

The name change of North Macedonia

A study towards the attachment of inhabitants of North Macedonia to the country before
and after the name change



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I Summary

Macedonia: a name where is a lot to do about in the Balkan. The name goes back for centuries and is connected with great names as Alexander the Great and Philip II, who made from Macedonia a huge state with an area that spread from the Balkan until India. Nowadays we know Macedonia mostly as a small country in the middle of the Balkan. The name of this country however has changed only two years ago from Republic of Macedonia to Republic of North Macedonia. This had to do with a dispute about the name of the country in order to join the European Union and NATO: since the independence of North Macedonia in 1991 the country tries to become member of both organizations in order to get more protection and the profits of cooperation with many other countries. But to join both organizations all the member states have to agree that a country joins the organization. And in the case of Macedonia, it was mostly Greece that kept Macedonia from joining the European Union and NATO. Why? Because of the name.

In Greece, when people talk about Macedonia, they point to the region in the north of the country, which is called Macedonia as well. Within Greece this region is seen as the 'real' Macedonia. That is why there was anger within Greece when Yugoslavia fell apart during the 1990s, and a state took the name 'Macedonia' as constitutional name. According to Greece, this was a claim on the history and figures that belong to Greece. That is why Greece wanted that the newly formed country would change its name to something that did not point to the history of Macedonia. The newly formed country Macedonia refused this and chose in 1992 as flag the 16-point Sun of Vergina, a Macedonian symbol linked with Alexander the Great, who was – according to Greece – a Greek national hero. Greece went to court for this and won the trial: the newly formed country changed its flag to the Macedonian Sun with 8 rays.

But what did not change was the name: the country was still called Macedonia. Greece was still not confident with this and tried to convince the United Nations not to allow Macedonia as a state because of the claim on the history. Given the name dispute between Greece and Macedonia that worsened that time, during the 1990s, the United Nations decided to allow Macedonia as a member state, but only under the name Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, shortened to FYROM. The name dispute became eventually calmer, but Greece still did not allow Macedonia to join the European Union and NATO.

It would take until 2018 before Greece allowed Macedonia to join the European Union and NATO. The reason for this was the agreement between Macedonia and Greece that was signed in 2018, the Prespa Agreement, called after the lake that lies on the border between Greece and Macedonia. In this agreement stood that Macedonia would change its name if Greece would allow the country to join the European Union and NATO. The agreement was signed, the Republic of Macedonia was transformed into the Republic of North Macedonia and in 2020 North Macedonia became member of NATO. The path is open to join the European Union, but to reach this the country has to fulfil a few criteria. But at least the blockade by Greece that kept North Macedonia from joining for decades was gone.

Meanwhile, the inhabitants of North Macedonia suddenly lived in a country with a different name. This thesis tried to explain the feelings of attachment among the people from North Macedonia before and after the name change and if there are differences in feelings of attachment to their country. The people from North Macedonia don't look very different towards their country since the name change, but the way the name change took place was something that still rises questions within North Macedonia.

II Table of contents

I Summary.....	2
Chapter 1 Introduction.....	5
1.1 Framework	5
1.2 Relevance	5
1.2.1 Societal relevance.....	5
1.2.2 Scientific relevance.....	6
1.3 Project objective.....	6
1.4 Research questions.....	6
Chapter 2: Theories and concepts.....	7
2.1 Theories	7
2.1.1 Political geography	7
2.1.2 Balkan borders.....	8
2.1.3 Macedonia.....	9
2.2 Conceptual model	9
Chapter 3 Methodology	10
3.1 Research Strategy.....	10
3.2 Data collection.....	10
3.3 The interviews	11
Chapter 4: History of the Macedonian borders	12
4.1 The beginning	12
4.2 Macedonia and Greece	12
4.2.1 Hellenization of the Macedonian kingdom	12
4.2.2 Alexander the Great	13
4.2.3 Roman empire	13
4.3 Byzantine Empire.....	14
4.3.1 The early years	14
4.3.2 The Slavs	14
4.4 Ottoman Empire	14
4.5 The Macedonian Question	16
4.5.1 The parties.....	16
4.5.2 The partition.....	17
4.6 Yugoslavia.....	17
4.7 Another Balkan war	18
4.8 The fall of Yugoslavia.....	19
4.9 The Republic of Macedonia	20

Chapter 5: Attachment and identity	21
Chapter 6: Ancient Macedonian symbols	22
6.1 Alexander the Great	22
6.2 The Sun of Vergina	23
Chapter 7: The Macedonian name dispute	23
7.1 The Macedonian identity	24
7.1.1 The Greek view	24
7.1.2 The North Macedonian view	25
7.2 The first years of independence	26
7.3 Joining the European Union	27
7.4 The Prespa Agreement	27
7.5 Greece and North Macedonia nowadays	28
Chapter 8: Conclusions	29
8.1 History of the borders	29
8.2 Symbols of ancient Macedonia	30
8.3 The Macedonian name dispute	32
8.4 The Macedonian name change	32
8.5 The (sub-)questions	33
8.5.1 Sub-question 1	33
8.5.2 Sub-question 2	34
8.5.3 Sub-question 3	34
8.5.4 Main question	35
8.6 Discussion, reflection and recommendations	36
Reference list	38
9 Appendix	42
9.1 Interview scheme	42

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Framework

Yugoslavia. The name of the area in the south east part of Europe, north of Greece from 1918 until 2003. But during the 1980s, after the death of President Josip Broz Tito, troubles started to appear in the region (Djokic & Ker-Lindsay, 2010). Regions of the country which had more or less autonomy (under the Ottoman Empire) before the unity in 1918 wanted their autonomy back. In 1991, Slovenia became the first region to get independent and to get recognised by other countries. Later that year, the area around Skopje got independent as well. For the first time in history this region had its own state, and it called itself the Republic of Macedonia, although Greece was not very content with this name (Craven, 1995). The reason: in the north of Greece there is also a region with the name Macedonia, and Greece was scared that people would confuse the name of the country north of Greece with the Greek region. Greece saw it as a claim on the Greek history. These feelings of dissatisfaction from Greece endured until the area around Skopje changed its name in 2018, but are sometimes still there (Koneska, 2019).

1.2 Relevance

1.2.1 Societal relevance

Since its independence in 1991 the Republic of Macedonia wanted to join the European Union, the United Nations and NATO. To become a member state of the EU, all of the sitting members need to agree with the entrance of a new member state. For years, all of the member states agreed on the entrance of the Republic of Macedonia in the EU, except for Greece: Greece didn't allow the Republic of Macedonia to become a member because of the name of the country (Vasilev, 2011). The only way Greece would allow the Republic of Macedonia accessing the EU was that the Republic of Macedonia would change its name so it would be less similar to the name of the Greek region (Koneska, 2019). In June 2018, Greece and the Republic of Macedonia made an appointment at a place at Lake Prespa, a lake that lies between the two countries (Chrysosgelos & Stavrevska, 2019). During this appointment, both countries signed the agreement that the Republic of Macedonia would change its name to the Republic of North Macedonia. Due to the name of the lake, the agreement was called the Prespa Agreement. With the signing of this document, Greece allowed North Macedonia to join the EU by 2019 (Chrysosgelos & Stavrevska, 2019).

The path to joining the EU seemed free for North Macedonia. But then, France decided to not allow the entrance of North Macedonia in the EU. As a result of this decision, the negotiations between the EU and North Macedonia on EU accession got postponed and the parliament of North Macedonia resigned on February 17th 2020, because it couldn't keep its word to the people about joining the EU (NOS, 2020). In an interview with an inhabitant of North Macedonia came forward that inhabitants of North Macedonia felt 'betrayed' by the EU: the country took many steps to finally join the EU such as changing the name, but the EU didn't came over the bridge (NOS, 2019).

This thesis tries to find out whether the attachment of inhabitants of North Macedonia to their country has changed since the name change. In existing literature a lot has been written about how governments and researchers look towards the name change and how the negotiations went before and during the Prespa agreement, but the view of the people of North Macedonia themselves is something there has not been written a lot about. This thesis tries to give the North Macedonians a

voice so that it comes clearer how Macedonians think about the name change of their country. The people who have been interviewed in the existing literature were mostly governmental workers.

1.2.2 Scientific relevance

Since the independency of the Republic of Macedonia and the fall of Yugoslavia, a lot of articles and books have been written on the fall and how the countries have been living together since the fall. Also on the Prespa Agreement there are plenty of articles and journals online. It is for the first time since the independency of North Macedonia that Greece acknowledged the name of the area north of Greece and allowed its accession to the EU. The name change of the country does not only influence the political spheres; the name change has influence on the inhabitants of North Macedonia as well. That is where this thesis tries to contribute to already existent literature, giving a clearer insight of the view and vision of inhabitants of North Macedonia on the name change and how the attachment of the inhabitants might have changed since the name change. A lot has been written about the history between the two countries and which symbols play a role in the name dispute around the name of the Republic of North Macedonia. This thesis tries to connect to this existing literature with the view of the inhabitants of North Macedonia on the name change, and how this name change has effected the attachment of North Macedonians to their country and the symbols written about in the existing literature.

1.3 Project objective

In this thesis the views on both sides of the border will be analysed on the name change of North Macedonia, but mostly from the perspective of the inhabitants of North Macedonia. To come to conclusions as good as possible, it is important to know what the inhabitants of both countries think of the name change and its effects. To get to know the views of the inhabitants of both countries, interviews will be held with people who are born and have lived in North Macedonia and Greece. As a result, this thesis will be written with the information gathered by experiences and opinions of (former) inhabitants of North Macedonia and Greece, as well as on already existing literature.

This thesis will also take into account the effects of the expected accession of North Macedonia in the EU in 2020. Because this is something North Macedonia has been hoping for for years and this has been one of the reasons for the name change, the accession and the view of North Macedonians and Greeks on this accession will be analysed to find out what role the accession plays under the (former) inhabitants. This thesis tries to contribute to the existing literature with insights on both sides of the border on the name change of North Macedonia and how it might have influenced the attachment of North Macedonians to their country.

1.4 Research questions

The main research question in this thesis will be:

In how far did the name change of North Macedonia influence the attachment of North Macedonians to their country?

With this main question this thesis tries to investigate whether the view of inhabitants of North Macedonia has changed towards the identity of the country and if they experience differences in being 'Macedonian' and being 'North Macedonian' after the name change. This also includes the view of inhabitants of North Macedonia towards the Greek region Macedonia, and towards

Macedonian symbols as Alexander the Great and the Verginian sun and in how far these views have changed since the name change.

Sub-questions to answer the main questions are:

In how far do inhabitants of North Macedonia and inhabitants of the Greek region Macedonia appropriate ancient symbols as Alexander the Great and the Verginian sun?

How do inhabitants of North Macedonia describe the differences between their identity and the identity of inhabitants of the Greek region Macedonia?

What is the opinion of inhabitants of Greece on the name change of North Macedonia?

These sub-questions are formed to help answering the main question. The first sub-question tries to answer the question in how far North Macedonians and Greeks see ancient Macedonian symbols as 'theirs' and how they connect them to the two different areas.

The second sub-question tries to clarify how North Macedonians see their identity and how they see the identity of the Greek region Macedonian, and whether they see differences between the identities on both sides of the border. This sub-question takes into account what role the border plays in the difference between the different identities according to North Macedonians

The third sub-question tries to clarify the view of Greeks on the name change of North Macedonia. Thanks to the name change, Greece agreed on the North Macedonian accession to the EU.

Chapter 2: Theories and concepts

In this chapter several theories on which this thesis is written will be discussed. Later in the chapter, the conceptual model that arises from the research questions will be explained.

2.1 Theories

2.1.1 Political geography

In this thesis the situation of the name change of North Macedonia will be analysed from a political geographical view. Political geography is the part of human geography that has the closest link with studying politics (Agnew, 2016). In this field the geographical organization of governance is being analysed, as well as the spatial basis to political identities and movements of politicians and organizations. Furthermore, Agnew talks about the movement from a focus on spatial attributes of statehood to considering new questions about political movements.

In another work Agnew reflects on the break-up of Yugoslavia, between 1989 and 1994 (Agnew, 2003). He discusses that the break-up took place along ethnic-regional lines. He talks about the local causes of the break-up, such as a wrong distribution of power and well-being in the Balkan area by different ethnic groups. External parties, such as the US and West Germany, played a role as well in the Balkan wars between 1989 and 1994. The United States saw Yugoslavia as a buffer state between the west and the Soviet Union, where West Germany promoted local independence to do trade with the wealthier, northern part of Yugoslavia, the regions Croatia and Slovenia. The whole discussion about Yugoslavia remaining one state or individual regions got independent was mostly about the terms of the absolute sovereignty in the different regions. It was about regional governments and what they did in *their* state. "The name of the game is statehood" (p. 7).

