

## Southeastern Europe

# Southeastern Europe

## Editor-in-Chief

Anna Krasteva (*New Bulgarian University, Sofia*)

## Executive Editor

Stefano Bianchini (*Istituto per l'Europa Centro-Orientale e Balcanica (IECOB), Bologna*)

## Associate Editor

Marco Puleri (*University of Bologna*)

## Book Review Editor

Vjieran Pavlaković (*University of Rijeka*)

## Book Review Assistant

Martina Draščić (*CESSDA ERIC*)

## Editorial Board

Sara Barbieri (*IECOB, Bologna*)

Florian Bieber (*University of Graz*)

Vesna Bojicic-Dzelilovic (*London School of Economics and Political Science*)

Sharyl Cross (*St. Edward's University, Austin*)

Christina Koulouri (*Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens*)

Joseph Marko (*University of Graz*)

Sergiu Miscoiu (*Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj*)

Julie Mostov (*New York University*)

Asim Mujkić (*University of Sarajevo*)

Craig Nation (*U.S. Army War College, Carlisle*)

Günay Özdoğan (*Istanbul*)

Francesco Privitera (*University of Bologna*)

Sabrina Ramet (*The Norwegian University of Science & Technology*)

Maria Todorova (*University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign*)

Mitja Zagar (*Institute for Ethnic Studies, Ljubljana*)

Volumes published in this journal are listed at [brill.com/seeu](http://brill.com/seeu)

# Southeastern Europe

VOLUME 44 (2020)



BRILL

LEIDEN | BOSTON



Southeastern Europe is edited and produced in cooperation with the Istituto per l'Europa Centro-Orientale e Balcanica (IECOB) in Bologna, Italy. [www.eurobalk.net](http://www.eurobalk.net).



SEEU Editorial Office is located at the Department for Political and Social Sciences of the University of Bologna, Forlì Campus. Address: G. della Torre 5, 47121 Forlì, Italy

### Notes for Contributors

Please visit [brill.com/seeu](http://brill.com/seeu), or contact editorial assistant Marco Puleri at [marco.puleri2@unibo.it](mailto:marco.puleri2@unibo.it).

Need support prior to submitting your manuscript? Make the process of preparing and submitting a manuscript easier with Brill's suite of author services, an online platform that connects academics seeking support for their work with specialized experts who can help. Go to [authorservices.brill.com/](http://authorservices.brill.com/).

Brill Open Access options can be found at [brill.com/openaccess](http://brill.com/openaccess).

Typeface for the Latin, Greek, and Cyrillic scripts: "Brill". See and download: [brill.com/brill-typeface](http://brill.com/brill-typeface).

ISSN 0094-4467

E-ISSN 1876-3332

Copyright 2020 by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

Koninklijke Brill NV incorporates the imprints Brill, Brill Hes & De Graaf, Brill Nijhoff, Brill Rodopi, Brill Sense, Hotei Publishing, mentis Verlag, Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh and Wilhelm Fink Verlag. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Koninklijke Brill NV provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910, Danvers, MA 01923, USA. Fees are subject to change.

Brill has made all reasonable efforts to trace all rights holders to any copyrighted material used in this work. In cases where these efforts have not been successful the publisher welcomes communications from copyright holders, so that the appropriate acknowledgements can be made in future editions, and to settle other permission matters.

This journal is printed on acid-free paper and produced in a sustainable manner.

# Ending the Long-lasting “Difference over the Name”

## *The Prespa Agreement – Its Philosophy, Origins and Challenges Ahead*

AQ1

*Sasho Georgievski*

Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, North Macedonia

*s.georgievski@pf.ukim.edu.mk*

AQ2

*Irena Rajchinovska Pandeva*

Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, North Macedonia

*i.rajchinovskapandeva@pf.ukim.edu.mk*

### Abstract

This article offers a broad analysis of the “name issue,” its origins, background and the challenges ahead in light of the Prespa agreement. It posits the historical perspective of both identities, assesses the positions maintained by the parties during the political and diplomatic dispute settlement process and presents the concerns of both parties regarding the agreement. Given the content of the Prespa agreement, the article aims at mapping its essential theoretical frame, explaining the key arrangements in the Prespa agreement and identifying the challenges associated with its implementation that might stand in the way of the accomplishment of its purported “historic” mission of settling the long-lasting disagreements between the two parties, offering some recommendations in that respect.

### Keywords

Prespa agreement – Macedonia – Greece – North Macedonia – name issue – identity

## 1 Introduction

The signing of the Final Agreement for the Settlement of the Differences as described in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions 817 (1993) and 845 (1993) on June 18th, 2018, on the Greek side of Lake Prespa

(hereinafter the “Prespa agreement”; in the Greek version, the “Prespes agreement”),<sup>1</sup> which terminated the Interim Accord of 1995 (Interim Accord, 1995), marked the ending of the twenty-five-year-long protracted negotiations over the “name difference” between the Republic of Macedonia (“RM”) and the Hellenic Republic (Greece). Along with the Agreement on Friendship, Good Neighborliness and Cooperation of the 1st of August 2018 between the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Macedonia (hereinafter the “BG-MK agreement”),<sup>2</sup> it targeted the closure of what has been historically known as the “Macedonian question.”<sup>3</sup>

The “name difference,” or, the “name issue” as it is often called, is a case of a denial by Greece of the RM’s official name, of the distinct existence of the “Macedonian” ethnicity and nation and of a “Macedonian” minority on Greece’s own territory.<sup>4</sup> As such, it is rather unique within the system of interstate relations under current international law, where countries’ names and identities are acknowledged as expressions of their equal rights and of the self-determination of peoples.<sup>5</sup> Its essence, Greece’s abrupt reaction to the official name of the newly proclaimed country in 1991 – the Republic of Macedonia – following the dissolution of the former Yugoslav Federation was reasoned by the fear that the naming of the newly independent country as “Macedonia” would in fact imply its ill-disguised territorial aspiration towards the northern Greek province bearing the same name (Satanakis 2018: 1) and an overall appropriation of the symbols, traditions, myths and even territory associated with the name ‘Macedonia’ (Triandafyllidou *et alii*, 1997). It is related to the standpoint according to which the recognition of the Republic would also implicitly extend to the national identity and nation (Rossos 2008: 269), along with the Greek viewpoint that naming is a fundamental expression of political

- 1 Spogodba, 2018. The Parliament of the RM ratified the agreement on 20.06.2018. It entered into force following the adoption of constitutional amendments in parliament on 11.01.2019, and the ratification in the Greek parliament on 25.01.2019, in accordance with its Articles 1 and 20. The official use of the name Republic of North Macedonia (“RNM”) began as of 12.02.2019, and this logic is implemented in the article.
- 2 BG-MK agreement. The agreement entered into force following its ratification by the Macedonian Parliament, and the Bulgarian Parliament, on January 15th and 18th 2018 respectively.
- 3 On the issue much has been written, including Schwartz, 1993; Romaniuk, 2010; Rossos, 2008; Triandafyllidou *et alii*, 1997.
- 4 See Joseph, 2008. The census of the Republic of Greece does not contain data on ethnicity of the population since the Hellenic Statistical Authority collects only data that represent citizenship, as in the latest report, Greek Stats, 2018.
- 5 See Crawen, 1995: 234–235 and 238; Warbrick, 2003: 209. Crawford, 2006: 188, and note 54 at 677. Also see Zaikos on Austria’s change of its name (Zaikos, 2010: 337); however, its context was too different from that of the RM to make any valid comparisons between them.

power, and that “to name something means to bring [it] into existence” (Triandafyllidou *et alii*, 1997). Both arguments lead to the denial and contestation of the Macedonian national identity by Greece grounded on the assumption of a “cultural theft” (Satanakis 2018: 1)<sup>6</sup> – a “theft of the Greek historical and cultural heritage” (Greek MFA) by the new nation state. In the decades following its inception, the name difference resulted in an abundant set of assertions by both sides that made the negotiating of national identities ever more complicated, as it became increasingly related both to the risk of destabilizing Macedonia and, probably, the entire region, due to internal and external factors.

Against that background, the UNSC’s Resolution 817 of 7.04.1993 (hereafter: SC Resolution 817) established a mechanism for the settlement of – what it called – the “difference over the name” under the UN Secretary General’s good offices,<sup>7</sup> and provided that the RM shall be provisionally referred to within the UN system under the reference of “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,” while allowing it to unilaterally use its constitutional name.<sup>8</sup> Its product, following 27 years of protracted negotiations, is the Prespa agreement. The agreement, in essence, envisages a change of the then-current official name of the RM with a new official name (the “Republic of North Macedonia” or “North Macedonia”), meticulous internal constitutional and other changes in the country that would enable the international and domestic use of that new name and related adjectives (and a non-use by the country of ancient Macedonian symbols), and an alteration of parts of the country’s current national identity narrative, in exchange for certain assurances by Greece regarding the distinct identity of its people. The Prespa agreement, in turn, provides an elaborate framework for future close relations between the parties based on their “strategic partnership,” which is the main *raison d’être* of the Prespa Agreement, including assurances for an unimpeded access of the RM to international organizations (NATO and the EU).

6 An additional factor that fueled such Greek fears even further was the promotion and execution of the former Macedonian PM Gruevski’s project aimed at the reconstruction of Macedonian national identity – popularly known as “antiquization” – which came about after the Bucharest NATO summit in 2008. See *infra* note 28.

7 As of 1993, the name negotiations have been mediated on behalf of the UN SG by Cyrus Vance and Lord David Owen, then Cyrus Vance alone and, finally, by Mathew Nimetz.

8 The RM’s right to unilaterally use its official name under SC Resolution 817 and the Interim Accord was confirmed by the judgment of the ICJ in the *Application of the Interim Accord* 644, especially para. 103.

## 2 Theoretical Background

Identities are complex, dynamic and context-driven concepts. This implies that identities are not to be perceived as monolayer entities, as fixed and static forms or as a simple derivate of natural or historical circumstances. This post-modern line of thinking is correlated to the idea that identities are constructs (Thiesse, 2001: 11) defined in relation to their context and in relation to others, thus underlining fluidity and relativity as their main features (Powell 1996: 1497). Or, as Ewing posits, “self-representations ... are context-dependent and may shift rapidly” (Ewing 1990: 251).

National identity as a collective form of identity is a social construct (Thiesse, 2001: 11)<sup>9</sup> that encompasses a shifting, unsettled complex of historical struggles and experiences that are cross-fertilized, produced and translated through a variety of cultures (Inac and Unal, 2013: 230). Consequently, national identities represent collective self-representations, and there is nothing more international than national identities (Thiesse, 2001: 11).

The prime requisite of what constitutes a nation, according to Connor, is subjective and consists of the self-determination of people with a group – its past, its present and, what is most important, its destiny (Connor 1994: 4). Empirically, national identities are a psychological conception which according to Kelman cannot be dictated or prescribed by outsiders (Kelman, 1997: 336). According to him, the social construction of national identity is precisely what makes it unreasonable to reject (or for that matter defend) it on the basis of some formal (theoretical, judicial or historical) criteria (Kelman, 1997: 338).

Situating of national identities in modern times is challenging due to many factors (relativity of boundaries, multiplicity of identities, internal diversity... as in Eriksen 2004: 50), including migrations that mold the societies so that they became more and more pluriethnic (Seymour 1999: 415–416), thus wiping across the political map of ethnic nations. So, discourse on the borders or boundaries of nations becomes impossible. Hence, fixing identities is not only intractable but challenging as well. Lin argued that as long as there are factors that “continue to fix the essentialist identities for others (or, conversely, ignore or deny the existence of others who are different from them), there will still be the need for identity struggles and politics” (Lin 2008: 214). Because, according to Lin, “identities are not problematic per se, but the fixing as essentializing act of using rigid identity boundaries and contents to label, stereotype and limit the possibilities of groups, and to exclude them from the society’s goods, or

9 The argument that ethnic identities are constructs is also in line with the primordialism school of nationalism, where it is assumed that once the ethnic identity is constructed, it becomes fixed. See more in Bayar, 2009.



conversely, to deny their difference or existence and ignore their needs altogether [is]” (Lin 2008: 214). The part of this article dedicated to the analysis of the Prespa agreement will demonstrate that the fixing of Macedonian identity was most likely envisaged from the onset and by both parties during the final round of the negotiations that brought about the agreement, and may raise certain challenges to its implementation.

National identities embrace subjective and objective presentations – the first in relation to the self-representation vis-à-vis the “other(s),” while the second regards the recognition of the identity by “other(s).” In the sphere of national identities, recognition becomes closely associated to the right to self-determination, both of which have a normative framework in international law. The rules of recognition in international law are rules according to which sovereign states recognize one another and non-state entities as rights-bearing agents within international society (Williams 2015: 6), while the right to self-determination is basically the right of all peoples to freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development (UN Resolution 1514). However, as Tourme-Jouannet argues, the concept of recognition aims at an expectation that law and justice can never completely meet, because it means accepting others for what they are thus it cannot be computed or measured by law alone (Tourme-Jouannet 2013: 686). According to her, the international law of recognition reflects the need to recognize not just everyone’s equal dignity but also the importance of culture, diversity and identities so as to respect what it is that makes the lives and histories of individuals, women, communities and peoples meaningful and to end the countless denials of recognition that befell them (Tourme-Jouannet 2013: 686).

Similarly, the psycho-historical approach to recognition argues that identities that lack an achievement, or that experience a failure in achievement, may face an identity crisis (Lin 2008).<sup>10</sup> On the objective side, the identity that seeks recognition is placed in an inferior position while the power to grant or withhold the recognition lies in the hands of the already recognized and existing entities. In line with this argumentation is Taylor’s stance that “our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves” (Taylor 1997: 25). In addition, the psychological approach posits the injustice of misrecognition which consists of damaged subjectivity for the group (Williams 2015: 6).

Apart from the psychological argumentations there are also normative ones, such as the increasingly complicated practice of gaining international

<sup>10</sup> More on the subject in Erikson, 1968.

recognition (Turk 1993), especially vis-à-vis the case of Macedonia, but also regarding the hardcore political aspects of recognition or the “political barriers of recognition” (Turk 1993). Accordingly, as regards the Prespa agreement, the absence of recognition or the misrecognition can produce a lasting gloom among the parties involved and the expectant rapture of inter-national relations will eventually fade away. Hence, there are at least the following potential risks that the Prespa agreement might entail: 1) misrecognition as underlining of almost all the calls for boycott or resentment towards the deal, bearing in mind that it might motivate political struggle (Meer *et alii* 2012: 131) and 2) rejection (or at least discounting) of the imposed and fixed barriers to the Macedonian identity within the historical, geographical and substantive stipulations in the agreement. Both potential outcomes are grounded in the history of persistent contestation and denial of the distinct Macedonian national identity by their neighbors, which has developed a defensive perception of surrounding entities, along with the subjective notion of imposition by externalities (the international community, including the EU and particular states), as exterior factors, and rising concerns on the intractability of intrastate relations vis-à-vis the ethnic Albanian community as an interior factor. Against such a background, in fact, the greatest challenge in the RM ever since its independence has always been how to determine its national identity as inclusive and undisputed, internally and externally.

In line with Taylor’s viewpoint, recognition is important because it will satisfy the need (as one of the driving forces behind nationalist movements in politics) and the demand (as one of various and numerous forms of identity politics) (Taylor 1997: 25) to be universally acknowledged in one form or another (Taylor 1997: 36), since, according to him, non-recognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted and reduced mode of being (Taylor 1997: 25). The convoluted Greek-Macedonian relationship of the past 27 years, but most notably in the past decade, has affected the development of a particular self-image on both sides – almost a mirror projection of the “other” that comes to life within the interaction between the two identities (for example see Triandafyllidou 1998: 604). Borrowing the terminology proposed by Mead, Greeks and Macedonians have become each other’s “generalized other” (Mead 1934).

### 3 Macedonian and Greek Macedonian Identities from a Historical Perspective

In essence, the Macedonian and Greek nation-building and state-building projects took very different paths in terms of their evolution and design. The

Greeks had established their state much earlier than the Macedonians, in 1821. And the contours of Greek identity (including Greek Macedonian identity) and the ensuing national narrative, which had been finally shaped somewhere in the second half of the nineteenth century, have been left almost unchallenged since the time of its original conception, regardless of projections by the state of different dominant variants of nationalism (ethnic or civic, since they were both present at some point during Greek political history) (Prevelakis, 2003). The originally conceived Greek (and Greek Macedonian) identity has been projected onto a heterogeneous population within the Greek state and maintained as a shield against other diverse and competing claims. The Greek Macedonian identity, as it has been preserved until today, has a strong reliance on Hellenic heritage, based on the notion of an unbroken historical continuity between ancient and modern Greece, including between the ancient Macedonian kingdom and modern Greek Macedonia, since ancient Macedonia is understood as being of a Hellenic character (Michailidis, 2006). It is conceived as united with the Greek national identity, that is, as a mere extension of the (ethnic) Greek identity of the citizens inhabiting the Greek Macedonian northern territory of Greece, as territorially demarked and with a mere cultural content amounting to the historical legacy of the region.

The Macedonian identity, in turn, has been developed in the particularly complex historical environment of a constant struggle by ethnic Macedonians to achieve statehood and for the recognition of their distinct identity in circumstances of its persistent denial by the earlier established Balkan nation-states. That identity relies equally upon the historical narrative that spans over centuries and encompasses the authentic Macedonian language and upon culture and the autonomous Macedonian Orthodox Church, as other Balkan identities. The nature of the ethnic ties rests upon the traditional definition of *ethnie*: a named human population with a myth of common ancestry, shared memories and cultural elements, a link with a historic territory or homeland and a measure of solidarity (Smith, 1993: 29). The long Macedonian struggle for statehood finally materialized through the successful communist-lead liberation campaign at the end of World War II, in 1944, with the establishment of the People's (later Socialist) Republic of Macedonia (PRM) at the Anti-Fascist Assembly of the People's Liberation of Macedonia. The PRM was founded as a constituent republic of the People's Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, on the part of the Macedonian territory that formerly belonged to the pre-war Yugoslavian kingdom. As it is known, amid the breakup of the former SFRY, the Socialist Federal Republic of Macedonia declared independence in 1991, and became a member of the UN in 1993 under the provisional reference "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia," due to the difference over the name with Greece. Following a series of centrifugal and centripetal political claims, what was

once imagined as a political community of the Macedonian nation later on, and especially after the Ohrid Framework Agreement, became a community of Macedonian citizens.

## 4 The Positions of the Parties Regarding the Name Difference

### 4.1 *The Position of Greece*

Along the historically shaped contours of the Greek and Greek Macedonian identity, the position of Greece towards the name difference, that was developed shortly before and after the inception of the name controversy at the turn of the 1990s, largely follows the perennialist logic according to which the nation is viewed as a politicized ethno-cultural community, a community of common ancestry that stakes claim to political recognition on that basis (Smith, 1998: 22). Within this logic (and its hardcore interpretation) the nation is rooted in place and time and embedded in a historic homeland (Smith, 1998: 22), so that any claim on this persistent and immemorial foundation of the nation is envisaged as a threat to it. Mostly devised among the public and expert opinion in Greece,<sup>11</sup> but also considerably reflected in the Greek official discourse of that time,<sup>12</sup> the predominant Greek position maintained throughout the name-settlement process (described by Kofos as “revisionist” as opposed to the “traditional” Greek viewpoint) (Kofos, 2005: 131–133) is comprised of the three following major elements.

Firstly, according to the Greek position, the newly independent RM must not be allowed to bear the term “Macedonia” in its official name, and to use the adjective “Macedonian” or similar “derivatives” from that term (e.g. for denoting its people, culture etc.), both internationally and within its territory. This rests on the premise that the term “Macedonia” and its derivatives are reserved exclusively for identifying the “historical” region of “Macedonia” as it existed at the time of the Kingdom of Phillip II, which, according to the Greek perception, roughly corresponds to the territory of the present Greek Macedonian region, and for the denomination of the identity of the Greek population inhabiting that region (the Greek Macedonians or *Makedones*). For the

11 As reported by Roudometof, 2002, a great inspiration for the “revisionist” position of Greece towards the name issue developed during the 1980s and at the beginning of the 1990s was found in the work of Martis, 1983. Before that in Andriotis, 1992.

12 The official position of Greece at that time is most visible from the letter dated 17.01.1992 from Greece’s FM, Andonis Samaras, to the European Community’s FM and his official address, *Address of Foreign Minister Andonis Samaras* (Lisbon, 17.02.1992) in Tsiampiris, 2000: 207–213 and 218–232. Also in the Letter of the President of Greece, Kostas Karamanlis, to the EC Heads of Government dated 3.01.1992 in Valinakis and Dalis, 1996: 63–64.

later – cultural – aspect, this position departed significantly from the decades-old “traditional” viewpoint maintained by Greece in the post-World War II period according to which the word “Macedonia” designated the wider Macedonian region including the portion of it that corresponds to the current territory of the RM, while emphasizing the security elements of the name issue in the first place (Kofos, 2005: 131–133). Indeed, at that time, Greece had tolerated the name of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia within the former SFRY, and had denoted the non-Greek Macedonians as “Slav Macedonians,” while apparently viewing them to be “ethnic Bulgarians rather than ‘ethnic Macedonians’” (Kofos, 2005: 131–133). Nevertheless, the extreme Greek position of the beginning of the 1990s, reflected in popular slogans like “No to the name of Macedonia or its derivatives!” or “Macedonia is Greek!” asserted that by “appropriating” the term “Macedonia” in its official name and its derivatives, the RM, in fact, maintained territorial and irredentist claims towards the Greek Macedonian part of Greece.

Correspondingly, along with the great reliance of the Greek Macedonian identity on Hellenic heritage and on the unbroken historical continuity between the ancient Macedonian kingdom and modern Greek Macedonia, the RM cannot be allowed to use ancient Macedonian symbols and names (along with the name “Macedonia” and its derivatives), or to make any other references to the ancient Macedonian legacy, including in history books, school textbooks etc. The opposite would amount to an “appropriation” on its part of the Hellenic historical and cultural legacy belonging to the Greek Macedonians and thus stir up territorial and irredentist claims towards the Greek Macedonian region.

Finally, according to the Greek position, the RM must be stopped from maintaining an “irredentist” and “hostile” propaganda against Greece and from interfering in its internal affairs, in particular, by insisting on the rights of a (non-existent) ethnic Macedonian minority in Greece and of the Slavic-speaking refugees from Greek Macedonia (and their descendants) from the time of the Greek Civil War.

In the course of the name negotiations, Greece has amended to a certain extent its maximalist position by accepting the word “Macedonia” to be included in the official name of its northern neighbor, on the condition that a geographical or a temporal qualification be inserted before that word in order to reflect the distinctiveness of the territory of the Republic Macedonia from that of Greek Macedonia.<sup>13</sup> With this, in fact, it came closer back to the

13 See for instance the letter of the Greek PM Kostas Karamanlis to the SG of the UN dated 14.04.2008, forwarded to the UN SG by letter of Ambassador John Mourikis under reference F.4608/434/AS/1121 dated 15.04.2008, in which he confirms Greece's willingness to

“traditional” Greek understanding of the term “Macedonia” in the period before the 1990s as designating the wider Macedonian region. In all other aspects, however, the post-1990 position of Greece remained almost intact during the name negotiations as its “red line” position, including its insistence on the so-called *erga omnes* formula. The later formula assumed that there must be a single – “compound” – negotiated name for the RM (with a qualifier before the term “Macedonia”) that would be used “for all purposes,” that is, in the country’s international relations, or, in the ultimate – “unqualified” – version of that position, also domestically, within the country’s internal domain.<sup>14</sup> The same also relates to the use of all derivatives from that single negotiated name.

#### 4.2 *The RM’s Position*

As opposed to Greece, the RM has maintained a predominantly modern attitude towards the name difference, as the logic of modernists implies that the nation is a territorialized political community, a civil community of legally equal citizens in a particular territory, a novel and recent creation which is typically riven and divided into a number of regional, religious, class, gender or other social groups, each with their own interest and needs, an entity established on the principle of national solidarity which is based on citizenship and social communication (Smith, 1998: 22, 23). Primarily couched in normative and legalistic terms, the RM’s position has been largely influenced by the deep conviction present in the RM’s official and public discourse that the name issue had been unjustifiably imposed on it by “nationalistic” Greece, in contravention with the fundamental principles of sovereignty and self-determination, including the right of its people to maintain their own identity and self-identification.<sup>15</sup> According to the RM, the use of the term “Macedonia” in its

---

accept the word “Macedonia” (albeit qualified) in its neighbor’s official name. In fact, Greece had been willing to accept that name in 2005, in the context of the mediator’s Nimetz March 2005 proposal for the name “Republika Makedonija-Skopje” (in Macedonian language), possibly even before. See *infra* note 14.

14 *Ibid.*, according to which Greece maintains that there should be a “single composite name, that will apply for all uses, *erga omnes*.” Also in the letter of Ambassador Mourikis, Permanent Representative of Greece to the UN (REF.4608/450/AS 1161) to the Permanent Representative of China and the other representatives in the UN SC dated 14.04.2008. But, compare the latter with the aforementioned Greek acceptance of the name “Republika Makedonija-Skopje” (in Macedonian language) proposed by Nimetz in March 2005 (“Nimetz Proposals on the ‘name’ Issue”) – to be used only “in the UN and for other official international usage” (with the RM retaining the use of its constitutional name for internal purposes).

15 See Vankovska, 2013 and Lozanoska, 2013. Also see Janev, 1999: 155. Note also the RM’s President address: 2010 (“there is no single country, nor a single government, nor any power that that can deny the right of the Macedonians to be Macedonians since human



official name, that it has been bearing officially ever since the establishment of the PRM within the former SFRY, and to which use (and the use of the ancient Macedonian symbols) it has not been objecting to Greece, did not imply territorial claims towards its neighbor,<sup>16</sup> that had been further reinforced by firm guarantees provided by the RM under international law. Its interest in the question of the rights of the Macedonian minority in Greece and of the Macedonian refugees from the Greek Civil War (and their descendants) is within the confines of current international law (as it should be), in particular, international human rights law.

Concerning the core issue – its official name – the position of the RM at the negotiating table has varied over time, but, with one constant in that: that the negotiated solution should not have embarked upon its right to retain the use of its current official name (at least unilaterally) in line with SC Resolution 817 and the Interim Accord,<sup>17</sup> and, in particular, that it should not impose upon it any requirement for constitutional and other internal changes as implied by the unqualified *erga omnes* formula advocated by Greece. For some time during the name-negotiations, the RM had been proposing the so-called “dual formula” for the negotiated solution over the name, according to which the negotiated new name should be used solely by Greece, or, under a modified version of that formula, by Greece and within the international organizations in which the two countries are members, when referring to the country.<sup>18</sup> On certain occasions, it was willing to accept proposals for an official name that would preserve the core of its existent constitutional name, thus avoiding changes on its part, in particular, according to “derivatives” from that name.<sup>19</sup>

---

rights are stronger and more permanent than the change of certain governmental structures or particular politicians”). Additionally, see arguments by Araujo 2000:1 and Tourme-Jouannet 2013: 675–676.

16 That was confirmed by the Arbitration Commission on the Conference on Yugoslavia set up under the auspices of the EC (the so-called “Badinter Commission”) in its Opinion No.6 of January 1992, para. 5 (“the use of the name ‘Macedonia’ cannot therefore imply any territorial claims against another state”).

17 See *supra* note 8.

18 See the President of the RM’s speech in the RM Parliament from 2.11.2008, in which he explains the RM’s position of the so-called dual formula – “always” held in the previous years – as “the use of the constitutional name of the RM ... in all international organizations and in bilateral relations with all countries, with a compromise solution to be found only for the bilateral relations with the Republic of Greece.” In truth, during the name negotiations, the RM has often been willing to contemplate other options for the name during the name-negotiations. See *infra* note 19.

19 E.g. “Republic of Macedonia (Skopje)” or “Republika Makedonija” (in Macedonian) etc. The RM, for instance, was willing to accept the Nimetz proposal of October 2005 for a multiple name: “Republic of Macedonia-Skopje” – to be used in bilateral relations

There have been various reasons for the persistent rejection by the RM of the requirement to adopt constitutional and other internal changes as envisaged by the *erga omnes* formula, some relating to its identity and sovereignty concerns, or to the potential serious implementation difficulties, whereas others to the fear that the latter would have opened a Pandora's box amid persistent internal pressures for substantial constitutional reforms exerted by the Albanian ethnic community within the country. One major reason for such a rejection, however, was the fear that the profound constitutional and other changes implied in the *erga omnes* formula (e.g. the changing of personal documents of citizens, names of institutions, naming of the people and its culture according to the new name and derivatives etc.), if accepted, might have caused sharp and enduring divisions within the already fragile Macedonian society, and potential resistance by a substantial part of ethnic Macedonian citizens to it, given the value-based and thus perceptual and highly emotional character of the name issue.<sup>20</sup> The latter is related to the internal and external recognition of ethnic identities in line with Smith's argument that "names are important, not only for self – and other – identification but also as expressive emblems of the collective personality" (Smith 1993: 29).

On the other hand, especially regarding the second half of the name settlement process,<sup>21</sup> the Macedonian public became increasingly concerned with the preservation of its identity and identity attributes, resulting in the RM's preparedness to discuss certain identity aspects (e.g. the official recording of Macedonian citizenship and language in the UN) at the negotiating table.<sup>22</sup>

---

between the RM and Greece, "Republika Makedonija" (not translated) for use in the UN and "Republic of Macedonia" for internal use and for use in the country's bilateral relations with third countries (ICG, 2009: 5); and, later, the March 2008 Nimetz proposal "Republic of Macedonia (Skopje)" for international use and "Republika Makedonija" (in cyrillic letters) for internal use (A1 News, 2008). These Mediator's proposals were not acceptable to Greece.

20 In identity conflicts like the name issue, characterized by a "transforming relationship" between the parties, the parties must confront their differences in values, so that they often reject bargaining or attempt to separate values from interests that are subject to bargaining, which makes it more difficult to negotiate and may lead to escalation as parties attach their identities to the values in dispute. See Druckman, 2005: 185. The same *a fortiori* applies to the addressees during the implementation of an agreed-upon settlement of an identity conflict.

21 Note, for instance, an earlier statement by President Gligorov at his election speech in 1994, that the RM was "prepared to discuss all issues of importance to Macedonian-Greek relations which do not threaten our national identity and the dignity of our country and our people." <https://www.icj-cij.org/files/case-related/142/16354.pdf>.

