgarian Communist Party leader, Georgi Dimitrov. It was part of an imaginative plan to desanctify the historic status of the region and create a new entity that would in time be supervised by a Communist Bulgaria. The plan was appropriated by the pro-Axis forces that were allowed by the Germans to annex both Greek and Yugoslav territory. After liberation this, with its resistance credentials and high reputation among the Communists, usurped the plan and replaced Bulgarian leadership with that of his federated Yugoslavs. The term 'Macedonia' was coined for the first time in 1920 'Socialist Republic of Macedonia', and the immodest cause of this federal state was enshrined in the preamble of the current FYROM constitution which refers to a 1944 constitutional document, extending the ultimate goal of the three Macedonias.

That the weak state cannot realise its president's founding myth at the expense of its Greek, Bulgarian and Albanian neighbours is small comfort to a region which has been plagued by terrorism and guerrillaties for a good part of this century. The FYROM insists on its exclusive use of the name 'Macedonia' and the ancient symbol of the Macedon as its flag and retains the Corfu group's preamble which lays claim to the territory of its neighbours. Following the American recognition of FYROM in mid-February 1994, the Greek government prohibited the passage of oil to that state through Greek territory. This measure was intended to place the domestic public opinion on the understanding why Greece's Western allies insist on giving a former enemy of the Alliance the benefit of the doubt. Greek foreign policy has, once again, submitted to domestic considerations at the expense of long-term interests. The Greek government must still live with the perception that its instruments have declined and undermined its policy and look to the unique opportunities that are already being exploited by the private sector in the Balkans. Greek businessmen and bankers in the region are setting the pace of a stability which will conflict political rhetoric. Once Albanian drafts its legislation which protects foreign investment, it will also assure substantial Greek capital. Things being as they are, Albania survives on the consolations that Albanian immigrant workers send from Greece.

A return to the 'Paninion package' would prove beneficial to all parties concerned because it would provide Greece with its quickfire land route to Western Europe and FYROM, as 'Novo Makedonija', with the most vital assets that recognition entails — access to the part of Thessaloniki and Greek investments. The survival of FYROM has been and still is in Greece's interest, although not all politicians realise it. The present Greek government, with its comfortable majority in parliament, can afford to overlook its electoral promises of integration on the Macedonian question and prove inconsistent in a constructive way.

In the Balkan context, there is yet another Greek concern that could well change in the near future. Vladimir Zhirmov's revived pan-Macedonian vision engenders on Greece's northern provinces as well as in Turkey's territorial integrity. This view from the Russian imperial fringe might yet prove instructive in reminding the two uneasy allied that there is a commonality between them that needs to be explored.

The current feeling of outrage that guides Greece's Balkan policy reminds us of the brilliant speech of Diodotus to the Alcian Assembly in 428 BC. Following the long silence of the demagogue Chios, who urged Athens to punish the rebellious Mitacionales, Diodotus argued the contrary on the grounds of expediency and common sense: 'I have risen not to defend the Mitacionales. The question is not their guilt but our interests, and we are deliberating not about the present, but about the future, and how they may be of best service to us... Diodotus carried the day. Whose council will contemporary Athenians observe, Chios's or Diodotus's?'

THANOS VEREMIS

NOTES
1. See presentation of the Anti-Fascist Assembly of the National Liberation of Macedonia (AFAM), Skopje, August 1943, Macedonians under Bulgarian and Greek rule: the formulation of the term 'Macedonians' depends on participation in the activities of the relevant political parties (1958, p. 165).

How to help Afghanistan

While much of Afghanistan is now more stable than at any time since the Communist coup of April 1978, the country remains afflicted by an acute internal power struggle which has turned Kabul into the Sandynco of the East. On 1 January 1994, a bizarre alliance of the extremist anti-Western Haibari Islam leaders, Gulbadin Helmatyar, and the Afghan Uzbeke warlord, Rashid Dostum, attempted to stage a coup against the government, headed by Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani, President of Afghanistan since mid-1992. In line with a 1993 accord brokered by Pakistan politicians, Helmatyar carried the title of Prime Min-
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As the war in Afghanistan approaches its twenty-fifth anniversary, the country remains mired in a cycle of violence and destruction. The fighting has had a profound impact on the Afghan people, with millions of civilians displaced and forced to flee their homes. The conflict has also had international implications, with the United States and other countries providing military aid and support to various factions. The situation is complex, with multiple forces at play, including regional powers and international actors. As the conflict continues, there is growing concern about the long-term consequences for the region and the world.
in addition to recognition of the Afghan government, the exchange of ambassadors, and declaratory support for the moderate regime in its struggle against its extremist opposition. It is a considerable scope for constructive action which Western governments should vigorously support. Overstretched as it is by crises elsewhere in the world, the United Nations remains the key international body that can play a positive political role. In the political sphere, the UN’s involvement in the Afghan issue has hitherto been of dubious value, and the hospitality it continues to provide in its Kabul premises to the former head of the Communist secret police – a fugitive from justice rather than a perpetrator – is a stark reminder of how counter-productive the efforts of the UN turned out to be on the last occasion when it sought to manage political transition in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, on 14 February 1994, the Afghan Foreign Ministry issued a statement welcoming the offer of the Secretary-General for the basis of a UN General Assembly Resolution of December 1993, and stating that the ‘Islamic State of Afghanistan is ready to take immediate steps to consolidate the political process, thus contributing to the creation of a sound political situation and the needed security which would allow the holding of general, free and fair elections in the country to be observed by the United Nations and by the Organisation of the Islamic Conference’.

