

***North Macedonia:  
'New' country facing old problems***

*A research on the name change of the Republic of North Macedonia*

**Willem Posthumus – s4606027**  
**Master Thesis Human Geography - Conflicts, Territories and Identities**  
**Nijmegen School of Management**  
**Radboud University Nijmegen**  
**Supervisor Henk van Houtum**  
**October 2019**  
**36.989 words**

*Once, from eastern ocean to western ocean, the land stretched away without names. Nameless headlands split the surf; nameless lakes reflected nameless mountains; and nameless rivers flowed through nameless valleys into nameless bays.*

*G. R. Stewart, 1945, p. 3*

## ***I Preface***

After a bit more than a year, I can hereby present my master's thesis. It's about a name. Around 100 pages about a name: I could not have thought it would be such an extensive topic. Last year I had heard about Macedonia, or the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as it was often called. I didn't know it that well, just that it used to be part of Yugoslavia, obviously. An item in the news, however, triggered my interest: the country was about to change its name to North Macedonia. 'Why?' I thought. I didn't know about the name dispute, but the more I read about it, the more I wanted to know. When I had to choose a subject for my master's thesis, I knew I would look at this name change. A year later, I think I understand the name change and the dispute better. Still, the topic is more complicated than I thought. Understanding everything there is about it would probably take a lot more time.

Doing this research I got the chance to go abroad one more time during my studies. I preferred, of course, to go to North Macedonia. When I couldn't find a place there, I eventually ended up in Belgrade, at the Association of European Border Research (AEBR). I really enjoyed my stay in Belgrade: a city that's raw and alive, where there's so much to see and to do. The atmosphere was great. Behind the grey buildings hides a beautiful city. The people were always welcoming and were curious to know why I chose to live there. From there, I worked on my research, gathered information, planned interviews and eventually went to Skopje, where life on the streets was a bit more relaxed than Belgrade. People were also warm and welcoming, it was a pleasant stay. By talking to people there, I understood the complexity of the topic. The name change divided people, but everyone was willing to explain to me their opinion. It helped me a lot to eventually write the rest of my thesis.

I want to thank a lot of people who helped me last year. First, I want to thank Eva for being there and supporting me, either with me or when I was in Belgrade. Without you it wouldn't have been that easy. I want to thank Danilo and Slaviza for hosting me in Belgrade and being so open and welcoming. Same goes for Igor and Saliza in Skopje, wonderful people. I want to thank Ana and Natasha from the AEBR for their support, helping me with the interviews and for their company. Thanks also to Marija, who joined me to the first interviews in Skopje. I want to thank all people I interviewed for their time and for their recommendations for other respondents or reports. I want to thank Francesco, for being a friend in Belgrade. Finally, I want to thank Henk for the feedback and enthusiasm towards my subject. It was very helpful. Without these people, and others, this thesis wouldn't have been possible. I hope you enjoy reading it.

## ***II Abstract***

In June 2018, Greece and the Republic of Macedonia solved a dispute about the name 'Macedonia' with the Prespa Agreement, implementing the new name 'North Macedonia'. In this research, the underlying dispute and the influence of this name change is analysed. To understand the complex dispute, the history of the geographic region of Macedonia is analysed with a cartographic analysis of ethnographic maps. It tries to show how maps changed the perception of Macedonia's ethnicity. This cartographic 'battle' eventually resulted in a real 'battle': the Balkan Wars. These wars caused the split-up of geographic Macedonia, in 4 different states. Then the period after independence of the Republic of Macedonia is analysed, explaining the complexity of the name dispute. Greece did not agree with the name of the new Republic of Macedonia and tried to block its integration in international organizations. The Interim Agreement was a way to (temporarily) cool things down, with the aim of finding a solution to the name issue. The Government of Prime Minister Gruevski started to put emphasis on the ancient past of the Macedonians, by for example starting the 'Skopje 2014' project, infuriating the Greeks. The new Government of Prime Minister Zaev restored relations with Greece and, eventually, signed the Prespa Agreement. The new name 'North Macedonia' was, eventually, adopted early 2019. In the last part of the thesis, the name change and its (geopolitical) consequences are explained, looking at the implications for North Macedonia's future. Different geopolitical players have had an interest in North Macedonia and want to remain or regain influence. The name change means a change of cards in the geopolitical play: some now have better hands than others. North Macedonia strived to become NATO and EU member now Greece will not block its Euro-Atlantic integration anymore. As long as this is not achieved yet, different other players can still gain influence in the country. Internally, discontent with the change of the constitutional name could lead to a political change. Eventually the future is unclear, but the way of resolving the name issue can be an example for other disputes in the world.

By combining different theoretical concepts with a mixed methods approach (interviews, observation, desk research and cartographic analysis), this thesis tries to give more insight into the name change. It concludes that the Prespa Agreement was a compromise for both countries: it made an end to a dispute where conflicting identities clashed, now maybe bringing identities closer again. The thesis aims to be a starting point for further research on the name change. The situation of North Macedonia, like happened so often in history, might change again in the future. Hopefully, this thesis will still be of use to those who want to do research on this change, to understand the situation of the country better.

### **III Table of Contents**

<b>I Preface</b> .....	3
<b>II Abstract</b> .....	4
<b>III Table of Contents</b> .....	5
<b>IV List of maps</b> .....	7
<b>V List of figures</b> .....	7
<b>VI List of abbreviations</b> .....	7
<b>1 Introduction</b> .....	9
1.1 Project Framework	9
1.2 Societal Relevance	11
1.3 Scientific Relevance	12
1.4 Research objective and questions	13
<b>2 Research methods</b> .....	15
2.1 Research strategy	15
2.2 Research methods	16
2.2.1 Internship	16
2.2.2 Analysis of maps	17
2.2.3 Desk research	19
2.2.4 Observations in North Macedonia	19
2.2.5 Interviews in North Macedonia	20
<b>3 Macedonia: a complex history</b> .....	23
3.1 Macedonia: an introduction	23
<i>Concept 1: Maps and cartopolitics</i>	26
3.2 Ancient Macedonia	29
3.3 Medieval Macedonia	31
3.4 Ottoman Macedonia	34
<i>Concept 2: Nationalism and national identity</i>	35
<i>Concept 3: (Critical) Geopolitics</i>	38
3.5 The Balkan wars and split of Macedonia	50
3.6 After World War II: Socialist Republic of Macedonia	52
<b>4 The independent Republic of Macedonia</b> .....	53
4.1 Independence and striving for recognition	54
4.2 Struggle with Greece	55
<i>Concept 4: Toponymy and the value of geographic names</i>	55
<i>Concept 5: Disputes over territory and nationality</i>	59
4.3 Struggle with the Albanian minority	64
4.4 'Antiquization' and Gruevski's government	66

<b>5 'North' as a solution to the name dispute.....</b>	<b>70</b>
5.1 Tsipras and Zaev come together	70
5.2 The name change process	71
<b>6 Geopolitical consequences of the name change.....</b>	<b>73</b>
6.1 International geopolitics	74
6.1.1 Geopolitics on world level	75
6.1.2 Geopolitics on the European/Atlantic level	78
6.1.3 Geopolitics on the regional level	82
6.2 How geopolitics influenced North Macedonia internally	85
6.3 Prespa Agreement as an example for other disputes	88
<b>7 Conclusions and discussions.....</b>	<b>89</b>
7.1 Answering the sub questions	89
7.2 Answering the main question	94
7.3 Relevance and recommendations	95
7.4 Reflection own process	96
<b>8 References.....</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>9 Interview guide.....</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>10 Observation scheme.....</b>	<b>110</b>

#### ***IV List of maps***

1. Geographic Macedonia with Ancient borders - Rossos (2006), p. 4.
2. Definitions of geographic Macedonia - Wilkinson (1952), p. 4.
3. Macedonia under Philip and Alexander - Roisman, J., & Worthington, I. (2010), p. xxi.
4. Byzantine Empire and the Ottomans - Shepherd (1911), p. 89.
5. Ottoman conquest - Shepherd (1911), p. 124.
6. Macedonia in 1842. Wilkinson (1952), p. 34, adapted from Safarik (1842).
7. Macedonia in 1847. Wilkinson (1952), p. 36, adapted from Boué (1847).
8. Macedonia in 1861. Wilkinson (1952), p. 44, adapted from LeJean (1861).
9. Divisions of 1878. Rossos (2006), p. 50.
10. Macedonia in 1877. Wilkinson (1952), p. 70, adapted from Stanford (1877).
11. Macedonia in 1899. Wilkinson (1952), p. 122, adapted from Nicolaidis (1899).
12. Macedonia in 1900. Wilkinson (1952), p. 130 adapted from Kancev (1900).
13. Division of Macedonia by 1913. Rossos (2006), p. 119.
14. Yugoslavia 1945-1991. Benson (2004), p. xxvi, adapted from Singleton (1985).

#### ***V List of figures***

1. Flag of the Republic of Macedonia (1992-1995). Wikimedia Commons.
2. Flag of the Republic of Macedonia (1995-2019) and the Republic of North Macedonia (2019 - present). Wikimedia Commons.
3. Statue of Justinian I in Skopje. Own photo.
4. Porta Macedonia in Skopje. Own photo.
5. Government building with EU flag (left) and NATO flag (right). Own photo.
6. EU Delegation in Skopje. Own photo.
7. EU Info Centre. Own photo.
8. Graffiti in Skopje City Park. Own photo.

#### ***VI List of abbreviations***

AEBR	Association of European Border Regions
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
CBC	Cross-border cooperation
CELSE	China-Europe Land-Sea Express line
DPA	Democratic Party of Albanians
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union

FYROM	Former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia
ICJ	International Court of Justice
NDM	People's Movement of Macedonia
NLA	National Liberation Army
SDSM	Social Democratic Union of Macedonia
SRM	Socialist Republic of Macedonia
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States
VMRO	Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization
VMRO-DPMNE	Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization - Democratic Party of Macedonian National Unity
WMC	World Macedonian Congress

# **1 Introduction**

What's in a name? The importance of a name is something people value in their daily lives. When someone calls you by your name, you know they mean you. But what would happen if your name would suddenly change? Not everyone would accept that. You had this name for years and you identify yourself with this name. People would have to get used to using your new name and some might even refuse to do that. Changing a name could mean trouble. Changing a name could, however, also bring new opportunities. Maybe this new name makes it easier to meet new people or to get a new job. Then a change might be for the best.

## **1.1 Project Framework**

The Republic of North Macedonia<sup>1</sup> right now is going through this process. Since its independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, the country is in dispute with Greece about the name 'Macedonia'. In the North of Greece, there's a region called Macedonia, coming from the historic ancient region of the Kingdom of the Macedons. In 1991, the founding of the new Republic of Macedonia was seen by Greeks as a problem, suspecting the Republic of Macedonia of territorial ambition (BBC, 2018b). The Republic of North Macedonia is a landlocked country, and the Greeks were afraid of territorial expansion to the Greek Macedonia, where Thessaloniki could be a way to Sea (Smith, 2018a). The country became known to the world as Macedonia, but in international organizations where Greece was a member, it was officially referred to as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). The use of the name 'Macedonia' was the main reason Greece vetoed the Republic of Macedonia's attempt to get membership of NATO, and its ambitions to join the EU (Delauny, 2018). During the years after 1991, the Greeks and Macedonians argued about the history of the Macedonian Region. For example, in 2006, The Republic of Macedonia named its biggest airport the Alexander the Great Airport, infuriating the Greeks who see Alexander the Great as an important figure of Greek history (BBC, 2018b). The government of the Republic of Macedonia also started the project Skopje 2014, where they transformed the city centre of the capital into neoclassicist/baroque style, with 'new' buildings and statues, reminding of a proud 'Macedonian' past (BBC, 2014). This process, what Vangeli (2011) calls 'antiquization', not only worsened the relations with Greece but also its international position. It even created tensions in the country,

---

<sup>1</sup> *In international organizations formerly known as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, or FYROM. After the name-change, this name doesn't apply anymore. The country is now officially called 'The Republic of North Macedonia'. In this research, the country is referred to as 'North Macedonia' or 'the Republic of North Macedonia', or sometimes 'the Republic' (if it's clear it refers to North Macedonia in the sentence), following the official name change. Since the name issue is sensitive, I will try to keep making a difference between Greek or Aegean Macedonia and North Macedonia and avoid referring to the whole region as if it would be one 'Macedonia'.*

between ethnic Macedonians themselves, who did not agree about 'their' common history, or about the way the government displayed this with the statues (Vangeli, 2011).

In 2018, after 27 years of dispute, the Greek and the Republic of Macedonia's Government finally came together to make an end about the conflict. They agreed that the Republic of Macedonia would change its name to the Republic of North Macedonia. In this way, Greek-Macedonian relations would be improved, the dispute resolved and membership of EU and/or NATO would be possible for the Republic of Macedonia. In January 2019, the name-change passed through the Republic of Macedonia's Parliament and the Greek Parliament, finalizing the Agreement (Smith, 2019a). On 12 February 2019, North Macedonia was officially acknowledged as the new name of the country (Smith, 2019b). Changing a name is one, but what will this mean for the country? What is the value of a name? The name dispute of Macedonia is such an example of a case where the name has value. A name change now is seen as a solution to the problem, but is it going to end the dispute with Greece forever? Is it going to bring North Macedonia closer to EU/NATO membership? What do other countries think about it and what does it mean for North Macedonia's citizens?

A lot is still unclear and the future of the country is uncertain. In this thesis, I hope to give insight into the name-change, with the history, present, and future of the country. The subject is a combination of history, geography, and politics: three fields that come together in North Macedonia. In a subject about territory and politics, the term 'geopolitics' comes up immediately. In 'Introduction to Geopolitics' Flint (2006) describes the different aspects of the term. According to him, geopolitics "is the practice of states controlling and competing for territory." (p. 13). Next to that, geopolitics makes order: "geopolitics, in theory, language, and practice, classifies swathes of territory and masses of people." (Flint, 2006, p. 13). In the history of the geographic region of Macedonia, these geopolitical aspects have played a big role, as I will explain further in chapter 3. Different states, (most importantly Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia and the Ottoman Empire) competed to control the Macedonian territory. Classifying the people living in the region was one of the main instruments to make these territorial claims. For example, Bulgaria classified the people living in Macedonia as Bulgarians, while Greece classified them as Greeks (Wilkinson, 1952). The people stayed the same, but different states fought over their territory and classification. In the rest of this thesis, I hope to make clear that the turbulent geopolitics of the Macedonian region is not just something from the past. The history of the region shaped the situation of today, but tomorrow the whole situation could be different. I hope to show how the current name change fits into this pattern of change. Who knows what the situation in the country might be in 10 years? The point is to understand yesterday and today in order to be prepared for tomorrow. By doing that, I hope to find out what the name change will mean for the geopolitical future of North Macedonia.

## ***1.2 Societal Relevance***

After the ending of the Cold War and the end of the East-West division in Europe, many former communist countries, eventually, joined the European Union. The Republic of Macedonia did not join. This, was partly because of their dispute with Greece, which was already a member since 1981. Greece tried to block the Republic of Macedonia's efforts to join both EU and NATO, objecting the use of the name 'Macedonia', since they saw that as part of 'their' history (Delauny, 2018). Now, the name-change might bring an end to this blockade. North Macedonia's government is trying to achieve EU and NATO membership for their country. For the Republic of North Macedonia's society, this might change their opportunities. At first, it could give Macedonians more opportunities to move to other countries. Joining the Schengen Agreement makes it easier for people to live or work in other EU countries. Next to that, it could give the Macedonian economy a boost, when trade with other EU countries would become easier. These opportunities are, however, speculation. Right now, the first step is the implementation of the name change. The question then is, what the significance is of this name. The process of naming has to do with national identity: someone can identify as 'Macedonian' and see someone who does not identify the same as the 'other'. Naming is, in that sense, a way of ordering: distinguishing between 'us' and 'them' (Van Houtum, 2002). Radding and Western (2010) state that: "a name's significance is connected to a society." (p. 349). People in a certain society are attached to geographic names from that region. Changing 'their' name could be difficult for the people.

The name issue divided people in both countries. In Athens, protesters against the name-change clashed with the police in the days around the vote in Parliament (Kirby, 2019). Greeks from the Greek Macedonia are not happy with the use of 'Macedonia' at all, even with the 'North' in front of it, since they see the region where they live in as the one and only true Macedonia (Williams, 2019). Every other use of the word is seen as a claim to Greek heritage (Williams, 2019). In the Republic of Macedonia, Delauny (2018) also reported protests: "In Skopje, posters declaring 'We Are Macedonia' have appeared on billboards opposite the National Assembly" (Delauny, 2018). On both sides the name change was not welcomed by everyone.

At the beginning of January, the deal got through both parliaments and was officially implemented (Smith, 2019a). The application for NATO-membership is already underway (Smith, 2019b). The rest of the future of the country is, however, still uncertain. What is going to change? Do people notice the name-change directly? In this research, I hope to address questions like these and find out what the name change is going to mean for the (geopolitical) future of the country. I hope it will give more insight into the chances and opportunities, but also the problems that come with this name-change. In the interviews, I experienced how sensitive these issues are. A part of the Macedonians is not happy they have to use the word 'North' in front of 'their' country. Next to that, they don't know if the name change is actually going to make their daily life better. In my opinion,

it's especially the uncertainty that's the hardest part for people, something I also noticed doing research for my bachelor thesis about Brexit and the Irish border. People don't know what the change of situation is going to mean for themselves. Hopefully, this thesis will help to provide more insight into the background and consequences of the name change for North Macedonia's society, so people might be better prepared for the future.

### ***1.3 Scientific Relevance***

How often does it happen that a country is changing its name? In Europe's history, this happened a lot. Take for example the Netherlands, which name changed often during the last centuries. In recent years, however, name changes of countries did not occur that much anymore (Kadmon, 2004). Now, in 2018, a country in Europe is suddenly changing its name. How does this work and what are the consequences to, for example, people's identity? This topic came up recently and it's interesting to jump in and see how the situation develops. For scientific research, this means you can be among the first researchers to look at the new development. Of course, the name-dispute is something widely discussed in scientific literature (see for example Brown, 2000; Craven, 1995; Danforth, 1993; Kofos, 1999; Messineo, 2012; Rubeli, 2000), it's not a dispute that came up recently. Therefore, I can use the work of these researchers to understand today's situation better. The name-agreement only happened in 2018 and there is not much information about it yet from scientific authors. There are some policy reports (Armakolas et al., 2019; Armakolas & Petkovski, 2019), or opinion articles (Filis, 2019; Vankovska, 2019; Vukadinovic, 2019) but there are almost no scientific publications yet on the topic. It's a topic that's going on right now, with a lot of uncertainties. The main uncertainty is what this name-change could mean for the future of the country. For scientific literature, this case could be interesting, because it could add to the literature on the name-dispute, to see if this name-change is a working solution. It could also be useful for research around countries changing its name, which happened a lot in history. Of course, when countries got independence from their colonial ruler, they often changed their name (like Rhodesia to Zimbabwe). Some countries changed their name in line with a changing political situation, like North Macedonia that used to be the 'Socialist Republic of Macedonia' (Ceka, 2018). Sometimes names changed over time, because more and more people used it like Barrow (2003) points out about India, which was formerly known as 'Hindustan'. These examples show that North Macedonia is not unique: names of countries have always changed in the course of history. This research could be used to compare to other name changes from countries, to see what the similarities and differences are and to help to add to theories around the effects of name changes. If another country would want to change its name, then this research could be used as a reference to how this works in practice. Hopefully, this thesis will also contribute to theories about conflict resolution. The Prespa Agreement can be seen as an example to end a long dispute between two countries or

parties. Edward P. Joseph (2018) from Foreign Policy and the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies highlighted the importance of the name-change: “In fact, the deal does much more than that. It creates a model for addressing identity clashes that drive conflict not only in the Balkans but across the globe.” (Joseph, 2018). I hope this research can make that clear. I’m not going to try to make an addition to the scientific literature on how the dispute emerged. That topic is widely discussed and it’s very useful information for my research (see above). Instead, I try to zoom out and get a broad perspective of the name change. I look at the genealogy of the name ‘Macedonia’ by using old ethnographic maps of the region. This cartographic aspect of my thesis will hopefully help me explain the complexity of the region and the people living there. Then I want to connect this genealogy to the name change now: what does history tell us to understand the name change? I hope I can help to contribute to the scientific literature about the name change, by making this connection of past, present and future, to make clear the significance of what is happening in North Macedonia.

#### ***1.4 Research objective and questions***

The research objective of my thesis is to gain more knowledge about the geopolitical consequences of the name-change for the Republic of Macedonia, in order to have more insight into the future of the country. Predicting the future is hardly possible, but reaching this objective would help people in the Republic of Macedonia to prepare for possible (geopolitical) changes. It could also help other countries that would change its name in the future, to be better prepared for the consequences.

The main research question and sub-questions are drawn up to reach this objective. The main focus will be on the consequences of the name-change. The sub-questions will split these consequences into different aspects. The main research question will be:

*‘What are the geopolitical consequences of the name change of North Macedonia, inside and outside of the country?’*

In order to answer this main question, several sub-questions are drawn up;

*‘What does the history of the geographic region of Macedonia look like and what role did maps play in it?’*

*‘How did the conflict between Greece and North Macedonia about the name Macedonia emerge?’*

*‘How did Greece and North Macedonia find a solution to the name dispute?’*

*'What could the name-change mean for the international geopolitics of North Macedonia?'*

*'What could the name-change mean for the internal geopolitics of North Macedonia?'*

With these sub questions, I hope to gather enough information to answer the main question. The history of the conflict is important to understand what's going on right now. Without history, in my opinion, it's impossible to understand the present. The second question deals with the name dispute itself. It's, of course, part of history, but I wanted to give it more emphasis by making it a separate sub question. In this way, it's easier to understand the origins of the dispute better. By answering the first and second question, there should be enough information about the dispute to look at the third sub question: how the name change became the solution of the dispute. This is a question more focussed on conflict resolution, a way to end an almost 30 year during conflict over the name 'Macedonia'. The main goal of the name change was to improve relations of North Macedonia with Greece, in order to get for example EU and/or NATO membership. It is, therefore, interesting to see in what ways this name-deal contributes to improving that relationship. That is also the case for the last two questions: how the name change might change the future internal and external relations of the country. EU/NATO membership was the main reason for the deal and the application for NATO membership already started (Smith, 2019b). By answering these sub questions, understanding how the name change might influence this process and what needs to be done to achieve these memberships should be possible. Finally, combining the sub questions and combining the history, present and future, the main question is answered: what the name-change means for North Macedonia's geopolitical situation.