Agnew distinguishes three geographical assumptions that produces a state-centric aspect of the geopolitical imagination (Agnew, 2003). These three assumptions are: sovereignty and territorial space, the territorial state as container of society, and third the domestic and foreign polarity. In world politics only states and states-in-the-making have a part of the to be divided space worldwide. "Territorial states are the individual actors of the geopolitical imagination" (p. 12). To this view is often referred as the Westphalian view, set up in 1648. It actually states that a single government has jurisdiction over a single territory. The regions in the Balkan area were holding on to this view in the years between 1989 and 1994; they wanted more and more an own state with an own government instead of being ruled by a central government leading a lot of different regions at the same time (Djokic & Ker-Lindsay, 2010).

2.1.2 Balkan borders

Borders are dynamic and have always been dynamic; worldwide borders have been changing since the beginning of states and will always be changing (Van Houtum, 2005). States appeared, disappeared, gained areas from other countries so that the borders changed from position, states formed one state together, such states declined and this will go on. The borders of states can widen, but also shrink. They can appear, or disappear. According to Friedrich Ratzel (1923), there are territorial limits on states. He argues that the borders of states limit the states and mark the end of a state; across the border a new state with other habits and ways of doing things start. According to John Agnew, there are no boundaries on borders of states (1994): at borders certain cultures or languages don't stop.

Agnew (2003) states that because of globalization, the world since the 1970s has become a "relatively less violent place, in the sense of major interstate wars at least, than it was in the twentieth century" (Agnew, 2003, p. 118). Agnew refers with this statement to the ending of the Cold War, but during the 1990s there was still enough violence, with many victims, deadly and wounded, in the Balkan area (Irwin, 2010). But what was it, that there were so many fights and conflicts in the Balkan area between so many different states?

When it comes to the wars in the Balkans, and especially the war and conflicts over Macedonia, Agnew states that there is more than just the historic-geopolitical context in which the fights take place in the Balkans (Agnew, 2002). However, this includes mostly the relation between Macedonia and Greece during the twentieth century. When we take a look at another work of Agnew, *The territorial trap: The geographical assumptions of international relations theory* (2008), he argues that it is to consider that territoriality plays a major role in the conflicts between states after the Cold War. This territoriality has to do with political frameworks and the volatility and the velocity of the world economy that have increased since the end of the Cold War. In earlier work Agnew (2003) discusses three geographical assumptions, that such conventional thinking as considering territoriality as basis for the wars in the Balkan, can rely on. These assumptions are sovereignty and territorial space, the territorial state as container of society, and third the domestic and foreign polarity (Agnew, 2003).

But what about borders, that mark territories? "My main normative commitment is to the idea that the answer to what borders do should always be related to the overriding ethical concern that they serve and not undermine human dignity and what Jonathan Seglow has called "the right to a decent life."" (Agnew, 2012, p. 3). According to Agnew in this work, border thinking should open up to consider that spaces, marked as territories, should be seen as dwellings instead of national places. Next to that, Agnew argues that border thinking should open up to consider that there should be more political responsibility in the search for a good life that can reach beyond borders of a particular state. Then, borders will not only limit the motion of several things as money and people,

but they also form a limit for the exchange of imagination, intellect and the political will. “The challenge is to think and then act beyond their present limitations” (Agnew, 2012, p.3).

2.1.3 Macedonia

The area has been ruled by the Ottoman Empire from 1355 until 1804. During this time, there was a border around the empire that marked the empire, and there were borders inside the empire, which indicated the states. After the Ottoman Empire fell apart a strong nationalism started to appear in the region. This nationalism in different regions in the area endured until 1918, when Yugoslavia was established as a nation of multiple regions in the Balkan area. But even though Yugoslavia was one nation made out of multiple different regions, there have always been certain feelings of proud and a need for an own state within the regions during the Yugoslavian time (Pavkovic, 2000). These feelings led eventually to the Balkan Wars during the 1990s, where Yugoslavia fell apart in several smaller states (Nation, 2003). This was when Macedonia gained its independence and formed an own state.

Different authors with different backgrounds look different towards the history of the borders and of the state Macedonia. Greek authors as Kofos (1964), Karakasidou (1997) and Demetriou (2001) argue that ancient Macedonia is part of the history of Greece, together with its heroes, tales and symbols, where Slavic authors as Vasilev (2015), Stawowy-Kawka (2008) and Taleski (2014) argue that ancient Macedonia was a state apart of Greece. What all the authors say in common is that Macedonia was influenced by Greek habitats and the Greek language. But where the Greek authors argue that ancient Macedonian heroes as Alexander the Great and Philip II were Greeks because of their language and habits, we see that the Slavic authors are less sure that such figures were Greek, because Macedonia had a state and a dialect which was different from Greece in that time.

As time went by the border between Macedonia and Greece changed a lot (Rossos, 2013). This happened in the direction that Greece gained more terrain from Macedonia, and also that Macedonia gained more terrain from Greece. The most recent example of a changing border is the first Balkan War from 1912-1913, where Greece got 34.356 km² of the area called Macedonia within the Ottoman Empire (Rossos, 2013). After this, Greece started to Hellenize this part, with as main city Thessaloniki, in order to expand the Greek area. The border that was drawn then between Macedonia and Greece is the border as we know today. And it seems that on both sides of the border authors look different towards the Macedonian history.

2.2 Conceptual model

In this thesis the attachment of inhabitants of North Macedonians to their country before and after the name change will be analysed. From the theory discussed earlier in this thesis comes clear that the borders of Macedonia have changed throughout the years, so the history of the country and its geographic changes should be taken into account. Next to that, this thesis tries to find out whether the former disagreement of Greece on North Macedonia accessing the EU because of the name dispute has influence on the view of inhabitants of North Macedonia. Furthermore this thesis tries to find out whether symbols that both regions claim have influence on how North Macedonians think about their country. All together, these elements give the following conceptual model, showing an indirect effect (figure 4).

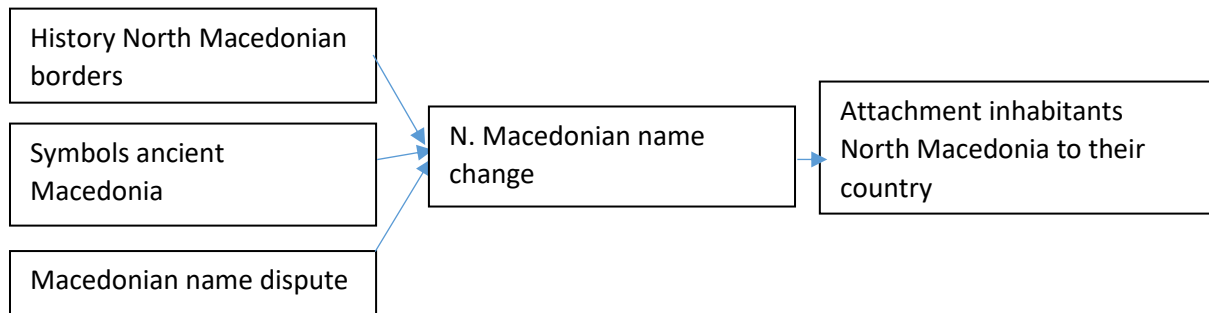


Figure 4: conceptual model

This conceptual model shows what this thesis tries to find out. Whether the North Macedonian name change has an effect on the attachment of the inhabitants of North Macedonia to their country, and what the effect the history between North Macedonia and Greece, the disagreement of Greece on North Macedonia joining the EU because of the name, and the symbols of ancient Macedonia have on the name change of North Macedonia.

Chapter 3 Methodology

In this chapter the research methods to gain information for this thesis will be explained. This includes the reasons why the methods are chosen and in which way the information will be gathered and used.

3.1 Research Strategy

Before writing this thesis it is important to have enough information from already written literature to be up-to-date about the subject and to start well-read on this thesis. This thesis will be written on a combination of information gathered from literature and from interviews with (former) inhabitants of North Macedonia and Greece. The gathering of data in this thesis will be qualitative. According to Vennix (2011), it is important for qualitative research to study a phenomenon in its natural environment. The interviews however will be held in the Netherlands with (former) inhabitants of North Macedonia and Greece..

The form of research will be case study, because the information comes from depth interviews with people who are more or less involved in the case and literature on how the borders of the region have changed throughout the years and the bond between Greece and North Macedonia throughout the years.

3.2 Data collection

In the thesis not only the view of North Macedonia will be taken into account, the view of Greece will be taken into account as well. By analysing these views and comparing them with each other and the literature on the history of (the borders of) the Balkan, this thesis tries to investigate whether the attachment of inhabitants of North Macedonia to their country has changed after the name change of the country.

In this thesis the voices of North Macedonian people will be gathered by taking interviews about their view of the situation described above. This will be done by interviewing (former) inhabitants of North Macedonia in the Netherlands on their view. Not only the view of (former) inhabitants of North Macedonia will be asked to their view; also people who live(d) in Greece will be asked on their view on the name. This will be done to get to know how people from Greece think about North Macedonia. Because this thesis tries to explain the view on the name change of North Macedonia from the perspective of (former) inhabitants of North Macedonia different kinds of people will be interviewed, not necessarily governmental workers or researchers. All these people with different backgrounds will be interviewed on their view to get as much information as possible on how different people with different backgrounds look at the situation of North Macedonia.

Due to the outbreak of the coronavirus and the measures that came along while writing this thesis the interviews will be held via Skype or by phone; it is nearly impossible to go to get an interview with someone face-to-face because the Dutch government advises to stay home.

3.3 The interviews

For this thesis, there have been held 9 interviews. All the interviews are taken with people who were raised in Greece or North Macedonia. The interviews have been held with the following people with the following backgrounds:

- Lazaros, a student from Greece, born and raised in Athens, Greece, studying in Nijmegen
- Michael, a student from Greece, raised on the Greek island Kos, studying in Eindhoven
- Andrea, a student from Greece, born and raised on the Greek island Andros
- Maria, a student from North Macedonia, with a Greek father and a Macedonian father studying in Nijmegen
- Igor, a student from the south of North Macedonia, studying in Nijmegen
- Goran, a student from North Macedonia, born and raised in Veles, studying in Leiden
- Alex, a student from North Macedonia, born and raised in the east of Macedonia, studying in Eindhoven and living in Roosendaal
- Bogdan, a man born and raised in North Macedonia, but lives in the Netherlands for a couple of years now
- Vladimir, a man aged 61, who is born and raised in North Macedonia, and lives close to the border with Greece

As said earlier, due to the corona outbreak it was impossible to do the interviews face-to-face, so the interviews took place online, via Skype and Whatsapp. I want to thank the people who were interviewed for this bachelor thesis very much for their time and help.

From the first three interviews I sadly lost the recording due to a technical error of the recorder, but the information I received during these interviews was still useable for this thesis, as I typed along during the interviews. The information I gathered this way was still useful and has been used in this thesis.

All the names of the respondents in this thesis are aliases to guarantee and respect the privacy of the people who were interviewed for this thesis.

Chapter 4: History of the Macedonian borders

In this chapter, the history of the borders and occupiers of the area what is now the Republic of North Macedonia will be shortly described. The beginning point is the point from where we know civilization settled in North Macedonia, and from there this chapter will explain chronologically the dynamics of the borders and the different occupiers to the present. Most information is retrieved from work by Andrew Rossos (2013), supplemented by other sources to discuss certain points.

4.1 The beginning

There have been living people in the area that is now called North Macedonia since 6000 BC. Archaeological findings indicate two main influences during that time; the Aegean-Anatolian influence and the Central European influence (Rossos, 2013). The Aegean-Anatolian influence indicates the early Greek influence, where the Central European influence indicates the early Balkan area influence. Around 2800 BC, there were sizeable populations in western and central Macedonia. The Early Iron Age (1050-650 BC) is the oldest time period where information from inhabitants in the region is known: in this period there were Illyrian and Thracian tribes in the area.

The origin of Macedonians is today still a topic of discussion between historians. What we know is that the Macedonian people developed their own dialectics and habits during the last centuries BC. "They were different from the Illyrians to the north and north west, the Thracians to the east and north east, and the culturally more advanced Greeks to the south, in the city states" (Rossos, 2013, p. 12-13). During the fourth century BC, the Macedonian took over some cultural aspects from Greece and the official communication was via the Greek language, but nevertheless, the Macedonians stayed themselves. Kiro Gligorov, the first democratically chosen president of the Republic of Macedonia, stated in 1991: "they were generally perceived in their own time by Greeks and themselves not to be Greeks" (Rossos, 2013, p. 13).

