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"RESEN IS THE BIGGEST VILLAGE"*

Towards a Community Study
All Foreground, No Background

It was a young Turkish man from Resen who described at a Bayram party his hometown as "the biggest village". I have known Engin since he was two years old. He is eighteen now and has completed his training as a laboratory technician. He attended technical school in the large city, Bitola, instead of going to the secondary school in Resen, the Czar Samuil High School (formerly named the Marshall Tito High School). Engin thought it best to get an education which could lead directly to a good job, despite doubts that such jobs were available. The small public clinic in Resen, where he hoped to get a job, has a full staff of technicians, working in a small and poorly equipped laboratory.

In their fathers' generation, said Engin, they could emigrate to Canada, the United States, or Australia, for employment in construction and industries was then in a boom period. Engin's father had worked in Australia and returned to Macedonia the year before Engin was born.

Engin's is what I call the *"post-pechalba"* generation of contemporary Macedonia. Its life-style expresses the need to bring global culture to "the biggest village" when emigration to distant metropoles is no longer feasible. The (un) civil war in Bosnia, moreover, has resulted in Western European visum restrictions on Macedonian citizens. The Republic of Macedonia is probably more landlocked today than ever in its modern history. The maintenance of Prespa-centred global networks through the electronic media is supplanting the traditional culture of migration.

Engin, like many of his contemporaries, has learned English, and he often confided in me, sometimes he even tried to correct me, as if he were the adult and I the teenager. This is how I now put the matter. Engin would rather say that when we talked together, it was man to man. Age-levelling is one of the puzzling surprises in the field. Young informants are pedagogues to aging anthropologists. This boy, whom I remember in diapers, was telling me the way things were in Resen, which meant I had to relinquish many naive ideas.

The Turkish-sponsored party was being celebrated to end the month-long period of fasting during Ramadan. Our table was in the middle of the floor of the delapidated and abandoned movie theatre in Resen, "The First of May Cinema." Between two and three hundred people were present, most of them young. It was very chilly in the theatre, and Engin and I talked above the loud music from the band on the stage.

It was my second week in Resen, and Engin asked me what I was doing here. I was interested in finding out how people "here" (now "there") thought about the world. "Too much politics!" a friend, Femi, interjected. Engin elaborated, turning "the world" into his generation's experience. His parents did not understand young people today. "They lived under Communism; they had to be home at 10 PM Resen is the biggest village."

During most of his four-year education, Engin lived in the technical school's dormitory in Bitola, and he gladly came home on the weekends. He hoped to be able to find work in his hometown so he could continue to live there. There were many limitations in Resen, but these limitations were familiar and could be endured. The new coffee bars which had sprung up in every sizable Macedonian town, he said, are "mostly for Macedonians." While he at first was enthusiastic about the new coffee bars, he soon felt that they were cliquish and was uncomfortable in them.

Listening to Engin tell about Resen at a Bayram party was a good context for understanding Resen "as a whole." Resen, Engin says, is "the biggest village," by which he means, among other things, that Resen

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is neither a city *(grad* in Macedonian) nor a village *(selo* in Macedonian). "The Village" ("remote", "urban" and/or "global") is surely one of the most elastic categories of place in modern linguistic practice. Engin knew that Resen was not a *selo,* but it was not a city, like Bitola. Resen was in between and therefore he could use the English word village with a superlative for large size to describe it.

At the Bayram dance, Engin said, there were many Turkish kids from Ohrid and Bitola. "Tonight they will sleep over at their cousins' houses." Some Macedonians, Albanians, and Rom attended the party that night. Everybody who wanted to dance took hold of two others' hands and entered the long, unbroken chain of the Macedonian ore this evening, however, to the beat of a local Turkish orchestra. One dance could last more than half an hour.

The band that played at the Bayram party had six members: violin, elbass, guitar, drums, keyboards, and a male singer who was slight of build were spent in the circle of Turkish young people, which often included friends from Resen's Rom and Macedonian communities.

In representing the entire community of Resen, I often foreground the Turkish community within it. "Foregrounding" a group is different from "focusing" on it. It may sound presumptuous, but I do not consider looking at minorities as the most revealing subject for understanding social life in Resen. I could focus on Albanians, on Rom, on Turks, on Vlachs, and of course, on Macedonians. Perhaps I object to the way "focus" implies a falsely objectifying optics. My notebooks are filled with foregrounds. There is no background. When Ida Red is printed out in Copenhagen, I read how the Turkish people help to complete the image of Resen's community. Without them, I could not make a community study. My aim is *not* to relegate others to the background, but in the narratives of Resen, "The Turks" seem to occupy a significant space and time. That they are cautious and sceptical reveals how they have survived. Their low profile heightens the community at large.

SLIKA

Ahmed and En gin in "Eros" barber shop Resen, February 1995. (K. R~nne)

Warnings Against Warner

The word "community" has entered the text after being deliberately evaded for the first few pages. There is resistance to the elusive term "community and even stronger strictures against the "ahistorical functionalist conceptual framework" of "community studies" epitomized in the social anthropology of Lloyd Warner (Bell and Newby 1971:102). I will attempt, however, to reformulate Warner's community study approach with the notes from the fieldwork in Resen.

The previous chapter aimed at sketching the parameters of Prespa Lake as an historically bordered region, with "Nature" and "Nations" establishing the boundaries. The region's modem history is marked periodically by warfare, occupation, and betrayal. Voluntary and forced migration crisscrossed the Prespa Lake region, so that "routes" were just as salient as "roots" in the making of identities (Gilroy 1992, Clifford 1994).

According to informants, Resen is a community, or in Engin's happy phrase, "the biggest village". My presumed membership in the community came from sustained contact with several Turkish families since my first visit in 1977 (Schwartz 1978, 1985, 1989, 1993). That visit was itself assisted by associations with "guestworkers" in Copenhagen who came from the Turkish community in Resen.

In this way the Turkish minority, and particularly the Turkish minors, the youth, and their culture are foregrounded. A community study aims at something other than "minority research." Much "minority" research, it can be said, represents the "majority" only as an instrument of power. The relations of domination and subordination are thought to be minored in the relations between majority and minority. A rather static and stratified image results, where minorities arc found at the bottom. Movement is shown as mobility up and down the social ladder. Lloyd Warner~ s "community study" of Newburyport, Massachusetts added the category of "ethnicity" to factors of social class in American

society's mobility and stratification (Sollors 1986). Resen's population, close to 20,000, resembles that of Newburyport during the Yankee City studies.

It is assumed incorrectly that cthnography is merely about ethnic minorities and not about the (non) ethnic majorities. "Ethnic groups" are almost by definition "minority groups" (cf. a critique in Tonkin 1989). Focus is placed on the minorities and their efforts to gain rights and respect for their identities; these are political goals which I fully endorse.

Macedonians, who are the majority in Resen, constitute a restricted minority in Florina, the city in northern Greece, ca *50* kilometrcs to the southeast, as the stork flies. I could imagine an ethnographic fieldwork in Greek Macedonia that foregrounded Ponte, Vlach, and Macedonian communities so as to arrive at a wider understanding of community in a Greek provincial town. It would be interesting to compare how the community concept is manifested in both border towns. Maeedonian and Greek villagers in Albania are minorities, as there are Albanian villagers in Greece and Macedonia. The "exchange of populafions" as the policy for achieving national homogeneity was not completed in the 1920's (Smith-Llwellyn 1973). The Prespa Lake region is living evidence. One might redefine the "liability" of the past as an "asset" for the future. "Ethnic cleansing" in comparable situations of the world is the desperate culmination of nationalist assimilation and "cultural fundamentalism" (Stolcke 1995).

By attempting to sketch a community study of Resen, I have followed some, but not all of the criticism of "community studies" made during the 1960's and 1970's. The main points of criticism which I endorsed were 1) that the "community" was taken to be a discrete and bounded whole, and 2) that the community could serve as a "microcosm" for the society at large. The warnings against Warner's "Yankee City" series' exorbitant claims ought to be heeded; nevertheless, the notion of a functional (though contested) community of diverse groups cannot be totally scrapped. Some modest form of functionalism can be salvaged and put to use (cf Chapter 6). "Community", tough a slippery concept, is indispensable.