During the process of answering these questions, I will introduce 5 different concepts relevant to the research. In chapter 3 about the history of Macedonia, I will start with the concept of 'maps and cartopolitics'. I think maps have played an important role, especially in the 19th and 20th Century, to shape people's perception of certain 'unknown' areas. The power of maps is illustrated to understand their function in history (Wood, 1992). In the same chapter, the concepts of 'nationalism and national identity' and '(critical) geopolitics' will be introduced. In the 19th Century, awareness of national identity started to come up, having a major influence on the geopolitical situation in different parts of the world, including Macedonia. Different states saw the people living in Macedonia as belonging to 'their' national identity (Wilkinson, 1952). Geopolitics, about states competing for territory (Flint, 2006), was fueled by these nationalist ideas. I will also describe critical geopolitics, a criticism to the traditional way of battling for territory, since the geopolitical field has changed over the years (Ó Tuathail, 1995). In recent years, states do not necessarily compete for territory, there are more actors involved and it's more about getting

influence than own the territory (Ó Tuathail, 1995). I will describe these concepts to understand the role they played in the history of a region where nationalism and national identity have played a major role ever since. In chapter 4, the last two concepts will be added. First, I look at 'toponymy and the value of geographic names'. With the independence of the Republic of Macedonia, the name 'Macedonia' became a big issue. I have tried to describe the value of certain names, to understand why people and countries find them so important. Disagreement over the use of the term 'Macedonia' led to a dispute between the Republic of Macedonia and its southern neighbour Greece. I will look at the concept of territorial disputes to see what they can be about and compare them to the Macedonian name dispute. I hope these concepts will be of added value to my thesis, helping to make the issues around the name change of North Macedonia more clear.

Different methods are used to gather this information. Sometimes interviews will provide this, sometimes observations and sometimes maps or other literature. During the process, I will gradually find out what I need in order to answer the main and sub questions. My hypothesis to these questions is that the name change will, especially in the beginning, divide the country into people for and against the name change. In the beginning, the possible positive consequences are not that visible yet, which makes it harder to accept the name change. National identity will play a major role, I think, in the perception of people of the name change. On the long term, the name change could have a more positive role in the country, since it could give economic opportunities with Euro-Atlantic integration and a more important role on international level. To reach this, the biggest obstacle, I think, will be the group opposing the name change. They live in the same country and have to live with the name as well. I think the challenge is to not get a country that stays divided by this decision. That's why the coming years

## ***2 Research methods***

### ***2.1 Research strategy***

Macedonia has always been a region with interest from a lot of different groups. It's a region with a complex history, on both North Macedonia's side as well the Greek side. Doing research on this topic requires, therefore, a broad perspective, in order to understand what's going on right now. In this thesis, my research strategy is trying to understand what's happening by zooming out, by seeing what parties were involved, are involved and will be involved in the future. I want to analyse what the roles and interests of different parties in the region are. By looking at history, it's easier to understand the present. The aim of looking at history is to find out why there is a dispute at all and why this name-change might be a way to end this conflict. Looking at the geographic history of Macedonia means maps will be involved. In the past these maps differed depending on the year and

author. Some portrayed Macedonia as Bulgarians, others as Greeks or Serbs. Therefore, it's useful to analyse these maps and its differences, to see where the origins of the dispute lie. As I will explain later on, maps have the power to influence people's perception of certain countries or regions (Wilkinson, 1952). In this name dispute, maps can explain the complexity of what people see as 'Macedonia'. Next to that, I will make use of literature on the topic, from both sides of the Macedonian region, to get a broad view of the dispute. In addition, I hope to arrange interviews with relevant people on my field trip to North Macedonia. All in all, I will use a 'mixed-methods' approach, combining different ways to gather data to get a broad view of the dispute. In this way, I hope to get multiple perspectives by zooming out of the conflict, in order to understand the name-change in 2019 better.

## ***2.2 Research methods***

### ***2.2.1 Internship***

In our master's programme, we have to combine writing our thesis by doing an internship. In this way, you can get some experience for your career, while at the same time, an internship can help you with getting the necessary data for your thesis. I wanted to go abroad once more to do this internship and, therefore, I wanted a subject outside of the Netherlands. Choosing (then) the Republic of Macedonia as the country of my subject, obviously meant I wanted to do an internship there. I emailed different organizations working in topics like international relations or NGO's internationally orientated. When this didn't work, I asked the teacher of my summer school of 2018, Hynek Böhm, who worked in Brussels and is still working in cross-border cooperation. I figured he would know a lot of people in Europe, so maybe in North Macedonia as well. He suggested me to contact Ana Nikolov from the AEBR Centre for Balkans in Belgrade since her organization focuses on the Balkans, not just Serbia. Thanks to Hynek, I got in touch with Ana and I could do a research internship in Belgrade, from the beginning of April until the end of June.

At the 31<sup>st</sup> of March, I took a flight to the Nikola Tesla Airport in Belgrade. The next day, I met Ana at her office, where I got my own desk to work and study. In the first few weeks, I worked a lot on the history chapter of my thesis, gathering data like maps and reading a lot of literature. Every day of my internship, I wrote down what I worked on and what I learned, so at the end, it would be easy to read back when certain ideas or changes of ideas came up and why. Now, this logbook, is one of the most important ways to find back the steps in my research. I can see the steps I took in writing this thesis, including the most important findings and changes. I did not follow a certain method, I just tried to write down every day what I wanted to do and what I eventually did.

At the end of April, I started to prepare my interviews in Skopje. I planned the week to go there and started emailing certain people and organizations that could be relevant. Ana suggested

some organizations and people, which was very helpful. In May, time started running out and I still hadn't got that many respondents. Luckily, a colleague of Ana, Marija, arranged two interviews for me on my first day in Skopje, so I would have a good start of my fieldwork week. Eventually, Ana forwarded all my emails through her office email account, which helped a lot. Now more and more people responded. An email of a known organization obviously worked better than from just a student. In Skopje, I eventually did 9 interviews and some observations. More about that below. I found out almost every organization and all people are either in favour or against the name change to North Macedonia. Back in Belgrade, I helped Ana with setting up e-modules about cross-border cooperation, while at the same time I started transcribing my interviews. At the beginning of June, I attended two conferences as a representative of the AEBR, which was very interesting to experience. In between the workshops and speakers, I had the chance to speak to some people who worked in North Macedonia, which got me some more insights into the opinion of people from the country.

The last weeks in June, I mostly worked on finishing the transcriptions of my interviews and the e-modules about CBC. When I was about to leave Belgrade to fly back to the Netherlands, I could look back at a very interesting and relevant time as an intern at the AEBR. Although I could not be of use to them as much as I wanted, they helped me a lot with my fieldwork and the logistics for my trip to Skopje.

### **2.2.2 Analysis of maps**

Maps play important roles in writing history. As a kid, I used to look at the maps of ancient Greece or the Roman Empire to see what parts of the world belonged to it. Maps, however, are always interpretations of history. Maps have different sides and different ideas behind it. Maps, therefore, are never neutral (Van Houtum, 2013). This plays a big role in the dispute between Greece and the Republic of Macedonia as well. The region has always been a place with multiple ethnicities. Wilkinson (1951) already pointed out what this meant: "The many ideas on the ethnographic structure of Macedonia which sprang from it are recorded in a variety of ethnographic maps." (p. 5). Those different maps "incorporate vital evidence about the origins and growth of the ethnographic dispute which has always been at the heart of the Macedonian problem." (Wilkinson, 1951, p. 5). In this thesis, I want to analyse these historical maps (including those Wilkinson uses) to find out the political meanings behind them. Van Houtum (2013) and Bueno Lacy and Van Houtum (2015) use the term 'cartopolitics' to describe the "cartographic strategies designed to assert control over a territory". (Bueno Lacy & Van Houtum, 2015, p. 484). This concept will be used to critically analyse maps of Macedonia, similar to the way Bueno Lacy and Van Houtum (2019) used maps of Cyprus in their article, to show how perceptions of Cyprus changed over time. I will also use Denis Wood's book 'The Power of Maps' (1992) to help to analyse maps of Macedonia. This

is a book I encountered in several publications and I think it gives good guidelines to critically analyse maps. Wood described a lot of ways to critically reflect maps. He describes the ways maps can be useful, but also the things you need to keep in mind when using them.

For Macedonia, I started to collect different maps from books, scientific articles and online sources, from authors from different backgrounds and with different perspectives (for example, from Wilkinson, 1951 and Rossos, 2006). I want to analyse them, to see how the idea of 'Macedonia' changed over time. To structure this analysis, I want to look at the same things for every map:

- Background author(s)
- Aim or goal of the author(s) with the map
- Impact of the map

Most maps I use come from the book of Wilkinson (1951) who collected different ethnographic maps of the region. This book was easy to access online, and contained lots of information, while other maps online did not have background information. Wilkinson did change the layout of the maps to make them all easier to compare. Next to that, the book is in black and white, so no colours are visible. Therefore, with the analysis of maps, I'm not including the meaning of the colours or the layout. I'm well aware, especially through the work of Wood (1992) and Harley (2009) that colours and layout do mean something and can send a message. In this case, however, I choose to focus on other aspects of the maps. First I look at the *background of the author*. In some cases this can tell a lot of things about the map as Wood (1992) points out: "That is, maps, all maps, inevitably, unavoidably, necessarily embody their author's prejudices, biases and partialities." (p. 24). Knowing something about the author makes it easier to understand the second thing I want to look at: *the aim or goal of the author with the map*. Authors of maps can portray the same situation completely different as Wilkinson (1952) points out: "Even given exactly the same information and similar methods, two or more sharply contrasting ethnographic maps were often produced by different map-compilers." (p. 316). In this thesis, I use a lot of maps from the 19th Century. In that time, regions like the Balkans were not that well mapped by cartographers. Next to that, the Balkans was a contested region, claimed by different ethnicities and religions. Maps portraying a certain group of people in an area could be a legitimization of that group's claim to that area. Maps can, therefore, have an impact on the perception of people: not only on the public but also on politicians and policymakers. This is why I also look at the *impact of the map*. I will keep in mind that this 'impact' was bigger in times where not that much was known about certain areas. With the maps of the 19th and early 20th Century, this impact will, therefore, be of more value than the more recent maps. Finally, by looking at these three aspects, I hope to have gotten a better understanding of the map. Of course, there are more aspects of a map that can be analysed to understand its meaning better, but I don't have the necessary time and space to analyse them in more detail. Next to that, as mentioned before, most maps I use are from the same region and have the same layout

and symbols. I, therefore, choose to focus on the background, aim and impact of the map, since I think this is more relevant for my thesis.

### **2.2.3 Desk research**

Next to maps, in this thesis, I also make use of existing literature. The dispute between Greece and the Republic of Macedonia has been a topic widely discussed by scientific authors (see chapter 4). It is useful to use this work to get as much information as possible on the subject. With desk research, I can analyse existing literature to better understand the conflict. Desk research is described as “a research strategy in which the researcher does not gather empirical data himself, but uses material produced by others.” (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2010, p.194). It can help to find more out about the history of the conflict. Important to keep in mind with desk research is the position of the authors of the literature. Some authors with a Greek nationalist perspective write differently about the dispute than those from a Republic of Macedonia’s nationalist background. Some external authors are also seen as being pro-Macedonian (In favour of the Republic of Macedonia) like Rossos (2006) who made a case for the existence of the ethnicity of the people of the Republic of Macedonia. Others are seen as pro-Greek, like Kofos (1999, see chapter 4), looking at the dispute from a Greek point of view. Sometimes the opinion of the writer is already obvious from the first sentence, like Rothenbacher (2013): “Macedonia originally was a Greek region, with a Greek tribe and a Greek kingdom.” (p. 625). With others, it takes a bit longer to find out what their opinion is. Of course, there are also writers who don’t take a stand too much and are neutral in the subject, more like Danforth (2010) in my opinion. It’s good to look at the perspective of the author before using the literature, especially when writing about Macedonia’s history. It’s a sensitive topic and it requires thorough research, which I hope to do in this thesis.

### **2.2.4 Observations in North Macedonia**

With observations, I hoped to find out more about the change that the country is undergoing. This is a method in addition to the interviews, the main reason I visited the country. With observations, I wanted to write down the things that are striking in everyday life, on the streets and in the media. I used a small observation scheme (added in the Appendix) to keep the observation systemised and scientific relevant. An observation is described as: “the act of noting a phenomenon in the field” (Cresswel, 2013, p.166). This phenomenon, in this case the name change, can be observed in a participating and a non-participating way. Cresswel (2013) then distinguishes 4 types of observing: ‘complete participant’, ‘participant as observer’, ‘nonparticipant/observer as participant’ and finally ‘complete observer’ (p. 167). Although these 4 roles have differences, a “good qualitative observer” may change the role he or she takes during the process of observation (Cresswel, 2013).

For my observation, I chose to be 'nonparticipant/observer as participant'. Cresswell (2013) describes this as follows: "The researcher is an outsider of the group under study, watching and taking field notes from a distance." (p. 167). Although I did not necessarily observe a group of people, I did not engage with people on the street to ask about their opinions. In the interviews I did, but that's different than with my observations. For the 'observation site' I chose the city centre of the capital of North Macedonia, Skopje, and the area around the Skopje City Park nearby. My 'observation goal' was to find signs on the streets connected to the name change. In my 'observation protocol' (added in the Appendix), I wrote down the different factors I wanted to pay attention to. At the same time, I left space open for things I encountered on the streets. I did not use the observations as a primary source, but it was useful for the history chapter to see how Museums, for example, portray North Macedonia's history. Next to that, I saw the signs or billboards about the name change on the streets. As described in chapter 6, the government in North Macedonia is trying to make the work of the European Union more visible, by placing billboards and signs of EU flags together with Macedonian ones. Next to that, I saw the NATO and EU flag raised in front of the National Assembly of North Macedonia, while the country is not even a member of those organizations yet. These observations, together with the rest, gave me a better understanding of the visibility of the name change. I tried to use these observations and reflect on them in my thesis, especially in chapters 5 and 6. In the Appendix, I added my observation scheme, including the notes I wrote down when I visited Skopje.

### **2.2.5 Interviews in North Macedonia**

During my internship I worked on finding respondents for my interviews in North Macedonia. After weeks of preparation, I went to Skopje in May to do the interviews. My internship supervisor brought me in contact with people there for interviews. I wanted to do interviews with people working in regional and international cooperation or relations, to see how the name change might influence the country and their work. These organizations, in my opinion, often have a good view on the international aspect of the name change. While I wanted to see how the name change also influenced North Macedonia's geopolitical situation, I think these organizations would give me more information on that. I think it is useful to have done interviews as an addition to my other existing data because interviews can go more into detail on some topics. I made use of semi-structured interviews because I think this suits the difficult topic of Macedonia better. Babbalanza and While (1994) argue that semi-structured interviews "are well suited for the exploration of the perception and opinions of respondents regarding complex and sometimes sensitive issues" (p. 330). In the case of Macedonia, this strategy can help to understand opinions from different perspectives of Macedonia better since the topic can sometimes be sensitive to people. If some things or answers are unclear, semi-structured interviews give room to ask additional questions

that come up during the interview (Cresswel, 2013). By visiting North Macedonia, I hoped to get an image of the state of the country now and what people think of the name change. In the interviews, I first tried to find out the respondent's opinion of the name dispute, by asking them about the history of the dispute. Every respondent had different things to tell and different perspectives, but it helped to place the rest of the interview in context. After that I asked what they thought of the name change and the process and if the name change had an influence on their work. Finally, I asked what they expected for the future. By doing this, I hoped to get more information on the past, present and future of the region of Macedonia. By interviewing people from different backgrounds and with different opinions, I hoped to get as much information as possible. Some information of respondents contradicted each other, but that made it interesting to understand why. By using the semi-structured type of interview, I gave the respondents enough space to bring in what they thought was important. In some cases, this helped to get the information I did not think of to ask. Some told me more about the political background in the country for example, which I did not know enough about before the interviews. I made notes during the interview to keep up with what the respondents were saying. Next to that, I recorded most interviews, if the respondent agreed, so I could write out the transcript of the whole interview. In this way, it was much easier to find back what a respondent told me. By doing this, it was also possible to include a lot of quotes in my thesis. In some cases, a quote of the interviews made an argument better to understand. In other cases, a quote showed how different perspectives looked at the same topic. All in all, I think the interviews really helped me to get a better understanding of the name dispute and the country in general.

To find respondents, I used the contacts of my internship, to have a start with talking to people in the country. Next to that, I tried to make use of the people of different student organizations in Belgrade (EGEA Belgrade and ESN Belupgrade) to see if I could get contacts at universities or other organizations in North Macedonia. This method, often described as the 'snowball' method or 'chain sampling' (Noy, 2008), was very useful to find enough respondents. The snowball method is described by Biernacki and Waldorf (1981) as follows: "The method [snowball method] yields a study sample through referrals made among people who share or know of others who possess some characteristics that are of research interest." (p. 141). The way of the 'snowball' is to ask people if they know other people that could be relevant, so the 'snowball' gets bigger along the way. The advantages are that people who are otherwise hard to reach can be found and connected to the researcher: "In various studies snowball sampling is often employed as a particularly effective tool when trying to obtain information on and access to 'hidden populations'" (Noy, 2008, p. 330). In my case, there are a few things (like not speaking the language, not living in the country, not having existing contacts) that made it harder to reach people or organizations in North Macedonia, which made the 'snowball' method useful. The method also has its problems and gets criticism for the lack of scientificness (Noy, 2008). Atkinson and Flint (2001) describe these

problems: “Because elements are not randomly drawn, but are dependent on the subjective choices of the respondents first accessed, most snowball samples are biased and do not therefore allow researchers to make claims to generality from a particular sample.” (p. 4). The problem with this method could be that you end up having respondents from the same backgrounds and from the same type of organizations. It was my role, as a neutral researcher, to evaluate the respondents and keep in mind that I did not want to talk to the same people with the same backgrounds. Eventually, I spoke to a lot of different people from different organizations, giving me different explanations of the same topics.

I arranged 10 interviews with people working in North Macedonia, from different backgrounds. The people I spoke to did not necessarily reflect the view of their organization or profession, sometimes their statements were purely their personal opinion. The different respondents were:

- V. Naumovski [Macedonian], a former name negotiator and Ambassador to the United States
- J. Andonovski [Macedonian], a former official in Ministry of Foreign Affairs and current Ombudsman
- A. Krzalovski [Macedonian], a director of the MCIC (Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation)
- Someone from the Local Self Government [Albanian from North Macedonia], specialized in cross-border cooperation (Respondent 4)
- I. Stefanovski [Macedonian], a researcher from EUROTHINK
- Diplomat from the EU Delegation [Hungarian] (Respondent 6)
- B. Mohr [German], from German organization GIZ North Macedonia
- Professor in International Politics [Macedonian] (Respondent 8)
- Sofia Grigoriadou [Greek], comparing Athens and Skopje
- Someone from the Prespa and Ohrid National Trust (PONT) [Macedonian], working on cooperation between Albania, Greece and North Macedonia (Respondent 10)

Next to that, I emailed with several organizations (like the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and the Centre for Research and Policy Making) and people in North Macedonia, providing me with publications, research and other relevant literature. I emailed with the Greek Embassy in Belgrade who were not able to meet me but provided me with a lot of information and publications on the Greek opinion of the name issue. All these contacts together gave me a lot of information to use for my thesis.

## ***3 Macedonia: a complex history***

### ***3.1 Macedonia: an introduction***

In 2019, the Republic of Macedonia officially changed its name to the Republic of North Macedonia. A change in a relatively new country, which was not the first change in the region. Over the years, parts of Macedonia belonged to different Kingdoms, different people and its borders were never really fixed. The ethnically mixed population of today is a result of all these changes. To understand the current situation, we have to look back at the past, at the origins of not just North Macedonia, but of the whole Macedonian region.

“A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture, is like a tree without roots.”, a quote from civil rights activist Marcus Garvey, who tried to get better rights for black people in the U.S. in the 1920s. He made clear that knowledge and awareness of the history of your own people are important. It can strengthen the togetherness of a group of people, like the black minority in the U.S. Throughout history, people have come together by a common past. The realisation that you share the same origin and culture as another person can make you feel closer to each other. Nationalism has used this way to unite nations in their strive for an own nation-state. Marcus Garvey used it to try to unite black people in the U.S. to demand better civil rights. It had an important role and still, black minorities are not always treated the same in the U.S. and other countries. Awareness of history has, however, also been used to make a distinction between us and them, sometimes a reason for civil or ethnic wars.

