

# **Effects of Security Discourse on Post-conflict Nation-Building: the Case of Macedonia**

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## Abstract

The present thesis examines the effects of security discourse on post-conflict nation-building. Drawing on the literature developed by the Copenhagen School of security studies, the thesis argues that the post-conflict nation-building project that has taken shape in Macedonia was developed as a response to internal and external perceived identity threats. For that purpose, while the weak state phenomenon reflected in the constant challenges of the character of the State, by the ethnic Albanians, together with the continuous disputes of a distinct Macedonian national identity by Macedonia's immediate neighbors, shaped security discourse in Macedonia to revolve around both the State as the only protector of Macedonian national identity, and the nation, as the State's main legitimizer- it was the OFA that exacerbated its potential. Namely, by failing to address ethnic Macedonians' societal security requirements seen in the ethnic character of the State it served to intensify the societal security dilemma. As a result, the antiquisation narrative and the Skopje 2014 Project as its culmination sought to address these concerns.

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It goes without saying that any inconsistencies that may occur in the thesis are solely mine. If you have any questions or comments, feel free to e-mail me at [aleksandar.sazdovski@yahoo.com](mailto:aleksandar.sazdovski@yahoo.com)

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## Introduction

With the demise of the bi-polar Cold War political order, the field of security studies has been increasingly permeated by new ways of thinking about international security. The dangerous security dynamic that followed the disintegration of large multi-national States and the array of ethnic conflicts that sprang out from the dissolution of Yugoslavia challenged the applicability of existing concepts in explaining security in the new global political order. The predominant state-centrism of the existing concepts and their focus on the military aspects of security threats failed to take into account the various non-military, identity based concerns that emerged in the post-Cold War transformed world. One school that attempted to overcome these inabilities is the Copenhagen School of security.

The Copenhagen School proposed re-conceptualization and stretching of the concept of security in order to encompass a much broader range of concerns and issues. This broadening of the concept emphasized the crucial link between security and identity. In this, the CS highlighted the extent to which post-Cold War security “has been bound up with perceived threats to the identity of discrete political communities, and the consequent search by such communities for ways of preserving and expressing their identity”.<sup>1</sup> For that purpose, they introduced the concept of “societal security” which enables the security analysis to look at “society” as a referent object of security alongside “the state”, in which identity based threats and insecurities are of primary concern. For, as Buzan and Waever argue “survival for a society is a question of identity, because this

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<sup>1</sup> Lisbeth Aggestam and Adrian Hyde-Price, eds., *Security and Identity in Europe: Exploring the New Agenda* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 6.

is the way society talks about existential threats: if this happens, we will no longer be able to live as ‘us’<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, they introduce the notion of security as a mode of discourse through which certain issues are identified, and thus constructed as security threats.

It is this notion of security discourse that is crucial for understanding the link between security threats and nation-building. Namely, since identifying something as a security threat is always a matter of interpretation of something as such, security discourse at the same time re-constitutes and re-creates the threat in itself. Accordingly, as Campbell argues security discourses “portray certain dangers as threatening the ‘We’...telling ‘Us’ what we are not and what the State should defend us from. In this sense, the process of constitution of both identities, of state and people, the inner and outer, or Us and Them might merge at the same time”. Thus, it is this “specific boundary producing political performance” of security discourse that provides a significant input to the nation-building project.<sup>3</sup>

It is the effects of security discourse on nation-building that are main focus of this thesis. Namely, using the case of Macedonia as a case study, the thesis argues that the post-conflict nation-building project that has taken shape in Macedonia was developed as a response to internal and external perceived identity threats. As such, the thesis offers a process-oriented, rather than actor-oriented analysis enabling the study to look at the context in which the security discourse was framed and examine the response it triggered.

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<sup>2</sup> Ole Waever, Barry Buzan, and Morten Kelstrup, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1993), 25.

<sup>3</sup> David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (U of Minnesota Press, 1998), 57–62.

For that purpose, in the first chapter I provide the theoretical framework focusing on the concepts of societal security, securitization and the societal security dilemma, as developed by the Copenhagen School of security. Furthermore, I also discuss the weak state phenomenon- which has been neglected by the Copenhagen School- as the context in which security discourse in multi-ethnic states is shaped. In the next chapter I look into the pre-conflict phase in order to outline the internal and external security dilemmas around which security discourse in Macedonia was framed. Namely, I look at how the weak state phenomenon, embedded in the constant challenges to the character of the State by Macedonia's domestic ethnic Albanian population, and the disputed character of a distinct Macedonian national identity by its immediate neighbors, shaped security discourse in Macedonia to revolve both around the State, and the nation as its main legitimizer. In the third chapter I provide an overview of the 2001 armed conflict and the debates around the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement and show how the security discourse was reflected in the opposition to the provisions related to the identity of the State, by ethnic Macedonian political elites. In the fourth chapter, by deconstructing the antiquisation narrative and its culmination in the Skopje 2014 Project, I elaborate how the nation-building project that was initiated, was developed as a response to the external and internal perceived security threats. Finally, in the conclusion I summarize my argument and discuss possible limitations, and implications for future research.

# Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework

## 1.1. Societal Security

With the Cold War slowly progressing towards its end, new ways of thinking about international security began challenging the dominant paradigms and existing concepts, in an attempt to explain security in a transformed world. While for the dominant Realist and Neo-Realist theories the only referent object of security was the State, the Copenhagen School of security, described as seeking a middle ground between the two,<sup>4</sup> introduced societal groups – such as nations and ethnic groups – as units of security analysis. Thus, for the Copenhagen School, “society”, alongside the State, can be viewed as a referent object that can be threatened and worthy of analysis.

The term “societal security” was first introduced by Barry Buzan in *“People, States and Fear”*, in which he distinguishes five different sectors of security, in which society was one of the sectors, alongside with political, military, economic and environmental concerns.<sup>5</sup> Societal security referred to the sustainable development of traditional patterns of language, culture, religious and national identities, and customs of states.<sup>6</sup> As such, society is just one of the five sectors that could be threatened. The referent object however, was still state sovereignty, as all of these sectors essentially remained as sectors of national security. Furthermore, for Buzan the threats in the military sector remained of primary importance.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Waever, Ole. *“Security Agendas Old and New and how to Survive them”* 2000, Buenos Aires, p.4

<sup>5</sup> Buzan Barry, *People, States, and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, 2nd ed. (European Consortium for Political Research Press, 2008), 122–23.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Paul Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma* (Routledge, 2004), 42.

While Buzan’s significant contribution to the widening of the security agenda is important, introducing more sectors of state security was simply not enough. What was needed was introducing other referent objects of security. Taking Buzan’s approach further, Ole Waever in “Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe” argued that “societal securities” have become increasingly important in Post-Cold War Europe. Therefore, he suggested a re-conceptualization of the five sector approach into a duality of state societal security. As such, societal security is retained as a sector of national security, but it is also a referent object of security in its own right.<sup>8</sup> The key notion in Waever’s re-conceptualization is survival. While state security refers to threats to state sovereignty – the State will not survive as a State if it loses its sovereignty, societal security refers to threats to identity – the society will not survive as society if it loses its identity.<sup>9</sup>

Waever suggests that “Society is about identity, about the self-conception of communities and individuals identifying themselves as members of a community”<sup>10</sup>. He then defines collective identity simply as “what enables the word *we* to be used”. He then attempts to make a distinction between “society” and “social group”, and asserts that not all kinds of social group correspond to society. As such, societal security is necessarily concerned with the security *of* society as a whole rather than security of groups *in* society. He then concludes that “security action is always taken on behalf of, and with reference to, a collectivity. The referent object is that which you can point to and say: it has to survive, therefore it is necessary...” For Waever, the main units of analysis of societal security are “politically significant ethno-national and religious entities”. Taking this into

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<sup>8</sup> Waever, Buzan, and Kelstrup, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, 24–25.

<sup>9</sup> Ole Wæver, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe* (Pinter, 1993), 25–26.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

account, societal security must be approached as the security of societies as having more than, and being different from the sum of its individual parts.<sup>11</sup>

Defined as identity security of collectivities, the concept of societal security raised serious doubts among scholars about how a fluid and dynamic phenomenon as society is, could be defined as a coherent unit of analysis. Bill McSweeney criticizes Waever's approach for adopting a "near positivistic conception of societal identity"<sup>12</sup>. According to McSweeney, society is something negotiated, "which embraces a system of interrelationships which connects together the individuals who share a common culture". As such, "identity is not a fact of society; it is a process of negotiation of people and interest groups"<sup>13</sup>. Thus, McSweeney accuses Buzan and Waever of taking an objectivist view, that societies and social identities are "things" that somehow naturally exist.<sup>14</sup>

In an attempt to respond to the criticism, the Copenhagen School redefined their assertions in a more constructivist manner. They still conceive of societal identity as a "thing", but a socially constructed "thing":

If one studies only the processes by which identities are formed, then identity never becomes a 'thing' at all: there is never a product as such. If one studies the politics around the established identities (as we do) why does that mean having to posit identities as . . . immutable and intractable by sociological, 'deconstructionist' analysis. Why can one not think of identities as definitely being constructed by people and groups through numerous processes and practices, and when an identity is constructed, and becomes socially sedimented, it becomes a possible referent object for security?<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma*, 44.

<sup>12</sup> Bill Mcsweeney, "Identity and Security: Buzan and the Copenhagen School," *Review of International Studies* 22, no. 01 (1996): 83.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>14</sup> Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma*, 46.

<sup>15</sup> Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, "Slippery? Contradictory? Sociologically Untenable? The Copenhagen School Replies," *Review of International Studies* 23, no. 02 (1997): 242–3.

Social identities are thus, socially constructed, but once they are constructed they can also be regarded temporarily fixed. As such, the Copenhagen School's approach represents a balance between fluid and fixed conceptions of identity construction. As Roe argues, although ethno-national identity is invariably constituted by shifting values, identity constructions nonetheless remain stable for a sufficiently long period of time to study their security dynamics.<sup>16</sup> Societal identities can thus be seen as "objects in the sense that most members of the group adhere to, and so behave in accordance with, a particular, dominant identity construction: they become objects around which security dynamics can take place".<sup>17</sup>

Taking this into account, Wæver defines societal security as "the ability of a society to persist in its essential character under changing conditions and possible or actual threats. More specifically, it is about the sustainability, within acceptable conditions for evolution of traditional patterns of language, culture, association and religious and national identity and custom" and in order to understand societal security it is important "studying the process whereby a group comes to perceive its identity as threatened, when it starts to act in a security mode on this basis and what behavior this triggers".<sup>18</sup>

According to Buzan, the societal identity is threatened when "one identity is suppressed and unable to reproduce itself and when are present the practices of forbidding the use of language, names and dress, through closure of places of worship

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<sup>16</sup> Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma*, 48.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

<sup>18</sup> Wæver, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, 23.

and education, to the deportation or killing of members of the community”.<sup>19</sup> However, the threat perception is difficult to assess, for as Buzan argues, “real threats may not be accurately seen and the perceived threats may not be real, and yet still have real effect”.<sup>20</sup> Taking this into account, Roe argues that the perception of threat to the identity depends on whether the particular action is defined as a part of the societal security requirement.<sup>21</sup>

Buzan, Waever and de Wilde identify three main categories of threat to societal security, namely: migration, when the host society’s structure is changed by the influx of those from the outside, or from a shift in the composition of the population; horizontal competition, when groups have to change their ways because of the overriding linguistic or cultural influence from another; and finally vertical competition, when either due to integration, or disintegration groups are pushed towards either wider or narrower identities.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, Buzan argues, as with the State, society can also be threatened through the other four sectors: military, political, economic and environmental. In the military sector, the most obvious threat would be if the State is threatened militarily from outside its borders, then so is the society within it. Societal identity can also be threatened from internal aggression, when the regime uses its armed forces to suppress its societies.<sup>23</sup> Military threats to societal identity thus, can mainly be seen in terms of depopulation – where a significant amount of the society is killed or deported, to either “hinder or prevent identity from being transmitted from one generation to the next.”<sup>24</sup> In the political sector, threats to societies are most likely to come in the form of suppression

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 43.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Paul Roe, “The Intrastate Security Dilemma: Ethnic Conflict as a ‘Tragedy’?,” *Journal of Peace Research* 36, no. 2 (March 1, 1999): 196.

<sup>22</sup> Barry Buzan and Jaap De Wilde, *Security: a New Framework for Analysis* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), 121.

<sup>23</sup> Waever, Buzan, and Kelstrup, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, 46–48.

<sup>24</sup> Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma*, 49-50.

of minorities, by their own government. In that sense, multi-ethnic countries where the state machinery is overwhelmingly controlled by a dominant society are prone to generating societal insecurities.<sup>25</sup> In the economic sector, threats to societies are mainly twofold: first, the capitalist system can undermine cultural distinctiveness by generating global products, attitudes and styles, thereby replacing traditional identities, with contemporary ones; and second, the free market can cause unemployment and economic depression which might prevent societies from enjoying their traditional way of life.<sup>26</sup> Finally, in the environmental sector, threats to societies are most likely to occur when identity is attached to a particular territory. In that sense, “certain types of threats to the landscape...can threaten the existence of culture and sometimes people themselves”.<sup>27</sup>

In sum, societal security is not about society at large, but about collectivities within societies, which are constituted by a distinct social identity giving them a feeling of collectiveness.<sup>28</sup> According to the Copenhagen School, the most important identity communities in modern times are ethnic groups and nations. What characterizes every identity community is that its members “afford it a claim to survival which is ultimately self-referential. Since it’s bound up with their identity, they value the community’s preservation as an end in itself, rather than just as a means to achieving other ends”.<sup>29</sup> Thus, as Buzan concludes, the logic of societal security is “always ultimately about identity”.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>26</sup> Waever, Buzan, and Kelstrup, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, 51–55.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>29</sup> Tobias Theiler, “Societal Security and Social Psychology,” *Review of International Studies* 29, no. 02 (2003): 251.

<sup>30</sup> Waever, Buzan, and Kelstrup, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, 122.

## 1.2. Securitization

The most serious charge against the concept of societal security was placed on the problem of identity as the organizing principle around which security is defined in terms of threats and vulnerabilities of a given collectivity.<sup>31</sup> In that sense, Bill McSweeney, questions “why...choose identity from among countless values which people are concerned about and which can be attributed to the collectivity of society?”<sup>32</sup> Paul Roe attempts to answer this by making two points. The first one is that the survival of the group can be seen to rest ultimately on the maintaining of the collective identity, or “without a sense of collective identity societal groups will fail to exist. While the units comprising the group (people) may endure, the group as a self-conscious whole will not”.<sup>33</sup> The second point is that identity is “invariably utilized in terms of how actors articulate threats to security. While there are many, potential insecurities facing societies, security dynamics are often activated by reference to identity”.<sup>34</sup>

However, the most important response comes from Buzan, Waever and de Wilde themselves in the 1998 *Security: a New Framework for Analysis*:

Societal security is not a question of whether some given object is threatened. It is a mode of discourse, one characteristic variant of the generic category: security discourse. Security discourse means to argue in terms of existential threats, political primacy, etc., and societal security is when that which is installed as ‘referent’ for this discourse is an identity group (nation or the like). Then the argument that follows takes on some specific features because the logic of threat

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<sup>31</sup> Tanja Hafner, *State-making and Security in the Balkans: The Case Study of Macedonia*, CEU International Relations and European Studies Department Master Theses 2003/36 (Budapest: CEU, Budapest College, 2003), 11.

<sup>32</sup> Mcsweeney, “Identity and Security,” 84.

<sup>33</sup> Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma*, 52.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.,

and survival has to be conducted in terms of ‘identity’ in contrast to for instance the one about state survival which takes the track of ‘sovereignty’.<sup>35</sup>

This notion of societal security as a mode of discourse became the central methodological tool of the Copenhagen School – securitization.