For example, let us toy with the method of classical community studies, to ironize the method. First, I would have to give the town of Resen a fictional name which would make the field anonymous and thereby more adaptible to generalization. Because apple-growing is Resen's main source of income, 1 could name Resen "Appletown" for English readers, or to give the town a more distinctly native sound, I would name it "Jabokovo" which means "place of apples" in Macedonian,

Everybody would know that it is Resen I am writing about, especially when maps are included. The persons whose experience I am describing and analyzing in this book, I hope, will be able to recognize themselves. Thc book is about Macedonia, but the anecdotes and histories come primarily from Rcsen and the Lake Prespa region in former-Yugoslavia. The anecdotes and histories are diverse—plural, if you will—but if the coexistence of and respect for plurality is one of our epoch's most urgent needs, then social scientists ought to play their cards from the field openly and fearlessly.

All my informants knew I was going to write a book about them and their town, and most had no objection to being named. Many even insisted on their right to be identified as actual historical persons, which, of course. they are. If people wanted to have their anonymity protected, I have followed their wishes. I promised that I would not write anything scandalous about them, but I wanted to write about their experience—and mine—in a free and open style. Re-reading William Foote Whyte's *Street Corner Society* (1943, *1955)* has probably rubbed off on *Pieces of Mosaic.*

My attempt is to sketch a civil and cosmopolitan ethnography of—and for—Macedonia. The method of representation was something like taking photographic portraits where the subject does try to look relaxed and pleasing. Is this effort false, "unreal"? In public spheres, and in intimate ones as well, we try to look our best, and membership in trusted communities is one of the typical ways of looking our best. It is a time for being voluntarily foregrounded, and an ethnographer can catch that experience of informants and friends without altering the names of persons and places :o "protect" them.

"Yankee City" as everyone knows is Newburyport, and William Foote Whyte's "Cornerville" is Boston's North End. In this book Resen will not e "Jabokovo". Lloyd Warner's rhetorical device of "defamiliarizing" the New England community by "repatriating" exotic, "primitive" categories rrom aboriginal Australia for ritual and ceremony (Marcus and Fischer 986) is a temptation for community

studies in European contexts.

Critics of Warner have pointed out how he repeated Newburyport's ~aders' definitions of history as "data", knowing that they were nostalgic, ;vishful, and mythological. The historical pageants in Newburyport were as the leaders now wished it (i.e. history. JMS) to be and what they wished it were not." Warner discovered this fictive present and inscribed it into the Yankee City texts. He did not try to correct history but took it at face value as presented by the town leaders. Ethnographers today are more likely to accept, with qualifications, Warner's perspective (cf Singer 1984). We tend to be zealous deconstructionists of what leaders and followers do, and therefore we find a lot of material in the scenes of activity. For this reason we have integrated wishes, evasions, and tenors into the facticity of the present.

A community study draws upon several sources of what can be called historical wishcraft. In the 1990's we are perhaps more willing to go along with our informants' narratives, not so much because they are truthful facts. Rather, they constitute experience with persuasive consequences. A community study has a pragmatist presupposition whereby beliefs make things happen—as George Bernard Shaw perceives the characters in his play, "Saint Joan". The play is about miracles, and he has his characters speak prophetically and cogently about future history.

I am attempting to study Resen as a "community", and I admit that much of my experience was within and via the Turkish minority. The young Turkish people may be said to "refract" the Resen community at large (For the metaphor and method of "refraction" in anthropological interpretation cf. Evans-Pritchard *1956,* Herzfeld 1987, Schwartz 1992). Members of minorities have by necessity incorporated the knowledge of the majorities. Minorities, at home and as migrants, can gain from being members of minorities. "Don't say that we are split," one immigrant in Denmark stated in a lecture at a folk high school. "Say that we are doubled."

In Resen, Turkish and Albanian speakers can switch to and from Macedonian in what appears to be an effortless manoeuvre, like a good sailor can tack the boat across wind. Not many Macedonians speak the minorities' languages, though some young people are making an effort to do so, in order to develop friendships.

Many of my Macedonian friends commented upon how much time I was spending with Turkish and Albanian people. I have mentioned the significance of the three bunches of flowers in the introductory chapter. When I was at the Three Roses restaurant, after buying the present, a Macedonian (who had lived in Goteborg) asked me if the gift was for a Turkish or a Macedonian couple. He seemed pleased to hear that it was a Macedonian anniversary that was being celebrated with flowers. My field-notes about "the Three Roses" say that "it is an all-Macedonian place in the centre of Resen." It was one of the few public places where I never heard Turkish or Albanian spoken. A Turkish friend said that this was because the cooks served pork in so many of their dishes.

My notebooks from fieldwork in Macedonia (on both the Greek and the Macedonian sides of the border) also revealed a high proportion of interest in minorities. This is not by way of apology. Some members of minorities do want to be foregrounded when they get the chance and when they feel they can trust the guests. A good, i.e. expressive, ethnography of community reduces the background and presses as much into the foreground as the text can bear. This is why Warner's community study of Yankee City represents the "present" of the 1930's in New England when the research was conducted. He and his staff workers were able to perceive how various ethnic communities in Newburyport adjusted to each other in a functionally stratified manner. "True" or "False"? demanded the
critics a generation later. Today's (Danish) answer would be the "báde/og" (both/and), not to be equivocal but polyvocal about the changing reality at hand.

My perception of a functional equilibrium within and between Resen's ethnic communities is probably a "blow-up" in the photographic darkroom sense of the phrase. Some of that equilibrium is a balance of mutual envy. It is based upon ethnic interface-keeping. "Interface" is a metaphor from traffic engineering on an automobile freeway, where at the cloverleaf, motorists must keep an eye on other motorists' intentions and moves (Wallman 1978). Interface is therefore a situation of potential danger and, in most cases, of resolution. Interface within a community like Resen's is good Balkan medicine. All the more

reason for studying the Prespa Lake region.

Some of "Yankee City's" flaws can be recycled in a community study of "Jabokovo". I like Warner's "mistaken" immediacy, and I do not think it deserves the opprobrium of "ahistoricity." Warner employs freely the rhetorical device of the ethnographic present in the flexible, volatile period of the New Deal in the United States. American community studies ("Cornerville", "Middle town", "Yankee City") attempted to slow down the pace of American culture and society when they were moving most rapidly. To slow down the hectic pace was not to put the society into a deep-freeze, but to reveal its contours, continuities, and changes. A half century later down the road, an expatriate anthropologist cannot only forgive the authors of the classic community studies, he can thank them for their still-life like compositions.

Four Pillars of the Community

In my description of Resen as **a** community, four aspects have been selected as pillars: 1) schools, 2) apples, 3) local radio, and 4) holidays. Each of these topics involves the practices of ethnicity, but none is exclusively ethnic. The Muslim minorities may be foregrounded, but it is never my intention of pushing the Orthodox Christians into the background. The making of Makedonija is proceeding as it is because every group wants to be present and up front.

Cultural pluralism and multiculturalism are code terms for policies which are not native to Balkan nation-states. They are, rather. borrowed from nation-states that Balkan families emigrated to: Canada, the United States, Australia, and Sweden. Before looking at each of the four commur~iity pillars, I need first to examine the demographic and ethnographic bases for them.

Since independence from Belgrade in 1991, Rom, Vlachs, Serbians, Turks, Macedonian Muslims, and last but not least Albanians, are all making their voices heard in national and local political arenas.

As mentioned below, Macedonia is the republic of ex-Yugoslavia that is trying to continue on the mainline of Marshall Tito's ethnic policy as expressed in the Yugoslavian constitution of 1974. This policy included, whenever feasible, the right to 8-years' primary education in the child's (often the father's) mother tongue.

The Republic's census "by ethnic groups" was taken in June 1994. National and local elections were held in October 1994. Some valuable statistical materials were made available early in 1995, and I shall make a selective use of them in this community study.