In North Macedonia, the government understood the significance of history. When the country got independence in the early 1990s, there had to be more attention on the common history of the ‘Macedonians’. Eventually, government policies led to the earlier mentioned project Skopje 2014, where the ‘Macedonian’ past was highlighted (Vangeli, 2011). The conflict with Greece about the name ‘Macedonia’ has a lot to do with this interpretation of the past. Therefore, in this chapter, I will try to delve deeper into history, from ancient times up until the 20th Century, to understand the dispute better. I will try to highlight the main differences in history to make clear why the name dispute was there and the name is still a sensitive issue. Wilkinson (1952) points out that just the question where Macedonia is, geographically, already can be cause for a lot of different conflicting opinions. He highlights the changing size of Macedonia and the different ethnic groups within the region:

This region [Macedonia] is distinctive not on account of any physical unity or common political experiences but rather on account of the complexity of the ethnic structure of its population. It is a zone where the Albanian, Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian linguistic

provinces meet and overlap, and where in addition exclaves of Romanian and Turkish speech are found ; it is a region where the concept of national sentiment, associated with language, exists side by side with the perhaps older concept of community based on religious affinity ; it is a region where many influences, economic, cultural and political emanating from different parts of Europe, Asia and Africa, meet and mingle but where the process of fusion has not always taken place.

Wilkinson, 1952, p. 3

Map 1: Geographic Macedonia with Ancient borders

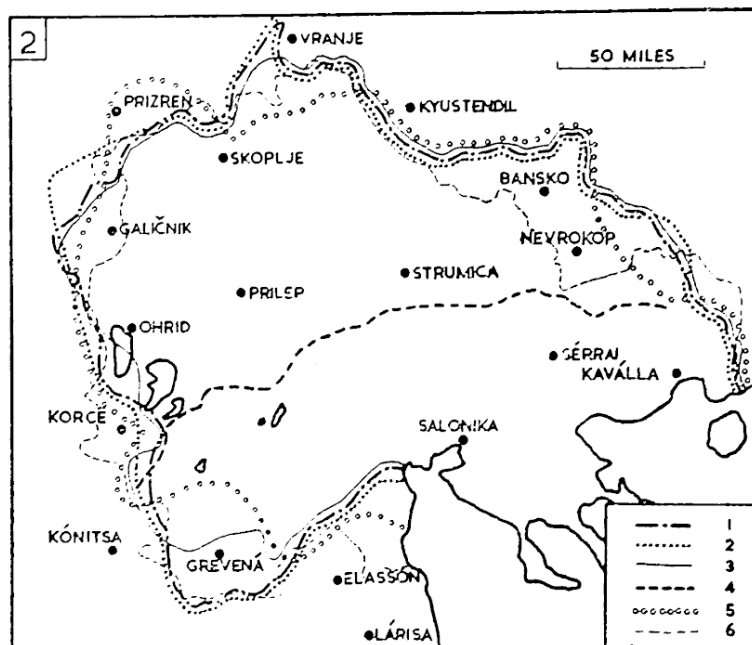


Source: Rossos, 2006, p. 4

Before analysing Macedonia's history, it's good to make clear what the analysis will be about, because the definition of what Macedonia is, already makes a point for discussion. In the context of history, I will try to look at Macedonia as a geographic region, not as a state, kingdom or province of some bigger empire. The area often described as 'geographic Macedonia' right now lies in four different countries: Greece, Bulgaria, North Macedonia and a tiny part in Albania. This 'geographic' Macedonia is something people from different perspectives agree on. It resembles the region that made up the Macedonian kingdom in the 4th Century B.C., as seen on Map 1 of Rossos (2006), the lines of the current countries of geographic Macedonia are also visible. As described in chapter 2, with every map I will look at (1) *the background of the author*, (2) *the aim/goal of the author* and

(3) *the impact of the map*. The author on map 1 is Andrew Rossos (2006). Rossos (2006) wrote a book about the history of North Macedonia and its people, called 'Macedonia and the Macedonians'. He was born in Aegean Macedonia, now Greece, fled after the Civil War and eventually got his Ph. D. at Stanford University. He wrote his book as part of the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, founded by former U.S. President Herbert Hoover. His background as a refugee from the Greek Civil War could explain the way he portrays the Macedonians and Greeks in his book. He supports the case of the Macedonians in the name dispute for example. With this map, he tries to show how Ancient Macedonia resembles the current region viewed as Geographic Macedonia. What's striking is the use of 'Macedonia' as the name of the country back in 2006 on maps often still portrayed as 'Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia'. It makes clear what Rossos thinks is 'Macedonia'. The impact of the map is not substantial since it was not used in policy or to make a claim.

Map 2: Definitions of geographic Macedonia



Source: Wilkinson, 1952, p. 4

Borders Macedonia from different perspectives: (1) Bulgarian 1900, (2) Austrian, 1899, (3) Bulgarian, 1905, (4) Serbian, 1889, (5) Italian, 1930, (6) German, 1927.

Map 2 shows the boundaries of geographic Macedonia as portrayed by different authors, put together by Wilkinson (1952). Henry Robert Wilkinson was a lecturer in Geography at the University of Liverpool. In his work, he focused a lot on cartography. With visits to the former Yugoslavia, his interest in the (then) People's Republic of Macedonia became bigger and bigger (Spooner, Swithinbank & Hall, 2001). His work on the ethnographic maps of Macedonia did not get

that much attention, although in later years, for example after the 1990s, people started to use Wilkinson's book more to understand the situation better (Spooner, Swithinbank & Hall, 2001). The aim of Wilkinson with this map was to show the differences in the perception of geographic Macedonia. Like Wood (1992) described, all authors have different opinions and differ in their perception of the same situation. Map 2 clearly shows how this works in practice. Different interpretations of the region of Macedonia are given, from 19th and 20th Century maps. Although the lines differ slightly, the general shape of the geographic region can be seen where most lines meet. This is the shape that came up in more works used in this thesis (like Agnew, 2007; Danforth, 1993). The impact of this map is not very relevant since it is a collection of different other maps and this one, in particular, did not have a major impact.

For this chapter on the history of Macedonia, I will refer to the history of this geographical region, not only on the part that's now the Republic of North Macedonia. Looking at the bigger picture makes it, in my opinion, easier to understand the tensions that eventually arose over the region. Macedonia's geographical location made it an important way through for trade between Europe and the Middle East and Asia. As Wilkinson (1952) points out, the "importance of its routeways" and the "complexity of its ethnic structure" are connected, because "accessibility often gives rise to a heterogeneous population" (Wilkinson, 1952, p. 5). The location also made it a region of interest to the neighbouring countries. This chapter will hopefully make these connections clear.

Wilkinson's work is focused on ethnographic maps from mainly the 19th and 20th Century, so he did not examine maps from Ancient times (Wilkinson, 1952). However, he makes clear that from the beginning, the Macedonian region was seen as a strange mix of different people, living together in a Kingdom closely related to the Greeks, but at the same time seen as strange or distant (Wilkinson, 1952). Therefore, the most important part of his chapter will be the relations between the different ethnic groups in the history of the Macedonian region. The maps of the work of Wilkinson (1952) will be used to show these relations and differences. Coming back to Garvey's quote, maybe the 'Macedonian' tree has multiple roots and it just depends which root you pick. I will try to dig into this and see what the complexity of this history looks like. Maps will play an important role in understanding this history.

---

### **Concept 1: Maps and cartopolitics**

For a geographer, to make clear what 'Macedonia' actually means, the map quickly comes into play. To describe the history of a certain country or region, maps can give more insight into the changing borders and changing interpretations of the ethnic and political situation. Maps can, however, also influence people's opinion. Is it always true what we see on maps? Before delving into the history of Macedonia, it is, therefore, good to take a critical look at the values and meanings of maps.

Maps can tell a lot about the history of places. They can show you where something is and where something has been. In history and geography lessons, maps played an important role. Maps are, however, a certain representation: they are made on purpose, by people who have a meaning with it and want to show you a certain truth (Wood, 1992). Maps have always been associated with politics and power. From the colonists and explorers of the 16th to the military powers in the 20th Century: maps always played a major role. The association of maps with power, eventually, started to be criticised, especially because of its role in the military: "Mapping and surveying were important instruments of the imperial powers of the nineteenth century, and geography has always flourished in wartime, in response to the demands of armies for detailed geographic information and analysis." (Goodchild, 2006, p. 254).

One of the major critiques on maps came from David Harley in the 1980s. Maps can be a form of power, as Harley (1988, as described in Henderson & Waterstone, 2009), shows in his work on 'Maps, knowledge and power', as well as in his famous 'Deconstructing the Map' (Harley, 1989). Maps, according to him, are a form of language, a 'literature' of maps, where authors try to give a message through their maps. Two maps of one and the same region, like for example Macedonia, with different authors can bring a totally different message to the reader. One could show different borders and colours and express a different interpretation of what Macedonia is and where it lies. Harley makes a link of maps to the 'sociology of knowledge'. He sees maps as a form of knowledge, but the one who brings the knowledge can decide how to visualize it on the map (Harley, 2009). The author can leave details or add emphasis on certain places of the map. Harley uses the example of Foucault, who provided a model for the history of map knowledge (Harley, 2009; Poster, 1982). Foucault argued that the one who was looking for truth did not do this neutral and objective, but wanted to have power. Knowing the truth sometimes means hiding certain parts of that truth. In this way, knowledge could become power, reflected on maps (Poster, 1982). Harley then describes cartography as a 'form of knowledge and power', regardless of its scientific form: "Whether a map is produced under the banner of cartographic science - as most official maps have been - or whether it is an overt propaganda exercise, it cannot escape involvement in the process by which power is deployed." (Harley, 2009, p. 130).

Bueno Lacy and Van Houtum (2015) discuss the symbolism of maps and argue that maps mislead people into thinking what does and what does not belong to a certain area (in their case, Europe). 'Cartopolitics' is used as a term to describe the political meaning behind maps. Bueno Lacy and Van Houtum (2015) define it as: "the visual imposition of control and meaning over space as well as over its inhabitants, their behaviour and ideologies [ . . . ] It is a political technology that consists in carto-graphically defining political territories and empowering them with meaning." (p. 485). In the light of cartopolitics, the author of the map is the one giving political meaning to it. The maker of the maps tries to make a point. He or she leaves certain details and adds emphasis to

others. Maps, although sometimes divided into scientific and political/propaganda maps, are therefore always political, as Leuenberger and Schnell (2010) argue: “Any map, irrespective of its overt function, can become a tool to shape, legitimize, and institutionalize certain forms of knowledge and collective spatial imaginations.” (p. 805). A map is always a simplification of an area or situation, it's never a reality. People do, however, believe this ‘reality’: “By manufacturing perceptions of all-encompassing geographic scale, cartographic artifacts implant in people’s heads a mediated reality.” (Van Houtum & Bueno Lacy, 2019, p. 164).

As Messineo (2012) points out, maps have played a major role in the dispute between North Macedonia and Greece: “Ancient maps of lost empires feature prominently in the on-going ‘denominational conflict’ between [Greece] and [North Macedonia].” (p. 170). Wilkinson (1951) shows how many different maps there were of the Macedonian region. Authors from different backgrounds had a different interpretation of what Macedonia was and where its boundaries were. It illustrates how maps on the same topic of an area can be totally different from each other. The maps of Wilkinson’s work are used to show the differences in portraying the same area and explain how these different views influenced public opinion on the matter. This is one of the influences maps have, according to Denis Wood’s work ‘The Power of Maps’ (1992). In this book, Wood describes the many ways in which maps work and have influence. From early history to the present, maps have always been a way to portray reality in a certain way. Wood describes how authors of maps always have certain intentions with a map (Wood, 1992). Wood sees maps as instruments, rather than representations of reality. Maps are models, simplifications of the truth and maps leave some bits out and highlight others (Wood, 1992). By leaving the parts the author does not want to show, the reader may think these parts do not exist at all. In this way, the author has a lot of power in shaping the reader’s reality.

But no sooner are maps acknowledged as social constructions than their contingent, their conditional, their . . . *arbitrary* character is unveiled. Suddenly the things represented by these lines are opened to discussion and debate, the interest in them of owner, state, insurance company is made apparent. Once it is acknowledged that the map *creates* these boundaries, it can no longer be accepted as *representing* these ‘realities’, which alone the map is capable of embodying (profound conflict or interest).

Wood, 1992, p. 19

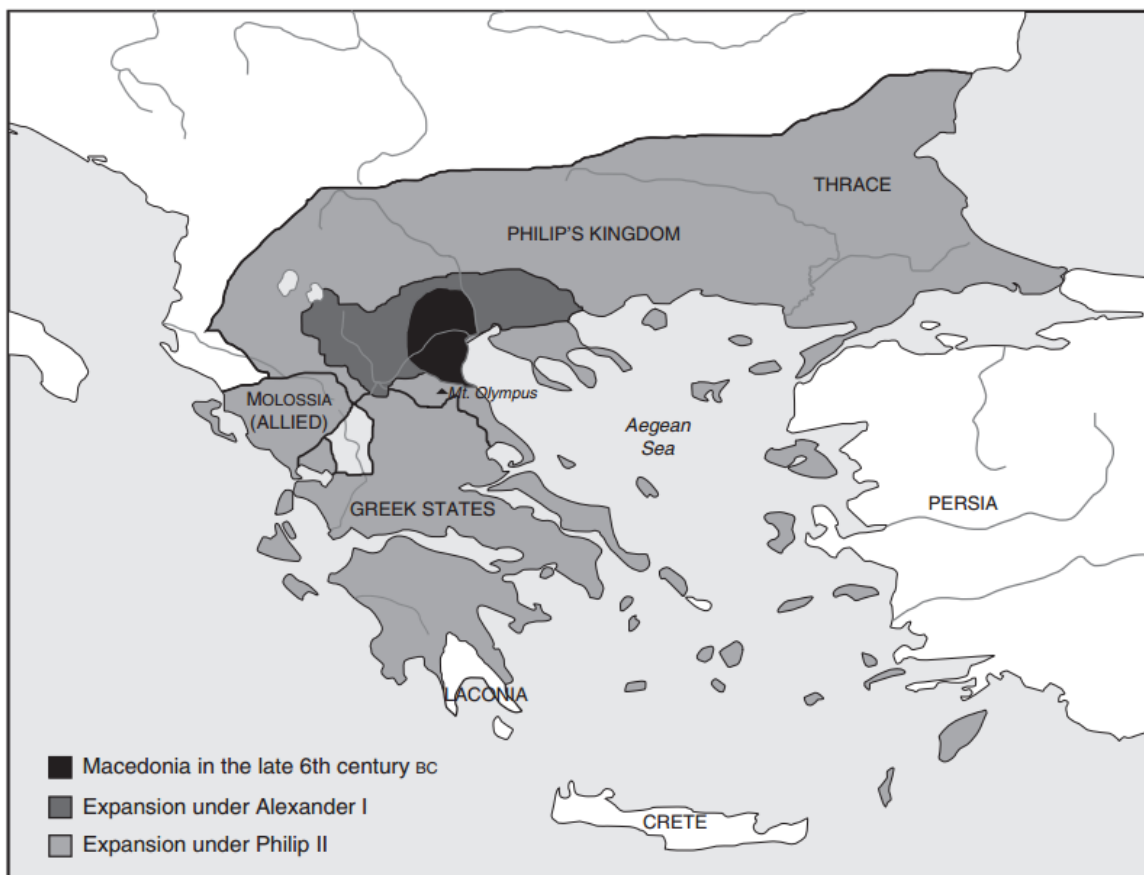
In this thesis, these examples play a major role in the ethnographic maps of the region of Macedonia from the 19th Century onwards. It is good to keep in mind that these influences of maps can influence one’s opinion and viewpoints of reality. Certainly, in the case of Macedonia, this has played an important role. Still, maps can be a useful instrument of research, because different

authors with different backgrounds and viewpoints can, for example, be compared. Every map has its own background and meaning, like Wood (1992) describes: “‘Mirror’, ‘window’, ‘objective’, ‘accurate’, ‘transparent’, ‘neutral’: all conspire to disguise the map as a ... reproduction ... of the world, disabling us from recognizing it for a social construction.” (p. 22). Therefore, as described in chapter 2, I want to look at (1) *the background of the author(s)*, (2) *the aim/goal of the author(s)* and (3) *the impact of the map* (more about this in the previous chapter). By doing this I hope to make clear the importance of certain maps in their time. With keeping the background of these maps in mind, I hope to get more insight into the history of the geographic region of Macedonia, in order to understand the dispute better.

---

### 3.2 Ancient Macedonia

Map 3: Macedonia under Philip and Alexander



Source: Roisman & Worthington, 2010, p. xxi

When people think of Ancient Macedonia the name Alexander the Great mostly comes up first. He was the most famous Macedon King and one of the most important rulers of his time. Tracing back the history of the Macedonian region means going back to these times, a few hundred years before Christ.

As seen on Map 3, Macedonia made up a small region on the Aegean coast, in the 6th Century BC. The map comes from the book 'A Companion to Ancient Macedonia' edited by Roisman and Worthington (2010). In the book, the editors put together different essays from different authors about Ancient Macedonia. The book was part of the Blackwell series 'A Companion to the Ancient World'. The editors wanted to look into the Ancient Kingdom of the Macedons and later on in the book, look at their connection with the Slavs that later became the 'Macedonians' (Roisman & Worthington, 2010). For giving 'too much' space to this connection, the editors are criticized by Greek researcher Tataki (2012), who argues that the volume is not satisfactory and puts too much emphasis on these Slavs. The goal with map 3 is to show where the Kingdom of the Macedons started and how it expanded. It shows how the oldest part of that Kingdom would now lie within the borders of geographic Macedonia. The impact of the map was not big, since it is not a 'new' map or one that portrays a situation different than before.

The Kingdom of the Macedons became significant when Philip II took over as King of the Macedons. Below a small account of what is written in scientific sources about this period, see for more information about Macedonia's history the book by Roisman and Worthington (2010). Important to know is that there are not many written sources from ancient times, as Rhodes (2010) makes clear. The few sources are either from Greeks trading with Macedonians or from stories about the Macedonian royals (Rhodes, 2010). Next to that, there are a few writers like Herodotus, but all in all, most information comes from secondary sources, or from writers outside of Macedonia (Rhodes, 2010).

When Philip II started as Macedon King, he inherited a small Kingdom, that cooperated with its Greek city-state neighbours (Poulton, 2000). The Macedon royals spoke Greek and the language of their people, Macedonian, but according to Hammond (1967) (whose publications on Macedonian history also stood on the basis of Roisman and Worthington, 2010 and Poulton, 2000), the people of Macedonia did not consider themselves Greeks, nor did their neighbouring people. Macedonia did, however, work together with the Greeks on a lot of topics. The Royal family of the Macedons did perceive themselves as Greek in culture and admired the Greek way of living:

Already by the fifth century B.C. Macedonia and the southern Greeks (1) shared most of the same gods, (2) the Greek alphabet and language were employed in Macedonia at least for written communication, and likely for oral as well; (3) Macedonian cities possessed theatres and other architectural and cultural attributes of their southern neighbours and (4) Macedonian art, in the words of C.I. Hardiman in 'Classical Art to 221 BC' "was part of the general artistic koinai of the age". (Anson, 2010, pp. 17-18)

During the centuries B.C., the relationship between the Greeks and Macedonians started to become closer, Anson (2010) argues. At first, Macedonians (not the royals) were seen as barbarians

by the Greeks, but slowly they started to be acknowledged and around 300 B.C., were even allowed to join the Greek Olympic competitions (Anson, 2010).

Philip II changed the situation in the region and went from “being on the periphery of Greek affairs to dominating them” (Poulton, 2000, p. 14). He conquered the area now known as ‘geographic Macedonia’, but did not try to conquer the Greek city-states. When Philip’s son, Alexander III, or commonly known as Alexander the Great, took over power, the Kingdom of Macedon had developed as an important area in the Mediterranean (Poulton, 2000).

Anson (2010) then makes three main conclusions:

(1) Macedonia was clearly part of a broader Greek cultural world at least by the fifth century, (2) whatever may be meant by the stray allusions to spoken ‘Macedonian’ all surviving epigraphical evidence from grave markers to public inscriptions is in Greek, and (3) while the literary evidence into the fourth century suggests that the Greeks did not accept the Macedonians as brothers and there is virtually no evidence to garner the views of non-royal Macedonians, the Argead royal family, including both Philip II and Alexander III, believed themselves to be Greek and were accepted as such by most of the Greek world. (p. 20).

The time of the Macedonian Kingdom was, however, definitely over when the Romans came to conquer the region, incorporating Macedonia as a Roman province in 146 BC (Poulton, 2000). For a few hundred years, Macedonia would be ruled by the Romans (more about that: Poulton, 2000).

### ***3.3 Medieval Macedonia***

When the Roman Empire collapsed, Macedonia remained part of the East Roman Empire or Byzantine Empire. By the 6th Century AD, Slavs migrated into the Balkans, combining forces with Bulgarians from the East (Poulton, 2000). This resulted in the first Bulgarian state in 681. From the 8th Century AD, Slavs started to migrate to the region of Macedonia, bringing the Slavic language and traditions, to the region formerly mostly inhabited by Greeks and Illyrians (Rothenbacher, 2013). Meanwhile, the Bulgarian state grew into a big Empire, defeated the Byzantine Forces and at its height, the Empire stretched out from the Adriatic Sea to the Black Sea (Forbes, Toynbee, Mitrany & Hogarth, 1915).

Religion played an important role in the rest of the division on the continent, as Rothenbacher (2013) points out: “Europe was Christianized from two centres: from Rome, the fountainhead of western Christendom, pushing to the north into Scandinavia, to the east into Central-Eastern Europe, and also to the south-east; and from Byzantium, the centre of Eastern

Christianity, moving through the Balkans into Moravia and Bohemia.” (p. 11). This caused conflict between the two main powers within Christianity: “around the year 1000 the question was settled, the territory partitioned: Poland, the Czech lands, Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia, and the Dalmatian coast became Roman Catholic and largely remained so; Montenegro, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, and the Belarusian, Ukrainian and Russian territories became and remained Orthodox.” (Rothenbacher, 2013, p. 11).