22 In fact, the issue of the use of the adjective "Macedonian" in the context of the registration of the RM's citizenship and the commercial uses of that name (including country



## 5 The Prespa Agreement

### 5.1 *Circumstances Leading towards the Prespa Agreement*

After 25 years of endless name negotiations, the success of the final round of negotiations in 2017–2018 that resulted in the Prespa agreement was most probably caused by a cumulative set of a number of circumstances on the one hand, and external intervention on the other. One specific event that proved to be of particular relevance was the decision adopted by the NATO member states at the NATO Bucharest Summit of May 2008 to indeterminately postpone the RM's long-awaited accession to the alliance on the pretext of the unresolved name issue,<sup>23</sup> followed by a similar decision adopted by the EU regarding the start of the RM's accession negotiations with the Union just months later, in December 2008.<sup>24</sup>

The externalities named had a significant impact on the internal dynamics and political developments in the RM. They ignited additional frustration and considerably lowered the public and political enthusiasm regarding the name negotiations in the RM,<sup>25</sup> while at the same time providing extra leverage for

---

codes) has often been present at the negotiation table, most notably in the second phase of the negotiations. See for instance the October 2009 Nimetz “working” proposal, suggesting two alternatives for the recording of the nationality of the country's citizens (“Macedonian,” or, “of the Republic of North Macedonia”), and for non-exclusivity regarding the commercial use of the name and the adjective “Macedonian” (ICG, 2009: 8). Similarly, in his March 2013 proposal, Nimetz suggested the use of a combined adjective “Macedonian/Makedonsko” for the naming of the language, and the same adjectival phrase for recording the nationality of the country's citizens, or, in the alternative, the phrase “of the Upper Republic of Macedonia” (Balkan Insight, 2014).

23 That occurred despite the RM's acceptance of the formal proposal for the name settlement issued by Nimetz just days before the Summit, which was rejected by Greece – see the March 2008 proposal by Nimetz in *supra* note 19. The stance assumed at the 2008 Bucharest NATO summit, constantly reiterated in the following years, was that “... an invitation to the FYROM will be extended as soon as a mutually acceptable solution to the name issue has been reached.” See NATO Press Release 2008: 049.

24 The formula adopted by the European Council (EUCO) from 19–20 June 2008 stated that “[m]aintaining good neighborly relations, including a negotiated and mutually acceptable solution on the name issue, remains essential.” CEDEFOP 2008: para 56. According to ICG, “Athens thus established resolution of the name issue as an additional condition for accession talks ... bringing [the EU's SAP] into the service of its bilateral dispute with Skopje.” ICG 2009: 12.

25 Unsatisfied by such an outcome of the 2008 NATO summit, the RM initiated a judicial process against Greece at the ICJ, which resulted in a judgment on December 2011 finding that the objection of Greece to Macedonia's invitation for membership in NATO amounted to its breach of the Interim Accord (*supra* note 8). Yet, the former position of the NATO remained unchanged until the final stages of the negotiations that brought about the Prespa agreement.

Greece to play the delaying card in the name negotiations (with help from some of its EU partners skeptical about the WB accession<sup>26</sup>). Amid the weakening transformative power of the externalities caused by the indefinite delay of the RM's Euro-Atlantic perspective, which persisted despite some futile EU efforts to bridge the gap,<sup>27</sup> the Macedonian Government under Gruevski became less genuinely interested in pursuing the Euro-Atlantic agenda and more inclined towards some controversial policies and agendas.<sup>28</sup>

Following the deep political crises in the country that culminated around 2015, the launch of the final stage of the negotiations came swiftly after the change of the coalition government in the RM (now led by the SDSM) in June 2017, and the reopening of the dialogue with the SYRIZA-led government in Greece. The new – Zaev-led – government's decision to proceed towards a final agreement with Greece (and, shortly before, with Bulgaria) was apparently motivated by the assessment that the indeterminate continuation of the already protracted name negotiations would be of great cost for the country in view of its stalled progression towards NATO and EU membership, in a hope that the latter would turn around the recent downfall in the country's internal developments. In addition, the mounting pressure by the domestic Albanian community to speed up accession was also a significant factor.

At the same time, the Greek government led by Tsipras also found an interest in closing the name issue that had been degenerating country's energy for so long, among other serious open issues with its other neighbors (most notably, Turkey). And the main third party facilitators in the process, the US, the EU and some of its most influential members (Germany, the UK etc.), were firmly resolved to push decisively the name negotiations towards a successful

26 According to the ICG, France was the main supporter of the Greek position at the Bucharest NATO summit and later on within the EU. See ICG 2009: 6, especially note 36, and p. 12 citing a statement of the French FM at the EUCO meeting of 8.12.2009. ESI also points to "other enlargement-sceptical countries in Europe [that] hide behind [the name dispute] to undermine the whole Western Balkans accession agenda," ESI 2012.

27 See for example the EU Enlargement Strategy 2012–2013 and the European Commission (EC) suggestion to the European Parliament and the EUCO to set up "a negotiating framework which also takes into account the need to solve the name issue at the early stages of accession negotiations." COM (2012) 600 Final: 13. Also see the EU Enlargement Strategy 2013–14 and the EUCO stance on the accession COM 2013: 29, as well as the EC on launching of the High Level Accession Dialogue (the HLAD) for the RM as a substitute for its blocked advancement towards EU membership on the pretext of the name issue, in Skopje on 15.03.2012.

28 Among these was the so-called "antiquization" policy – mostly reflected in the "Skopje 2014" project – pursued by the Gruevski's government from 2007 and on. For the history of the so-called Project Skopje 2014 see the article in the Guardian 2016. On the overall details of the project, its background, costs and scope see BIRN.

outcome as part of their efforts to consolidate the region against the perceived growth of Russian influence.

The end result of these negotiations was the Prespa agreement. The agreement is a perpetual and irrevocable treaty<sup>29</sup> aimed at producing a balanced response to the main concerns of the parties as reflected in their respective positions over the name difference. It is an arrangement for the reconciliation of competing nation-building projects, a mode of surpassing and resolving the long-lasting political feud between both parties and to ensure close future co-operation between them. The agreement aims to establish the idea of the resolution vs. the solution of the issue, a task not easily done keeping in mind the main concerns of both parties regarding the name issue, but secured by promoting their relationship in strategic terms. The latter is well detailed in the brief analysis of its provisions that follow in the remainder of the text.

### 5.2 *The Agreement and the Main Greek Concerns*

A considerable number of the provisions of the agreement address Greek worries over the RM's official name, the adjectival use of that name and the Greek allegation of an appropriation of the Hellenic-ancient Macedonian legacy by the RM.

Firstly, under the agreement, Greece obtained from the RM an acceptance of a change of its current official name (the “Republic of Macedonia”) to a new compound constitutional name (the “Republic of North Macedonia,” or, shortly “North Macedonia”) for an unqualified *erga omnes* use (including domestically).<sup>30</sup> The same goes, in principle, for the adjectival reference under that name to the state, its official organs and other public entities (and private entities affiliated to them), which are to now be qualified both internationally and internally with the reference “of the Republic of North Macedonia” or “of North Macedonia.”<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Article 20(9) of the agreement.

<sup>30</sup> Articles 1(3)(a) and 1(8) provide that the new name shall be “for all usages and all purposes” both “domestically, and in all [its] bilateral relations, and in all regional and international Organizations and institutions.” According to the agreement, even before its entering into force, the RM is bound to adopt changes to its existent Constitution that would “incorporate” the new name (and derivatives) *en bloc* with one amendment to the Constitution (Article 1(3)(g), (4), (11) and (12)), along with an amendment of certain articles in the Constitution allegedly implying irredentist claims. See *infra* note 42.

<sup>31</sup> E.g. “the Ministry of culture of the Republic of North Macedonia” etc., Article 1(3)(f) of the agreement. Regarding the use of these terms in commercial names, trademarks and brand names, private business communities shall be supported and encouraged by the parties to enter into a “sincere, structured and in good faith dialogue” arranged by the agreement.

These arrangements represent a major concession made by the RM to Greece. As noted previously, for years, the Greek insistence on the *erga omnes*-domestic reach of the new name and its derivatives had been a thorn in the side of the RM's negotiators, the view of whom had been largely respected by the UN mediators<sup>32</sup> including, at moments, by official Greece.<sup>33</sup> The adoption of the unqualified *erga omnes* approach in the agreement also assumes a unilateral abandonment by the RM of the already acquired recognition of its current constitutional name in its bilateral dealings with some 140 states,<sup>34</sup> and massive domestic changes regarding past and existent official documentation, correspondence and materials (including citizens' personal documents), as envisaged by the agreement.<sup>35</sup> In view of this, it comes as no surprise that, following the conclusion of the Prespa agreement, this part of the agreement faced a particularly hostile reception from the main opposition party, VMRO (including the President of the Republic), a large part of the Macedonian intellectuals and the wider public (especially that of ethnic Macedonian origin), that saw in it a "sale of the Constitutional name" by the current Government amounting to a "capitulation" and a "criminal" and "treacherous" act.<sup>36</sup>

Secondly, under the agreement, Greece obtained strict assurances for the exclusively Greek character of the Hellenic-ancient Macedonian legacy vis-à-vis that of the RM's ethnicity and nation. Based on the premise that there is a "different historical context and cultural heritage" of the parties to which the words "Macedonia" and "Macedonian" refer, the agreement provides for an outright delimitation of the Greek Macedonian and the RM's Macedonian identity narratives and expressions.<sup>37</sup> Under the agreement, Greece reaffirms its exclusive right to the legacy of the ancient Hellenic civilization, history, culture and heritage of its northern region, as embedded in the Greek and the Greek Macedonian identity and narrative, whereas, in turn, the RM acquires a

32 In fact, with the exception of the initial proposal of Vance and Lord Owen in 1993 (Annex v of the letter of letter dated 26.05.1993 from the UN SG Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to the President of the SC UN doc. S/25855 1993: Article 5), all other mediator's proposals advanced throughout the name negotiation history did not require from the RM a domestic use of the newly negotiated name.

33 As noted before (*supra* note 14) Greece officially accepted the Nimetz March 2005 proposal envisaging a new name only for use "in the UN and for other official international usage."

34 Article 10. The above includes Russia, China and the US. The UK and France, for instance, have used the RM's constitutional name in their bilateral contractual dealings with the RM.

35 Articles 1(9) and 10.

36 See *infra* note 54. Regarding the opposition in Greece see *infra* note 50.

37 Article 7 of the agreement.

recognition by Greece of the existence of a distinct identity of its people, albeit without the possibility for a reference in its identity narrative to the Hellenic, i.e. the ancient Macedonian, historical legacy and culture.<sup>38</sup>

The above provisions are supplemented by specific obligations of the RM regarding its use of Hellenic antique names and symbols, which includes a ban on the use by it of the sixteen-ray “Sun of Vergina” from the period of the ancient Kingdom of Phillip II,<sup>39</sup> and an RM undertaking to take effective corrective action so as to eradicate the results of the “antiquization” policy of the former Macedonian government of the last ten years.<sup>40</sup> Added to these is the important obligation of the parties to proceed towards a revision of the school textbooks and auxiliary materials used by them so as to remove from these “irredentist” or “revisionist” references, within a Joint Inter-Disciplinary Committee of Experts on historic, archaeological and educational matters – JIDCE – under the procedures established by the agreement.<sup>41</sup>

Finally, under the agreement, Greece obtained additional assurances from the RM for its sovereignty and territorial integrity,<sup>42</sup> especially regarding non-interference in its internal affairs on the pretext of the ethnic Macedonian

38 Article 7 of the agreement. Thus, when used by Greece, the terms “Macedonia” and “Macedonian” denote “the area and people of [its] northern region ... but also their attributes, as well the Hellenic civilization, history, culture, and heritage of that region from antiquity to present day.” And, when the same terms are used by the RM, they denote “its territory, language, people and their attributes, with their own history, culture, and heritage, distinctly different from [that of Greece].” Article 7(5), however, adds an important provision keeping the traditional “usage” of the words “Macedonia” and “Macedonian” unaffected by the agreement.

39 Article 8(1) and (3) of the agreement. This Article mirrors the provisions of Article 7 of the former Interim Accord.

40 Article 8(2) and (3). On the “antiquization” policy see *supra* note 28.

41 Article 8(5) of the agreement provides an obligation of the parties to set out, within a month, and on a parity basis, a Committee of Experts on historic, archaeological and educational matters supervised by the MFAs and other national authorities, that would “consider the objective, scientific interpretation of historical events based on scientifically sound historical sources and archaeological findings,” and revise any school textbooks and auxiliary materials used by the parties as to ensure that, after a year, these would no longer contain “irredentist/revisionist references.”

42 See Article 3 of the agreement. The parties are further bound to give priority to endonyms over exonyms regarding the use of geographical names and toponyms by them in the territory of the other party, in contrast to their past practice of using old geographical names and toponyms in their own language. Article 6 (corresponding to Article 7(1) of the former Interim Accord) offers mutual assurances of the parties against “hostile activities, actions or propaganda” and activities “likely to incite chauvinism, hostility, irredentism and revisionism”, including due diligence preventive obligations for the parties with respect to acts of private entities likely to incite violence, hatred or hostility against the other party.

minority in the country (whose existence has been claimed by the RM and denied by Greece) and of the members of that minority that took refuge abroad during the Greek Civil War (and their descendants). As to the latter, the agreement provides for some interpretative statements on the Macedonian Constitution,<sup>43</sup> and a specific obligation for the RM to amend (previously already amended) Article 49 of its Constitution interpreted to this effect prior to the entering into force of the agreement, together with Article 3 and the Preamble of the Constitution, all of which have been adopted by the RM Parliament on 11.01.2019. Persons belonging to the Macedonian minority (and the refugees and their descendants) would continue to enjoy their rights in accordance with international human rights and domestic guarantees for individual civic rights.<sup>44</sup>

### 5.3 *The Agreement and the RM's Concerns*

Firstly, the Prespa agreement responds affirmatively to the RM's major concern expressed during the negotiations (and before) of "preserving" the distinct "Macedonian" identity of the Macedonian ethnicity and nation. To recall, such a distinct identity, including the Macedonian language, has long been established and recognized internationally, however, it has not been recognized by Greece (or Bulgaria).

As already demonstrated, Article 7 of the agreement (defining the meaning of the words "Macedonia" and "Macedonian") already assumes a recognition by Greece of the existence of a distinct identity of the RM's people,<sup>45</sup> and a

43 Article 4 of the agreement, setting out a general and a more specific interpretative statement of the Macedonian Constitution, especially of its Article 49, so as to prevent that the latter would constitute a basis for any Macedonian territorial claims towards Greece or for interference with its internal affairs on the pretext of "the protection of the status and rights of any persons that are not its citizens" (i.e. persons belonging to the RM's claimed Macedonian minority in Greece). The latter interpretative statement basically corresponds to the one provided by the former Article 6 of the 1995 Interim Accord. Significantly, Article 6 IA has already been interpreted by the ICJ in its 2011 judgment (See *supra* note 8), where the court rejected the Greek allegation that certain of the RM's expressed concerns on behalf of the persons expelled from Greece during the Greek Civil War of the 1940s amounted to a breach of that article.

44 To that effect, merely replicating Article 9 of the 1995 Interim Accord, Article 5 of the Prespa agreement enlists numerous international human rights instruments under which minority members (and the refugees and their descendants) would enjoy rights in accordance with international human rights and domestic guarantees for individual civic rights.

45 See *supra* note 38.

confirmation by it of the existence of the Macedonian language as a long recognized Slavic language.<sup>46</sup>

Such recognition of the distinct “Macedonian” identity (with the content confined by the agreement), however, is further reinforced by the agreement’s denomination of the nationality of the RM’s citizens as “Macedonian/citizen of the Republic of North Macedonia,”<sup>47</sup> and by an additional confirmation in the agreement that the official language of the country shall be the “Macedonian” language.<sup>48</sup>

In the aftermath of the conclusion of the Prespa agreement, the above arrangements came under harsh attack from the political opposition and the larger public in Greece which, following the post-1990 “revisionist” lines, were particularly annoyed by the “sale” of the “brand” “Macedonian” for the denomination of the RM’s ethnicity and nation.<sup>49</sup> Unlike the government, the RM’s political opposition in turn was not entirely convinced in the recognition of the “Macedonian” ethnicity and nation by Greece *via* the agreement. The debates in both countries in the first months following the conclusion of the Prespa agreement clearly reveal the danger of different interpretations of its – somewhat vague, but extremely important – provisions dealing with the “Macedonian” ethnicity and nation even among the main protagonists that brought about the agreement.<sup>50</sup>

46 Article 7(4) defines the “Macedonian language” as a South Slavic language, recognized by the Third UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, held in Athens in 1977, with the participation of 59 states including Greece (Third UN Conference, 1977).

47 Article 1(3)(b) of the agreement.

48 Article 1(3)(c) of the agreement, providing that the official language of the country shall be the “Macedonian language,” within the meaning of Article 7(4).

49 Note, for instance, the accusations against the government by the main opposition leader Konstantinos Mitzotakis during the Parliament’s debate over the motion of censure by the New Democracy party at a session of the Greek Parliament, that the agreement had in fact recognized the “Macedonian” character of the nation in the RM. (Greek Observer 2018). In Thessaloniki and Athens, for instance, massive rallies were held in January, February and June 2018 against the agreement under the well-known slogan of “Macedonia is Greek!” A 2018 poll by ELIAMEP shows that just months before the agreement was signed, 71.5% of the Greek citizens were against the use of the term Macedonia in the final agreed-upon name. See more in Triantafyllou and Maltezou 2018; BBC 2018; and Armakolas and Siakas 2018.

50 Note for instance the interpretation given by FM Nikos Kotzias when replying to the criticisms of Mitzotakis during a session of the Greek Parliament (*infra* note 49), denying that the appellation “Macedonian” related to the ethnicity of their neighbor’s population: “We did not give ethnicity. The agreement says citizenship. When the deal says citizenship and you say ethnicity, FROM will invoke you.” (Greek Observer 2018). PM Tsipras himself, in his statement of 05.07.2018, concurred with the latter interpretation: “nowhere in the agreement is there recognition of a Macedonian nation. There is recognition of



On the other hand, the agreement responds positively to the RM's immediate concern of unleashing the process of the country's accession to NATO and the EU that was the primary motivation from the RM's government to proceed to the agreement. Under the agreement, the RM obtained clear assurance by Greece that it would no longer object to the RM's membership in these (and other) organizations.<sup>51</sup>

#### 5.4 *Strategic Partnership and Future Close Cooperation between the Parties*

Most importantly, Part 2 of the Prespa agreement is wholly devoted to "Intensification and Enrichment of Cooperation Between the Two Parties," with detailed rules for their intensive and enhanced cooperation in various political, economic and cultural fields. That part, undoubtedly, reflects the main *raison d'être* of the agreement of providing a historical turning point in the overall relations between the parties, which have been strained in the past due to the unresolved difference over the name.

## 6 Conclusion

The Prespa agreement is primarily aimed at closing the clashing discourse of the national identity narratives of both countries. Even so, the potential to generate challenges on the matter is vivid especially when cross-referenced with the BG-MK agreement. The rationale of both agreements denotes that the transformation of intra state relations and more importantly inter-community relations will not be possible without simultaneous historical reconciliation processes that will lead the parties involved from conflict towards cooperation. However, there is a high potential that the Prespa agreement, and also the BG-MK agreement, can, and most probably will, additionally influence the

---

nationality [citizenship]." (Tsipras Alexis Tweet, 5.7.2018). These statements stand in contrast with the statement of PM Zaev in his address upon the adoption of the Constitutional amendments by the Macedonian Parliament implying that the agreement clearly entails recognition of the identity of the Macedonian ethnicity and nation by Greece (Vlada, 2019).

- 51 Largely mirroring Article 11 of the 1995 Interim Accord, Article 2 of the Prespa agreement sets out a general obligation for Greece "not to object to the application by or the membership" of the RNM in international organizations of which Greece is a member (i.e. NATO and the EU), and more particularly an assurance that Greece will ratify any accession agreement of the RNM to these international organizations, including a specific sequence of steps that the parties must take so as to allow the RNM's prompt accession to NATO.



Macedonian identity project. Public statements of Macedonian officials demonstrate a gradual tendency to solve the internal challenge of the identity along with the external one. Key words used by them, such as "inclusiveness," "fixing the identity," "for all time" and so on hint an underlying intention to intervene in the core of the nation's identity by imposing international guarantees for its existence (HBC Debate, 2018). Furthermore, the unqualified *erga omnes* approach adopted in the agreement's provisions possesses the capacity of causing internal societal divisions in the country,<sup>52</sup> and potentially risks an enduring resentment by a portion of ethnic Macedonians towards accepting the requirements of the agreement.<sup>53</sup> The latter relates to the notion that the Macedonian national identity has had its share of interventions from within and without, fueled by an everlasting struggle with the country's democratic consolidation, stalled economy, retrograde rule of law and absence of political stability and security. Therefore, what is at stake for the RNM is an imminent identity transition. The bridging of the identity transition can be successful only if it involved external incentives, such as EU and NATO integration, along with viable democratic consolidation, speeding up the reform processes, boosting the economy and national reconciliation.

Regarding Greece, the main challenge to the agreement derives from the continual and mounting internal hostility towards it in the Greek political and public discourse, based on the 1980/90s-born extreme perspective on the name issue. Should the latter discourse continue to considerably influence Greek internal and external policy, it might detrimentally affect the agreement's implementation. Greece's position to exert considerable leverage towards the RNM as a current member of the EU during the process of North Macedonia's accession to the union in order to influence the agreement's implementation, with a potential to disturb the smooth operation of the agreement, should not be disregarded.

The prospects of the agreement's implementation relate to the interpretation of some of its key – inevitably – vague provisions, and the sensitive task of

<sup>52</sup> See *supra* note 36.

<sup>53</sup> Quite expectedly, the agreement's potential to cause internal divisions and resentment in the RM has vividly materialized immediately following its signing. In the 30.09.2018 consultative referendum, only 36.89% registered Macedonian voters voted positively for the agreement, without the referendum reaching the threshold of 50% turnout required by law. The parliament's decision to open up a procedure for constitutional amendments (conditioning the entering into force of the agreement), with only a tiny, required 2/3 majority of MPs, turned the wave in favor of the agreement's endorsement in the Macedonian Parliament. The amendments were adopted in the Macedonian Parliament by an equally tiny 2/3 plus one majority on 11.01.2019, following which the agreement was ratified in the Greek Parliament as well (by 153 votes in favor, out of 300 MPs) on 25.01.2019.

the already established JIDCE. The work of the latter committee overlaps with that of a corresponding committee established under the BG-MK Agreement, charged with a similar, yet even more demanding duty in view of the largely intertwined histories of the two neighboring nations.

On balance, the implementation and the overall success of the Prespa Agreement would largely depend on whether the official politics and the larger public in each of the parties would embrace and genuinely pursue the strategic partnership between them offered by the agreement aimed to provide a radical shift in their relations. Finally, its success would ultimately rest on the credibility of the process of the RNM's accession to the EU, under the genuine sponsorship of its strategic partner, Greece (as NATO accession is already on the way). Not to forget, the Macedonian government and its foreign allies largely relied on the RNM's EU accession promise as an ultimate card for persuading its people to acknowledge the agreement.

## References

- Araujo, R. 2000. "Sovereignty, Human Rights, and Self-Determination: The Meaning of International Law," (*Fordham International Law Journal*, Vol. 24, Issue 5).
- Armakolas, I. and Siakas, G. 2018. "What's in a name? Greek Public Attitudes towards the 'Name Dispute' and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in 2018," ELIAMEP Research Paper. Available at <https://www.eliamap.gr/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Whats-in-a-name-Report-poll-on-name-issue-2018.pdf> (accessed on 4.12.2018).
- Balkan Insight. 2014. *Name proposal for Macedonia revealed*. Available at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/nimetz-s-name-proposal-for-macedonia-revealed> (accessed 25.09.2018).
- Bayar, M. 2009. "Reconsidering primordialism: an alternative approach to the study of ethnicity," (*Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 32:9):1639–1657, DOI:10.1080/01419870902763878.
- BBC. 2018. *Greece Macedonia: Name dispute draws mass protest in Athens*. Available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-42937889> (accessed on 10.12.2018).
- BIRN. "Skopje 2014 Uncovered." Available at <http://skopje2014.prizma.birn.eu.com/en/> (accessed 10.12.2018).
- Breully, J. 1985. *Nationalism and the State* (Chicago: University of Chicago).
- Burchill, S. et alii (eds.) 2005. *Theories of International Relations: Third Edition* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan).
- Connor, W. 1994. *Ethnonationalism – The Quest for Understanding* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- Crawen, M. 1995. "What's in the Name? The Republic of Macedonia and Issues of Statehood," (*Australian Yearbook of International Law*): 199–239.

- Crawford, J. 2006. *The Creation of States in International Law – 2nd edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, Adopted by General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, available at <http://www.un.org/en/decolonization/declaration.shtml>.
- Druckman, D. 2005. “Conflict Escalation and Negotiation: A Turning Points Analyses,” in *Escalation and Negotiation in International Conflicts*. Zartman, W. and Faure, G.O. (eds) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Ekathimerini online edition. 2018. “Greek Rally Against Use of Macedonia in the Name Dispute, Vassilis Triantafyllou and Renee Maltezou.” Available at <http://www.ekathimerini.com/225109/article/ekathimerini/news/greeks-rally-against-use-of-macedonia-in-name-dispute> (accessed on 10.12.2018).
- Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2013–2014. 2013. (COM (2013) 700 Final). Available at [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key\\_documents/2013/package/strategy\\_paper\\_2013\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/strategy_paper_2013_en.pdf) (accessed 27 September 2018).
- Eriksen, T.H. 2004. “Place, Kinship and the Case for Non-Ethnic Nations,” (*Nations and Nationalism*. 10(1/2)): 49–62.
- Erikson, E. 1968. *Identity, youth and crisis* (New York: Norton).
- ESI. “Breaking the Macedonian deadlock before the end of 2012.” Available at <https://www.esiweb.org/index.php?lang=en&id=562> (accessed 26 September 2018).
- Ewing, K.P. 1990. *The Illusion of Wholeness: Culture, Self and the Experience of Inconsistency* (*Ethos*, 18): 251–278. DOI: 10.1525/eth.1990.18.3.02a00020.
- Geddes, A. and Taylor, A. 2015. Those Who Knock on Europe’s Door Must Repent? Bilateral Border Disputes and EU Enlargement (*Political Studies* 64(4)): 930–947. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.12218>.
- Gellner, E. 1983. *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell).
- Good Neighborliness and Cooperation. 2017. Available at: [https://vlada.mk/sites/default/files/dogovori/Dogovor\\_Za\\_Prijateljstvo\\_Dobrososedstvo\\_Sorabotka\\_Megju\\_Republika\\_Makedonija\\_I\\_Republika\\_Bugarija.pdf](https://vlada.mk/sites/default/files/dogovori/Dogovor_Za_Prijateljstvo_Dobrososedstvo_Sorabotka_Megju_Republika_Makedonija_I_Republika_Bugarija.pdf). (accessed on 7.10.2018).
- Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs. FYROM Name Issue (Athens: Ministry of Foreign Affairs). Available at <https://www.mfa.gr/en/fyrom-name-issue/> (accessed 16.10.2018).
- Greek Observer. 2018. “Kotzias: You can have everything you want from a deal only after a war.” Available at <http://thegreekobserver.com/politics/article/45032/kotzia-you-can-have-everything-you-want-from-a-deal-only-after-a-war/> (accessed on 15.01.2019).
- Guardian. 2016. “Story of cities #31: Skopje plans for the future by fixating on its ancient past.” Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/apr/27/story-cities-skopje-plans-future-ancient-past> (accessed on 2.01.2019).

- HBC Town Hall Debate. 2018. Telma TV. Available at <https://telma.com.mk/top-tema-na-vasha-strana-town-hall-debata-so-premierot-zoran-zaev-i-vitsepremierite-shekerinska-i-osmani-25-09-2018/> (accessed on 25.09.2018).
- Hellenic Statistical Authority report. 2018. Available at [http://www.statistics.gr/documents/20181/1515741/GreeceInFigures\\_2018Q3\\_EN.pdf/5578f8ee-5db4-45fab729-090d9ae63411](http://www.statistics.gr/documents/20181/1515741/GreeceInFigures_2018Q3_EN.pdf/5578f8ee-5db4-45fab729-090d9ae63411).
- Hobson, J.M. 2003. *The State and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- I.C.J. Reports. 2011. Judgment of the International Court of Justice of 5 December 2011 in the Case on Application of the Interim Accord of 13 September 1995 (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia v. Greece).
- Inac, H. and Unal, F. 2013. "The Construction of National identity in Modern times: theoretical perspective" (*International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Vol. 3, No. 11): 223–232.
- Interim Accord. 1995. Available at <http://www.mfa.gov.mk/images/stories/Dokumenti/Vremena-spogodba-1995.pdf> (accessed on 18.05.2018).
- International Crisis Group. 2009. "Macedonia's Name: Breaking the Deadlock," Policy Briefing No.52. Available at <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/balkans/macedonia/macedonia-s-name-breaking-deadlock> (accessed on 25.09.2018).
- Janev, I. 1999. "Legal Aspects of the Use of a Provisional Name for Macedonia in the United Nations System," (*American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 93, No. 1): 155–160.
- Joseph, E.P. 2008. "Averting the next Balkan Wars: How to Solve the Greek Dispute Over Macedonia's Name," *Spiegel* Online. Available at: <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/averting-the-next-balkan-war-how-to-solve-the-greek-dispute-over-macedonia-s-name-a-557092.html> (accessed on 2nd January 2019).
- Kellas, J.G. 1998. *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity* (London: St. Martin's Press).
- Kelman, H.C. 1997. "Negotiating national identity and self-determination in ethnic conflicts: The choice between pluralism and ethnic cleansing," (*Negotiation Journal*, 13): 327–340.
- Kofos, E. 2005. "The Unresolved 'Difference Over the Name: A Greek Perspective,' in *Athens – Skopje An Uneasy Symbiosis* (Athens: Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy [ELIAMEP]).
- Lin, A.M.Y. 2008. "Modernity, postmodernity, and the future of 'identity': Implications for educators" in Lin, A.M.Y (ed.) *Problematizing Identity: Everyday Struggles in Language, Culture, and Education* (London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates): 199–219.
- Lozanoska, J. 2013. "The True Substance of the Name Issue: Consequences of an Invented Dispute for the Republic of Macedonia," in Dzuvalekovska, M. (ed.) *The*

- Macedonian Issue Revisited – An Anthology of Academic Articles* (Skopje: Macedonian Information Centre): 95–112.
- Macedonian Heritage. "Nimetz Proposals on the 'name' Issue," by Macedonian Heritage. Available at <http://www.macedonian-heritage.gr/OfficialDocuments/Nimetz.html> (accessed on 15.09.2018).
- Mead, G.H. 1934. *Mind, Self, and Society from the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
- Meer, N, Martineau, W. and Thompson, S. 2012. "Misrecognition and ethno-religious diversity," (*Ethnicities*, 12(2)): 131–141.
- Michailidis, I.D. 2006. "Frontiers and Identities in Modern Greece," in Klusáková, L. and Ellis, S.G. (eds.), *Frontiers and Identities: Exploring the Research Area* (Pisa: Edizioni Plus – Pisa University Press).
- NATO Press Release. 2008. Bucharest Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Bucharest on 3 April 2008 (3 April 2008). Available at [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_8443.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_8443.htm) (accessed 26.09.2018).
- Nikolaos, A. 1992. "The Federated State of Skopje and Its Language". (Athens: Trohalia [in Greek]), as in Roudometof, V. 2002. *Collective Memory, National Identity, and Ethnic Conflict – Greece, Bulgaria, and the Macedonian Question* (Westport: Praeger Publishers).
- Nikolaos, M. 1983. *The Falsification of the History of Macedonia* (Athens: Athanassiades Bros.).
- Powell, J.A. 1996. "The Multiple Self: Exploring between and beyond Modernity and Postmodernity," (*Minnesota Law Review* 81): 1481–1520.
- Presidency Conclusions. 2008. "Brussels European Council 19/20 June 2008 – Presidency Conclusions". Available at <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/brussels-european-council-1920-june-2008-presidency-conclusions> (accessed 26.09.2018).
- President address in the Council of Europe on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the European Convention for Human Rights. 2010. Available at: <http://www.president.gov.mk/en/publicrelations/speeches/302-6-.html> (accessed on 23.12.2018).
- Prespa Agreement. 2018. *Government of the Republic of Macedonia*. Available at <https://vlada.mk/sites/default/files/dokumenti/spogodba-en.pdf> (accessed on 1.10.2018).
- Prevelakis, N. 2003. "The Spirit of Greek Nationalism: an Examination of the Greek Case in Light of Greenfeld's Conceptual Framework," 1st Ph.D. Symposium on Modern Greece, London School of Economics. Available at: [http://www.lse.ac.uk/europeanInstitute/research/hellenicObservatory/pdf/1st\\_Symposium/N\\_Prevelakis\\_paper.pdf](http://www.lse.ac.uk/europeanInstitute/research/hellenicObservatory/pdf/1st_Symposium/N_Prevelakis_paper.pdf) (accessed on 17.09.2018).