Doing an ethnic and religious survey of a town's population is an enterprise that started during the Ottoman Empire. In one of the few historiographical documents I had available for this study, an article "Resen," was photocopied from Papers of the Geographical Society (Kiselinovski 1920). The main sources for this article were travel reports published in Vienna (1867) and Moscow (1877) and a local survey done at the culmination of the first Balkan War in 1912. Notice it was travellers from two of Europe's large dynastic states which had an interest in charting "Turkey in Europe." The old reports emphasize the mixture of Muslim and Orthodox populations but the first systematic survey was made in 1912 when the Turkish rule came to an end. (I do not know what demographic and ethnographic materials were prepared by the Turkish state officials, but the archives in Istanbul contain whatever is extant).

Resen's population, according to this 1912 survey, totalled 4,102 persons, living in 909 households. Then, as now, Resen's population was multi-ethnic and mobile. Several ethnic groups are named in the demographic survey of Resen, whose presence is still noticed: Albanians, Turks, Rom and Vlachs. As for religious affiliation, 2,407 persons were Orthodox Christians, and 1965 were Muslim. Emigration to America was also a demographic factor mentioned in the article (Kiselinovski 1920:94).

We recall Edith Durham's distrust for ethnic tallies, but when the tallies help substantiate an argument, they ought not be dismissed. Resen was a century ago what some would call a multi-ethnic mosaic. A day's journey on horse from both Bitola and Ohrid placed Resen as a place for rest and for trade. Borche Kiselinovski noted this in his article. Resen was established during the 17th century at the midpoint between the two larger and more influential cities. Turkish landowners controlled the fertile land which drains into Prespa Lake. The Golema Reka (Big River) was described then as very large, usually flooding

its banks in springtime. Today the "Big River" is barely a stream. The town lies high enough above the river delta to avoid malaria. One gathers that Resen was a fairly healthful and relatively cordial "community". It served as a secure base for Edith Durham's relief work after the troubles of 1903. We know that there were stories of conflict between Turkish lords and Macedonian peasants, but the town of Resen was apparently spared from the destruction and violence that ravaged the Prespa Lake region of Macedonia during the first half of the 20th century. Is the civility of Resen legendary, and if so for what reason?

Keeping the 1912 ethnographic survey in mind, I can now shift to the present. In order to build up a set of demographic and ethnographic profiles from a variety of materials, some published and others compiled from interviews, it is important to notice first which categories are used to record the official statistics. The Republic of Macedonia conducted a census "by ethnic affiliation" and also by residence. Acknowledging the fact that many citizens of Macedonia lived abroad, these persons, and their ethnic affiliations, were also included in the 1994 census. The descriptive category is "Citizens of the Republic of Macedonia staying abroad for more than one year, by municipality of the official place of residence in the Republic of Macedonia" (Republic of Macedonia, Census 1994).

In the official Yugoslavian census reports (SF Yugoslavia 1981), "temporary migrants" were included in the census figures of their municipalities, but ethnic affiliations were not included. The Republic of Macedonia has altered the criterion of emigrants from "temporary" to "at least one year", thus making the classification more specific. Also important, the registry includes ethnicity. The figures in parentheses represent the numbers of persons from each ethnic group "staying abroad more than one year."

The population of Resen municipality (1994):	17,467	(4766)
Macedonians	13,297	(3755)
Albanians	1,694	(188)
Turks	1,891	(774)
Rhomas	117	(-)
Vlachs	30	(-)
Serbs	68	(3)
Others	370	(40)

There are some sharp discrepancies between the Macedonian, Albanian, and Turkish proportions of "persons staying abroad." If the figures are at all accurate—and I would guess that the figure (188) for the Prespa Albanians abroad is far lower than their actual numbers—the statistics, nevertheless, may indicate how diligently emigrants register their affiliation to the home community in Resen and/or how diligently the groups are informed about registration. The Registry of emigrants has the affectionate name of *Matica,* which means Queen Bee. It would look like the Turkish ethnic community in Resen keeps close to its Queen Bee, and the Albanians have flown beyond her domain. The Macedonians keep very close contact as well.

Statistical data of this sort becomes evidence only through interpolation and inferential leaps. One of my inferences is that the Turkish emigrants come from the town Resen, as well as a few large villages near by (like Carey Dvor). They are active in the town of Resen, and their family members abroad continue to identify with the town's institutions. Appraisals of "the qualitative" elide with inferences from "the quantitative". In Resen I seldom undertook head-counts of informants and non-informants. I tried to make sense of the proportions which made up the putative whole. During the three months in Resen I was constantly struck by the "temporary" absence of people, those who live abroad in diasporas. Their half-built houses and furnished apartments are among the strongest indices of the community. In Chapter 5 on diasporas. I shall pursue this discussion.

The town of Resen and its villages have still one of the highest percentages of "persons staying at least one year abroad~~. The percentage for the Republic as a whole is ca 7.1%. For Resen, the percentage is ca 27%, that is, four times the average. "Prespa" is famous for its apples and for its pechalbari.

Another telling piece of statistical evidence in the Republic's 1994 census is the numbers of households, dwellings, and agricultural holdings. Resen has an outstandingly high number of dwellings and agricultural holdings per household:

	Resen	Rep.Mak.
Households	4,944	503,456
Dwellings	7,433	582,981
Agricultural holdings	3,151	177,447

These data indicate how many "empty" houses and apartments there are in Resen and the villages. "Empty" is not the whole truth, because the dwellings await their owners during the summer and autumn months, and upon retirement. In the apartment building where I lived, there were 38 flats, 12 of them were unoccupied. The absence of tenants in the apartment below mine meant that it was very cold. The former residents (my landlords) said that the heat from the downstairs' neighbours used to keep them so warm that they didn't have to keep their own woodstove burning! How envious I was for missing this benefit!

Over three-fifths of Resen households, according to these figures, have agricultural holdings, and they are typically apple orchards. Tractors and donkey carts passed by the apartment building almost every day on the way to the orchards. Resen's apple orchards and pastures for grazing occupied the outer ring of space beyond the houses and factories. Walking a kilometre in most directions from the centre of town, you would be likely to find yourself in an apple orchard. The national statistics indicate that Resen (with 1,567 hectars under cultivation) is Macedonia's (and exYugoslavia's) most intensive fruit-growing region. "Prespa is the California of Yugoslavia", a school-teacher from Resen declared in 1979. When Engin described Resen as "the biggest village" it was not only the lack of discotheques he had in mind. He knew that most people in Resen were apple farmers, who may have had a salaried job in the morning and their trees to take care of in the afternoons and weekends. Demographic, ethnographic, and agronomic statistics assist forming the context for a community study. There are, however, many empty places in statistical tables. As we turn to the four pillars of Resen's community, the schools will be an obvious place to start, for schools are the institutions where communities are most visible and audible.

School Days

The high school in Resen, I have noted, has had its name changed to Tsar Samuil from Marshall Tito. Tsar Samuil was the 11th century medieval king whose army lost a tragic battle to the Byzantine forces. Bulgarians insist that Samuil was Bulgarian, Macedonians that he was Macedonian. His palace in any case was in Ohrid, and that is a cultural centre of Macedonia. When all but two of Samuil's soldiers were blinded by the victorious Byzantines, the survivors trekked back to Ohrid. On seeing them, Tsar Samuil fell dead with sorrow.

The high school is on a ridge, called Egypt, overlooking the town of Resen, and on clear days, Prespa Lake can be seen ten kilometres to the south. Before becoming the town high school in the 1960's, the building was a military headquarters for southern Yugoslavia. Several abandoned storage buildings lie in ruins behind the asphalt playground.

Just before eight o'clock in the morning the students trek up the hill in clusters. Their choice of clothing—for boys and girls alike—has a definite style: jogging shoes, blue jeans, sweat-shirts or sweaters. Many have knapsacks for their books. A few boys wear baseball hats. If the weather is cold, as it was until late in April, down coats are the norm.