During the time from the fall of the Western Roman Empire in the 6th Century, until the Ottoman attack in the 15th Century, the region of Macedonia was divided into different empires. What is now the Republic of North Macedonia was in different years part of the Byzantine, Bulgarian and Serbian Kingdom (Rossos, 2006). This gave the region a lot of different influences, with migrants from different places, making it, like in Ancient times, a place where different ethnicities and cultures came together.

On Map 4, these differences are shown, in 1265 and 1355. At the top, most of geographic Macedonia was part of the Byzantine Empire, at the bottom it belonged to the Kingdom of Serbia. You can see the capital of North Macedonia, Skopje (Scopia on the map) belonging to first the Byzantine Empire and later the Serbian Kingdom. While the map only shows two moments in this time period, it makes clear how the region was divided into different Empires and ruled by different Kings and Emperors. The map was part of the Historical Atlas of William Robert Shepherd (1911). Shepherd was an American cartographer and historian specialized in Latin-America. He criticized the imperialist U.S. dominance in the Americas and argued Latin-America did not get the attention it deserved (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019). With his maps, Shepherd tried to put more attention to other areas than just the countries that had an interest of the U.S. The aim with the maps below was probably to show the different changes in South East Europe in that period of time. The impact of the map was not substantial since it did not show anything new or a change in how it was portrayed before.

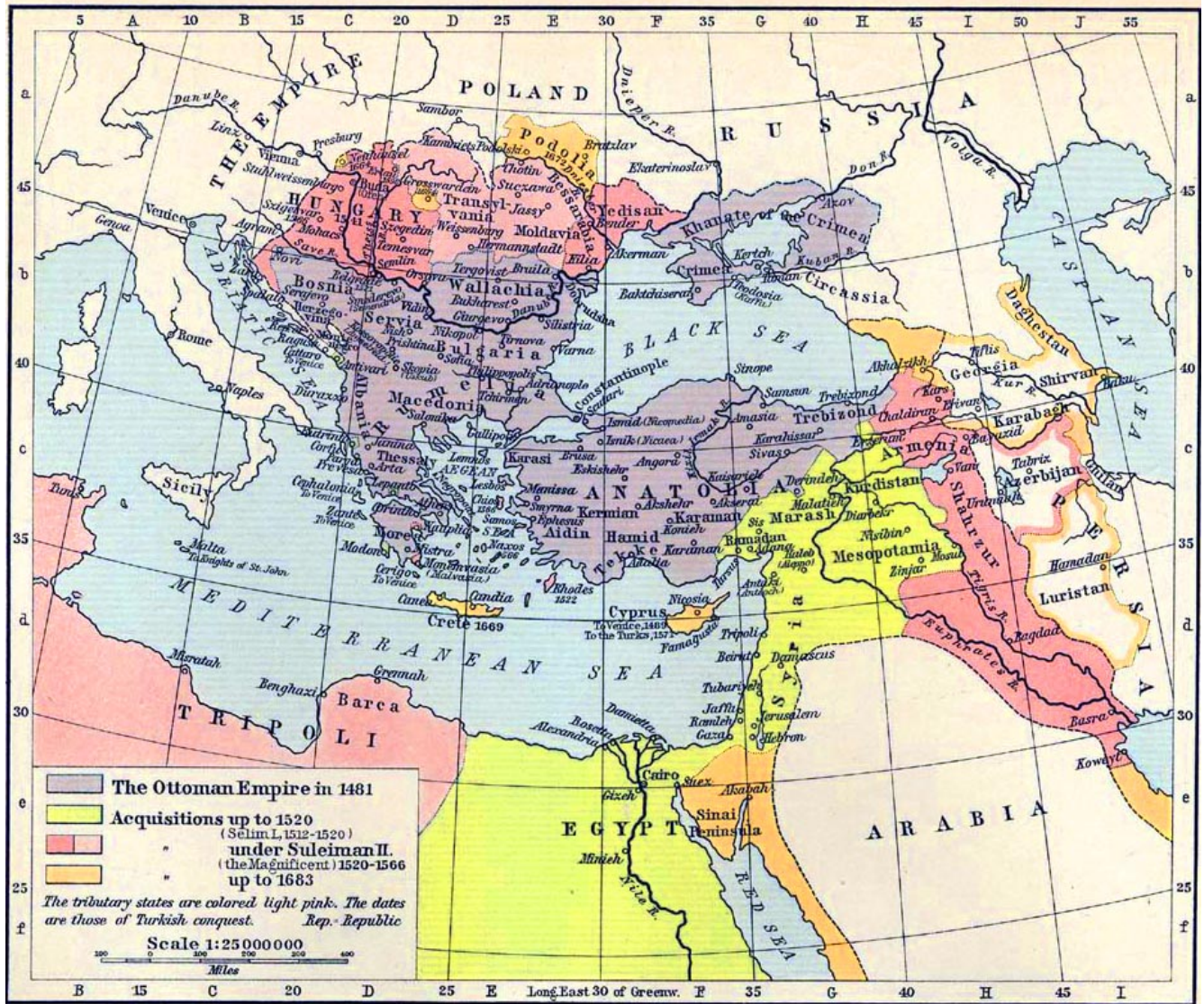
In 1453, the Ottoman Empire started to conquer the Balkans and brought another influence of different people and culture to the region. On Map 5 their conquest from 1481-1683 is visible on the map. This map was also taken from the historical atlas of Shepherd (1911). His aim with the map was to show the growth of the Ottoman Empire, from an area around Constantinople towards an Empire around the Mediterranean Sea. From the end of the 15th Century, Macedonia was part of this ‘new’ Ottoman Empire. You can see Skopia now being part of the Ottoman Empire, hence the name ‘Üsküb’ which the Ottomans gave it. There is no known substantial impact of this map from the Historical Atlas.

Map 4: Byzantine Empire and the Ottomans



Source: Shepherd, 1911, p. 89

Map 5: Ottoman conquest



Source: Shepherd, 1911, p. 124

### 3.4 Ottoman Macedonia

The conquest of the Ottomans changed a great deal of South-East Europe. By conquering a great part of the region, the Ottomans brought the Islam to the Balkans. In some parts, 'islamification' had a big influence on society, like parts of (now) Bosnia, Greece and Albania, but the Ottomans tolerated other religions (Vucinich, 1962). Christianity in the Balkans was, therefore, still possible (more about the Balkans under Ottoman rule see: Vucinich, 1962). In the 19th Century, the power of the Ottomans was, however, declining. In South and Eastern Europe, more and more countries under Ottoman rule wanted to gain independence, using the upcoming nationalism to get people to join their movements (Vucinich, 1962). Here the concept of nationalism and national identity was introduced to the region of Macedonia.

---

## **Concept 2: Nationalism and national identity**

Does a new name mean a new national identity? “Hi, I’m North Macedonian”. Is that what people from North Macedonia going to say this when they go to another country? That is, of course, hard to imagine. It depends on how they identify, what they value more and what their background is. People from Greek Macedonia could say “I’m Macedonian”, but so could people from North Macedonia. Nationalism and national identity play a big role in the name dispute and name change, but what does that mean? What is the value of nationalism and national identity and why do people value it so much? I will shortly look at these concepts, by looking at the ideas about nationalism and national identity in the last few decades. Of course, you can trace nationalism back to the 18th/19th Century, but describing all these developments would be too extensive for this thesis.

Nationalism has been around for quite some time, but after the Second World War, not that much attention in Europe has focused on the concept anymore. It was seen as a concept of the past, not too relevant anymore (Spencer & Wollman, 2002). But, as Spencer and Wollman (2002) write in the introduction for their book about nationalism, in the 1990s, nationalism suddenly got very relevant again, when civil war broke out in the former Yugoslavia. This “sudden explosion of nationalism” (Spencer & Wollman, 2002, p. 1) made people realize that nationalism was not gone. Suddenly, after the fall of communism in the late 1980s, nationalism in former-communist countries got a new impulse. During communist times, nationalism was mostly restricted by governments. It was more important to be communist first, before nationality (Spencer & Wollman, 2002).

In the book ‘The Identity of Nations’, Montserrat Guibernau (2007) analyses the different components and consequences of national identity. National identity, according to Guibernau (2007) is “a collective sentiment based upon the belief of belonging to the same nation and of sharing most of the attributes that make it distinct from other nations.” (p. 11). She distinguishes this national identity in 5 dimensions: the psychological, cultural, territorial, historical and political dimension (Guibernau, 2007). The psychological dimension is about the feeling of belonging. People feel close to others living in the same country. Guibernau points out that this feeling doesn’t necessarily have to be grounded in factual history: the feeling of belonging to a nation is often non-rational, but so is the concept of ‘nations’, often originating from mixed ethnic groups (Guibernau, 2007). Applying this to North Macedonia, Guibernau would not question the legitimacy of nationalism, since the most important thing is the ‘feeling’. Secondly, the cultural dimension creates unity in a community or society. Language is in this case, according to Guibernau, one of the most important things to consider. Guibernau asks herself about the origins of national cultures: do they emerge naturally or are they constructed? She leaves the answer open to different interpretations. She then mentions the third factor, the historical dimension, but this has a lot of overlap with the

cultural dimension. Under 'historical dimension' she writes: "Members of a nation tend to feel proud of their ancient roots and generally interpret them as a sign of resilience, strength and even superiority when compared with other nations unable to display a rich past during which the nation became prominent." (Guibernau, 2007, p. 20). This has a strong link with the 'cultural' dimension she mentioned before. The fourth dimension she uses is the 'territorial dimension' of national identity. People are strongly connected to their homes and their villages and cities, leaving them can be devastating, just like leaving your own nation and/or country (Guibernau, 2007). Culture and history are often connected to the territory of the nation, a reason why Guibernau thinks territory is important. In the case of Macedonia, this plays a major role, as the maps further in this research will show. Just the question of 'where' already leaves so much discussion that the case of Macedonia is always a sensitive one when it comes to territory. The last dimension Guibernau uses is the political one. She argues that the construction mechanisms the state uses to make their own country a nation-state (especially in the 19th Century) have a big influence on the way people perceive national identity (Guibernau, 2007).

Identity is not something only geography deals with. It has been a subject of importance in a lot of different fields. For example in sociology, where Pierre Bourdieu wrote about ethnic and regional identity: "the quest for the „objective“ criteria of „regional“ or „ethnic“ identity should not make one forget that, in social practice, these criteria (for example, language, dialect and accent) are the object of mental representations, that is, of acts of perception and appreciation, of cognition and recognition, in which agents invest their interests and their presuppositions, and of objectified representations, in things (emblems, flags, badges, etc.) or acts." (Bourdieu, 1992, p. 223). Bourdieu (1992), in contrast to Guibernau (2007), puts more emphasis on the representations, making clear that an objective interpretation of national identity is hardly possible.

Paasi (1999) criticized the more "generalized" and "abstract" ways in which nationalism and national identity were often portrayed. He emphasizes the important connection between nationalism/national identity and territory: "nationalism is nevertheless a specific, strategic form of territoriality and an expression of the struggle for control over land and socio-spatial consciousness." (Paasi, 1999, p. 5). Not only nationalism but also national identity is connected to territory according to Paasi (1999). National identity, according to him: "refers to a number of elements which link the idea of territory with culture, language, history and memory." (Paasi, 1999, p. 5). The link between nationalism and national identity is, according to Paasi, that nationalism can legitimate national identity, by linking it to "a real or fictional common past and territory." (p. 5). This legitimation of national identity fits into what Paasi (1999) sees as the 'construction' of identity. He uses the viewpoint from 'social constructivism'. "The construction of identity narratives is a political action, and, particularly in the case of national identities, this activity is an expression of the distribution of social power in society." (Paasi, 1999, p. 11). Paasi (2001) later

used this viewpoint on Europe: “Competing discourses on what European identity means have also emerged. This is inevitable since all collective identities at all spatial scales are political constructs and include decisions and definitions on behalf of groups of people.” (p. 19). Nationalism has a lot to do with this ‘collective identity’. Nationalism is the political version of creating a national identity (Paasi, 2001). Nationalism, therefore, has a role to play in this national identity of for example people in North Macedonia or Greece. Nationalism, according to Danforth (2010), is: “an ideology whose goal is to create territorially bounded political units, or states, out of homogeneous cultural communities, or nations.” (p. 577). According to the ideas of Paasi (1999; 2001) mentioned above, nationalism does not have to be for homogeneous communities or nations like Danforth (2010) describes. The power of a ‘construction’ is to make people have the idea they ‘belong’ together, or share a common past or territory, although this does not necessarily have to be true: it can be real or fictional as Paasi (1999) pointed out.

This view fits the Macedonia case perfectly: different countries legitimated their claims on Macedonia by looking at some part of history where they occupied some or big parts of geographic Macedonia. At the same time, as will be discussed in chapter 4, the government of the Republic of Macedonia tried to construct a ‘Macedonian’ identity around the narrative that ‘Macedonians’ descended from the Ancient Kingdom of the Macedons (Vangeli, 2011). Paasi (1999) sees this process as a construction. He uses two main dimensions of the construction of national identity: spatialization and historialization of the nation (Paasi, 1999). The spatialization of the nation deals with the territory of the nation. The historialization claims a past connected to these territories, arguing why the people of the nation are connected (Paasi, 1999). Both territory and history have played a major role in the Macedonian name dispute as will be discussed further on. National identity and nationalism are linked and politicians can use, or misuse, national identity in order to get people to believe in their nationalistic approaches. Recently, this way of governance is seen more and more throughout Europe (Wodak & Boukala, 2015). This thesis hopefully makes clear that from the 19th Century until now, nationalism and national identity have always played an important role in (geo)politics in Macedonia.

---

### **Ottoman 19th and early 20th Century**

Connected to the concept mentioned above, nationalism and national identity would play an important role in the last 100 years of Ottoman dominance in the Balkans. Macedonia was still part of the Ottoman Empire, but the power of the Empire was declining. The Russians saw this and wanted to gain more influence in the region. During the 19th Century, the Russians started to promote ‘Slav nationalism’ in the Balkans, to replace the Ottoman influence by Slavic countries (Wilkinson, 1952). The Bulgarians would become the main power in the Balkans if the Russians could decide about it. At the second half of the 19th Century, the Russians started to attack the

Ottomans, to reduce their influence in the region. Ethnographic maps of the 19th Century often displayed 'Bulgarians' as the main population in the Balkans, making up almost the whole region of Macedonia, as well as areas from now Serbia and Greece (Wilkinson, 1952). At the beginning of the 19th Century, the term 'Slavs' was just used to describe both Bulgarians and Serbs in Macedonia. The idea of 'Pan-Slavism', developed by the Hungarian scholar Kollar in 1824, was meant to unite the 'Slavic' people and emphasize their common heritage and history (Wilkinson, 1952). Scholars from Western countries did not know that much about the ethnic composition of the Balkans back then and to them, the people living there were all 'Slavs' (Wilkinson, 1952). Slowly, this idea started to change, when Romanticism and Nationalism started to arise. Like the maps below show, cartographers started to differentiate between Serbs and Bulgarians on the map of Macedonia. With the growing influence of national identity and ethnographic maps, geopolitics started to play a role. As discussed in the introduction chapter, this thesis tries to show what the geopolitical consequences of the name change for North Macedonia could be. To explore these outcomes, it's, firstly, important to understand the geopolitical history of the region. When concepts like national identity and ethnicity got more attention in the 19th Century, leaders of countries started to think about national identity as a tool to gain or claim certain territories. Maps were used to support claims to certain territories (Wilkinson, 1952). The geopolitical situation changed. To understand the analysis of the consequences of the name change, it's useful to understand the different definitions and explanations of the concept of geopolitics.

---

### **Concept 3: (Critical) Geopolitics**

Geopolitics, politics of earth if you would translate it literally, is a term to describe the practice of different states striving for the same territories (Flint, 2006). As quoted in the introduction chapter, Flint tries to look at the different aspects and concepts of Geopolitics in his book 'Introduction to Geopolitics' (2006). First, he emphasizes the link between statesmanship and geopolitics: states and countries always competed for territories, to control the land and the resources (Flint, 2006). He notes however that geopolitics is more than just the competition over territory: it's also a conceptual view of the world, how you see the things around you (Flint, 2006). An important part of geopolitics, according to Flint (2006) has to do with geopolitical agents: the actors that conduct geopolitics. With a social science background, Flint uses the concepts of agents and agency within the field of geopolitics (Flint, 2006). With agency, he means "the act of trying to achieve a particular goal." (p. 24). According to him, a lot of different actors can be an agent with agency: "A political party is an agent; their agency is aimed at seeking power. A separatist movement is an agent; their agency is targeted toward achieving political independence. A country may also be seen as an agent; their agency is seen in their trade negotiations, for example." (Flint, 2006, p. 24-25).

The different definitions of geopolitics from Flint (2006) make it clear that there's not one single version of the term 'geopolitics'. Therefore, different types are sometimes distinguished. There's a difference made between the traditional geopolitics on the one side, with classic and modern geopolitics, and critical/postmodern geopolitics. Classic geopolitics is often associated with states, territory and warfare, conquering and discovering new places (Flint, 2006). With critical or postmodern geopolitics, a lot of different parties and people can be seen as an actor with agency. In the classic geopolitics, this was different: "States were the exclusive agents of geopolitics." (Flint, 2006, p. 25).

In the 1990s, this critical way of geopolitics got more and more attention. Gearóid Ó Tuathail and John Agnew claimed in an article in 1992 that the concept of geopolitics needed to be "re-conceptualized as a discursive practice by which intellectuals of statecraft 'spatialize' international politics in such a way as to represent a 'world' characterized by particular types of places, peoples and dramas." (Ó Tuathail & Agnew, 1992, p. 192). Geopolitics, according to the writers, "is not a discrete and relatively contained activity confined only to a small group of 'wise men' who speak in the language of classical geopolitics." (Ó Tuathail & Agnew, 1992, p. 194). Later on, Ó Tuathail wrote more about this 'new' concept. In his book 'Critical Geopolitics' (1996), he discusses the meaning of critical geopolitics in contrast to the traditional geopolitics (Ó Tuathail, 1996). First, he looks at geopolitics in general. Like Flint (2006), he doesn't provide one simple definition, but he describes different aspects of the term geopolitics:

The term 'geopolitics' is a convenient fiction, an imperfect name for a set of practices within the civil societies of the Great Powers that sought to explain the meaning of the new global conditions of space, power, and technology. It names not a singularity but a multiplicity, an ensemble of heterogeneous intellectual efforts to think through the geographical dimensions and implications of the transformative effects of changing technologies of transportation, communications, and warfare on the accumulation and exercise of power in the new world order of 'closed space'.

Ó Tuathail, 1996, p. 15

After this 'description' of geopolitics, Ó Tuathail (1996) admits that the term itself contains so much that it's hard to explain what geopolitics really means and what you can classify geopolitics and what not: "[geopolitics] is a sign overloaded with many different meanings even in the critical discourse of academia. Among many critical scholars, geopolitics has become an appealing and handy summary term for the spatiality of modernity as a whole." (p. 16). In contrast to Flint (2006), Ó Tuathail focused on critical geopolitics, instead of giving an overview of the traditional types of geography. While Flint (2006) wanted to give an overview of the whole field of geopolitics, he could

have added more emphasis on critical geopolitics. Later in the book, Ó Tuathail (1996) starts to explain the relevance of a critical, postmodern view of geopolitics. Ó Tuathail uses his work with Agnew (1992) as an example of how you can criticize the traditional way of geopolitics. He concludes that critical geopolitics “problematizes the ‘is’ of ‘geography’ and ‘geopolitics’” and it “should not be understood as a general theory of geopolitics or an authoritative intellectual negation of it. As an approach that seeks to assert the irreducible textuality of ‘geography’ and ‘geopolitics’, critical geopolitics does not lend itself to the constative form; it is not an ‘is but, in the manner of deconstruction, it takes place.” (Ó Tuathail, 1996, p. 68). So, critical geopolitics challenges the worldview that the ‘world order’ between states is given and a fact, not really changeable. Newman and Paasi (1998) agree with this view: “Critical geopolitics has begun to challenge the idea of a fixed, territorially bounded world . . .” (p. 191).

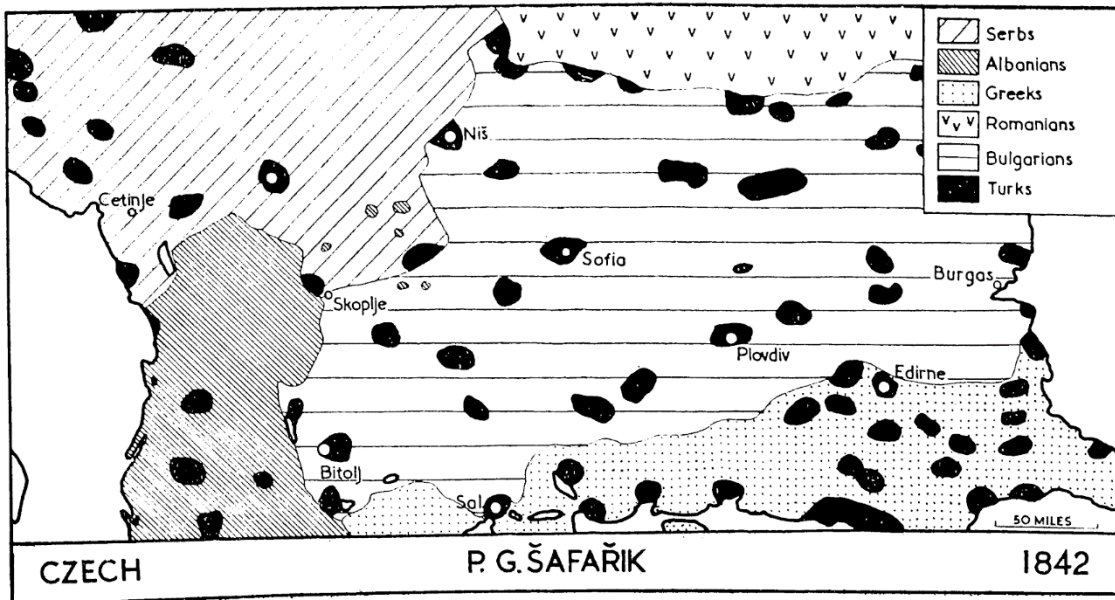
While geopolitics in the 19th Century was still often just about territory and power, as I will show below, later on the critical explanations of geopolitics became more relevant. In chapter 6, when I will look at the geopolitical consequences of the name change, I will use this critical geopolitics to explain the different parties and organizations involved in the name change. First, I will look at the ‘battle’ for Macedonia where the classical geopolitical terms of territory and power play a major role.