- Romaniuk, S.N. 2010. "A National Awakening: Nationalism, Identity and Ethnic Conflict in South Eastern Europe," (*Annales Universitatis Apulensis, Series Historica*, 14/1): 287–295.
- Rossos, A. 2008. *Macedonia and the Macedonians: A History* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University).
- Satanakis, S.M. 2018. "Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: The Prespa Agreement. What comes next?" (*AIES*, Focus 6).
- Schwartz, J. 1993. "Macedonia: A Country in Quotation Marks" (*Anthropology in East Europe Review*, Vol 11 No 1 & 2): 110–117.
- Seymour, M. 1999. "On Redefining the Nation" (*The Monist*, Vol. 82, Issue 3): 411–445.
- Smith, A.D. 1991. *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press).
- Smith, A.D. 1998. *Nationalism and Modernism* (London: Routledge).
- Smith, A.D. 1993. "The Ethnic Sources of Nationalism" in Brown, M.E. (ed.), *Ethnic Conflict and International Security*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press): 27–43.
- Strategy and Main Challenges 2012–2013. 2012. (COM (2012) 600 Final) Available at [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key\\_documents/2012/package/strategy\\_paper\\_2012\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/strategy_paper_2012_en.pdf) (accessed on 27.09.2018).
- Sutch, P. and Elias, J. 2007. *International Relations – The Basics* (Routledge: London).
- Taylor, C. 1997. "The Politics of Recognition" in *Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition: An Essay* (Princeton: Princeton University Press): 25–73.
- The President's Inaugural Address at the Inaugural Ceremony at the Parliament of the RM. 1994. Memorial of the Applicant in the Case between RM and Greece, vol. ii, Annex 122. Available at <https://www.icj-cij.org/files/case-related/142/16354.pdf> (accessed on 12.12.2018).
- Thiesse, A. 2001. *La Création des identités nationales: Europe xviii<sup>e</sup>-xx<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Seuil).
- Third UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in Athens 1977, UN Digital Library. Available at [https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/29404/files/E\\_CONF.69\\_4%5BV.II%5D-EN.pdf](https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/29404/files/E_CONF.69_4%5BV.II%5D-EN.pdf). (accessed on 17.10.2018).
- Tourme-Jouannet, E. 2013. "The International Law of Recognition" (*European Journal of International Law*, Vol. 24, Issue 2): 667–690. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ejil/cht021>.
- Triandafyllidou, A. 1998. "National identity and the 'other'" (*Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 21:4): 593–612. DOI: 10.1080/014198798329784.
- Triandafyllidou, A., Calloni, M. and Mikrakis, A. 1997 "New Greek Nationalism" (*Sociological Research Online*, vol. 2, no. 1), available at <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/2/1/7.html> (accessed on 7.11.2018).
- Tsiampiris, A. 2000. *European Political Cooperation and the Macedonian Question* (Aldershot: Ashgate Press).
- Tsipras, Alexis (Alexis Tsipras). "Επιμένουν να λένε ψέματα πως με τη συμφωνία η Ελλάδα αποδέχεται μακεδονικό έθνος και γλώσσα. Κάνουν λαθροχειρία, αφού γνωρίζουν πολύ

- καλά ότι πουθενά στη συμφωνία δεν υπάρχει αναγνώριση μακεδονικού έθνους. Υπάρχει αναγνώριση ιθαγένειας. #Βουλη.” 5 July 2018, 8:31 a.m. *Tweet*.
- Turk, D. 1993. “Recognition of States-A comment,” (*EJIL* 4): 66–71.
- UN doc. S/25855. 1993. Annex v of the letter dated 26 May 1993 from the United Nations Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to the President of the Security Council, entitled Draft Proposed by Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen. Memorial of the Applicant in the Case between RM and Greece, Annex 33. Available at <https://www.icj-cij.org/files/case-related/142/16354.pdf> (accessed on 9.07.2018).
- UN Security Council’s Resolution 817 of 7 April 1993. Available at [https://undocs.org/S/RES/817\(1993\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/817(1993)), (accessed on 7.11.2018).
- Valinakis, G., and S. Dalis (eds.) 1996. *The Skopje Question – Attempts towards Recognition and the Greek Position, Official Texts 1990–1996, 2nd edition* (Athens: Sideris/ELIAMEP): 63–64.
- Vankovska, B. 2013. “David vs. Goliath: The Macedonian Position(s) in the So-Called ‘Name Dispute’” in Dzuvalekovska, M. (ed.) *The Macedonian Issue Revisited – An Anthology of Academic Articles* (Skopje: Macedonian Information Centre): 195–222.
- Vlada. 2019. “Премиерот Заев: Големата одлука на Парламентот е доказ дека македонската држава се движи кон светла иднина, но и обврска од денеска да работиме уште посилено”. Влада на Република Македонија”. Available at <https://vlada.mk/node/16375> (accessed on 16.01.2019).
- Warbrick, C. 2003. “States and Recognition in International Law,” in Evans, M.D. (ed.) *International Law* (New York: Oxford University Press).
- Williams, M.S. 2014. “Introduction – On the use and abuse of recognition in politics”, in Eisenberg, A. et alia (eds) *Recognition versus Self-Determination – Dilemmas of Emancipatory Politics* (Vancouver: UBC Press): 3–18.
- Zaikos, N. “The Onomastics of States in International Law: the Case of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”. Available at: [http://www.academia.edu/4006438/Zaikos\\_The\\_onomastics\\_of\\_states\\_in\\_international\\_law.\\_The\\_case\\_of\\_The\\_Former\\_Yugoslav\\_Republic\\_of\\_Macedonia](http://www.academia.edu/4006438/Zaikos_The_onomastics_of_states_in_international_law._The_case_of_The_Former_Yugoslav_Republic_of_Macedonia) (accessed on 23.12.2018).

**Author Queries:**

AQ1: Please provide the complete Author Affiliation.

AQ2: Please provide the complete Author Affiliation.



# The Three Memory Regimes of Ilinden Commemorations (2001–2018)

*A Prolegomenon to the Study of the Official Memory in North Macedonia*

Naum Trajanovski

Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland

Faculty of Philosophy, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje,

North Macedonia

*trajanovskinaum@gmail.com*

AQ1

## Abstract

This article aims to map and periodize memory regimes in North Macedonia, with the divergent set of Ilinden commemorations epitomizing the developments and critical changes in the period from 2001 to 2018. Ilinden is still by and large considered to be pivotal for Macedonian nation-building, structuring the long Macedonian 20th century and serving as the most prominent state holiday. The commemorative narratives, understood as political strategies with the aim of taking a position towards and interpreting the past, establish a set of patterns, groups or trajectories which will be argued to be principal in the creation of official memory in North Macedonia. Herein, the set of 18 Republic Day/Ilinden commemorations will be reconstructed, triangulating the analysis of Macedonian media outlines, institutional discourses and political rhetoric, and finally, it will be discussed as a tripartite periodization model, drawing upon the theoretical framework offered by Kubik and Bernhard (2014).

## Keywords

Republic of North Macedonia – official memory – commemorations – Republic Day – Ilinden – memory regime – mnemonic actor

## 1 Introduction\*

One can easily say that “Republic of Ilinden Macedonia” [mk. *Republika Ilindenska Makedonija*], a proposal for solving the so-called Greco-Macedonian name dispute, has provoked large-scale reactions among the regional public. The proposal was believed to contain the right amount of mobilizing potential among both the Greek and Macedonian citizenry, and to be able to secure the consent of the neighboring states, even so it was never hinted at in the almost three-decade-long bilateral negotiations. However, slightly after the primary appraisal of the compromise reached during the EU-Western Balkans summit in Sofia (18 May 2018), Athens officially turned down the proposal, while the North Macedonia’s oppositional camp reproached the initiative, highlighting the constitutional changes that the eventual name change would entail. Symbolically enough, the proposed state name has faced a similar destiny as its namesake, the ill-fated Ilinden Uprising of August 1903, which was brutally suffocated by the end of September 1903.<sup>1</sup> The “Ilinden proposal” serves as a particular point of entry to the present article’s topic – memory politics in the Republic of North Macedonia in the last two decades (2001–2018). Ilinden, despite failing to name the former southernmost Yugoslav state, is still by and large considered to be pivotal for the Macedonian nation-building, structuring the long Macedonian 20th century and serving as the most prominent state holiday (Republic Day).

The article aims to map and periodize the memory regimes in North Macedonia, with the divergent set of Ilinden commemorations epitomizing the developments and critical changes in the period from 2001 to 2018. Its contribution to the vast national, cross-national and international field of “Ilindenology” is twofold. Firstly, it discusses the post-2001 Ilinden commemorations as products of cultural and political memory practices. Herein, the construction of the past is approached as a process (Bond, Craps & Vermeulen 2017), in reference to the “evolving needs of the present” (Fridman 2016, 440). The

\* I would like to express my deepest appreciation to Karolina Bielenin-Lenczowska, Ljubica Spaskovska and Filip Lyapov for their comments and feedback. Nonetheless, any shortcomings are solely my responsibility.

1 The name was denounced as “irredentist” by the Greek side, “in that it implies territorial claims to Greece” (Kokkinidis 2018). In the course of the intensified bilateral negotiations, Ilinden Macedonia has given the floor to a new proposal – North Macedonia, operative from June 2018 as part of the “Greco-Macedonian Name Agreement,” and a state name which was decided upon by plebiscite on 30 September 2018. Even though the minimum threshold was not reached by the non-binding September referendum, the Macedonian Parliament approved a constitutional amendment for changing the state name in January 2019.

commemorative activities, “social and political” by definition (Gillis 1994, 5), are to be discussed as socially mediated (Halbwachs 1992; Zerubavel 2003a; 2003b; Misztal 2003) and subject to ongoing negotiations in the public sphere. Secondly, the analysis tends to provide an overview and thus fill the literature gap on the post-2001 memory politics concerning the Ilinden commemorations in North Macedonia. Ilinden’s symbolic capital was recently discussed through the *topoi* of Kruševo, the Macedonian Ilinden memorial epicenter (Brown 2000; 2002; 2003; 2004; Majewski 2015), religious minorities and inter-community violence (Yosmaoğlu 2014; von Puttkamer 2017), the media discourse on the commemorations (Krapfl 1996; Soldić 2012) and the politics of history-writing (Troebst 1997; 1999; 2003; Roudometof 2002; Brunnbauer 2003; 2004; 2005; Frusetta 2004; Marinov 2009, 2013; Marinov & Vezenkov 2014). The present article builds upon the critical discourse and aims at approaching the post-2001 Ilinden commemorations as focal in the construction of the Macedonian official memory landscape *in toto*.

## 2 Approaching the Memory Politics in North Macedonia (2001–2018)

The article’s focus is on the political mediation of memory – a process which has the instrumental function of the past as its defining feature – the past as a screen for projecting the present political claims, as described by Misztal (2003). Moreover, in the recent scholarship, one can trace a shift in memory studies’ research focus from the initial Halbwachsian representations to the social actors’ agency in the mnemonic practices (more in Gensburger 2016). The political actors and agencies, in reference to the actor-centered analytical approach, are herein seen as legitimization-seeking stakeholders (Kubik & Bernhard 2014). The commemorations and commemorative activities thus appear to be principal in unfolding the developments in the discursive construction of memory, as well as the consecutive mnemonic shifts or changes. The commemorative narratives (or the political efforts to position and interpret a historical issue), inaugurated within the annual memorial events (both formal and informal), further contribute to an establishment of patterns, groups and trajectories, which in Zerubavelian terminology are identified as “master commemorative narratives” – the broad “storyline” which integrates the various historical narrations and the particular commemorative ritualogy (Zerubavel 2003; 2003a and Fridman 2016). Along these lines, a set of 18 Ilinden commemorations will be reconstructed triangulating the national media outlets, the institutional discourses and the political rhetoric. The commemorations will be further discussed as a tripartite periodization model, while three changes in

the Ilinden master commemorative narratives will be identified (the 2001, 2007 and 2015 commemorations).

The proposed periodization is structured upon the conceptual arsenal offered by Kubik and Bernhard (2014, 7–37). The authors delineate the model of different “memory regimes” as a particular interplay of the “mnemonic actors” in the given political, societal and cultural constellation. The mnemonic actors, in these regards, are “the political forces that are interested in a specific interpretation of the past,” while the memory regime is “the dominant pattern of memory politics that exists in a given society at a given moment in reference to a specific highly consequential past event or process” (*ibid.*, 4). Kubik and Bernhard identify four types of mnemonic actors (warriors, pluralists, abnegators and prospectives), and depending on the actors prevailing in the particular synchrony, three memory regimes can be denoted (fractured, pillarized and unified).<sup>2</sup> Drawing upon the present typology, with a special stress on the diachrony of the commemorative narratives, the article approaches the Macedonian case study as shifting from an unified (from 2001 to 2006), to a bipolar-fractured (2007–2014) and, finally, to a multipolar-fractured memory regime (2015–2018). The proposed periodization is juxtaposed with the initial period of creating the Ilinden commemorative ritualogy in North Macedonia, which will be argued to extend from the early 1970s up until the end of the first post-Yugoslav decade, with the seven-month armed conflict in 2001 acting as a clear diachronic juncture.

### 3 The Two Ilindens

Much has been said and written on the Ilinden Uprising since 1903.<sup>3</sup> Organized by the activists of the Internal Macedonian-Adrianople Revolutionary

2 The fractured memory regimes emerge by default “when a mnemonic warrior enters a debate on a particular issue.” In other words, if there is the “intention of drawing a sharp line between its authors, the guardians of the ‘true’ version of the past, and ‘them’ – the prevaricators or opportunists who do not know or care about the ‘proper’ shape of collective memory – we call the author(s) of such discourses ‘mnemonic warriors’ and the resulting mnemonic regime fractured.” On the contrary, “a mnemonic regime without warriors is either pillarized or unified.” The *differentia specifica* is the very “balance between abnegators and/or pluralists.” Herein, “in a pillarized regime there will be differences between actors over their interpretations of the past, but toleration of differences of opinion or indifference over memory issues will prevent the partisan politicization of such interpretations.” Finally, “memory regimes that are predicated on agreement over the interpretation of the past and thus are largely free of mnemonic conflicts are called unified” (Kubik & Bernhard 2014, 14).

3 There are more than 500 bibliographical units within both North Macedonia’s and Bulgarian national libraries’ databases, the two major intellectual provenances of information on the

Organization (VMORO) [mk. *Vnatrešna makedonsko – odrinska Revolucionerna Organizacija*], the 1903 uprising had the political autonomy of the Macedonian lands as its primary goal.<sup>4</sup> Just months before the insurrection, the Organization reached a certain consensus on the starting day – the Orthodox Christian holiday of St. Elijah.<sup>5</sup> Finally, the rebellion broke out in the Bitola vilâyet (i.e. province), an Ottoman administrative unit, and quickly spread all the way to the Adrianople vilâyet, in the “direct vicinity” of the capital city of Istanbul (Bechev 2009). One of its major military successes was the liberation of the town of Kruševo and its immediate surroundings, where the rebels managed to mobilize a large portion of the local community, announced the formation of Kruševo Republic [mk. *Kruševska republika*], lasting for ten consecutive days, and reached out to the neighboring Muslim population with a supra-ethnic manifesto [mk. *Kruševski manifest*].<sup>6</sup> The 1903 events contributed to a political realigning, or a “qualitatively new political situation” (Čepreganov 2008, 202), in regard to the contested regional territorial and political claims over the Macedonian lands, popularly approached as the “Macedonian Question.”<sup>7</sup>

1903 Ilinden uprising. For an overview of the primary sources, see Abadžiev 1953; Lape 1953a Andonov-Poljanski 1968; 1970; Dimeski 1970 and Pandevski 1978. More on the historiographic debate on Ilinden in the socialist Macedonian context in Lape 1953b; Lape 1969; Hristov 1979; Veljanovski 1979; Popovski 1979 and Katardžiev 1979. On the immediate regional media and artisan receptions of the uprising, see Andonovski 1953 and Mitrev 1953. See Esculies, Ucelay-Da Cal & Pich 2013 for the transnational histories of the uprising. See Racin 1987; Hristov 1971, Milosavljević 1992 and Veskovik-Vangeli 1993 for an overview of the initial Macedonian sociological interpretations of the uprising. For the most recent debate on Ilinden, see Veskovik-Vangeli 2003; 2005; Crvenkovska-Risteska 2005; Popovski et al. 2014; Saveski & Demiri 2014 and Ačkoska 2014. Information on the development of the Ilinden-Preobrazhenie discourse, as present in the Bulgarian literature on the uprising, can be found in Konstantinov 1968; Hristov 1983 and Georgiev 2017. The overview of the Bulgarian-Macedonian debate on the 1903 uprising can be read in Troebst 1997 and Marinov 2013. The memoirs of the Macedonian political actors involved in the Bulgarian-Macedonian history debates can be found in Čašule 1985; Crvenkovski 1989 and Filip 1993.

- 4 Established as Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (MRO) [mk. *Makedonska Revolucionerna Organizacija*] in Salonika (1893), by six members of the Macedonian intelligentsia, it opted for an armed struggle against Ottoman rule. Without the Ottomans as a revolutionary *raison d'être*, the Organization was *de facto* subjected to the interests of the Bulgarian elites in the interwar period.
- 5 20 July, the feast day of the prophet Elijah [mk. *Ilija*], according to the “old style” Julian calendar. The uprising broke out on 2 August according to the current, Gregorian calendar.
- 6 It is worth mentioning that there is no original copy of the Kruševo Manifesto. The present-day version was written in 1923 by Nikola Kirov-Majski, the actual writer of the original Manifesto, and it was first published in his pre-war drama “Ilinden.” The first issue of the Kruševo Manifesto in post-war Macedonia was published by the State Committee of the Macedonian People's Front [mk. *Zemski odbor na Narodniot Front na Makedonija*] in August 1948.
- 7 See Pettifer 1999, Roudometof 2000 and Livanios 2008 for an overview of the “Macedonian question” discourse. The contested interpretations of the 1903 uprising appeared both before

WWII brought a new societal and political reality in the region – with the victory over the Bulgarian and German occupiers “in sight,” the massively supported Tito-led Partisan movement proclaimed, deliberately, the Anti-Fascist Assembly of the National Liberation of Macedonia (ASNOM) [mk. *Antifašističko Sobranie za Narodno Osloboduvanje na Makedonija*] on 2 August 1944, St. Elijah Day (Troebst 1997, 246). The 2nd of August, Ilinden, was immediately inaugurated as Republic Day in the new political unit, while the first post-war generation of historians finalized the “symbolic chain” between the first – 1903 – and the second – 1944 – Ilindens, a connection already instigated by the armed partisan fighters, thus linking the socialist revolution with the “unfinished business” of the Macedonian revolutionaries of the late 19th century (Brunnbauer 2004, 178).<sup>8</sup> The mnemonic agenda of the newly formed Macedonian state, on the other hand, was also impacted by three events in the immediate post-WWII years, namely, the Tito-Stalin split (1948), the aftermath of the Greek Civil War (1946–1949) and the reshufflings within the Macedonian Communist party. All three events have contributed to a certain advancement or a “cultivation” of the memory over Ilinden (Krapfl 1996), which was further approached as one of the pillars of post-war Macedonian state-building.<sup>9</sup> In the

---

and in the wake of its brutal suffocation. The oppositional voices to the armed struggle were silenced, while the failed uprising deepened the Organization's division across the pre-Ilinden camps. In the early 1900s, the Greek authorities launched a paramilitary campaign against the rebellions which lasted until 1908, a period which will be afterwards referred as the “Macedonian Struggle” in the Greek literature (see Dakin 1966; Roudometof 2002 and 2012).

- 8 The “symbolic chain,” as an official recognition of the First Ilinden Uprising, has the concessions made by the members of the Macedonian intelligentsia in the wake of the suffocation as a particular discursive framework (the writings of Dimo Hadži Dimov and Krste Petkov Misirkov, the publications by the Macedonian émigré circles in Sofia in the 1920s, the first studies by Hristo Siljanov, Kosta Veselinov and Angel Dinev in the 1930s as well as the literary takes by Nikola Kirov Majski). As an illustration, Hadži Dimov, in his “The historical importance of the Ilinden Uprising” from 1942, wrote that “even though short-lasting, the idea of the Kruševo Republic was magnificent. Macedonia has had its first Ilinden, followed by bloody days of destruction and terrible suffering. There will be a second Ilinden, in the new and safer age of the victories which are close at hand. This second Ilinden is near, it is coming. And in that day those who still remain from the first Ilinden will embrace their new leaders and rejoice in the ideal they have achieved” (cited from Krapfl 1996). This trope was further instrumentalized in the Macedonian media of the 1980s, *inter alia*, as a series of articles on the Macedonian revolutionaries (Sotirovski 1980) and the MRO's legacies in the region of Kruševo's anti-fascist resistance (Miteski 1983).
- 9 The aforementioned period was recognized as critical for the formation of the key institutional “transmission belts” (Troebst 2003) of Macedonian nationhood – the codification of the Macedonian language (1945), the creation of the Macedonian Orthodox Church (1958, autocephalous after 1967) as well as the establishment of the Macedonian Academy of

course of the 1950s and 1960s, a set of Bulgarian-Yugoslav contestations emerged, with Yugoslav Macedonia being high on the bilateral agenda. The bilateral contestations led to an extensive politicization of the historical narratives in the two neighboring states, while the 1903 uprising, already endorsed by the Macedonian and Yugoslav historiography, was traced as one of the peaks of the “quarrel” (Marinov 2009, 80).

#### 4 The Commemorative Ritualogy

There is a scholarly consensus that the early 1970s were critical in the development of the Ilinden legacy as a national “sacred place” (see, *inter alia*, Brown 2000; 2003; Majewski 2015).<sup>10</sup> With the majority of revolutionaries gone and the communicative memory of the uprising dispersed, it was a state intervention which strove to reimagine Ilinden as a “symbolic epicenter” (Brown 2003, 2) of Macedonian nationhood. In this context, Kruševo was invested as the center of commemorative activities, both the formal memorial ritualogy and the informal mnemonic practices. Regarding the first point, one can map Tito’s visit to Kruševo in 1969 (Soldić 2012), the opening of the *Makedonium* memorial complex (later renamed the Ilinden memorial) in 1974 – the 30th anniversary of ASNOM (Marinković 1974) – and the foundation of the memorial object at *Sliva*, as illustrations of the aforementioned political project.<sup>11</sup> The erstwhile emerging Macedonian cinematography had also produced two Ilinden-themed feature films in this period, “The Republic in Flames” (mk. *Republikata vo plamen*, 1969, dir. Ljubiša Georgievski) and “The Longest Journey” (mk. *Najdolgiot pat*, 1976, dir. Branko Gapo). The inter-institutional body “Scientific Council Ten Days Kruševo Republic” was also established in 1974, with a special act, with the sole function of organizing the state-sponsored

---

Sciences, the Skopje University, the first National Museum and the Institute for National History in the first post-war decades (Bechev 2009; Troebst 2003; Brunnbauer 2003; 2004; 2005; Frusetta 2004; Stefoska 2009; and Marinov 2009; 2013).

10 According to Willemsen, “the relationship between the victorious Partisans in 1944 and the tradition of the Macedonian movement within the Ottoman Empire was by no means as unbroken as it has seemed to be since the 1970s” (as translated in Troebst 1999, 70). The work of Keith Brown on the bottom-up practices and the social mobilization in Kruševo is seminal in this context (Brown 2000; 2002; 2003; 2004).

11 In addition, the annual commemorative event dedicated to Ilinden in the neighboring town of Bitola, entitled “Ilinden days” [mk. *Ilindenski denovi*], was also established in the early 1970s (more in Tanuševski 2020). The format of the Bitola-based “Ilinden-days” served as a blueprint for numerous Ilinden commemorative events across the country and within the Macedonian diaspora.



Ilinden commemorations in Kruševo. Moreover, the ASNOM's venue of St. Prohor Pčinjski, an Orthodox-Christian monastery, was also reenvisioned as a memorial site and hosted official commemorations of the Republic Day from 1969.<sup>12</sup> The official commemorative ritualogy, in this context, was fabricated around the activities at the two memory sites, galvanizing the Ilinden memory as a state-sponsored, univocal feature. Additionally, the two most noteworthy vernacular commemorations – the annual Ilinden gatherings of the Macedonian diaspora in Trnovo, a village near Bitola, as well as the “Ilinden cavalry” [mk. *Ilindenska konjanica*], an initiative reenacting the 1900s Komitadji marches, can also be traced back to the early 1970s – with the first meeting of the Macedonian diaspora taking place in 1971, while the first cavalry march occurred in 1974, and such marches are ongoing to this day.

The symbolic abundance of Ilinden was also significant during the Yugoslav dissolution, with the Macedonian political emigration instigating – and the post-socialist elite appropriating – the “Third Ilinden” [mk. *Tret Ilinden*] as a political framework of Macedonian independence. On a narrative level, the *floskel* of the “Ilinden ideal,” a reference to the ultimate goal of the Macedonian national struggle, was projected to be the basis for the post-socialist “consensus politics” (Trencsényi 2014) in the new political setting.<sup>13</sup> Ergo, Ilinden was promoted to the Constitutional preamble in November 1991, thus tracing Macedonian statehood back to the legislative and factual efforts of the historic years 1903 and 1944 (Milosavljevski 2004 and Jančeva 2014). The new political constellation, however, did not translate into a significant alteration of the late socialist Ilinden commemorative pattern.<sup>14</sup> The domestic state challenges

12 On 26 May 1969, an agreement was concluded between the monastery's governing body and the Socialist Republic of Macedonia's State Secretariat for education, science and culture, authorizing the Macedonian side to use the facilities of the monastery for a certain financial compensation (Džikov 1990, 14–15). Furthermore, in 1974, the road to the monastery from the town of Kumanovo was finished and opened to the public in August, for the Ilinden commemoration (Pačkov 1974).

13 A remark of either Ilinden or the Ilinden ideal, can be traced as high on in the agenda of the programs of the majority of political parties in the 1990s. The political programs are available in Timovski & Stefanovski 1990.

14 Katerina Blaževska, a prominent Macedonian journalist, observed that no novelty occurred in regards to the Ilinden commemorations in the first post-socialist decade (2003). Additionally, the historiography on the two Ilindens in the Macedonian 1990s remained, by and large, instructed by the institutional inertia of the late Yugoslav socialism. Troebst noticed that the “authoritative collection for the meeting of the 50th anniversary of ASNOM (...) allows for a comparison” with those that took place of the 40th, 30th or the 20th anniversaries during the Yugoslav period” (2003). Similar criticism was expressed by Todorovski (2008, 250–293). Brown also noted difficulties in expressing alternative discourses on Ilinden in the immediate post-Yugoslav years (2000).



would eventually postpone the debate on Republic Day commemorations for roughly a decade, while the bilateral contestations over St. Prohor Pčinjski's "national affiliation" would dictate the public discourse over Ilinden during the initial post-Yugoslav decade.<sup>15</sup> Herein, the Macedonian elite nonetheless managed to constitute the state while avoiding the ongoing bloodshed of the 1990s, and the borderland monastery will solidify its image as an epitome of Serbian-Macedonian tensions – triggering the establishment of the Pelince Memorial Center in 2004.<sup>16</sup> On a different note, the initial post-Yugoslav decade will create the profile of the two major political camps in the ethno-Macedonian block, the rightist VMRO-DPMNE and the reinvented socialists of the SDSM.<sup>17</sup> The main mnemonic struggles over Ilinden, however, will unfold in the post-2001 period. Notwithstanding, the so-called "rotating system" – a protocol established in the 1970s of annually alternating politicians between the two Ilinden commemorative sites – will be the highlight of the political debates over Ilinden in the 1990s. The protocol, as a mnemonic agenda, will nevertheless survive the initial post-Yugoslav decade, alongside the annual cacophonies over politicians' preferences among the sites of memory.<sup>18</sup>

15 The saga around the borderland monastery holds a particular pre-history in the border demarcation debates from 1946 up until the termination of the agreement to use the monastery's facilities for commemorating ASNOM in 1986 (more in Džikov & Todorovski 1990; Džikov 2004 and Todorovski 2008).

16 In 1990, Serbian radical groups demolished the memorial plaque in the monastery's "ASNOM memorial room" and the Serbian police "brutally stopped the commemorative activities" (Georgievski 2001, 23–24). In July 1991, the ASNOM memorial room was reported to be relocated without prior announcement, while the story was covered as a "desecration" of the Macedonian history (Ristevski 1991 and Risteski 1991).