The 4-year high school has slightly over 500 students enrolled, in three different programs: math/science, languages, and agriculture. Five days every week from 8 AM until 2 PM, the students meet in their home classrooms, and teachers (they number ca 30) come to them for the specific subjects for that hour. The marble corridors are therefore relatively quiet, compared to my recollections of American high

schools. Between classes the teachers generally go to the teachers' room where there is a long table. Here they check through a large red book with the names and grades of their students. The students, meanwhile, are in their own rooms, chatting, laughing, snacking, or maybe catching up on their studies.

Ethnicity is not the main topic of conversation at Tsar Samuil High School, neither among the teachers nor among the students. Speaking of ethnic relations was almost an intrusion when Kirsten R~nne and I addressed ourselves to the topic in the English classes. In order to visit the classes, we needed permission from the supervisor of schools in Resen. As an appointee from the education ministry in Skopje, she had to contact her own superior. The recently appointed Minister of Education, Emilija Simoska, had previously been Director of the Centre for Ethnic Relations. I had a letter from her when she was Director, and this letter I presented to the supervisor of schools at the town offices in Resen. Permission was granted for our research in the high school, perhaps because Emilija Simoska was involved, albeit indirectly.

The number of students from the Muslim communities at the high school is not in the official statistics which were made available to me at the Supervisor's office, but students and teachers in conversation estimated that the number is about 25, that is, about 5% of the student body. Engin, as noted at the opening of this chapter, explained why he preferred a secondary school education with a vocational future.

Turkish and Albanian children in Resen have the option of attending the first eight years of their schooling in their mother tongues. The high school's language of instruction is Macedonian, so the pupils from Turkish and Albanian classes must be bi-lingual when they move up to secondary schools.

The statistics from the Supervisor of Education indicate ethnic composition by language groups in the classrooms. The numbers of pupils in each of three language communities are as follows: Macedonian 2,325; Turkish 288; Albanian 179. (In total 2,792)

Because many of the schools in the villages have a falling number of pupils, children from the minority groups sometimes have to be bussed to schools where there is teaching available in the mother tongues. Policy, since Tito's legislation in 1974, is to have both the minority and the majority classes in a single school. In Resen muncipality there are no all-Albanian or all-Turkish schools, but there are several all-Macedonian schools. In Resen for example, there are Turkish classes at the Mite Bogoevski school (911 pupils in all) but not at the Goce Delcev school (573 pupils in all). Older Turkish pupils from Carey Dvor are bussed to Resen so they attend Mite Bogoevski.

The Albanian pupils attend primary schools in the villages (like Gmciri) where there are classes in their language through the 8th grade. The younger Albanian children attend schools in their own village (like Krani) until they are old enough to take the bus to Grnciri for the final four years of primary school. One of my Albanian friends in Krani said that at the village school which his two children attend there are currently a total of 15 Albanian children and 4 Macedonian children. When he was a child there were 25 children in each class. Emigration accounts for this large-scale reduction.

In the town of Resen one does not notice a shortage of children. The school play-grounds are filled with game-playing, almost like the painting by Brueghels. Fathers take over some of the space for pick-up basketball and soccer matches. Mite Bogoevski's school, where there are about one-third Turkish pupils, and one hears shouting in both Turkish and Macedonian.

There is not much talk about ethnicity in this system, and even putting this quantitative material into a chapter on community gives it a tone of uncanny objectivity. Schools lend themselves to objectivizing. Maybe they are the very source of objectivizing about society, because the school children are regarded as "raw material" for social reproduction. Both of the high school's two English teachers grew up and got their schooling in the United States; they therefore had much experience in metropolitan melting pots. Their move back to Prespa and their profession as English teachers did not eradicate that experience, but it was not what they talked about in their teaching. Tsar Samuil High School kept a rather low profile about ethnic relations, probably much like American high schools before "the rise of the ethnic unmeltables" in the 1960's.

"Open dialogue" about "common problems" is assumed by people of our likes to be an essential element in the making of the civil society. The informants in the field are not so enthusiastic about

dialogue. They would rather confide in us privately, instead of having a public debate in the classroom. As noted, the minority groups were very much a minority in these classrooms. These relatively few students were often shy about ethnic identity talk in public settings. I shall discuss this topic more in connection with "holidays" where the high school classrooms lent themselves more easily to discussions of religious ceremonies and traditions. It is perhaps worth stressing that respect for minority rights includes the right to civil and ethnic privacy. The Czar Samuil high school was not the best choice for perceiving ethnic communities in Resen, but it was an excellent context for revealing the imagined community as a whole. Perhaps the two teachers remembered their own American high-school days as a time for developing skills of social integration, not for voicing ethnic identity. The informal style of their English classes, with American idioms and accents prevailing, made them among the most appreciated teachers at the high school. The culture of *Pechalba* also implies the gains of returning, and the two teachers were bringing home the harvest from their youth in the United States.

The recent effort to open an all Albanian university in Tetovo (see Chapter 4) places severe tension upon standards of multi-ethnic equality and justice in the Republic of Macedonia. In this chapter we are describing a system that is still functioning from former Yugoslavian days. Ethnic pluralism in contemporary Macedonia puts strains on the public budgets, and emotional strains are felt as well in the conflicting goals of the Macedonian republic since independence. The Macedonian majority, both ethnically and electorally, would press harder for consensus and integration. Extreme Macedonian nationalists would abolish ethnic pluralism altogether, while some factions of resistant minorities would pull for a politics of divergence and even of separation. Primary schools, secondary schools, and universities thus become the arenas for social and cultural struggle in contemporary Macedonia.

Prespa, as everybody told me, is not Tetovo, but the question which is implicit in that statement is: which way is Macedonia headed? Towards "a Prespa" or towards "a Tetovo"? This book is not meant as crystal ball-reading. If forced, it would catch a glimpse of Prespa Lake in the future.

Cases of Apples

In the town square of Resen is a cement column with a sculpted red delicious apple placed on its top. Growing and marketing apples is an undisputed pillar of the community. Some of the salient statistics have been remarked upon, yet I have no figures of the total tonnage of apple production or cash income derived from the sales, and I am not sure these statistics are even systematized. "But this is the Balkans," a secretary at the town hall exclaimed to me when I asked in vain for data regarding Resen's employment and unemployment figures.

I decided early in April to take matters into my own hands. I made a series of visits to municipal offices and personnel offices at several of the large industrial firms. The aim of these interviews was to make a general assessment of employment in the private and public sectors for the entire Resen community.

I should interject that during the fieldwork of 1995, the staff members of the town hall in Resen were hospitable and helpful. At least six offices assisted the research. I could freely walk in and out of the building without being stopped and asked what I was doing. This open reception was completely different from my earlier experience with the state and municipal authorities. I remember being very anxious whenever I had to enter the building. Visiting social scientists from the West—who pledged their allegiance to Tito's socialist federation—were often taken to be capitalist spies. There are new times and new problems in the 1990's.

After a two-week survey, I checked the results of the employment "profile" with a couple of trusted informants (a Turkish computer science teacher at the high school and a Macedonian geographer at the town hall) and they both could recognize it. Here is a summary of that profile.

I used 20,000 as a round number for the total population and substracted 5,000 "persons living abroad at least one year." This left 15,000 persons, 8,000 of whom live in the town of Resen and 7,000 live in the villages.

My profile of Resen and the villages has its political features. There are two legistlative districts in

Resen's municipality, both of which voted strongly (62%) for the Social Democratic candidates in the first round of
the elections, thus cancelling the need for a second round. The district with the town of Resen and a few nearby villages (ca 10,000 voters) indicated its cohesive political "community" with overwhelming support to the Social Democratic candidate. Minority groups, instead of voting for their ethnic parties,chose to support the Macedonian Social Democrat. The VMRO candidates received slightly over 10 percent of the total vote, although its Party had considerably greater strength in the all-Macedonian villages towards the Greek border. In the district which included Resen, VMRO candidates got 9.8% of the vote, in the outlying village, 16.3% of the vote. The Albanian Party for Democratic Prosperity received just over 3% in that district (Election Results 1994: Republic of Makedonija
1994.141—2).

In the work force and the labour market, I had to do guess work and interpolations from the few statistical materials I collected. My hit was 8,000 in the work force, after subtracting school children and the elderly. No demographic age and gender pyramid graphs were available.