---

The politics around territory became more and more important throughout the 19th Century. As mentioned above, geopolitics became a term related to the competition to control certain areas (Flint, 2006). Maps were a way to validate this competition, which the following pages will hopefully make clear. Map 6 and 7, published quite close to each other, tell different stories of the inhabitants of Macedonia. What’s interesting to see is the difference in the Bulgarian population between the maps.

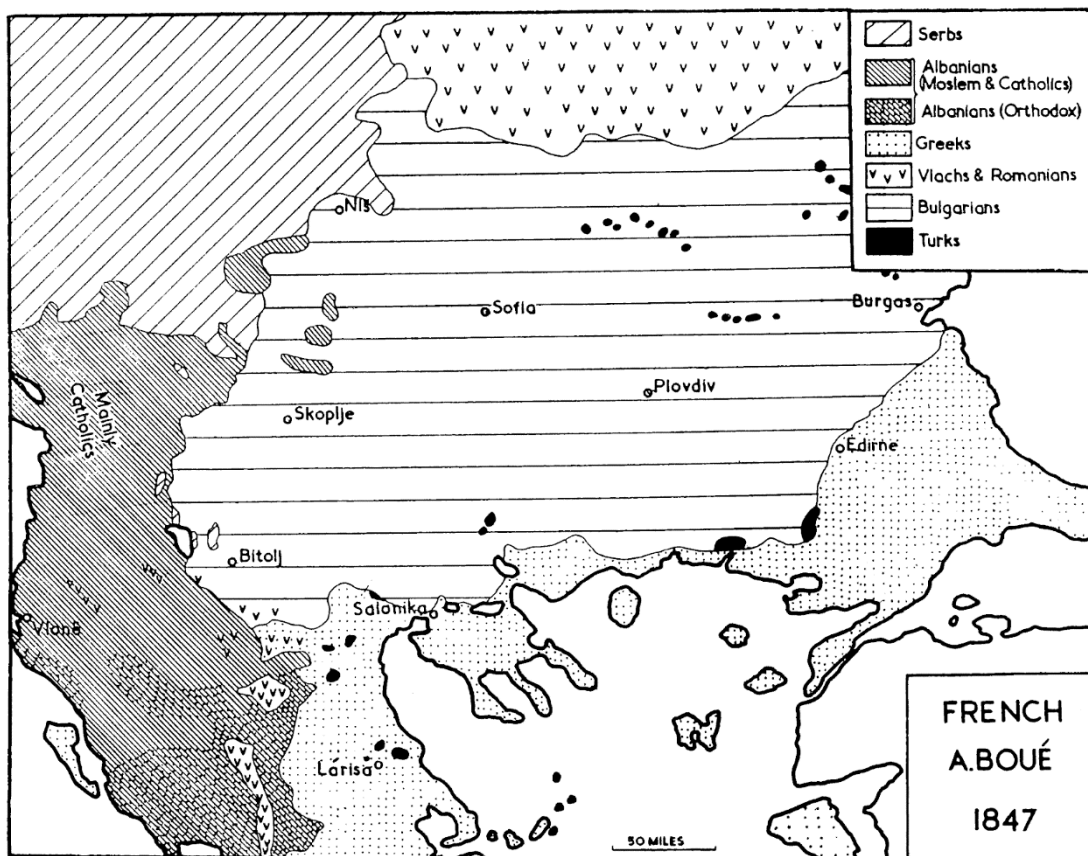
Map 6 is from Czech cartographer Safarik. At the time the map was published, the Czechs “assumed the intellectual leadership of the European Slavs” (Wilkinson, 1952, p. 33) and thought the people in the Balkans hardly knew their origins (Wilkinson, 1952). Safarik studied the Balkans for twenty years and lived in Novi Sad, then belonging to Hungary, where he gathered his information (Wilkinson, 1952). Safarik was one of the first cartographers to portray the Turks as a group scattered across the region (Wilkinson, 1952). His goal with the map was to advocate more Slavs were living in Macedonia than was thought before (Wilkinson, 1952). Big areas of the Balkans before seen as inhabited by Greeks or Turks he now classified as mainly Slavs (Wilkinson, 1952). Safarik’s way to determine ethnicities was to mainly look at language. Wilkinson (1952), however, points out that Safarik’s proportion of Albanians was much smaller than actually the case. The impact of his map was that the Slavs from the time of publication were better represented on ethnographic maps of the Macedonian region (Wilkinson, 1952).

Map 6: Macedonia in 1842



Source: Wilkinson, 1952, p. 34

Map 7: Macedonia in 1847

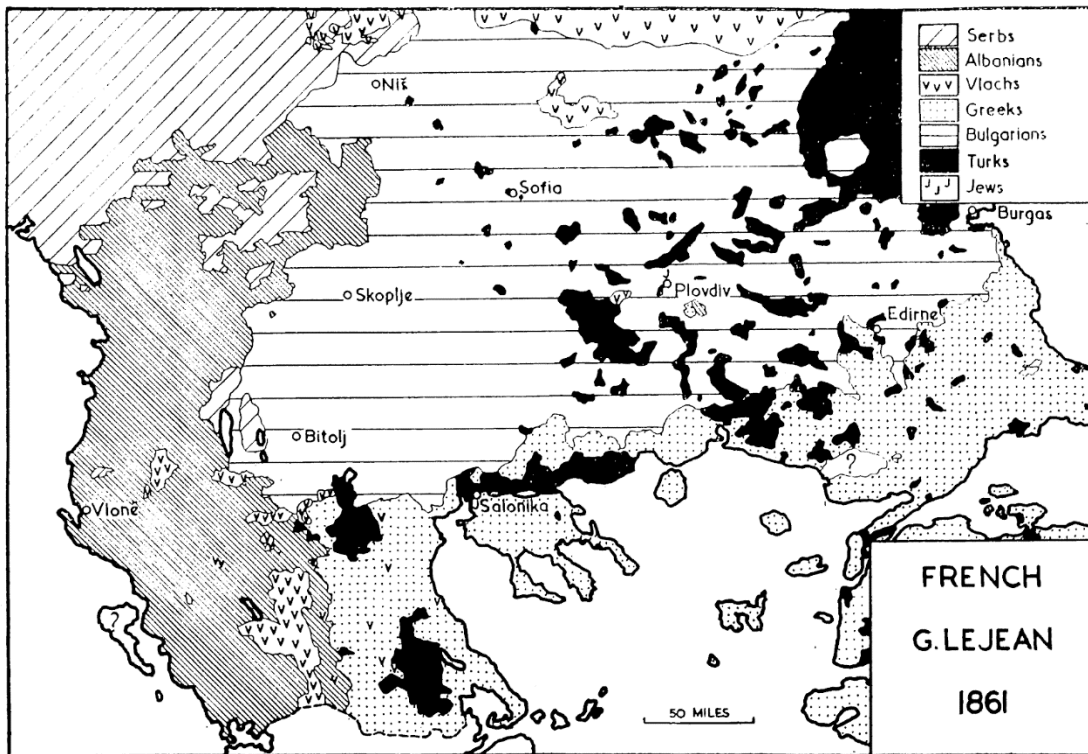


Source: Wilkinson, 1952, p. 36

On Map 7, we see the same area, but now from French cartographer Boué, from 1847. Boué wrote four volumes about Turks in Europe and gathered information through travelling and observing in the region (Wilkinson, 1952). In contrast to Safarik, Boué portrayed fewer Turks in the region. He shows them only in cities and bigger towns, but not as a considerable proportion. Safarik showed Serbs living directly North from Skopje, while Boué said the people living there were Bulgarians. Differences in methodology had a lot to do with the differences between the maps. For example, what the cartographers used as the most important qualification for ethnicity. Boué showed a smaller Greek population in Macedonia than Safarik, arguing that the people from the Greek Orthodox Church not necessarily had to be Greeks (Wilkinson, 1952). Boué aimed to prove that Bulgarians had more influence in the region than shown before. The map made an impact to the Bulgarians, who used Boué's map to make claims to the Macedonian territories (Wilkinson, 1952). Here, the use of maps for political reasons, like for example Harvey (2009) Wood (1992), or cartopolitics, like Bueno Lacy and Van Houtum (2015) showed in their work becomes clear again: the Bulgarians used Boué's work to make clear that they were the legitimate 'owner' of Macedonia. The impact of Boué's map was, perhaps, even more than the one from Safarik, because Boué was "of French origin and credited with academic integrity and an impartial approach" (Wilkinson, 1952, p. 41). Now it was not a Slav portraying a big Slav majority in the Balkans, but a Frenchman. This had more impact in the rest of Europe.

14 years later, another French map of Macedonia was published, by LeJean in 1861 (Map 8). LeJean worked on the ethnography of 'Turkey-in-Europe' at the request of the French Government (Wilkinson, 1952). LeJean used the maps of Safarik and Boué to compare his findings and observations with. LeJean, a historian, thought language was given too much value in determining ethnicity. Map 8, similar to Boué's, showed a major Bulgarian population in the region. LeJean made the Bulgarians even bigger than Boué. He also included more space for Albanians. The Serbs on his map made up a mixed population with Albanians in the North West of Skopje but did not make up much of the rest of Macedonia. Interestingly, LeJean showed a bigger Turkish population than his French and Czech colleagues. He portrayed fewer Greeks, to the advantage of Turks and Bulgarians. Wilkinson (1952) argues LeJean relied too much on Turkish numbers of Turks living in these areas, hence the big proportions of Turks on his map. The impact of LeJean's map was further proof of big slav influence in the Balkans (Wilkinson, 1952). What Safarik started and Boué observed, LeJean took together and substantiated with more historical research (Wilkinson, 1952).

Map 8: Macedonia in 1861



Source: Wilkinson, 1952, p. 44

In the second half of the 19th Century, fewer cartographers believed in the Pan-Slavic idea that all Slavs belonged to the same group of identity and language (Levine, 1914). More research was done on ethnographic differences and distinctions between the different Slavic groups became more clear (Levine, 1914). The different Slavic nations started to become aware of their own national identity (Levine, 1914). In 1868, the French professor Delamarre pointed out how languages belonging to the Slavic group were all different, and could not be seen as one language for one group of people (Wilkinson, 1952). He showed in his work that there was the Polish, Czech, Serbian, Bulgarian and Russian language and each one could not easily understand each other. With the maps of people like Safarik, Boué and LeJean, together with the opinion of Delamarre, Macedonia was not anymore seen as partly inhabited by 'Slavs'. The distinction between Serbians and Bulgarians became to play a more important role. While the Russians firstly wanted to promote the pan-slavism, to unite all Slavs, now the contrasts between Serbians and Bulgarians started to divide them. In the meantime, revolts started to break out to the Turkish rule in the Balkans. Bulgarians started to fight the Turks, hoping to gain independence from the Ottoman Empire. The Turks violently crushed down the revolts, leading to a reaction of the Russians.

With the Conference of Constantinople in 1876, the Great Powers came together to discuss the fate of the Balkans under Turkish rule (Wilkinson, 1952). The Turkish violent reaction on Bulgarian revolts was one of the reasons they wanted reforms, to prevent that from happening

again in the future (Wilkinson, 1952). Russia proposed a big independent Bulgaria to prevent the influence of the Ottomans. The Great Powers were, however, afraid that the influence sphere of Russia would become too big. The Ottomans, therefore, were allowed to keep possession of Bulgaria and Macedonia, if they would install reforms (Wilkinson, 1952). The Russians, not happy with this result, kept promoting an independent Bulgaria in the Balkans. In 1878, they liberated Bulgaria from Ottoman rule after the Russo-Turkish War, and the San Stefano Treaty was signed (Engström, 2002). With this treaty, most of geographical Macedonia came under Bulgarian autonomous rule, although the Ottomans still had the nominal rule over Bulgaria (Engström, 2002). The boundaries were according to the propositions of the Conference of Constantinople. Now, Bulgaria came to be one of the biggest countries in the region.

Wilkinson (1952) points out the role of maps at the Conference of Constantinople:

But if the Conference achieved nothing else, it did create an interest in ethnographic maps because it became clear that through the medium of ethnographic ideas the Bulgarians had gained a moral ascendancy over all the other peoples of the Balkans. This may have been due in part to the widespread sympathy felt for the most oppressed of the Sultan's subjects, but even more so was it due to the simple fact that for thirty years, the greater part of the territory between the Danube and the Aegean, between the Macedonian lakes and the Black sea, had been coloured as Bulgarian on scores of ethnographic maps. The terms Balkan and Bulgarian had become practically synonymous and this had been achieved solely by that subtle emotional appeal which emanated from ethnographic maps. . . . In the simple flat colours were to be seen the hopes and aspirations of a nation.

p. 64

The Great Powers of that century (Great Britain, France, Russia, Austria-Hungary, Germany, Italy) were, however, not happy with this new division. They feared Bulgaria would become too big and Russia's influence in the region too strong (Engström, 2002). Therefore, at the Congress of Berlin a few months later, most of Macedonia was given back to the Ottomans while also parts of the earlier Bulgarian state were given to Serbia and Romania (Engström, 2002). On map 9 it's visible what the Russians proposed as the new Bulgarian state (white line) and how the Great Powers decided otherwise (black lines). Map 9, made by Rossos (2006), tries to combine the different ideas of the division of Macedonia, showing the two Treaties in one map. It is, therefore, slightly confusing to see: the lines run across each other. After a more extensive look, it makes, however, clear how much the two Treaties differed. The goal of Rossos was to make these differences clear on the map. The

impact of the map is not substantial since it was not a new situation or new idea Rossos (2006) shows.

Map 9: Divisions of 1878



Source: Rossos, 2006, p. 50

The Bulgarians disagreed and argued that a lot of Bulgarians in Macedonia now lived outside Bulgaria. They wanted to get back Macedonia. The rest of the countries in the Balkans were also not satisfied with the outcomes of the 1878 negotiations. Macedonia was back under Ottoman rule and was still a contested region: "That 'province' [Macedonia] was destined to become a kind of no man's land in both a literal and a metaphorical sense." (Wilkinson, 1952, p. 89). The agreements of the Congress of Berlin would later play an important role in Bulgaria's role in the wars of the 20th Century (Engström, 2002). With the same Congress of Berlin, Serbia became an independent

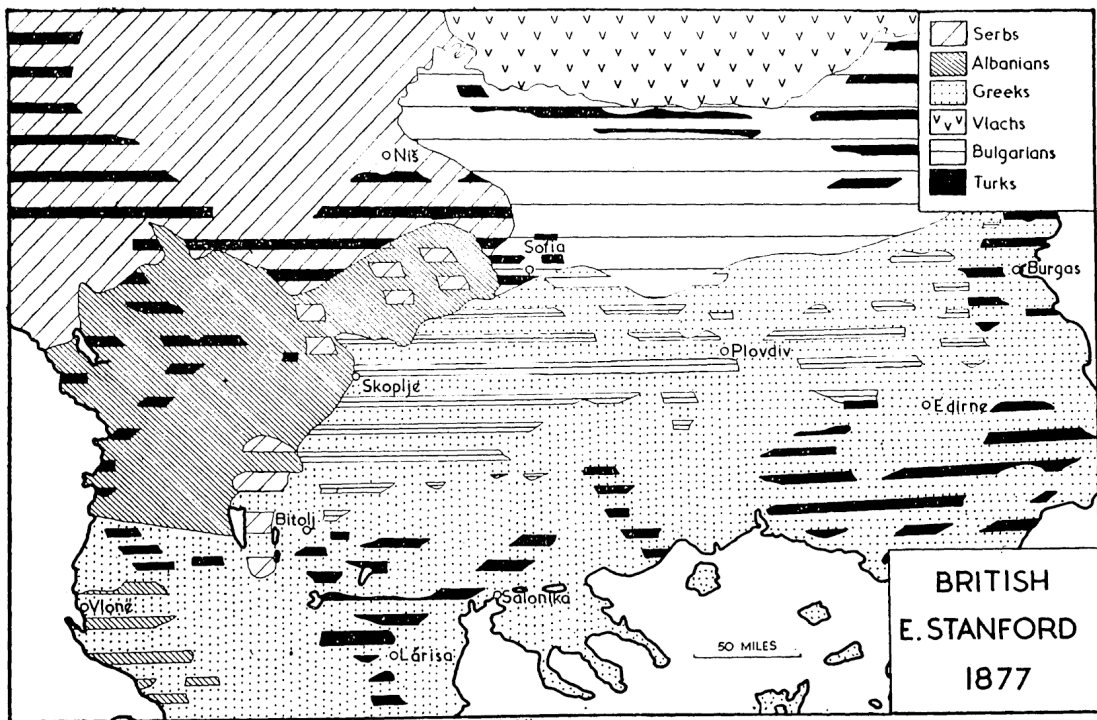
country, although it had been an autonomous state within the Ottoman Empire from the early 19th Century (Forbes et al., 1915). Disagreements over Macedonia between the involved countries would shape the events of the coming years.

The battle of Bulgarians, Serbs and Greeks over Macedonia did not emerge in the beginning of the 19th Century. Serb cartographers even showed the region of Macedonia as inhabited by Bulgarians on their maps, although the Serbs would later claim Macedonia as 'theirs' (Wilkinson, 1952). This is what Denis Wood (1992) describes in the *Power of Maps*: how mapmaking can shape perceptions of history. After the Treaties of 1878, slowly the Serbian cause in Macedonia was starting to get more support. Before, Macedonia was often portrayed as inhabited by simply Slavs, later it became Bulgarians. Now, a new trend started to emerge, where Serbs more and more became to play an important role in Macedonia. Next to that, the Greeks were also aware of their position in the Macedonian question. Both countries saw how the trend in maps developed that Macedonia was for a great deal Bulgarian. With help from the British, the Greeks started to improve their position. While the Bulgarian view was dominant for years, the Serbs and Greeks came to see the power of ethnographical maps in shaping the general opinion of the region.

While the French and Czech cartographers already started to differentiate between Bulgarians and Serbs on the maps, the Serbs themselves finally started to highlight their existence in Macedonia. Going a bit back, before the Treaties of 1878, Wilkinson (1952) writes about a paper by M. S. Milojevic in 1873, who argued that the Serbian culture and language extended further south than people had believed before and that big parts of Macedonia were not Bulgarian, but Serbian. His Serbian colleagues did not approve of this idea, because they wanted to keep peace with their neighbours (Wilkinson, 1952). His colleagues also did not take his claims seriously but later in the 19th Century, more and more people in Serbia would agree with the claims first made by Milojevic (Wilkinson, 1952). When pan-slavism made way to nationalism, national awareness started to create tensions, with multiple parties claiming the same area (Wilkinson, 1952). Milojevic' claim was only the beginning.

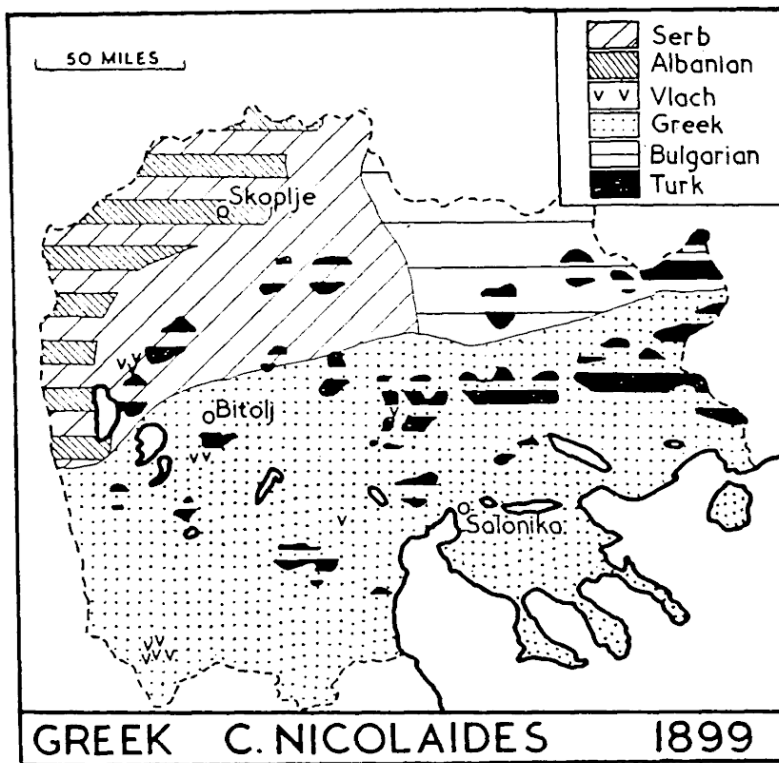
Map 10 shows Macedonia as portrayed by English cartographer Edward Stanford. Stanford used a lot of Greek sources to come to his map of the region. His goal was to support the claim of the Greeks that they were not represented enough on ethnographic maps of the region (Wilkinson, 1952). Stanford argued a lot of Slavs before portrayed as Bulgarians were, in fact, Greek nationalists who happened to speak Bulgarian (Wilkinson, 1952). The impact of Stanford's map was, together with other maps like the one of Nicolaides below, that Greeks were back in the competition over Macedonia, proving their right through ethnographic maps.