17 The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization-Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE) [mk. *Vnatrešna makedonska revolucionerna organizacija-Demokratska partija za makedonsko nacionalno edinstvo*], claiming legacy over the "historical" VMRO and the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM) [mk. *Socijaldemokratski sojuz na Makedonija*], building upon the institutional legacy of the Macedonian socialists from Second Yugoslavia. What is today known as VMRO-DPMNE is a political organization created in the Macedonian political diaspora, with its main ideological matrix molded around the anti-regime sentiments of the first generation refugees from the newly established communist rule in the post-war Balkans. The SDSM emerged from the Communist Alliance-Party for Democratic Changes (SKM-PDP) in the early 1990s.

18 See, for instance, the sensationalism of the media coverage of 1999 Ilinden commemorations, with the erstwhile state-president Kiro Gligorov being criticized for "choosing ASNOM instead Ilinden." More in Večer 1999.

## 5 Phase I – Post-conflict Pillarization (2001–2006)

In January 2001 a violent conflict broke out between the Macedonian security forces and armed ethno-Albanian radicals. The conflict was settled with the Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA) on 13 August 2001, an event which can be read as a particular rupture with the first post-Yugoslav decade. Moreover, the so-called “Vraniškovski affair” from late 2002, or the attempt to establish a parallel Orthodox Church in North Macedonia, again put Macedonian-Serbian contestations high on the political agenda in the two neighboring states (Kuzmanovska 2003 and Vasilevska 2003). The post-conflict period is also marked by the presidential tenure of the DPMNE-backed candidate, Boris Trajkovski (holding office from November 1999 to February 2004), and the second governmental change in the history of the Macedonian democracy in November 2002, which put the SDSM-led coalition “Together for Macedonia” in charge. Prior to the two most critical commemorations of Ilinden in post-Yugoslav Macedonia – the 100th anniversary of the 1903 uprising in 2003 and the 50th anniversary of the ASNOM in 2004 – the seemingly shattered political scene will endeavor to establish a reconciliatory commemorative narrative, stressing the common future endorsed, with the OFA as a clear, and to a certain extent, the state’s only prospect. Regarding the analytical model, the Macedonian memory regime from 2001 to 2006 is to be identified as pillarized, with the political actors taking prospective positions without challenging the dominant narrative and commemorative frameworks.

The 2003 Ilinden commemoration is most illustrative in the post-conflict setting – the major political consensus on the state’s integrational agenda (with a singular stress on European integration), as well as the traceable fatigue from partisan ethno-nationalism, have brought to light the political incentives to reimagine the Ilinden commemorative model. Here, it was Trajkovski who suggested a supra-party platform for commemorating Ilinden in 2003, with the “state, and not party delegations, entitled to lay flowers” (Hristov 2003). The daily newspaper *Večer* thus headlined the 2003 commemorations as a “holiday without partisan promotions” (2003), while *Nova Makedonija* covered the “great jubilee” as “the best occasion to show that, amidst all the dividing aspirations and tendencies from the past, the citizens of this, now independent and free, state know how to respect the deed and the ideals of the Ilinden fighters” (2003). Moreover, the whole range of political, religious and societal actors, cross-cutting the groupist intra-ethnic boundaries, were present to witness the narrative construction of a state unity in various state-sponsored events, a storyline hinted at during the 2001 and 2002 Ilinden

commemorations and echoed on a larger scale from 2003 to 2006.<sup>19</sup> The particular discursive figure of collocating the two Ilindens with the state's EU prospects is also illustrative in this manner – the 100th anniversary of the uprising presented the Kruševo Republic as a “democratic avant-garde” within the wider, European constellation, and eventually, the 50th ASNOM anniversary had the anti-fascist struggle as a trope suggesting a major Macedonian contribution to transnational European history. For instance, Trajkovski linked the ideas of the Kruševo Manifesto as identical with the “words of the visionaries of modern Europe, Jean Monnet and Robert Schumann” (A1 2003a), while the ex-Speaker of the Parliament Nikola Popovski juxtaposed the European stereotypes on the region with the “democratic philosophy of the Manifesto” (Hristov 2003a). The 2004 commemorations had a similar commemorative highlight, with Kiro Gligorov, ASNOM member and the first president of North Macedonia, depicting the partisan struggle as a “fight against fascism, fight for freedom, for democracy, for human rights and freedoms, for social justice” (Gligorov 2004).<sup>20</sup>

The reconciliatory narrative strategy had an additional, actual manifestation in the proactive neighborhood politics of the early 2000s. Here, it was the Ilinden commemorations which tended to demonstrate not only the Macedonian political consensus on the EU and NATO integrational agenda but, more significantly, a particular regional consensus on this issue. The Trajkovski–Koštunica treaty from February 2001, which envisioned state border demarcation, a certain commitment to the cross-border “cultural-historical monuments” preservation and, moreover, an initiative to establish the Ilinden commemoration as a regional platform for communicating common prospects, is one of the most prominent examples. However, this political incentive failed to establish continuity – the St. Prohor Pčinjski Monastery was highly contested in the course of the “Vraniškovski affair,” while the representatives of

19 In 2001, Zoran Todorovski, the ex-president of the Council of the “Scientific-Cultural Meetings Ten Days Kruševo Republic,” advocated respect for all the “national and social movements in Macedonia” from the Mečkin Kamen platform (Dnevnik 2001), while in 2002, just days before the signing of OFA, the then-PM Georgievski's speech had the call for a “national unity” as a highlight (A1 2002). In a personal account from the Ilinden commemoration in 2000, Todorovski describes an informal initiative by Trajkovski to “greet” the members of the oppositional SDSM in Kruševo (2008, 201–203).

20 In a similar vein, Vlado Bučkovski, the erstwhile prime minister, in Gorno Vranovce – the village where the first newspaper of *Nova Makedonija* was printed in the late October 1944 – stated that “the creators and visionaries of the young state, have laid the basic principles and aspirations for a European future, which are now referent for the new generations of independent Macedonians” (2004).

the regional states attended only the 2003 Ilinden commemoration (Serbia, Romania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and, for the first time in hitherto Macedonian history, a Bulgarian state delegation). Thus, the difficulties with acting out the regional initiative have contributed to a particular setback in North Macedonia – the “Prohor Pčinjski scandal,” unfolding in 2003, contributed to a pillarization of the mnemopolitical claims along party lines, while the envisioned regional platforms faced certain sporadic religious and nationalistic contestations in North Macedonia. The pillarization can be seen in the criticism over the idea of constructing the Pelince Memorial Center – DPMNE MP Silvana Boneva denounced the initiative as a “surrogate memorial centre,” located at a site where “Macedonian Partisans were killed by Draža Mihailović’s Chetniks” (A1 2004a), while the DPMNE parliamentary group criticized Ljupčo Jordanovski, the then-Speaker of the Parliament, for his “failure to mention 1903 in a single sentence” in his Ilinden commemorative speech to the Macedonian Parliament (A1 2004b). The abovementioned setbacks will end up reshaping the Ilinden commemorative model, which will open up the second phase of commemorative sets.

## 6 Phase II – Partisan Bifurcation (2007–2014)

The second phase is delineated by the advent of a memory warrior in the Macedonian political arena. Hitherto, even though the DPMNE’s agenda from the early 1990s was much clearer on several historical revisionist issues, it barely translated into a particular memory policy during the first DPMNE governance from 1998 to 2002. On the contrary, the ten-year rule of the reformed and technocratic DPMNE (2006–2016) will be mostly identified with major take-overs in the cultural sphere, with the “project Skopje 2014” as a central event in this setting. The “project Skopje 2014” is an umbrella term endorsing the 137 monuments and memorials erected in Skopje’s city centre in the early 2010s. Heretofore, the scholarship pointed out its divisive aspects (for an overview, see Trajanovski 2020), while its selection of historical figures reflects the reformed DPMNE’s positioning towards Macedonian history – a meta-historical aggregation stretching from antiquity to the most recent conservative political history. Moreover, as rightly observed by Cvitković and Kline, the “Skopje 2014” strategy of “façade renovations,” a palimpsestic mode of external refurbishing in neo-classical style, was primarily directed towards buildings in the central area erected during the Yugoslav socialist period (2017). The period from 2007 until 2014 will be discussed as a particular bifurcation across the two major political parties in the Macedonian camp. Again, the Ilinden commemorations

in the given phase can be approached as anticipative of the *in toto* memory politics – one can trace two particular trajectories of the aforementioned split, starting with a narrative shift (2007–2008), and resulting in yet another change in the Ilinden commemorative model (2009–2014), which matches the time period of the DPMNE-led governmental coalition and the DPMNE-backed presidential candidate (Ćorġe Ivanov, holding the office from May 2009 onwards).

I argue that the Ilinden commemorative narrative shifted from the afore-presented, integrational framework, inaugurated in the immediate post-OFA period, to exclusive, party-centered interpretations. The shift can be traced back to the 2006 commemoration, with Ljubiša Georgievski, the former Speaker of the Parliament, problematizing the narrative of Ilinden continuity by introducing the legal trope of the Yugoslav “brutal suspension” of basic human rights in his speech at Pelince Memorial Center (A1 2006). Since 2007, the interpretative historical discourses are to be traced as highlights of the Ilinden commemorative speeches.<sup>21</sup> In this context, the 2007 and 2008 commemorations brought different stakes to the First and the Second Ilindens’ complementarities, with the two major political camps competing to establish the frames of reference over Macedonian statehood.<sup>22</sup> The partisan Ilinden interpretations have both instigated and denoted the Macedonian *Kulturkampf*, a peculiar process of encompassing the “struggle for the past aiming at creating an ideological hegemony by stressing the fundamental incompatibility of visions” (Trencsényi 2014, 138). The incompatibility’s highlight was thus introduced by the DPMNE’s Ivica Bocevski, a governmental spokesman who, responding to the accusations of party-centered Ilinden rhetoric and politicized mobilizations during the Ilinden commemorations, stressed that “the time when the national holidays were in a single subject’s domain” was “long gone” (Ćorġevski 2007a). The approach will further develop in a party-centered martyrology,

21 The DPMNE commemorative discourse frequently had the monopoly over the national struggle as its main highlight. In these regards, the 2010 Ilinden commemorations were marked by the parole – “there is only one Organization in Macedonia” (Stojančov 2010a; 2010b), which establishes a direct link between the 1903- and the modern-day VMRO-DPMNE, an exclusive, ahistorical and clearly instrumental interpretation. Similarly, the political struggles from 2012 and 2013 had the concluding note of “the Ilinden ideal is not accomplished” (Kaziovska 2012), thus granting the “only one Organization” with the right to interpret, and furthermore, deal with the state’s issues. A critical stance on this issue can be found in Trajanovski 2010.

22 Crvenkovski, approaching the 1903 uprising as a “myth,” which contributed to the “realization” of the Macedonian independence in 1944 (in his commemorative speech from 2007, Dnevnik 2007b), while the former Speaker of the Parliament, Trajko Veljanovski, recounted the First Ilinden in 2008 as a “foundation of the Macedonian sovereign state” (A1 2008).

functional in regard to the oppositional, leftist (both socialist and post-socialist) narrative over Macedonian nation-building. The rightist partisan “therapeutics,” or the promotion of the “movement’s own victims” (Sarkanjac 2011, 115), was offered as a rationale for restructuring the national canon.

Notwithstanding, it would be an external factor which would launch the peculiar process of politicizing national history as a top-level priority – the 2008 Greek veto to full membership in NATO. The process is, again, most visible by observing the Ilinden commemorations – from 2008 onwards, the massively attended state commemorations had the human rights of the Macedonian refugees from the Greek Civil War, the opposition to the name change and identity politics as commemorative highlights. The commemoration in Trnovo, organized by several ethnic Macedonian diaspora communities and the local government, can be interpreted as a discursive center of this particular political narrative. The event, taking place since 1971, was often manipulated as a platform for addressing the target group of the diaspora, the rightist political camp as well as the international community.<sup>23</sup> From 2011 onwards, Skopje, the capital city, located 160km from Kruševo and 65km from Pelince, will appear as the major site for commemorating Ilinden, often legitimizing the major response to Greek contestations – the “Skopje 2014” project. The project of inaugurating Skopje as an “Ilinden-city” introduced the ancient Macedonian Phalanx [mk. *Makedonska Falanga*] and religious authorities as central agents within the new Ilinden ritualogy. Simultaneously, one can trace a definite political withdrawal from the St. Prohor Pčinjski-based commemorations (Dnevnik 2006), as well as the state-sponsored project of reimagining Kruševo as an “ethno-town.”<sup>24</sup> The two dichotomous tendencies – the partisan

23 For instance, the Trnovo’s commemoration from 2016, attended by the erstwhile PM Gruevski, was by far the most reported Ilinden commemorative event that year, with Gruevski emphasizing that “VMRO is Macedonia, VMRO is the diaspora, VMRO is the past and the future” (Mkd.mk 2016). Moreover, it was the members of the diaspora communities which went further in the populist endorsement of the rightist historical narrations. Todor Petrov, the then president of the co-organizing institution of the World Macedonian Congress, has claimed that the First Ilinden is the Phillip II’s Battle at Chaeronea, which according to his interpretations, took place on 2 August 338 BC (Falanga 2014). Baradziej and Dambrasukas’ (2020) take on the 2015 Ilinden commemorations in Trnovo is the only account on this mnemonic practice. The authors claim that the Trnovo-based commemorations are instrumental in the construction and the practice of the Macedonian national identity.

24 The official opening of the 66-metres-tall Millennium Cross in Skopje, announced as a “contribution to the commemoration of Ilinden” (Vreme 2007), and the opening of the Orthodox Church of St. Prophet of Elijah in Skopje on 2 August, Ilinden, attended by the high governmental and religious officials (Dnevnik 2007a) are illustrative for this point. “Kruševo Ethno-Town,” a month-long manifestation sponsored by the Macedonian



narrative contestations and the center-periphery approach to the Ilinden commemorations – can be read as a paradigmatic shift of the first post-2001 Ilinden commemorative model. The second commemorative phase brought Ilinden memory as a univocally party-centered endorsement, with the mnemonic actor both promoting the partisan narrative and demarking the lines of political contestations.

## 7 Phase III – Fragmentation (2015–2018)

The third phase is built upon the fractured memory regime as a particular political legacy, with a traceable tendency to further fragment the Macedonian mnemonic landscape. Two particular points illustrate these dynamics – the governmental change from 2016/2017 and the landslide victory in the most recent local elections in October 2017, which established the SDSM as a main political factor in the ethno-Macedonian political camp. One of the major assets of the governmental change was the further treatment of the redundant “Skopje 2014 project” itself, with the SDSM taking a hard line against the undertaking during the long periods of campaigning in both 2016 and 2017. Moreover, the first year of the SDSM governance was also marked by proactive neighborhood politics, concluding with the Bulgarian-Macedonian Friendship Treaty in August 2017 and, further on, the Greco-Macedonian Name Agreement in June 2018. Both the accords, amidst the focus on the interstate partnership, as well as EU and NATO integration, project a certain rereading of the regional past (Greco-Macedonian Agreement) and envision a Joint Committee to overview the revision of history textbooks (Bulgarian-Macedonian Treaty). On the other hand, one can notice a particular fatigue with the former set of Ilinden commemorations among the Macedonian public – the highly contested, massive, party-centered ceremonies from the previous phase had lost their mobilizing potential, resulting in a series of media reports stressing the need for altering the commemorative model (Blaževska 2010; Ćorčevski 2012a and 2012b).

The partisan split from the previous phase has further developed since 2015, with the formal arrangements of recent neighborhood politics as a clear juncture, and the evolving informal practices as a particular result of the political

---

Ministry of Culture, was established in 2009 and had its peak in the following years. The “touristic revolution” was described as “awaking Kruševo from the long-lasting apathy,” by increasing the “total number of tourists for 100 percents” (Vreme 2009).

shifts. The 2017 Ilinden commemoration is the most telling in this context – the official commemoration was held in Skopje, in the Orthodox Church of St. Spas, with the Macedonian and Bulgarian PMs leading the ceremony, just a single day after the signing of the bilateral treaty. The 2017 Ilinden commemoration was also instrumental in the course of the partisan positioning towards the Bulgarian-Macedonian Friendship Treaty, as well as anticipative in the wake of the proposed “common memorial activities.” The Macedonian PM, Zoran Zaev, has openly endorsed the treaty, stressing the “history and the past as strong bases for the European future,” while Ivanov, from Skopje, has defined as “common” only the past from the post-1992 period (Večer 2017). St. Spas has an additional symbolic layer in the given context, as it holds the remains of the late 19th century VMRO leader Goce Delčev, thus marking the Bulgarian-Macedonian memory work from the late 1940s and the first post-WWII attempts at a bilateral cooperation (more in Karajanov 2006). On the other hand, the event in Kruševo was led by Parliamentary Speaker Talat Xhaferi, who challenged the official narrative over the 1903 uprising, highlighting the “multicultural and multiconfessional constant” of both the First and the Second Ilindens (Makfaks 2017). The DPMNE’s officials visited Kruševo on 1 August, deliberately encircling the state-sponsored commemoration the very next day. The tendency of disregarding the state commemorations culminated in 2018, with a high-ranking DPMNE party member calling for a boycott of the official ceremonies organized for Ilinden (Trpenoski 2018). In these regards, the rightist camp’s efforts to create an alternative Ilinden commemorative site in the periphery of Kruševo, such as Smilevo (2017) and Taš Maruništa (2018), can be read as a highlight of the novel politics of counter-positioning vis-à-vis the governmental mnemonic agenda.

On a different note, it was the political crisis from late 2015, culminating in the governmental change in 2016/2017, which significantly contributed to this peculiar process. Again, Ilinden appeared to be the key symbolic capital in the wake of the political turmoil – the protest wave against the change had the banner of the “Fourth Ilinden,” while the same phrase was utilized by the governing SDSM in the course of the 2018 pro-referendum campaign. Moreover, one can trace a tendency of NGO-ization within the rightist camp, with late VMRO affiliates or First Ilinden historical figures labeling the majority of the organizations, instrumental in the protests against the new governmental coalition (2017) and the counter-memorial events (2017 and 2018). Thus, if the second phase had the bifurcation along party lines, then the formation of a spectrum of politically active mnemonic communities is to be stressed as a major feature of the third commemorative phase, with the polyphony of mnemonic claims over Ilinden and the Republic Day commemorations traceable from late 2015 (the “Bulgarian Cultural Club – Skopje” in Macedonia’s public



campaign for “Returning Ilinden to the place where it belongs,” as well as the initiative to “de-ethnicize” the ASNOM, arguing in favor of the ASNOM as a class rather than a national revolution), and culminating in the aforementioned commemorations from Smilevo and Taš Maruništa.

## 8 Concluding Remarks

The period between the armed conflict (2001) and the newly signed bilateral treaties (2017 and 2018) was presented following a tripartite periodization model analyzing the diachrony of the Republic Day/Ilinden commemorations in North Macedonia, which were further contextualized as focal points in the construction of memory politics on a national level. The article discussed the immediate post-Yugoslav decade as a particular mnemopolitical frame of reference, or more precisely the national canon of Three Ilindens as instrumental in the further reconstruction of the Macedonian mnemonic landscape. The first period, from 2001 to 2006, brought about a reconciliatory narrative strategy as a major political effort, and, moreover, pillarized partisan claims on the pre-established historical narrative over Ilinden. The second phase, from 2007 to 2014, was delineated as a period of bifurcation along partisan lines, instigated by the introduction of a mnemonic warrior in the North Macedonia's setting. During the last set of commemorations, from 2015 to 2018, I identified further fragmentation of the mnemonic narratives and the commemorative model. Moreover, the last phase brings the political parties' inability to dictate the narrative over Ilinden as a key idiosyncrasy (the name proposal of Republic of Ilinden Macedonia can be, arguably enough, approached from this perspective), while, simultaneously, the Ilinden frames of reference helped various groups to articulate their mnemonic claims.

According to Kubik and Bernhard, the fragmentation of the memory regimes has clear implications on the democratic standard in the political arena, the stability of the party system and the questions of good governance (2014, 39–32). The quasi-democratization of the Ilinden commemoration is thus anticipative in the wake of the recent political developments in North Macedonia – the state-sponsored commemorations are to be perceived as emerging platforms for promoting the transnational historical agendas, while the new set of vernacular practices is expected to organize and articulate the resentment towards the novel (trans)historical narratives of Macedonian history and North Macedonia's foreign politics. Therefore, one can stress that the very premises of the mnemonic struggle in the Macedonian post-2001 period are shifting from a party-dominated field to a broader fragmentation – cross-cutting the political agendas of a divergent set of mnemonic communities, entrepreneurs

and activists. The prediction as such was not categorically reflected in the 2018 commemorations – the President's speech at Kruševo, which was argued to be “controversial,” the nationalistic slogans during the Kruševo Presidential speech (Mitevaska 2018) as well as the repetitiveness of the commemorative protocol from the second phase (Skopje – Kruševo – Pelince) can be perceived as an incidental cases, rather than as insinuating patterns. Notwithstanding, the general tendency is to be defined as a political struggle to occupy certain positions regarding the historical narrative over Macedonian nationhood, which will indisputably last during the final episodes of the country's European integration.

### References

- A1. 2002. “Devedeset i devet godini Kruševska Republika,” *A1*, 2 August 2002.
- A1. 2003. “Popovski: Ilinden krana na borbata za slobodna Makedonija,” *A1*, 1 August 2003.
- A1. 2004a. “DMPNE ja kritikuva vlasta za docnite pregovori za proslavuvanje na jubilejot,” *A1*, 31 July 2004.
- A1. 2004b. “Svečena sobraniska sednica po povod 60-godišnjinata od ASNOM,” *A1*, 31 July 2004.
- A1. 2008. “Centralnata proslava vo Kruševo,” *A1*, 2 August 2008.
- Abadžiev, Gj. 1953. “Bibliografija na knigi, statii i dokumenti za ilindenskoto vostanie,” in Lj. Lape et al. (eds.), *Ilindenski zbornik 1903–1953* (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija): 298–335.
- Ačkoska, V. 2014. “70 godini ASNOM, 70 godini makedonski državnost,” *Univerzitetski vesnik* 157: 3–6.
- Andonov-Poljanski, H. 1968. *Odzivot na Ilindenskoto vostanie vo svetot* (Skopje: Radio-televizija).
- Andonov-Poljanski, H. 1970. *Osvrt kon izvorite na literature za odnosot na Evropa kon Ilindenskoto vostanie* (Skopje: Filozofski Fakultet na Univerzitetot vo Skopje).
- Andonovski, H.G. 1953. “Ehoto na ilindenskoto vostanie sred jugoslovenskite narodi,” in Lj. Lape et al. (eds.), *Ilindenski zbornik 1903–1953* (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija): 221–254.
- Baradziej, E. and K. Dambrauskas. 2020. “Don't tell me that I don't exist: The construction and practice of Macedonian national identity,” *Balkan Border Crossings* (forthcoming).
- Bechev, D. 2009. *Historical Dictionary of the Republic of Macedonia* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press).
- Blaževska, K. 2003. “Da gi slušneme ilindenskite kambani vo nas,” *Dnevnik*, 1 August 2003.

- Blaževska, K. 2010. "Sè po spisok," *Dnevnik*, 3 August 2010.
- Bogoev, K. et al. (eds.). 1994. *Sto godini od osnivanje na vmro i 90 godini od Ilindens-koto vostanie* (Skopje: MANU).
- Bond, L., S. Craps, and P. Vermeulen. 2017. "Introduction: Memory on the Move," in L. Bond et al. (eds.), *Memory Unbound: Tracing the Dynamics of Memory Studies* (New York: Berghahn): 1–26.
- Brown, K. 2003. *The Past in Question: Modern Macedonia and the Uncertainties of Nation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- Brown, K. 2004. "Villains and Symbolic Pollution in the Narratives of Nations: The Case of Boris Sarafov," in M. Todorova (ed.), *Balkan Identities: Nation and Memory* (New York: New York University Press): 233–253.
- Brown, K.S. 2000. "A Rising to Count On: Ilinden Between Politics and History in Post-Yugoslav Macedonia," in V. Roudomet of (ed.), *The Macedonian Question: Culture, Historiography, Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press): 143–172.
- Brown, K.S. 2002. "Contests of heritage and the politics of preservation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia," in L. Meskell (ed.), *Archaeology Under Fire: Nationalism, politics and heritage in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East* (London & New York: Routledge): 68–87.
- Brunnbauer, U. 2003. "Serving the Nation: Historiography in the Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) After Socialism," *Historein* 4: 161–182.
- Brunnbauer, U. 2004. "Historiography, Myths and the Nation in the Republic of Macedonia," in U. Brunnbauer (ed.), *(Re)Writing History. Historiography in Southeast Europe after Socialism* (Münster: LIT Studies on South East Europe): 165–200.
- Brunnbauer, U. 2005. "Ancient Nationhood and the Struggle for Statehood: Historiographic Myths in the Republic of Macedonia," in P. Kolstø (ed.), *Myths and Boundaries in South-Eastern Europe* (London: Hurst & Company): 262–296.
- Čašule, K. 1985. *Zapisi za nacijata i literaturata* (Skopje: Mislja).
- Čepreganov, T. 2008. *History of the Macedonian People* (Skopje: Institute of National History).
- Crvenkovska-Risteska, I. 2005. "Antropološki pogled vrz procesot na sozdavanje na makedonskiot nacionalen identitet vo periodot na prerodbata, pred i po Ilindens-koto vostanie (1903 godina)," *EtnoAntropoZum* 5: 72–113.
- Crvenkovski, K. 1989. *Vo odbrana na makedonskata kauza* (Ohrid: Koteski): 9–52.
- Cvitković, S. and M. Kline. 2017. "Skopje: Rebranding the Capital City through Architecture and Monuments to Remake the Nation Brand," *Sociologija i prostor* 55(1): 33–53.
- Dakin, D. 1966. *The Greek struggle in Macedonia 1897–1913* (Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies).
- Dimeski, D. 1970. *Prilog kon bibliografijata za istorijata na Makedonskoto nacionalno osloboditelno dvizenje vo poilindenskiot period do hurietot, 1903–1908* (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija).

- Dnevnik. 2001. "Ilinden vo čest na makedonskite braniteli," *Dnevnik*, 31 July 2001.
- Dnevnik. 2004. "Kakva Makedonija ќе izgradime, takva ќе imame," *Dnevnik*, 28 July 2004.
- Dnevnik. 2006. "ASNOM zaslužuva dostoinstvena proslava," *Dnevnik*, 31 July 2006.
- Dnevnik. 2007a. "Naroden sobir vo crkvata Sv. Prorok Ilija vo Aerodrom," *Dnevnik*, 1 August 2007.
- Dnevnik. 2007b. "Ne smee da ima edna naša, druga vaša Makedonija," *Dnevnik*, 3 August 2007.
- Džikov, S. 2004. "Zošto e premolčano prisvojuvanjeto na manastirot?" *Dnevnik*, 31 July 2004.
- Džikov, S. and G. Todorovski. 1990. "Makedonskiot manastir Prohor Pčinjski: Dokumenti i argument," *Treta Programa Radio Skopje* 44: 11–36.
- Esculies, J., E. Ucelay-Da Cal, and J. Pich. 2013. "Catalan nationalist perspectives on the Ilinden Uprising of 1903," *Journal of History* 48(1): 107–132.
- Filip, J. 1993. *Podvodni grebeni na politikata: Razgovori so Krste Crvenkovski* (Skopje: Makedonsko radio).
- Fridman, O. 2016. "Memories of the 1999 NATO Bombing in Belgrade, Serbia," *Südosteuropa. Journal of Politics and Society* 64(4): 438–459.
- Frusetta, J. 2003. "Bomb-throwers and Cookie-pushers: American Diplomats, the Macedonian Question and Perceptions of Violence, 1919–1941," *Balkan Studies* 4: 3–17.
- Frusetta, J. 2004. "Common Heroes, Divided Claims: IMRO Between Macedonia and Bulgaria," in J.R. Lampe and M. Mazower (eds.), *Ideologies and National Identities: The Case of Twentieth-Century Southeastern Europe* (Budapest & New York: Central European University Press): 110–131.
- Gensburger, S. 2016. *National Policy, Global Memory. The Commemoration of the "Righteous" from Jerusalem to Paris, 1942–2007* (New York & Oxford: Berghahn): 35–81.
- Georgiev, G.N. 2017. "The Bulgarian national liberation movement in Macedonia (1893–1912) – ideology, politics, revolution," *Macedonian Review* 3: 21–34.
- Georgievski, Lj. 2001. *Ostvaruvanje na vekovniot son* (Skopje: NIP Nova Literatura).
- Gillis, J.R. 1994. "Memory and Identity: The History of a Relationship," in J.R. Gills (ed.), *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press): 3–24.
- Gligorov, K. 2004. "Gord sum što bev učesnik vo vtoriot Ilinden," *Dnevnik*, 31 July 2004.
- Ćorĝevski, B. 2003. "Makedonija go čestvuva vekot vo koj ilindensките ideali stanaa realnost," *Dnevnik*, 1 August 2003.
- Ćorĝevski, B. 2012a. "Ilindenska opomena," *Dnevnik*, 3 August 2012.
- Ćorĝevski, B. 2012b. "Klišeto go oddaleči narodot od Ilinden," *Dnevnik*, 3 August 2012.
- Halbwachs, M. 1992. *On Collective Memory* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press).