The first Macedonian kingdom is believed to be formed during the seventh century BC, when people from the western and north western parts of Macedonia, 'Upper Macedonia' started to move to more central 'Low Macedonia'. This migration was led by King Perdiccas I, who created the state between the rivers Ludias and Axios. Nowadays, we know these rivers as Loudias, which runs through the Greek region Macedonia, and Vardar, which runs through North Macedonia and Greece.

4.2 Macedonia and Greece

4.2.1 Hellenization of the Macedonian kingdom

During the sixth century BC, the Macedonian kingdom fell under Persian rule (Vasilev, 2015). But in 479 BC, the Macedonian kingdom regained independence from Persia again under King Alexander I. When Persia and Greece were still fighting, Alexander I took advantage of the situation and conquered the Greek colony Lydia, which had rich mineral deposits (Rossos, 2013). With the capture of this colony, the Macedonian kingdom proceeded in the pursuit to an exit to the sea. But Athens was not satisfied with this conquering; Athens wanted to lead the whole Thracian coastal area.

Alexander I was known as the 'philhellene', because of his appreciation for the Greek city-states. He started to Hellenize the Macedonian court and elite (Rossos, 2013). After his death the Macedonian kingdom played an important role in the wars among Greek city-states: the Macedonian kingdom chose the side of different parties just to stay safe and without being taken in. The Macedonian

kingdom stayed more or less stable until Alexander IV, also known as Alexander the Great, becomes king.

Later, under Philip II (359-336 BC), the Macedonian kingdom expanded its territory widely until it became a big Balkan state (Rossos, 2013). He secured the way to sea by conquering important trading points on the route. Rossos mentions that the kingdom was expanded “to Lake Lychnida (Ohrid) in the north west” (Rossos, 2013, p. 14). Lake Ohrid nowadays lies in the south west part of the country, on the border with Greece. This is a sign that the borders of the Macedonian kingdom that age also included terrain of the nowadays Greek region Macedonia. After this conquering, he conquered more and more areas among the Greek city-states, with even victories over Athens and Thebe. He wanted to head east to fight the common area, the Persians, but he died in a clash 336 BC, and his son, Alexander, followed him up.

4.2.2 Alexander the Great

Different sources write differently about Alexander III, better known as Alexander the Great. During the interviews came clear that the North Macedonians and the Greeks both look differently towards the origin of Alexander. From 336 until his death in 323 BC, Alexander expanded the Macedonian kingdom with areas along the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea and even until areas which are nowadays in the west of India (McKay et al., 2014). Even though his age – he was only twenty years old when he became king – he was well prepared to lead the kingdom and the armies. In 334 BC, he led an army of Macedonians and Greeks to Persia. In the next three years, he moved more eastwards into Persia. After these first three years he was already in the area what is now Syria. Later he conquered Egypt, where the people saw him as liberator and named him pharaoh, their leader. He then founded a new capital for Egypt at the Mediterranean coast, called Alexandria, which still exists. Not as a capital, but still as a big city. In 330 BC, the Persians surrendered, the Persian Empire was fallen and the wars were over. In 324 BC he had conquered areas in nowadays Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Iran and India. Here stopped the expansion of his empire.

He would never go home; a year later he died because of fever near Babylon, which is now in Iraq. During his trip eastwards, he brought the Hellenistic culture everywhere he came. He founded cities and spread the Greek culture in the areas he conquered (McKay, 2014). His contemporaries in the city-states in Greece thought he was an evil tyrant, but Roman and Roman writers admired him later on. They even started to regard him as philosopher, interested in the common good. “The most common view today is that Alexander was a brilliant leader who sought personal glory through conquest, and who tolerated no opposition” (McKay, 2014, p. 97).

After the death of Alexander the Great, the Hellenizing started again in the area. The areas Macedonia had under control after the death of Alexander were only a few: some areas in Hellas, some areas in Egypt and some areas in Persia. But the empire was far smaller than it was under Alexander the Great, when it stretched from the Balkans to east India (Rossos, 2013).

4.2.3 Roman empire

In 168 BC, Macedonia became the first Roman province in the Balkans (Rossos, 2013). During the Roman period, the borders shifted frequently. In the fourth century AD, different source point to two Macedonia's in the Roman empire according to Rossos. These two Macedonia's were called Macedonia Prima, with capital Salonika (now Thessaloniki) and Macedonia Secunda, with capital Stobi (now Gradsko). Remarkable is that of these cities nowadays one lies in the Republic of North Macedonia (Gradsko) and one lies in the Greek region Macedonia (Thessaloniki). According to J. Wiseman (1984), the borders of Macedonia Secunda can be retrieved from several topographical studies. What we now know is that Macedonia Secunda was a way smaller area north of Macedonia

Prima, with only 8 known places, where Macedonia Prima has about 32 known places. According to Wiseman, historical, topographical and epigraphical research point out that the area of Macedonia Secunda was formed by the middle Vardar and stretched from the Bregalnica River in the north east (now near Štip, North Macedonia) to the mid-Crna River in the south west (now near Prilep, North Macedonia) (Ecole française de Rome, 1984). This area nowadays forms the heart of the Republic of North Macedonia. After the decline of the Roman empire in 395 AD, the Macedonians formed one area again.

4.3 Byzantine Empire

4.3.1 The early years

In 395 AD, Macedonia becomes, just like most of the Balkan regions, part of the Byzantine Empire. During the fourth and the fifth century AD, Macedonia gets invaded by the Huns and the Goths, who devastate Macedonia (Rossos, 2013). About this time period there is little known, only that the Huns and the Goths didn't stay very long. But everything changes when the Slavs enter the area and they decide to stay.

4.3.2 The Slavs

In the fifth and sixth century the Slavs entered the area that then was part of the Byzantine Empire (Shea, 2008). The Slavic expansion started around 150 AD from the area what is now Hungary southwards to the Balkans and until Greece. The Slavic language replaced the Illyrian, Thracian and Phrygian languages in the Balkan area. The tenth-century emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus mentioned the inhabitants of the area of Macedonia as Makedons when he spoke of the Macedonian Slavs. During the middle ages, the Byzantines spoke of Macedonians as well when they mentioned the Slavic inhabitants of the area of Macedonia. Until 1018 AD, the Macedonian Slavs build a state that started with a size nearly the same size the Republic of North Macedonia has nowadays, with Ohrid as capital. At the end of the 10th century AD the Macedonian Slavs had expanded their area with areas between the Black Sea and the Adriatic sea, as well as Serbia and Thessaly.

After 1014 AD, the area of Macedonia decreased and Macedonia became part of the East Roman Empire. Although they were dominated by a large empire, the Macedonians could keep their language and habits. The country was at the end of tenth century inhabited by many cultures, but most of the inhabitants were Slavs (Shea, 2008). From 1018 AD, Macedonia became a region of the Bulgarian area inside the Byzantine empire, with its capital Skopje and as other big 'theme' Salonika (Rossos, 2013). After 1025, the Byzantine Empire wanted to reduce the Slavic traditions in Macedonia and started to Hellenize cities as Ohrid by appointing high positions to Greeks and by settling non-Slavs among Slavs. This led to rebellions with in 1040 AD with as important happening the take-over of Skopje by the Slavic troops. But in 1041, the cities and areas the Slavs had conquered by rebellions, were captured again by the Byzantine empire. The next three centuries were unstable, with different rulers and with plenty of wars, but most of the time Macedonia remained a part of the Byzantine Empire, until around 1400, when the Ottomans were expanding their area. It was around 1400 that the Ottomans had conquered nearly whole Macedonia, except for Salonika. But this changed in 1430, when Salonika fell.

4.4 Ottoman Empire

In 1430, the Macedonian area fell under the vision of the Ottoman Empire completely by the surrender of Salonika to Sultan Murad II (Shea, 2008). This was the beginning of a period of almost

500 years of Ottoman reign in the area, until the Balkan Wars started in 1912 (Rossos, 2013). The first two centuries the area was stable and the reign worked pretty well on the Empire: “the autocratic and theocratic system worked extremely well” (Rossos, 2013, p. 45). By 1600, the Ottoman system stopped expanding and started to decline later on, with the first territorial losses in the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century, when there were more and more rebellions in the empire, the area of Macedonia started to Hellenize again, with replacing of the Slavonic Church and with installing Greeks in high positions in Ohrid.

During the Ottoman occupation, the Ottomans tried to spread the Turkish religion and language throughout the empire, and they had little interest for the other religions and languages, which counted for the Orthodox church in the Balkans as well (Rossos, 2013). However, even though during the first ages of the Ottoman occupation the Orthodox religion more or less froze in the region, Greeks were taking over the high positions within the church and started to Hellenize it. The main language in the church, as well as in education, became Greek. The Slavonic churches could do very little against it, as the Greeks administered the Orthodox parts of the Ottoman Empire and thus helped to run the Ottoman Empire. However, there were some monasteries in the Upper Macedonia, where monks thought education to small groups in the Slavic language. These arose in the seventeenth and eighteenth century and sometimes the monks opened their own schools in Macedonian towns. There were such schools in Veles, Prilep and Skopje. Even though the Greek language and culture were dominating the area, Slavic schools kept maintained, what led to surviving of the Slavic language in the Macedonian area.

Even in the period of the Ottoman Empire, sources talk about the borders like they were ages ago, of Macedonia Prima and Macedonia Secunda. Felix de Beaujour, at the end of the eighteenth century consul in Salonika, reports the borders of the Turkish districts in the Balkan area as the ancient Macedonian borders. He talks about the more populated Lower Macedonia, where Salonika lies, and that it is far bigger than Upper Macedonia (Rossos, 2013). Today, the borders of the Republic of North Macedonia are to find within the borders of Upper Macedonia, where the borders of the Greek region Macedonia are mostly to find within the borders of Lower Macedonia, with the city of Salonika in it, now Thessaloniki.

When the Ottoman Empire declined during the nineteenth century, the region of Macedonia became more and more important to a lot of countries in the Balkan. By 1800, Macedonia was a part of the Ottoman province Rumelia, which stretched from the capital Sofia (Bulgaria) in the north, to Stip (North Macedonia) in the west and to Salonika (Greece) in the south (Rossos, 2013). Later in nineteenth century, the capital of Rumelia became Manastir (now Bitola), which nowadays is in the Republic of North Macedonia, and Manastir became an important Ottoman administrative and military centre.

In the period 1800-1912 there was more and more a call for more autonomy in the Balkan region, which was expressed in various autonomous polities that arose in the region (Blumi, 2011). The first regions that revolted were Serbia, in 1802 and 1815 and Greece, which gained independence in 1830 as a small kingdom (Rossos, 2013). This kingdom had as northern frontier the line between Arta in the west and the Gulf of Volos in the west (Dakin, 1973). Nowadays, this line is a more or less horizontal line in the middle of the mainland of Greece. The Greek kingdom that was established in the 1830s did also not include islands as Crete, Samos and the Ionian islands. However, Athens was in the kingdom. Salonika was still a part of Macedonia, and would be added to Greece during Conference of Berlin in 1881, after the Slavs gained a lot of territory on the Balkans during the Congress of Berlin in 1878 (Dakin, 1973). In 1864, the Ionian Islands were ceded to Greece by the United Kingdom, and Crete became a part of Greece in 1913.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, cities in Macedonia flourished in their industries and the population increased in cities as Skopje, Ohrid, Prilep, Salonica and Struga. During the 1850s and 1860, the communication and infrastructure in Macedonia improved (Rossos, 2013). There came roads to connect Macedonian cities and the first telegraph line arose, which connected Skopje with Pristina (now Kosovo) and via Belgrade Europe and via Bitola with Albania. In 1873, the first trains rode on the railroad from Salonica to Skopje and further north. This was organized by the Ottoman rulers and it grew further until the fall of the Ottoman Empire in the early 1900s. In the Balkan region however, the political state started to become less secure and more and more countries were concerned about where Macedonia belonged to. This resulted in the Macedonian Question, that started to arise in the 1870s.

4.5 The Macedonian Question

4.5.1 The parties

The countries who were concerned about the possession and control of Macedonia, what started in the 1870s, were Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia (Rossos, 2013). The fight about who was the 'rightful owner' of Macedonia started between Bulgaria and Greece, as the Bulgarians claimed that most of the population was Bulgarian, where the Greeks claimed that the area belonged to them (Roudometof, 2002). Later on, the Serbs also joined the conflict. The question to who Macedonia actually belonged was called the Macedonian Question. During the next three decades, nationalism came up more and more in the Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian regions, which the Ottoman Empire tried to stop.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman bureaucracy started to set up reform programs to provide equality among all the inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire (Roudometof, 2002). This was set up by the Ottomans to prevent the nationalistic movements that arose in the Balkan area to grow. "This attempt to establish interethnic citizenship among the Ottoman population was a deliberate effort to provide a meaningful alternative to the rising Greek, Serb and Bulgarian nationalisms" (Roudometof, 2002, p. 18).