The term “securitization” was introduced by Ole Waever in his 1995 piece “Securitization and Desecuritization” where he defines security as a “speech act”

With the help of language theory, we can regard ‘security’ as a speech act. In this usage, security is not of interest as a sign that refers to something more real; the utterance itself is the act. By saying it something is done. . . . By uttering ‘security’, a state-representative moves a particular development into a specific area, and thereby claims a special right to use whatever means are necessary to block it.<sup>36</sup>

Thus, security becomes a self-referential practice; an issue becomes a threat not because it is real, but because “the issue is presented as such”.<sup>37</sup>

Buzan explains the notion of securitization further, as “the move which takes politics beyond the established rules of the game and frames the issue either as a special kind of politics or as above politics”.<sup>38</sup> In order to be securitized, the issue is presented as an existential threat which requires emergency measures, above normal politics, and which necessitates priority over all other issues because “if we don’t tackle this problem, everything else will be irrelevant (because we will not be here, or be free to deal with it in

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<sup>35</sup> Buzan and Wilde, *Security: a New Framework for Analysis*, 46.

<sup>36</sup> Waever, Ole. “Securitization and Desecuritization” in Ronnie D. Lipschutz, *On Security* (Columbia University Press, 1995), 55.

<sup>37</sup> Buzan and Wilde, *Security: a New Framework for Analysis*, 24.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 23

our own way”.<sup>39</sup> As such, the issue is presented as a threat for the very survival of the society (or the State) and its handling requires using extraordinary means which “break the normal political rules of the game”<sup>40</sup> Thus, as Buzan concludes, “securitization can be viewed as extreme politicization”.<sup>41</sup>

However, as Roe notes, not all issues presented will necessarily become securitized.<sup>42</sup> Besides the “securitizing actor” (the one who “utters security”), and the particular discourse, the decisive role is played by the “audience”. Only when the audience is convinced that the “referent object” is threatened, then the securitization is successful.<sup>43</sup> If the audience does not respond to the “speech act”, that is only considered as a “securitizing move”<sup>44</sup>

The acceptance of the “speech act” by the audience, as Waever argues, depends on external and internal “facilitating conditions”. He identifies three such conditions:

First, the demand internal to the speech act of following the grammar of security and constructing a plot with existential threat, point of no return and a possible way out; second, the social capital of the enunciator, the securitizing actor, who has to be in a position of authority, although this should neither be defined as official authority, nor taken to guarantee success with the speech act; and third, conditions historically associated with a threat: it is more likely that one can conjure a security threat if there are certain objects to refer to which are generally held to be threatening – be they tanks, hostile sentiments, or polluted waters. In

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 24

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 23

<sup>42</sup> Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma*, 53.

<sup>43</sup> Lamovska, Senada. “*Security is what the State Makes of it: the Greece-Macedonia Name Dispute*” CEU Department of International Relations Thesis, Budapest, 2012, 16

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.,

themselves, they never make for necessary securitization, but they are definitely facilitating conditions.<sup>45</sup>

According to Buzan, securitizing actors can be politicians, bureaucrats, the government, and other persons who have some authority in the society.<sup>46</sup>

In sum, the notion of security as discourse reveals little about real threats that exist, but it enables us to identify security perceptions, usages and practices, because security is first and foremost a self-referential practice.<sup>47</sup> As such, the study of societal security becomes a process-oriented, instead of an actor-oriented project, which enables the study to look at the “effects of security practices and dynamic in security discourse”.<sup>48</sup> And, “if security is about survival, it is the speech act that tells us about whose survival by against what existential threats”.<sup>49</sup> Thus, the focus on the perceptions of securitizing actors and the audience, rather than on objectively defined threats, makes societal groups function as coherent units and identity as the main principle of defining their reality and security perceptions.<sup>50</sup>

### **1.3 Societal Security Dilemma**

In an attempt to construct a concept in which issues such as nationalism and ethnic conflict could be fully addressed within the framework of security studies, scholars of security tried “to revise the basic traditional conception of security so that it could still

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<sup>45</sup> Waever, Ole. “*The EU as Security Actor: Reflections from a Pessimistic Constructivist on Post-sovereign Security Order*” in Morten C. Kelstrup and Michael Charles Williams, *International Relations Theory and the Politics of European Integration: Power, Security, and Community* (Routledge, 2000), 252.

<sup>46</sup> Buzan and Wilde, *Security: a New Framework for Analysis*, 27.

<sup>47</sup> Hafner, *State-making and Security in the Balkans*, 7.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 12

say the old things but also include the new things in their own right”.<sup>51</sup> In that sense, the reformulation of the concept of the security dilemma allowed for an “explicit treatment of identity concerns in their own right”<sup>52</sup>. The concept of security dilemma was first introduced by John Herz and Herbert Butterfield in an attempt to explain the Cold War setting “where groups live alongside each other without being organized into a higher unity, has appeared the so-called security dilemma”.<sup>53</sup> According to them, uncertainty, misunderstanding, and fear of the other’s intentions on both sides, can lead them to an unintentional conflict. And exactly this, according to Butterfield is the paradox, or the “tragedy” of the security dilemma, or as he calls it, the “irreducible dilemma”. He asserts:

In the peculiar characteristic of the situation that I am describing...that you yourself may vividly feel the terrible fear that you have of the other party, but you cannot enter into the other man’s counter-fear, or even understand why he should be particularly nervous. For you know that you yourself mean him no harm, and that you want nothing from him, save guarantees for your own safety and it is never possible for you to release or remember properly that since he cannot see the inside of your mind, he can never have the same assurance of your intentions that you have.<sup>54</sup>

Or as Barry Posen neatly sums it up: “This is the security dilemma – what one does to enhance one’s own security causes reactions that, in the end, can leave one less secure”.<sup>55</sup>

Prior to the end of the Cold War, the concept of the security dilemma was primarily applied to inter-state conflict. However, since the end of the Cold War there has

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<sup>51</sup> Buzan and Wæver, “Slippery?,” 242.

<sup>52</sup> Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma*, 55.

<sup>53</sup> John H. Herz, “Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma,” *World Politics* 2, no. 2 (January 1, 1950): 157.

<sup>54</sup> Sir Herbert Butterfield, “*History and Human Relations*” (Collins, 1951), 21.

<sup>55</sup> Barry R. Posen, “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict,” *Survival* 35, no. 1 (1993): 28.

been an increasing tendency among many writers toward utilizing the security dilemma in terms of the intrastate level of analysis. The first author to utilize the concept of the security dilemma on inter-ethnic conflict was Barry Posen in his article “the Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict”. Posen furthered the application of the concept of security dilemma to incorporate the intra-state level, providing an explanation for the outbreak of violence between neighboring groups. He argues that security dilemmas occur within states in the situation “when one group of people suddenly find themselves newly responsible for their own security”<sup>56</sup> This usually occurs after the collapse of large multi-ethnic states, or empires.

Posen begins by saying that “a group suddenly compelled to provide its own protection must ask the following questions about any neighboring group: is it a threat? How much of a threat? Will the threat grow or diminish over time?”<sup>57</sup> When judging the others’ intention “the main mechanism groups will use is history: how did the other group behave last time”.<sup>58</sup> However, he claims that the historical views that ethnic groups take will often turn out to be inaccurate and misleading. This is due to a number of reasons: first, regimes in multi-ethnic states may well have suppressed or manipulated the historical record to consolidate their own position. Second, within the groups themselves old rivalries will have been preserved more in stories, poems, and myths than in ‘proper’ written history, which will have been undoubtedly magnified in telling.<sup>59</sup>

Since Posen, other scholars have also utilized the concept of the security dilemma to explain ethnic conflict. One such author is Stuart Kaufman who argues that the

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>58</sup> Barry R. Posen, “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict,” *Survival* 35, no. 1 (1993): 30.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 31.

security dilemma is one of three required elements for ethnic war.<sup>60</sup> He begins by dividing ethnic conflict into two types: mass-led conflict and elite-led conflict. The mass-led ethnic conflict is a bottom up approach where hostilities emerge spontaneously, and fear and mistrust “trigger spontaneous out-breaks of violence, activating a security dilemma which in turn exacerbates hostility and fear”<sup>61</sup>. With the elite-led ethnic conflict however “the process is different because elites intentionally cause both, mass hostility and a security dilemma, rather than reacting to them”<sup>62</sup>. He writes that “leaders spread the key myth that the ethnic group is somehow threatened, by offering false or misleading factual claims as “proof”, and by appealing to emotive symbolic issues as somehow representing that threat”.<sup>63</sup> Thus, Kaufman makes a clear distinction between the role of the people and the role of their leaders when explaining ethnic conflict.

Furthermore, Kaufman identifies two different types of security dilemma: a “structural security dilemma” and a “perceptual security dilemma”. A structural security dilemma refers to a situation which has occurred not by state design, but of the anarchic nature of the system in which it exists. On the other hand, a perceptual security dilemma occurs when decision makers “fail to recognize the degree to which their security measures threaten other states and therefore provoke hostility”<sup>64</sup>. Nevertheless, as Kaufman concludes, in order for the security dilemma to be successful, mutual fears of extinction must exist.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Stuart J. Kaufman, “An ‘international’ Theory of Inter-ethnic War,” *Review of International Studies* 22, no. 02 (1996): 149–72.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 157.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 170.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 151.

<sup>65</sup> Stuart J. Kaufman, “Spiraling to Ethnic War: Elites, Masses, and Moscow in Moldova’s Civil War,” *International Security* 21, no. 2 (1996): 112.

Likewise, Paul Roe's contribution to the concept of the security dilemma and its application on ethnic conflict, attempts to refocus the security dilemma from the "fundamental compatibility of "goals" to the fundamental compatibility of "security requirements".<sup>66</sup> He distinguishes between a "tight", "regular" and "loose" security dilemma. A "tight" security dilemma occurs when "two actors, with compatible security requirements, misperceive the nature of their relationship and thus employ countermeasures based on an illusory incompatibility. In a "regular" security dilemma, while the protagonists may still be seen as security-seekers, there exists a real incompatibility in terms of their security requirements. This is what Roe calls a "required insecurity", where security for one side necessitates insecurity for the other. And finally, in a "loose" security dilemma what is most important is that offense-defense variables still play a role in explaining war.<sup>67</sup>

By emphasizing identity insecurities, Roe argues, the concept of the security dilemma refocuses "what" is to be secured and "how" to secure it. While the traditional concept's predominant state-centrism focused on the military sector of security, threats to societal identity are more often than not, of non-military nature. Thus, the defense of societal identity often calls for non-military means.<sup>68</sup> When the society is threatened in terms of its identity, it tries to protect itself by strengthening its identity, as Wæver suggests "for threatened societies, one obvious line of defensive response is to strengthen societal identity. This can be done by using cultural means to reinforce societal cohesion and distinctiveness and to ensure that the society reproduces itself".<sup>69</sup> The defense of

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<sup>66</sup> Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma*, 13.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 56–59.

<sup>69</sup> Wæver, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, 191.

“culture with culture”, as Roe argues may often manifest in terms of what John Hutchinson calls cultural nationalism. Hutchinson maintains that “cultural nationalism is designed to generate a strong feeling of self identification. It emphasizes various commonalities such as language, religion and history, and downplays other ties that might detract from its unity”.<sup>70</sup> Indeed, as Waever claims: “it offers a particularly attractive mode in times of crises and depression since the link to a glorious past... donates immediate relief, pride and shield against shame”.<sup>71</sup>

As such, cultural nationalism is designed to generate a strong feeling of self-identification when societal identity has been weakened. In that sense, cultural nationalism often takes the form of reconstituting and inventing traditions and history and reconstruction of societal identity. Or, as Roe asserts: “in defending against perceived threats, societal identity is (re)constructed and thus also strengthened. It is this new, revised identity which constitutes the nature of the object around which security processes will take place. This is because societal identity is not relevant as a referent object of security until it is (perceived to be) threatened”.<sup>72</sup>

Taking into account that, as Buzan argues that “threats to identity are...always a question of the construction of something as threatening some “we”, it often contributes to “the construction or reproduction of “us”.<sup>73</sup> Similarly, Waever explains how threats re-constitute the collectivity and its relations with the Other:

Due to the paradoxical nature of identity, a defense of identity sets off complicated and often self-defeating processes. Identity is never something one simply has or is; identity discourse is about one could be or should

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<sup>70</sup> John Hutchinson and Anthony David Smith, *Nationalism* (Oxford University Press, 1994), 123.

<sup>71</sup> Wæver, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, 21.

<sup>72</sup> Roe, “The Intrastate Security Dilemma,” 195.

<sup>73</sup> Buzan and Wilde, *Security: a New Framework for Analysis*, 31.

be...Therefore, to raise an issue about a threat to one's identity, in one sense is to stabilize one's own identity, by producing a threat and an Other and thereby the explanation for the lack; however it also points out to the problematic character of one's identity, and thus produces more insecurity. Therefore, attempts to "defend security" in the societal sector...tend to be self-defeating but thereby also self-producing.<sup>74</sup>

Thus, what Michael Ignatieff calls "the logic of identity" necessarily involves a threat and a "defining Other" which often "enter as part of the self-identification" and the reconstruction of the Self.<sup>75</sup>

According to Buzan, societal security dilemmas might explain "why some processes of social conflict seem to acquire a dynamic of their own".<sup>76</sup> He argues that when the societal security dilemma is activated "societies can experience processes in which perceptions of "the Other" develop into mutually reinforcing "enemy pictures".<sup>77</sup> In that sense, the dynamic of the societal security dilemma is best explained by Paul Roe, when one society reinforces its identity (its societal security), the second society feels less secure about its own identity, and as a response tries to strengthen its societal security, which, on the other hand decreases the first society's societal security (weakens its identity). The attempts by societies to strengthen group identity activate an action-reaction dynamic which can be conceived in terms of escalating nationalisms. And

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<sup>74</sup> Ole Wæver, "Security agendas old and new, and how to survive them", paper prepared for the Workshop on "The Traditional and the New Security Agenda: Inferences for the Third World", Universidad Torcuato Di Tella Buenos Aires, September, 2000 11

<sup>75</sup> Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism*, Reprint (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1995), 64.

<sup>76</sup> Barry, *People, States, and Fear*, 46.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.,

ultimately, if grievances are not adequately addresses through existing legal and political means, this action-reaction process may culminate in the outbreak of ethnic violence.<sup>78</sup>

#### **1.4 The Weak State Phenomenon**

Third World Security studies literature has addressed the concept of the security dilemma in the setting of the “weak state”, in an attempt to provide for a better understanding of the security dynamic in cases where nation and state making projects in multi-ethnic societies lead to problems in state consolidation and its penetration into society as the central institution of social control.<sup>79</sup> In that sense, the weak state phenomenon, as the “most important symptom of the state-making process” in Macedonia, is crucial for understanding the context in which its security discourse is constructed.

From an array of definitions of the weak state, Roe, building on Brian Job’s approach, identifies three main features of the “weak state” concept: first, an inability to meet the basic economic conditions of its population; second, a weak identity and lack of social cohesion; and third, internal security threats. As such, the weakness of the state refers to the lack of commonality between the governing power and the various societal groups, and the weaker the state is, the more likely it is that the regime will have to rule by coercion, not by consent.<sup>80</sup> Or as Job asserts, “The weakness of the state . . . hinges upon the paradox that the more the regime attempts or needs to exercise the coercive

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<sup>78</sup> Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma*, 73.

<sup>79</sup> Hafner, *State-making and Security in the Balkans*, 2.