- Hristov, A. 1953. "Organizacijata na vlasta na vostaničkata teritorija za vreme na ilindenskoto vostanie," in Lj. Lape et al. (eds.), *Ilindenski zbornik 1903–1953* (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija): 163–188.
- Hristov, A.T. 1971. *Stvaranje Makedonske države 1893–1945* (Beograd: Savremena Administracija).
- Hristov, B. 2003a. "Partiite dadoa zbor i besa da ne go zloupotrebat Ilinden," *Dnevnik*, 29 July 2003.
- Hristov, B. 2003b. "Ilinden na Evropa i ponudi nova vizija," *Dnevnik*, 31 July 2003.
- Hristov, H. et al. (eds.). 1983. *Ilindensko-Preobrazhenskoto vastanie ot 1903 godina* (Sofiya: BAN).
- Jančeva, Lj. 2014. "The principles of ASNOM and the constitutional historic legacy for the 'framework' Republic of Macedonia," *Politeia* 30: 71–78.
- Jovanovski, D. 2012. "Grčki reakcii za Ilindenskoto vostanie," *Godišen zbornik na Filozofski fakultet Skopje*: 69–84.
- Karajanov, P. 2006. *Vraćanje na Goce vo slobodna Makedonija* (Skopje: Združenie na građanite koi go počituvaa likot i deloto na Josip Broz Tito): 5–49.
- Katarđiev, I. 1979. "Ilindenskoto vostanie i razvojt na nacionalno-revolucionernite borbi na makedonskiot narod za osloboduвање," in A. Hristov et al. (eds.), *Prilozi za Ilinden 1978* (Kruševo: Sovetot Deset dena Kruševska republika): 43–59.
- Kaziovska, S. 2012. "Temelot postaven, za idealot se ušte se borime," *Dnevnik*, 2 August 2012.
- Kokkinidis, T. 2018. "Greece Rejects 'Republic of Ilinden Macedonia' Proposal," *Greek Reporter*, 20 May 2018, available at: <https://greece.greekreporter.com/2018/05/20/greece-rejects-republic-of-ilinden-macedonia-proposal/> (accessed 25 December 2019).
- Konstantinov, G. et al. (eds.). 1968. *Ilinden Preobrazhenie 1903* (Sofiya: Bŭlgarski pisatel).
- Krapfl, J. 1996. "The Ideals of Ilinden: Uses of Memory and Nationalism in Socialist Macedonia," in J.S. Micgiel (ed.), *State and Nation Building in East Central Europe: Contemporary Perspectives* (New York: Institute on East Central Europe): 297–316.
- Kubik, J. and M. Bernhard. 2014. "A Theory of the Politics of Memory," in J. Kubik and M. Bernhard (eds.), *Twenty Years After Communism: The Politics of Memory and Commemoration* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press): 7–37.
- Kuzmanovska, M. 2003. "Srpskata nota se izgubi na patot Belgrad-Skopje: Vistinata skriena pod mantija," *Večer*, 25 July 2003.
- Lape, Lj. 1953a. "Novi dokumenti za ilindenskoto vostanie," in Lj. Lape et al. (eds.), *Ilindenski zbornik 1903–1953* (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija): 3–151.
- Lape, Lj. 1953b. "Krušovskata republika," in Lj. Lape et al. (eds.), *Ilindenski zbornik 1903–1953* (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija): 152–162.
- Lape, Lj. et al. (eds.). 1969. *Kniga za Ilinden* (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija).

- Livanios, D. 2008. *The Macedonian Question: Britain and the Southern Balkans 1939–1949* (Oxford: Oxford University Press): 3–52.
- Majewski, P. 2015. "Kruševo – Pomiędzy Świętym Miastem Macedońskiego Nacjonalizmu a Pierwszym 'Ethnomiastem' w Europie," *Lud* 99: 161–184.
- Makfaks. 2017. "Obrakanje na Talat Džaferi vo Kruševo za Ilinden," *Makfaks*, 2 August 2017.
- Marinković, S. 1974. "Vrz Gumenje kaj Kruševo: Hram na slobodata," *Nova Makedonija*, 27 July 1974.
- Marinov, Č. 2013. *Makedonskoto prašanje od 1944 do denes: Komunizmot i nacionalizmot na Balkanot* (Skopje: Fondacija Otvoreno Opštество).
- Marinov, T. 2009. "Anticommunist, But Macedonian: Politics of Memory in Post-Yugoslav Macedonia," *Tokovi istorije* 1–2: 65–83.
- Marinov, T. and A. Vezekov. 2014. "Communism and Nationalism in the Balkans: Marriage of Convenience or Mutual Attraction?" in R. Daskalov and D. Mishkova (eds.), *Entangled Histories of the Balkans: Transfers of Political Ideologies and Institutions* (Leiden & Boston: Brill): 469–555.
- Milosavljevski, S. 1992. *Sociologija na makedonskata nacionalna svest* (Skopje: Kultura).
- Milosavljevski, S. 2004. "Minorities in Macedonia in the Political and Constitutional Acts: From the 1903 Kruševo Manifest to the 2001 Constitutional Amendments," *New Balkan Politics* 7/8.
- Minov, N. 2011. "The Aromanians and IMRO," *Macedonian Historical Review* 2: 181–200.
- Misztal, B.A. 2003. *Theories of social remembering* (Maidenhead: Open University Press).
- Miteski, G. 1983. "Partizani, Ilinden e makedonski," *Nova Makedonija*, 27–30 July 1983.
- Mitevski, M. 2018. "Ivanov zaguben vo vremeto," *Radio Slobodna Evropa na makedonski jazik*, 3 August 2018, available at: <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/29409657.html> (accessed 25 December 2019).
- Mitrev, D. 1953. "Odrasot na ilindenskoto vostanie vo umetničката literature," in Lj. Lape et al. (eds.), *Ilindenski zbornik 1903–1953* (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija): 255–297.
- Mkd.mk. 2016. "Gruevski vo Trnovo: Graѓanite na Makedonija se gospodari na ova parče zemja," Mkd, 2 August 2016, available at: <https://www.mkd.mk/makedonija/partii/gruevski-vo-trnovo-gragjanite-na-makedonija-se-gospodari-na-ova-parche-zemja> (accessed 25 December 2019).
- Nova Makedonija (NM). 1989. "Svečena sednica po povod 45-godišnjata od prvoto zasedanie na ASNOM: Triumf na vekovniot ideal," *NM*, 20 July 1989.
- Pačkov, T. 1974. "Intenzivna izgradba na patot za Prohor Pčinjski," *Nova Makedonija*, 26 July 1974.
- Pandevski, M.D. 1978. *Ilindenskoto vostanie vo Makedonija 1903* (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija).

- Popovski, D. 1979. "Ilindenskata revolucija i Kruševskata republika vo borbata na makedonskiot narod za nacionalno i socijalno osloboduvanje," in A. Hristov et al. (eds.), *Prilozi za Ilinden 1978* (Kruševo: Sovetot Deset dena Kruševska republika): 21–42.
- Popovski, V. et al. 2014. *Sozdavanjeto na sovremenata makedonska država* (Skopje: Makedonska Reč).
- Racin, K. 1987. "Značenieto na Ilinden," in K. Racin, *Proza i publicistika* (Skopje: Naša kniga): 170–173.
- Risteski, Ć. 1991. "Ušte eden atak vrz manastirot Prohor Pčinjski: Srpska kujna preku trpezarija," *Večer*, 23 July 1991.
- Risteovski, Ć. 1991. "Muzejot vo manastirot Prohor Pčinjski povtorno pretvoren vo trpezarija: Uvertira pred Ilinden?!" *Večer*, 20 July 1991.
- Roudometof, V. 2000. "Culture, Identity, and the Macedonian Question: An Introduction," in V. Roudometof (ed.), *The Macedonian Question: Culture, Historiography, Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press): 1–25.
- Roudometof, V. 2002. *Collective memory, national identity, and ethnic conflict: Greece, Bulgaria and the Macedonian question* (Westport: Praeger).
- Sarkanjac, B. 2011. *Doma – Idejata na konzervativizmot* (Skopje: Makavej).
- Saveski, Z. and M. Demiri. 2014. *Nacionalizmot vo(n) kontekst: Sorabotkata na Albancite i Makedoncite od Ilindenskoto vostanie do Narodnoosloboditelната vojna* (Skopje: Levičarsko двиženje Solidarnost).
- Soldić, M. 2012. "Ilinden: Linking a Macedonian past, present and future," in Lj. Šarić, K. Gammelgaard and K.R. Hauge (eds.), *Transforming National Holidays. Identity discourse in the West and South Slavic countries, 1985–2010* (Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins): 191–213.
- Sotirovski, T. 1980. "Zapis za Ilinden: Učitel po heriozam," *Nova Makedonija*, 31 July 1980.
- Stefoska, I. 2009. "Why the Institute of National History? The Beginnings of the Institutionalized Form of Historiography in the Process of Building the Macedonian Nation," in Z. Trajanovski et al. (eds.), *The Echo of the Nation* (Skopje: Templum): 76–92.
- Stojančov, S. 2010a. "Proslava na Ilinden," *Radio Slobodna Evropa na makedonski jazik*, 2 August 2010.
- Stojančov, S. 2010b. "Etnizacija na praznicite," *Radio Slobodna Evropa na makedonski jazik*, 2 August 2010.
- Tanuševski, M. 2020. "Vo presret na 50-to izdanie na festivalot 'Ilidenski denovi,'" *Opserver*, 4 February 2020.
- Timovski, V. and S. Stefanovski. 1990. *Političките partii vo Makedonija* (Skopje: POS Sistem 21 Skopje).
- Trajanoski, Ž. 2010. "Karikaturite na Ilinden," *Dnevnik*, 4 August 2010.



- Trajanovski, N. 2018. "I love GTC' Citizens Initiative: A Happy Ending Story," in G. Pudar Draško et al (eds.), *Democratic Engagement in South East Europe: Stories to be Told* (Belgrade: Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory): 11–20.
- Trebst, S. 1997. *Bugarsko-jugoslovenskata kontroverza za Makedonija 1967–1982* (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija).
- Trencsényi, B. 2014. "Beyond Liminality? The Kulturkampf of the Early 2000s in East Central Europe," *boundary 2* (41): 135–152.
- Troebst, S. 1997. "Yugoslav Macedonia 1943–1953: Building the Party, the State, and the Nation," in M.K. Bokovoy, J.A. Irvine and C.S. Lilly (eds.), *State-society relations in Yugoslavia, 1945–1992* (New York: St. Martin's Press): 243–266.
- Troebst, S. 1999. "IMRO + 100 = FYROM? The politics of Macedonian historiography," in J. Pettifer (ed.), *The New Macedonian Question* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan): 60–79.
- Troebst, S. 2003. "Historical Politics and Historical 'Masterpieces' in Macedonia Before and After 1991," *New Balkan Politics* 6.
- Trpenoski, G. 2018. "Za Ilinden Zaev vo Pelince, Ivanov na Mečkin Kamen, Mickoski vo Tašmaruništa," *Sakam da kažam*, 1 August 2018.
- Vasilevska, Ć. 2003. "Po sekoja cena, li, Sv. Prohor Pčinjski," *Večer*, 29 July 2003.
- Večer. 1999. "Gligorov go odbra ASNOM mesto Ilinden," *Večer*, 28 July 1999.
- Večer. 2017. "Ivanov: Dogovorot za dobrososedstvo otvara vrata za gradenje meĝusebna doverba i sorabotka," *Večer*, 2 August 2017.
- Veljanovski, N. 1979. "Kontinuitetot na revolucionernoto dviženje na makedonskiot narod izrazen niz neкои dokumenti od ilindenskiot period i od periodot na NOV 1941–44 godina," in A. Hristov et al. (eds.), *Prilozi za Ilinden 1978* (Kruševo: Sovetot Deset dena Kruševska republika): 465–479.
- Veskovik-Vangeli, V. 1993. *Francuskata revolucija i Kruševskiот manifest 1903* (Skopje: Mislа).
- Veskovik-Vangeli, V. 2003. "'Enigmata avgust' vo istoriskoto minato na Makedonija (1903–2001)," in N. Veljanovski et al. (eds.), *Makedonija vo dvaesettiot vek* (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija): 47–64.
- Veskovik-Vangeli, V. 2005. "Ilindenskata kauza vo narodnoosloboditelnata i anti-fašističката vojna – od aspekt na čovekovite prava," *100 godini Ilinden: 1903–2003* 2: 7–22.
- Von Puttkamer, J. 2017. "The Vlachs of Krushevo. Nationalism and Violence in the Ilinden Uprising," *Südost-Forschungen* 76: 217–240.
- Vreme. 2007. "Otvoren i osveten patot kon Mileniumskiот krst," *Vreme*, 1 August 2007.
- Vreme. 2009. "Kruševo celosno vo 'film' od 1903," *Vreme*, 27 July 2009.
- Yosmaoğlu, İ. 2014. *Blood ties: religion, violence, and the politics of nationhood in Ottoman Macedonia, 1878–1908* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press).

- Zemski odbor na Narodniot Front na Makedonija (ZONFM). 1948. *Kruševskiot Manifest* (Skopje: ZONFM).
- Zerubavel, E. 2003a. *Time maps: collective memory and the social shape of the past* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
- Zerubavel, E. 2003b. "Calendars and History: A Comparative Study of the Social Organization of National Memory," in J.K. Olick (ed.), *States of Memory: Continuities, Conflicts, and Transformations in National Retrospection* (Durham & London: Duke University Press): 315–337.

**Author Query:**

AQ1: Please provide the completed Author Affiliation.

# The Long Road to Europeanization

## *North Macedonia's Contentious Democratization between Its Democratic Deficit and External Involvement*

*Ivan Damjanovski*

Associate professors, political science department, "Iustinianus I" Faculty of Law, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, North Macedonia  
*n.markovic@pf.ukim.edu.mk*

AQ1

*Nenad Markovikj*

Associate professors, political science department, "Iustinianus I" Faculty of Law, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, North Macedonia  
*i.damjanovski@pf.ukim.edu.mk*

AQ2

### Abstract

This article focuses on the relation between EU leverage and domestic elites related to the differential impact of conditionality in the case of the Republic of North Macedonia. The main focus is on the influence of the low credibility of the membership perspective on the effectiveness of EU political conditionality in North Macedonia. Additionally, it examines to what extent the legitimacy of the process is determined by domestic factors. The domestic political elites strategically raise the domestic costs to the level where Europeanization becomes a highly costly process and external influences such as political isolation or rewards given in the process seem to have very weak results. The article introduces the concept of the "leverage trap" – a political discourse devised by domestic political elites apropos the EU, in turn used to increase the leverage of political elites domestically and to present the EU as an impotent actor.

### Keywords

Republic of North Macedonia – conditionality – EU – leverage – state capture – accession process – Europeanization

## 1 Introduction

Ever since its independence from Yugoslavia, North Macedonia's democratization and stabilization have been set between a policy of pursuing the incentives of EU and NATO membership and deficits in political dialogue which have heightened the country's dependence on external intervention in resolution of interethnic and political conflicts. On one hand, North Macedonia has been one of the first countries from the Western Balkans to embrace the process of integration into Euroatlantic structures. It was the first Western Balkan country to sign a Stabilization and Association Agreement (2004) with the EU in 2001 and the second Western Balkan country to become a candidate for EU membership in 2005 (Council of the European Union 2006). However, on the other hand, North Macedonia's progress towards EU and NATO accession has been heavily hit by the 2008 Greek-influenced blockade of both North Macedonia's NATO membership and the start of EU accession negotiations. These developments rerouted endogenous political processes onto a completely unexpected track. The result has been a decade-long deadlock of the EU and NATO accession processes that have consequently had detrimental effects on governance in North Macedonia. Exacerbated by the effects of the global financial crisis, enlargement fatigue in the EU and the more recent migrant crises, the lack of a credible EU and NATO membership perspective has exposed the shortcomings of North Macedonia's capacity to democratize, as the country has witnessed a longstanding process of democratic backsliding and a rise of Eurosceptic energy (Freedom House 2018; Damjanovski 2014). These developments have culminated in the biggest political crisis since the armed conflict in 2001, the resolution of which through mediation from the EU and the USA further confirmed the importance of external actors in Macedonian politics (Markovikj and Damjanovski 2018).

The article analyzes the interplay of EU leverage and domestic elites through the perspective of differential impact of conditionality in the case of the Republic of North Macedonia. It examines how low credibility of the membership perspective has influenced the effectiveness of EU political conditionality in the country, and to what extent the legitimacy of the process is determined by domestic circumstances. The article argues that when domestic political elites strategically raise the domestic costs to the level at which Europeanization becomes a highly costly process, external influences such as political isolation or rewards given in the process seem to have very weak results. The article specifically focuses on the "leverage trap" set by domestic political elites for the EU, which is in turn used to increase the leverage of political elites domestically and to present the EU as an impotent actor.

Through a process-tracing approach, the article at first introduces a theoretical framework of Europeanization and EU conditionality, specifically analyzing the context of Southeast Europe. Then the article presents a short history of the Europeanization process in the Republic of North Macedonia and its challenges. The third part is devoted to the analysis of the dysfunctions of EU conditionality in North Macedonia in the context of the effectiveness of EU leverage and the credibility of the accession perspective. The fourth part critically examines the role of domestic costs and the effects of state capture and is followed by an analysis of the impact of external and domestic drivers in democratic change in North Macedonia.

## 2 Theoretical Background: Europeanization and the Western Balkans

Defined as a process of “construction, diffusion and institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, ways of doing things and shared beliefs and norms” (Radaelli 2003: 30), Europeanization as a discipline has been initially confined to the study of the effects of European integration on the domestic change in Member States. However, the enlargement process involving countries from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) expanded the concept by opening new research avenues that focused on the factors and mechanisms of EU-induced democratization in the candidate states through the lenses of compliance with EU conditionality (Sedelmeier 2011).

Mainstream literature on the processes of Europeanization in the candidate countries (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2004, 2005) has largely focused on the “new institutionalist” paradigm by exploring the applicability of the two logics of consequentiality and appropriateness (March and Olsen 1989). The first logic has inspired a rationalist approach towards Europeanization which emphasizes the role of material benefits as a driver of compliance with EU norms in the candidate countries. Based on a strategy of “reinforcement by reward”, the EU uses its asymmetrical power (Moravcsik and Vachudova 2003) in relation to the candidate states to coerce them into costly democratic reforms by offering them the incentive of EU membership. In this sense, the candidates will be willing to comply as long as the membership perspective remains credible and it outweighs the domestic costs of compliance with EU conditionality (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005; Vachudova 2005) or the costs of exclusion (Mattli 1999). The second logic seeks a constructivist explanation of Europeanization which relates EU-inspired socialization and cognitive change through “social learning” with the belief of the elites in the candidate countries in the legitimacy and effectiveness of EU norms (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005; Checkel 2005).

Research on CEE enlargement has emphasized the applicability of the rationalist accounts and the role of external incentives in the Europeanization of the candidate countries (Noutcheva 2015: 691). According to this model (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2005), the success of Europeanization is dependent on four factors: credibility of the membership perspective, determinacy of EU norms, administrative capacity and domestic costs. Credibility has been pinpointed as one of the key factors for compliance (see Böhmelt and Freyburg 2013), as it supposes that a credible and consistent promise of membership on behalf of the EU creates an incentive structure in the candidate countries that outweighs the costs of reforms. Determinacy stresses the clarity and consistency of EU rules as a precondition for the success of their adoption. The internal dimension of Europeanization is related to the administrative capacities of the candidate countries as a key factor of transposition and implementation of EU norms (Hille and Knill 2006), and domestic adoption costs which could undermine compliance with EU rules if they are deemed by the political elites as intrusive to their interests and electoral chances.

Previous research on the CEE enlargement has largely confirmed the size and credibility of external incentives and low adoption costs as key factors for EU-induced democratization (Schimmelfennig et al. 2006; Vachudova 2005). In general, the process of Europeanization of the CEE countries that entered the EU in 2004 and the instrument of conditionality has been considered as successful (Grabbe 2006, 2014; Ekiert et al. 2007). However, recent research outputs have been more critical of the post-2004 processes of Europeanization by underlining the damaging impact of domestic factors (Magen and Morlino 2009) and even the negative aspects of the EU's rule of law and democracy promotion strategies (Börzel and Pamuk 2012; Mendelski 2015, 2016). These critical remarks are especially relevant in regard to the Western Balkan accession process, which has been situated in a very different context in comparison to the CEE enlargement, a context that has contributed towards a much slower pace of Europeanization (Zhelyazkova et al. 2019). Thus, two decades after the EU opened the perspectives for membership of the Western Balkan countries, the Europeanization of the Western Balkans has met with many limitations (Džankić et al. 2019a), to the extent that the "countries show clear elements of state capture, including links with organized crime and corruption at all levels of government and administration, as well as a strong entanglement of public and private interests" (European Commission 2018).

Several factors have contributed to such a differential position of the accession perspectives of the Western Balkans in comparison to the CEE experience. The region had been initially hampered by several armed conflicts in former Yugoslavia that have effectively delayed the democratization process in the affected states (Fink-Hafner and Lajh 2012). In addition, the Europeanization



process has been inter-connected with a parallel and often conflicting process of state- and nation-building (Keil 2013), whereby “the EU had to become increasingly involved as an agency dealing with transformation and development problems” (Mungiu-Pippidi and Stefan 2012: 355). Even more importantly, the Western Balkan EU accession process has been embedded in a much different and unfavorable EU enlargement policy framework compared to the trajectory of the CEE candidates. From the onset, the accession process of the Western Balkans has been labeled as “mainly externally driven, coercive and increasingly demanding” (Anastasakis 2005: 82). Although, on average, the Western Balkan countries have been politically and economically less developed than the CEECs, their EU aspirations have been confronted with a much stricter conditionality framework, a less credible membership perspective and higher domestic costs.

First, the region has been faced with a very low credibility of the accession process. The Western Balkans enlargement aspirations have been confronted by an ongoing “enlargement fatigue” within the EU and its Member States which has been further exacerbated by the negative effects of the financial crises and the growing internal conflictual political dynamics in the EU in the aftermath of the migrant and Brexit crises. In this sense, the accession process has been faced with a highly uncertain promise of membership, as represented by the lack of EU commitment on provisional time frames for possible conclusion of the accession process for particular candidates and by discouraging statements from high-ranking EU officials. Furthermore, public opinion in EU Member States is increasingly negative towards further enlargement of the EU. The latest Eurobarometer results show that majority of EU citizens (46%, as opposed to 44% who are supportive) do not support further enlargement of the EU to include other countries in future years (Standard Eurobarometer 89 2018). These developments undoubtedly put more pressure on politicians in the Member States who are already conflicted over the issue of Western Balkan enlargement. In a context of a growing nationalization of EU enlargement policy (Hillion 2010), several Member States have raised serious concerns over the viability of the Western Balkans’ accession. The reluctance of France and the Netherlands to approve the commission proposal to open accession negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia in 2018 (Baczynska and Emmott 2018) and in June 2019 (Jozwiak 2019) serves as a good example for this argument. Even more, French president Macron’s stance to put EU enlargement in the back seat until the EU undergoes a significant internal institutional reform that will speed up the decision-making process has further deflated the accession perspectives of the candidate states (Lough 2019). Furthermore, the decision-making within the EU on the progress of the Western Balkan candidates has been poisoned by a worrying growth of EU veto

players who have used bilateral disputes with the candidate countries in order to block their accession process (Djolai and Nechev 2018), turning what has been an exceptional move in the past into a regular practice (Basheska and Kochenov 2015: 397). Finally, the lowered interest in the region has left a void that has been filled with attempts at external influence by third states, such as Russia, which oppose the Euro-Atlantic integration of the region and have a disruptive influence on the EU and US strategies of democratization of the region (Bechev 2017, 2020; Nechev and Nikolovski 2020; Bieber and Tsifakis 2019).

Second, the accession of the Western Balkan states is placed in a much stricter conditionality framework compared to the previous enlargements. In its inaugural document outlaying the new enlargement strategy with the Western Balkan countries, the European Commission outlined rigorous conditionality and the absorption capacity of the EU as two key pillars of the EU's enlargement policy (European Commission 2005). The current strategy prioritizes rule of law and democratic governance reforms as key criteria for progress in the accession process (European Commission 2012). Especially with the introduction of the "new approach" to accession negotiations, the EU has effectively put rule of law conditionality at the very heart of the accession process, since this policy innovation requires the two rule of law Chapters, 23 and 24, to remain open throughout the entirety of the accession negotiations, while at the same time it ties the progress of other chapters with the progress made in Chapters 23 and 24 (European Commission 2012: 203). While this revamped, widened and toughened conditionality framework has undoubtedly strengthened the determinacy of the process, its application, especially in regard to rule of law conditionality, has been a subject of significant criticism. Much of the criticism is related to the lack of clarity and the inconsistency of the EU's approach towards rule of law and democracy promotion. Kochenov (2014) for example has listed a number of drawbacks in the application of pre-accession conditionality, such as the unclear vision of what is expected from the candidates, the inability of the Commission to properly and evenly assess democratic and rule of law issues across the candidate countries. The inexistence of a general EU-wide rule of law framework (Pech 2016) and of a more specific unified judiciary policy (Smilov 2006; Preshova et al. 2016) has been blamed to as having contributed towards an inconsistent and differential impact on rule of law reforms in the candidate countries (Coman 2014). These deficiencies have even prompted authors to label the effects of the EU's rule of law promotion in Southeastern Europe as "pathological" to the extent that in some cases application of rule of law conditionality has had a reversible negative impact on rule of law reform (Mendelski 2015, 2016; also see Slapin 2015).

Finally, the literature particularly emphasizes the critical role of domestic structures and domestic adoption costs on the differential democratic consolidation (see Vachudova 2015; Elbasani 2013) in the Western Balkans. The low credibility of the membership perspective has “affected the perceptions of the domestic actors regarding the size of the rewards”, especially with the ultimate reward of membership continuing to be a very distant moving target which is beyond the scope of current governments, who are “unlikely to be the beneficiaries of their efforts and therefore unwilling to tackle costly and unpopular reforms” (Zhelyazkova et al. 2019: 27). Compared to the CEE enlargement, contestations in the domestic arena and resistance to change among the political elites in the Western Balkans and Turkey have had a much more pronounced role in limiting the Europeanization efforts (Džankić and Keil 2019; Knezović and Zeneli 2018; Alpan and Diez 2014). On one hand, societal opposition has so far remained low in almost every Western Balkan country. Although public support for EU membership has been declining in several candidate countries (Nuttall 2018), still, a majority of the population in the region supports their country’s accession to the EU. In addition, the power of societal veto players is limited, since there are no significant Eurosceptic political parties or interest groups. Yet, these tendencies haven’t been able to push for decisive democratization of the political elites, who, without concrete external incentives on the horizon, see the process of tackling the challenges of Europeanization as damaging to their material, electoral and power related interests. Hence, the region is still dominated by “formal and informal gate keeper elites” (Džankić et al. 2019b: 2) that are increasingly showcasing illiberal and authoritarian tendencies in their governing mechanisms. Even more, in the wake of the recent migrant crisis and emerging geopolitical confrontations, they have exploited the EU’s preference for regional stability over democratization in the region in order to maintain power without much criticism from the international community. This soft approach by the EU towards these seemingly cooperative political actors has in fact enhanced their semi-authoritarian style of governance (Redeljić 2019) and enabled them to manipulate the EU bureaucracy and their constituencies (Perković 2014). Lastly, policy makers in the Western Balkans have been faced with a stringent political conditionality which tackles extremely sensitive issues of national identity (Freyburg and Richter 2010; Subotić 2010) such as the demands for cooperation with the ICTY in the Yugoslav successor states, or the name dispute between North Macedonia and Greece, which have imposed very high political costs of compliance and have enhanced societal cleavages and nationalist sentiments.

Against the backdrop of these developments, the literature also points towards alternative strategies and agents of domestic change that could accelerate the Europeanization process. Firstly, civil society organizations and other

domestic non-state authors could play an important role as drivers of democratization (Slavov 2015), especially in conditions of limited incentives (Yilmaz 2014). Secondly, political parties have been considered to be the most important source of domestic policy change and compliance with EU demands (Vachudova 2019: 72). In this sense, Vachudova (2008, 2014) proposes an “adaptive model” that could be applicable in the Western Balkan context. The model is especially interesting for cases of illiberal and authoritarian regimes where adaptation to EU leverage occurs in two stages, the first stage encompassing reformist opposition parties that collaborate with civic groups based on the mutual pursuit of broad pro-democracy and pro-EU agendas; while in the second stage the illiberal parties change their party agendas and become supporters of Europeanization as they realize that this is the only alternative in order to return to power.

In sum, the analysis of the ongoing Europeanization of the current candidates and potential candidates for EU membership points towards the credibility of accession and the role of domestic agents as variables of key significance for the enlargement process (Dimitrova 2016). We apply this assumption in our study by analyzing the effects of credibility and domestic costs on the Europeanization and democratization processes in North Macedonia.

### 3 Long Road to Europeanization: From a Frontrunner to a Captured State

From the early years of Macedonian independence, Euro-Atlantic integration has been seen as a key national interest by every Macedonian government. In the 1990s North Macedonia already had cooperation agreements with the EU in place and gained access to the EU's PHARE instrument for financial aid. At the turn of the millennium, North Macedonia established itself as a frontrunner in the Stabilisation and Association Process by becoming the first country from the Western Balkans to sign a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU in 2001. A good track record of compliance with EU political conditionality, post-conflict consolidation and the successful implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement contributed towards a positive decision of the European Council in 2005 to grant the country the status of a candidate country for EU membership. Despite a change of government, compliance with EU criteria continued to improve and it resulted in a European Commission recommendation to start accession negotiations with North Macedonia in 2009. However, a decade and eleven successive recommendations later, the country is yet to open accession negotiations with the European Union. 2009 becomes a turning point for Macedonian Europeanization. In retrospect, the

decision of the Greek government to follow its veto over North Macedonia's NATO membership bid in 2008 with a decision to block North Macedonia's accession process to the EU in 2009 has had a devastating effect on North Macedonia's democratization, which was confronted with a decade-long period of political turbulence and a notable rise in illiberal and authoritarian tendencies (see Freedom House 2018; BTI 2018).

Authors have labeled the Greek utilization of veto power in EU enlargement decision-making as a successful attempt "at hijacking the pre-accession process, rendering the EU's enlargement law unworkable, and making the effective application of the principle of conditionality impossible" (Basheska and Kochenov 2015: 394). The case of North Macedonia confirms this assumption, as the deadlock in the accession process lowered the credibility of North Macedonia's membership perspective tremendously and diminished the EU's incentive structure which, as we argue in this article, consequently enabled rent-seeking elites in North Macedonia to undermine the democratization process and cement their grip on power. The regression in compliance with political conditionality has had a spillover effect of slowing down compliance regarding other policies (see Gerovska Mitev 2013) and limiting democratic policy making through exclusion of non-state actors (Risteska 2013).

The correlation between the credibility and the notable democratic backsliding since 2009 is backed by data from several indexes that measure the democratic performance of countries over time. For example, the Freedom House (2018) "Nations in Transit" index shows a significant drop in its Democracy score in the period between 2010 and 2017 (from 3.79 in 2010 to 4.43 in 2017). The Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI 2018) notes a similar decline in its Democracy status (from 7.95 in 2010 to 6.45 in 2018) and Rule of law (from 7.3 in 2010 to 6 in 2018) ratings for the same time period. Although the EU tried to increase its leverage and reduce the negative trends in compliance with the introduction of the benchmarking-based instrument of the High-Level Accession Dialogue in 2012, its positive effect was short-lived and it was discontinued in 2014. The deterioration of the state of democracy in the country peaked with the political crisis that was sparked by the wiretapping scandal in 2015, which fully exposed the corruption and clientelist networks within the government and the judiciary. These dynamics have been met with significant criticism from the European Commission, which for the first time conditioned its recommendations in 2015 and 2016 to start accession negotiations with fulfillment of extra criteria related to the implementation of the Pržino agreement (European Commission 2015a, 2016a). The criticisms culminated with a dire assessment from the Commission which has spoken openly of concerns about the government's "state capture affecting the functioning of democratic institutions and key areas of society" (European Commission 2016b).