In the second part of the nineteenth century, nationalistic ideas came up in the Macedonian region, which led to the formation of the VMRO (Vnatrešna Makedonska Revoloesjionerna Organizatsjija), a revolutionary organisation, in 1893 (Rossos, 2013). This organisation tried to secure an autonomous state for Macedonia on the Balkans by violence.

Later, in 1912, the nationalistic movements in Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece led to the formation of coalitions and armed troops (Roudometof, 2002). During battles in 1912 and 1913 they were able to defeat the Ottoman Empire and divided the Macedonian area among them. Later, these battles became known as the Balkan Wars, which started with the rise of the Macedonian Question. Eventually the Macedonian area was split up in three parts: Greece got Aegean Macedonia, Bulgaria got the Slavic speaking part of Macedonia (Pirin Macedonia) and Serbia got the Yugoslavian part (Vardar Macedonia) (Danforth, 1993). In the years after the dividing of Macedonia, Bulgaria and Greece denied the existence of a Macedonian state. The Bulgarians saw the Macedonians that lived in Bulgaria, where the Greeks started to Hellenize names of people and towns in Aegean Macedonia. Next to that, they started to destroy Slavic literature and people who saw themselves as Slavs were sent to Bulgaria and Turkey.

4.5.2 The partition

Greece got the greatest part of the three; Greece gained an area with a surface of 34.356 km² (Rossos, 2013). This gained area was divided by Greece in three different parts: a central part, with the capital Salonika, an eastern part with the capital Kavala and with cities as Seres and Drama; and a western part, with the capital Kazani. An interesting conclusion Rossos makes, is that every source that writes about that time, except for the Greek ones, acknowledges that the majority of Macedonians were Slavic speakers before the partition in 1913.

Where Greece got the largest part of the Macedonian region, Bulgaria got the smallest part, with a surface of 6.788 km² (Rossos, 2013). This was due to the battles Bulgaria lost during the Balkan Wars in 1912-1913. In addition to Serbia and Greece, Bulgarians gave the Macedonians the freedom and rights to be Macedonian and to have a Macedonian cultural and political life.

Although Macedonia was divided in three parts, the Slavic Macedonians held during the inter bellum period still feelings of Macedonian nationalism and the need for an own state, whether they were Aegean Macedonian, Pirin Macedonian or Serbian Macedonian (Rossos, 2013). In Bulgaria, the VMRO stayed very active, and in Serbia and Greece more and more movements were set up among Macedonians to let the Macedonian nationality survive.

The borders that were set during the partition in 1913 became eventually the borders as we know them these days, with the Republic of North Macedonia within the borders of the Yugoslavian part after the partition in 1913. The parts that went to Greece and Bulgaria belong these days still to those countries, where in Bulgaria many Macedonians stayed, and where from Greece many Macedonians left for what is now the Republic of North Macedonia or other eastern European countries (Rossos, 2013).

4.6 Yugoslavia

The part of Macedonia that became part of Serbia in 1913, became in 1918 part of the newly formed country Yugoslavia (Danforth, 1993). Until World War II, the Serbs didn't see the Macedonians as Macedonian, but as southern Serbs. Later, when Tito was reigning in 1944, he set up together with other leaders of the Communist Party in Yugoslavia, the People's Republic of Macedonia, with the capital Skopje, as a state within the new Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Before this, a national or ethnic Macedonia was not allowed by the Serbs. From August 2 1944, Macedonia got its own recognised state and developed an own language and established an own Orthodox Church in 1967. Between 1946 and 1949, the population of Yugoslavia and Macedonia grew when 35.000 Slavic Macedonians fled from the Greek Civil War to Yugoslavia and other countries in eastern Europe, because people who spoke Macedonian in Greece were prosecuted (Kofos, 1964).

After World War II, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia negotiated about a possible consolidation of Pirin Macedonia and Vardar Macedonia (Moore, 1979). The leaders of both countries, Tito (Yugoslavia) and Dimitrov (Bulgaria), met in Bled in Slovenia in 1947 to discuss the consolidation of both Macedonian parts to form a strong Balkan state. When the Soviet Union heard about the plans of making one state out of the two Macedonian parts, the Macedonian and Bulgarian leaders were called to Moscow, where the Soviet leaders told the Soviet Union wanted an immediate federation. The Yugoslavs then stepped back from the plan, sensing a trap by the Soviets to rule the area. The federation project eventually bled to death. Nowadays, Pirin Macedonia is still an oblast in Bulgaria, carrying the name Blagoevgrad, with the capital Blagoevgrad (Rychlík, 2007).

The establishment of an own state with the name Macedonia meant that Macedonia got its own state with the name Macedonia for the first time since 168 BC, when the Romans occupied the area (Rossos, 2013). In the meantime, Macedonia was, and still is in the 1950s, subject to many occupations and struggles regarding to who its owner is (Roudometof, 2002). Where in the first ages the Romans and Byzantines ruled over Macedonia, as the time passed by the important players who claimed to be the owner of Macedonia became Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria, after the Ottoman Empire had vanished in the 1910s. The motives for claiming the area of Macedonia came mostly forward out of historical perspective, to gain back what was theirs (Roudometof, 2002). According to Foucault (1984), however, the examination of discontinuities in national narratives should not be determined by history, but by genealogy. Genealogy tries to subvert the quest for origins, by taking into account the relationship between knowledge and the dynamics of domination and power into the process of the production of knowledge.

From 1950 until the Balkan Wars during the 1980s and 1990s, there were no many rumours in Yugoslavian Macedonia (Rossos, 2013). Under the dictator Tito, Yugoslavia had a different communistic regime than the Soviet communism, a way more open form. Sometimes, especially between the 1960s and the 1980s, it almost felt like there was a liberal regime in Yugoslavia. His slogan was: *bratstvo i jedinstvo*, what stands for brotherhood and unity (Nation, 2003). He gave the different regions within the Yugoslavian Republic a certain amount of autonomy, but the institutions were subordinated at the federal level of the Yugoslavian Republic. This gave Macedonia the opportunity to develop an own dialect, as mentioned earlier. During the 1960s the dialect became distinguishable from Bulgarian, where before the 1960s the language spoken in Macedonia was almost identical to Bulgarian. This gave Macedonia the opportunity “to bolster a distinctive Macedonian Slavic identity” (Nation, 2003, p. 72).

4.7 Another Balkan war

After the death of Tito in 1980, the economic and political decline within the Yugoslavian Republic started to accelerate (Nation, 2003). Where Tito was president for life, when he died the power was picked up by eight high members of the government, each representing a federal entity within the republic who together formed a collective presidency. The position of chair was rotated every year.

During the economic and political decline in the 1980s, more and more nationalistic leaders stood up in the different federal states within the Yugoslavian Republic (Nation, 2003). Within Serbia, Slobodan Milosevic gained more and more influence as ‘ethnocrat’. In 1987, he gained the highest power in Serbia. Within Slovenia there were more and more cultural movements against old dogmas of Yugoslavia. These movements tried to show the ‘cultural superiority’ of Slovenia within Yugoslavia. In Croatia there were already movements in the 1970s. In 1971, during the Croatian Spring, Croatia tried to reform several things in the Yugoslavian Republic on political and cultural grounds, and to gain more autonomy for Croatia at the same time. This Croatian Spring was suppressed in 1971, but the Croatian Nationalism, what caused the Croatian Spring, revived in the 1980s. In 1989, the Croatian Democratic Community (Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica) was established. This community served as a kind of forum especially for nationalist politics of Croatia.

In 1988, Milosevic gained the highest power in the Yugoslavian Republic, and he was the first one since Tito who made it happen that so much power was settled on one person (Nation, 2003). He tried to install the Serbian nationalism in Yugoslavia, where the representing members of Slovenia and Croatia, who were both nationalistic in their ideas as well, couldn’t stop him. In 1989, Ante Markovic, a Bosnian Croat, came with a plan to a Yugoslavian solution, the Markovic Plan. At first it

looked like the plan could work out, with strengthening of the Yugoslavian currency *dinar*, but on short term Markovic didn't reach the amount of trust what was needed to make the plan work.

More and more plans to keep Yugoslavia together, initiated by the Serbs, ended up unused, and more and more congresses of the leaders in Belgrade ended up with disagreement (Nation, 2003). At the last Congress, in January 1990, the delegations of Slovenia and Croatia walked away from the Congress, out of protest against the purported hegemony of Serbia. Later in 1990, on July 2, Slovenia declared the sovereignty. However, the Serbian led Yugoslavia did not recognize this event.

4.8 The fall of Yugoslavia

"The war of all against all began in April 1990" (Nation, 2003, p. 104). A Serbian minority in the Croatian area started to create its own state, which did not held for long. The first violent actions appeared in February 1991, when Serbia wanted to broaden its area by taking in a police station in western Croatia. This was the start of the ethnic conflicts in whole Yugoslavia, where villages fought each other and neighbours became scared of each other (Nation, 2003).

The fight between villages became a fight between states, when Croatia and Slovenia announced their disassociation from Yugoslavia at July 24th 1991 (Nation, 2003). They called it disassociation instead of secession, to emphasize the point that the Yugoslavian Republic formerly was established out of free will from all the nations. Where the Serbian leader Milosevic agreed on the disassociation of Slovenia, was this not the case with the disassociation of Croatia, or Zagreb, as he called it. In the area of Croatia there were still many members of the Serbian minority in Croatia who wanted an own state. Milosevic supported these Serbian Croats in order to create an own state within Croatia.

When we take a look at the situation in Macedonia, we see that the situation inside the state, as in the whole Balkan area, was fed by conflicts. "In the troublesome years 1990–6, relations between Yugoslavia and Macedonia were very much influenced by the crisis and civil war in the territory of former Yugoslavia" (Dobrkovic, 1999, p. 80). Macedonia became disassociated from Yugoslavia in September 1991 (Irwin, 2010). In January 1991 Kiro Gligorov, a 74-year old Macedonian politician who was also member of the state presidency of Yugoslavia, was elected as president of Macedonia. When Croatia and Slovenia became their disassociation in June 1991, Macedonia wanted to follow their lead. Kiro Gligorov, the chosen president of Macedonia, was chosen during the first elections in Macedonia in January 1991. His party, the VMRO-DPMNE, became the biggest of the country (Irwin, 2010). The government was formed by three parties: two Macedonian parties and one Albanian party. At first, Gligorov, together with the leader of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegovic, wanted to maintain Yugoslavia and reform the system to let Yugoslavia as a state survive (Daskalovski, 2004). But the gap between the opposing forces at that time, Serbia and Slovenia, only became bigger and the situation in Yugoslavia worsened, and what followed was a violent summer in Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia.

On September 8th 1991 a referendum was held within Macedonia, with as theme the independence of Yugoslavia. The referendum outcome was positive, with most Macedonians voting for independence (Irwin, 2010). According to Daskalovski (2004), over 95% of the voters voted for the independence of Macedonia. But the outcomes were dangerous: the dissolution of Yugoslavia caused several threats for Macedonia (Irwin, 2010). But Macedonia went on in the process to get independent and on September 17th 1991 the Macedonian parliament "adopted a Declaration on the proclamation of the results of the referendum" (Daskalovski, 2004, p. 55). On November 1st 1991 the

new constitution was promulgated: Macedonia would become a parliamentary democracy, where the Macedonians and the minority groups would live together in harmony. On November 21st 1991, Macedonia declared its independence and disassociated itself from the Yugoslavian 'rump'.

4.9 The Republic of Macedonia

The society within the republic should be built on the protection of the principles of human rights and freedom, according to the government shortly after the independence of Macedonia (Daskalovski, 2004). But after the disassociation of Macedonia from Yugoslavia, many ethnic Albanians who lived in Macedonia were not happy with the new constitution of the newly formed country. The tense among Macedonian Albanians was a result of a different perception about the underlying concept of the Macedonian state, where Albanians had the feeling they were demoted in comparison with the underlying concept of the state during the Yugoslavian period (Daskalovski, 2004). The tense resulted in several protests from Macedonian Albanians in the southwest of Macedonia. The tense within the Albanians, that appeared in 1991 after the independence of Macedonia, is nowadays still among the Macedonian Albanians who live in Macedonia. The Albanian parties, who represent the biggest minority within Macedonia, denied the legitimacy of the constitution of Macedonia, and still question the validity of the Macedonian state.