<sup>80</sup> Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma*, 66.

machinery of the state . . . the more obvious is its weakness”.<sup>81</sup> He then explains the relation between the “weak state” and the security dilemma or as he calls it the “insecurity dilemma”: “Groups acting against perceived threats to assure their own security or securities consequently create an environment of increased threat and reduced security for most, if not all, others within the border of the state”.<sup>82</sup> Thus, Roe concludes, ethnic differences combined with the state’s inability to meet the demands of its citizens, leads the population to express its loyalty elsewhere.<sup>83</sup>

Similarly, John Glenn addresses the relation between the weak state and the security dilemma, by explaining how the lack of domestic legitimacy is tackled through the nation-building process. Glenn argues that in the attempts to create a common, overarching identity for its population, the nation-building projects often fail to evaluate the extent to which various cultural identities within the state are rooted. In that sense, nation-building projects can pose serious threats to societal security. Furthermore, he argues that the nation-building project can take the form of assimilation – where minority groups are forced to adhere to the identity of the majority; or acculturation – where the goal is to create a new identity. Nevertheless, as Roe concludes, while the nation-building project may well be pursued for the purposes of security, this may only be achieved at the expense of minority identities.

On the other hand, Joel Migdal and Barry Buzan study the power dynamic within the state, namely the relationship between society as a whole and the state.<sup>84</sup> In that sense,

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<sup>81</sup> Brian L. Job, ed., *The Insecurity Dilemma: National Security of Third World States* (Lynne Rienner Pub, 1992), 12-18.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>83</sup> Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Societal Security Dilemma*, 66.

<sup>84</sup> Albert Rakipi, *Weak States and Security* (Department of International Relations of Bilkent University, 2006), 33.

Buzan identifies three main features of the weak state: first, the idea of the state which has its sources in the nation and in the organizing ideology; second, the physical base of the state which is made up of territory, borders, population, natural and human resources; and third, the institutional expression of the state.<sup>85</sup> Conversely, for Joel Migdal state's strength depends on "the capabilities of the state to achieve changes in the society that their leaders have sought through state planning, policies and actions...capabilities include the capacities to penetrate society, regulate social relationships, extract resources and use resources in determined ways".<sup>86</sup> Thus, Migdal developed a state-in-society model in which the state is decomposed and looked as one of many social organizations within society. Moreover, the state is forced to compete with other social organizations for control and the ability to create rules of social behavior. In that sense, the state becomes the main institution of social control "only if it is able to capture and provide for the needs of the broadest range of population".<sup>87</sup>

Hence, the weak state phenomenon becomes the main condition that underlines the security discourse in fragmented, multi-ethnic societies where the nation-state project is in its making. In such a situation, as Tanja Hafner argues, security discourse polarizes itself around both the nation and the state, because the dominant ethnic group seeks to establish monopoly over the state by defining it as exclusively theirs. As a consequence, Hafner concludes, all challenges to the nation-state-making project are seen as existential threats to the nation and the state as its legitimizer.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Barry, *People, States, and Fear*, 65.

<sup>86</sup> Rakipi, *Weak States and Security*, 34.

<sup>87</sup> Hafner, *State-making and Security in the Balkans*, 15.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

This chapter laid the theoretical framework used for the analysis of the Macedonian case. It first introduced the concept of societal security, which places society as a referent object of security, and examines identity security concerns of “politically significant” collectivities, namely nations and ethnic groups. Then it looked at securitization, as the main methodological tool of the Copenhagen School, for investigating the process of security discourse construction. The next section introduced the societal security dilemma concept which explains the security dynamic between societies within the state. And finally, the weak state phenomenon was identified as the context in which the security discourse in multi-ethnic states is shaped. The next chapters will apply the theoretical findings on the Macedonian case.

## Chapter 2: The “Oasis of Peace” Phase (1991 – 2001)

In order to understand the dynamic of the societal security dilemma in post-conflict Macedonia, it is important to examine the background in which Macedonia’s security discourse is structured. Taking this into account, this chapter will investigate how the weak state phenomenon, embedded in the constant challenges to the character of the State by Macedonia’s domestic ethnic Albanian population, and the disputed character of a distinct Macedonian identity by its immediate neighbors, shaped security discourse in Macedonia to revolve both around the State as the only protector of Macedonian national identity, and the nation as the State’s main legitimizer.

### 2.1 The New Macedonian Question

At the beginning of Yugoslavia’s turmoil and eventual disintegration, Macedonia played minor role. Even though the Macedonian Parliament adopted the Declaration of Independence on the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 1991, Macedonia’s President Kiro Gligorov, together with Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic devised a “Quixotic” constitutional formula of “asymmetric confederation”, in a desperate attempt to preserve the federation, just five days after the adoption of the Declaration.<sup>89</sup> Being heavily dependent on the Federation for security, because of its high conflict potential and hostile regional environment, the dire economic situation as the poorest Republic in the federation, as well as the lack of independent statehood tradition, Macedonia’s independence came

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<sup>89</sup> Biljana Vankovska, *Civil-military Relations in Macedonia* (Copenhagen Peace Research Institute, 2000), 11.

much more out of necessity, than of an intended state-building policy.<sup>90</sup> The necessity came from the fact that staying in the federation, for Macedonia would mean “taking part in conflicts which were not her own”<sup>91</sup>, and also, any form of “revised Yugoslavia” without Slovenia and Croatia would lead to Serbian domination, or “Serboslavia”.<sup>92</sup>

Thus, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September 1991, the Republic of Macedonia declared its independence, after a successful referendum, and “peacefully, legally and democratically”<sup>93</sup> dissociated itself from the Yugoslav Federation. The Preamble of the new Constitution, adopted by the Parliament on 17<sup>th</sup> of November, now established the Republic of Macedonia as “a sovereign and independent state, as well as a civil and a democratic one”.<sup>94</sup> Immediately after coming into being, the new state faced what Vankovska calls a “double security dilemma”, an external security dilemma posed by its neighbors, and an internal societal security dilemma posed by its domestic ethnic Albanian population.<sup>95</sup>

After independence the country began its struggle to gain international recognition under its constitutional name. However, in the process “the identity of this state, its name, symbols, language and history, emerged as one of the most contentious issues in the Balkans”.<sup>96</sup> Whereas, all of Macedonia’s neighbors, or The Four Wolves, as James Pettifer refers to Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria and Albania, recognized the new State,

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid 10-11

<sup>91</sup> Mircev, Dimitar. “*Engineering the Foreign Policy of a New Independent State: the Case of Macedonia*” in James Pettifer, ed., *The New Macedonian Question* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 206

<sup>92</sup> Vankovska, *Civil-military Relations in Macedonia*, 11.

<sup>93</sup> Mircev, Dimitar. “*Engineering the Foreign Policy of a New Independent State: the Case of Macedonia*” 201.

<sup>94</sup> The Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, “*The Preamble*” Official Gazette No. 52, 1991  
For the full version of The Preamble and the Constitution visit: <http://www.sobranie.mk/en/default-EN.asp>

<sup>95</sup> Personal Interview by the author

<sup>96</sup> Dreyzov, Kyril. “*Macedonian Identity: an Overview of Major Claims*” in James Pettifer, ed., “*The New Macedonian Question*”, 47

as an entity, each denied a segment in which the Macedonian nation was defined. Namely, Bulgaria, while being the first country to recognize the Macedonian state, it nevertheless denied the existence of a separate and distinct Macedonian nation and language; Greece on the other hand, recognizes the existence of a separate Slavic nation and State, however claims that a Slavic people had misappropriated the name of Macedonia, a name that “was, is and always will be Greek”<sup>97</sup>; Serbia while it does not dispute the existence of a distinct Macedonian nation and language, it denies the existence of an autocephalous Macedonian Orthodox Church; and finally, Albania while not laying any direct claims towards Macedonia, it still contests the relationship of the State with its ethnic Albanian population.<sup>98</sup> These issues that are still very much prevalent today, according to James Pettifer are part of the “New Macedonian Question”.<sup>99</sup>

While this chapter will not look in full detail the positions of each country, it will provide a general survey of each position and the factors that affect Macedonia’s security discourse.

## **2.2. The Macedonian Question in History**

The Macedonian Question-that is, “the issue of who would control the people and the territory of Macedonia”- has dominated Balkan politics and history for over a hundred years.<sup>100</sup> It appeared on the political and historical scene of the Balkans in the late nineteenth century, after the Congress of Berlin (1878), where Greece, Serbia and

<sup>97</sup> Loring M. Danforth, “Transnational Influences on National Conflict: The Macedonian Question,” *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 18 (1995): 21.

<sup>98</sup> Dreyzov Kyril. “*Macedonian Identity: an Overview of Major Claims*” 47-59 and James Pettiffer “*The New Macedonian Question*” 15-27

<sup>99</sup> Pettiffer, James. “The New Macedonian Question,” *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 68, no. 3 (July 1992): 475, doi:10.2307/2622967.

<sup>100</sup> Danforth, “Transnational Influences on National Conflict,” 19.

Bulgaria contended for “the largest remaining, nationally undetermined portion of the Ottoman Empire in Europe”.<sup>101</sup> With the conclusion of the Balkan Wars 1912-1913, and the Bucharest Treaty, a tripartite split of Macedonia between Bulgaria (Pirin Macedonia), Greece (Aegean Macedonia) and Serbia (Vardar Macedonia-today Republic of Macedonia) emerged. These borders, which were established in 1913, remain until today with some minor changes.

In the interwar period, none of the countries that had taken a part of ethnic Macedonia was disposed to give the slightest recognition to any kind of distinct Macedonian identity.<sup>102</sup> The Bulgarian Government has officially denied the existence of a Macedonian nation; instead it claimed that all the Slavs from Macedonia are Bulgarians. The official Serbian position, on the other hand was that all the Slavs from Macedonia were actually Southern Serbs, and Serbia directed its policy to forced assimilation of the Macedonian Slavs into the mainstream Serbian society.<sup>103</sup> Finally, the Greek government has consistently denied both the existence of a Macedonian nation and a Macedonian minority in Greece, and referred to the Slav Macedonians in Greek territory as Greeks, or perhaps “Slavophone Greeks”.<sup>104</sup> After 1913, as Danforth shows, all Slavic personal and place names were Hellenized and all evidence of Slavic literacy was destroyed. As a result, the number of people in Greek Macedonia who had a sense of Greek national identity increased substantially.<sup>105</sup> Thus, in all three parts of Macedonia, the local population was subjected to assimilation and even forced deportation.

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<sup>101</sup> International Crisis Group: *“Macedonia’s Name: Why the Dispute Matters and how to Resolve it”*. Skopje/Brussels, 2001. p. 11

<sup>102</sup> Danforth, “Transnational Influences on National Conflict,” 20

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Rossos, Andrew. *“The British Foreign Office and Macedonian National Identity, 1918-1944” 1* (Slavic Review, 1994), 9.

<sup>105</sup> Danforth, “Transnational Influences on National Conflict,” 21.

During the Second World War, Macedonian communists, led by aspirations for self-determination and creation an independent state, started an active anti-fascist partisan movement. The communist leader Josip Broz Tito, whose plan was the unification of all the Yugoslav territories, supported the Macedonian resistance.<sup>106</sup> The Macedonian partisans took advantage of the Yugoslav assistance to realize their national cause, and in 1944 the People's Republic of Macedonia was established as one of Yugoslavia's constituent Republics. With the establishment of People's Republic of Macedonia for the first time in history the existence of a distinct Macedonian people, with distinct language and culture was officially recognized.

When the Greek Civil War (1946-49) broke out, the Slavic Macedonian population living in the northern part of Greece made up a significant part of the communist-led partisan movement. In line with the policy Tito inherited from the Comintern in the inter-war period, they fought to unite the Yugoslav, Greek and Bulgarian parts of Macedonia in an autonomous, communist Macedonia within Yugoslavia.<sup>107</sup> Following the communists' defeat in Greece some 35,000 Macedonians fled to Yugoslavia and other countries in Eastern Europe, their properties in Greece were confiscated, and while ethnic Greek communist refugees were later allowed to return, Slav Macedonians were not.<sup>108</sup> In the decades that followed, consecutive Greek governments continued the policy of persecution and assimilation.

Under Yugoslavia many of the issues regarding the Macedonian Question were temporarily frozen, and with the establishment of the People's Republic of Macedonia as

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<sup>106</sup> Henryk J. Sokalski, *An Ounce of Prevention: Macedonia and the UN Experience in Preventive Diplomacy* (United States Institute of Peace, 2003), 38.

<sup>107</sup> International Crisis Group. "Macedonia's Name: Breaking the Deadlock" Pristina/Brussels, 2009. p. 3

<sup>108</sup> Evangelos Kofos, *Nationalism and Communism in Macedonia* (Institute for Balkan studies, 1964), 184.

one of the six constituent Republics, it was even considered that the Macedonian Question has finally been resolved.<sup>109</sup> However, with the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the insecurities regarding Macedonian national identity have been revived, as immediately after gaining independence, Macedonia found itself into various disputes with its neighbors. The reaction to these challenges by the Macedonian political leadership proved to be very pragmatic. In an attempt to preserve peace, or rather “negative peace (absence of war)”<sup>110</sup> at any cost, two strategic principles were adopted: first, the principle of active equidistance with all neighboring countries, in the sense of equal good relations and equal political distance from all of them; and second, not entering into any inter-state, bi-lateral or multi-lateral alliances.<sup>111</sup> Below, a general survey of the official positions of Macedonia’s four neighbors will be outlined.

### 2.2.1. Bulgaria

Bulgaria was the first country to officially recognize the independence of the Macedonian republic; however, from the outset it was made clear that Bulgaria does not recognize the Macedonian nation, as a separate nation, distinct from the Bulgarian. Although the issue of the nation was not explicitly mentioned in the official recognition, it was raised indirectly, through the issue of language.<sup>112</sup> Sharing most of the characteristics that distinguishes the Bulgarian language from the other Slavic languages prompted the view, as Poulton argues, that Macedonian is nothing else than a Bulgarian

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<sup>109</sup> Jenny Engstrom, “The Power of Perception: The Impact of the Macedonian Question on Inter-ethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia,” 2002, 3.

<sup>110</sup> Vankovska, *Civil-military Relations in Macedonia*, 21.

<sup>111</sup> Mircev, Dimitar. “*Engineering the Foreign Policy of a New Independent State: the Case of Macedonia*”, 210

<sup>112</sup> Engstrom, “The Power of Perception,” 5.

dialect.<sup>113</sup> As a result, Bulgaria refused to employ interpreters in official dealings with Macedonia, claiming that there was no need for them – a claim that warranted a fierce opposition by Macedonians.<sup>114</sup> Since 1999, the language issue has taken a new turn, as the political leaders of both states signed a joint declaration employing a practical formula “Bulgarian language according to the Bulgarian Constitution, Macedonian language according to the Macedonian Constitution”, which enabled the drafting of official documents in both Bulgarian and Macedonian, without Bulgaria having to recognize the existence of a separate Macedonian language, and implicitly, a nation.<sup>115</sup>

Historically, Bulgaria has been the country most closely occupied with the Macedonian Question. The “Greater Bulgaria” that was created with the San Stefano Treaty in 1878 included most of geographical Macedonia. The revision of the San Stefano Treaty at the Congress of Berlin, excluded Macedonia from the territory of the Bulgarian State, and since then both the Bulgarian State and its intelligentsia have repeatedly asserted claims on Macedonian territory.<sup>116</sup> Since independence however, although Bulgaria does not make any official claims on Macedonian territory, it has assumed the role of “big brother” with explicit interest in the political development of Macedonia, as it still considers Macedonia a significant part of Bulgarian national history.<sup>117</sup>

Furthermore, Bulgaria has continuously exerted an overt cultural pressure on Macedonians arguing that “Macedonia and Bulgaria have a shared history that cannot be

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<sup>113</sup> Hugh Poulton quoted in *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>114</sup> Victor Roudometof, *Collective Memory, National Identity, and Ethnic Conflict: Greece, Bulgaria, and the Macedonian Question* (Praeger, 2002), 41.

<sup>115</sup> Engstrom, “The Power of Perception,” 5–6.