The credibility of the accession process has been potentially brought back on track only after the dramatic change of government in 2017, which came as a result of a long process of EU-brokered negotiations between the major political parties to resolve the political crisis. The new social democratic government prioritized the resolution of the name issue with Greece, which resulted with the signing of the Prespa agreement in June 2018, which has resolved the decades-long dispute by changing the country's constitutional name of Macedonia into North Macedonia. Since the provisions of the agreement passed parliamentary approval in the two countries in the first half of 2019, Greece has lifted its blockade of North Macedonia's NATO membership and the EU accession process. However, while these developments have put NATO accession back on track, as they initiated the ratification procedure of the Accession Protocol in the Member States' parliaments, the long-awaited opening of the accession negotiations for EU membership in June 2019 didn't materialize. Due to dissent among some Member States, the European Council decided to postpone the decision on the opening of accession negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania to no later than October 2019 (Jozwiak 2019).

In the following sections we deconstruct the dynamics of the processes of Europeanization in North Macedonia through an analysis of the interplay between EU leverage and domestic factors.

#### 4 Lost Leverage and Dysfunctional Conditionality

The Prespa Agreement between Greece and North Macedonia, reached in June 2018, settled the three decades-long dispute over the name issue between the two countries. The agreement enabled the continuation of the Euroatlantic aspirations of North Macedonia and opened the path for the country to join the NATO alliance. Symbolically, Greece was the first country to sign the protocol for North Macedonia to join NATO in February 2019, and as of July 2019, 20 out of 29 NATO members have done the same. If the remaining nine countries sign the Protocol by the end of 2019, North Macedonia will become the country that has had the fastest accession procedure of all NATO members. However, this was meant to happen as far back as 2008, but the NATO summit in Bucharest resulted in a completely unexpected turn of events.

In fact, the NATO summit in Bucharest in 2008 acted as the tipping point in North Macedonia's path to democratic backsliding. The end game of the summit resulted in invitations for Albania and Croatia to join the alliance, while North Macedonia was put "on hold" (NATO 2008) due to the effective use of the veto mechanism by Greece, deriving from the name dispute between the two countries. The Macedonian delegation, headed by both Prime Minister Nikola



Gruevski and the president of the country Branko Crvenkovski, came back to the country with what was possibly the biggest defeat for North Macedonia in international politics to that day. However, the dramatic consequences of the aftermath of the NATO summit in 2008 were felt years later, while in fact the NATO summit was used as the “perfect storm” for the domestic political elites, spearheaded by VMRO-DPMNE and the Prime Minister, Nikola Gruevski.

The blocked path towards NATO membership and the subsequent block of the start of the EU accession negotiations in 2009 had several serious consequences, besides the obvious one that North Macedonia had to face a situation of once again being outside a system of collective security that would in turn have guaranteed its internal stability. On one side, both NATO and the EU were unable to solve the conundrum stemming from the name dispute, not being powerful enough to convince Greece to lift the veto for North Macedonia, nor being sufficiently potent to broker a solution for the name dispute at that point. Having their hands tied by the formal veto power of Greece gave grounds for domestic elites to easily “advertise” the EU and NATO as impotent players not being able to overpower Greece, especially in a situation where serious promises<sup>1</sup> were made to North Macedonia. On the other hand, and speaking of domestic political elites, there were only two choices for Gruevski and his government after Bucharest: either to try to reach a very unpopular agreement with Greece which in turn would affect the popular ratings of the government and the ruling party (VMRO-DPMNE), or to try to completely shift the paradigm and turn the political narrative on its head by denying any responsibility for the failure and diverting complete attention to Greece and international actors.

Choosing the second scenario seemed more viable for domestic political elites for two reasons: the first is that domestic costs for the Europeanization process after Bucharest increased to a level where ruling elites assessed that they were not worth taking, meaning that the trade between a compromise with Greece and the benefits of EU and NATO accession became unacceptable. And the second, in close relation to the first one, was the adaptational pressure

1 The Republic of North Macedonia became a part of the Adriatic Charter as an effort of the USA to bring North Macedonia, Croatia and Albania (later on Montenegro) into NATO in a group format. During the Bucharest summit of NATO in 2008, North Macedonia was the only country that did not join due to Greece's veto. Additionally, Greece and North Macedonia signed an Interim Agreement in 1995, whose Article 11 clearly states that Greece will refrain from any diplomatic action blocking North Macedonia's integration in international, multi-lateral or regional organizations. For more details please see [https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/MK\\_950913\\_Interim%20Accord%20between%20the%20Hellenic%20Republic%20and%20the%20FYROM.pdf](https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/MK_950913_Interim%20Accord%20between%20the%20Hellenic%20Republic%20and%20the%20FYROM.pdf). (accessed 22 October 2018).



(Börzel and Risse 2003) of the Europeanization process that in fact affected domestic public opinion, which started to display resistance towards a possible settlement of the name dispute, constantly showing stable levels of disapproval in conjunction with a possible compromise in order to gain access to the EU and NATO (Klekovski 2011: 16),<sup>2</sup> especially among ethnic Macedonians which comprised the vast majority of supporters of the government led by VMRO-DPMNE and Nikola Gruevski.

However, in the post-Bucharest period, the loss of leverage of international actors, the EU and NATO, in front of the domestic audience firsthand, was not only a consequence of the inability to either broker an agreement between the two countries or pressure Greece to raise the veto on North Macedonia's NATO accession. It was also a matter of a very well-thought-out political strategy of the Macedonian conservatives in power, to build a political narrative based on victimization and the transferring of responsibility towards international actors (Bliznakovski 2017: 59). The discourse of blaming the EU and NATO for the failure in Bucharest intensified in the country, joined by the lack of political vision that a political agreement has to be reached with Greece in a situation of a highly asymmetrical power relation. This directly affected public opinion, which showed gradually increasing frustration resulting in loss of support towards joining the EU from 97% in 2006, the year when VMRO-DPMNE came to power, to the historically lowest 72% in 2014 (Damjanovski 2014: 26), two years before VMRO-DPMNE and Gruevski fell from power in the country. This discursive "blame game" was accompanied by an adjacent discourse on "patriots and traitors" accompanied by "reliance on ethnocentric myths of victimization which were used to create an image that the fall of the party would bring "destruction of the state" (Bliznakovski 2017: 59), which incrementally built up as the country remained under the rule of Gruevski. The government effectively labeled as traitors any group of people that would openly advocate a possible solution to the name dispute or oppose any major decision by VMRO-DPMNE. Although formally keeping a pro-Western tone, after Bucharest, Gruevski effectively reversed the logic of the political discourse in the country. Instead of reaching out to the Greek side and making an attempt at a solution, he decided to raise the stakes, by raising the domestic costs of the Europeanization process via an identity intervention in the national tissue of ethnic Macedonians.

2 Public opinion research in 2011 showed that 43,6% of ethnic Macedonians are not in favor of a compromise if EU and NATO accession is at stake, while 35% would approve of such an arrangement. See <https://www.mcms.mk/images/docs/2011/macedonia-name-dispute-2011.pdf>. (accessed 15 August 2019).

As authors rightfully note, Gruevski and other leaders in the region (Dodik, Djukanović) came to power as politically pragmatic people and strong economic reformers (Bieber 2001: 340). However, Gruevski gradually shifted the focal point of his policy from economy towards nationalism and identity questions, a political tactic additionally motivated by the frustration from the failure at the NATO summit in 2008 and of the efforts of North Macedonia to join the Alliance, even under the FYROM name. In 2009 Gruevski decided to introduce the infamous “Skopje 2014” project, a major architectural revamping of the city center with historical references from antiquity to contemporary times. Being described in condensed terms as “a visual text on Macedonian national history” (Graan and Takovski 2017: 70) the project has been seen as an attempt at strengthening Macedonian identity and popularizing the city via “musealization” (Koziura 2014: 109). The obvious aim of the project was to “remind” ethnic Macedonians of their glorious past reaching to antiquity, with the central figure of the project being a 22-meter-tall statue of Alexander the Great on his horse Bucephalus, and in a way to attempt to heal the wound inflicted in 2008 by Greece. As early as 2011, authors saw the obvious connection between the project and the Bucharest failure, stating that the project was “validated in the eyes of Macedonian nationalists after the failure of North Macedonia’s NATO bid in Bucharest in 2008 and their reinforcement despite the pressure by Greece” (Vangeli 2011: 18). This reference was not coincidental, even spurring a debate about whether it was a rational choice made by Gruevski to try to create a bargaining position apropos the name dispute or a simple attempt at national constructivism introduced to inflict massive psychological satisfaction to the upset national pride of the ethnic Macedonians (Markovic and Damjanovski 2010).

Regardless of the controversy that the project infused among the domestic and international public, and the possibility to approach it from various angles, choosing to analyze the project from a strictly politically instrumental viewpoint seems to give answers to the question of the relationship between the project and the Europeanization process. Nevertheless, it instantly became obvious that the “Skopje 2014” project represented a symbolical countermeasure to Greece’s veto policy, embodied in an architectonic chimera that partly had its origins in the “Macedonian government’s desire for symbolic retaliation” (Holleran 2014: 22). Besides the name dispute, where the Gruevski government clearly stated that “his government and the population are not willing to tolerate ‘blackmailing’ by their Greek neighbors and perceive their request for a name-change as a threat to Macedonian identity” (Kubiena 2012: 86), a new line on the Greek-Macedonian front was drawn in the face of the project. Being labeled as a project that spurred a game of “ethnic appropriation of the

city" (Mattioli 2013: 5), one of its primary political effects was precisely defining Macedonian identity as primarily European, but also as contrasting to Greek and Albanian identity, or in other words "the 'European' Macedonia presented by Skopje 2014 thus not only draws on a model of Europe that has been particularly valorized in a post-socialist, Europeanizing context, but this vision is also organized against the backdrop of Greek and ethnic Albanian challenges to Macedonian state legitimacy" (Graan 2014: 169). In this regard the political message of the project was that "not only does Macedonian identity have its own history, but it also has its own culture that is part of the European cultural circle" (Georgievska-Jakovleva 2014: 47) notwithstanding that this "strategy was seen as a response to the absurd decision by NATO and EU that the Republic of Macedonia shouldn't start full membership negotiations" (Georgievska-Jakovleva 2014: 47).

Without the ambition to analyze the project from the perspective of nation-building, its aesthetic nature or corruptive aspects, there is one less obvious aspect to the whole effort, that ended up in being one of the most elaborate money-laundering schemes in the history of Europe (Jordanovska 2015). Seen from the perspective of the process of Europeanization of North Macedonia "Skopje 2014" has several implications, none of them pointing at the conclusion that the project furthered the aim of integrating the country into the Euro-Atlantic structures. On the contrary, the building of the project significantly raised the costs of joining NATO and the EU, with an obvious irritation being inflicted upon Greece by the introduction of motifs from the Hellenistic period. Greece is in fact a crucial veto player and a gatekeeper in the process of EU accession, which speaks on behalf of the fact that the mega-project undertaken by Gruevski was not only plainly risky, but completely counterintuitive, when seen from the perspective of the Europeanization process of the country. Bilateral relations between Greece and North Macedonia deteriorated rapidly, and the EU agenda started to fall behind, although the pro-EU and pro-NATO narrative was strategically kept. The development of events led to a significant loss of political leverage of the EU in the domestic political arena, which could not effectively handle a situation that started spiraling out of control, which in turn contributed to further loss of leverage and obvious decrease in support of the EU accession process, especially related to a possible trade off and concessions in the name dispute. Bieber (2015: 349) rightfully concludes that "It is no surprise that the regime that has responded least to the external legitimacy dynamic is North Macedonia, which has been confronted with greater obstacles towards EU accession than Serbia or Montenegro due to the Greek veto over the name issue." It seemed that the EU's conditionality did not function at the time being, in a situation where domestic costs were raised via an effective

identity intervention, spurred by the dissatisfaction caused by the impotence of the EU and NATO to solve the problem of North Macedonia's accession in both organizations. Domestic costs were strategically raised in a sphere that is by default very sensitive, the sphere of ethnic and national identity, with an additional challenge being that the EU has no effective way of tackling bilateral disputes except via its neighborly relations policy which is based on an international law principle which has been criticized for its lack of clarity and inconsistencies in interpretation (Basheska 2015). Moreover, the EU cannot directly address or dispute processes of nation building, aside from warning a specific country of its possible consequences in international and regional politics via diplomatic channels or by indirectly making the settlement of disputes with neighboring countries a condition for advancement of candidate countries, which in reality puts the candidate countries in a rather asymmetrical position apropos countries which are already members. A stark contrast was created between the "potent and mighty" government of Nikola Gruevski, able to undertake mega projects and freely express the complete opulence of the Macedonian national identity, and the confused international actors who were not certain how to combat the increasing gap between North Macedonia and Greece, and at the same time keep the Europeanization discourse in the country alive and at least minimally legitimate. However, the behavior of domestic political elites, that "trapped" international community actors between a rock and a hard place would have been impossible without the systemic state capture performed by VMRO-DPMNE.

## 5 Domestic Conditions and the Democratic Backsliding Mechanism – An Attempt at State Capture

North Macedonia falls into the group of countries that "evolved" from semi-consolidated democracies to a hybrid semi-authoritarian regime in a time-frame of less than a decade (Freedom House 2018). The democratic backsliding of the country, as a part of a regional trend in Southeast Europe, happened through very specific mechanisms of control, imposed by one political elite, over the main economic, political, social and, not the least important, informational flows in society. Recognized as state capture, the phenomenon of "tight-gripping" all societal spheres, from the media and the judiciary to the economy and the public administration, refers to a "situation where powerful individuals, institutions, companies or groups within or outside a country use corruption to shape a nation's policies, legal environment and economy to benefit their own private interests" (Transparency International 2009: 43).

Additionally, state capture is frequently related to “any group or social strata, external to the state, that seizes decisive influence over state institutions and policies for its own interests and against the public good” (Pesic 2007: 1) or “the process of obtaining, or capturing, state regulatory authority without democratic authorization” (Bracking 2018: 170).

The problem of state capture hides two aspects that closely intertwine: the thin line between managing political processes and mishandling them, and the problem of providing sound proof that a certain political elite is misusing resources, positions and influence for its own gain. Although North Macedonia went through several serious political crises during the governance of VMRO-DPMNE (the May Agreement in 2007, violence in the Parliament in 2012, problematic elections in both 2011 and 2014), nothing implied that the general public will get firsthand evidence of how state capture functions in detail. Namely, in 2015, the leader of the opposition SDSM party, Zoran Zaev, started publicly disclosing wiretapped audio materials (colloquially known as “bombs”) that were in fact telephone conversations between high government officials. The materials were a result of a systemic and illegal wiretapping of more than 20000 people in the country, with the audio files being stolen by whistleblowers and handed over to the opposition for public disclosure. The audio files revealed massive and systemic abuse of state funds, positions and influence in the media and the judiciary during the electoral and pre-electoral processes, as well as plain corruptive schemes based on extractive economy with the single goal of turning public funds into private ones.

Media trouble in the Republic of North Macedonia started as early as 2011, when the largest and most influential pro-opposition TV channel, named A1, was closed by financial authorities, and its owner Velija Ramkovski was arrested, tried and later sent to jail for financial mishandling. By eliminating one of the main pro-opposition informational influences in the country, the government led by Gruevski pushed the odds in its favor when it came to media dominance. However, this was only the beginning of what became a systemic corruption of media to work in favor of the government, which the wiretapped materials displayed in all of its intensity. On one hand, the audio files displayed direct relations between editors of the most influential TV outlets and the chief of the secret police as well as ministers in the government, and on the other hand such actions were accompanied by systematic persecution of pro-opposition journalists, the most two infamous cases being the trial of Tomislav Kežarovski and the arrest of Zoran Božinovski. Having in mind that pro-opposition journalists were the major target of the massive wiretapping, it comes as no surprise that the direct pressure on journalists was accompanied by constant accusations of plotting against the government and undermining

the ruling elites in their efforts to reform the country (Marušić in Keil 2018: 70). Nevertheless, the media landscape gradually changed in favor of the elites in power, accompanied by increasingly worrying tones on the media situation in North Macedonia from international organizations and domestic analysts and journalists, who experienced increasing pressure by the government. The situation culminated in 2016, when Freedom House decided to change its score for media freedoms in North Macedonia from “partly free” to “not free” (Freedom House 2016), while in only eight years North Macedonia fell on the World Freedom of the Press index from 46th place in 2006 to 123rd place in 2014 (Reporters without borders 2018). In sum, all indicators pointed to thorough informational control and media capture, a situation where major media outlets worked in favor of the ruling parties, while opposition journalists were put under pressure, direct physical aggression and were even jailed.

The judiciary is another vital sphere that was effectively put under complete governmental control during the reign of the government led by VMRO-DPMNE. Being a constant weak spot of the Macedonian political system, its credibility was further devastated when “wiretapped phone conversations that were leaked revealed serious, worrying flaws in the operation and the management of the judiciary in regard to political and party influence, corruption, clientelism and the like” (Preshova 2018: 3). International organizations, especially the European Commission, in a series of progress reports on the country, in a very diplomatic manner expressed concerns over “judiciary backsliding”, pointing to direct culprits in a situation where “achievements of the last decade’s reforms are being undermined by real and potential political interference in the work of the judiciary” (European Commission 2015b). However, such mild language stood in complete contrast to what was happening in reality. Although political interference of the political elites is nothing new in the Macedonian political context, the wiretapped materials vividly exhibited direct elections of judges via pressure of the ruling party and the secret police, filtering “politically adequate” judges via a system of parallel lists, as well as direct interference in major cases and their outcome in the courts. All elements contributed to a complete submission of the judicial system to the ruling elite, regardless of the constant efforts to reform the judicial system, obviously to no avail.

Effective state capture is impossible without eliminating any form of political opposition or at least making sure that the given opposition has little or no chance at winning the elections (Lodge 2006: 14). Blocking any possible alternative for the citizens is the fundamental mechanism for staying in power and exercising perpetual control over all societal spheres. Indications that something is wrong with the electoral process in the country came as early as 2011,



but international organizations started expressing their suspicions more intensely from 2015. Freedom House lowered the score on the electoral process from 3.25 in 2015 to 3.50 in 2015, expressing “concern over the accuracy of the voter registry, the inadequate separation between the ruling party and the state prior to the elections, and overwhelming media bias in favor of VMRO-DPMNE and its presidential candidate during the campaign” (Freedom House 2018). The EC generally stood by the same line of argumentation, going even a step further by pointing to “manipulation of the voter list, vote buying, voter intimidation, including threats against civil servants and companies, and preventing voters from casting their votes” (European Commission 2015b). Wiretapped materials proved that these indications were just the tip of the iceberg, with high officials being directly involved in rigging parliamentary elections, electoral fraud, vote buying as well as issuing IDs to persons with fake addresses in the capital in return for votes.

Electoral frauds were accompanied by massive control over state administration. Džankić summarizes that “despite the legislative measures that have been introduced in order to prevent the influence of political parties on public administration, malpractice in recruitment in Macedonia is persistent” (Džankić 2018: 93). This meant that during its years in power VMRO-DPMNE effectively captured the administrative body of the state through three mechanisms: massive employment of loyalists, relocation of pro-opposition public officers and effective blockage of the principle of equitable representation for minorities with only nominal respect for this principle (Džankić 2018: 93). The benefits of such excessive control over the public administration are at least twofold: wide-ranging control over all administrative processes in the country as well as increasing the army of voters through the mechanism of existential dependence on the party in power.

Contrary to popular opinion, the public sector in North Macedonia is not massive compared to the EU average, extending to 6,26% of the overall population compared to the EU's average of 9,96% (Gocevski and Maleska-Sachmarovska 2017: 13). However, the politicization of the public administration and the public sector has been one of the long-lasting weak spots of the Macedonian state. The frequent changes of power in the period between 1991 and 2006 disabled massive waves of employment in public administration by just one political center of power. Nevertheless, eleven consecutive years in power (2006–2017) enabled VMRO-DPMNE to develop completely new methods of recruitment and control of public administration, deploying a number of innovations that ultimately lead to massive misuse of public employees for party and personal goals, which was also confirmed by the wiretapped materials released by the opposition. A number of international organizations in the



period of governance of Gruevski's administration issued warnings regarding both the constant rise in the number of employees in the public sector as well as the complete dependence of the employments not on formal criteria, but on political orientation of the candidates. Freedom House (2015), in its annual report on North Macedonia, directly pointed out that "membership in a party within the ruling coalition is often an informal precondition for employment in the public sector". A year earlier, the European Commission came up with a similar finding stating that "politicization of the public administration, at both central and local level, is a serious concern" (European Commission 2014: 2). It was a public secret that all employments in the public administration must be initially approved by political party committees, which was an already established practice in the country ever since the introduction of the multi-party system. The constant efforts to reform the public administration did not in fact alter the practice of political "filtering" of public administration employees through party sieves.

Additionally, Gruevski's political establishment deployed innovative tactics for both employing and control over public administration. Regarding employments, the methods of employing prior to elections was a constant occurrence, accompanied with inflation of the public administration through the creation of new posts on social or political grounds (European Commission 2014: 8). The position of the socially endangered layers of society was misused under the cover of socially sensitive rhetoric, where public administration posts were opened for socially marginalized citizens, which completely contradicted the normative standards of employment in public administration based on education, experience and competences (Najchevska 2013). Another method that was supposed to spur a wave of populist support prior to elections was the transformation of temporary into permanent employments in the public administration whereas "the declared commitment to transparency, accountability and merit in public administration has been compromised by ad-hoc measures allowing public employment as a social measure or the mass conversion of temporary staff to permanent status" (European Commission 2015a: 12). Such measures had only one goal, and that is to extend the number of public servants, dependent on the informal political network of the governing political elite, thus providing broad support for Gruevski's regime.

Moreover, the political control and misuse of the public administration did not stop with the process of employment of public servants. On the contrary, the broadening of the public sector had an *ultima ratio*, which was to recruit new voters for any possible upcoming elections. Although this was also a public secret for a long time, it was finally confirmed by the wiretapping scandal in 2015. The audio materials revealed highly positioned political figures setting up

elaborate schemes of voter recruitment through managerial staff of public enterprises that should have been in charge of submitting lists of possible VMRO-DPMNE voters for any upcoming elections (YouTube 2015). The participants in these illegal activities even reveal names of state institutions where such elaborate arrangements were in effect already. In this regard the misuse of the public administration was twofold, to say the least. Besides the complete control over the recruitment process, Gruevski's administration also tried to establish a system of complete political control over the public administration in order to secure consequent electoral victories, under the rhetoric of the constant reform of the public administration.

This rough sketch of the state capture mechanism explains the inefficiency of the Europeanization process in a situation of complete control of one elite over all spheres of state and society. The illusion that VMRO-DPMNE is invincible in the country significantly raised the leverage of the party in the bargaining process with the international actors. This constantly gave them the tactical advantage of working out privileges or acts of toleration by actors of the international community in exchange for minimal efforts in reform and attempts at furthering the process of Europeanization. In addition to this, informational control over society enabled the ruling party and Gruevski to manipulate information apropos the EU and NATO in the desired direction, creating a very strong anti-EU sentiment when needed and easily transferring the responsibility for the failure of the country to external factors. However, from the perspective of the Europeanization process, the behavior of domestic political elites completely damaged the political leverage of the country within the very process, given that both the antiquization and the increasingly obvious state capture lowered the negotiating capacity of North Macedonia, and given that Greece easily presented North Macedonia in front of international stakeholders as both a provoking side and as an undemocratic country with a serious lack of capacity to fulfill even fundamental democratic standards. As much as the position of the government led by Gruevski looked solid internally, the less leverage in front of international actors it had, the lesser were the possibilities for any progress in the accession to the EU and NATO. However, this was the very essence of the leverage trap that Gruevski set for the actors from the international community. In fact, seen from the present perspective, it appears that the goal of Gruevski's government was not in fact at any moment accession to the EU and NATO. The inability of the EU and NATO to contribute towards the name dispute and effectively put an end to the already effective state capture was used as a sort of "counter-leverage" on their side apropos which Gruevski's position was defined both as righteous and morally strong. By transferring complete responsibility towards the EU and NATO

structures via a very potent propaganda machinery, he in fact used the imperfections of the accession procedures to advertise himself and his own political agenda. It seemed that the more the pressure increased on Gruevski's regime, the more it benefited domestically.

In addition, media capture also enabled the strategic raising of the costs for domestic actors of the Europeanization process through various mechanisms, while control over the judiciary and public administration was utilized to create the illusion of reforms required by the EU, even in situations where the process did not really require such changes. Adjacent to that, the required reforms in the media sphere and the judiciary were completely neglected, while the process of Europeanization at times stopped completely. This stalemate was further stimulated through another intervening variable in the process – the influence of actors that strongly opposed the process in the country, such as Russia, and to a lesser extent Turkey.

## **6 Breaking the Stalemate – External and Domestic Drivers of Europeanization – Pressure from Above, Pressure from Below**

The wiretapping scandal in North Macedonia began in 2015 with the leader of the SDSM opposition party, Zoran Zaev, publicly displaying audio materials indicating criminal activities on the part of government officials. This led to a full-scale political crisis in the country and a complete institutional blockade spurring mass protests on the streets of the capital as well as other cities in the country. In such a turbulent political situation, once again, domestic political actors were unable to agree on a common solution to the crisis, and thus the already tested template was implemented, i.e. inviting the EU and the USA as mediators and facilitators in the process of resolving the crisis. This led to the so called “Pržino process”, where the EU for the first time had the leading role, unlike in previous attempts at mediating during political impasses in the country (Markovikj and Damjanovski 2018). During the entirety of the duration of the political crisis, and of the efforts to bring the political process back on track, the EU changed its traditional role of offering incentives to political actors for overcoming the crisis, and switched to a more direct approach, even bringing in a mediator and three MEPs to work directly with the political parties in building confidence among the actors of the process. The crisis was of such magnitude that the EU's efforts were (as on previous occasions) paired with efforts on part of the US administration, while the resolution of the crisis took two years to accomplish. The fundamental blueprint for the resolution of the crisis was the so-called “Priebe report”, a document detecting the major

flaws of the political and legal system of the country, entailing also a design for further reforms in major societal spheres (European Commission 2015c).

However, the eventual moving of the Europeanization process of the country from a dead spot to a gradual progress would not have been possible without “pressure from below”. The political crisis gave birth to a series of civil society movements that strongly opposed the Gruevski government. Social movements multiplied by the day, involving different social strata and even political energies. The initial spark was the formation of the Student Plenum, a students’ protest movement against the Law on higher education adopted by the parliament under Gruevski’s political steering. Dissatisfaction started to spread out to a level of massive societal anti-governmental movement under the name Colorful revolution. Everyday protests and civil unrest slowly started to change the political landscape of the country, creating additional challenges for the weary political regime whose stability has been shaken in its fundament.

The end game of the two-year crisis in the country concluded with one last attempt on part of Gruevski’s government to avoid the inevitable fall. Under a lot of direct political pressure, most of it coming directly from EU, USA and NATO officials, VMRO-DPMNE was unable to form a government after winning the most seats in the parliament during the parliamentary election in North Macedonia in December 2016. Undermining its own coalition potential by running an excessively ethnocentric campaign, the winning party in the elections was unable to find an Albanian counterpart to form the needed majority. What followed was the attempt to block the parliament’s work and the election of a new parliamentary speaker through a specific form of filibustering, accompanied by organized counter-protests by civil society movements close to Gruevski’s regime. These protests ended in the dramatic events of 27th April 2017, when a group of protesters rallied the parliament, trying to stop the election of a new parliamentary speaker. The attempted coup d’état ended with several MPs being physically attacked and one being very seriously injured. However, the attempted blockade of the change of power in the country concluded as a very unsuccessful attempt, and the new government, led by the social-democrats, was formed in May 2017.

The change of government in North Macedonia in May 2017 altered the political climate in the country. The efforts of the EU to actively participate in the resolution of the political crisis were rewarded in the form of regained confidence of the public opinion in the country and regained trust in the positive influence of the EU on the rule of law in the country, accompanied by the instant decrease in the perception of Russia as having the greatest influence in the country to just 3.7% (Nechev and Markovikj 2018: 3). However, the

international community in the country, involving the EU as one of the main actors of the process, took a step forward by trying to finally remove the last obstacle in the country's Europeanization – the name dispute. Through a series of diplomatic efforts, the international community brokered the Prespa Agreement between the governments of Aleksis Tsipras and Zoran Zaev, which serves as a fundament for resolving the name dispute. The Prespa Agreement entails concessions on both sides, with the ultimate benefit for the country being joining NATO and the opening of the accession negotiations with the EU as soon as possible. However, joining the EU does not solely depend on the settled dispute between North Macedonia and Greece. In fact, categories like the rule of law, an independent judiciary and democratic reforms are just the tip of the iceberg of the requirements addressed to North Macedonia by the EU, whereas the delivery of these requirements is seriously put in question. The new government's lack of reforms in the judiciary and the public administration, the problematic relation between the judiciary and the executive power, and high-level corruption affairs such as the "Reket" extortion scandal, with the involvement of even the Special Public Prosecutor's office (Marušić 2019), present serious challenges to the process of opening the accession negotiations. These deficits are furthermore coupled with the unsuccessful referendum on accepting the new name of the country in September 2018 due to a very low turnout of 36.91% (Casule and Sekularac 2018), as well as the concessions made to the eight MPs from VMRO-DPMNE needed for the two-thirds majority in the parliament for the adoption of the Prespa Agreement (Chrysosgelos 2019). A number of the MPs were pardoned for the storming of the parliament in April 2017 in return for their votes, and some were even granted public bids for state-sponsored activities. In sum, NATO and EU accession are complex processes that require standards far beyond settlement of bilateral disputes, however, the main obstacle for North Macedonia has certainly been removed.

## 7 Conclusion

This article has shed light on the peculiar case of North Macedonia's Europeanization process. Building on a growing literature that emphasizes the importance of EU leverage and domestic factors for the differential impact of conditionality in the Western Balkans, our study demonstrates that in situations with low credibility of the membership perspective, the effectiveness of EU political conditionality becomes largely determined by domestic circumstances.

Our findings demonstrate how a political stalemate with power to block the accession process, such as the name dispute between Greece and North Macedonia, could seriously endanger the effectiveness of EU conditionality

mechanisms in existing candidate countries. In a situation when domestic political elites are ready to raise the domestic costs to the level that Europeanization becomes a very costly process, external influences in form of political isolation or possible rewards barely give results. As our Macedonian example shows, any attempt of the EU to work out political leverage in the country, was intercepted by requirements posted by domestic rent-seeking political elites in form of political demands to pressurize Greece on the name issue, in a situation where Greece had the power of veto, which made such political demands senseless. The inability to do so, was presented in North Macedonia as a failure of the EU to demonstrate political strength which deepened the “leverage trap” for the EU and enabled the illiberal elites to strengthen their state capture mechanisms. The Macedonian example has demonstrated that in such cases, any attempt at possible change of strategy gives very little result, unless a major political crisis occurs. Even if it does, then still a two-way pressure (from above and below) is needed to move the process of Europeanization forward by changing not the strategy, but the actors on the domestic political scene. Once a leverage trap is set for the EU, the only thing that can move the Europeanization process forward is change of political elites.