The two large industrial finns, "Prespateks" (a synthetic textile and clothing manufacturing company) hires 1300 persons, and "Agroplod" (a company that produces and packages food and snacks) currently hires 760 persons. The director of Agroplod, after two days of delaying, told me that he could not give me any information about employment. Two women secretaries from different departments helped me with some of the material I asked for during the time of delay. Both women had returned to Resen, to get married, after growing up in Toronto and Goteborg respectively. The time spent waiting for the director to make up his mind was used for friendly conversation about two important sites of Macedonian community abroad. The two women also got a chance to get to know each other. There were in any event, 760 persons then employed at the company. The two large companies plus a number of smaller industrial firms employ an estimated 2,400 people.

In the public sector, including professions, I estimated 1,600 persons. In the small shops and service trades I estimated 1,200 persons. This figure represents 300 registered shops and services, with four people keeping the businesses open for as many as 12 hours every day. The municipal secretary of the office for privatisation (whom I met in 1980, when he worked as a public health inspector) showed me his hand-written registry of new licences for shops and services. There were nearly 300 of them: cafés, barber shops, taxis, shoe repair shops, grocery stores, etc.

The Director of the social work office informed me that 800 "families" receive welfare, that is, roughly one-sixth of the total number of 5,000 "households." This was all the information he would present to me, but welfare recipients told me how difficult it was to get assistance and how limited that assistance was.

Finally there are the full-time apple growers, and they number, in my projected profile 2,800. Many of these persons live and work in the villages. Like most of the small privately owned shops and services, the apple farms are family businesses.

Sustained observations, of course, are better than hypothetical projections. What strikes an observant participant in Resen is how many men with salaried posts (school teachers, public administrators) supplement their income with apple production. Rather, the salaries supplement their incomes from apples. I know of no factory workers who own and work orchards. Shop owners likewise, have neither time nor energy to toil the extra hours in the orchards. Even a relatively small orchard with 200 highly productive trees requires time and labour beyond what most factory workers and shop owners can expend. The "white collar" workers, on the other hand, can manage the office or school job and spend four or five hours with their trees. The arduous jobs of pruning limbs, fertilizing, chopping down old trees and planting new ones take place in February through April. This is also the period for re-packing apples for trucking to markets. Spraying with various pesticides begins in late April when the blossoms appear—a job which I have not participated in—and continues through the summer, along with channeling and irrigating—which I have participated in. Apple-picking is usually in the middle weeks of October.

Before the collapse of Yugoslavia, the marketing of apples was typically the work of the grower. Starting in November and reaching a peak at the Christmas season, farmers drove their crates of apples to

Belgrade, Zagreb, and Sarajevo, where they got highest prices.

Several informants in 1984 said that 1 U.S. dollar per kilo was the going price for high quality Prespa apples. The dollar was very high at that time. It was advantageous to sell the apples when they were newly picked, since they lost weight because of de-hydration during the winter months. Many farmers owned and drove their own small trucks, purchased with wages they or family members had earned abroad. In November and December they shuttled to and from the large Yugoslavian cities, selling their cases of apples from the truck beds.

The Yugoslavian government in the 1960's began to encourage labour migration *(pechalbastvo)* and family-scaled private agriculture. For the Prespa Lake region this reform legislation started two decades of development. New houses were built, and many are dated and initialed by their proud owners on the white plastered gables. Most of the dates are in the late 1970's. The proverbial "California of Yugoslavia" reached its peak in the middle of the 1980's. The labour markets of the Western countries were in a long recession; many—but it is not known how *many—pechalbari* returned to their homes and orchards in Resen. The prices of apples on Yugoslavian urban markets could generally keep pace with the rapid inflation. The industrial wage-earners and salaried employees in the cities were those who suffered most from the inflation, which happened to coincide with the decade after Marshall Tito's death. The old Partisan hero passed away before the socialist experiment he inspired showed some of its weaknesses.

When the Yugoslavian Socialist Federation broke apart, and Macedonia slipped quite easily away from Belgrade's authority, the market system which had been favourable to Prespa farmers came abruptly to an end. The first shock came in 1992—3, when the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina was gaining momentum. It seemed almost impossible for Prespa apple growers to sell that year's bumper crop. New strategies were needed, and this is what I shall now tell about.

I observed and took part in three distinct methods of selling Prespa apples in 1995. The "traditional way" was continued by Albanian friends and informants in one of the villages. Small trucks and cars with trailers were loaded with crates of apples and driven, not to Serbia or Croatia, but to outlying towns in Macedonia, close to the Bulgarian and Serbian borders, sometimes supplying apples to local Albanians. One of my friends hired two couples from Albania to prune his orchards. These couples had been trained in the Albanian agricultural academy, but there was no work for them in Albania. After pruning his farm, my friend sent them on to other Albanian growers in Prespa. This, he said, was a way of helping his people. He took his apples to markets and hoped to get the highest price, 1 D-mark per kilo.

A second strategy also involved Albanians, but in a quite different way. Three Turkish brothers in Resen, who had no apple orchards of their own, began a shipping firm that negotiated contracts between truck drivers from Albania and growers in Prespa. I recall the brothers since the 1970's never speaking a word about apples. One had been a textile worker, another a truck driver, and the third a bus conductor. Now in their tiny office next door to their home, they shout over their portable telephone (in Macedonian, Turkish, and Albanian) to prospective buyers and sellers. Deals are made—ten tons of Golden Delicious—and broken, which is the cause for the shouting.

Three or four trucks with Albanian license plates—and German, French, or Danish company trademarks still proudly visible—are stationed across the road from their house. Most of these truck engines badly need valve and cylinder repair, because the smoke from their exhaust pipes makes the trademarks invisible.

Trading with the poor neighbour country Albania is something new in Macedonia. Without doubt, the ethnic minorities of Resen have a head start with the new businesses, which results in envy from Macedonians. Language skills among the minorities assist the import-export branch. Repeated impressions were that selling apples to Albanian truckers earned .5 D-marks per kilo, or half of the desired price. Desperation and impatience, as summer approached, gave results. A third and problematic option was to sell Prespa apples in United Nations' blockaded Yugoslavia, including Kosova. Apples are not weapons, and I could very well understand how Prespa growers used their former connections in Serbia to receive and sell further the cases of apples.

Kadri who had many years' experience as truckdriver and shipper, was able to sell his large apple crop to a buyer in Serbia, possibly an Albanian from Kosova. Kadri is a great organizer of voluntary labour

power; he gathered eight men (including myself) to sort through the cases of apples, picking out the rotten ones and repacking the rest for shipment. Readers have met Kadri in the first chapter of the book, and I shall now tell about his work party for planting apple trees.

Three of us starting digging holes for 130 young Ida Red apple trees. Kadri had staked out the orchard space, and we three drove there on his tractor with the trees and a a large bucket of manure. One of my jobs was dipping the roots in a diluted cow dung which Kadri called "vitamins". After digging about two holes in the time it took the other men to dig four, I was ready for a break. At nine o'clock we saw reinforcements arriving on bicycles and on tractors. It was like the cavalry coming to the rescue in a 1940's Western movie. The group included a couple of older men, my age, so we got the root-dipping jobs. The eight young men dug the holes, and we held the saplings up and refilled the earth around their roots. Kadri showed me which direction the graft should point: south towards the lake. Kadri even tested me once. He put the tree in wrong so the graft pointed north. He asked "Good?" I said "No", and I turned it around. "Dobro!" he yelled, and everybody laughed. When he checked to see if the tree was vertical, I asked to him yell "Galitcisa" or "Palister," the names of the mountains to west and east respectively. I was not sure how to say West and East in Macedonian. The entire work team was soon heard yelling "Galitsica" or "Palister", as we planted the trees in the 130 holes. My digging was a small part of the whole.

We were finished with the work by 2 PM and were invited to a huge lamb dinner at his home that his wife and daughter were preparing while we were digging and planting trees. The group of men for the *moba* included Macedonians and Turks. The entire project, I was told, was planned with one day's notice. Kadri and the men agreed that that is the way things get done in Macedonia.