<sup>116</sup> Roudometof, *Collective Memory, National Identity, and Ethnic Conflict*, 39.

<sup>117</sup> Engstrom, “The Power of Perception,” 6.

separated from each other”.<sup>118</sup> This view has been most explicitly expressed by Bulgarian President Zhelev in 1992:

We have a common history, a common language, a common religion... For the vast majority of Bulgarians, and for our historians, the idea has therefore arisen that Macedonia is not a nation in its own right. But politically, we cannot allow ourselves to impose a national identity on the Macedonians.<sup>119</sup>

In accordance with this position, Bulgaria has consistently claimed the Macedonian historical figures as Bulgarian heroes.<sup>120</sup> According to Roudometof, what lies at the heart of this dispute, is the legacy of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (VMRO).<sup>121</sup>

The VMRO was originally formed in Thessaloniki in 1893 by a group of intellectuals, and soon became engaged in terrorist activities aimed against the Ottoman Empire. Internal quarrels over the future of Macedonia led to a division within the Organization into two wings: a left-wing or “Macedonists” – advocating an autonomous Macedonia; and a right-wing or “Vrhovists” – advocating the “reunion of Macedonia with its motherland Bulgaria”.<sup>122</sup> The Organization staged the Ilinden Uprising on St. Elijah’s Day 1903 and established the Krusevo Republic, which lasted only ten days, and which in Macedonia is considered “the brightest memory of the national struggle and de facto state-building”.<sup>123</sup> Accordingly, when the People’s Republic of Macedonia was established in 1944, it was considered a “Second Ilinden”<sup>124</sup>, creating a symbolic

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid 8

<sup>119</sup> Quoted in Roudometof, *Collective Memory, National Identity, and Ethnic Conflict*, 40.

<sup>120</sup> Engstrom, “The Power of Perception,” 8.

<sup>121</sup> Roudometof, *Collective Memory, National Identity, and Ethnic Conflict*, 42.

<sup>122</sup> Vankovska, *Civil-military Relations in Macedonia*, 3.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid 4

<sup>124</sup> Ibid 8

relationship between the new State and the ideals of VMRO. Similarly, the emerging of the nationalist party VMRO-DPMNE in Macedonia, in 1990, with “an irredentist agenda aimed at “reunification” of pre-1913 Macedonia”<sup>125</sup>, also suggested a link between the ideals of the party, with the ideals of the original VMRO. In Bulgaria, however, the VMRO is considered a Bulgarian national organization, its members as having a Bulgarian national consciousness, and the Ilinden Uprising as an expression of the Bulgarian national liberation struggle.

Another important issue in the Macedonia-Bulgaria dispute is the issue of the Macedonian national minority in Bulgaria. At the core of the issue is Sofia’s categorical denial that a Macedonian national minority exists within the boundaries of Bulgaria, despite the fact that human rights activists in Bulgaria have indicated that such minority exists.<sup>126</sup> According to Roudometof, the central contemporary controversy concerns the manner in which Bulgarians view and interpret Macedonian national identity. As he shows, for Bulgarian nationalists, as well as for the majority of the public in Bulgaria, the Macedonian nation and Macedonian national identity are nothing more than an “ideological construct of the Cold War, and Tito’s effort to expand his reach into the Southern Balkans”.<sup>127</sup>

Consequently, as Kyril Drezov sums up the official Bulgarian position on the Macedonian Question, “Bulgarians either deny the contemporary reality of a Macedonian nation and language, or – when they acknowledge it – ascribe it entirely to Serbian, Comintern and Titoist propaganda”.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Roudometof, *Collective Memory, National Identity, and Ethnic Conflict*, 42.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>128</sup> Drezov Kyril. “*Macedonian Identity: an Overview of Major Claims*” 51

### 2.2.2 Serbia

In the early stages of the Yugoslav crisis, which would later bring about the disintegration of the Federation, Macedonia was not vocal about independence, as was the case with Slovenia and Croatia. Thus, when Macedonia declared independence, this was met with surprise in Serbia, and was considered as a move of disloyalty.<sup>129</sup> Nevertheless, unlike the other parts of the Federation, Macedonia was the only Republic from which the Yugoslav People's Army withdrew peacefully, and which managed to achieve independence without bloodshed.<sup>130</sup>

Nina Dobrkovic identifies a reason for this in Macedonia's pragmatic leadership, especially President Gligorov, who allowed the YNA to remove everything possible from the barracks upon its withdrawal.<sup>131</sup> Another important reason is the fact that as an independent state, Macedonia would inevitably be a weak state, and given its large Albanian population, an alliance with Serbia would be very likely.<sup>132</sup> Although, Serbia did not react militarily, its position on Macedonia's independence was unclear as it neither accepted, nor clearly opposed the move. It did however express its desire to win back Macedonia. In that sense, Serbia relied on its Serbian minority in Macedonia, who with support from Belgrade organized a referendum on joining the Yugoslav Federal Republic.<sup>133</sup> Similarly, as Pettifer and Dobrikovic show, Serbian nationalists were very much opposed to Macedonia's independence and claimed historical rights of Serbia over Macedonia's territory. One of the most prominent nationalist leaders Vojislav Seselj,

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<sup>129</sup> Dobrkovic, Nina. "Yugoslavia and Macedonia in the years 1991-6: from Brotherhood to Neighborhood" in Pettifer, *The New Macedonian Question*, 84.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 90

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>132</sup> Rakipi, *Weak States and Security*, 152.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid*

even spoke of two army divisions that could occupy Macedonia<sup>134</sup>, and of partition of Macedonia between Serbia and Bulgaria, with few small areas given to Albania.<sup>135</sup>

At the same time, Serbia's President Slobodan Milosevic held bilateral talks with Greece and Bulgaria about Macedonia, declaring that "only Serbs, Greeks and Bulgarians live in Macedonia" in an attempt to undermine Macedonia's independence.<sup>136</sup> This position was similar to the position of Serbian academics, which Drezov sums up "that throughout the ages the Macedonian Slavs were devoid of any particular ethnic characteristics, and always represented a part of "une masse flottant" that stretched between "true" Serbs and "true" Bulgarians"<sup>137</sup> In that sense, until the official recognition of Macedonia in 1996, the borders between Serbia and Macedonia were seen as merely administrative borders, rather than as international ones.<sup>138</sup>

Since then, although Serbia officially recognizes both the Macedonian state and the Macedonian nation, it denies the existence of an autocephalous Macedonian Orthodox Church, which is considered an integral part in the Macedonian national self-identification. While this dispute was not seen as a major issue, in the prevailing internal and external surroundings, it did serve to intensify the discourse.

### 2.2.3. Greece

Unlike Serbia and Bulgaria, Greece's opposition to Macedonia was much more explicit and direct, and while Greece does not deny the existence of a distinct Slavic

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<sup>134</sup> Dobrkovic, Nina. "Yugoslavia and Macedonia in the years 1991-6: from Brotherhood to Neighborhood" 89

<sup>135</sup> Pettifer, *The New Macedonian Question*, 25.

<sup>136</sup> Rakipi, *Weak States and Security*, 153.

<sup>137</sup> Drezov Kyril. "Macedonian Identity: an Overview of Major Claims" 53

<sup>138</sup> Rakipi, *Weak States and Security*, 153.

nation in Macedonia, and recognizes the independence of the State, the dispute is around the application of the term “Macedonia” as its name. The Greek official position was that there is only one “Macedonia”- Greek Macedonia and no region in the Balkans, except the Greek province of Macedonia can be associated or identified with the ancient kingdom of Macedonia and no people, except Greeks, are entitled to call themselves Macedonians, either as a cultural-ethnic or a geographic-regional denomination.<sup>139</sup>

The first major focus of the dispute was the attempt by the Republic of Macedonia to gain recognition by the European Community. In December of 1991, at the insistence of Greece, the European Community stated that it would not recognize the Republic of Macedonia until it guaranteed that “it had no territorial claims against any neighboring state and that it would not engage in hostile acts against any such state, including the use of a name which implied territorial claims”.<sup>140</sup> Specifically the EC was referring to two Articles of the Macedonian Constitution, Article 3 and Article 49. Article 3 stated that “the borders of the Republic of Macedonia may be changed in accordance with the Constitution” and Article 49 stated that “the Republic cares for the status and the rights of Macedonians living in neighboring states and assists them in their cultural development and promotes ties to them”.<sup>141</sup> This was seen in Greece as nurturing a climate of irredentism by Macedonia as well as creating an excuse for the Republic to interfere with the internal affairs of Greece under the pretext of a constitutional duty to assist a

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<sup>139</sup> Rozita Dimova, “Beyond the Naming Dispute” (Oslo: Eastbordnet, 2010), 2, [http://www.eastbordnet.org/working\\_papers/open/](http://www.eastbordnet.org/working_papers/open/).

<sup>140</sup> Danforth, “Transnational Influences on National Conflict,” 21.

<sup>141</sup> The Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, Sluzben Vesnik br. 52, 1991

For the full version of the Constitution visit: <http://www.sobranie.mk/en/default-EN.asp>

“Macedonian” minority”.<sup>142</sup> As a result, On January 6, 1992 the Macedonian Parliament adopted 2 amendments to the Constitution: 1) that the Republic has no territorial claims against any neighboring state and that the borders of the Republic could only be changed in accordance with international law; and 2) that the Republic would not interfere in the internal affairs of other states.

Accordingly, the Arbitration Commission, established by the EC, led by Robert Badinter in its Opinion no. 6 stated that after the referendum held on 8<sup>th</sup> of September 1991 on which the majority chose independence, and after the two amendments of the Constitution, which preclude any territorial pretension towards its neighbors, Macedonia fulfills the necessary conditions. It also stated that only Slovenia and Macedonia fulfill these conditions and recommended recognition.<sup>143</sup> Moreover, it held that “the use of the name Macedonia cannot...imply any territorial claims against another State”.<sup>144</sup> However, the EC decided not to accept the recommendation of its Arbitration Commission, and announced on January 15<sup>th</sup> that it would recognize Slovenia and Croatia, but not Macedonia. In addition, in June 1992 the EC adopted the Lisbon Declaration in which it stated that “The European Council expresses its readiness to recognize the country within its existing borders under a name which does not include the term Macedonia”.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Demetrius Andreas Floudas. “Pardon? A Conflict for a Name? FYROM’s Dispute With Greece Revisited.” In George Kourvetaris, Victor Roudometof, and Kleomenes S. Koutsoukes, eds., *The New Balkans: Disintegration and Reconstruction* (East European Monographs, 2002). p. 90

<sup>143</sup> Opinion no.6 of the Arbitration Commission on the Recognition of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia by the EC and its Member States In B. G. Ramcharan, *The International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia: Official Papers* (BRILL, 1997), 1270–1275.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1274-1275

<sup>145</sup> Snežana Trifunovska, *Yugoslavia through Documents: From Its Creation to Its Dissolution* (Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1994), 347.

In 1993, the focus of the Macedonia-Greece naming dispute shifted to the UN, when Macedonia applied for admission. This attempt was also faced with a fierce opposition from the Greek side, this time in a form of a Memorandum against the admission of the Republic of Macedonia, in which it openly declared its views on the problem and tried to explain how Macedonia with its name represented a security threat to Greece and the region, through certain historical facts from World War 2 and the Greek Civil War.<sup>146</sup> Under such strong Greek pressure, the UN Security Council recommended admission of Macedonia with its Resolution 817 from April 1993, according to which the Republic would be admitted to the UN under the temporary provisional name “the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”<sup>147</sup>. Additionally, later that same year the Council adopted Resolution 845 which “urges both parties to continue their efforts under the auspices of the Secretary-General to arrive at a speedy settlement of the remaining issues between them”<sup>148</sup>.

In the beginning of 1994, annoyed by the fact that several West-European countries have established full diplomatic relations with Macedonia, under its provisional name, Greece announced the enforcement of a second economic embargo towards Macedonia (the first one being in 1992). They argued that they had to do it because the neighboring country continuously refused to change its name and constitution.<sup>149</sup> During the embargo, the relations between the two countries seriously worsened and massive demonstrations took place in both countries. Consequently, under strong international

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<sup>146</sup> Vesela Mukoska-Čingo. "Constitutionalism" (Praven fakultet "Justinijan Prvi", 2007), 217.

<sup>147</sup> Igor Janev, "Legal Aspects of the Use of a Provisional Name for Macedonia in the United Nations System," *The American Journal of International Law* 93, no. 1 (January 1999): 155, doi:10.2307/2997959.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, 156.

<sup>149</sup> John Shea, *Macedonia and Greece: The Struggle to Define a New Balkan Nation* (McFarland, 2008), 289.

pressure, a bilateral agreement which ended the Greek embargo was reached in the form of an Interim Accord. With the agreement, the bilateral relations between the two countries were clearly defined and normalized on every level. According to it, the Republic of Macedonia removed the “Sun of Vergina” symbol from its national flag, and in return Greece lifted the economic embargo and recognized the independence and sovereignty of the Republic (under the provisional name).<sup>150</sup> Furthermore, both parties declared the existing borders to be permanent and inviolable, and agreed in bilateral relations to act in accordance with the most important international documents specifically enumerated in the agreement.<sup>151</sup>

Since the signing of the Interim Accord, the Macedonia-Greece naming dispute has reached a stalemate, with on the one hand, Macedonian diplomacy continuously struggling to gain a wider international recognition under its constitutional name, and join NATO and the EU, and on the other hand Greece blocking this process until “a mutually agreeable solution for the name issue is found”<sup>152</sup>

#### **2.2.4. Albania**

In Albania, the independence of Macedonia was received positively, as it was seen as “a counterweight to Serbia and an irritant to Greece”.<sup>153</sup> However, while Albania recognized the existence of the Macedonian nation and State, it maintained that such a State does not belong exclusively to the ethnic Macedonians.<sup>154</sup> Whereas Albania did not

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<sup>150</sup> In the text of the Accord no specific names are used, instead Greece is referred as “the Party of the first Part” and Macedonia is referred as “the Party of the second Part”

<sup>151</sup> Articles 1, 2, 9 and 14 of the Interim Accord, 13<sup>th</sup> of September, 1995. New York

<sup>152</sup> International Crisis Group. “*Macedonia’s Name: Breaking the Deadlock*” p. 6

<sup>153</sup> Pettifer, *The New Macedonian Question*, 21.

<sup>154</sup> Engstrom, “The Power of Perception,” 10.

pose any serious threat to the territorial integrity of Macedonia, the open support by the Albanian political leadership for the radical wing of the Albanian PDP party from Macedonia, concerning the Tetovo university and the language issue, as well as the frequent statements by the Albanian president Sali Berisha regarding the rights of ethnic Albanians in Macedonia, was perceived as an attempt of Albania to interfere in Macedonia's internal affairs.<sup>155</sup> Nevertheless, relations between Macedonia and Albania have been peaceful and established in a good neighborly manner, with just a few occasional backlashes.

In sum, in Macedonia's relationship with its neighbors, each of them posed a security dilemma, by challenging a segment by which Macedonian national identity was defined. As a result, as Vankovska points out "the negative effects of the external factors were decisive in terms of the growing feeling of insecurity regarding the state identity issue. The struggle for international recognition was more than difficult, but the obstacles contributed to strengthening Macedonian nationalism".<sup>156</sup> This in turn had a significant impact on the nation-state –building project in Macedonia.

### **2.3. Macedonia's State-Building: towards a Weak State**

While the external challenges indeed served as facilitating conditions to the course on which the nation-state-building project was set, it was Macedonia's internal dynamic that was at its core. The center of this dynamic were the relations between the majority -ethnic Macedonians, and the biggest ethnic minority -ethnic Albanians concerning the character and of the new State.

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 11

<sup>156</sup> Vankovska, *Civil-military Relations in Macedonia*, 25.