It almost lead to a civil war within in Macedonia in 2001 (Reka, 2008). The Albanians united themselves in the Albanian Uprising, addressing the emphasis on inequalities between Macedonians and Albanians in the Constitution of Macedonia in 1991. To prevent a civil war breaking out, the Macedonians made an agreement with the Albanians called the Ohrid Agreement (Reka, 2008). In this agreement the Constitution of Macedonia from 1991 was supplemented with lines that the Macedonians and the minority groups are more equal. This was not only beneficial for the Albanians within Macedonia, but also for the other, smaller minority groups within Macedonia, such as the Turks.

Since the independence in 1991, Greece has never been content with the attitude of Macedonia, using symbols and names that according to the Greeks belong to Greece (Roisman & Worthington, 2010). The first thing they didn't like, was the choice for the name Macedonia. According to Greece, that name belongs to the northern part of Greece, together with its history and symbols. That is the reason that they Greece did not like the symbol on the flag chosen by Macedonia: the Sun of Vergina, that refers to Alexander the Great (Roisman & Worthington, 2010). According to Greece, Macedonia should not 'claim' these symbols. What followed where trials at court, that the Greeks won in 1995. Since then, Macedonia has an eight-pointed sun instead of the sixteen-pointed star of Vergina.

Since the independence of Macedonia in 1991, there have been two major political parties within Macedonia. These are the VMRO-DPMNE (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation-Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity) on the right, that delivered the first president Gligorov and Prime Minister in 1991, and the SDSM (Social Democrats) on the left, that delivered the last Prime Minister Zoran Zaev (Macedonian premier may not control fractious coalition, 2017). In February 2020, the parliament lead by the SDSM stepped down after it could not keep its word to the promise that Macedonia would join the EU after the name change in 2018 (NOS, 2020). In the meantime, between 1991 and 2015, the two parties reigned the country, with alternately the SDSM and the VMRO-DPMNE as biggest party after elections (Bértoa & Taleski, 2015).

Chapter 5: Attachment and identity

In this chapter the meaning of attachment and identity within Macedonia will be paraphrased, and how people can have attachment towards a country, an area or a culture, with the concepts of J. Agnew as leading concepts. This also includes the role of borders and territories.

When we take a look at the Balkans, Agnew (2012) states that there is a great heterogeneity of ethnicities and social practices, especially when it comes to Macedonia. This makes it difficult to draw borders around a territory, because in the region and in Macedonia there is a 'fruit salad' of cultures, practices and ethnicities, but with a more or less common language. Eventually, it were nationalistic activists who were politically dominant who made locals make a choice between sides.

As mentioned earlier in this thesis, Macedonia has been inhabited by Slavic people since the sixth century AC. During the whole period of the Byzantine and Ottoman Empire, where Macedonia was occupied by the Byzantines and the Ottomans, Macedonia existed most out of Slavic inhabitants, with Turks, Bulgarians and Greeks as minorities. This was also the case during the first Balkan War in 1912-1913, where the area Macedonia, then still consisting out of Pirin Macedonia (Bulgaria), Vardar Macedonia (Serbia/Yugoslavia) and Aegean Macedonia (Greece) together: the area contained mostly Slavo-Macedonians and Bulgarians, with Salonika in the south as exception, which had many Greek, Jewish and Islamic inhabitants (Agnew, 2012). After the partition in 1913, when Greece gained the largest part of what was Macedonia before the Balkan War, it gained a part with mostly Slavic Macedonian speaking people (Rossos, 2013). During the decades after the partition, many Slavic speaking Macedonian speaking were prosecuted in Greece and fled to Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and other European countries (Kofos, 1964). During the interviews came forward that the grandparents of a participant from North Macedonia, who lived just across the border in Greece, were forced out of Greece.

When Greece would capture Vardar Macedonia, that would be mostly important for recreating the Greek nation (Agnew, 2012). It would bring together the conceptions of Greece as a nation during the ancient and Byzantine period, as well as 'bringing home' Alexander the Great. The ties in Greece with Alexander the Great are huge, and by capturing Macedonia it would make sure that Alexander the Great was from the Greek area including Macedonia. But as a result of the partition of Macedonia in 1913, a border appeared that "ran through a potential zone of expansion rather than simply delimited the limit of a territorial claim" (Agnew, 2012, p. 19).

"National identities are never given; they are produced historically under particular geographical conditions" (Agnew, 2012, p. 21). With this sentence, Agnew states that national identities have changed throughout the ages, and will change with time. And as national identities change, so do borders change. But here comes the ugliness (according to Agnew) of borders: borders are to despise, but it seems we can't live without them. Even though borders have changed throughout time, and will change with time. Macedonia is a good example of the changing of borders and national identities. Where Macedonia had a far bigger surface in 1910, with mostly Slavic inhabitants and a few minorities living together under the Ottoman banner, Macedonia nowadays has a far smaller surface. Many Slavic Macedonians were forced out of Greece after the partition, because they were not 'Greek'. So we see that in the last hundred years the borders of Macedonia have changed, together with the numbers and sorts of inhabitants. But all together, we can conclude that Macedonia nowadays is a Slavic country, like it was in 1910 before the Balkan Wars, and is not Hellenistic like it was in the period of Alexander the Great.

Chapter 6: Ancient Macedonian symbols

This thesis tries to explain what role ancient Macedonian symbols as Alexander the Great and the Sun of Vergina play in the name dispute between Greece and North Macedonia. This is done by studying literature and asking the respondents whether they think where the different ancient symbols belong to.

6.1 Alexander the Great

As said earlier, different sources write differently about Alexander IV, better known as Alexander the Great. Nineteenth century historian Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos talks about Alexander as a true national hero who spread the Hellenistic culture to Asia: "What is really genuine and what spurious Hellenism? Through the inscrutable ways of Providence, Alexander carried the flag of Hellenism to the East" (Paparrigopoulos, 1860). Another nineteenth century historian, George Grote, states the opposite: that Alexander 'asiatised' Greece after his battles. "Hellenism, properly so called . . . never passed over into Asia. Instead of hellenising Asia, Alexander was tending to asiaticise Hellas" (Grote, 1856). The Greek writer Kyriakos Demetriou compared these historians in his study (2001). He concludes in his study that both historians had a different image of what Alexander brought to Greece, but the overall conclusion is: he is from Greece.

De Munck and Risteski (2012), however, conclude in their work that Alexander the Great is a great warrior from Macedonia, a country apart from Greece. They say that Macedonia has been influenced by the Greek culture, but Alexander the Great is no Greek, but a Macedonian. Dane Taleski (2014), an important Macedonian scientist, agrees with De Munck and Risteski (2014). But when we read what Anastasia Karakasidou (1997), a Greek native writer, says about the origin of Alexander the Great and other Macedonian history, we read that she does not share the meaning that Macedonia had an own state during the time of Alexander the Great and that the territory was part of Greece. She states that Balkan nationalisms at the end of the twentieth century gave rise to "competitive, even antagonistic ideologies that make Ancient Macedonia of coffee-table picture books the centre of discord and controversy" (Karakasidou, 1997, p. 11).

During the interviews came forward that the Macedonians don't really care what happened 2000 years ago, in the stories of Alexander the Great. The respondents from North Macedonia state that they don't know whether he was Greek or Macedonian, but that his origins don't matter. Goran says that he can't form an opinion about the origins of Alexander the Great, because there is no scientific proof of where he is from. When there would be scientific facts about his origins, he would then possibly make up an opinion. The respondents from Greece however are very clear about the origins of Alexander. When it comes to his origins they state that Alexander the Great is from Greece. Andrea names that Alexander the Great is part of the Greek history, it is thought on schools to children and it is a national hero that Greece is proud of. When it comes to the point whether Alexander could be Macedonian, the Greek respondents answer firmly that he is Greek.

According to several sources, both Greek and North Macedonian, Alexander lived according to the Greek culture and spoke Greek, but where he really is from is still unclear. Given that Alexander was buried near Babylon, where he died, makes it more difficult to retrieve where he is from. The Greek respondents say he is from Greece, the North Macedonian respondents don't really care where he is from and several historic sources report differently about his origins. But that Alexander plays a role in the dispute between Macedonia and Greece is for sure, mostly within Greece.

6.2 The Sun of Vergina

Another ancient Macedonian symbol, a symbol that refers to Alexander the Great and which Greece has been using for centuries, and where is a lot to do about between North Macedonia and Greece, is the Sun of Vergina. The Sun of Vergina, first discovered on a box in a grave tomb in Vergina, Greece, was associated with Phillip II, the father of Alexander the Great (Cowan & Brown, 2000). When Macedonia got independent in 1991, the former Yugoslavian state chose the 16-point Sun of Vergina (figure 5) to replace the petokratka, a 5-point star, on a red background in 1992. The 5-point star was displayed on the flag of the state Macedonia within Yugoslavia between 1992 until 1995 (figure 6) and was associated with the socialism during the Yugoslavian period (Cowan & Brown, 2000).



Figure 5: the 16-Pointed Sun of Vergina



Figure 6: the flag of Macedonia until 1991, with the 5-pointed petokratka

Chapter 7: The Macedonian name dispute

In this chapter the Macedonian name dispute will be explained. This chapter contains the most of the empirical data gathered during the interviews. This chapter tries to explain how people from Greece and North Macedonia look towards the name dispute, which name the respondents think fits best on the country North Macedonia and how the ties between Greece and North Macedonia have changed from 1991 until the moment this thesis is written, in 2020.

As mentioned earlier, the first thing where Greece fell over when the Republic of Macedonia was established in 1991 was its name. It should refer far too much to the northern part of Greece, Macedonia, and its history, and it was seen as a claim of the Balkans to the Greek history (Cowan & Brown, 2000). According to Cowan & Brown, the dispute about the name and ancient symbols could be called parapolitics: “the realm in which state and non-state actors compete to define the relationships between culture, politics and identity, and thus invest symbols with material consequence (Cowan & Brown, 2000, p. 123). At first, Greeks refused to call the Republic of Macedonia, its inhabitants and its uses Macedonian; they called it Skopjan, to refer to the capital of the Republic (Stawowy-Kawka, 2008). The Greeks didn’t call it the Macedonian problem, in which the Greeks referred to the use of Greek symbols by the Republic of Macedonia, they called it the Skopjan problem, as they replaced the name Republic of Macedonia with Republic of Skopje, out of protest.

In Greece many people protested in Athens and Salonika against the name and the flag of the newly formed Republic of Macedonia in 1992 (Stawowy-Kawka, 2008). Even though the Republic of Macedonia wanted international recognition and access to either the EU and NATO, Greece used its veto to keep Macedonia from joining both EU and NATO. But the reigning party, the VMRO-DPMNE, was strongly nationalistic organised, which counteracted Greece. The other party in the Republic of Macedonia, the social democratic SDSM, criticised the VMRO because of its agenda. In 1993, the

minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece complained at the UN where he presented arguments against the Republic of Macedonia joining the UN. His major points were the use of a Greek symbol on the flag, and the unrightfully claim on the name Macedonia, while the Republic of Macedonia consisted out of 38,5% of the Macedonian area before the Balkan War in 1912-1913, where Greece had 51% of the area (Stawowy-Kawka, 2008, p. 234). On April 9th 1993, the UN made a decision about the accession of the Republic of Macedonia. The Republic of Macedonia became part of the UN, but to prevent the name dispute and the conflict between Greece, Macedonia and the UN from escalating, Macedonia became member under the name Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, or FYROM.

At the moment Macedonia joined the UN, every European country voted for the access of Macedonia into the UN, except for Greece: Greece was still unconfident with the name Macedonia, as it claimed the history of Greece. In 1994, Greece set up an economic blockade upon Macedonia, and stopped the export of products as oil from Salonika to Macedonia (Stawowy-Kawka, 2008). Because of this blockade, Macedonia became more clear of the importance of the links with the other neighbours Albania and Bulgaria. On September 13th 1995 the governments of Macedonia and Greece signed an agreement in New York, in which was stated that Greece lifted the economic blockade and recognized Macedonia as a sovereign state, and Macedonia would change the symbol of the flag, the Sun of Vergina, and removed its claims to Aegean Macedonia in its constitution. On October 5th 1995 the Macedonian parliament passed the law with the flag change and the removal of the claims. The same month Greece lifted the blockade with Macedonia.

During the first month of 1996 the first diplomatic bonds were settled between Macedonia and Greece and the embassies opened in Athens and Skopje on February 27th 1996 (Stawowy-Kawka, 2008). But the ties between Greece and Macedonia were still not very good. Greece still didn't recognize that a Macedonian state existed, that there was a Macedonian minority within Greece and most of all, Greece didn't recognize the name of the newly formed republic. After all Greece still was confident that it would counteract the accession of Macedonia into the EU and NATO if Macedonia didn't change the name.