A month later we were busy repacking wooden cases of apples. There were some rotten apples that had to be removed, and the cases for long

SLIKA

Kadri serving lamb to helpers after planting apple trees.
This exchange is known as 'moba'.
Resen, March 1995

distance shipment were smaller than those used during the harvest. He sent a large truck with 19 tons of Ida Red apples the next morning to "Serbia" and, I also heard, "Kosova" mentioned as the destination. The men worked until 5 AM doing the packing. I had already quit when darkness fell.

For this large transaction, there was no money in sight, only hope and trust. His daughter, Sevda, explained to me that because her father "knew the man", this was ample basis for a deal between them. I had, however, visions of U.N. border guards, Serbian police, mafia gangs in the markets, Yugoslavian army, etc. keeping the 19,000 D-marks from my friend's pocket. But a month later, when Sevda was about to graduate from the high school and her father and his friends were putting the final touches on their new kitchen, the girl told me: "My father got some of the money.

Apples are a pillar of the community, and as one can gather, at least from my field experience, there are aspects of ethnicity in the apple trade since Macedonian independence. We are not speaking here of deep-seated ethnic conflicts, but of strategies in a field, where ethnic and linguistic skills can become symbolic capital and where financial capital is precarious.

Local Radio... and Global Culture

In my two-room apartment there was a tiny digital radio with Macedonian music. One evening at the beginning of my stay in Resen I was listening to a disc—jockey who called his program "Balkan Blues Cafe." I did not know where the program was being sent from, but I liked the choice of the music and the husky voice of the disc-jockey. The songs he played were Mississippi Delta blues, English rock, "evergreens" as well as the more local sounds of Macedonian groups, including Rom, Albanian, and Turkish numbers. "Nostalgia" was not a term which the disc-jockey of Balkan Blues Cafe tried to avoid.

He let his nostalgia come out over the air until late at night. There was the saving grace of irony in his nostalgia.

On my first and anxious visit to Resen's town hail, when I was going to inform the authorities about my project for fieldwork, a guard at the door (who spoke French) showed me the way to Nekhru's office on the first floor. Nekhru was the man who spoke the best English, as well as Turkish and Macedonian, and he welcomed me warmly into his small office. He had visited Denmark and Sweden, where he had family, and he was interested in what I was going to study.

Nekhru is a journalist by training and had studied at the university in Skopje during the early 1980's. After returning to Resen he had written for the local bi-weekly paper, edited by the Yugoslavian Communist League. With independence, transition, and privatization, the local paper is no longer being published. His post, as secretary, is taking the minutes of the town council. "Don't you need a local paper here in Resen?" I asked him. "No, we have local, private, radio." Nekhru then said that he had started Resen's first local private station two years ago. He was the one and only disc-jockey of Balkan Blues Cafe! I told him how pleased I was with his radio program. This was the lucky start with a person who turned out to be a good friend and informant.

Nekhru named his station "Radio Delicious" after the popular hybrid apple. The state supported local radio station is "Radio Resen" provides "information" to its listeners. The private local stations broadcast music, conversation, and advertizing. Listeners call in and make requests for songs. They can also send short messages and greetings to friends and family.

Besides meeting the voice of Balkan Blues Cafe in Resen's town hall, another surprise was to be revealed. Nekhru described one of Radio Delicious' purposes to be multicultural with each language community having a share of air time. When private local radio stations were being established, the New York-based George Soros Foundation expressed an interest in subsidizing them, provided that the stations would broadcast in the languages of the audiences. The Soros Foundation's branch in Skopje is The Institute for an Open Society. Nekhru applied for funds from the Institute to purchase his transmitter set and received them. Radio Delicious is currently in its third year on the air.

My research project had a section about the "civil society" and its activity in the Republic of Macedonia since independence. How do nongovernmental organizations (NGO's) with humanitarian, voluntarist, universalist goals intervene in the making of Makedonija? I raised the question, figuring that any answers would most likely be found in the capital city, Skopje (Seligman 1992). My new friend, Nekhru, was showing how cosmopolitan civil society had reached Resen, with funding for Radio Delicious. Local and private radio stations were thereby linked to global and public culture.

I visited Nekhru several times in his town hall office, but I also visited him several times at the studio of "Radio Delicious" in the back-yard of his house. His new house was directly behind the apartment building where I lived. The studio was a shack that resembled an immobilized "mobile home." Its only movement came when it was hit by the winter wind. One night during a storm, the aerial for the station blew over, and Nekhru's transmission was suspended. Nekhru swore bitterly about the fragile installation of Radio Delicious. Is this an anecdote about Civil Society as well?

Nekhru sometimes played Greek and Bulgarian folk music on the Balkan Blues Cafe. Angry listeners called in to protest these unpatriotic choices, but Nekhru insisted that all folk music was "beautiful" and that he would continue to air all folk music until the end of time. His stacks of LP records and racks of tape cassettes were evidence of the civil society's presence in Resen.

In April a new local, private radio station opened on the air waves. This was "Radio Stella" and Stella got no assistance from the Soros Foundation. There was no need for it. The young couple which managed the station worked at least 12 hours per day. The compact, comfortable studio was just upstairs from the office where my friends arranged the transactions of apples to Albania.

Radio Stella definitely attempted to reach the young people in Resen, and, in contrast to Radio Delicious, the irony of "Balkan Blues" was deliberately missing. The studio of Stella was in Engin's and Ahmed's house, and, Natasha, the young woman who was the disc-jockey complied with the tastes of her listeners. The music she said, was "mostly Macedonian," but she interspersed some requests for Turkish numbers into the programs. Engin volunteered his help to Radio Stella when needed. The small studio

quickly became a meeting place for young people of various ethnic groups.

On Easter (Veliden) Saturday, Radio Stella broadcast directly to a young peoples' street party in Resen, the first of its kind in history. The street party was sponsored by "Giovanni's Pizzeria", a small restaurant owned and operated by three young Macedonian brothers who had returned from a childhood in Australia "to start a life of our own", as Johnnie (23 years old) put it. Their parents were still in Australia. In "*post-pechalba"* Macedonia, young people return to their homeland to take mitatives that their fathers sought for when they emigrated. Johnnie, who is a successful businessman, lent the owners of Radio Stella his sound equipment. Thus, whereas Nekhru's old generation (he is about 35 years old) got financial help from the Soros Foundation, the younger generation manages on its own.

Wherever I turned in Resen, I heard about people helping each other, and ethnic boundaries were not a hindrance to help. If there was the slightest sign of trust, people were willing to help each other. The civil society, as an intellectual concept, is rooted in basic trust among persons. In Communist societies, it is often postulated, the civil society was non-existent because basic trust among citizens was lacking. My experience in Resen, whether it was a question of cases of apples or sounds of music, suggests that trust—as well as envy—was present in many forms of conduct, within and between ethnic communities.

Local and private radio is one of the unexpected indices of contemporary Macedonia in the making. Some readers might object that the activity of disc-jockeys in improvised radio studios is too trivial to deserve a pillar-of-the-community status. It is precisely because first "Delicious" and then "Stella" are the most direct media of communication in Resen that they merit such elaboration. In the following chapter (4), I shall describe a similar encounter with local radio stations in several villages of western Macedonia.

Newspaper reading is minimal in Macedonia. Nekhru is one of the few persons I knew who read Nova Makedonija every day. As a professional journalist and political secretary, he had had to keep up with the news. Many of my informants in Resen, who were university graduates, refrained from reading newspapers. They felt no need to read the news. One publishing company in Skopje, Nova Makedonija, issues the three papers: "Vecera" (the evening), "Nova Makedonija", and "Pulse", a weekly intellectual magazine. Nekhru estimated that with a population of nearly 2 million persons, 20,000 copies of the two daily papers were printed. That is, one percent of the population. Resen's population (rounded to 20,000) is one percent of the whole. I counted three kiosks in the town where papers were sold. I asked each shop keeper how many Nova Makedonija he had to sell every day. The bus-station's kiosk had the highest number: *50.*

People watch the news reports on television, and this few minutes represents the selected contact with "the outside world." If the viewers have satellite dishes, they can direct their viewing to the West (U.S.A) or the East (Istanbul). There are ten Turkish TV channels to select from. In one Turkish household which I often visited, the family watched the news from Istanbul, not Skopje.