Despite the differences in the state-building projects that the ex-Yugoslav republics have undertaken, each of them, as Brubaker shows have tended to engage in some form of “nationalizing project” in which the dominant elites “promote the language, culture, demographic position, economic flourishing, or political hegemony of the nominally state-bearing nation”.<sup>157</sup> In that sense, Macedonia’s state building project was no different. Following the examples of the other Yugoslav successor states, Macedonia also adopted the nation-state model, as Denko Maleski points out “Macedonia was just doing what others were doing, building a nation-state”.<sup>158</sup> Despite the fact that the first free multi-party elections in Macedonia, did not bring to power a strongly nationalist party or coalition, Vankovska shows that “even the moderate factions accepted the magical formula... VMRO + 100 = FYROM”.<sup>159</sup>

However, from the outset, the legitimacy of the nation-state building project was challenged by Macedonia’s ethnic Albanian population. The growing dissatisfaction with the unresponsiveness of the Macedonian government to ethnic Albanians’ grievances,<sup>160</sup> as well as the optimism that once Yugoslavia disintegrated, Albanians could gain their right to self-determination<sup>161</sup> led to their boycott of the Macedonian referendum for independence. When independence was proclaimed in 1991 without the support of the ethnic Albanian population, several Albanian politicians initiated an unofficial referendum for the establishment of the so-called Republic of Ilirida, in Albanian-inhabited areas in Western Macedonia. As Roudometof shows, of the 92% eligible voters

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<sup>157</sup> Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 57.

<sup>158</sup> Quoted in Haffner, Tanja. “State-making and Security in the Balkans” p.18-19

<sup>159</sup> Vankovska, *Civil-military Relations in Macedonia*, 11.

<sup>160</sup> Roudometof, *Collective Memory, National Identity, and Ethnic Conflict*, 172.

<sup>161</sup> Vankovska, *Civil-military Relations in Macedonia*, 13.

who participated in the referendum, 74% voted for territorial autonomy.<sup>162</sup> Despite the fact that the Republic of Ilirida proved to be a hoax, it had wider symbolic and political implications.

For the ethnic Macedonian political elite, the boycott of the referendum represented a sign of disloyalty by the ethnic Albanians. Accordingly, the debates around the Constitution about the character of the State showed that there was an evident disparity in the views between the ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians. As Graham Holliday asserts:

From an ethnic Macedonian point of view, the territorial integrity of the independent state henceforth became directly linked to the preservation and consolidation of their newly constructed national identity, mobilizing national sentiment around issues of history, language, religion and culture as a means of affirming their existence. Ethnic Albanians for their part tended to view their loyalty to the new state as contingent on the degree to which they were treated as a constituent people of ethnic equals in Macedonia.<sup>163</sup>

Thus, on the one hand, ethnic Macedonian political elites were determined about a “Macedonian” character of the new State, on the other hand the ethnic Albanian political elites were opting for a bi-national State of two equally constituent nations.

When the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia was adopted on 17<sup>th</sup> of November 1991, its Preamble clearly defined Macedonia as a democratic State, and a State of the Macedonian people:

Resting upon the historical, cultural, spiritual and statehood heritage of the Macedonian people and upon their centuries' long struggle for national and social

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<sup>162</sup> Roudometof, *Collective Memory, National Identity, and Ethnic Conflict*, 172.

<sup>163</sup> Holliday, Graham in, *The Fate of Ethnic Democracy in Post-communist Europe*, ed. Sammy Smooha and Priit Järve, LGI Books (Budapest, 2005), 144.

freedom, as well as for creation of their own state, and particularly upon the statehood-legal traditions of the Krusevo Republic and the historical decisions of the Antifascist Assembly of the Peoples' Liberation of Macedonia ... as well as upon the historical fact that Macedonia is established as a national state of the Macedonian people in which full equality as citizens and permanent co-existence with the Macedonian people is provided for Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, Romanies and other nationalities living in the Republic of Macedonia, and intent on the establishment of the Republic of Macedonia as a sovereign and independent state, as well as a civil and democratic one.<sup>164</sup>

Moreover, the Constitution proclaimed the Macedonian language and its Cyrillic alphabet as well as the Macedonian Orthodox Church, as the official language and religion in the country. Thus, in the Preamble the Constitution stressed the historical continuity and the “cultural, spiritual and statehood heritage of the Macedonian people” as the main legitimation for the existence of the Macedonian State. As such, for the ethnic Macedonians the nation-state-building project became fundamental to their national struggle, and “constitutional nationalism”<sup>165</sup> became its main expression.

For the ethnic Albanians the new Constitution guaranteed fewer rights than they had before in the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution, according to which populations were ranked in a three-tier system. The first tier consisted of “nations”, which had their own republics within the SFRY; the second included groups of “nationalities” that had kin-states outside the SFRY; and the third incorporated “ethnic groups” that had neither of

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<sup>164</sup> The Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, “*The Preamble*” Official Gazette No. 52, 1991  
For the full version of The Preamble and the Constitution visit: <http://www.sobranie.mk/en/default-EN.asp>

<sup>165</sup> Robert M Hayden, *Constitutional Nationalism in the Formerly Yugoslav Republics* / (Washington, D.C. :: National Council for Soviet and East European Research, 1993), p. 654.

these, but were ethnically distinct.<sup>166</sup> Furthermore, while the 1974 Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia defined the country as “the national state of the Macedonian nation and state of the Albanian and Turk nationalities”<sup>167</sup>, the new Constitution adopted an ethnic definition of the State, with titular status and exclusive ownership rights conferred to the ethnic Macedonians while relegating all other communities to the status of minorities.<sup>168</sup> As a result, the ethnic Albanian political elites decided to boycott the Constitution.

Ripiloski identifies two main factors that underlined the Albanian objections to the Constitution. First, the majority/minority paradigm that was legitimated and the power relations between the two communities it implied; and second, the fact that it denied ethnic Albanians the national status, as well as the self-determination and self-governance rights that their size deserved. He asserts that:

This solidified the perception amongst Albanian-Macedonians that the Slavic primacy and discriminatory practices from the Yugoslav era, when they had been excluded from state structures, would be perpetuated. For the Albanians, the Macedonian Constitution represented, as elsewhere in the region, an attempt, albeit a much more subtle one, to create a nation-state from an ethnically-mixed territory.<sup>169</sup>

Central to the ethnic Albanian demands was the plea for equal constitutional status with the Macedonians, a legal recognition “to reflect the size of the Albanian community in

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<sup>166</sup> Koinova Maria, “*Three Outcomes of Ethnic Conflict: The Cases of Bulgaria, Macedonia and Yugoslavia*”, (Socrates Kokkalis Program on Southeastern and East-Central Europe, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, February, 2001), p.2

<sup>167</sup> Ilievski, Zoran. “*Ethnic Mobilization in Macedonia*”. MIRICO, Bolzano, 2007. p. 17

<sup>168</sup> The ethnic definition of the State was already included in the 1989 Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia. See Sasho Ripiloski, “Macedonia 1991-2001 : a Case-study of Conflict Prevention : Lessons Learned and Broader Theoretical Implications” (2009): 98.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.

Macedonia, and the country's multi-ethnic reality more broadly<sup>170</sup>. Furthermore, they demanded a wider recognition of cultural rights and rights pertaining to the use of language, namely the right to display ethnic Albanian symbols and official recognition of Albanian language as second state language, including the right to education in Albanian language at all levels of education, as well as some sort of administrative autonomy, or decentralization.<sup>171</sup>

Nevertheless, the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia was adopted by the Parliament, despite the boycott of the ethnic Albanians. For the ethnic Macedonians, the Constitution represented a legal culmination of their national struggle, and as a result it was constructed in a manner that protected Macedonian ethno-national identity. The dominant view among ethnic Macedonian political elites was, as Ilievski shows, that while Albanians had kin states in Albania and Kosovo, the Republic of Macedonia was considered as essential to the protection and nurturance of the Macedonian ethno-nation.<sup>172</sup> On the other hand, ethnic Macedonians were doubtful of the willingness of the ethnic Albanians to integrate into the new state structures. Moreover, ethnic Albanian demands were always associated with irredentism and seen as a part of a wider secessionist platform aimed at federalization, and ultimately partition of the country and joining a Greater Albania or Greater Kosovo. The acceptance of such demands would mean to jeopardize the existence of the country. Therefore, Ripiloski concludes, “granting the Albanian community regional autonomy –and...elevating it to the status of

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<sup>170</sup> Ibid., 98

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., 103.

<sup>172</sup> Ilievski, Zoran. “*The Ohrid Framework Agreement in Macedonia: Neither Settlement nor Resolution of Ethnic Conflict?*” International Studies Association Conference, San Francisco, 2008, 9

a constituent nation- was out of the question on the grounds that it would undermine the unity of the country, and ultimately, represent a precursor to its territorial division”.<sup>173</sup>

The growing feeling of insecurity brought about by the constant challenges to the idea of the State by ethnic Albanians, asserted the need to intensify the repressive character of the State and its institutions. As Vankovska points out:

The need for greater state strength becomes particularly evident when either the state-idea is not clearly crystallized as political structures or it is not embedded within the understandings of the citizenry. Consequently, state institutions are primarily an expression of the narrow interests of dominant political elites or an ethnic group, or at least that is the perception of a significant part of the population. The legitimacy gap enforces the state to build more unity within the society, by constructing national identity and creating legitimacy in artificial ways by emphasizing security and other social control mechanisms.<sup>174</sup>

Thus, as a response to this growing insecurity, the State produces a security agenda that is primarily concerned with suppressing internal security threats. In that sense, the Tetovo University issue from 1994 and the flag crisis from 1997 were perceived as the main internal security threats, and consequently the government’s responses became prime manifestations of the repressive character of the Macedonian State.

One of the spheres where inter-ethnic tensions throughout the 1990’s were most prominently played out was the sphere of language rights. Namely, the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia proclaimed the Macedonian language and its Cyrillic alphabet as the Republic’s official language and alphabet. At the same time, the Constitution limited the use of minority languages to the local level, in the units of local self-

<sup>173</sup> Ripiloski, “Macedonia 1991-2001,” 100.

<sup>174</sup> Vankovska, Biljana. “*Ethnicity and Sovereignty: The Macedonian State Strength Dilemma*” in Lynne Alice (ed), “*Ethnocentrism, Minority Rights and Civil Society in the Balkans*”, Peter Lang Publishers, 2007, 11

government, where a “considerable number” of inhabitants belonged to a particular minority. Additionally, in 1994, the Constitutional Court overturned a 1985 law requiring respect for nationalities’ languages.<sup>175</sup> As a consequence, while the State provided primary and secondary education in minority languages, tertiary education in Macedonia was exclusively performed in Macedonian language.

In order to gain university level education, ethnic Albanians from Macedonia usually enrolled at the University of Prishtina. However, when the Milosevic regime decided to close down the University in 1990, increasing demands came from the ethnic Albanian elite for the establishment of an Albanian-language university in Macedonia. Suspecting that an Albanian-language university would become a breeding ground for Albanian nationalism, the Macedonian government dismissed such demands. The right to university education in their mother tongue was perceived by the ethnic Albanians as “central to the community’s cultural autonomy and the government’s belligerence as further indication of Skopje’s repression of Albanian nationhood.”<sup>176</sup> As a result, in 1994 the municipal councils of three predominantly Albanian municipalities unilaterally established a privately funded, Albanian-language university in Tetovo. The Tetovo University was immediately declared unconstitutional and closed down by the Macedonian authorities, leading to a violent clash between the State’s security forces and ethnic Albanian protesters, resulting in the death of one ethnic Albanian.<sup>177</sup> When the University was re-opened in 1997, the government decided to tolerate its existence; however it remained unaccredited until 2004.

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<sup>175</sup> Ilievski, Zoran. “*The Ohrid Framework Agreement in Macedonia: Neither Settlement nor Resolution of Ethnic Conflict?*” p. 11

<sup>176</sup> Ripiloski, “Macedonia 1991-2001,” 103.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.

In addition to the Tetovo University issue, the flag crisis was another manifestation of the repressive character of the Macedonian State. Namely, in 1997 the mayors of Tetovo and Gostivar, two predominantly Albanian inhabited towns, decided to fly the Albanian flag in their respective municipality buildings. This action was in defiance of the Constitution which proscribed the flying of foreign flags on public buildings.<sup>178</sup> When the Constitutional Court's order to remove the flags from the buildings was denied, Macedonian security forces were instructed to enter the cities, confiscate the flags and arrest the mayors. Accordingly, Rufi Osmani, the mayor of Gostivar was sentenced to seven years in prison, and Alajdin Demiri, the mayor of Tetovo was sentenced to two and a half. While for ethnic Macedonians, the flying of the Albanian flag underlined the assumption that the loyalty of the ethnic Albanians was directed elsewhere, for the ethnic Albanians this represented a legitimate expression of their identity, and the government's response again emphasized the repression they were subjected to by the Macedonian State.<sup>179</sup> Thus, as both cases illustrate, by treating the ethnic Albanians' demands as internal security threats, the Macedonian State generated a security agenda in which reassertion of the State's strength through repressive measures would be legitimated. Consequently, the Republic entered the paradox of the weak state in which "everything the State does to become a strong State actually perpetuates its weakness"<sup>180</sup>

In conclusion, in the first decade of its existence, Macedonia managed to escape the fate of the other Yugoslav successor States and avoid armed conflict. As a result, the

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<sup>178</sup> Ibid., 105.

<sup>179</sup> International Crisis Group "Macedonia: Not Out of the Woods Yet" Brussels, 2005, 9–10.

<sup>180</sup> Kalevi J. Holsti, "The Perils of the Weak: The State-strength Dilemma," in *The state, war, and the State of War*, Cambridge Studies in International Relations (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 117.

first president of independent Macedonia dubbed it “the Oasis of Peace”. While external peaceful transition was secured by the presence of the International Community (through UNPREDEP, OSCE Spillover Mission, etc), internal peace was secured by pragmatism through including the strongest ethnic Albanian political party into the governing coalition and initiating informal power-sharing. However, as “realities of an ethnically, religiously and linguistically divided society were not taken into account when designing the nation-state making project”,<sup>181</sup> from the outset, it became contested both, externally and internally. And, as Buzan argues: “unless the idea of the State is firmly planted in the minds of the population, the State as a whole has no secure foundation. Equally, unless the idea of the State is firmly planted in the “minds” of other States, the State has no secure environment”.<sup>182</sup> Therefore, the constant challenges to the idea of the State by the ethnic Albanians, and the disputed character of the Macedonian nation as its main legitimizer, shaped Macedonia’s security discourse to revolve around both the State, and the nation.

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<sup>181</sup> Hafner, *State-making and Security in the Balkans*, 23.

<sup>182</sup> Barry, *People, States, and Fear*, 78.

## Chapter 3: the 2001 Armed Conflict and the Ohrid Framework Agreement

Macedonia maintained the “Oasis of peace” image throughout the first decade of its independence; however this image was shattered when in 2001 an armed conflict, between the previously unknown National Liberation Army (ethnic Albanian paramilitary organization) and the Macedonian Security Forces broke out. Widespread civil war was prevented with the signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, which sought to put an end to violence and restore peace and address ethnic Albanian grievances through a series of measures. Taking this into account, this chapter will first provide an overview of the 2001 armed conflict and then, through an analysis of the process of implementation of the OFA it will show how the security discourse was reflected in the securitization of the OFA by ethnic Macedonian elites.