Map 10: Macedonia in 1877



Source: Wilkinson, 1952, p. 70

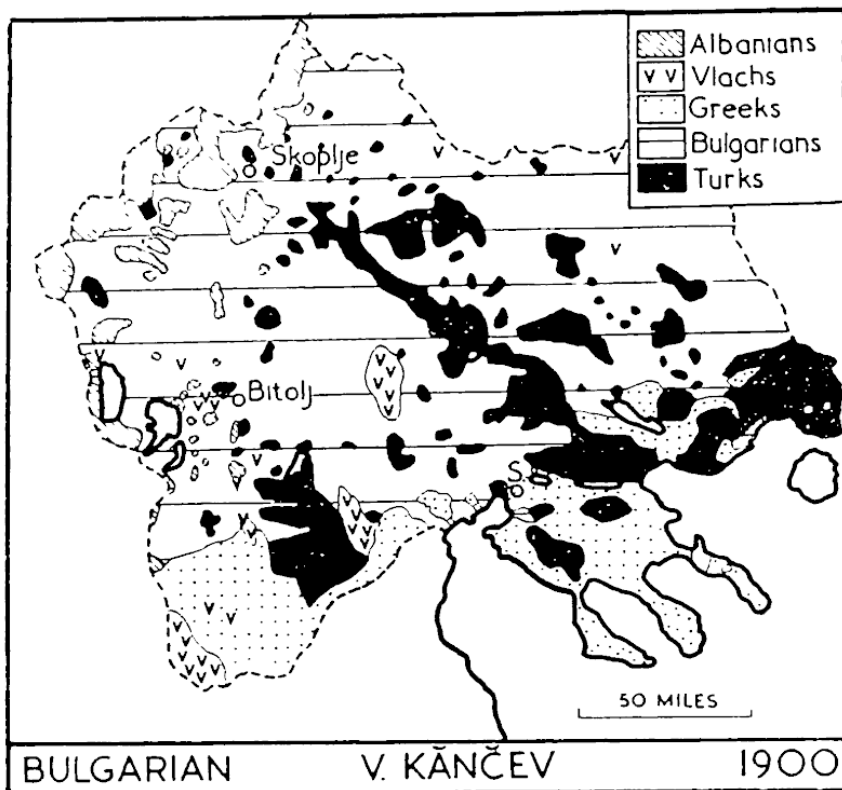
Map 11: Macedonia in 1899



Source: Wilkinson, 1952, p. 122

Map 11 shows Macedonia portrayed by Greek historian Nicolaides. He wrote a book on the role of Greeks in Macedonia, with the aim to prove most of Macedonia belonged to Greece (Wilkinson, 1952). He used the criteria of 'commercial language' rather than mother-tongue to determine ethnicity (Wilkinson, 1952). Wilkinson (1952) criticizes this method and the outcome: "His map defined the Greek sphere of cultural and commercial influence rather than Greek ethnic territory." (p. 123). The impact of the map of Nicolaides, together with the claims of Stanford, was that the 'battle' for Macedonia became even more unclear. While earlier in the 19th Century, Macedonia was inhabited by Bulgarians, now it was inhabited by Greeks, Serbs and Bulgarians at the same time (Wilkinson, 1952). Propaganda maps more and more became the way to join the 'battle' to claim territories, making the ethnographic situation "more obscure with every new map that appeared." (Wilkinson, 1952, p. 124). The differences between the maps became bigger and bigger: see for example the differences in the Greek population on map 10 and 11 in comparison with for example map 8 of LeJean.

Map 12: Macedonia in 1900



Source: Wilkinson, 1952, p. 130

After more and more claims to the Macedonian territories by the Greeks and Serbs, Bulgarians were afraid to lose their influence in the region. Until 1900, the Bulgarians had relied on maps of Boué and LeJean for example, now they wanted to make one themselves. Kancev was the one

publishing a book on the ethnography of Macedonia, containing a map with the 'official' Bulgarian interpretation of the situation (see Map 12) (Wilkinson, 1952). Kancev was not a cartographer, but an inspector of schools (Wilkinson, 1952). He used Bulgarian statistics, added with his own observations. His goal with the map was to prove the Bulgarians still were the most important ethnicity in Macedonia (Wilkinson, 1952). The impact of the map was that the 'official' Bulgarian view of the ethnographic situation in Macedonia for years was shaped by Kancev's map (Wilkinson, 1952).

The debate about the ethnicity of the people living in Macedonia grew bigger and bigger. Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece tried to make the inhabitants 'theirs'. Until now, the thought that the Slavs living in geographic Macedonia could be a separate ethnicity, Macedonians, was not a widespread idea. Could it be that the population living there is not necessarily Bulgarian or Serb? Buchan (1923) points out: "That Serb and Bulgar elements are present is undeniable; but, according to a probable view, the main population is itself neither Bulgar nor Serb, but is descended from a Slavic tribe, akin to both, but identical with neither." (p. 70). Slowly, people in Macedonia started to strive for an independent state of Macedonia. The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO or VMRO in Macedonian) started to plan an uprising against the Ottomans (Benson, 2004). Their goal was to get rid of the Ottomans and get an autonomous state, comprising the whole of geographic Macedonia (Rossos, 2006). On the 2nd of August, St. Elias's Day, in 1903, the VMRO led a fight against the Ottoman Empire, known as the 'Ilinden Uprising' (Benson, 2004). In the evening of that day, 'revolution' broke out at Ilinden (now in North Macedonia), where VMRO rebels attacked strategic places owned by the Ottomans (Rossos, 2006). On the 3rd of August, the rebels captured Krusevo, a town on top of a mountain, where they established a provisional government, declaring the 'Krusevo Republic' (Rossos, 2006). As described before, Macedonia was a region claimed by different powers in the region. The Great powers of Europe did not want the status quo in the region to change since they were afraid one of the three main Balkan states (Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece) would get too much power (Rossos, 2006). It became clear that no one would want to help the rebels with their cause and the Ottomans started to push them back (Rossos, 2006). After three months of rebellion, Ottoman rule was restored in the region and the power of VMRO declined (Rossos, 2006). After the Ilinden Uprising, the region of Macedonia became a place of violence and resistance to the Ottomans would not get as strong as before (Rossos, 2006). The revolt did, however, bring something new to the table: it was the first time an independent Macedonian state was close.

... the Ilinden Uprising represented a landmark in the history of the Macedonians. It was the first such organized effort bearing the Macedonian name, taking place throughout the territory, and calling for a free state encompassing the whole of geographic Macedonia. It

helped to redefine the so-called Macedonian question at home and in the rest of the Balkans and Europe. Thereafter people would view the problem no longer as Bulgarian or Greek or Serbian, as each of the neighbors claimed, but first and foremost as Macedonian.

Rossos, 2006, p. 111

### ***3.5 The Balkan wars and split of Macedonia***

As described before, at the end of the 19th Century, the power of the enormous Ottoman Empire was getting smaller and not much was left of the Empire that once ruled the whole Balkans. The Ilinden Uprising showed the power of the Ottomans was in decline. After the revolt of 1903, Macedonia became the area of a battle for territory. "This debatable land [Macedonia] had been contested in the Middle Ages by Greek, Bulgar and Serb; and, as the liberated States found their feet and began to look round them and anticipate the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, the secular conflict revived." (Buchan, 1923, p. 70). Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece saw this as an opportunity to finally push the Ottomans back out of Europe (Poulton, 2000). They formed the 'Balkan League' to fight the Ottomans (Buchan, 1923). Before the intervention, Bulgaria and Serbia divided the biggest parts of Macedonia into spheres of influence (Buchan, 1923). In the First Balkan War, the three states combined their forces and attacked the Ottomans. Macedonia, then still ruled by the Ottoman Empire, was in the middle of the fought territory. Serbia took over the city of Üsküb and its surroundings, restoring its old Serbian name of Skoplje (Buchan, 1923). The Bulgarians defeated the Turks in the East of Macedonia, while the Greeks secured Salonika (just one evening before the Bulgarians would get there) and the region of Macedonia on the Aegean Sea (Buchan, 1923).

After the success of the War, the Conference of London was held by the 6 great powers (Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia and Italy) to decide what should happen to the region. During the war, the Albanians had proclaimed an independent state, and at this conference, this state was officially acknowledged as a sovereign, independent state (Buchan, 1923). Macedonia was divided between Greece in the south, Bulgaria in the east and Serbia in the north. Bulgaria was, however, not satisfied with the outcomes of the first war. They thought Greece and Serbia had gained too much of the Macedonian territory. At the end of June 1913, they attacked their former allies Serbia and Greece, who in return allied with the former enemy, the Ottomans. The Bulgarians were pushed back and lost territory, remaining just a small part now known as Pirin Macedonia (Benson, 2004). In 1913, at the Conference of Bucharest, the new boundaries were established, showed on Map 13.

Map 13: Division of Macedonia by 1913



Source: Rossos, 2006, p. 119

Map 13 is a map from Andrew Rossos, the author mentioned earlier in this thesis. Interesting to see on this map is the legend that says “Macedonian lands annexed by”. The goal of Rossos could be to make clear that Macedonia was ‘annexed’ and not just split up. Rossos, supporting the cause of the Macedonians from (now) North Macedonia, argues that Macedonia belongs to the Macedonians, not to Greece, Serbia or Bulgaria. The impact of the map was not significant since it was only published in 2006. Perhaps the impact would have been bigger if it came out in 1913.

In 1918, after the First World War, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was established, in which now North Macedonia became a Serbian province (Fontana, 2016). The monarchy declined the existence of non-Serbian ethnicities in Macedonia and Serbo-Croatian was the only official language of the Kingdom (Fontana, 2016). After 1929, the Kingdom’s name was changed to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, but the policies towards ethnicity stayed the same: the Yugoslavs were promoted as a people, divided into three main tribes: Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Fontana, 2016). In this, there was no place for a ‘Macedonian’ ethnicity.

In the meantime, Greece was striving for 'the Great Idea', to unite all Greeks from surrounding countries in one big nation-state (Agnew, 2007). After the First World War, Greece invaded the Western part of Turkey, in an attempt to gain territory (Agnew, 2007). In 1922, they were, however, pushed back by the Turks and lost their attempt to gain territory from the Turks. After the deception, a population exchange was set up, where a big part of the Muslim population of Greece was exchanged for the Greek Orthodox population of Anatolia (Agnew, 2007). The Greek Orthodox people were mostly settled in Greek Macedonia, which now became more and more inhabited by Greek nationalists, instead of a more ethnically diverse area of Greeks, Slav Macedonians and Muslims (Agnew, 2007). In this way, Greek Macedonia was made more pro-Greek than before. In the 1930s, the Greek government then decided that from that time on all other languages than Greek were forbidden, at the same time denying the existence of other ethnicities than Greek in the region (Agnew, 2007). The Slavo-Macedonian population in Greek Macedonia would play an important role in the events after the Second World War (Michailidis, 2000).

### ***3.6 After World War II: Socialist Republic of Macedonia***

When Tito came to power during the Second World War, things started to change. The new leader after the war installed the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, composed of different Republics, with Macedonia now turned into the Socialist Republic of Macedonia. In contrast with the earlier Yugoslav Kingdom, Tito acknowledged more ethnic diversity in his Federal State and so, the Macedonian nation and language got fully recognised (Fontana, 2016). By doing this, he also tried to protect his territory from Greece and Bulgaria, who still saw Macedonia as 'their' region (Rothenbacher, 2013). Next to that, he denied the claims of Serbians that Macedonia was a Serbian province, like he denied Croatian and Serbian claims on Bosnia by acknowledging the Muslims there as a separate nation (Engström, 2002). By this, Tito tried to keep his republics in control: "Ironically, Tito's manoeuvres in Macedonia and Bosnia, including the 'establishment' of two new nations, were in part an effort to curb nationalism in the Yugoslav republics." (Engström, 2002, p. 6).

In the meantime, a Civil War broke out in Greece, between communists and royalists, fighting over power in the country after the Second World War ended (Agnew, 2007). The region of Macedonia became involved in the war since many Macedonians from Yugoslavia joined the communists, who promised to strive for an autonomous united Macedonia, that would join Yugoslavia (Agnew, 2007). The communists were, however, divided themselves in what should become of the region of Macedonia. Some wanted to join Yugoslavia, others Bulgaria and some wanted to become independent (Agnew, 2007). While the conflict went on, more Slavo-Macedonians joined the communists in the fight. When eventually the civil war was lost, the Greeks pushed the people who joined the communists out of the country. Therefore, a lot of people living

in Greek Macedonia fled to the Socialist Republic of Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria or outside of Europe, to Australia or Canada amongst others (Agnew 2007; Danforth, 1995; Schwartz, 2000).

In 1950, the Macedonian language had officially been developed and worked out and in 1967, even an autonomous Macedonian Orthodox Church was established (Danforth, 1993). Macedonians in the Republic of Macedonia, were, for the first time, seen as an own nation. Map 14 shows the Republics of Yugoslavia. The Republic of Macedonia is portrayed as just 'Macedonia' by author Leslie Benson (2004). Benson, professor of History and lecturer in Politics and Sociology, wrote an extensive book about the history of Yugoslavia, from its origins towards its break-up. With this map, I think he aimed to just show the divisions of the Republics in Yugoslavia. That Macedonia is just portrayed as 'Macedonia' does not have to be a statement, rather a simplification, since the other Republics also do not have the 'Republic of' in front of their name. The impact of the map of Benson is not significant since these boundaries were not new or shown in a different way than before.

Map 14: Yugoslavia 1945-1991



Source: Benson, 2004, p. xxvi

## ***4 The independent Republic of Macedonia***

“In September 1991, a small Balkan country to the west of Bulgaria and to the north of Greece was born out of the ashes of the Yugoslav Federation. That much was clear; everything else was up for debate.” (Fidanovski, 2018, p. 18).

#### ***4.1 Independence and striving for recognition***

Thinking of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, the Yugoslav ethnic wars immediately come to mind. Yugoslavia, made up out of several republics, collapsed and this resulted in different ethnic civil wars, over territory and independence. The only republic where independence came about without war, was the Republic of Macedonia, getting its independence in 1991.

When the League of Communists (communist party) lost its majority after the elections in 1990, the parties in the Republic of Macedonia started to question the current communist federal government (Craven, 1995). This led to the declaration of sovereignty, in January 1991. At first, the Republic of Macedonia did not seek to get independence, rather more autonomy (Craven, 1995). They wanted the right of self-determination, and a new constitution to decide about the future symbols of Macedonian statehood (Craven, 1995). The instability of Yugoslavia was met with a fear of territorial claims from Greece and/or Bulgaria on Macedonia, so the Republic of Macedonia wanted to keep Yugoslavia together at first (Engström, 2002). When the leaders found out that Yugoslavia of the future would probably be dominated by the Serbs, they started to aim for independence (Engström, 2002). What started as a call for more autonomy, turned into a referendum for independence in September. Eventually, on 17 September 1991, the Republic of Macedonia declared its independence, but with a “right to enter a union of sovereign States of Yugoslavia” (Craven, 1995, p. 203). Contrast to independence declarations of Slovenia and Croatia, the Republic of Macedonia’s independence caused no trouble and at the beginning of 1992, Parliament members were called back and the Yugoslav Army retreated its forces from the country and its borders (Craven, 1995). To gain recognition from the European Community, the newly created state declared to have no territorial claims on the Macedonian part of Greece or Bulgaria (Craven, 1995). The new constitution, adopted in 1992, stated:

I.1. The Republic of Macedonia has no territorial pretensions towards any neighboring state.

I.2. The borders of the Republic of Macedonia can only be changed in accordance with the Constitution and on the principle of free will, as well as in accordance with generally accepted international standards.

II.1. In the exercise of this concern the Republic of Macedonia will not interfere in the sovereign rights of other states or in their internal affairs.

Rubeli, 2000, p. 5

By doing this, they hoped to get recognition from the European Community, but this did not immediately work out. The European Community indicated that a name needed to be found that

could be accepted by all parties concerned (Craven, 1995). This was the first issue after independence indicating the struggle with Greece.

Next to Greece, there was Bulgaria, which also had a region of geographical Macedonia (see chapter 3). Bulgaria was one of the first states to recognise the independence of the Republic of Macedonia, however they did not recognise the existence of a separate Macedonian language (Engström, 2002). This language was, according to Bulgaria, a dialect of the Bulgarian language, and not an own, Macedonian language (Engström, 2002). The Macedonians saw this as a denial of their existence as a separate nation, fearing the Bulgarians wanted to claim the country to its territory (Engström, 2002). Bulgaria, however, denied this territorial interest and just wanted to act like a 'big brother' to the newly independent country (Engström, 2002).

## ***4.2 Struggle with Greece***

With independence, the struggle over the name 'Macedonia' started. As mentioned before, the geographic region of Macedonia had a difficult and complex past and this expressed itself in the events happening from 1990 on. A name turned out to be a reason for conflict. To understand this better, the use of names in geography, toponymy, is examined to see how names are originated and what influence they have nowadays. After that, I try to explain in short how territorial conflicts start and what they can be about.

---

### **Concept 4: Toponymy and the value of geographic names**

When people identify with their country of residence and/or origin, they use their country's name as identification. The value of this name can be very important, as we see in the case of Macedonia. In linguistic studies, toponymy is used to study place-names. It is the combination of the Greek word 'tópos' (place) and 'ónoma' (name), literally the study of place-names (Aurousseau, 1957). Toponymy tries to study the history and origins of place-names. Although this is not a linguistic study, toponymy can be of use to find more information about the origins of the word 'Macedonia'. It's useful in this research since a geographical name is the central topic: Macedonia. What does it mean and where does it come from? Toponymy might help to understand this better. The value of place names is a topic scattered across different scientific fields (Vuolteenaho & Berg, 2009). Next to geography, it can be discussed from the background of psychology, sociology, law and linguistics amongst others. I want to discuss a view of these fields to see what names can mean, before looking at it from a geographical view. First, a few examples of name 'clashes' are discussed.

Naumovski (2013), a professor in Law and also one of the respondents, writes in his book 'Bilateral Disputes in the European Union Enlargement' about different examples of name issues throughout the world. He gives examples of how countries with the same name solved their issues,

to shed light on the name dispute between Greece and North Macedonia. Here, I want to mention a few of the examples he uses (Naumovski, 2013):

- There are two Koreas, referred to as North and South Korea, but officially named the 'Democratic People's Republic of Korea' and the 'Republic of Korea'.
- There are two countries called Congo: the 'Republic of Congo' and the 'Democratic Republic of Congo'. When they were accepted in the UN, their capitals were placed behind their name in brackets to not confuse. 'Congo (Brazzaville)' and 'Congo (Leopoldville)' were their official names in the United Nations.
- In the Caribbean, the 'Republic of Dominica' and the 'Dominican Republic' exist, being two different countries on different islands.
- There are 4 countries with the name 'Guinea', being: 'The Republic of Guinea', 'Guinea-Bissau' (from the capital Bissau), 'Equatorial Guinea' and 'Papua New Guinea'.
- There used to be two Germany's, commonly referred to as West and East Germany, but officially called the 'Federal Republic of Germany' and the 'Democratic Republic of Germany'.
- Until 1990, there were two Yemen's, the 'Yemen Arab Republic' and the 'People's Democratic Republic of South Yemen'.
- On the island of Ireland, there are two countries: the 'Republic of Ireland' and 'Northern Ireland'.

(all examples come from Naumovski, 2013)

Next to countries with the same name, Naumovski (2013) points at regions or provinces in one country, being the name of a neighbouring state, like in the Macedonian name dispute, where Greek Macedonia is a region with its neighbouring state.

- In Belgium, there's a province named 'Luxembourg', while the country 'Luxembourg' lies next to it. In Belgium, there's also a province named 'Flemish Brabant', while we in the Netherlands have a province called 'North Brabant'. (Naumovski could also name the provinces of 'Limburg' here: one in Belgium and one in the Netherlands).
- In Romania, there's a region called Moldova, which used to be together in one state with the current country of Moldova.

Next to these examples, Naumovski (2013) names examples of Bretagne in France and the name 'France', or 'Frankreich' in German, while a region in Germany is called 'Franken'. I think these examples are, however, not that relevant here, because they do not literally have the same name, in contrast to the examples above. Medway and Warnaby (2014) give a few other examples, related

to the Macedonian name dispute: “Sociopolitical motivations clearly lie behind the above [Macedonian] toponymic dispute, and similarly driven instances of place name contestation lie in the use of the terms Burma instead of Myanmar by Western countries, or the Arabian Gulf instead of the Persian Gulf, the latter name being contested by some Arab countries because of its Iranian connotations.”

The examples of Naumovski (2013) and Medway and Warnaby (2013) show that the Macedonian case is not unique. The difference with the examples is maybe the relevance of the topic now. The examples shown above are (mostly) name issues already resolved, or names that didn't cause a dispute. Next to that, the examples are often from issues of decades ago. In that sense, the Macedonian case is unique, because a country changes its name in 2019. The difference lies in the context of time around it, not in disagreements over names in itself. Borders have changed much over the years so that regions that used to belong together in one state are now split up. The examples of Naumovski (2013) show that names can be confusing, although not all disagreements lead to a dispute. The question is, why are names valued that much?

Helleland (2012) looks at place names from a linguistic background. He tries to look further than just the descriptive function of names. Names, according to Helleland (2012) have more meaning: “Names are not only linguistic expressions referring to an object in the real or imagined world; they are also symbols that bring about a variety of feelings depending on the relationship between the name user(s) and the named object or person. Names are an important part of an individual's language and personal vocabulary, and as such of that individual's own self.” (p. 109). In his work, Helleland (2012) criticizes the ‘classic’ philosophers like John Stuart Mill, who only saw names as references, but without meaning.

Place names may be said to represent the oldest living part of human cultural heritage, in the sense that they have been handed down orally from generation to generation for hundreds or thousands of years at the place where they were coined. They are a special part of our cultural heritage in that they tell us something about the place to which they refer and about the name givers. Thus they provide important supplements to the history of the places where people settled, as ties to the past.