According to Stawowy-Kawka, Athens and Skopje searched together for a compromise where Macedonia would change its name and Greece allowed Macedonia to join the EU and NATO. It would endure until 2018 before such an agreement was established, where Macedonia changed its name to the Republic of North Macedonia, and Greece allowed Macedonia to join EU and NATO (Chrysogelos & Stavrevska, 2019). This agreement was signed in a village at the Prespa Lake, a lake that lies on the border between Greece and Macedonia. From then on, Greece allowed Macedonia to join the EU and NATO, and Macedonia changed its name to the name as we know it today, the Republic of North Macedonia.

7.1 The Macedonian identity

7.1.1 The Greek view

According to Danforth (1993) the Greek nationalist ideology that focused on negating the Macedonian identity after World War II focused on three main points: the Macedonian language, a Macedonian minority in Greece and the existence of a Macedonian state. Danforth argues that according to the Greek nationalistic perspective, the existence of a Macedonian nation is impossible because there has never been a Macedonian state that was independent. The Macedonian nation should be invented by Tito, who should have baptized different nationalities together with the Greek word Macedonians.

Next to this, Danforth (1993) argues that according to the Greek nationalistic perspective, the Slavic could never be the Macedonian language, as in ancient Macedonia people spoke Greek. The respondents agree with this statement: as Alexander the Great lived according to the Greek culture and spoke the Greek language, he could have never belonged to the Macedonian country we know nowadays as North Macedonia. According to Danforth, Greek sources portrayed the language that was spoken in 'Skopje' was an impoverished dialect of Bulgarian.

When we come to the Macedonian minorities in Greece that Greece should have denied, Danforth says: "The Greek government denies the existence of a Macedonian minority in northern Greece, claiming that there exists only a small group of 'Slavophone Hellenes or 'bilingual Greeks'" (Danforth, 1993, p. 4). The bilingual Greeks refer to the people who live in the northern parts of Greece, and speak Greek and a certain Slavic dialect, but these people have a 'Greek national consciousness'.

When it comes to the name Macedonia, the Macedonians should have 'stolen' the name of Greece according to Greek nationalist perspective, argues Danforth (1993). This claim of the Slavs would be felony against the people of Greece. "By calling themselves 'Macedonians', the Slavs are 'stealing' a Greek name; they are 'embezzling' Greek cultural heritage; they are 'falsifying' Greek history" (Danforth, 1993, p. 4). When it comes to Evangelos Kofos, a Greek Foreign Ministry historian, Kofos had the following to say to a foreign reporter: "It is as if a robber came into my house, and stole my most precious jewels – my history, my culture, my identity" (Danforth, 1993, p. 4).

During the interviews with the respondents from Greece came clear that they learned from a very young age that ancient Macedonian figures as Alexander the Great and Philip II were Greek, and that they were Greek national heroes who spread the Greek culture across the countries in the Middle East. For them there is no discussion: Alexander the Great and other Macedonian figures belong to Greece, and the Republic of North Macedonia should not make any claims on them. Both Andrea as Lazaros as Michael state that there is no dispute around the history of Alexander the Great and Philip II: both had the Greek culture, spoke Greek and belong to the Greek national history. Alexander and Philip are, according to the Greek respondents, true Greek national heroes, without doubt.

7.1.2 The North Macedonian view

During the interviews with the respondents from the Republic of North Macedonia came clear that they don't care that much what happened in the ancient times, where the origins of Alexander the Great lie etc. They care more about the situation within Macedonia nowadays. Danforth (1993) has not only written about the Greek side of the Macedonian name dispute; he wrote also about the Macedonian side. So does the work of Danforth connect to the view of the respondents from North Macedonia. Danforth states that Macedonians want to affirm that they are an own ethnicity, with an own identity and culture, who want these things to be recognized. "Macedonians insist they are not Serbs, Yugoslavs, Bulgarians or Greeks" (Danforth, 1993, p. 7). Alex, one of the respondents from the Republic of North Macedonia, recognizes the given that the history of Slavs in Macedonia is pretty new, and that Greece has more ties with the ancient history of Macedonia than the Slavs. But the respondents from North Macedonia argue that for example Alexander the Great spoke a dialect that was no Greek. Vladimir is very clear in his view where the origins of Alexander the Great are: in Macedonia. He names the given that Alexander the Great is only called Alexander the Great since the Vienna School gave him this name in 1807: before that he was called Alexander the Macedonian. Not Alexander the Greek; Alexander the Macedonian. However, according to Igor, no one can claim him. The borders of Greece and Macedonia were very different those days, the journeys of Alexander the Great form a 2000-year melting pot, it is impossible to claim him these days, he argues.

Even though many sources, like Danforth (1993), write about the bad ties between the Republic of North Macedonia and Greece. Bogdan, a respondent from North Macedonia, names that he has Greek friends. He has also visited Greece during holidays, and he explains how the discussions nowadays are less violent than in the early 1990's. The most respondents from North Macedonia don't see the name change as negative and embrace the new name, even though they still use the name 'Macedonia' and 'Macedonian' when they speak about their country. It is according to them good that Macedonia joins the EU, so that it becomes easier to travel abroad and to make it more easy to work or study in other parts of Europe. Now, North Macedonia has not joined the European Union yet, which makes it very hard to find work or to study in other countries of the European Union. Maria names that if you want to study abroad, you have to be either a very good student, or you need a lot of money. That is why many students who want to study abroad apply for a Bulgarian passport according to her: Bulgaria is part of the EU and with a Bulgarian passport, it is way easier to apply for a job or a study in other countries in the EU. And that is why the respondents from North Macedonia are happy that their country joins the EU, that it becomes easier and cheaper to travel and to work or study abroad.

7.2 The first years of independence

Agnew (2006) wrote about the border making in Greece during the past century, where Macedonia played an important role. During this 'making of Greece', the concept of cultural-symbolic borrowing was more the case than cross-border othering at the border making in Modern Greece.

The respondents from the Republic of North Macedonia name that there are two main political parties within Macedonia, just as Danforth (2013) mentioned. These parties, the VMRO-DPMNE and the SDSM, neigh, according to Bogdan, each to a side: the VMRO is more a party on the right, and the SDSM is more a party on the left. VMRO, which has been reigning most the first decade of the 21st century, organized and planned Skopje 2014, a project where different historic figures and stories were made visible in the city centre of Skopje. The respondents from North Macedonia, as well as the respondents from Greece, had things to say on this project. According to the respondents from North Macedonia, it was a waste of money, and the money could have been spent way better. The respondents from Greece saw Skopje 2014, with as headliner a gigantic building of Alexander the Great that was raised (Graan, 2013), different. They see the Skopje 2014 project as a claim of the government of North Macedonia on the Greek history. The respondents of Greece are not very content with the Skopje 2014 project, as they see Alexander the Great as a true Greek national hero.

Since the change of the flag of Macedonia in 1995, the political ties between Athens and Skopje have improved and since the name change in 2018 Greece gave North Macedonia finally permission to join the EU and NATO, after years of obstructing Macedonia to join the EU and NATO.

That there was still some friction between people from Macedonia and people from Greece since the change of the Macedonian flag becomes clear out of the interview with Maria. Maria mentions that in Thessaloniki, Macedonian cars are being ruined because they had Macedonian plates on it. Next to that, people from Macedonia who wanted to go to Greece had to fill in a form which said that they were from the FYROM, and not from the Republic of Macedonia. On the question whether she thought this was discrimination, she answered that it was more hatred within Greece.

Maria mentioned that her grandparents were forced out of Greece during the 20th century. They lived in a village that first was Macedonian, but became Greek. She told that it was forbidden to speak Macedonian and that her grandparents left Greece. She goes on that since the 20th century,

Greeks and Bulgarians try to exclude Macedonia in their history books. The given that there was hatred among Greeks towards Macedonians last decade connects more or less to the exodus of Macedonians from Greece during the 20th century.

Bogdan states that the issue nowadays is milder than how it was before the name change and that the issue between Greece and North Macedonia slowly fades away. He concludes the interview saying that it is the best for both Macedonia and Greece that both countries accept the new name. He names that the period 1991-1995 was the most difficult for the issue between Greece and Macedonia. The reigning of the VMRO was pretty nationalistic and the politics of VMRO were quite politically aggressive. They brought back several things from the history. Meanwhile there were Macedonian minorities in Greece who were not seen as Macedonian, but as Greek. Maria tells that the VMRO first got the power, then lost it to the SDSM, and then won the reign again, but they lost the reign again after Skopje 2014 failed.

Bogdan makes a reference from the situation between 1991-1995 to the situation after World War II, when many Macedonians had to leave Greece. Only in 1991-1995 the borders closed between Greece and Macedonia, which didn't happen shortly after World War II.

7.3 Joining the European Union

The respondents were asked how they thought about the Republic of North Macedonia joining the European Union. The respondents from Greece were positive about this: they answered that it is good for the country, good for the people and good for the developing of the country. The respondents from North Macedonia agree with this. They see the joining of the EU as positive: it is good for the country, because it makes it easier for the inhabitants to travel and to find a study or work abroad. Vladimir says that it would be good, but that it is unlikely to happen: to join the European Union you have to pass a lot of criteria, and it is impossible that North Macedonia pass all the criteria. But all the respondents, from Greece and from North Macedonia, think that it is good for North Macedonia to join the EU.

During an interview at April 2 2020 the president of the Republic of North Macedonia, Stevo Pendarovski, told that joining NATO, what happened on March 27th 2020, is more important than joining the European Union, which can take a few more years to complete. (Đorđević, 2020). Vladimir agrees with the last point, that it will take a lot to join the European Union. The first step is made, and the President, as well as the Prime Minister of North Macedonia, is confident with the accession to NATO.

7.4 The Prespa Agreement

The respondents from North Macedonia look very critically towards the Prespa Agreement. As said earlier, this agreement marked that the Republic of North Macedonia would change its name to the Republic of North Macedonia, and that Greece would allow North Macedonia to join the European Union and NATO. For this agreement, what was signed by the Greek Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of North Macedonia, a referendum was held within Macedonia. In this referendum the inhabitants of Macedonia got the question whether they were for or against the name change of the country. According to the respondents from North Macedonia, the referendum and its outcomes were not enough to let the name change happen. For making the outcome of the referendum work, at least 50% of the people who were able to vote had to turn up. The percentage that went to vote was only 30%, and not even all voters voted for the name change. But still the name change was set

through by the parliament, led by the social democratic SDSM party. This party, that resigned on February 17th 2020 and its Prime Minister Zoran Zaev, made it possible that Macedonia and Greece signed the agreement at the Prespa Lake in 2018 (NOS, 2020).

When it comes to the change of the country itself, the respondents from North Macedonia see the name change not as something negative. They say that the name change is not the problem, but the way the name change was set up was the problem. It was something the North Macedonian government really wanted and that it ignored some laws in order to change the name. Although the name of country has changed, the respondents from North Macedonia still call themselves Macedonian, just like the language is Macedonian, and they still call the country Macedonia. It is for them still Macedonia, and according to the respondents from North Macedonia it will take some time to get used to term North Macedonia and North Macedonian.

The respondents from Greece however are confident with the name change. They state that it is good that since the Prespa Agreement it is clear that the country North Macedonia is different from the region Macedonia in Greece. Michael adds to this view that people from Greece call the country Skopje instead of Macedonia, since its independence in 1991. According to him this has to do with the given that it was the name of a region in Greece, and that people in Greece were not happy with that. This is in line with what Stawowy-Kawka (2008) says, that people from Greece refer to the capital of the country instead of calling it Macedonia in the 90s. Michael confirms this and states that nowadays people in Greece still call North Macedonia Skopje and their inhabitants Skopjans.

However, all of the respondents from Greece who were interviewed for this thesis have been living abroad of Greece since before the name change and the developments towards the Prespa Agreement. Lazaros states that there were several protests in Greece against Macedonia joining the European Union, mostly in Athens and Thessaloniki. But all the respondents from Greece call that the name North Macedonia fits better than Macedonia, and that they are confident with the name change. Maria says that if she was in Greece during the period before the Prespa Agreement she had looked towards the name change differently and would be more into it, but because she was so far away from it now she was not that involved with the name change. Michael states that he has been raised on Kos, far from the Greek region Macedonia and the border with North Macedonia, and that people in the north of Greece are probably far more involved in the name dispute.