### ***3.1. What Happened in Macedonia in 2001?***

When an attack on the police station in Tearce occurred in January 2001, Macedonian authorities were caught by surprise. Public opinion polls conducted shortly before the outbreak of the conflict showed a high degree of satisfaction with inter-ethnic relations among ethnic Albanians. While ethnic Macedonians had different perceptions, it was the severe economic situation, rather than inter-ethnic relations, that was their primary concern.<sup>183</sup> The responsibility for the attack was claimed by the previously

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<sup>183</sup> Mitrevska, Marina. In Anton Grizold et al., "*Conflict Prevention and Conflict Management in the New Security Context: The Case of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*" (Faculty of Social Sciences, Založba FDV, 2012), 107.

unknown National Liberation Army, in their communiqué no. 4 in which they claimed that:

We will target the uniform of the Slav-Macedonian occupation until the ultimate liberation of the Albanian people. We call upon the police forces to return to their homes, and not give their lives for the illusory Macedonian plans over the Albanian population.<sup>184</sup>

Two days later, the official program of the NLA was published on their website claiming:

So far we, the Albanians in Macedonia have sought our rights through dialogue in a constitutional and peaceful way. Our demands have been ignored... The anti-Albanian policy the Macedonian government has pursued so far has rendered the Macedonian- Albanian dialogue senseless. International mediation is needed before it can continue. The NLA will fight until Macedonia constitutionally becomes a Macedonian-Albanian or Albanian-Macedonian State.<sup>185</sup>

Nevertheless, the similarity of the methods used by the NLA with those of the KLA, the use of the same acronym for the Organization (both are UCK in Albanian), as well as the developments just across the border in Kosovo and in South Serbia, put the “indigenous” character of the attacks in question.

As a result, two prevailing, mutually opposing discourses attempting to explain what happened to Macedonia in 2001 emerged. According to the first one, embraced by the ethnic Macedonians the armed conflict from 2001 was a spill-over effect from events from across the border in Kosovo and South Serbia. The initial “spark” that triggered the

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<sup>184</sup> Sandra Ismanovski, "*Conflict in Macedonia 2001: Terrorism or a Fight for Rights*?" (Open Society Institute Foundation, Makedonija, 2008), 51.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.,

conflict was the ratification of the border demarcation treaty between Macedonia and Yugoslavia, demarcating the Yugoslav-Macedonian borders, including the Kosovo-Macedonia one.<sup>186</sup> Moreover, according to this view, events in Macedonia are seen as a “collateral damage” of the NATO “humanitarian intervention” in Kosovo in 1999, when a large influx of refugees (around 360.000, predominantly ethnic Albanians, among which were also members of the KLA) seeking shelter from the crisis, entered Macedonia.<sup>187</sup> In that sense, Frckovski concludes, “violent conflict in Macedonia would not have occurred if it weren’t for the logistical and methodological support from Kosovo”.<sup>188</sup> According to the second discourse, embraced by ethnic Albanians, the armed conflict in Macedonia was exclusively a domestic rebellion, resulting from “the daily unfair treatment of the Albanian population in Macedonia”.<sup>189</sup>

However, Ilievski argues that the explanation is located in the middle. According to him, the conflict in Macedonia was a result of both internal and external factors. He argues that while repression and discrimination of the Albanian population in Macedonia did contribute to the growing dissatisfaction of the ethnic Albanians, without the logistical and organizational support, as well as the weapons smuggled from Kosovo, and without the illegal crossing of the Macedonia-Kosovo border, the armed conflict in Macedonia would not have occurred. He nevertheless maintains that, once the conflict began, the domestic Albanian population increasingly joined the insurgency.<sup>190</sup> Similarly, the analysis of Lyubov Mincheva, based on the International Fact Finding Mission in

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<sup>186</sup> Mary Frances R. Lebamoff and Zoran Ilievski, “*The Ohrid Framework Agreement in Macedonia: Neither Settlement nor Resolution of Ethnic Conflict?*” (March 26, 2008): 15,

<sup>187</sup> Mitrevska, Marina. “*Conflict Prevention and Conflict Management in the New Security Context: The Case of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*”, 103

<sup>188</sup> Personal Interview by the author

<sup>189</sup> Lebamoff and Ilievski, “*The Ohrid Framework Agreement in Macedonia*,” 15.

<sup>190</sup> Zoran Ilievski, “*Country Specific Report: Conflict Settlement Agreement Macedonia*,” 2007, 6.

Macedonia, points to the Albanian trans-border Ethno-Territorial Separatist Movement (ETSM) operating on both sides of the Kosovo-Macedonia border, as the main instigator of the conflict in Macedonia.<sup>191</sup> Furthermore, she identifies two stages of the conflict; in the first stage the crisis was imported from Kosovo, while in the second stage domestic ethnic Albanian fighters emerged and joined the insurgency.<sup>192</sup>

### **3.2. Escalation of the Crisis**

On February 16<sup>th</sup>, several weeks after the Tetovo attacks, another incident occurred when a private TV-station crew was kidnapped by uniformed masked men, claiming to belong to the NLA in Tanusevci, a mountainous village on the border with Kosovo. When a police unit was sent to Tanusevci to investigate the situation, a violent clash between the police unit and the NLA erupted, leading to the first two casualties on the side of the Macedonian police forces.<sup>193</sup> As initial reports on the situation gave conflicting information, the Government continuously stressed normality and emphasized its ability to deal with the NLA. An illustration for this is the statement given by Macedonia's Prime Minister at the time Ljubco Georgievski that "much greater disturbances should happen to consider the situation in one country to be unstable. There are many countries where terrorist incidents occur every day and no one considers these countries to be unstable".<sup>194</sup> Furthermore, the Government increasingly intensified its

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<sup>191</sup> Mincheva, Lyubov. "Dissolving Boundaries between Domestic and Regional/ International Conflict: The Albanian Ethno-Territorial Separatist Movement and the Macedonian 2001 crisis" New Balkan Politics Issue 9, Skopje, 2005.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>193</sup> Židas Daskalovski, *Walking on the Edge: Consolidating Multiethnic Macedonia, 1989-2004* (Globe Press, 2006), 87.

<sup>194</sup> Hafner, *State-making and Security in the Balkans*, 44.

rhetoric in portraying the NLA as terrorists, extremists and criminals from Kosovo, who sought to divide Macedonia and establish a Greater Albanian state.<sup>195</sup>

As the crisis escalated by mid-March, the NLA occupied the hills above Tetovo, a predominantly ethnic Albanian populated town in Western Macedonia. The Government issued a 24-hours ultimatum demanding the NLA to lay down their weapons and leave the country. The NLA leadership rejected the ultimatum; however it announced a unilateral ceasefire and called for political dialogue.<sup>196</sup> Prime Minister Georgievski rejected this proposal, claiming that “there will be no negotiation with terrorists”, and the Government launched a series of offensives which led to the withdrawal of the NLA forces.<sup>197</sup>

The crisis continued to intensify throughout April and May as the NLA began to occupy the areas around the Tetovo, Kumanovo and Skopje regions. On April 28<sup>th</sup> the NLA ambushed a Macedonian army and police convoy in the village of Vejce, in the Tetovo region, killing eight and wounding three. Similarly, on May 3<sup>rd</sup> in another ambush by the NLA, this time in the village of Vaksince, in the Skopje region, two members of the Macedonian security forces were killed, and one was kidnapped.<sup>198</sup> The murder of the eight Macedonian soldiers led to riots by ethnic Macedonians in Skopje, Veles and Bitola which were aimed at Albanian-owned businesses. As a response, police curfew was introduced in Tetovo, Bitola and Kumanovo, and the Government began to consider declaring a “state of war” in order to have greater flexibility in dealing with the NLA.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> Daskalovski, *Walking on the Edge*, 2006, 87.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

<sup>198</sup> Julie Kim, “Macedonia: Country Background and Recent Conflict,” *UNT Digital Library* (November 7, 2001): 7.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

As the crisis continued to deepen, the international community began emphasizing that the conflict required a political, instead of military solution, and started encouraging the Macedonian political elites (both Albanian and Macedonian) to enact legislative and institutional reforms in order to prevent long-term conflict. More specifically, the international community believed that “a broad coalition would represent a step towards peaceful conflict resolution”<sup>200</sup>. As a result, on 11<sup>th</sup> of May, the “Government of National Unity” was created, which comprised of the two largest ethnic Macedonian parties, namely the VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM, and the two largest ethnic Albanian parties, DPA and PDP. Nevertheless, as Daskalovski argues, from the outset the new government was fragmented. While the ethnic Macedonian parties were highly critical of the fact that none of the two ethnic Albanian parties in the coalition condemned the NLA, the ethnic Albanian parties criticized the security forces’ offensives against the NLA.<sup>201</sup> Furthermore, at the end of May, both the DPA and PDP met with representatives of the NLA in Prizren, Kosovo and signed the Prizren Agreement on cooperation and coordination between the NLA and the Albanian representatives in the Government, which additionally strained the relations within the coalition.

At the same time, the rhetoric of the NLA began to change. While initial communiqués issued included statements like “targeting the uniform of the Slav-Macedonian occupier until the Albanian people are freed”<sup>202</sup> and “the liberation of Albanian lands from the Slav-Macedonian occupation”<sup>203</sup>, subsequent communiqués issued by the end of May talked about “Albanians to be considered as equals to the

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<sup>200</sup> Daskalovski, *Walking on the Edge*, 92.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> “Albanian Guerrilla Group Surfaces in Macedonia,” *BBC*, January 26, 2001.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.,

Macedonians. We would like to see Albanian recognized as an official language, [have] the right to higher education in our native tongue, [see] changes to the Constitution that would guarantee equal status and treatment and a new census observed by international institutions to guarantee the legitimacy of the numbers”.<sup>204</sup> In that sense, in an interview given for Voice of America, the political representative of the NLA, Ali Ahmeti summed up the official demands of the NLA:

We demand the constitutive status for the Albanians in Macedonia. We demand equality of Albanians with Macedonians, the right to enjoy all their legitimate rights. My demand is to change the constitution in a way that would include all the cultural, educational, economic, and all other rights that a constitutive nation is entitled to... We are interested in preserving the integrity and sovereignty of Macedonia.<sup>205</sup>

When in mid-June, the NLA occupied the village of Aracinovo located approximately 8 kilometers from Skopje, and threatened to attack the capital, the conflict took a new turn. The inability of the Government to resolve the conflict led to a stronger diplomatic pressure on Macedonia from the NATO and the EU. The attempts by NATO Secretary-General Robertson and EU Security Chief Javier Solana to encourage efforts for a political dialogue in Macedonia, as well as KFOR’s intervention in the evacuation of the NLA insurgents from Aracinovo to Kosovo indicated that the international community was advocating a political solution to the conflict.<sup>206</sup> In addition, there was division within the Government as to how the conflict should be resolved. While the ethnic Albanian parties and the SDSM adopted the stance that the conflict should be

<sup>204</sup> “Macedonia: Inside A Rebel Camp,” *Newsweek Magazine*, April 27, 2001.

<sup>205</sup> Quoted in Hafner, *State-making and Security in the Balkans*, 43.

<sup>206</sup> “Nato Presses for Macedonia Peace,” *BBC*, June 14, 2001.

resolved politically, Prime Minister Georgievski and his party VMRO-DPMNE opted for a continuation of the offensives, and a military solution of the crisis. However, strong international pressure, together with events in Jazhince and Karpalak in which 18 members of the Macedonian security forces lost their lives, compelled the Government to search for a political solution to the crisis.

Finally, on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2001, the “Government of National Unity”, together with the President Boris Trajkovski, and the Special Representatives James Pardew and Francois Leotard, signed the Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA) in Skopje, which aimed at ending the violent conflict. The following day the NLA agreed to surrender their weapons under NATO supervision, in exchange for amnesty of its members, as well as a requirement for the Parliament to adopt the constitutional reforms within 45 days.<sup>207</sup>

### **3.3. Implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement**

The Ohrid Framework Agreement essentially consisted of three parts: firstly, Constitutional amendments, secondly, changes to the existing legislation and finally, a plan for the cessation of hostilities, and provisions for its implementation. More specifically, it included “both general principles and suggestions for solving concrete inter-ethnic problems, including decentralization, non-discrimination in public service, special parliamentary procedures for changing the Constitution and other major laws, education and language matters, as well as the expression of identity”<sup>208</sup>. Ultimately, the Agreement sought to transform Macedonia from an ethnic nation-state into a civic, multi-

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<sup>207</sup> Kim, “Macedonia,” 10.

<sup>208</sup> Ulrich Schneckener and European Centre for Minority Issues, “*Developing and Applying EU Crisis Management: Test Case Macedonia*” (European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI), 2002), 34.

ethnic one, while at the same time protecting the territorial integrity of the county, by guaranteeing that “there are no territorial solutions to ethnic issues”.<sup>209</sup>

In that sense, the main provisions of the OFA proposed introduction of a series of policy measures and constitutional amendments for the establishment of a number of power-sharing arrangements to redress power asymmetry between the two communities, and group-specific rights with the objective of eliminating structural, institutional and practical discrimination of ethnic Albanians and for the preservation of the country’s multi-ethnic character.<sup>210</sup> The implementation of the Agreement was supposed to be followed by a parallel process of demobilization and disarmament of the NLA, and their reintegration in the society. However, as Engstrom argues, the vague wording of the Agreement which made it susceptible to differing interpretation, together with the fact that the NLA did not participate in the Ohrid process had the potential to undermine the legitimacy of the Agreement.<sup>211</sup>

Respectively, from the outset ethnic Macedonian public opinion employed a harsh opposition towards the implementation of the Agreement. Leading newspapers referred to it as a “fatal indulgence to terrorism” which jeopardizes the country’s future existence because the “real aims of the extremist Albanians were not rights but territories”.<sup>212</sup> Furthermore, the Agreement was compared to earlier peace treaties. For example, the daily newspaper *Dnevnik* compared it to the Dayton Accord of 1995 which formalized the ethnic partition of Bosnia; the influential *Utrinski Vesnik* made a parallel with the

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<sup>209</sup> Article 1.2 of the Ohrid Framework Agreement. For a full version of the Agreement visit: <http://www.ucd.ie/ibis/filestore/Ohrid%20Framework%20Agreement.pdf>

<sup>210</sup> Holliday, *The Fate of Ethnic Democracy* 155.

<sup>211</sup> Jenny Engström, “Multi-ethnicity or Bi-nationalism? : the Framework Agreement and the Future of the Macedonian State,” article, *JEMIE - Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe*, 2002, 9.

<sup>212</sup> Brunnbauer, Ulf. “*The Consequences of Identity Politics: Security Dilemmas in the Republic of Macedonia*” in “*Security in Southeastern Europe*” (Beograd: Security Policy Group, The Management Center, 2004), 145.

Treaty of Bucharest of 1913 which divided geographic Macedonia after the Second Balkan War; finally the weekly journal *Zum* compared the OFA to the Treaty of Munich of 1938 with which German areas of Czechoslovakia were ceded to Nazi Germany.<sup>213</sup> Similarly, ethnic Macedonian political elites, especially the VMRO-DPMNE and Prime Minister Georgievski publicly denounced the Agreement as “blackmail from the West” who supported the “Taliban of Europe” in its “genocide against the Macedonians”<sup>214</sup> Moreover, they argued that Macedonia was betrayed by the international community, especially by the US and NATO who sided with the Albanians, and as a result Macedonia stood alone in its struggle for existence.<sup>215</sup>

In their opposition to the implementation of the Agreement, the media and the ethnic Macedonian political elites articulated and mobilized existing fears among ethnic Macedonians about their national identity. As Brunnbauer argues, “ethnic Macedonians did not want their national identity to be disconnected from that of the State, because they feared that this would jeopardize their existence as a nation”. As a result, “opposition arose mainly against those provisions...that dealt with the identity of the State”.<sup>216</sup> In that sense, four issues, namely the Preamble of the Constitution, the relationship between State and religion, the use of languages, and decentralization and territorial organization, all of which connected to the way ethnic Macedonians perceived themselves and the character of their State, sparked most fierce opposition.

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<sup>213</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>214</sup> Hafner, *State-making and Security in the Balkans*, 53.

<sup>215</sup> Ulf Brunnbauer, “The Implementation of the Ohrid Agreement: Ethnic Macedonian Resentments” (2002): 8.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid., 7.