The obstacles to action along this path are many. As long as Pakistan remains an intruder, the UN is unlikely to move with any expedition, fearing a new Somalia. However, successful Western pressure on Pakistan to abandon its support for him would provide some impetus. Since the collapse of the Communist regime in 1992, the ISI has maintained a major UN role in Afghanistan, recognising that this would be at the expense of its own manoeuvres. Western countries should make it perfectly clear to Pakistan that its continuing support for the ‘Hezb-Isam, which has a dismal human-rights record, is unacceptable. However, it should not be the same time sign that a constructive Pakistani approach to the Afghan problem may be welcomed with a more sympathetic ear to its arguments over the Kashmir dispute – a far larger issue than Afghanistan in Pakistan’s domestic politics. It must also be recognised that organising free and fair elections is a huge and complex administrative exercise, administratively easy to disrupt, and requiring resources far greater than those available to the Afghan government. However, as the Cambodian settlement showed, an internationally legitimate electoral process can provide a way for regional powers to detach themselves without humiliation from embarrassing surrogates, and what Pakistanis might see as a case for grabbing such an opportunity.

In the short term, however, it is vital to establish effective avenues of emergency assistance for Afghanistan, which remains one of the world’s poorest countries. UN appeals for Afghan reconstruction funds have been badly undersubscribed, often on the dubious pretext that turmoil in the capital prevents rebuilding elsewhere in the country. Western governments, observing the campaign inflicted since January by the coup plotters, may be tempted yet again to argue that now is not the time to come to Afghanistan’s assistance. For many Afghans, unfortunately, time is running out.

IRAN

Iran’s 15 years of Islam

Hazhir Teimourian

A secular Iranian intellectual, Abd al-Karim Serowsh, who, unlike most of his ilk, has not been driven into exile, recently issued a daring judgment on the record of the past 15 years of Islamic rule in his country – though he did it obliquely and politely. He said: ‘Leaders of traditional societies think that if the state is ruled by moral values alone, happiness will follow. This is not so... By contrast, Western societies are science-centred... Western political systems will not collapse just because you shut one and win that they would. When we contemplate the West, we ask ourselves: What has given rise to this science of theirs? That science is the result of the logicality that rules the West.’

But another newspaper, Alżin Tefan, cast doubt on whether Iran was ruled by any moral values at all. Professor Hashim Aghajari, a radical Modernist from a teacher training college, was being asked by the World of Islam about official complaints that students had grown atheist toward politics. He said: ‘In this country now, politics has become a game... Idealistic students do not trust... You go into politics to praise and to affirm, in order to advance your own, selfish interests... We are still not told why Mr. Abd [an newspaper editor] has been jailed.’

The professor could have said, as Iranian taxi drivers do, that ‘only the palace-dwellers have changed’, or that ‘the mullahs hardly ever leave their prayer-proofs limousines to see how ordinary people live’. But that would have required greater courage, even for a theological publication. President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani recently even criticized some sections of the mainstream press for publishing statistics issued by his own government, on the grounds that they ‘depress people’. To imply similarities between the present system and the ancient regime is dangerous enough. To portray direct parallels is a counter-revolutionary crime. Yet detecting such parallels is inescapable, and futilities could have been – and were – foreseen long before the Islamic revolution of 1979. The social problems that beset Iran, such as those emanating from the exploding population and rising expectations, would be extremely difficult to resolve, particularly for an ideology that took shape in the seventh century.

The man formally in charge of the Cabinet is President Rafsanjani, a 60-year-old cleric and former real-estate agent who was, on his elevation to the post in 1989, expected to impose his