7.5 Greece and North Macedonia nowadays

Since the independence of the Republic of North Macedonia in 1991, the ties between Greece and the then newly formed Republic of Macedonia have been changing a lot. Where first the people from Greece were angry with the choice of the name Macedonia for the country and calling the country Skopje, nowadays the people in Greece seem more confident with the new name according to the respondents from Greece (Stawowy-Kawka, 2008). The Skopje 2014 project set up by the VMRO-led government of the Republic of Macedonia in 2008 however was something which made the people in Greece angry according to the respondents from Greece. When asking the respondents from Greece how they thought about this project, they answered that it was like stealing the history from another country, by decorating Skopje with buildings that refer to ancient Greek history. But the respondents from North Macedonia are not confident with the Skopje 2014 project as well. They call it a waste of money and an unnecessary project.

After all, since the name change in 2018, the Republic of North Macedonia managed to join NATO in 2020, and it has become more easy to join the European Union. But Vladimir is still critical on North Macedonia joining the European Union. He calls that even now the dispute between North

Macedonia towards the name of the country is solved, there are still a lot of obstacles on the road to join the European Union. According to him, one of these obstacles is Bulgaria. Bulgaria sees inhabitants of North Macedonia as Bulgarians and the language spoken in North Macedonia as Bulgarian. So, according to Vladimir, even now the ties between North Macedonia and Greece might have improved since the name change, it is still unlikely that North Macedonia joins the European Union.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

In this chapter the conclusions of this thesis are formulated. This is done by giving meaning to the parts of the conceptual model as shown in chapter 2.2. In chapter 8.6 the main questions and sub-questions will be answered, beginning with the sub-questions. After that, there will be a short reflection about this thesis.

8.1 History of the borders

The borders of the country which is now the Republic of North Macedonia have changed a lot throughout the centuries since the first forms civilization appeared in the area. In the years BC, Macedonia became a kingdom with leaders who expanded the territory through the years, until Macedonia even stretched until India. The greatest leaders, Philip II and Alexander the Great, were responsible for these expansions. In the days of the wide expansion, the Macedonians admired the culture and language of Greece, and as far as we know nowadays the Macedonians lived the same way as the Greeks. It is thus plausible that Philip and Alexander spread the Greek culture across the countries on their way to the area what is nowadays India. The language that was spoken those days in Macedonia however is unclear. The respondents from Greece answered that people like Alexander spoke Greek, some respondents from North Macedonia answered that he spoke another language than Greek, and in the literature is said that he spoke a dialect that was a bit different from Greek.

After the days of wide expansion the Macedonian kingdom fell under Roman authority in 168 BC and became the first Roman province in the area that is now called the Balkan. Under the Romans, Macedonia was divided in two parts: Macedonia Prima in the south and Macedonia Secunda in the north. Macedonia Prima had as capital Salonika, which now is in Greece, where Macedonia Secunda had as capital Stobi, which is now in North Macedonia. Later the two parts were put together again in 395 AD, when the Roman Empire declined.

From 395 AD on, Macedonia became part of the Byzantine Empire. During the first two centuries of the Byzantine occupation Macedonia gets invaded several times by different folks, like the Goths and the Huns, who devastate Macedonia. When the Slavs enter Macedonia during the fifth and sixth century AD they decide to stay. The Slavic language became the common language on the Balkan area and the Slavs started to form a Macedonian state around the tenth century, with as capital Ohrid. A century later, this state declined again and became part of the East Roman Empire. The inhabitants of Macedonia however were allowed to keep using their Slavic language and habits.

The Byzantine period was a period where a lot happened within Macedonia. The area was inhabited by different cultures and the Slavs wanted more and more authority. The Byzantine Empire did not allow this and started to Hellenize Macedonia. During the fourteenth century the Ottomans advanced in Europe and started to conquer more and more areas. By 1400 the Ottomans had

captured almost the whole Balkan area, and by 1430 they had the full authority over the whole Balkan area when Salonika fell in Ottoman hands.

The Ottomans tried to spread their culture, religion and language across their empire. The administration for the Ottomans in the Balkan area was done by Greeks, who Hellenised the area. When looking at the borders of the Macedonian area these days, sources of those days report about the borders as the borders as they were during the Roman period, with a Macedonia Prima and a Macedonia Secunda. The Macedonians during the Ottoman Empire however were not called Prima and Secunda, but Lower and Upper. Upper Macedonia was the smaller part in the north (Secunda), and Lower Macedonia was the larger part in the south (Prima), with cities as Salonika.

In the nineteenth century there became more and more nationalistic feelings in the Balkan and region. In Macedonia this resulted in the establishment of the VMRO in 1893, the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation, who tried to establish an autonomous Macedonian state by violence. However, during the 1870s the question to whom Macedonia belonged rose up. The first battling states were Greece and Bulgaria, who both claimed that Macedonia belonged to them. Later, Serbia joined this battle. The battle came to a peak during 1912-1913, when the Macedonian Question became violent and Macedonia became patriated. Greece gained the largest part in the south (Aegean Macedonia), Serbia became the part that forms nowadays the Republic of North Macedonia (Vardar Macedonia) and Bulgaria became a small part that nowadays still is part of Bulgaria (Pirin Macedonia).

After the partition, Bulgaria and Greece denied that there was a Macedonian state, and the Macedonians in Serbia were seen by the Serbs as southern Serbs. When Serbia became part of Yugoslavia in 1918, Macedonia became a part of the newly formed country as well. It would take until 1944 before Macedonians got more recognition, when Tito established the Macedonian state from Vardar Macedonia within the Republic of Yugoslavia. From this happening the newly formed Macedonian state started to develop its own dialect and established its own church. The population of Macedonia and Yugoslavia grew in the years after World War II, because of a civil war within Greece where many Slavic Macedonians left Greece for Macedonia and other parts of Yugoslavia.

During the 1970s and 1980s more and more regions in Yugoslavia started to get nationalistic feelings for establishing an independent state. This only became more after the death of Tito. Mostly Croatia and Slovenia wanted an autonomous state, where Serbia tried to preserve Yugoslavia as a state. Eventually Slovenia became the first Yugoslavian region to get independent. During the 1990s the borders of the Balkan changed continuously, as more and more regions became independent of Yugoslavia during this decade. In November 1991 Macedonia declared its independence and established the state the Republic of North Macedonia. First with a flag that only lasted from 1992 until 1995 and a name that changed in 2018, but since the Balkan War in 1912-1913 the borders of the now Republic of North Macedonia haven't been change. So in the time since the borders for the now Republic of North Macedonia have been settled, the name, the regime, the flag and the ties with other countries have changed; the borders have not changed. A lot has happened to the small country in the heart of the Balkan in a short amount of time.

8.2 Symbols of ancient Macedonia

The best known symbols of ancient Macedonia are Philip II, Alexander the Great and the Sun of Vergina. These three symbols are all connected with each other. Philip II was the father and predecessor of Alexander III, better known as Alexander the Great. The Sun of Vergina was found on

a chest that was linked with Philip II. The chest was found in during the twentieth century in Greece and on it a sun was displayed. Because the chest was found near the town of Vergina the sun got the name the Sun of Vergina. It became an important symbol in Greece and it was shown on more and more places displayed on a flag. The Sun referred to Philip II, Alexander the Great and the conquests they both made for Greece.

When talking about the origin of both Philip II and Alexander the Great, there are many views on this topic. In Greece it is clear that Philip II and Alexander the Great belong to the Greek national history: they spread the Greek culture across many countries on their way to nowadays India. According to Greece and Greek sources there is no question where the origins of Philip and Alexander are: they were Greek and they are national heroes in Greece.

In North Macedonia people look different towards Philip II and Alexander the Great. From the interviews came forward that the younger people do not really mind whether their origins are in Greece or in North Macedonia: Philip and Alexander lived more than 2000 years ago, and it is hard to find out whether he came from Greece or North Macedonia. According to the most respondents from North Macedonia however, Philip and Alexander spoke a language that was different from Greek. But where the origins of Philip and Alexander really are is unsure. According to elder inhabitants of North Macedonia Philip and Alexander were definitely Macedonian. For example, they state that before 1807, Alexander the Great was known as Alexander the Macedonian, not as Alexander the Greek or as Alexander the Great. He was most of all not from Greece, but from Macedonia, regardless of the language of the culture Alexander and Philip had.

What all the respondents and sources say in common is that there was an area called Macedonia and that Philip and Alexander came from this area, but whether it belonged to Greece, or that it was different than Greece is still unclear.

Coming back to the Sun of Vergina; when Macedonia became independent in 1991 from Yugoslavia, the newly formed country chose as national symbol and as flag the Sun of Vergina, which referred to Philip II and Alexander the Great. Greece was very unconfident with this and set up a trade blockade between Greece and Macedonia. Greece also went to the court with the notion that Macedonia claimed Greek history with the choice of the Sun of Vergina as national symbol. Greece won the trials in 1995 and Macedonia had to change the flag and the national symbol. Instead of the Sun of Vergina, the Macedonian Sun with eight rays instead of 16 rays appeared on the flag of Macedonia, and Greece lifted the trade blockade between the two countries.

Rumour came up again when the Macedonian government in 2008 announced the project Skopje 2014, a project what would cheer up the city centre of Skopje with buildings and paintings of ancient Macedonian figures, with as highlight a gigantic building of Alexander the Great. This was something the people in Greece were not happy with at all. They saw it as a claim on the history of Greece and were angry on this project. Meanwhile, in Macedonia people saw this project as a waste of money: there are plenty of things the money could go to. They see it as an unnecessary project from the Macedonian government.

After all, it is still difficult to say where the origins of ancient Macedonian symbols as Philip II and Alexander the Great are. It is for sure that a chest was found from the period BC in Greece with a sun on it, which was later called the Sun of Vergina. But where Philip II and Alexander were born and raised and where they worked is still not clear. It is probable that he spoke some sort of Greek, and lived according to the Greek culture, as the area had been Hellenized for years. It is for sure that we was not Slavic, as the Slavs entered the area during the fifth and sixth century. But in what area Philip

and Alexander lived in those days and which area that would be now is, at the moment this thesis is written in 2020, not clear.

8.3 The Macedonian name dispute

About the name Macedonia there has been, and still is today, a lot to do about. It started after the Balkan War of 1912-1913, where the area with the name was divided in three parts. Greece got a part, Serbia got a part and Bulgaria got a part. After the partition of Macedonia Bulgaria and Greece denied the existence of Macedonia, and Serbia saw the Macedonian part it got as southern Serbia, with southern Serbs as inhabitants. Only when the Serbian Macedonian part became an own state within Yugoslavia under Tito in 1944 Macedonia got more rights and started to develop an own dialect and religion. The state was called the People's Republic of Macedonia, with Skopje as the appointed capital. It was for the first time since 168 BC, when the Romans occupied the Macedonian area, that there was a more or less autonomous region with the name Macedonia.

Within Yugoslavia things went quite well under Tito; he ruled with an almost liberal regime during the 1960s, 1970s and the 1980s after his death. After the death of Tito in 1980, more and more desire for more autonomy appeared in several regions within Yugoslavia. During the 1990s Yugoslavia declined and broke up in several autonomous states. Macedonia named itself the Republic of Macedonia in its constitution, a name that not all countries were confident with.

Greece was not happy at all with the name choice of the newly formed country. They saw the use of the name Macedonia as a claim on the national history of Greece. A name dispute broke out between Macedonia and Greece. When Macedonia wanted to join the United Nations in 1993, Greece complained that Macedonia used a name that belonged to Greek national history. Greece was the only country that voted against the accession of Macedonia into the United Nations, and the dispute between Greece and Macedonia seemed to worsen. Eventually the United Nations allowed Macedonia to become member, but only under the name Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, or FYROM, to prevent the dispute from escalating. This way, Macedonia could join the United Nations, and the United Nations took into account the opinion of Greece, that the name of the country Macedonia was a bit changed within the United Nations.

But Greece was still unconfident with the name of the country. Even though the name was changed to Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia in international relations and there were finally diplomatic ties established between Greece and Macedonia, Greece still found that the name was too similar to that of the region in Greece. When Macedonia wanted to join the European Union, all the European countries agreed with this, except for Greece; they were still not confident with the name. It would take until 2018 before Greece lifted the rejection on Macedonia joining the European Union: with the signing of the Prespa Agreement there came an end to the name dispute that had been going on for years between Greece and Macedonia. The Republic of Macedonia changed its name to the Republic of North Macedonia, and Greece lifted the vote against Macedonia joining the European Union.