### 3.3.1. The Preamble

The main point of contention between ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians since independence has been the Preamble to the Constitution which defined Macedonia as a “national State of the Macedonian people”. The constitutional amendments engendered in the OFA sought to re-define Macedonia as a State of all its citizens. According to the new draft-Preamble:

The citizens of the Republic of Macedonia, taking responsibility for the present and future of their fatherland, aware and grateful to their predecessors for their sacrifice and dedication in their endeavors and struggle to create an independent and sovereign State of Macedonia, and responsible to future generation to preserve and develop everything that is valuable in the rich cultural inheritance and coexistence within Macedonia, equal in rights and obligations towards the common good – the Republic of Macedonia... have decided to establish the Republic of Macedonia.<sup>217</sup>

Thus, the new Preamble adopted the concept of civic identity, replacing the references to specific ethnic communities from the previous Preamble.

However, ethnic Macedonian political elites and intellectuals immediately opposed the new Preamble, arguing that if the Macedonian people are not explicitly mentioned in the Preamble ethnic Macedonians will lose their State, the only State that recognizes them as people, putting the very existence of the Macedonian nation in question.<sup>218</sup> Accordingly, VMRO-DPMNE, together with two ethnic Macedonian opposition parties (Democratic Alternative and Real VMRO) said that they would not vote for the new Preamble, as it would contradict the historic development of the

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<sup>217</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>218</sup> Ilievski, “Country Specific Report: Conflict Settlement Agreement Macedonia,” 22.

Macedonian State.<sup>219</sup> On the other hand, ethnic Albanian parties rejected any re-negotiation. As a result, a compromise was met in negotiations led by Robertson and Solana and a new Preamble was adopted, according to which:

The citizens of the Republic of Macedonia, the Macedonian people, as well as those citizens who live within the borders of the Republic of Macedonia and are members of the Albanian people, the Turkish people, the Vlach people, the Serbian people, the Roma people, the Bosniak people, and of other peoples...have decided to establish the Republic of Macedonia.<sup>220</sup>

Thus, while the new Preamble still singled out the Macedonian people as primary basis of the State, it no longer defined Macedonia as exclusively “theirs”.

### **3.3.2. State and Religion**

Taking into account that the majority of ethnic Macedonians were Christian Orthodox, the Constitution of 1991 gave preferential treatment to the Macedonian Orthodox Church in relation to other religious denomination in the country. As part of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, an amendment to Article 19 of the Constitution which separates the State and the Church and gives religious communities the right to establish schools was proposed, to give other religious denominations parity with the Macedonian Orthodox Church. The draft proposal for Article 19 stipulated that “the Macedonian Orthodox Church, the Islamic Religious Community, the Catholic Church and other

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<sup>219</sup> Brunnbauer, “The Implementation of the Ohrid Agreement,” 10.

<sup>220</sup> Ilievski, “Country Specific Report: Conflict Settlement Agreement Macedonia,” 22.

Religious communities and groups are separate from the State and equal before the law”.<sup>221</sup>

The proposal was met with harsh opposition from the Macedonian Orthodox Church, which rejected being mentioned as equal with the Islamic Religious Community, the Catholic Church and the other religious denominations. Church leaders argued that since it was not recognized by other Orthodox Churches, at least in Macedonia, the Church deserved a privileged status. Furthermore, they declared that “the names of the deputies who vote in favor of the proposed changes will be publically announced at all Orthodox Church services” and that “the Church does not interfere with politics but it is forced to defend its dignity, status, position, and role in the Constitution, even by publically humiliating treacherous deputies.”<sup>222</sup> As such a move would stigmatize as traitors the deputies who would support the proposed changes, VMRO-DPMNE backed the Church’s cause and a new compromise had to be reached.<sup>223</sup> The final version that was accepted stipulated that “the Macedonian Orthodox Church, as well as, the Islamic Religious Community, the Catholic Church and other Religious communities and groups are separate from the State and equal before the law”, thus singling out the primacy of the Macedonian Orthodox Church and addressing the concerns of the Church and ethnic Macedonian elites.

### **3.3.3. Use of Languages**

According to the Constitution of 1991, the Macedonian language and its Cyrillic alphabet is the only official language of the country, although it stipulates the use of

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<sup>221</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>222</sup> Gordana Stojanovska, “Macedonia: Church Rage Over Political Reforms - Institute for War and Peace Reporting,” 2001

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.,

communities' languages at the local level, in the judiciary, education, and culture in municipalities where the particular community represents a majority. From the outset the demands of the ethnic Albanians for Albanian to be declared the second official language met with fierce opposition by ethnic Macedonian elites whose position was that "the Republic of Macedonia can only have one official language, Macedonian, given that it is a Macedonian nation-state".<sup>224</sup> Furthermore, it was argued that "it is unreasonable for Albanian to be in effect acknowledged as the second official language when its native speakers comprise only one quarter to one third of the population".<sup>225</sup> For ethnic Albanians on the other hand, the fact that ethnic Albanians comprise such a significant portion of the country's total population was sufficient enough to demand that Albanian be recognized as second official language which would represent "an essential validation of their equal status".<sup>226</sup> The compromise reached with the Ohrid Framework Agreement sought to reconcile the two positions, namely by reaffirming that the "official language throughout Macedonia and in the international relations is the Macedonian language", while at the same time establishing that "any other language spoken by at least 20 percent of the population is also an official language".<sup>227</sup> As only the Albanian language could meet the necessary requirements, it became a de facto second official language in the country.

### 3.3.4. Decentralization and Territorial Organization

In the debates over decentralization and territorial organization which were major elements of the Agreement, the fears among ethnic Macedonian elites that granting more

<sup>224</sup> Engstrom, "The Power of Perception," 13.

<sup>225</sup> International Crisis Group "*Macedonia: Still Sliding*", 2001, 6.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>227</sup> Engström, "Multi-ethnicity or Bi-nationalism?," 10.

rights to the Albanians could undermine the State's further existence again came to the fore. They argued that, not only that "the Macedonian national identity will be threatened in those areas in which Albanians dominate" but more importantly, "Albanians, once in control of local governments with more powers, would start to sever the links to the central government and eventually pull away from the Macedonian State as such".<sup>228</sup> These fears were further aggravated when the Minister of Local Government, an ethnic Albanian, proposed to the Parliament a new draft law on Local Self-Government which consisted of wide-ranging powers for local communities in education and health care, as well as the possibility for communities to merge and create common administrations.<sup>229</sup> Suspecting that this would allow for the creation of a de facto autonomous Albanian region in North-Western Macedonia, the ethnic Macedonian political parties rejected the draft proposal.

Nevertheless, in 2004, according to the decentralization provisions in the Ohrid Framework Agreement, a new Law on the Territorial Organization was adopted which revised the municipal boundaries and reduced the number of municipalities from 120 to 84. Ethnic Macedonian nationalist elites, including intellectuals and civil society actors opposed the revision of the boundaries, claiming that it was "ethnic gerrymandering" with the purpose to create municipalities where ethnic Albanians would comprise more than 20%, enabling them to enjoy the provisions of the Agreement.<sup>230</sup> As a result, the World Macedonian Congress, a citizen's association associated with the Macedonian Diaspora, initiated a referendum to repeal the new law. Public opinion polls conducted at

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<sup>228</sup> Brunnbauer, Ulf. "The Consequences of Identity Politics: Security Dilemmas in the Republic of Macedonia", 156

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>230</sup> Ladislav Lesnikovski, "Macedonia's Ontological Insecurity and the Challenges of Stabilizing Inter-ethnic Relations," *Eurasia Border Review* 2, no. 1 (2011): 68.

that time showed that support for the referendum was high indicating that it would be successful. However, three days before the referendum the USA decided to recognize Macedonia under its constitutional name arguing that it was for “stabilization of the country”<sup>231</sup> Consequently, on the day of the referendum, voter turnout was low, and the referendum failed.

### **3.4. Securitization of the Ohrid Framework Agreement**

The analysis of the process of implementation of the OFA reveals how the security discourse was reflected in the ethnic Macedonians’ opposition to the provisions of the OFA relating to the character of the State. Accordingly, while provisions of the OFA which granted the ethnic Albanians a broad legislative veto, or provisions related to the just and equitable representation, as well as other power-sharing mechanisms, were passed without any opposition, the entire debate focused around symbolic issues that related to how ethnic Macedonians perceived themselves and the identity of the State. In that sense, it was not the ‘gains’ that the OFA granted to the ethnic Albanian community, but rather the ‘losses’ for Macedonian national identity, which sparked the opposition.<sup>232</sup> Consequently, as “many Macedonians see their security as vested in a State that their language often represents as exclusively ‘theirs’”<sup>233</sup>, any attempt to change the State’s character was perceived as a threat to the very existence of the Macedonian nation. In this

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<sup>231</sup> Ibid., 70

<sup>232</sup> International Crisis Group, “Macedonia’s Name: Why the Dispute Matters and How to Resolve It,” 2001, 8.

<sup>233</sup> Keith Brown, *The Past in Question: Modern Macedonia and the Uncertainties of Nation* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2003), 135.

regard, as Lesnikovski concludes, “the altered character of the State in post-conflict Macedonia was seen as further weakening of the base of the Macedonian identity”.<sup>234</sup>

On the other hand, the securitization of the OFA was further intensified by demographic and secessionist fears, since ethnic Albanians had a much higher birth-rate than ethnic Macedonian, and their presence were territorially concentrated in North-Western Macedonia, along the borders with Kosovo and Albania. While according to the census results from 1953 ethnic Albanians represented 12.5% of the total population, their share in the total population doubled to 25.17% by 2002. In contrast, the share of ethnic Macedonians in the total population is in constant decline.<sup>235</sup> Furthermore, the persistent pressures of assimilation by ethnic Albanians on the smaller Islamic communities in Macedonia (the Turks, the Torbeshi<sup>236</sup>, and the Roma), raised ethnic Macedonians’ concerns of ‘Albanization’ of the country and of ‘losing’ their country to the Albanians.<sup>237</sup> In addition, the heavy concentration of ethnic Albanians in the North-Western parts of the country, where very few ethnic Macedonians were left<sup>238</sup> and the border proximity to Kosovo and Albania invoked fears of a hidden agenda. Ethnic Macedonian historians warned of a deliberate policy of territorial expansion aimed at establishing a “Greater Albanian State”, referring to Greater Albania from World War Two which included North-Western Macedonia.<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>234</sup> Lesnikovski, “Macedonia’s Ontological Insecurity and the Challenges of Stabilizing Inter-ethnic Relations,” 67.

<sup>235</sup> For a detailed analysis of census results in Macedonia see:  
[http://www.stat.gov.mk/OblastOpsto\\_en.aspx?id=31](http://www.stat.gov.mk/OblastOpsto_en.aspx?id=31)

<sup>236</sup> Ethnic Macedonian Muslims

<sup>237</sup> Brunnbauer, “The Implementation of the Ohrid Agreement,” 9–10.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid., 15

<sup>239</sup> Brunnbauer, Ulf. “*The Consequences of Identity Politics: Security Dilemmas in the Republic of Macedonia*”, 146-47

In sum, the armed conflict from 2001 indeed served to intensify ethnic Macedonians' perceptions that their national existence was under threat. The OFA which came about as a result of the conflict sought to redress ethnic Albanian grievances. However, from the outset the provisions from the OFA that related to "symbolic issues", connected to how ethnic Macedonians perceived themselves and the character of the State were met with fierce opposition by ethnic Macedonian elites. As the State was "charged with the task of defending and enhancing"<sup>240</sup> their fragile and insecure national identity, any attempt to change its character was perceived as a threat to the existence of the Macedonian nation. Thus, the security discourse was reflected in the ethnic Macedonian elites' opposition to the OFA. As a result, while the OFA sought to rectify Macedonia's nation-state building project and adopt it to its social reality by addressing ethnic Albanian grievances, by ethnic Macedonians it was perceived as "genuine security threat".<sup>241</sup> In that sense the OFA failed to meet ethnic Macedonians' societal security requirements in preserving the ethnic Macedonian character of the State, which was perceived as the only protector of the Macedonian nation. In such a situation "Macedonian nationalism grew not so much from pride, but from desperation to survive".<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>240</sup> Ibid., 157

<sup>241</sup> Hafner, *State-making and Security in the Balkans*, 55.

<sup>242</sup> Loomis, A., Davis, L. and Broughton, S. "Politics & Identity in Macedonia. Intrinsic Versus Extrinsic Understandings". Paper presented at the conference "Macedonia–Macedonias: Changing Contexts in the Changing Balkans", London, 14-16 June, 2001.

## Chapter 4: Effects of Security Discourse on Post-Conflict Nation-Building

In 2009 the nationalist VMRO-DPMNE Government, led by Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski, announced the “Visions of Skopje 2014” Project through a virtual tour of the city as it is supposed to look like by the year 2014. The Project envisaged an urban reconstruction of the city through a series of monuments and statues of historical and religious figures and various public buildings resembling neo-classical or neo-baroque architectural styles, as well as the decoration of existing structures with ‘classical’ facades.<sup>243</sup> The Project, in the words of Valentina Bozinovska chairwoman of the state commission for relations with religious communities, and a member of VMRO-DPMNE is “a statement of all that we have had from the ancient period until today. For the first time we have a chance to create a tangible manifestation of Macedonian identity. [...] Civilization practically started here.”<sup>244</sup> In that sense, as Kubierna concludes, through the Project “a mythical representation of an imagined singularity of Macedonia’s formation as a nation state was being engineered by moving back from the present into an idealized and selective version of the past”.<sup>245</sup>

Taking this into account, this chapter will examine how the security discourse was reflected in the nation-building project in post-conflict Macedonia whose culmination is the Skopje 2014 Project. Therefore, in the first part of this chapter I briefly introduce the functions of national myths of antiquity in nation-building as discussed by Anthony

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<sup>243</sup> Michael Kubierna, “Skopje 2014 - Musealizing the City, Re-inventing History,” *Western Balkans Policy Review* 2, no. 1 (2012): 87.

<sup>244</sup> Dimishkovska, Ljubica Grozdanovska (2010). “A New Ancient City” Transitions Online, July 19, 2010, pp. 1-5.

<sup>245</sup> Kubierna, Michael. “Skopje 2014 - Musealizing the City, Re-inventing History?”, 88

Smith. Following this perspective I highlight the two most important aspects of the “antiquisation narrative”, namely authenticity and continuity, which culminated in the Skopje 2014 Project. Finally, I examine how the nation-building project in post-conflict Macedonia developed as a response to the perceived internal and external threats to Macedonian national identity.

#### **4.1. National Myths of Authenticity and Continuity**

Myths of authenticity, as Anthony Smith argues satisfy the community’s needs for specific identity and their quest for unique-ness. In that sense, he argues “authentic identity” has two meanings:

The first is that of origin: who are we is determined by ‘whence we came,’ a myth of origin and descent...The second is that of difference: who are we is determined by our relations with the ‘outsider,’ the other who is marked off from ‘us’ by not sharing in our distinctive character, our individuality. Memories of one or more golden ages play an important part here, for they hold up values and heroes that we admire and revere – which others cannot do, because they have different values and heroes.<sup>246</sup>

Furthermore, they present “particular formations of the nation as the natural and authentic version and thus glosses over its heterogeneity and internal diversity”<sup>247</sup> And finally, “to uncover nation’s authenticity and profound sameness of the co-nationals-to-be, cultural elites aspire to purity and mobilize ‘the people’ appealing to the putative communal past with its ‘golden ages’, heroes, and poetic spaces.”<sup>248</sup>

<sup>246</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *The Antiquity of Nations* (Wiley, 2004), 221.

<sup>247</sup> Umut Özkirimli, *Contemporary Debates on Nationalism: A Critical Engagement* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 164.

<sup>248</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (University of Nevada Press, 1991), 68–69.