Although the recent developments in the country give the perception that North Macedonia is back on track in the Europeanization business, the process at the time of the writing of this article is still faced with many uncertainties. The Prespa agreement has been approved by the Greek Parliament in June 2018, while the commitment of the European Council to greenlight the start of the EU accession negotiations in October 2019 is still highly uncertain, mostly because of the reserves coming from France and the Netherlands concerning the enlargement process as well as the insufficient democratic reforms undertaken by North Macedonia. In this sense, the future of the Europeanization of North Macedonia will be defined by the outcomes in 2019. While the country is still among the regional leaders in EU rule adoption and has been forecasted as the first candidate country that could meet the accession criteria before 2023 (Bohmelt and Freyburg 2017), it is safe to assume that effective compliance with EU conditionality will be very much tied to the start of the accession negotiations and the prospects of a more credible accession path.

## References

- Alpan, B. and Diez, T. 2014. “The Devil is in the ‘Domestic’? European Integration Studies and the Limits of Europeanization in Turkey,” *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 16(1): 1–10.



- Anastasakis, O. 2005. "The Europeanization of the Balkans," *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 12: 77–88.
- Baczynska, G. and Emmott, R. 2018. "EU Puts Off Balkan Membership Talks as France Demands Reforms," *Reuters*, 26 June 2018, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-eu-balkans/eu-puts-off-balkan-membership-talks-as-france-demands-reforms-idUSKBN1JM14M> (accessed 15 November 2018).
- Basheska, E. 2015. "The Position of the Good Neighborliness Principle in International and EU Law," in D. Kochenov and E. Basheska (eds.), *Good Neighborliness in the European Legal Context* (Leiden and Boston: Brill):24–54.
- Basheska, E. and Kochenov, D. 2015. "Thanking the Greeks: The Crisis of the Rule of Law in EU Enlargement Regulation," *Southeastern Europe* 39: 392–414.
- Bechev, D. 2017. *Rival Power: Russia in Southeast Europe* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press).
- Bechev, D. 2020. "Russia: Playing a Weak Hand Well," in F. Bieber and N. Tzifakis (eds), *The Western Balkans in the World. Linkages and Relations with Non-Western Countries* (Basingstoke: Routledge).
- Bertelsmann Transformation Index, (BTI). 2018. *Macedonia Country Report*, available at: <https://www.bti-project.org/en/reports/country-reports/detail/itc/mkd/ity/2018/itr/ecse/> (accessed 4 January 2020).
- Bieber, F. 2018. "Patterns of Competitive Authoritarianism in the Western Balkans," *East European Politics*, 34(3): 337–354.
- Bieber, F. and Tzifakis, N. 2019. "The Western Balkans as a Geopolitical Chessboard? Myths, Realities and Policy Options," *Policy Brief* (Graz: Balkans in Europe Policy Advisory Group), available at: [https://biepag.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/The\\_Western\\_Balkans\\_as\\_a\\_Geopolitical\\_Chessboard.pdf](https://biepag.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/The_Western_Balkans_as_a_Geopolitical_Chessboard.pdf) (accessed 9 August 2019).
- Bliznakovski, J. 2017. "When State Capture and Myths of Victimization Meet: the Story of a Party's Attempt to Prevent Democratic Alternation of Power," *Perspectives: Political Analyses and Commentary – Southeast Europe – Captured States in the Balkan* 3: 59–62. available at: [https://www.boell.de/sites/default/files/perspectives\\_-\\_09-2017\\_-\\_web.pdf?dimension1=division\\_osoe](https://www.boell.de/sites/default/files/perspectives_-_09-2017_-_web.pdf?dimension1=division_osoe). (accessed 23 November 2017).
- Böhmelt, T. and Freyburg, T. 2013. "The Temporal Dimension of the Credibility of EU Conditionality and Candidate States' Compliance with the *Acquis Communautaire*, 1998–2009," *European Union Politics*, 14(2): 250–272.
- Böhmelt, T. and Freyburg, T. 2017. "Forecasting Candidate States' Compliance with EU Accession Rules, 2017–2050," *Journal of European Public Policy*, 25(11): 1667–1685.
- Börzel, T.A. and Pamuk, Y. 2012. "Pathologies of Europeanisation: Fighting Corruption in the Southern Caucasus," *West European Politics*, 35(1): 79–97.
- Borzel, T. and Risse, T. 2003. "Conceptualizing the Domestic Impact of Europe," in K. Featherstone and C. Radaelli (eds.), *The politics of Europeanization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press): 57–80.



- Bracking, S. 2018. "Corruption and State Capture: What can Citizens do," *Daedalus, the Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 3: 169–183.
- Casule, K. and Sekularac, I. 2018. "Macedonia Referendum Fails to Reach Turnout Threshold: Election Commission," *Reuters*, 30 September 2018, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-macedonia-referendum-turnout/macedonia-name-referendum-fails-to-reach-turnout-threshold-election-commission-idUSKC NiMAoX2>. (accessed 11 August 2019).
- Checkel, J.T. 2005. "International Institutions and Socialization in Europe: Introduction and Framework," *International Organization*, 59(4): 801–826.
- Chrysogelos, A. 2019. "Macedonia's Name Change Deal is a Triumph for the EU, but Worrying for Democracy," *Time*, 22 January 2019, available at: <https://time.com/5508640/prespes-macedonia-greece-eu-democracy/>. (accessed 14 August 2019).
- Coman, R. 2014. "Quo Vadis Judicial Reforms? The Quest for Judicial Independence in Central and Eastern Europe," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 66(6): 892–924.
- Council of the European Union. 2006. "Presidency Conclusions, Brussels European Council 15/16 December 2005, 15914/1/05 REV 1," available at [https://www.esiweb.org/pdf/macedonia\\_Council%20conclusions-2005-12-Brussels.pdf](https://www.esiweb.org/pdf/macedonia_Council%20conclusions-2005-12-Brussels.pdf) (accessed 4 January 2020).
- Damjanovski, I. 2014. *Public opinion and Macedonia's accession to the European Union 2004–2014* (Skopje: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and IDSCS), available at [https://www.kas.de/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=068dad7b-02c0-fcbe-f02e-c14a8f8d7e2e&groupId=252038](https://www.kas.de/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=068dad7b-02c0-fcbe-f02e-c14a8f8d7e2e&groupId=252038) (accessed 4 January 2020).
- Dimitrova, A. 2016. "The EU's Evolving Enlargement Strategies: Does Tougher Conditionality Open the Door for Further Enlargement?" (MAXCAP: Berlin), available at [http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/kfgeu/maxcap/system/files/maxcap\\_wp\\_30.pdf](http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/kfgeu/maxcap/system/files/maxcap_wp_30.pdf) (accessed 4 January 2019).
- Džankić J., Keil S. and Kmezić M. (eds.). 2019a. *The Europeanization of the Western Balkans: a Failure of EU Conditionality?* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan).
- Džankić J., Keil S. and Kmezić M. 2019b. "Introduction: The Europeanisation of the Western Balkans," in J. Džankić, S. Keil and M. Kmezić (eds.), *The Europeanization of the Western Balkans: a Failure of EU Conditionality?* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan): 1–14.
- Džankić, J. 2018. "Capturing Contested States: Structural Mechanisms of Power Reproduction in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro," *Southeastern Europe* 42: 83–106.
- Džankić, J. and Keil, S. 2019. "The Europeanisation of Contested States: Comparing Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Montenegro," in J. Džankić, S. Keil and M. Kmezić (eds.), *The Europeanization of the Western Balkans: a Failure of EU Conditionality?* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan): 181–206.

- Dzolai, M. and Nechev, Z. 2018. "Bilateral Disputes Conundrum: Accepting the Past and Finding Solutions for the Western Balkans," *Policy Brief* (Graz: Balkans in Europe Policy Advisory Group), available at: <https://biepag.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Bilateral-Disputes-Conundrum-Accepting-the-Past-and-Finding-Solutions-for-the-Western-Balkans.pdf> (accessed 9 August 2019).
- Ekiert, G., Kubik, J. and Vachudova, M.A. 2007. "Democracy in the Post-Communist World: An Unending Quest?" *East European Politics*, 21(1): 7–30.
- Elbasani, A. (ed.). 2013. *European Integration and Transformation in the Western Balkans: Europeanisation or Business as Usual?* (Abingdon: Routledge).
- European Commission, EC. 2005. "2005 Enlargement Strategy Paper, Communication from the Commission, COM (2005) 561 final," available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2005:0561:FIN:EN:PDF> (accessed 4 January 2020).
- European Commission, EC. 2014. "Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2014–2015, Communications from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, COM(2014) 700 final," available at: [https://www.ab.gov.tr/files/000etkinlikler/2014\\_enlargement\\_strategy\\_paper.pdf](https://www.ab.gov.tr/files/000etkinlikler/2014_enlargement_strategy_paper.pdf) (accessed 4 January 2020).
- European Commission, EC. 2012. "Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2012–2013, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, COM(2012) 600 final," available at [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key\\_documents/2012/package/strategy\\_paper\\_2012\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/strategy_paper_2012_en.pdf) (accessed 4 January 2020).
- European Commission, EC. 2013. "Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges 2013–2014, Communications from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, COM(2013) 700 final," available at [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key\\_documents/2013/package/strategy\\_paper\\_2013\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2013/package/strategy_paper_2013_en.pdf) (accessed 4 January 2020).
- European Commission, EC. 2015a. "EU Enlargement Strategy, COM(2015) 611 final," available at [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20151110\\_strategy\\_paper\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20151110_strategy_paper_en.pdf) (accessed 4 January 2020).
- European Commission, EC. 2015b. "The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Report 2015, Brussels, SWD(2015) 212 final," available at [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key\\_documents/2015/20151110\\_report\\_the\\_former\\_yugoslav\\_republic\\_of\\_macedonia.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2015/20151110_report_the_former_yugoslav_republic_of_macedonia.pdf) (accessed 4 January 2020).
- European Commission, EC. 2015c. "The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Recommendations of the Senior Experts' Group on Systemic Rule of Law Issues Relating to the Communications Interception Revealed in Spring 2015," available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/news\\_corner/news/news-files/20150619\\_recommendations\\_of\\_the\\_senior\\_experts\\_group.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/news_corner/news/news-files/20150619_recommendations_of_the_senior_experts_group.pdf) (accessed 24 November 2018).

- European Commission, EC. 2016a. "2016 Communication on EU Enlargement Policy, COM (2016) 715 final," available at [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20161109\\_strategy\\_paper\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20161109_strategy_paper_en.pdf) (accessed 4 January 2020).
- European Commission, EC. 2016b. "The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2016 Report, COM (2016) 715 final," available at [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key\\_documents/2016/20161109\\_report\\_the\\_former\\_yugoslav\\_republic\\_of\\_macedonia.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2016/20161109_report_the_former_yugoslav_republic_of_macedonia.pdf) (accessed 4 January 2020).
- European Commission, EC. 2018. "A Credible Enlargement Perspective for and Enhanced EU Engagement with the Western Balkans, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Strasbourg, COM(2018) 65 final," available at [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-credible-enlargement-perspective-western-balkans\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-credible-enlargement-perspective-western-balkans_en.pdf) (accessed 4 January 2020).
- Fink-Hafner D. and Lajh D. 2012. "Europeanization in South East Europe," in D. Sternad and T. Döring (eds), *Handbook of Doing Business in South East Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan).
- Freedom House. 2015. "Macedonia: Country profile," available at: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2015/macedonia> (accessed 13 August 2019]
- Freedom House. 2016. "Macedonia: Country profile," available at: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/2016/macedonia> (accessed 25 November 2018).
- Freedom House. 2018. "Macedonia: Country profile," available at: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/2018/macedonia> (accessed 24 November 2018).
- Freyburg, T. and Richter, S. 2010. "National Identity Matters: The Limited Impact of EU Political Conditionality in the Western Balkans," *Journal of European Public Policy*, 17(2): 263–281.
- Georgievska-Jakovleva, L. 2014. "The Project Skopje 2014 between Social Cohesion and Social Disintegration," *Kultura/Culture* 8: 43–56.
- Gerovska Mitev, M. 2013. "Europeanization of Social Inclusion Policy in Macedonia – Trends, Challenges and Potential Benefits," *Social Policy & Administration*, 47(2): 182–198.
- Gocevski, D. and Mileska-Sacharmovska, N. 2017. "Javni Sektor u Makedoniji – Odnos Zaposlenih u Makedonskom Javnom Sektoru sa Javnim Sektorima u Zemljama EU i Zapadnog Balkana," *Administracija i Javne Politike*, 2(3): 5–18.
- Graan, A. 2013. "Counterfeiting the Nation? Skopje 2014 and the Politics of Nation Branding in Macedonia," *Cultural Antropology*, 28(1): 161–179.
- Graan, A. and Takovski, A. 2017. "Learning from Skopje 2014: Architectural Spectacle in the 21st Century," *LA+: Interdisciplinary Journal of Landscape Architecture* 5: 66–73.

- Grabbe, H. 2006. *The EU's Transformative Power Europeanization Through Conditionality in Central and Eastern Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan).
- Grabbe, H. 2014. "Six Lessons of Enlargement Ten Years On: The EU's Transformative Power in Retrospect and Prospect," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 52: 40–56.
- Hille, P. and Knill, C. 2006. "It's the Bureaucracy, Stupid: The Implementation of the Acquis Communautaire in EU Candidate Countries, 1999–2003," *European Union Politics*, 7(4): 531–552.
- Hillion, C. 2010. "The Creeping Nationalisation of the EU Enlargement Policy," *SIEPS*, 6, available at [http://sieps.hemsida.eu/sites/default/files/2010\\_6\\_.pdf](http://sieps.hemsida.eu/sites/default/files/2010_6_.pdf) (accessed 4 January 2020).
- Holleran, M. 2014. "Show Us Your Country: Macedonia's Capital Transformed," *Dissent*, 61(3): 20–24.
- Jordanovska, M. 2015. "True Cost of Skopje 2014 Revealed," *BalkanInsight*, 27 July 2015, available at: <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/true-cost-of-skopje-2014-revealed> (accessed 24 November 2018).
- Jozwiak, R. 2019. "EU Delays Decision on North Macedonia, Albania Membership Talks," *Radio Free Europe*, 8 June 2019, available at: <https://www.rferl.org/a/eu-delays-decision-on-north-macedonia-albania-membership-talks/30006858.html> (accessed 10 August 2019).
- Keil, S. 2013. "Europeanization, State-Building and Democratization in the Western Balkans," *Nationalities Papers*, 41(3): 343–353.
- Keil, S. 2018. "The Business of State Capture and the Rise of Authoritarianism in Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia," *Southeastern Europe* 42: 59–82.
- Klekovski, S. 2011. *Macedonia Name Dispute: Public Views in Macedonia* (Skopje: MCMS and IDSCS), available at <https://mcms.mk/images/docs/2011/macedonia-name-dispute-2011.pdf> (accessed 4 January 2020).
- Kochenov, D. 2014. "Overestimating Conditionality," *University of Groningen Faculty of Law Research Paper Series*, No. 03. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004259140\\_031](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004259140_031).
- Koziura, K. 2014. "The Struggle Over Memory Hidden in the Contemporary Cityscape: the Example of Skopje 2014, Macedonia," *Journal of Urban Ethnology* 12: 103–118.
- Kubiena, M. 2012. "Skopje 2014 – Musealizing the City, Re-Inventing History," *The Western Balkan Policy Review*, 2(1): 78–99.
- Knezović, S. and Zeneli, V. 2018. *Europeanization in a Difficult Environment: A Comparative Analysis of Croatia and Albania*, *Southeastern Europe*, 42(2): 199–223.
- Lodge, T. 2018. "State Capture: Theoretical Considerations" in M. Merriotti and G. Masterson, G. (eds.), *State Capture in Africa – Old Threats, New Packaging* (Johannesburg: EISA): 13–28.
- Lough, R. 2019. "Size Matters: France Deflates EU Enlargement Aspirations," *Reuters*, 2 July 2019, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-eu-enlargement/size->

- matters-france-deflates-eu-enlargement-aspirations-idUSKCN1TX2AA. (accessed 9 August 2019).
- Magen, A. and Morlino, L. (eds.). 2009. *International Actors, Democratization and the Rule of Law: Anchoring Democracy?* (New York: Routledge).
- March, J.G. and Olsen, J.P. 1989. *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics* (New York: Free Press).
- Markovic, N. and Damjanovski, I. 2010. "Macedonia Between Identity Politics and EU Integration – New Paradigms, Old Mental Maps," paper presented at the 15th World Convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities (ASN) – Columbia University, 15–17 April 2010.
- Markovikj, N. and Damjanovski, I. 2018. "The EU's Democracy Promotion meets Informal Politics: The Case of Leaders' Meetings in the Republic of Macedonia," *REGION: Regional Studies of Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia*, 7(2): 71–96.
- Marušić, S.J. 2019. "Extortion Affair Rocks North Macedonia's Special Prosecution," *Balkan Insight*, 9 July 2019, available at: <https://balkaninsight.com/2019/07/19/extortion-affair-rocks-north-macedonias-special-prosecution/> (accessed 9 August 2019).
- Mattioli, F. 2013. "Unchanging Boundaries: the Reconstruction of Skopje and the Politics of Heritage," *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 20(6): 1–17.
- Mattli, W. 1999. *The Logic of Regional Integration: Europe and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Mendelski, M. 2015. "The EU's Pathological Power: The Failure of External Rule of Law Promotion in South Eastern Europe," *Southeastern Europe*, 39(3): 318–346.
- Mendelski, M. 2016. "Europeanization and the Rule of Law: Towards a Pathological Turn," *Southeastern Europe* 40: 346–384.
- Moravcsik, A. and Vachudova, M.A. 2003. "National Interests, State Power and EU Enlargement," *East European Politics and Societies*, 17(1): 42–57.
- Najchevska, M. 2013. "Zakonite ne Vazat za Gruevski," *A1On.mk*, 14 April 2013, available at: <https://a1on.mk/macedonia/najchevska-zakonite-ne-vazhat-za-nikola/> (accessed 13 August 2019).
- Nechev, Z. and Markovikj, N. 2018. *The European Union on the Verge of Bouncing Back in Macedonia* (Skopje: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and IDSCS), available at: [https://www.kas.de/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=b5d61685-c127-7300-1b89-cc9bec006e20&groupId=252038](https://www.kas.de/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=b5d61685-c127-7300-1b89-cc9bec006e20&groupId=252038) (accessed 14 August 2019).
- Nechev, Z. and Nikolovski, I. 2020. "North Macedonia: A Fertile Ground for External Influences" in F. Bieber and N. Tzifakis (eds), *The Western Balkans in the World. Linkages and Relations with Non-Western Countries* (Basingstoke: Routledge): 126–145.
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization, (NATO). 2008. "Bucharest Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the

- North Atlantic Council in Bucharest on 3 April 2008," available at: [https://www.nato.int/cps/us/natohq/official\\_texts\\_8443.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/us/natohq/official_texts_8443.htm) (accessed 22 November 2018).
- Noutcheva, G. 2015. "Societal Empowerment and Europeanization: Revisiting the EU's Impact on Democratization," *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 54(3): 691–708.
- Nuttall, C. 2018. "Euroscepticism Grows in Richer Western Balkans Countries," *Intel-liNews*, 14 July 2018, available at: <http://www.intellinews.com/euroscepticism-grows-in-richer-western-balkans-countries-125370/> (accessed 22 October 2018).
- Pech, L. 2016. "The EU as a Global Rule of Law Promoter: the Consistency and Effectiveness Challenges" *Asia Europe Journal* 14: 7–24.
- Perković, A.J. 2014. "The European Union and the Democratization Process of the Western Balkans A Critical Perspective," *Southeastern Europe* 38: 112–133.
- Pesic, V. 2007. "State Capture and Widespread Corruption in Serbia," *Working Document*, no.262, (Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies), available at: <http://aei.pitt.edu/11664/1/1478.pdf> (accessed 24 November 2018).
- Preshova, D. 2018. *Judicial Reforms in the Republic of Macedonia: Changes without Reforms* (Skopje: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and IDSCS). available at: [https://www.kas.de/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=eff71b02-c8df-c8ce-4753-de9c89964630&groupId=281657](https://www.kas.de/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=eff71b02-c8df-c8ce-4753-de9c89964630&groupId=281657) (accessed 4 January 2020).
- Presova, D., Damjanovski, I. and Nechev, Z. 2017. "The Effectiveness of the 'European model' of Judicial Independence in the Western Balkans: Judicial Councils as a Solution or a New Cause of Concern for Judicial Reforms," *Asser Institute CLEER Papers*, 1. (The Hague: Centre for the Law of EU External Relations), available at: [https://www.asser.nl/media/3475/cleer17-1\\_web.pdf](https://www.asser.nl/media/3475/cleer17-1_web.pdf) (accessed 4 January 2020).
- Radaelli, C. 2003. "The Europeanisation of Public Policy" in K. Featherstone and C. Radaelli, (eds), *The Politics of Europeanisation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press): 27–56.
- Radeljić, B. 2019. "Tolerating Semi-authoritarianism? Contextualising the EU's Relationship with Serbia and Kosovo," in J. Dzankić, S. Keil and M. Kmezić M. (eds.), *The Europeanization of the Western Balkans: a Failure of EU Conditionality?* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan): 157–180.
- Reporters Without Borders. 2018. "World Press Freedom Index – Republic of Macedonia" available at: <https://rsf.org/en/republic-macedonia>. (accessed 25 November 2018).
- Risteska, M. 2013. "The Role of the EU in Promoting Good Governance in Macedonia: Towards Efficiency and Effectiveness or Deliberative Democracy?" *Nationalities Papers*, 41(3): 431–446.
- Schimmelfennig, F. and Sedelmeier, U. 2004. "Governance by Conditionality: EU Rule Transfer to the Candidate Countries of Central and Eastern Europe," *Journal of European Public Policy*, 11(4): 661–679.



- Schimmelfennig, F. and Sedelmeier, U. (eds.). 2005. *The Europeanization of Central and Eastern Europe* (Ithaca and New York: Cornell University Press).
- Schimmelfennig, F., Engert, S. and Knobel, H. 2006. *International Socialization in Europe: European Organizations, Political Conditionality and Democratic Change* (Basinkstoke: Palgrave Macmillan).
- Sedelmeier, U. 2011. "Europeanisation in New Member and Candidate States," *Living Reviews in European Governance*, 6(1), available at: <http://www.livingreviews.org/lreg-2011-1> (accessed 26 November 2018).
- Slapin, J.B. 2015. "How European Union Membership Can Undermine the Rule of Law in Emerging Democracies," *West European Politics*, 38(3): 627–648.
- Slavov, A. 2015. "Democratic Consolidation in Southeast Europe – A Step Forward?," *Southeastern Europe* 39: 347–368.
- Smilov, D. 2006. "EU Enlargement and the Constitutional Principle of Judicial Independence," in W. Sadurski, A. Czarnota, and M. Krygier, (eds.), *Spreading Democracy and the Rule of Law? The Impact of EU Enlargement for the Rule of Law, Democracy and Constitutionalism in Post-Communist Legal Orders* (Dordrecht: Springer): 312–334.
- Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, of the other part. 2004. *Official Journal L* 84, 20.3.2004, 13–197. available at: [https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/saa03\\_01\\_en.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/saa03_01_en.pdf) (accessed 4 January 2020).
- Standard Eurobarometer. 2018. "The Views of Europeans on the European Union's Priorities, Spring 89" available at: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/44aab4f2-9abb-11e8-a408-01aa75ed71a1> (accessed 4 January 2020).
- Steunenberg B. and Dimitrova A.L. 2007. "Compliance in the EU Enlargement Process: The Limits of Conditionality," *European Integration online Papers*, 11 (5), available at: <http://eiop.or.at/eiop/pdf/2007-005.pdf> (accessed 10 November 2018).
- Subotić, J. 2010. "Explaining Difficult States, The Problems of Europeanization in Serbia," *East European Politics and Societies*, 24(4): 595–616.
- Transparency International. 2009. "The Anti-Corruption Plain Language Guide" (Berlin: Transparency International), available at: [https://www.transparency.org/files/content/corruptionqas/State\\_capture\\_an\\_overview\\_2014.pdf](https://www.transparency.org/files/content/corruptionqas/State_capture_an_overview_2014.pdf) (accessed 24 November 2018).
- United Nations. 1995. "Interim Accord," available at: [https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/MK\\_950913\\_Interim%20Accord%20between%20the%20Hellenic%20Republic%20and%20the%20FYROM.pdf](https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/MK_950913_Interim%20Accord%20between%20the%20Hellenic%20Republic%20and%20the%20FYROM.pdf) (accessed 22 November 2018).
- Vachudova, M.A. 2005. *Europe Undivided: Democracy, Leverage and Integration After Communism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).



- Vachudova, M.A. 2015. "External Actors and Regime Change: How Post-Communism Transformed Comparative Politics," *East European Politics and Societies*, 29(2): 519–530.
- Vachudova, M.A. 2019. "Enlargement and State Capture in the Western Balkans," in J. Dzankić, S. Keil and M. Kmezić (eds.), *The Europeanization of the Western Balkans: a Failure of EU Conditionality?* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan): 63–86.
- Vangeli, A. 2011. "Nation Building Macedonian Style: the Origins and the Effects of the so-called Antiquization in Macedonia," *Nationalities Papers*, 39(1): 13–32.
- Yilmaz, G. 2014. "EU Conditionality Is Not the Only Game in Town! Domestic Drivers of Turkey's Europeanization," *Turkish Studies*, 15(2): 303–321.
- YouTube. 2015. "Mile Janakieski I Vlatko Mijalkov Dogovaraat kako da Ucenuvaat Vraboteni vo Carinskata Uprava," *YouTube*, 17 March 2015, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c35Y7jM7gkg> (accessed 13 August 2019).
- Zhelyazkova, A., Damjanovski, I., Nechev, Z. and Schimmelfennig, F. 2019. "European Union Conditionality in the Western Balkans: External Incentives and Europeanization," in J. Dzankić, S. Keil and M. Kmezić (eds.), *The Europeanization of the Western Balkans: a Failure of EU Conditionality?* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan): 15–37.

**Author Queries:**

AQ1: Please provide the completed Author Affiliation.

AQ2: Please provide the completed Author Affiliation.

## Book Reviews



Jože Pirjevec. *Tito and His Comrades* (Madison, USA: University of Wisconsin Press, 2018) 535 pp., ISBN 978-0-299-31770-6.

When Jože Pirjevec began work on this superb book about three decades ago, he originally thought in terms of writing a biography of Tito and, in this, it is preceded by at least fourteen previously published biographies of the Yugoslav leader in English alone. These include the official biography by Vladimir Dedijer (1953), a biography by Tito's erstwhile comrade, Milovan Djilas (1980), and classic biographies by Fitzroy MacLean (1957), Phyllis Auty (1970), and Jasper Ridley (1994). Other biographies have followed, including a recent biography of Tito written by Zagreb historians Ivo and Slavko Goldstein (2018) and awaiting translation into English. The sheer proliferation of studies of Tito and his era is a tribute to the extraordinary career of one of Eastern Europe's longest-lived rulers. But what the distinguished Slovene historian, Jože Pirjevec, has produced is much more than a stunning new biography of Josip Broz Tito. First published in Slovenian in 2011, with translations into four languages between 2012 and 2016<sup>1</sup> and now published also in English, this book is, in fact, a historical account of Yugoslavia in the era of Josip Broz Tito, including detailed discussions of the rivalry between Tito's close associates Aleksandar Ranković and Edward Kardelj, of issues related to the less developed republics, and of controversies surrounding the 1974 constitution, among other topics. In

1 Pirjevec, Jože. *Tito in tovariši* (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 2011), 712 pp.

Pirjevec, Jože. *Tito i drugovi*, trans. from Slovenian by Nina Sokol (Zagreb: Mozaik knjiga, 2012), 711 pp.

Pirjevec, Jože. *Tito i drugovi*, an adaptation of the Croatian translation, translation rights arranged by Plima Literary Agency (Beograd: Laguna, 2013), 564 pp.

Pirjevec, Jože. *Tito e i suoi compagni*, trans. from Slovenian by the author (Torino: Giulio Einaudi editore, 2015), 633 pp.

Pirjevec, Jože. *Tito. Die Biographie*, trans. from Slovenian by Klaus Detlef Olof (Munich: Verlag Antje Kunstmann GmbH, 2016), 600 pp.

Pirjevec, Jože. *Tito i drugovi*, Montenegrin edition based on the Serbian (Podgorica: Nova Pogjeda/Portal Analitika/Nova knjiga/Universal Capital Bank, 2016), 720 pp.

researching this book, Pirjevec made use of 15 archives in nine countries: Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Italy, the Czech Republic, Germany, the USA, Great Britain, and Russia. Pirjevec is the author of a number of previous works, among which I would like to highlight two: *Il giorno di s. Vito. Storia della Jugoslavia, 1919–1992*, published by RAI-ERI in 1993, and *Le guerre jugoslave: 1991–1999*, published by Giulio Einaudi in 2001.

Tito was larger than life. Although he came to power around the same time as various other communists across Eastern Europe – Bolesław Bierut in Poland, Mátyás Rákosi in Hungary, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej in Romania, Klement Gottwald in Czechoslovakia, Enver Hoxha in Albania, Georgi Dimitrov in Bulgaria, and Walter Ulbricht in East Germany – Tito is the only member of that generation to continue to exert attraction for a tangible number of locals in his own country (or, more specifically, in the successor states which arose in the lands which once constituted Yugoslavia). I think that the most important reason why Tito is still interesting for historians and for the general reading public is his role during World War Two, when he led the Partisans in an unrelenting resistance against Nazi occupation; unlike most of the other members of the first generation of communist leaders, Tito came to power as a hero. Whatever his faults, he had stood up to the Nazis, risking his life over and over again. Also important is the fact that Tito defied the Soviets, and refused to accept satellite status, culminating in Stalin's expulsion of Yugoslavia from the Soviet-run Cominform in 1948; it is true that Enver Hoxha managed the same feat, but Albania was small potatoes and, in any event, protected from the Soviet bloc by the Yugoslav buffer. Another reason for the continued interest in Tito is that, unlike most of the other leaders in this set, Tito is remembered in ambivalent terms – faulted for the slaughter of fleeing Ustaše, Slovenian Domobranci, and Chetniks *and their families* in 1945, for the suppression of the Croatian spring of 1967–71, and, by some Serbs, for the constitution of 1974, which deepened the preexisting federalism, granting more extensive powers to the country's federal units; but at the same time he is given credit for allowing religious organizations a certain amount of freedom by the end of the 1950s, for allowing the country's media more freedom than was possible in other communist countries (most notably in the Croatian weekly magazine *Start* and the Slovenian newspaper *Tribuna*), for allowing Yugoslavs to travel freely (unlike the situation in the Soviet bloc countries), and for eventually allowing a certain amount of private enterprise. And a third reason for the continuing interest in Tito is that his triadic formula – self-management (workers supposedly running factories and other enterprises), affiliation with the nonaligned movement, and the formula “brotherhood and unity”, which translated into ethnic quotas in many, but not all, cases – has seemed to some at least, to have been better, at least in theory, than what came later.