8.4 The Macedonian name change

Since the Republic of Macedonia, or the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia internationally seen, changed its name to the Republic of North Macedonia a lot has happened. Greece lifted the vote against the republic joining the European Union after many years of resistance. It seems that younger people from North Macedonia don't bother the name change that much, at least the

respondents who were interviewed for this thesis, who live abroad. The interview with the respondent who still lives in North Macedonia, and is some older than the other respondents, argues differently. From that interview came clear that the name should not have changed. He is okay with the name change, but it is not the constitutional name of the republic. The respondents from Greece are confident with the name change; they think this name, North Macedonia, fits better to the country than the Republic of Macedonia, to make it distinguishable that there are two Macedonia's.

The point where the most is to do about, is the path towards the Prespa Agreement and the name change. It is not sure whether the referendum and the outcomes of the referendum inside Macedonia were valid, as there were in theory not enough voters who went to vote to make a referendum valid. But valid or not, the government did pass the law and started the negotiations with Greece about the name change and the access to the European Union. Eventually, the agreement was signed at Lake Prespa, a border that lies on the border between Macedonia and Greece. The agreement was signed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Macedonia and the Prime Minister of Greece. The agreement was signed, the name change was a fact and the path to the access to the European Union was open.

But this name change took a long time, and many protests were organized between 1991 and 2018 in Greece, mostly in Athens and Thessaloniki. And even though North Macedonia has now permission of Greece to join the European Union, not everyone in Macedonia is that optimistic about it. There are more obstacles on the road to join the European Union, and it can take years before North Macedonia really is ready to join the European Union. But nevertheless, North Macedonia managed to join NATO in 2020. This is a big step, made possible by the name change. According to some in North Macedonia joining NATO is more important than joining the European Union, but joining the European Union brings a lot of other benefits for North Macedonia. It becomes easier for people from North Macedonia to travel and to find a job or a study abroad. These are the benefits of the name change and the Prespa Agreement, but not everyone in North Macedonia agrees that the name change was necessary.

So, even though the name of Macedonia has changed to North Macedonia and there are a lot of possibilities in prospect, not everyone from North Macedonia is happy that the name has changed. And this not per se because of the new name, but more because of the track towards the name change.

8.5 The (sub-)questions

8.5.1 Sub-question 1

The first sub-question, which deals with the given in how far inhabitants of North Macedonia and Greece appropriate ancient Macedonian symbols as Alexander the Great and the Sun of Vergina, can be answered by looking from the view on history on both sides of the border nowadays. In Greece, people see Alexander the Great and his father Philip II, who conquered a huge area along the Mediterranean, as true Greek hero's, who belong to the Greek history and were definitely Greek. The Sun of Vergina, a symbol connected to Philip II and which was named after the town it was found, Vergina, in Greece, is therefore used a lot across Greece as a symbol of ancient Greek history.

What came forward during the research is that it is no question among Greeks where Alexander and Philip came from: they were Greek and they conquered the land in the name of Greece, as Macedonia belongs to Greece. People in Greece were not content when the newly formed Republic of Macedonia took the name Macedonia during the 1990s, as that name belongs to Greece and the

Greek history. That is why in Greece the opinion about the name change to the Republic of North Macedonia is positive: the name change makes it possible to distinguish the country and the area in Greece.

When looking at the North Macedonian view on ancient Macedonian symbols we see another view than the Greeks have. During the research came forward that older people in North Macedonia look different towards history than younger North Macedonians do. Younger North Macedonians answered that they don't really care what happened more than 2000 years ago, and that they focus more on the situation nowadays in North Macedonia. The older North Macedonians see Alexander and Philip as true Macedonian and answer that they were different to Greeks. As for this, they say that the name Macedonia belongs to their country.

We can state that in Greece, also among younger Greeks, Alexander the Great and Philip II are seen as true Greeks. People from North Macedonia, especially the younger North Macedonians, care less about the history the way Greeks and older Macedonian do: they care more about the situation nowadays in North Macedonia. The view among older North Macedonians is that Alexander and Philip were no Greeks, but Macedonians. However there were no Slavic people in the region of Macedonia, Alexander and Philip were Macedonians and not Greeks. The way people look towards the history on both sides of the border differs, all agree that Alexander the Great and Philip II were Macedonian; it is the question whether Macedonia belonged to Greece or whether it was apart from Greece.

8.5.2 Sub-question 2

The second sub-question, that deals with how North Macedonians describe the differences between their identity and the identity of inhabitants of the Greek region Macedonia, can be answered by how both North Macedonians and Greeks look towards each other. In the end, this sub-question did not have many response during the interviews, but we can state that North Macedonians feel mostly Slavic and connected with the rest of the Balkan, where Greeks see Greece apart from the rest of the Balkan. The language differs, as well as the way of building.

8.5.3 Sub-question 3

The third sub-question, that deals with how Greeks look towards the name change of North Macedonia, can be answered by the information gathered from the literature and the interviews. From the literature came clear that since 1991, the year that the Republic of North Macedonia chose Macedonia as its constitutional name, Greece was not confident with the name. There were protests in Athens and Thessaloniki against the name of the newly formed republic and for years, Greece did not allow the republic to join the European Union and NATO. Only since the name change in 2018, Greece allows North Macedonia to join the European Union and NATO. Joining NATO has been accomplished at the moment of writing this thesis, but joining the European Union is still in process.

During the interviews came forwards that the respondents from Greece are confident with the name change of the Republic of Macedonia to the Republic of North Macedonia in 2018. According to them, it is now made clear that there is a difference between the region Macedonia in Greece and the country on the Balkans. Within Greece, Macedonia is seen as the Greek region in the north of Greece, which has nothing to do with the Balkan country. So within Greece, people look positive towards the name change of the Republic of Macedonia to the Republic of North Macedonia. With the new name, it is made clear that the real Macedonia is within Greece.

8.5.4 Main question

When we come to answering the main question, *In how far did the name change of North Macedonia influence the attachment of North Macedonians to their country?*, we have to take into account all the aspects from the sub-questions and from the conceptual model. This model shows the relation between the history of the borders between Greece and North Macedonia, the ancient Macedonian symbols and the Macedonian name dispute, how these factors had influence on the Macedonian name change, and how this name change has might has affected the attachment of people from North Macedonia towards the country.

When we look at the first three factors, the history of the borders between North Macedonia and Greece, the ancient Macedonian symbols and the Macedonian name dispute, we see that these factors have influenced each other. When we start with the history of the borders between North Macedonia and Greece, we see that these borders have changed a lot during the centuries. During the time of Philip II and Alexander the Great, we see that the area called Macedonia existed from areas that are now in Greece and areas that are now part of the countries north of Greece.

During the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman period, Greece and what is now North Macedonia were both part of the empires. But during the fifth and sixth century AD Slavic tribes entered the region above Greece and decided to stay there. Today, the countries on the Balkan north of Greece are still mostly inhabited by Slavic people.

When we come to the first Balkan War, the wars of 1912-1913 between Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria about the partition of Macedonia, we see that during this wars the borders how they are today were established. Until 1912-1913, the borders of Greece and Macedonia had been different as they were after the Balkan wars and the partition of Macedonia. Before the Balkan wars, Macedonia had in area with parts in nowadays Greece, North Macedonia and Bulgaria. After the Balkan wars, Serbia got the part what is nowadays North Macedonia (then Vardar Macedonia), Greece got the largest part what reached from the middle of Greece until the contemporary border with North Macedonia (Aegean Macedonia) and Bulgaria got a small part (Pirin Macedonia). The parts that went to Greece and Bulgaria are nowadays still part of Greece and Bulgaria. In Bulgaria there are nowadays still North Macedonian minorities present in the area, where the most Slavic people fled Greece during the years after the Second World War.

During the 1940s Vardar Macedonia became an own state within the Republic of Yugoslavia under Tito, called Macedonia. Until 1991 Macedonia was part of Yugoslavia, but when Macedonia declared itself independent and took the constitutional name Macedonia there were question marks on the Greek side of the border. Greece assumed that the newly formed republic made claims on the history of Greece and its heroes, Philip II and Alexander the Great.

It is the discussion where Philip and Alexander really came from that caused the name dispute between North Macedonia and Greece: where did Philip and Alexander really came from and which country had the most rights to call their area Macedonia, after the great empire that Philip and Alexander established? This discussion caused demonstrations in Greece and the rise of statues in then the Republic of Macedonia, where both countries argued that the ancient Macedonian symbols belong to their country. Today, we still don't know where the origins of the ancient Macedonian symbols lie: was it in the area that is now Greece? Was it in the area that is now the Republic of Macedonia? What we do see is that on both sides of the border people look different to the history. Within Greece there is no discussion: the ancient Macedonian symbols belong to Greece. Within North Macedonia there is more variation in views. The younger people care less about the origin of

ancient Macedonian symbols than older people. The younger people care more about the situation nowadays in Macedonia.

Since its independence the Republic of Macedonia has been trying to become member of the European Union and NATO, but because of the name there were countries that held against Macedonia joining the European Union and NATO. It was the desire to belong to the European Union that made the government of the Republic of Macedonia started negotiations with Greece after several years of arguing about the name. Even though the referendum and the outcomes went not entirely well, the negotiations went on what lead to the signing of the Prespa Agreement, which states that the Republic of North Macedonia changes its name to the Republic of North Macedonia and Greece would allow North Macedonia to join the European Union and NATO. The people in North Macedonia are not concerned about the name change itself, but more about the road towards the name change. Until now, we can say that the historical borders between Macedonia and Greece, the ancient Macedonian symbols and the Macedonian name dispute form a causal relationship, which eventually led to the Macedonian name change.

When it comes to the attachment of North Macedonians before and after the name change, we can say that the attachment has not changed much. On the contrary, according to the North Macedonians North Macedonia has a lot of profit when it joins the European Union and NATO. When North Macedonia becomes member of the European Union it becomes easier for people from North Macedonia to study or work abroad or to travel. According to the Prime Minister, joining NATO is important because of the protection of the small state. Because of this possibilities people from North Macedonia in order to join the European Union and NATO do not see the name change as something negative. However, when they talk about their country and language, people from North Macedonia still call it Macedonia and Macedonian, and they see themselves still as Macedonians. But this will need time before people from North Macedonia will start calling it North Macedonia and North Macedonian automatically. Even when North Macedonia eventually does not succeed to join the European Union, which is still a possibility, because in order to join the European Union a country has to fulfil a big list of criteria. The name change is just two years ago, and the use of the word North Macedonia is something people need to get used to.

8.6 Discussion, reflection and recommendations

While writing this thesis I was, due to Corona interventions, unable to travel to North Macedonia, where I wanted to take the interviews with people from (local) governments and normal citizens about their view on the name change, to get a view how people *inside* North Macedonia look towards the name change and how they feel attachment before and after the name change towards their country. As a result, I have done my interviews online and mostly with people from North Macedonia and Greece who don't live in North Macedonia or Greece at the moment, so the outcome of this thesis can be slightly different than when I held the interviews *in* North Macedonia and Greece. In the end, I hope the voices of the respondents are representative for the people who live in North Macedonia and Greece at the moment.

While writing the theory part of this thesis I focused mostly on theories of John Agnew. It would have been better when I took into account the views of other authors earlier in order to have a broader theory chapter. Eventually I have taken into account the views on the border between North Macedonia and Greece from both sides of the border to start a different discussion in order to make the theory chapter broader to interpret.

While writing this thesis I have been busy with some subjects of the study GPE in order to graduate, which has cost me time to write this thesis. It is because of this that the length of the thesis is smaller than I aimed for.

I hoped to take into account the outcome of the parliamentary elections in North Macedonia. These elections should have taken place in April if the Corona interventions would not have appeared. Due to these interventions the elections are scheduled for the second part of this year. I hoped to take into account the outcome in order to predict whether it would take longer or shorter time for North Macedonia joining the European Union, dependant on whether the VMRO or the Social Democrats would have won.

My recommendation for further research on this topic is to travel to Macedonia to experience how the situation is in the country itself, and how the people in their home country look towards the name change of their country. The outcome of the research might be different than the outcome of this thesis, which is written on information gathered from interviews held with people who do not live in North Macedonia or Greece at the moment. If I had travelled to North Macedonia and Greece, I would have observed in how far the ancient Macedonian symbols would be visible on the streets and in the cities on both sides of the border. Maybe the outcome of this observation would have an influence on the way people on both sides of the border look towards ancient Macedonian symbols.

And last but not least, make sure that the records of the interviews are safe: I have experienced how stressful it can be if you lose them because some information you gathered is lost forever. Luckily I made many notations during the interviews, which means that I had information from every interview available for this thesis, even though some records were lost. To conclude: all the interviews have been useful and I used information from all the interviews, and I would like to thank all the respondents for their time and help they gave to make this thesis possible.

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