When Nehkru or his helpers cannot sit at the transmitter in the studio, he hooks his station into the Istanbul network, "Metro FM," where the announcers comment in a mixture of English and Turkish. Once I heard the woman disc-jockey on Metro FM sing along with the Gypsy Kings. Radio Delicious, then, is not as completely local as Radio Stella. Nekhru guesses that his programs have about 3,000 listeners, but some of them have probably switched over to Stella. This does not bother Nekhru. What is most troubling is the fact that the government in Skopje is beginning to enforce the laws about licensing private radio stations.

"Delicious may have to shut down," he announced dramatically in my last visit to his studio. The local Greek station across Lake Prespa, he explained, has the same frequency as his Delicious, and it also has a more powerful transmitter. The Greek station reaches the large Macedonian tourist resort in Oteschevo, 15 kilometres from Resen. Delicious cannot be heard there, which means a loss of listeners and income. Nekhru's libertarian and cosmopolitan spirit leads him to play Greek folk melodies on the Resen side of the border, against the will of many of his listeners. The government in Skopje and the local Greek radio may combine to remove the Balkan Blues Cafe from the airways and civil society of the Prespa Lake region.

I can tentatively conclude from this rapid review of local radio in Resen that it serves both to join the listeners to the flows of global culture and to maintain a sense of regional community. The NGO

sponsorship of multicultural and plural linguistic projects, however, has a minimal effect. Interethnic coexistence and harmony do not emerge from the music and conversation of disc-jockeys. As an activity the work in local radio may build upon such feelings of trans-ethnic community, with or without the help of trans-national NGO's. In the following section on the celebration of holidays we shall see a fourth pillar of community that has both ethnic and trans-ethnic dimensions.

Holidays: From Ramadan to Veliden

What would people do if the measured or "total prestations" of ceremonies were completely eliminated from social life (Mauss 1954)? A society without systematic, mutual exchanges of gifts—it would be virtual dystopia—would be hard to imagine; an anthropologist would find little social substance to record in the portable computer. Exchanging anecdotes is a partial prestation, for the present situations generate collective memories and the narrating of them. As Halbwachs *(1950)* expertly demonstrated, an individual's memories draw nearly always on collective memories. An "I" intersperses slowly but surely with a "We".

Anthropology in our time is still living on the gifts of French social science from Durkheim's school onward. The "collective" or shared notions of morality which were so persuasive in the French tradition have, of course, been tempered by academic style and discourse—also a gift of the French. Community studies in North America, as exemplified in Lloyd Warner's Yankee City series, invested in the inheritance of Durkheim. Durkheim's exaggerations of social and cultural cohesion are doubled in the American community studies. "The Community" seems like a caricature.

It is hard to shake off the notion of community from one's shovel. (It was Fernand Braudel's (1958) simile of referring to "time" in social science and historiography as mud which sticks to the farmer's spade). The selective exchanges of gifts during religious and quasi-religious holidays in a multi-ethnic community are the topic for this section of the chapter. "From Ramadan to Veliden" traces the Spring calendar from the Muslim period of fasting to the Macedonian Orthodox Christian celebration of Easter. (Veliden means in Macedonian "Big Day.") Besides the two Bayram feasts in the Muslim communities, the Spring season also includes the feast of Saint George, and the several secular (or quasi-religious) holidays, May Day and the Commemoration of the victory over Fascism.

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Muslim calendar, where fasting and abstinence are mandatory during the hours of daylight. An anecdote concerning my first indirect experience with Ramadan is appropriate. I was conducting (1974-1979) an action research project in a guest-workers' ghetto in Copenhagen, the aim of which was a multi-ethnic mobilization for better housing and health conditions. Two Turkish brothers from Resen who were active in the grass-roots organization—they moved back to their hometown in 1982—cautioned the action research people against scheduling meetings during Ramadan. If there were to be meetings they should after dark and after a long-awaited evening meal. To call a meeting at 4 PM, that is, upon immediate return from work would jeopardize the chances for solidarity. The Muslim men would be too irritable from hunger and fatigue. The anecdote dates from February 1976. The same two brothers showed an even stronger conviction about fasting during Ramadan in Resen than they did in Copenhagen. Religious commitment is being revived in Macedonia after independence. Both of Resen's *djamijas* (mosques) are restored and in use, as are the two Orthodox churches in Resen, St. George and Sts. Kyril and Methodius. That there are two churches in Resen has a "political explanation", according to one of the town's three priests. The older church, dedicated to St. George, was under the Greek patriarchy. When the Bulgarian exarchiate split away from Greek authority in 1870, there was another church needed in Resen, and the new church was dedicated to Sts. Kyril and Methodius, who had translated the Bible into old south Slavic language.

The religious and political holidays in Resen are manifestations of intra- and inter-community life. As far as I know, there is no local "round table" for sharing one's religious persuasions with others. More evident is the carrying of trays with freshly baked Baklava and bowls of coloured Easter eggs to one's friends and neighbours across the ethnic boundaries. A similar exchange of ceremonial gifts between Muslim and Orthodox Christian neighbours has been noted in Bulgaria (See Georgieva 1995:159)

Of course, most of the gift-giving is within the ethnic groups, but the ostensible giving and receiving ceremonies are from Muslim to Christian (at Bayram following Ramadan) and from Christian to Muslim (at Veliden). The weekend prior to Easter, four girls knocked on the door of my apartment. I was writing notes. It was unusual to have a visit. When I opened the door, a girl said "it is *Lazara',* and I guessed rightly that I was supposed to give them a present. I came back to them with three Ida Red apples (notice I brought an odd number even though there were four girls). The Macedonian Christians also bake Baklava and they give it, along with special forms of bread, to their Muslim neighbours. High school students at an English class agreed that it was primarily "neighbours" who exchanged gifts at Bayram and Easter.

On the day before Big Bayram, a man went through the Turkish neighbourhoods beating a drum. In Resen, there are neighbourhoods, as there are villages, where all the inhabitants are Macedonian. Minorities live in "mixed neighbourhoods" as we used to say in Detroit. There is a neighbourhood called "Cemetary" which is near the town's two cemeteries. The Muslim and the Orthodox Christian cemeteries are adjacent to each other on the road toward Prespa Lake. The space for the living and the dead is dividedand adjacent.

The town centre is where most of the Rom live, and they are neighbours with many Turkish people. Resen's Rom tend to be Muslim and Albanian-speaking, but as they say, they wrap many traditions together into a happy bundle. May 6, Saint George's, is their day for a feast, when they slaughter, roast, and serve a lamb. The other groups eat lamb at B ayram or at Easter.

What was impressive to a bewildered ethnographer was how the entire community of Resen, Muslims and Christians, celebrated "Georgiden" by picking sprigs of willow by the Big River and placing them over their doors and windows. Engin's sister fetched water from the stream and washed in it.

Georgiden honours the coming of Spring, and gift-giving at this time is the activity of the Rom. The Rom hold an annual dance in the First of May movie theatre, as does the Turkish community at Bayram. This spring, there was apparently wide disagreement as to which orchestra was to play, and when none turned up, the dance was cancelled. Macedonian and Turkish friends, knowing our interest in culture, had urged us to attend the Rom festival.

We did, however, attend a very solemn ritual conducted at the Church of Saint George, outside in the church yard: We are sprinkled with holy water. A Godfather *(Num* in Macedonian, *Kum* in Serbian) donates to the priest a large round, ornamented bread, which is divided into four parts by spoke-like bands of bread. Nobs of baked dough are on the edge of the circle. The priest turns the bread upside down, and then pours wine onto it. Then he turns the loaf right side up and people place their hands on the nobs, turning the bread in a clockwise circle three times, symbolizing, another priest later explained, the changing of the seasons and the agricultural cycle of the year.