In addition, Anthony Smith argues that the myth of authentic identity sanctifies the origin of the group and locates the community in its own historic space, its sacred homeland.<sup>249</sup> In that sense, the community which was “prior to everybody has the right to that territory over all others, meaning that, say the rights of citizenship must take second place to those of ethnicity and that those who have primacy also have the right to define (and maybe circumscribe) the rights of citizenship”.<sup>250</sup> Thus, autochthonism becomes the principle that “determines the historical right of the particular nations over controlling certain territories and symbols – the older the nation is imagined, the more powerful it is, thus the more right to manifest its dominion”.<sup>251</sup> Consequently, by transforming the territory into the ‘historic homeland’ “what is asserted is that an old state that once upon a time controlled the territory in question was a national state of our group”,<sup>252</sup> where “‘our’ sages, saints, heroes and great men lived, worked, prayed and fought”<sup>253</sup>

Very closely related to myths of authenticity, Smith introduces the national myths of continuity. According to Smith:

The return to a golden age suggests that, despite all ravages of time and the vicissitudes of social change, we are descendants of the heroes and sages of the great age...By establishing genealogical descent as well as cultural affinity with heroic age(s), later generations realize their own genuine heroic individuality.<sup>254</sup>

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<sup>249</sup> Geoffrey A. Hosking and George Schöpflin, *Myths and Nationhood* (C. Hurst & Co. Publishers, 1997), 49–50.

<sup>250</sup> George Schöpflin, *Nations, Identity, Power: The New Politics of Europe* (C. Hurst & Co. Publishers, 2000), 96.

<sup>251</sup> Anastas Vangeli, “Nation-building Ancient Macedonian Style: The Origins and the Effects of the So-called Antiquization in Macedonia,” *Nationalities Papers* 39, no. 1 (2011): 23,

<sup>252</sup> Pal Kolsto, *Myths and Boundaries in South Eastern Europe* (C Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd, 2005), 22.

<sup>253</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford University Press, 1999), 150–53.

<sup>254</sup> Smith, *The Antiquity of Nations*, 223.

Furthermore, he highlights that “the greater, the more glorious, that antiquity appears, the easier it becomes to mobilize people”.<sup>255</sup> Thus, the myths of continuity establish a sense of commonality between generations investing them with a special dignity by virtue of antiquity, pedigree and past glory.<sup>256</sup>

In what follows I examine how both, the myths of authenticity and continuity were reflected in the antiquisation narrative, and the Skopje 2014 Project as its culmination.

#### **4.2. Antiquisation Narrative and the Skopje 2014 Project**

With the coming to power of the VMRO-DPMNE, under the leadership of Nikola Gruevski, the nation-building project in Macedonia took a new turn. Namely, the Party initiated a process of redefining and reconstructing Macedonian national identity, which in the Macedonian public discourse became known as “antiquisation”.<sup>257</sup> The antiquisation narrative stressed a linear continuity of Macedonian national identity from antiquity to the present, in which the uppermost importance was given the figure of Alexander the Great. In that sense, it reflected both the myth of authenticity and continuity, by linking the roots of the modern Macedonian nation to antiquity, to those of the ancient Macedonians. The initial antiquisation measures, as Vangeli argues, “were rather spontaneous and resembled political populism”. He further contends that “the name of Alexander the Great was used to simply depict the nation's grandeur and to

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<sup>255</sup> Ibid., 213

<sup>256</sup> Matvey Lomonosov, *National Myths in Interdependence: The Narratives of Theancient Past Among Macedonians and Albanians in the Republic of Macedonia After 1991*, CEU Nationalism Studies Master Theses 2012/14 (Budapest: CEU, Budapest College, 2012), 32.

<sup>257</sup> Vangeli, “Nation-building Ancient Macedonian Style,” 13.

nourish the people's spirit".<sup>258</sup> In this regard, in 2006 Skopje airport was renamed to "Alexander the Great Airport" and new antique-style statues were installed in front of the government's building entrance.<sup>259</sup> Furthermore, this was accompanied by a series of printed editions of textbooks that glorified the "shadowy historical materials of the ancient Macedonian identity and historical events that expanded unfounded borderlines between purely the heroic 'ours', and the dirty 'theirs'."<sup>260</sup>

The antiquisation narrative became much more assertive after the second victory of VMRO-DPMNE, in the early elections in 2008, winning absolute majority in the Parliament, as well as after Macedonia's efforts to join NATO that same year were blocked by Greece because of the name issue. The post-2008 antiquisation measures as Vangeli argues were "numerous and multifaceted".<sup>261</sup> Subsequently, the Skopje stadium and the main highway which was part of the pan-European Corridor X were renamed to "National Arena Philip II" and "Alexander of Macedonia" respectively. Moreover, the government initiated a campaign for "raising the national dignity and optimism" titled "You are Macedonia". The campaign consisted of video clips and posters portraying Alexander the Great as a brave warrior who never backs off, since it was not "Macedonian" to retreat.<sup>262</sup> Similarly, in the aftermath of the presidential elections in 2009 another campaign under the title "Pride" was initiated. The posters of the campaign read:

Philip was Macedonian. Alexander was Macedonian. Saints Cyril and Methodius were Macedonians. Saint Clement Ohridski was Macedonian, Tsar Samuel was

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<sup>258</sup> Ibid., 20

<sup>259</sup> AndyMcNelly, "Macedonia Between Ohrid and Brussels," *Docstoc.com*, 28, accessed June 4, 2012.

<sup>260</sup> Ljubomir D. Frckoski, "Reconciliation and Transitional Justice in Macedonia, Ten Years Later," *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* (September 1, 2011): 48.

<sup>261</sup> Vangeli, "Nation-building Ancient Macedonian Style," 18.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid., 18–20.

Macedonian. King Marko was Macedonian. Karpos was Macedonian. Gemidjiite were Macedonians. Goce Delcev was Macedonian. Dame Gruev was Macedonian. Nikola Karev was Macedonian. Krste Misirkov was Macedonian. Metodija Andonov Chento was Macedonian. Be proud of our history; be proud of our ancestors. Be proud that you are Macedonian!<sup>263</sup>

In addition, as Vangeli shows, the antiquisation process gradually gained scientific and pseudo-scientific support from ethnic Macedonian intellectual circles. In that sense, he gives the examples of the newest official version of “The History of the Macedonian People” published by the Institute for National History which claimed “during the interaction of the immigrant Slavs and the native Ancient Macedonians, the ancient features prevailed and defined the development of the region”<sup>264</sup>; as well as the genetic survey conducted by the Swiss project iGenea whose findings suggested that “Macedonians have more ancient Macedonian blood than Greeks”.<sup>265</sup>

Another important feature of the antiquisation discourse according to Vangeli was the invention of new traditions, as referred to by Eric Hobsbawm as a “set of practices...of symbolic nature, which seek to in-calculate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past.”<sup>266</sup> In this regard, he gives the example of the “Xantica” holiday, promoted by the VMRO-DPMNE government in 2008, in which participants in the celebration are dressed in “ancient Macedonian” style uniforms. Similarly in the celebration of the “Ilinden” national holiday, which celebrates the “Ilinden Uprising” from 1903, the horsemen dressed in

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<sup>263</sup> Morten Dehli Andreassen, “‘If You Don’t Vote VMRO You’re Not Macedonian’ A Study of Macedonian Identity and National Discourse in Skopje” (June 17, 2011): 43.

<sup>264</sup> Vangeli, “Nation-building Ancient Macedonian Style,” 20.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>266</sup> Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence O. Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge University Press (1992), 19.

traditional “Komiti” uniforms have been replaced with new cavalry units dressed like ancient Macedonian soldiers.<sup>267</sup>

Finally, the myths of authenticity and continuity were most explicitly reflected in the Skopje 2014 Project which represented a culmination of the antiquisation narrative. Namely, the project includes the re-construction of the buildings destroyed by the earthquake in 1963, re-creation of authentic Macedonian architecture, as well as building of monuments and statues of “Macedonian” heroes from all eras. The heroes represented stemmed from antiquity- Alexander the Great and his father Philip II of Macedon; through the Roman Era- the monument of Iustinianus Primus; the Slavic Era and the Middle Ages- Cyril and Methodius, and Naum and Clement, as well as the monument to the “Macedonian” Emperor Samuel; through a series of monuments of the Ottoman Era and the inter-war period; and finally monuments from the Communist Era as well as monuments from recent Macedonian history-the monument for the victims of the 2001 ethnic conflict. Furthermore, the spatial proximity of the monuments and their concentration in the central area together with the “simple fact that the statues range from antiquity and the Roman-Byzantine Empire to Christian missionaries of the first millennium and revolutionary figures of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, suggests a linear trajectory towards a national identity”, which Kubienna concludes is “impossible to ignore”.<sup>268</sup>

Furthermore, the link to antiquity satisfied ethnic Macedonians’ needs for an authentic self-definition, in which uppermost importance was to be given to Alexander the Great and his father Philip II. The central position in the Project and the sheer size of

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<sup>267</sup> Vangeli, “Nation-building Ancient Macedonian Style.” p. 21

<sup>268</sup> Kubienna, “Skopje 2014 - Musealizing the City, Re-inventing History,” 90.

the monuments of these two figures just further substantiated the claim. Thus, in the antiquisation narrative, and its culmination the Skopje 2014 Project, ancient Macedonia was seen as the Golden Age of the Macedonian nation. As such, the antiquisation narrative was designed to generate a strong feeling of self-identification by constructing a link to the Golden Age of the Macedonian nation, a link to a glorious past around which the nation-building project could take place.

### **4.3. Skopje 2014: Nation-Building under the Societal Security Dilemma**

In order to understand the effects of the societal security dilemma, as Wæver argues it is necessary to study the “process whereby a group comes to perceive its identity as threatened, when it starts to act in a security mode on this basis and what behavior this triggers”.<sup>269</sup> When the society is threatened in terms of its identity, it tries to protect itself by strengthening its identity, as Wæver suggests “for threatened societies, one obvious line of defensive response is to strengthen societal identity. This can be done by using cultural means to reinforce societal cohesion and distinctiveness and to ensure that the society reproduces itself”.<sup>270</sup> In the process, Roe concludes “in defending against perceived threats, societal identity is (re)constructed and thus also strengthened”.<sup>271</sup>

As previous chapters have shown, the external contestation of a distinct Macedonian national identity, as well as the internal challenge to the Macedonian State - whose ethnic Macedonian character was perceived as the only protector of the Macedonian nation- by Macedonia’s domestic Albanian population, perpetuated the

<sup>269</sup> Wæver, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, 23.

<sup>270</sup> *Ibid.*, 191.

<sup>271</sup> Roe, “The Intrastate Security Dilemma,” 195.

societal security dilemma. Indeed it was these perceived threats to Macedonian national identity that the Skopje 2014 Project sought to address.

Namely, tracing the roots of the modern Macedonian nation to antiquity, satisfies the “quest for authenticity” and unique-ness of the Macedonian nation and the “urge to differ from the neighbors and ethnically different compatriots”.<sup>272</sup> The portrayal of the “authentic” Macedonian identity as rooted in antiquity, thus highlighting its pre-Slavic origins, disputes the expansionist claims from neighboring Slavic nations (Serbia and Bulgaria), who challenged the existence of a distinct Macedonian nation. Furthermore, by depicting the contemporary Macedonians as direct descendants from the ancient Macedonians means that “their ancestors have inhabited this territory prior to the ancestors of other peoples – Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbs, and Albanians”.<sup>273</sup> In that sense, the ‘natural’ right of the Macedonians over the land, as the autochthonous and indigenous people of the territory, implies having much more historic rights on the territory and its resources than the others, and at the same time played down ethnic Albanians’ demands for equal ownership of the State, since “they have come from somewhere out there and now they want to take over our land”.<sup>274</sup>

The organic bonds of the Macedonians with their “homeland”, co-relates with the perennial existence of this identity in continuity from antiquity to the present, thus emphasizing the nation’s “unceasing existence and affirmation throughout the centuries”.<sup>275</sup> More specifically, the Project implicitly established the presence of the name “Macedonia” throughout all periods from antiquity to the present. In that sense,

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<sup>272</sup> Vangeli, “Nation-building Ancient Macedonian Style,” 23.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>274</sup> Anastas Vangeli, “Antiquity Musing: Reflections on the Greco-Macedonian Symbolic Contest Over the Narrative of the Ancient Past” (Central European University, 2009), 61,

<sup>275</sup> Lomonosov, *National Myths in Interdependence*, 46.

Kubiena argues that “the naming issue with Greece has been included indirectly in the Project”.<sup>276</sup> Furthermore, by linking the contemporary State to the ancient empire of Alexander the Great and his father, the Project compensates the lack of statehood tradition which has served as grounds for denying the existence of a distinct Macedonian national identity by Macedonia’s neighbors.<sup>277</sup>

In that sense, the Prime Minister Gruevski explained the Project: “the main driving power of each success is the national spirit. The love for one’s past and inherited values has raised many nations from the ashes. Skopje 2014 puts an end to Macedonia without monuments...accompanied by constant denials of our nation, language, identity, history”.<sup>278</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> Ibid., pp. 89-92.

<sup>277</sup> Magdalena Elchinova, “Myth and Redefining Group Boundaries in Ethnic Discourse (on the Cases of Bulgaria and the Republic of Macedonia)” (New Bulgarian University, Sofia, 2003), 23.

<sup>278</sup> International Crisis Group, “Macedonia: Ten Years After the Conflict,” 2011, 2.

## Conclusion

Generally, this thesis examined the effects of security discourse on nation-building. By analyzing the case study of Macedonia it confirmed that the post-conflict nation-building project that took place in Macedonia was developed as a response to the internal and external perceived identity threats. While the weak state phenomenon reflected in the constant challenges of the character of the State, by the ethnic Albanians, together with the continuous disputes of a distinct Macedonian national identity by Macedonia's immediate neighbors, shaped security discourse in Macedonia to revolve around both the State as the only protector of Macedonian national identity, and the nation, as the State's main legitimizer- it was the Ohrid Framework Agreement that exacerbated its potential. Namely, by failing to address ethnic Macedonians' societal security requirements seen in the ethnic character of the State it served to intensify the societal security dilemma. As a result, the antiquisation narrative and the Skopje 2014 Project as its culmination sought to address these concerns, by tracing the roots of the Macedonian nation into antiquity, thus demonstrating the authenticity of its character, and disputing expansionist claims by neighboring nations. In doing so, the link to antiquity would also serve to verify the autochthonous and continuous character of the Macedonian nation, thus repudiating any claims by the ethnic Albanian "others" for equal status.

One possible limitation is that this thesis focuses primarily on the ethnic Macedonian point of view in discussing the security dynamics in Macedonia. Such limitation has come about from the mere fact of spatial limitation, as well as for avoiding possible digressions. In addition, this thesis focuses on aspects of security concerns

stemming from identity-based threats. In doing so, it neglects to take into account security concerns related to aspects of human security, namely poverty and unemployment, as well as corruption and organized crime. Taking into account the importance of such concerns and their prevalence in conditions of a weak state emphasizes the need for their inclusion in the analysis of security dynamics. However, on the other hand, focusing primarily on identity concerns sheds light on the process by which Projects like Skopje 2014 take place, which in the prospect of the new “Macedonia 2017” project announced by the government becomes even more relevant.

Finally, it is yet to be seen how the processes of globalization and “Europeanization” will affect security dynamics in Macedonia. While for now the prospect of EU integration serves as an “overlay” making violent conflict in Macedonia improbable, it is yet to be seen how their emphasis on “shared values” and “supra-national identity” would play into the security dynamics in Macedonia, a society in which national identity is defined in ethnic and exclusivist terms. As such, it would be the task of a future research to examine how notions of “supra-national identity” would highlight the need for yet another re-definition of Macedonian national identity in purely civic terms.

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