Helleland, 2012, p. 101

Like Helleland, Rymes (2001) writes about names from a linguistic background: “Across societies, people carefully control the way names are used, who uses them, and in what context. A proper name, then, is not simply a useful label, but a repository of accumulated meanings, practices, and beliefs, a powerful linguistic means of asserting identity (or denning someone else) and inhabiting a social world.” (p. 3). She emphasizes that one name might mean different things to different

people. Understanding a name means looking at it from different perspectives, not just your own interpretation.

Radding and Western (2010) try to see what the value of names in geography is. They look at topographic names and try to look at their meanings from a geographic and linguistic point of view. Geographic names, according to them, are important because they have a deeper, cultural meaning, designed to it from the people living in the area. "Although we need names for geographical locations on the globe so we can interact with others in our daily lives - think of 'Meet me at the river' - the most interesting philosophical questions about names involve their ever-mutating human connections." (Radding & Western, 2010, p. 401). In the end, they conclude that geographic names do not easily fit into the study of language: "we must bow to their indissoluble connection with the people who use them." (Radding & Western, 2010, p. 410). Something Loy (1989) agrees with, who sees that place-names go beyond linguistics and need to be assessed and researched thoroughly by geographers. Loy uses the example of Wright (1929) to point out what should be important in the study of geographic names: the 'ecological' way of place-name studies, which means looking at the relation of a name to its physical and human environment, instead of just facts about names (Loy, 1989).

Kadmon (2004) looks at the political use and misuse of geographical names. He sees that name changes are not uncommon in geography: "Whenever a new political system comes into power, or wherever a geographical region 'acquires' a new ruler, toponyms (and heads) begin to topple." (p. 86-87). He sees two major periods of re-naming: just after the Second World War, when many countries obtained independence of their colonial ruler, re-installing native names, and in the early 1990s, when new states emerged in Eastern Europe (Kadmon, 2004). Kadmon (2004) points out different disputes about names. On Cyprus, for example, where Greeks and Turks have been arguing over different geographic names for years (Kadmon, 2004). The Greeks here use Greek names for places on the island, while the Turks use Turkish names (Kadmon, 2004).

A new name is, however, not a guarantee that people also use that name. Rose-Redwood, Alderman and Azaryahu (2010) point out that people can still refuse to use it: "If enough people refuse to recognize a commodified name, the official toponym itself may actually lose some of its own performative force." (Rose-Redwood, Alderman & Azaryahu, 2010, p. 466). It brings up the question what the people in North Macedonia will say when they tell where they come from. Will they say 'Macedonia' or 'North Macedonia'?

I will look at toponymy from what Vuolteenaho and Berg (2009) call a 'historical-culturalist' approach. This approach deals with the etymology of place names, tracing a name back in history and describing its path towards the present situation (Vuolteenaho & Berg, 2009). In this way, the socio-historic context of a name can be taken into account to understand its development (Medway & Warnaby, 2014). Having these explanations of the value of names in mind, I hope it helps to

understand the Macedonian name issue better. The name 'Macedonia' is followed in this thesis; starting with the ancient times, through the Middle Ages and Ottoman rule, Yugoslavia, independence and finally, towards the name change of 2018/2019. Describing these different times will, hopefully, help understanding the value and relevance of the name Macedonia.

---

### **Concept 5: Disputes over territory and nationality**

Connecting with the other concepts, national identity has its influence on the value of place names, which can be displayed on maps. Territorial disputes come in when disagreement exists between or amongst these concepts. In the case of Macedonia, there's disagreement about what national identity belongs to what name. Does the name 'Macedonia' belong to 'Macedonians' and if so, who are the 'Macedonians'? Both parties use different maps to show why their national identity belongs to their name (Wilkinson, 1951). The disagreement between Greece and the Republic of Macedonia became a territorial dispute, where both parties claimed the same name. It's useful to analyse what territorial disputes are and how they come about, to place the 'Macedonian question' into context. A few examples of territorial disputes are given, to see what they imply and how the countries involved dealt with it. The topic of (territorial) disputes is big, so to not be too extensive, only a few examples will be given.

Over history, territory has always played a big role in wars as Kocs (1995) pointed out. Interstate wars over territory are, however, not common anymore. After the Second World War, "international legal norms prohibiting territorial conquest and favoring the self-determination of states have become progressively stronger." (Kocs, 1995, p. 159). Since then, states attempted to claim possession of disputed territories with legal claims. In the case of Macedonia, it's not a legal claim that was the basis of the dispute: it's merely, according to Greece, the fear for a territorial claim on the Greek territory of Macedonia (Smith, 2018a). Both parties claim the same heritage and origins, the 'Macedonian' history. The dispute is for a great deal about who 'owns' this territorial history.

There are several examples of countries where disputed areas claim the same name or history. Bueno Lacy and Van Houtum (2019) look at the case of Cyprus. On this island, 'Greek' and 'Turkish' Cypriots both claim Cyprus as 'theirs'. Today, Cyprus is divided along the so-called 'Green Line', that divides the island in a Greek and Turkish part. Bueno Lacy and Van Houtum (2019) date this distinction back to the British colonizers, who saw 'Greeks' and 'Turks' instead of 'Cypriots'. At the time of colonization (1878), the people there lived together on the island, without separation. Now, the island is divided and both parties claim to be Cypriot. The analysis of the authors "shows that geopolitical (mis)representations of history and heritage, culture and identity, geography and borders construct cartographically organized notions of territory (i.e., people as well as "their" space and culture) and that these notions can have the most dramatic political impact." (Bueno Lacy

& Van Houtum, 2019, p. 615). Like in the case of Macedonia, history and territory play a big role in the dispute.

Territorial disputes often, like in the case of Cyprus, have to do with two groups claiming the same territory. The concept of national identity plays a big role in this as well. Paasi (1999) described the two main parts of national identity according to him; history and territory. In territorial disputes, these factors can play a big role. Different national identities can clash over the same territory, legitimizing their claim by different interpretations of history. Greece pointed to the ancient Greek times and saw Alexander the Great as an important figure in Greek history. North Macedonia, especially Gruevski's government (see chapter 4.4) saw the same Alexander the Great as 'their' national hero (Vangeli, 2011). This, being just one example of clashing interpretations of history, shows how disputes can emerge by different viewpoints of the same history. North Macedonia and Greece found a way to overcome these differences. Later on in this thesis, I will, therefore, look at the lessons that can be learned from North Macedonia and Greece that could be applied to other disputes.

---

### **Struggle for recognition**

The issue with the European Community made clear that, although the independence process went smoothly, the recognition would be a tougher process. Greece objected the name 'Macedonia' and would rather see 'the Republic of Skopje' as the new name of their neighbouring country (Craven, 1995). Starting in the Greek province of Macedonia, protests erupted against the newborn Republic of Macedonia (Kofos, 1999). People went to the streets with the slogan 'Makedonia einai elliniki' (Macedonia is Greek), but this confused Western media into thinking Greece had territorial claims on the Republic of Macedonia since that was the 'Macedonia' they were familiar with (Kofos, 1999). Dr. Kofos, a Greek historian and former Consultant for the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, argues that the sudden eruption of protests had to do with this misunderstanding of the media<sup>2</sup>. Before the 1990s, most people in Greece had not objected the name of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia and even Greek historians and politicians saw Macedonia merely as a geographic region, containing the Greek province, Yugoslav Republic and Bulgarian area of Pirin (Kofos, 1999). These protests, however, were not without a cause. At the end of the 1980s, Kofos points out, calls for a unification of Macedonia (with the Greek and Bulgarian part) came out in Skopje and other cities in the Yugoslav Republic. With slogans like 'Solun is ours' (meaning Thessaloniki), people asked for one, united Macedonia. The Assembly of the (then called) Socialist Republic of Macedonia (SRM) stated that it would take care of interests of Macedonians in other countries, infuriating Greece and

---

<sup>2</sup> Kofos tried to bring over the Greek position on Macedonia and in his role with Foreign Affairs, he argued that the use of the term Macedonia by the people living in the Republic of Macedonia was unjustified (Danforth, 2010).

Bulgaria (Poulton, 2000). Poulton (2000) argues these developments were caused by a fear that the SRM would lose its existence if Yugoslavia would break up. Therefore, stronger nationalism was encouraged to hide their weaknesses (Poulton, 2000). As Kofos (1999) points out, these developments helped to cause major protests in Greece, in fear of territorial claims from the newborn Republic of Macedonia. What Kofos (1999) nevertheless does not point out, is that the renewed interest of the Greeks in the Macedonian question only came up after Yugoslavia started to become weaker. In the meantime, after the First World War, the issue of Greece with Macedonia was not that strong or publicly made clear. While Kofos (1999) makes clear how people in the Republic of Macedonia made claims to geographic Macedonia, so did the Greeks in that time, who objected the name of the newborn state (Poulton, 2000). On the other side, opposed to Kofos and in favour of the right of the Macedonian people to the name Macedonia, Rossos (2006) also gave his opinion about the territorial claims: "How the small, poor, militarily powerless state could threaten Greece—one of the region's larger states, a member of the European Community and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and a modern military power—was difficult to grasp." (p. 268). The different opinions of these writers reflect the opposing ideas and opinions on Macedonia in the early 1990s. While accusations were made back and forth from both sides, a solution seemed far away.

Making clear the origins of protests on both sides of the border, the situation in the early 1990s in the border region was tense. The Republic of Macedonia wanted to be acknowledged in the United Nations (UN), but Greece was still not cooperating. In 1993, the country was finally admitted under the name 'Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia' (FYROM). This caused mixed reactions in the Republic: people were happy to be finally in the UN but did not approve of the provisional name (Poulton, 2000). Wood (1997), however, emphasizes 'FYROM' was not a 'name' of the country, rather just a reference. The 'Former Yugoslav' part was already met with criticism since reincorporation into what was left of Yugoslavia was feared (Poulton, 2000). In the period after independence, several small 'ultra-nationalist' parties were founded, like the MAAK-Conservative Party and the World Macedonian Congress (WMC), both advocating the rights of ethnic Macedonians inside and outside of the country (Saveski & Sadiku, 2012). It made clear some people did not agree with the 'FYROM' in front of 'Macedonia'. The use of the provisional reference was, however, meant to be temporarily, until a final agreement would be reached on an official name (Craven, 1995). With a temporary reference and no flag since Greece objected the use of the star of Vergina (see figure 1), FYROM was officially a member of the United Nations (Craven, 1995). The flag issue was a problem, since the Vergina star (the name derives from an archeological find place in Greece) was associated with Philip II Of Macedon, Alexander the Great's father (Brown, 2000). Philip's kingdom, however, did not make up the part of the Republic of Macedonia, but only within the borders of the modern Greek state (Brown, 2000). This is in line with what Bourdieu

(1992) saw when he looked at national identity. He pointed out flags, like other symbols, are the objectification of a representation in things (Bourdieu, 1992). People like to show their national identity and, therefore, value symbols like national flags. This would fit in what Guibernau (2007) sees as the cultural dimension of national identity: symbols that make people feel they belong to each other.

Figure 1: Flag of the Republic of Macedonia (1992-1995)



Source: Wikimedia Commons

In the meantime, all member states of the European Community (except for Greece) officially recognised the provisional name over the next year, so did the US. Greece did not only object the name of the new republic because of the name 'Macedonia', but also started an economic embargo, preventing oil and other trade to go to the Republic of Macedonia (Rubeli, 2000). By doing this, they wanted to pressure the new Republic of Macedonia to drop their name and the use of the Vergina Star in their flag (Rubeli, 2000). At the same time, the Republic of Macedonia was also joining sanctions against Serbia. This made the economic position weak since now there was almost no trade with the southern and northern neighbour (Rubeli, 2000). Next to that, to the West and East, Albania and Bulgaria were "just post-communist and not ready to have good economic relations with." (Andonovski, personal communication, May 21, 2019). This made the Republic of Macedonia's position isolated. Floudas (2002) pointed out that this was not useful for Greece's international position: "For a period of several years after 1992, Athens was seen as a 'second bully of the Balkans,' an accomplice almost of Serbia and unworthy of European and international support or even, in the extreme cases, membership." (p. 11). Eventually, the US sent 550 UN peacekeepers to the unstable region to provide escalation or spreading of civil war (Rubeli, 2000). In these uncertain and unstable years, Greece and the Republic of Macedonia finally came together in 1995 and signed a treaty calling for mutual recognition (Rubeli, 2000). The flag issue was resolved, the Vergina star was removed and replaced by the 'new sun of liberty' (see figure 2) (Rubeli, 2000).

Figure 2: Flag of the Republic of Macedonia (1995-2019) and the Republic of North Macedonia (2019-Present)



Source: Wikimedia Commons

Kondonis (2005) highlights the importance of this Agreement: “The Accord gave Skopje the necessary legal and political basis for opening diplomatic relations, for substantially improving its relations with Greece, and for its integration into the international community.” (p. 57). Next to that, it was also beneficial for Greece, which more and more became to get a negative image because of its policies towards the newly established Republic of Macedonia in the international community (Brown, 2000). This Accord showed other countries that Greece did not want to remain the tensions in the region. Still, the provisional name of FYROM was in use in international organizations, until a final solution to the name would have been found.

Like in many (territorial) disputes, the nationalist parties and opinions shaped the debate on the Macedonian name. Michailidis (2000) points out that these nationalist ‘views’ should not shape the way the issue is portrayed: “I believe, in fact, that the Greek and the Slavo-Macedonian historians, and indeed all their Balkan colleagues, bear an enormous responsibility in this respect, perhaps greater than all the rest. What historiography needs is a radical change of approach, to unhitch itself completely from the wagon of nationalism.” (p. 79). Anthropologist Danforth (2010), who comes up frequently in publications about Macedonia, writes his own opinion about the name ‘Macedonia’ and the terminology used by nationalists:

The Macedonian nation is not an artificial invention of Marshall Tito, the former Yugoslav leader, as Greek nationalists claim, nor are modern Macedonians the descendants of the ancient Macedonians, as Macedonian nationalists claim. They are a Slavic people (i.e. they speak a Slavic language), just as Greeks are an Indo-European people (i.e. they speak an Indo-European language). This does not mean, however, that Macedonians should be called Slav Macedonians, any more than Russians should be called Slav Russians or Greeks should be called Indo-European Greeks.

p. 573

The dispute between the Republic of Macedonia of Greece was not just about a name, it was bigger than that. Like Naumovski (2013) showed, over the world there were more places where the same name was used in a different way. Why did it then end up in a dispute over the name Macedonia? In the beginning, the dispute had a lot to do with territory, an important aspect connected with national identity (Guibernau, 2007; Paasi, 1999). After the Republic of Macedonia assured it had no territorial interest in the rest of geographic Macedonia, the name dispute was not over. Territory was, therefore, not the only factor. In my opinion the concepts national identity and the value of names came together in the Macedonian name dispute. The perception of national identity played a major role in what people perceived as 'Macedonia'. Greece valued the name, since it was part of its ancient Hellenic past, while the Republic of Macedonia valued it since it had been the name of the country, the language and its people, the Macedonians. The claim of the Republic of Macedonia to the name can, however, be seen as 'constructed', in line with Paasi (1999), if you look at the period of time when Tito decided to rename the Yugoslav Republics and 'founded' the People's Republic of Macedonia and later on the (official) Macedonian language. On the other hand, the name Macedonia had been of great importance to the Macedonians from the struggle for independence from the Ottomans (Rossos, 2006). Next to that, the Greek national identity in Greek Macedonia can also be seen as 'constructed', since they only acquired it after the Treaty of Bucharest. Although the kingdom of the Macedons was part of the ancient Greek civilization, from the Middle Ages on, Greek or Aegean Macedonia had been split up into different powers and states for a long time (Poulton, 2000; Rossos, 2006). For both sides there can be support and criticism for 'claiming' the name Macedonia. They could, however, not agree about a solution and after the Interim Agreement of 1995, things relatively cooled down.

### ***4.3 Struggle with the Albanian minority***

From its ancient times, the region of Macedonia has always been one of multiple ethnicities coming together. The country was praised for its peaceful coexistence of multiple ethnic groups: "In an international climate increasingly infused by a multiculturalist ethos, where the rights of individuals to religious, linguistic and other cultural freedoms are cherished, Macedonia's internal heterogeneity has come to be perceived as a phenomenon that should be preserved." (Cowan & Brown, 2000, p. 9).

This has, however, not always been peaceful cooperation. While the dispute with Greece was about external relations, there was also a major internal dispute, between the Albanian minority and the Macedonian majority in the country. In the communist system of Yugoslavia, Albanian nationalism was suppressed in the Republic of Macedonia. Kosovo was an autonomous province in the Socialist Republic of Serbia, so a lot of Albanian students went to Pristina for

university in their own language (Poulton, 2000). They complained that education in the Albanian language was not accessible in the Republic of Macedonia. (Poulton, 2000).

With the declaration of independence of 1991, in the constitution, the country was formulated as a national state of the Macedonian people (Azizi, 2012; Walsh, 2018). The Albanians saw this as a downgrade of their status within the country (Walsh, 2018). The Albanians thought they were now treated as a minority, instead of citizens of the Republic of Macedonia. They pointed back at the Macedonian constitution of 1974, which stated that the Socialist Republic of Macedonia was a national state of the Macedonian people and also of the Albanian nationalities in it (Walsh, 2018). Next to that, the constitution “removed collective rights which had previously been granted to Macedonia’s non-majority communities in terms of proportional representation by quota in public bodies, language rights, and the right to fly national flags.” (Walsh, 2018, p. 106). As a consequence of this new constitution, the Albanians boycotted the referendum on independence (Walsh, 2018). In the years after, the tensions got lower, and Albanian parties, for example, took place in government coalitions in the Macedonian Assembly, even with the more nationalist Macedonian parties (Walsh, 2018). In 1998, after VMRO-DPMNE won the general elections, it for example surprisingly announced that it would form a coalition with Albanian party DPA (Democratic Party of Albanians) (Brown, 2000).

After the Kosovo Crisis of 1999, a lot of Albanians moved to the Republic of Macedonia as refugees for the bombings (Poulton, 2000), increasing the Albanian population of the Republic of Macedonia. Tensions were higher in the region, especially around the border with Kosovo. Still, it surprised the leaders in the Republic of Macedonia that in 2001, the Albanian struggle erupted into violence. Extremist Albanians close to the border with Kosovo started to attack police and Macedonian military, to get better rights for the Albanian minority (Rossos, 2006). In February, the rebels, who called themselves the National Liberation Army (NLA), took control of a village on the border with Kosovo (Walsh, 2018). From this moment on, several violent clashes between the NLA and Macedonian police and military started to erupt, resulting in more than 200 casualties (Walsh, 2018). The conflict almost ended up in a civil war, but the EU and US were quickly involved to prevent escalation and with political pressure, a cease-fire was announced in July (Rossos, 2006). The fighting ended with the Ohrid Framework Peace Agreement in August 2001, which established constitutional changes to improve the situation of the Albanian minority in the Republic of Macedonia (Spaskovska, 2012). For example, the Agreement provided better representation in the police and army, and more rights for the use of the Albanian language (Rossos, 2006). Next to that, the Ohrid Framework meant new ultra-nationalist movements were founded, to oppose the better position of the Albanian minority (Saveski & Sadiku, 2012). The party’s TMRO and People’s Movement of Macedonia (NDM) were some of the new parties, opposing the Ohrid Framework (Saveski & Sadiku, 2012). TMRO wanted to revise the boundaries of the Bucharest Treaty (see

chapter 3), to unify geographic Macedonia (Saveski & Sadiku, 2012). The NDM was milder in their views, but was also opposed to the Ohrid Framework, arguing “the size of the Albanian minority had been deliberately exaggerated and that this was an act of treason against the Republic of Macedonia.” (Saveski & Sadiku, 2012, p. 3). The parties did, however, not get enough votes in elections to become a serious voice in Macedonian politics.

The relevance of the Albanian minority lies in the size of the population and their role in the name dispute with Greece. Albanians make up around 25% of the population in North Macedonia (Griessler, 2014). When the government tried to frame the Republic of Macedonia as a country for people from Ancient Macedonian heritage, the Albanians did not support this, since that denied their existence in the country in some way (Azizi, 2012). In a survey, carried out by Azizi from the South-East European University in 2012, the public opinion of the Albanians in the Republic of Macedonia was tested. Almost all respondents thought the name dispute was an obstacle to a Euro-Atlantic future of the country (94%), and the respondents overwhelmingly supported a possible name change to end the dispute with Greece (83% yes, 8% no) (Azizi, 2012). This makes clear that the Albanian minority did not value the name ‘Macedonia’ as much as the rest of the country. Something that could have influenced the way they voted in the referendum in 2018 (see chapter 5).

#### ***4.4 ‘Antiquization’ and Gruevski’s government***

Walking around in North Macedonia’s capital Skopje maybe makes you feel like you entered a movie set. Big new statues in Greek styles pop up around every corner in the city, as you see in figure 3 and 4. These statues were part of the ‘Skopje 2014’ program. With this program, the Republic of Macedonia tried to emphasize their ancient ‘Macedonian’ roots, by placing statues of ‘Macedonian’ kings like King Phillip and Alexander the Great (Vangeli, 2011).