Then the priest cuts the bread and gives one quarter back to the donor, two parts to those who ask politely for it, and the priest keeps one for himself. This was gift-giving within the group, not across groups. The diversity of practices at Georgiden, with the "marginal" Rom momentarily at the centre, indicates the (functional?) working of a community's segments. There was not in Resen a single pageant, as in Warner's Yankee City, where all the ethnic groups added their contribution to the imaginary whole. In Resen, the sequence of religious holidays adds up, through reciprocity and division of symbolic labour, to an imagined Resen community. Marking the religious holidays by public gestures to the the community at large is almost as important as an individual's activity.

A Muslim musician beating his drum thus announced the coming of Bayram by walking through the streets. Green flags with the Muslim symbol of star and quarter moon were placed on the two minarets in Resen. Prayers were sung on the loudspeaker to call the men to worship at 5 AM, and I joined the men at the early morning prayer in the *djamija.*

I tried in my fieldwork to keep an equal balance in attendance between Orthodox and Muslim religious services. Warner's (1961:59-66) opposition between "oral Protestantism" and "visual Catholicism" in Yankee City Christianity seemed to represent some of the primary differences between Islamic and Orthodox liturgies in Resen. Islamic prayer and the gestures which accompany it require the believer to remain stationary, kneeling and bowing, sometimes cupping one's hands behind one's ears so as to better hear the chanted phrases. The men form straight rows on the carpets. Shoes are removed at the entrance,

so as to ensure that no matter be out of place. Texts from the Koran ornament the walls and ceilings. The liturgy is centred on the chanted text. The difference between “oral Islam” and “visual Orthodoxy” would startle Warner. Compare the open space of the djamija with the crowded and divided space of the Orthodox church. The iconostasis both displays and keeps secluded the icons. What would Warner have written about this profound difference of symbolic expression? Is community possible with such differences of membership and ritual?

Orthodox liturgy includes chanting, but the waving of the censer, the sprinkling of water, the lighting of candles, repeated crossings with the right fingers, thumb pressed to ring finger tip, kissings of icons’ faces, right hands, and hearts. Islam and Orthodoxy are different. Why try to evade the difference? But why make the difference into a time-bomb?

In Resen from Big Bayram to Veliden and Little Bayram, religious ceremonies and rituals followed upon each other’s heels in what seemed to me a continuous dance. Folklorists would say I had not done my homework, but I had in fact read the classic Frazer, Durham, and especially Wace and Thompson (1914), which is devoted primarily to Vlach folklore in northern Pindus (Greece). These books were noton the shelves of my apartment, so I took each new celebration of springtime as it came.

One of the most puzzling experiences came at Easter weekend. On Saturday I heard a strange sound. As I hung up some clothes to dry on the balcony of the apartment, I heard a sound of percussion from across the town. Maybe some kids were practicing playing the drums. The sounds came periodically, and I got used to them. They had no significance because I didn’t know their significance.

On the evening of Good Friday, Sandra, a Macedoiiian girl, told me that the sound came from the Church tower (Sts Cyril and Methodius). Boys up in the tower beat on wooden sticks for Veliden. She said she and a friend were going up to the church that night. Would I go along? Of course. Alexandra’s friend was named Iton. He was Muslim and Rom, but he explained on the way up to the church that every religion with a belief in one God was good. He was pleased to hear I was Jewish.

The sounds of the beating sticks got louder as we approached the church. The churchyard was illuminated by candles held by crowds of celebrants. I did not know the word for the sound of this rhythmic music, so I called it “clickety-elack” which amused Sandra and Iton. They did not know the name of the music either, but they insisted that “This is done only in Resen.” Iton qualified the statement. “They do it in Spain too, but with drums."

I take such information as truth, at least until I can check its veracity later. Iton and Sandra were earnest in believing that Resen was the only place where boys beat on sticks in church towers at Easter time. Such statements make for a sense of community and identity. Facticity lies in its consequences. I went along with their belief, but I was sceptical.

Inside the church, Sandra lit a candle, taught me to cross myself, and kissed an icon. I had a candle, lighted it, and planted it in the sand beside an icon. I asked Iton and Sandra if we could go up into the church tower. They asked the man who sold candles and he pointed the way to a ladder. It was the first time Sandra had tried going up the ladder. She had been afraid of doing so for many years, though she had wanted to. We began climbing up the series of wobbling wooden ladders until we safely, miraculously, reached the top. I had gotten a shave and haircut, put on a clean shirt, tie, and jacket for the Good Friday Church service. Now I was up in a dark, dusty church tower. There were about seven boys, around 12 years old beating on the two or three wooden boards that were suspended on steel wires inside the church tower. They beat the boards with wooden sticks in a sound that was like a train on a railroad crossing and/or the sound of horses’ hooves. Periodically, until midnight at Easter Sunday, the boys take turns beating the boards. I still believed that this was a tradition, unique in Resen. I wanted to believe that it was unique, because that would mean that I as a (social) scientist had made a discovery.

The urge for finding the unique is a very powerful motive. Something like that had happened in Kadri’s yard when we were laying the pieces of mosaic for the pathway. This was an event for me. Later I saw how many men in Resen spent their evenings and weekends laying pieces of mosaic, including my landlord at his new house. I had walked on such mosaic paths in Resen for years, not really noticing them, until after I had worked on one, and then, mistakenly thinking it was unique. Our belief in the unique is

precious, for the very idea of "precious" comes from the belief of uniqueness. It is like Spinoza's problem: Do we desire something because it is good, or is it good because we desire it? Because the body talks and knowledge is carnal, we start with desires and will. This is what Spinoza combined in his concept of Conatus (Hampshire 1951:133). Vico's pragmatic axiom carries Spinoza's answer further for a a theory of historical and social knowledge. We make what we know is the practical equivalent of we know what we make. Human beings make their history, therefore we can know history. God made the universe, therefore (S)he can know the universe. (Wo)men should stick to history, because that is the only thing we have made.

Up in the church tower I tried my hand at beating on the boards, not as well as the 12-year-olds. In the following weeks I asked many people about the custom and found out—of course—that it was not unique in Resen but widely practiced in provincial towns of Macedonia. What about Bulgaria and Greece? I asked. Nobody knew. Local knowledge is local for both the native informant and the naive ethnographer. Most people I asked had spent Easter in their hometown, so they really did not know what was done elsewhere, and it wasn't much talked about. Some were tempted to think that their church tower was the only one that rapped through the weekend until the bells of Easter began ringing at midnight.

There is a term for the ritual, *Tropotenje,* and there were many people who did not know the word. I asked English classes at the high school in Resen to tell me about the religious traditions in the weeks following Veliden. What about the beating of sticks in the tower? What did it mean? One girl—almost to the surprise of her classmates and her teacher, Slavica, who had grown up in New Jersey—said what her grandmother had told her: "It is the sound of the horses pulling the chariot that takes Jesus' soul". That was a solid answer which had no magical hocus pocus in it.

A sociologist of religion at the university in Skopje said, on the contrary, that the percussion custom goes back to "pagan times" as a way of driving off evil spirits. The debate between Peirce's semiotic method and Frazer's sympathetic magic could not be more sharply presented. (ef Singer 1984 for a Peircean semiotic anthropology). The girl's grandmother indicated in a Peircean method how the sound of sticks resembled semiotically—but not magically—the chariot carrying Jesus' soul. The sociologist of religion interpreted the activity, not as elements in a complex system of signs, but as survivals of pre-logical, "pagan" magic.

Several times in connection with the revival of Orthodox ritual, I observed that young people wanted to practice the religious rituals and they were not so interested in the theological or scriptural meanings of them. Holding a lighted candle in the church yard on the eve of Veliden was a sign of renewed Macedonian Orthodox community in Resen. The candles were a sign of sociability as much as religiosity. The students from

House-cleaning in Djamija for Bayram
Resen, February 1995. (K. Re~nne)

the villages came into town that evening, and many walked down to the young people's street party afterwards. That too was a sign of community.

This cross-examination of witnesses in the high school classroom and the university lecture hail illustrates the crocheting method. When I told Sandra that the "clickety clack" was not unique in Resen's church tower at Veliden, she was not disappointed. The pillars of her community remain standing. It is apparently not belief in the unique that maintains community.