Pirjevec shows Tito to have been a man of unusual talent. Although lacking much by way of education and starting his career as a metal worker, by 1936, when he was forty-four years of age, in addition to his native Serbo-Croatian, Tito was fluent in Russian, knew some German, Slovenian, French, Czech, Hungarian, and even Kirghiz, and was studying to improve his English. He used more than 30 pseudonyms in the years before 1945, including Walter (a German tourist), Rudi, Ivan D. Kisić, Otto, a representative of the Czech car manufacturer “Škoda” named Tomášek, engineer Petrović, and even Spiridion Matas, a Canadian citizen of supposedly Greek origin. Pirjevec recounts multiple occasions on which Tito came close to being killed, both during World War Two and after. In one particularly touching episode in 1943, Pirjevec recounts how, during a Nazi attack on the Partisan leader’s encampment, Tito’s large German shepherd, Lux, insisted on sprawling over Tito, despite the Partisan leader’s efforts to push him away. Eventually, a splinter of an exploding bomb took the dog’s life; Tito, however, survived with only a wound to his left arm. But Tito’s survival depended not just on a brave dog or on luck, but also on his ability to outwit his enemies, as when (toward the end of 1939) he boarded a train in Prague, immediately exiting it on the other side, continuing his journey by another train, only to get out in Zagreb “to stretch his legs”, and declining to continue onward by ship to Gibraltar, where British police, certain that he was on board the ship, spent several hours searching it from top to bottom. Tito’s Partisans were fighting both Axis forces (primarily the Germans but also Italian forces and forces of local quislings) and also the Serb nationalist Chetniks, whose leader, Draža Mihailović, presented his opportunist forces as a resistance group but also admitted to a British envoy in February 1943, while intoxicated, that his enemies were the Partisans, the Croatian fascist Ustaše, and Muslims – in that order – and that he would fight the Germans only after he had defeated the previous three groups. It is striking that, as Pirjevec shows, Tito began to distance himself from the Soviets as early as late 1943, when he decided that he would no longer inform the Soviets about everything he was doing or planning.

Stalin knew what kind of man Tito was and, even before the expulsion of Yugoslavia from the Cominform organization in May 1948, Stalin sent a team of Soviet doctors to perform minor surgery on Tito, and the nurse who accompanied the team allegedly brought along vials of poison. When he could not eliminate the Yugoslav leader in that way, Stalin found sympathetic persons in Andrija Hebrang and Sreten Žujović, about whose contacts with the Soviet leader Pirjevec provides interesting details culled from a Russian source. Tito, Pirjevec confirms, was a man of wild imagination – dreaming about annexing not only Bulgaria and Albania but also Greece to a large Balkan “federation” under his baton, imagining himself as Stalin’s successor as head of the socialist

camp, and, after Stalin's death, fantasizing (in 1960) about obtaining nuclear-powered ships. Tito's central role in creating the Nonaligned Movement, in which he figured as its leading personality, was merely one confirmation of the Yugoslav leader's grand sense of self. But not surprisingly, when Belgrade played host to the Nonaligned Movement, Tito had the rooms of all the non-aligned guests bugged (as Pirjevec notes, drawing upon the memoirs of Aleksandar Ranković).

As of the early 1960s, either Ranković or Kardelj seemed poised to succeed Tito in office; in 1962, Tito briefly considered removing Kardelj from office – but ultimately did not do so. Two years later, at the Eighth Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia – for which occasion Tito registered as a Croat! – Tito was siding with Kardelj and Croatian communist Vladimir Bakarić against Ranković. But throughout his years at the helm of the country, Tito lived in fear of his closest collaborators. Ultimately, as is well known, Ranković was stripped of his posts in summer 1966 and Kardelj, eighteen years younger than Tito, died in February 1979, more than a year before Tito's death. In spite of various cloak-and-dagger plots recounted in this book, Yugoslavia was making a tenuous, tentative start at evolving in a more pluralist and liberal direction in the latter half of the 1960s and into 1971. But in December 1971, Tito took the decision to remove from power the Croatian leader Miko Tripalo, whom Tito had briefly considered anointing as his successor. Tito authorized an extensive purge of the ranks of the Croatian party, followed by similar purges of the Serbian, Slovenian, and Macedonian parties, ending the political careers of more liberal communists. This purge had particularly baneful effects in Serbia, according to Pirjevec, who writes that (p. 388):

...the defeat of the 'most educated part of Serb society' opened the floodgates to the 'Levantine' school of thought, xenophobic and closed in its myths, unable to rip out the nation from its economic and civil decay...

As the author tells it, the purge set the stage for the rule of sycophantic Tito loyalists presiding incompetently over a system that was increasingly spiraling out of control. Tito, "a tiger ready to attack", had shown his fangs for the last time and, as Pirjevec notes, by 1977, Kardelj was confiding to a Yugoslav researcher based in the USA that he considered the Yugoslav system "terrible and wrong".

Pirjevec also brings out some details about Tito's personal life and predilections. Tito, it turns out, liked to sing popular songs, enjoyed political jokes (though presumably not at his own expense), and had learned from his mother how to cook. He liked to dance and once even danced a waltz with Britain's Queen Elizabeth II. The author also calls Tito "a sexual enthusiast ... even into

his old age" (p. 417) – perhaps also in his own notion a "tiger" ready to pounce. Tito had three wives and two live-in mistresses. His fifth and final partner was the famous Jovanka Budisavljević Broz, thirty-two years his junior, a semi-literate Serb from Croatia, who had joined the Partisans at age seventeen. Jovanka – and she is always referred to by her first name – married "the old man" in 1952, when he was already sixty years of age. She was more comfortable handling a gun than using the silverware at a formal dinner, was self-indulgent (eventually owning about 150 dresses), given to bad temper tantrums, and prone to engage in political intrigues aiming, for a while, to set herself up as Tito's successor in power. Domineering and embracing anti-Croat Serb nationalism, Jovanka eventually frightened her husband so much that, in his later years, he would shut himself up in the bathroom in order to get away from her. During one of many arguments of the married couple, Tito called her "a paranoid liar" (p. 433) in front of witnesses.

Tito was no man's fool and came to understand that his political formula had no long-term prospects. Indeed, he feared the worst for the future. Did Tito ever regret his purge of the liberals during 1971–1972 or suspect that Yugoslavia might have had an alternative future but for that fateful decision? Pirjevec does not say, presumably because Tito never confessed to having been wrong in that decision. When Tito died in May 1980, he had been in power for 35 years – not as long as Franz Joseph of Austria-Hungary, whose reign had lasted for a remarkable 68 years – but Tito was the last of the prominent figures of World War Two in the region to meet his end and it was partly in recognition of that fact and of what he thus symbolized that his funeral was attended by four kings, thirty-one presidents, six princes, twenty-two prime ministers, and forty-seven ministers of foreign affairs. They came as much to mark the end of an era as to celebrate the man who contributed to pushing the Nazis out of his country and who had later defied the Soviet strongman, Iosif Vissarionovich Stalin.

This is a book written for the ages and its sheer lasting power should be obvious to any reader, whether a general reader with an interest in World War Two or someone interested in the careers of political figures of the twentieth century. Pirjevec uncovers details I have not encountered in other biographies of Tito which I have read and offers a goldmine of information not just about Tito but about Yugoslavia during tumultuous years.

*Sabrina P. Ramet*

Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU),

Trondheim, Norway

*sabrina.ramet@ntnu.no*



**Author Query:**

AQ1: Please provide the completed Author Affiliation.

Stefano Bottoni. *Stalin's Legacy in Romania: The Hungarian Autonomous Region, 1952–1960* (London, UK: Lexington Books / The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, 2018).

Stefano Bottoni's work is a thoroughly researched, well-written, and generally fascinating history of the Hungarian Autonomous Region (HAR) during the first decade of communist rule in Romania. Bottoni belongs to the younger generation of historians, with an expressed appetite for storytelling, without however altering the evidence found in archives. He is a researcher at the Academy of Sciences, and the present book is an English version of his Ph.D. thesis. He is at home with Romanian and Hungarian politics and history, concentrating mainly on the Hungarian minority in Romania.

The history of the HAR is traced back to Stalin's nationality politics and is presented – rightly – as an ambiguous “gift” of autonomy. But can autonomy be a “gift”, can it be a personal gesture, rather than a natural state, as vindicated by any liberal theory?

In the introduction, Bottoni assembles a set of theoretical literature which is intended to be the framework of his interpretation. This shows a list of the author's favourite concepts, that unfortunately is never referred to again. “Everyday ethnicity and centre-periphery conflicts in a multinational environment, or rather the fuzzy relationship between territorial borders and ‘invisible’ ethnic boundaries, represent Ariadne's thread binding this research together.” (p. xv.) I'm afraid this “Ariadne's thread” isn't enough to find our way out from the Labyrinth, or this “fuzzy relationship”. Therefore, we need to address at least one historical-theoretical question in order to place the HAR's history in a larger context.

We may start simply by pointing to the name of Hungarian Autonomous Region, which would immediately show the problem that needs to be clarified. Talking about genuine national autonomy in the Stalinist “ecosystem” (Bottoni's own, ingenious term) might seem utterly impossible.

Stalinism is regularly defined as a belief in the omnipotence of the state, which means stripping any individual, or part of the society, professional group, strata, or, by the same token, the nations in Soviet Union and national minorities everywhere, of their autonomy, offering in exchange the feeling of the ghetto-like “togetherness”. Of course, we would be astonished to hear about the “autonomy” of Jewish Councils running business in a ghetto under close surveillance. But if Stalin's ideas on nation are more carefully analyzed, one can find a place, albeit tiny, even for autonomy.

To understand this, we have to turn briefly to the Stalinist view on nations, which fundamentally differs from that of Lenin, though Bottoni tends to

equate the two. To run ahead, these strategies differ substantially. Lenin used the nation as a tactical weapon in combat, while for Stalin the nation was a building block for the foundation of an empire.

The clash between the two visions on the role of nations on the way to the world revolution of the proletariat came to a showdown in 1922, at the creation of the empire of the USSR, when Lenin, holding to his tactical line, had been willing to recognize the right to secession (limited independence, because in military and foreign affairs the last say remained with the union) of the Soviet Republics, while Stalin pursued the politics of “autonomization”, meaning the strong, central, party (in its initially proposed form: Russian) control of the republics. While attempting to extend unitary state control over formally independent states, Stalin relied on his own, distinctive perception of a nation, developed mostly during his exile in Siberia, between 1913 and 1916, and if not in stark, still in perceptible contrast with Lenin’s own idea. Lenin regarded the nation as a necessary evil and the nationalists a possible ally until the inevitable triumph of the world proletariat. Stalin, the “worst Russian chauvinist” – as Lenin came to regard him – nurtured an organicist feeling towards national communities with an identity of their own, that would entitle them to “autonomy”. This inner contradiction in Stalin’s persuasion describes the essence of the “autonomization” policy, that made the HAR a best practice experiment in Stalinism, outside the borders of Soviet Union, bestowing upon all subjects of the experiment the struggle within Stalin’s own confusions. This makes us recognize the autonomy as mere ghettoization, offering the feeling of “togetherness” for national communities in an otherwise totalitarian state, suppressing the individual.

Bottoni’s detailed account does not give the reader the impression that he is aware that what he calls “Soviet-type integration of minorities” is rather an inclusion in Soviet-type, Stalinist rule. However, Bottoni mentions emphatically the personal involvement of Stalin in drafting the new Romanian constitution in 1951 (and, another example, his amendments to the Polish constitution, in which he inserted a paragraph, mentioning “Polish national culture” and “Polish national rebirth”, p.68.) and the sudden appearance of the HAR as an administrative unit, to the greatest bafflement of the Romanian Worker’s Party leadership.

Bottoni’s study revolves around the concepts of nationality, identity, ethnic diversity, assimilation, all of which are embedded in nationalism studies. At certain points this approach leaves the argument wanting. It should be rewarding, and would reduce the “fuzziness”, if one would supplement this conceptual framework with an approach that relies on the political theory of democracy and dictatorship, and particularly when correlated to Stalin’s own ideas on

the nation and “autonomy”. Most certainly this was not within the goals set out by the author himself. On the other hand, Bottoni’s work is a solid historical account, a groundwork for such an enterprise, so that it addresses a larger public of scholars, not only historians of a particular region.

*Zoltán Bretter*

University of Pécs, Hungary

*zoltan.bretter@gmail.com*

**Author Query:**

AQ1: Please provide the completed Author Affiliation.

David W. Montgomery, ed. *Everyday Life in the Balkans* (Indiana, USA: Bloomington, 2018) 448 pp., ISBN 0-253-03817-0.

The edited volume *Everyday Life in the Balkans* introduces the reader to a wide variety of academic debates on the Balkans. Drawing on anthropology, linguistics, cultural studies, political science, and geography, the thirty-five chapters touch on everyday practices related to kinship, safety nets, neoliberal spaces, war criminals, religious boundary making, and memory in post-transition societies. It is especially welcome that David W. Montgomery chose to include Greece and Turkey. Considering that the Western Balkans have received more attention since the Yugoslav Succession Wars, Greece and Turkey are often analyzed individually, or else in relation to North Macedonia or the Ottoman Empire.

Montgomery, a political anthropologist with fieldwork experience in Kosovo and Albania, builds on the works of, for instance, Alfred Schutz, Thomas Luckmann, Ben Highmore, and Ágnes Heller to introduce the everyday through the practice of coffee consumption. By utilizing coffee as a prism through which to examine the everyday, Montgomery illustrates the “affective richness” of daily life in private and public spaces.

*Everyday Life in the Balkans* is packed with articles from seasoned and well-known researchers who explore the everyday from a historical angle. Hayder Patterson starts the first section off with his observations of furnishing practices in Yugoslav apartments. The second section deals with homemaking and belonging. Carolin Leutloff-Grandits, for instance, works on kinship and safety nets in Croatia and Kosovo, while Larisa Jašarević introduces the reader to the subtle variance that differentiates the art of cooking winter preserves from preparing domestic medicine. Azra Hromandžić analyzes the outsourcing of care to the private sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In section three, Mila Dragojević, Deema Kaneff, and Daniel Knight examine the livelihoods of citizens in Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece respectively. Nataša Gregorič-Bon, Jelena Džankić, and Ilká Thiessen examine the everyday from a political perspective in section four. The fifth section explores the everyday from a religious angle with contributions from David Montgomery, Milica Bakić-Hayden, and Albert Doja. The volume closes with a section on art by Alyssa Grossman, Carol Silverman, and Ervin Hatibi, among others.

*Everyday life in the Balkans* is an excellent introduction for readers interested but not yet familiar with this part of Europe. It offers a comprehensive and insightful introduction to the area, as well as to current academic debates relating to questions connected to cultural materiality. Readers are thus introduced to everyday life in the Balkans from the point of view of a common, yet

“ethnically politicized” consumption culture as exemplified by Keith Brown’s work on Burek (savory pastry), or Mary Neuburger’s work on *kafene* and *krüchma*’s (institutions of hospitality). Other authors, including Vasiliki P. Neofotistios, work on the international judicial intervention following the Ohrid Framework Agreement in Macedonia. By connecting elementary cultural items, common to the entire region, to a larger geopolitical, social, and religious context, the authors push beyond the stereotypes that often characterize the Western Balkans.

Simultaneously, the volume provides readers with an overview of a host of well-known researchers in the field and of critical academic discussions. Brković and Jansen introduce the reader to the fluid border of the Drina River that divides Serbia from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Monika Palmberger, similarly, offers insight into her work on young people strategizing “normal life” in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as does Ipek K. Yosmaoğlu with his research on everyday events relating to the Gendarmerie in Ottoman Macedonia. However, the format of the individual articles is too short to convey an in-depth argument.

While the above articles push current debates, the volume itself might have benefited from a stronger conceptualization regarding the everyday. *Everyday in the Balkans* promises to offer insight by way of examining everyday dramas through the prism of the banal. Unfortunately, the reader is left wondering about those very mundane activities that may include the buying of bread for breakfast, shopping for clothes, getting gas at the pump, etc., which are not exclusive to the people in the Balkans only, but are found elsewhere too. Employing a strictly regional focus invokes a sense of exceptionalism to the point of rendering this area static. The two chapters written by Andrew Wachtel and Roman Kuhar, both of whom offer excellent overviews, do not deal with the everyday *sensu stricto*. Ordinary life as experienced by the local population, for instance, fades into the background in Wachtel’s focus on early regional history. Kuhar, further, portrays the Slovene LGBTIQ community’s struggle to achieve equal family rights, specifically the right to marry. Yet, by doing so, he leaves the very question about how the Slovene queer community experiences ordinary life unanswered. The reader, in other words, is left wanting to know more about mundane activities at the local level. Indeed, one is left wondering if people in the Balkans ever get bored, or whether epic histories and politics capture their daily existence.

*Everyday in the Balkans* is, to be sure, an excellent source for students looking to get a good overview of current academic discourses in the field. It presents a succinct account of the everyday from a multidimensional perspective. Renowned academics offer a much-needed insight into the region, by which graduates and postgraduates are sure to find an up-to-date overview on current



debates on the Western Balkans. While the condensed format of individual articles limits authors in presenting in-depth arguments, the volume nevertheless demonstrates the current state of the art. As such, *Everyday in the Balkans* presents an important contribution concerning the direction of research on this part of Europe.

AQ1

*Mišo Kapetanović*

University of St. Gallen, Switzerland

*miso.kapetanovic@unisg.ch*

AQ2

*Sandra King-Savic*

University of St. Gallen, Switzerland

*sandra.king-savic@unisg.ch*

**Author Queries:**

AQ1: Please provide the completed Author Affiliation.

AQ2: Please provide the completed Author Affiliation.

Radina Vučetić. *Coca-Cola Socialism: Americanization of Yugoslav Culture in the Sixties* (Budapest, Hungary & New York, USA: Central European University Press, 2018) ISBN 978-963-386-200-1.

Originally published in 2012, *Koka-kola socijalizam* by Radina Vučetić, associate professor at the University of Belgrade, stands out in local historiography for at least two reasons: on one hand, it contributed to the emerging of a new stream of literature investigating the cultural sphere of socialist Yugoslavia, which strengthens the connections among subsections of the academic communities in the post-Yugoslav space; on the other, it successfully blended together cultural history and the history of international relations, showing to what degree the two are entangled. The English-language edition of the book, *Coca-Cola Socialism*, published in 2018 by the CEU press, allows international scholars, already familiar with the Yugoslav case (Luthar, Pušnik 2010), to access a richly nuanced case study in the cultural history of the Cold War. This volume is part of a new historiographical trend that examines the hybridity and circulation of influences beyond the two blocs (Romijn, Scott-Smith, Segal 2012; Mikkonen Koivunen 2015). Albeit published in an academic format, the book is capable of reaching a wider public, including the former “children of Coca-Cola socialism”, as the author herself posits in the foreword, and any other reader interested in cultural transfers in Cold War Europe.

The book is divided into four chapters covering topics ranging from cinema, to music, art, fashion, consumption, and everyday life. In the first chapter, the author reconstructs the background of Yugoslav policies related to film – the so-called “seventh art” – outlining the penetration of American cinematography, along with its intended and unintentional consequences. While the Yugoslav establishment succeeded in benefitting from the attractiveness of new genres to support its own values, as in the case of Partisan Westerns (70–72), it nurtured an ambivalent attitude towards “dissident” New Wave films, which addressed the critical aspects of the Yugoslav reality. The latter were allowed to convey the image of a liberal country abroad, but were often prevented from circulating domestically (73–84). The penetration of new music genres, from jazz to rock ‘n’ roll, central to the second chapter, provides another meaningful case study of the successful strategy adopted by Yugoslavia of appropriating cultural phenomena to use them in support of its political system. Young generations benefitted from the opening up towards new sounds coming from the West, and drew on state infrastructures to develop a new music system (121–130), which diverted, at least in the initial phase, their attention from potential issues of discontent. As shown in Chapter 3, similar mechanisms, drawing on the “illusion of freedom”, were at stake between the state and cultural elites in

the realm of art, where the departure from socialist realism as a consequence of the 1948 split with the Soviet Union opened the path for the spread of modernism and Western avant-garde in the country. This trend could be best observed in Belgrade, Yugoslavia's capital city, where the two most representative cultural institutions in this field, the Museum of Contemporary Arts (167) and the BITEF theatre festival (170–173), were based. Finally, the fourth chapter focuses on material culture and social practices. The impact of Americanization was at its finest in the field of everyday life, with the introduction of new cultural products, such as cartoons, as well as brands, forms of consumption, and forms of socialization which put the Yugoslavs in contact with a new style of life, summed up as “the Coca-Colonization of Youth” (231).

As the author repeatedly stresses, both actors in the exchange benefitted from this cultural encounter. US exports smoothly penetrated almost every field of the Yugoslav cultural sphere, consequently shaping the cultural maps of the citizens of a socialist country which stood out as an alternative model of socialism that could potentially endanger the Soviet bloc. Yugoslavia, meanwhile, used Westernness as a tool to build its narrative of “socialism with a human face”, successfully concealing the regime's flaws. Furthermore, the recipients enjoyed contact with fresh international trends which allowed them to be part of a wider “Westernized” dreamworld.

However, as the author shows, contradictions emerged when the artists critically addressed Yugoslavia's founding myths, as happened more and more often after the political crisis which affected the country from 1968, revealing the limits of its liberalization. While a provocative attitude was often well-accepted in the form, it was repressed – in a more or less soft way – when it addressed the substance of the Yugoslav system itself.

The book draws on some assumptions which open up new lines of inquiry. However, the insistence on the strict relation between Americanization and democratic values requires further discussion; likewise the tendency to ascribe to Americanization different kinds of global influences might lead the reader to overlook the role of other Western European countries which the Yugoslavs experienced directly – such as Italy, Austria, and, above all, Western Germany, where hundreds of thousands of guest-workers emigrated. Moreover, the praiseworthy comparative approach, which the author deploys to show how multi-faceted the Soviet bloc was, would probably give interesting results if extended to the entire Mediterranean area, which experienced Americanization in a peculiar way, partially deconstructing the East-West divide.

Nonetheless, Vučetić's book makes a valuable contribution to the history of Yugoslavia during the Cold War, enriching our understandings of the interaction between international relations and cultural policies as well as showing

how Western trends were integrated into the local culture. Drawing on both a top-down and bottom-up perspective, the author shows to what extent Americanization, despite being an “indicator of the contradictions in Yugoslav society”, left a permanent imprint on ordinary people in a socialist country constantly looking for a balance between apparently incompatible political systems.

*Francesca Rolandi*

University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

*francesca.rolandi@gmail.com*

### References

- Luthar, B., Pušnik, M. (eds.) (2010). *Remembering Utopia: The Culture of Everyday Life in Socialist Yugoslavia* (Washington D.C.: New Academia Publishing).
- Mikkonen S., Koivunen, P. (eds.) (2015). *Beyond the Divide: Entangled Histories of Cold War Europe* (New York – Oxford: Berghahn).
- Romijn, P., Scott-Smith, G., Segal J. (eds.) (2012). *Divided Dreamworlds? The Cultural Cold War in East and West* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press).

**Author Query:**

AQ1: Please provide the completed Author Affiliation.

## Notes on Contributors

### *Zoltán Bretter*

is Associate Professor at Pécs University, Hungary, Department of Political Science and International Studies. He studied at Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, received his M.A. degree in philosophy (1984) and sociology (1987) from Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, and earned his Ph.D. from the same university (2002). He served as member of the Hungarian Parliament between 1990 and 1998. He was the director of the Hungarian Cultural Institute in Bucharest (2008–2012). His latest publications include “Rumänien und Ungarn” in *Europäische Rundschau* (2019/3) and “Cultural Trauma – The Case of the Winner”, in *Politics in Central Europe* (2019).

### *Ivan Damjanovski*

is associate professor at the political science department of the Law Faculty “Justinian I” – Ss. Cyril and Methodius University. His research interests include Europeanisation of candidate countries, EU enlargement, EU integration theory and ethnic identity politics.

### *Sasho Georgievski*

is Professor at the University Cyril and Methodius, Law School, Skopje (North Macedonia). He holds courses in International public law, EU law, Theories of EU integration and EU law. He participated as expert or coordinator in several international projects, such as the regional research project “European Union Law Application by the National Courts of the EU Membership Aspirant Countries from South-East Europe”, supported by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) – Open Regional Fund for South-East Europe Legal Reform (2013–2014).

### *Mišo Kapetanović*

is an international postdoctoral fellow at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, the University of St. Gallen. He received a BA degree in philosophy and sociology from the University of Banja Luka (2008), a joint master’s degree in global studies from the University of Vienna and University of Leipzig (2010), and a PhD degree in Balkan Studies at the University of Ljubljana (2017). He worked as outreach workers for hard-to-reach social groups such



as sex workers and registered civil victims from the war 1992–1995 in Croatia (Documenta, 2012). He published several journal articles and book chapters dealing with contemporary working-class culture, informal construction, labor migration (*gastarbajteri*), popular music and queer audiences, and vernacular commemoration practices. His postdoctoral research project at the University of St. Gallen explores how labor migrants from former Yugoslavia use mobilities to construct spaces and new forms of belonging.

*Sandra King-Savic*

received her Ph.D. in Organization and Culture (DOC) at the University of St. Gallen (HSG) in February 2019, where she presently serves as a Postdoc at the School for Social Sciences and Humanities (SHSS). King-Savic is a lecturer on migration and cultural studies, and Executive Director at the Center for Governance and Culture in Europe (GCE) at the University of St. Gallen. She volunteered as a human rights educator for Amnesty International and conducted open source research for the Foreign Military Studies Office, Fort Leavenworth, at the University of Kansas before receiving a Swiss National Foundation (SNF) scholarship for her dissertation on the transversal relationship between migration and informal markets (forthcoming in 2020, Routledge). She received various grants, including the Foreign Language Area Studies (FLAS) and the A&S Study Abroad scholarship from the University of Kansas (KU) and the University of Wyoming (UWYO), where she received her M.A. (2012) and B.A., (2010) respectively. King-Savic examines how labor migrants and refugees from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia define their experience with de-servingness of ‘integration’ in Switzerland.

*Nenad Markovikj*

is associate professor and head of the political science department of the Law Faculty “Justinian I” – Ss. Cyril and Methodius University. He is founder and a senior researcher at the Skopje-based think tank, the Institute for Democracy “Societas Civilis” (IDSCS). From 2016 to 2018, he was the president of the Macedonian Political Science Association (MPSA) and one of the founders of the Balkan Political Science Association (BPSA).

*Irena Rajchinovska Pandevo*

is Associate Professor at the University Cyril and Methodius, Law School, Skopje (North Macedonia). Her research interests include International History and Politics, Conflict Processes and Comparative Politics, Identities and European integration.

*Sabrina P. Ramet*

is Professor Emerita of Political Science at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), in Trondheim, Norway. She is the author of 14 scholarly books and editor or co-editor of 37 books published to date. Her latest book is *Alternatives to Democracy in Twentieth-Century Europe: Collectivist visions of modernity* (Central European University Press, 2019). She is currently writing a book about Germany during the years 1933–1990.

*Francesca Rolandi*

completed a Phd in Slavic Studies at the University of Turin with a thesis on the influence of Italian pop culture on socialist Yugoslavia which was awarded the prize Vinka Kitarovic and published as a monograph. She is currently a research fellow at the University of Ljubljana. Her research interests focus on the social and cultural history of the Upper Adriatic and post-Yugoslav area.

*Naum Trajanovski*

is Ph.D. candidate in sociology at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences and researcher at the Faculty of Philosophy – Skopje. He holds MA degrees in Southeastern European and Nationalism Studies. He was affiliated with the Warsaw-based “European Network Remembrance and Solidarity” as a project coordinator (2017) and the international research network “COURAGE – Connecting Collections” as an advisor and a proofreader (2018).



## Brill Open

Brill Open is Brill's program in Open Access publishing.

Brill offers an Open Access solution at all publication levels: articles, journal issues, entire journals, chapters, books, and book series. Additionally, Brill publishes four full, broad Open Access journals.

To find out more about these Open Access publication services, please contact us at [brillopen@brill.com](mailto:brillopen@brill.com)

### *Why publish in Open Access with Brill*

**Visibility:** Reach a wide audience. Maximize usage. Let your work be used and shared. Increase impact of your research by sharing your work in institutional and commercial repositories.

**Compliance:** More and more research institutions have a mandate in place requiring you to publish in Open Access. Brill aims to be compliant with all institutional policies, and is fully compliant with the policy of national and European funders such as the RCUK and ERC; also with the policy of independent organizations such as the Wellcome Trust.

**Peer review:** All of Brill's manuscripts are peer reviewed, often double-blind, by expert reviewers. Solid quality control is Brill's top priority for its entire publishing program, including our Open Access publications.

**Speed:** Throughout the entire publication process we aim to work to strict deadlines in order to have your book or article published and brought to market as soon as possible.

**Competitive charges:** Brill offers highly competitive rates for 'Gold' Open Access publishing, especially for books.

**Hybrid and full OA:** Brill publishes around 200 journals covering a wide variety of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. All of our journals offer 'hybrid' Open Access publishing solution, and in addition we publish several fully Open Access journals.

For further information, please visit: [brill.com/brillopen](http://brill.com/brillopen)



BRILL

# Take your manuscript to the next level

[authorservices.brill.com](http://authorservices.brill.com)

Make the process of preparing and submitting a manuscript easier with Brill's suite of author services, provided by Peerwith.

Find the right expert in language editing, copy editing, visuals production and many other areas, to take your academic work to the next level.

## How it works

Author Services is an online marketplace, matching academics seeking support for their work with experts who can help out with language, visuals, consulting, or anything else that scholars need.

## How to get started

Write  
your  
request



Get a quote  
and choose  
expert



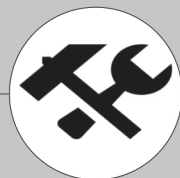
Agree on  
the fee and  
conditions



Pay using the  
secure PayPal  
system



The work  
can  
begin!



**Sign up today at [authorservices.brill.com](http://authorservices.brill.com), it's free!**



## Discover Together

Take a tour of the new [brill.com](http://brill.com)

- **Simplicity:** clean and easy to use interface
- **Ease of Use:** content discoverable on one platform
- **Integrated Search:** integrated search refinement, easy use on mobile



BRILL