After the Treaty of 1995, tensions between the Republic and Greece became lower and both countries started to work together again. Relations started to improve and cooperation programmes were set up. When the VMRO-DPMNE party of Gruevski came to power again in 2006, things started to change. The party, with a more nationalist point of view, started to work on ‘Macedonian’ nationality and tried to create more awareness about what they saw as ‘their’ origins and culture (Christidis & Paschalidis, 2017). ‘Skopje 2014’ was part of this attempt. Skopje’s airport was changed into ‘Skopje Alexander the Great Airport’ and the main highway, from Serbia to Greece, was named ‘Alexander the Great highway’. Not surprisingly, the Skopje 2014 project made tensions come back and infuriated the Greeks (Vangeli, 2011). When the Republic of Macedonia in 2008 again tried to get an invitation to join NATO, the Greek government opposed and the Republic was not admitted (Christidis & Paschalidis, 2017). After this, the relations even got worse. The decline of NATO-membership made Gruevski’s government focus even more on its nationalist policies. The

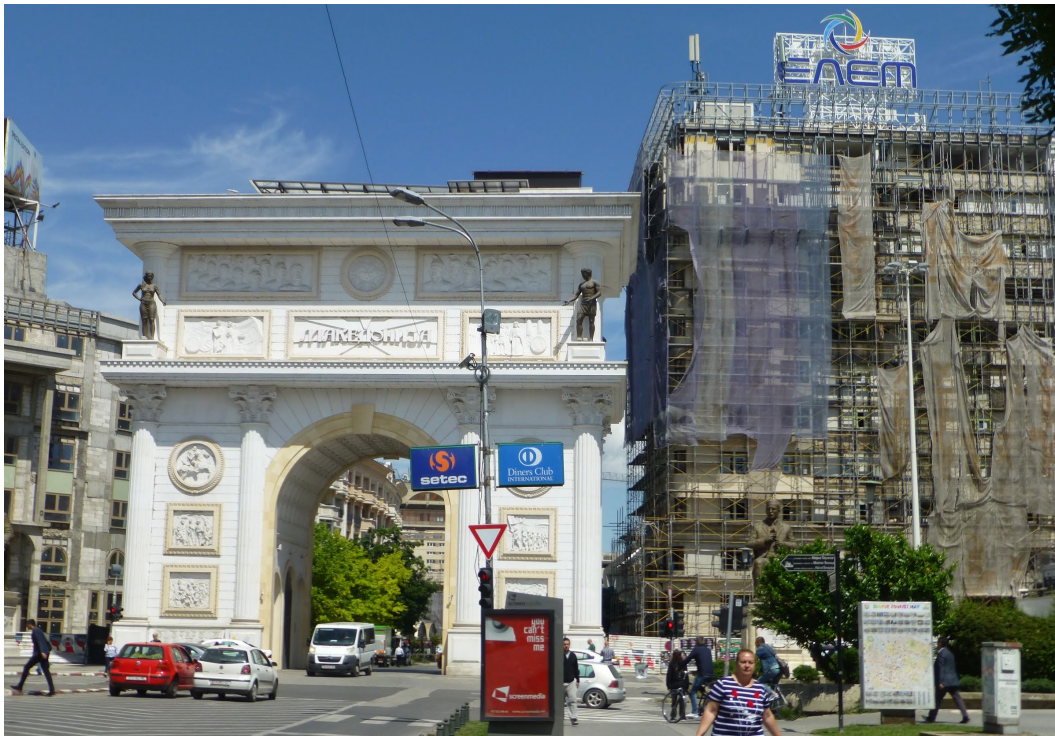
government installed, for example, Ancient Macedonian holidays, celebrated in traditional Macedonian armour that had to resemble the soldiers of Alexander the Great (Vangeli, 2011).

Figure 3: Statue of Justinian I in Skopje



Source: own photo

Figure 4: Porta Macedonia in Skopje



Source: own photo

Most respondents pointed out that at this moment, where the country met all requirements, Greece unjustly vetoed the Republic of Macedonia's accession. The country itself believed the same. After this deception, the government of the Republic of Macedonia went to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) because they argued the veto was not in line with the Interim Agreement of 1995, where Greece promised not to block the country's Euro-Atlantic integration (Messineo, 2012). "The Court held that Greece had breached one of its obligations under the 1995 bilateral Interim Accord by objecting to the admission of Makedonija to NATO in the run up to the Bucharest Summit of 2008." (Messineo, 2012, p. 170). The court judged that Greece was not allowed to block NATO membership of the Republic of Macedonia (Messineo, 2012). The decision of the court did not, however, give the Republic of Macedonia NATO membership, that was not part of the jurisdiction of the court. The only thing the ICJ could do was judge if the Interim Agreement was breached or not. As Naumovski in the interview pointed out: "In 2011, the ICJ decided that Greece had violated the Interim Accord. But there's no 'police' or other force to implement this decision." (Naumovski,, personal communication, May 21, 2019).

Vangeli (2011) argues that the reason behind the policies of antiquization was to give the people of the Republic of Macedonia hope and positivity, in overcoming negative sentiments, like low living standards, the hard transition from communism and the decline of NATO (which had promised economic progress and national peace). Emphasizing this ancient history would give the Macedonians back their pride. This fits into what Guibernau (2007) saw as the historical dimension of national identity, when people of a nation: "feel proud of their ancient roots and generally interpret them as a sign of resilience, strength and even superiority." (p. 20). Vangeli (2011) not only criticizes the policy because of its nationalist focus, also because its financial impact: "For example, in the midst of the global financial crisis, the Macedonian government is squandering vast amounts of the state budget on 'cultural elevation' by erecting sculptures, constructing monumental buildings and undertaking archaeological excavations inspired by the myth of ancient descent." (p. 24). Next to that, the policy is criticized because of its 'Macedonocentrism', creating tensions with other ethnicities in the region (Vangeli, 2011). For example, the Albanians in the Republic of Macedonia were not happy with the government policies, which was seen as putting them back to their status in the pre-2001 situation (see chapter 5.3), where they did not have equal rights (Vangeli, 2011). In the interview, Mohr made the same connection: "But later, the name dispute has been instrumentalized from my opinion, by the previous Macedonian government, for process of nation building, for creating and inventing a new Macedonian identity, which is mostly somehow based on segregation from other identities." (Mohr, personal communication, May 23, 2019). 'Macedonocentrism' could be seen as a form of (cultural) essentialism: Gruevski's government focused primarily on the ancient heritage of Macedonia, pressing Macedonians to identify with that period. Heyes (2018) writes about essentialism in the Stanford Encyclopedia on

identity politics: “to the extent that identity politics urges mobilization around a single axis, it will put pressure on participants to identify that axis as their defining feature, when in fact they may well understand themselves as integrated selves who cannot be represented so selectively or even reductively.” Gruevski’s government mobilized the people of the Republic of Macedonia around the axis of the ancient Macedonians, although not everyone identified with that period of time. In a research paper, conducted by the Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities - Skopje (Kolozova et al, 2013), the opinion of people in Skopje about the Skopje 2014 project is analysed. The outcomes of the research show that the people from the city did not like the make-over the city got. More interesting in this research, the respondents got the question who they see as the ‘most important historical figure for building the Macedonian national identity’. 73% of the respondents chose for Goce Delchev, who fought in the Macedonian resistance against the Ottoman Empire, while Alexander the Great only got 9% of the votes (Kolozova et. al, 2013). The emphasis of the Gruevski government on the Ancient Macedonian history, including the massive statue of Alexander the Great on the city square, is not in line with what the respondents see as ‘their’ most important Macedonian past. This is in line with the earlier mentioned political dimension of national identity, according to Guibernau (2007). The state uses mechanisms to change the way people perceive their own country, to boost the idea of belonging together (Guibernau, 2007). In this case, the government used the mechanism of reminding the population of a proud ‘Macedonian’ past.

Gruevski’s VMRO-DPMNE led government continued the nationalist policies of antiquization. From 2014 on, however, their power started to shrink since massive protests started in Skopje when a corruption scandal of government officials came out (Zakem, Rosenau & Johnson, 2017). The protests started with students at the end of 2014, who protested the proposal for “externally-supervised tests, i.e., ‘state exams’, for both Bachelor and Master’s students.” (Georgievski, Andonov & Trajkoska, 2016, p. 302). The government, however, went on with the proposals leading to the occupation of the state university in Skopje, which made the government, eventually, abandon the state exams idea (Georgievski, Andonov & Trajkoska, 2016).

Dissatisfaction with Gruevski’s government contributed to a high number of people starting with other protests in 2015. Zoran Zaev, leader of the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM) accused the government of illegal wiretapping: the government had allegedly monitored phone calls of more than 20.000 people over four years (Georgievski, Andonov & Trajkoska, 2016). In the following months, Zaev, who got hold of different phone calls from government officials, published several conversations, to prove his accusations (Georgievski, Andonov & Trajkoska, 2016). This situation made the protests even bigger, growing to tens of thousands of people in May 2015 in front of the government building, demanding Gruevski’s resignation (Georgievski, Andonov & Trajkoska, 2016). In June and July 2015, the Pržino Agreement was made, between the main political parties, mediated by the European Union (Georgievski, Andonov & Trajkoska, 2016). It

was agreed to have parliamentary elections in April of 2016 (eventually delayed to June), while the current government had to resign at least 100 days before those elections (Georgievski, Andonov & Trajkoska, 2016). In the meantime, an interim Prime Minister had to be elected in January to lead the government until the elections. Eventually, after the elections, in 2017 a new government was formed and a new 'chapter' in the Republic of Macedonia's short history began.

## ***5 'North' as a solution to the name dispute***

The country was brought in, provisionally, under the name Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. That was not the name of the state, it was a provisional designation until the name was determined, which everyone thought would happen very quickly. I told something like, when you have a child, and the child doesn't have a name yet, it's the baby of Mr. & Mrs. Nimetz. But that's not the name of the child. That's the designation until the parents give the child a name. But if they can't agree on a name, and it goes on for 24 years, that child does not have a happy life.

Nimetz (United Nations), 2019

### ***5.1 Tsipras and Zaev come together***

At the end of May 2017, the government of Prime Minister Zaev from the social-democrats came to power in the Republic of Macedonia (Delauny, 2018). Zaev changed the name of the Alexander the Great airport and highway back to International Airport Skopje, and the Friendship highway (Delauny, 2018). These moves made the relations with Greece better and were the first signs that the new government would not continue the antiquization policy of its predecessor. First reports of a possible solution to the name dispute come from June 2017, when Zaev was just elected Prime Minister of the Republic of Macedonia (Smith, 2017). Foreign Ministers Dimitrov and Kotzias met in Athens to discuss possibilities and Zaev was positive about the prospects: "I know that if we have friendly relations and a good approach then a solution is feasible." (Smith, 2017). Zaev declared that he wanted the Republic of Macedonia to join the EU and NATO as soon as possible (Smith, 2017). Therefore, relations with its neighbour had to be restored. Zaev, in that perspective, criticized his predecessor Gruevski with his policy of antiquization, and stated that he would lead the country differently: "I can only say that the era of monuments, renaming of highways, airports, sports halls and stadiums with historical names ends." (Smith, 2017).

Ceka (2018) noticed this, what he calls a 'new beginning', in his article in the Journal of Democracy, where he pointed out that a solution to the name dispute could be likely with these two leaders: "Before any progress can be made in joining the EU and NATO, however, the name issue

with Greece will need to be resolved. Fortunately, Zaev's centre-left government seems genuinely interested in doing so. With a willing partner in Greek premier Alexis Tsipras, who heads the left-wing Syriza party, the chances are as good as they have ever been." (p. 154). Ceka's predictions turned out to be true.

## ***5.2 The name change process***

After Zaev restored relations with Greece, in 2018 the name deal was announced when Zaev and Tsipras met in June, at Lake Prespa, where the borders of Greece, North Macedonia and Albania meet (Smith, 2018a). At this place, both parties signed the Prespa Agreement (for pdf of the Agreement: [The National Herald, 2018](#)). The Accord signed would mean that the Republic of Macedonia would change its name officially to the Republic of North Macedonia. For the Accord to be realised, the deal would first have to be passed by Parliament and a referendum in the Republic of Macedonia, before it could be accepted by Greece (Smith, 2018a).

On 30 September this referendum took place. To the disappointment to Zaev's government, the turnout was only 35%, although a 91% majority voted in favour of the deal (Smith, 2018b). Opponents of the name change, who held protests against the deal since it was first announced, boycotted the referendum, hence the low turnout (Smith, 2018b). After most things had gone well for Zaev's plan, this was the first real blow. Now, he had to accept the result, although the turnout was really low. Zaev celebrated the result, however, as a triumph: "Zaev declared the vote a win for 'European Macedonia', insisting that the overwhelming 'yes' vote would give legitimacy for the next step of the implementation of the agreement: a constitutional change in parliament" (Marusic, 2018). A 50% turnout would have been needed to make the vote valid (Smith, 2018b), but the referendum was only consultative, so the result could not obstruct the name change process (Marusic, 2018). Krzalovski in the interview pointed out that this low turnout meant the name change was not backed by the people: "So, in my opinion, the Agreement did not reach majority support." (personal communication, May 21, 2019). According to Medway and Warnaby (2014), the protests that erupted around the name change are not unusual: "A key theme of contestation in place naming is that, when toponyms are purposively changed either for sociopolitical reasons or in a drive towards economic gain and commodification, there is usually some level of resistance. Even well-meaning attempts to improve the lot of society through toponymic redrafting can result in contestation and opposition." (p. 163). Like described in concept 4 about toponymy, a name can mean a lot of things to people. They value their name as part of their identity. A name change could be a (forced) change of identity. Protests against this change are, therefore, not strange.

Regardless of the referendum, Zaev went on with the deal for a vote in parliament. In October, a vote was held, preceded by tense political debates, polarising the political views in the country. Protests were held after the result of the referendum of people who did not want the deal

to go through. To change the constitution, the name deal would have to be backed by at least two-thirds of the Parliament (The Guardian, 2018). Although Zaev's coalition only held 72 seats in the 120 seat Parliament, 80 MPs voted in favour of the deal, succeeding in the requirements to pass through (The Guardian, 2018). The US was quick in sending a representative in support of the name change, seeing the stakes of the deal regarding Russia's interests (see chapter 6), afraid the new situation would give way for unrest (Smith, 2018c).

After the deal was passed by the Macedonian National Assembly, it only had to be ratified by Greece by a vote in Greek Parliament. This vote, however, turned out to be just as tight as the two-third majority in the Macedonian Parliament. Just as in North Macedonia, tensions in Greece around the vote were high, with massive protests outside the parliament by nationalistic groups (Smith, 2019a). Following an intense five day debate, the vote was cast on 25 January and eventually, 153 of the 300 votes were in favour of the deal, passing the name change with a really small majority, just as the vote in Skopje (Smith, 2019a).

Figure 5: Government building with EU flag (left) and NATO flag (right)



Source: Own photo

On 12 February 2019, the Republic of Macedonia officially changed its name to the Republic of North Macedonia (Smith, 2019b). In a ceremony in front of the main government building, the flag of NATO was hoisted in celebration of the new future of the country (Smith, 2019b). Currently, the European Union and the NATO flag can be seen in front of the government building, although North Macedonia is not officially member in both organizations (yet) (see Figure 5).

## ***6 Geopolitical consequences of the name change***

“I was born in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, then I lived in the People’s Republic of Macedonia, the Socialist Republic of Macedonia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and now I live in North Macedonia. God knows where I might die.” (Andonovski, personal communication, May 21, 2019).

The future of North Macedonia is hard to predict. There are so many different aspects and actors that can change every minute. The Greek Prime Minister that signed the Prespa Agreement, Tsipras, lost the elections and is replaced by a more centre-right Prime Minister who criticized the cooperation of Greece in the name change. This might change the relations between the countries, or not. Like this change, several other factors could change. The quote above from Andonovski was about his father, who lived in the same country all his life, but the name of that country changed 4 times already. People, eventually, got used to all those changes. As Respondent 10 points out, North Macedonia is dependent on itself and other geopolitical powers and relations: “Many things should fall into place, including geopolitics and other things. It’s not entirely on the country, but it also depends very much on the country, of making progress in other areas. Even if this happens, geopolitics, other constellations, power, struggle between the countries, inside the countries, influential countries, can always play, against North Macedonia and Macedonians.” (Respondent 10, personal communication, June 14, 2019)

Therefore, in this chapter, I try to look at the future for North Macedonia’s internal and international geopolitics. Within the geopolitical field, different states and other actors are the focus of attention. Earlier I mentioned the work of Flint (2006) who described the agent/agency view on geopolitics. I will use this idea to look at the different actors involved in the name change of North Macedonia. In contrast to the classic geopolitical view, I will not only look at states. Of course, there are several states involved but there are also international organizations, like the EU and NATO, with an interest in North Macedonia. However, within critical geopolitics, you could argue that looking at actors is in itself not in line with critical geopolitics, since it’s a way of ordering or structuring the situation. Although I agree it’s a simplification of the situation, I think it fits this thesis best, since I want to highlight the role of external factors in the name change process, especially because they came up in almost all interviews. Looking at the process without describing the most important actors would make this thesis not complete enough, I think.

I will not be as extensive as Flint (2006) when he talks about actors. According to him, everyone could be an actor with agency. Holding on to that view would make this work too extensive. Every organization or person could then influence the process. Therefore, I chose the most important states, organizations and, within the country, political parties. I think these are the

most important 'actors' having an interest in the name change. I will try to look at everyone's agency, or 'goal', to understand their role better. I will start with the international geopolitics because I think the events happening on the external level eventually influence what happens internally in the country. North Macedonia remains a small country and is dependent on external factors when it comes to geopolitics.

### ***6.1 International geopolitics***

"A spectre haunts the Western Balkans - the spectre of geopolitics. Once again, the region is at risk of becoming a geostrategic chessboard for external actors." (Hänsel & Feyerabend, 2018, p. 4).

In the quote above, Hänsel and Feyerabend (2018) open a publication of the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (2018) where they warn for a new geostrategic battle over the Western Balkans. So did Mohr in the interview, saying: "The other partners or external influences which we see in the region, just to name Turkey, the Arabic region, China, Russia, they're all at the doorstep" (Mohr, personal communication, May 23, 2019). In North Macedonia, this 'battle' is already going on. Different countries and actors made their interest clear in the country. I will zoom out and slowly zoom in on the key players in the region. First, I look at the world level, where different players want to gain influence in North Macedonia and the Western Balkans in general. Russia sees NATO as a threat and tries to prevent countries close to its territory joining the organization (Rey et al., 2018). Next to Russia, there are other countries in the international geopolitical playfield that have an interest in North Macedonia. In the interviews, different people pointed me at the role of Turkey and China as investors in infrastructure in the region, trying to get more influence and power. Outside of the region and the continent (although debatable with the geographic question if Turkey and Russia belong to Europe or not), Turkey, China and Russia are the biggest countries interested in North Macedonia (Nikolovski, 2019). While the Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung (2018) also looks at the influence of the Gulf States, as a 4th key player next to Russia, China and Turkey, I don't include them because they mostly just play a role in Albania and Kosovo according to the report, but not necessarily in North Macedonia (Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung, 2018). In this part of the thesis, I hope to make clear why the 3 key players, Russia, China and Turkey, are interested in North Macedonia. Like the 3 key players who 'battled' for Macedonia around 1900 (Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria), these 'new' key players also want to expand their influence. The difference is, of course, that now the 'battle' is not for territory, rather for economic or political interest, as I hope to make clear.

The interference of these three parties has caused reactions of the EU and NATO, including some important countries within those organizations. I will zoom a bit into the Euro-Atlantic level to look at their reaction to this interference. With the name change, Zaev's government is striving to join the EU. Next to that, I look at NATO, not just the European but also the Atlantic level. I try to

view North Macedonia's NATO aspirations in the light of other new members of the organizations, to compare their situations and their path to accession. In February 2019, NATO membership was already achieved, although all member states still have to ratify that Agreement (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 2019). What does this membership mean and why is it important to North Macedonia? Looking at the European Union and NATO means looking at Germany, as I also experienced in Skopje and Belgrade. A lot of German organizations are active in the Balkans. Why are they there? What's Germany's interest in the region? It's interesting to look at the role one of Europe's biggest and most influential countries plays in North Macedonia.

Thirdly, I will zoom in to the regional level, where I look at the neighbouring countries. As shown in the history chapter, the geographical region of Macedonia was first split up by Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria. Of course, the most important external factor in this topic is Greece, but Zaev's government also made a bilateral Agreement with Bulgaria (Marusic & Cheresheva, 2018). While these three countries all claimed to be the rightful 'owner' of Macedonia, it's interesting to see how they perceive this name change. Therefore, I will end this part by looking at these 3 countries in the region, described as the three major powers in the region in the interview by Krzalovski: "I guess Netherlands in some form, or Belgium, can relate to Macedonia, in case being among the major powers, like in your case France, Germany, UK/Britain, but here it's Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria..."

### **6.1.1 Geopolitics on world level**

"Russia, China and Turkey, have lost the first battle. But there's a new set of cards and a new game. Their hand is worse, but they could still play a role. It's hard to predict. As long as there's no EU membership, those players could still play an important role. They could use different forms of diplomacy: fake news, social media. The unconventional way." (Andonovski, personal communication, May 21, 2019).

It could take years before the EU is ready again for enlargement. Time is, however, not unlimited. Andonovski points out that the longer it takes, the more likely it is that other countries jump in to gain more influence: "Postponing this decision [about EU membership] keeps the door open for Russia, China and Turkey. This concern was not taken seriously." (Andonovski, personal communication, May 21, 2019). After the turbulence in North Macedonia around 2014, 2015, Andonovski compares the situation to a chessboard where the EU realised it had to "move a figure to mark a division." (personal communication, May 21, 2019). Negotiations on the name change were going on for quite some time, but in the last few years, there was a key push, which had to do with the fear of growing influence of Russia/China/Turkey, according to Andonovski.

## **Russia**

As has been the case throughout the last centuries, Russia's interests in the Balkans are still alive. The last decades, its influence is, however, declining. With EU membership of Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia, NATO membership of Montenegro, Albania, Croatia, Bulgaria and Slovenia, the Russians lost a lot of its influence in the Balkans in the last twenty years. For a long time, it seemed that the leaders in the Kremlin did not care too much about the situation, they did not make strong objections to Albania and Croatia's membership of NATO for example (Armakolas et. al, 2019). After the Cold War, Russia's role in geopolitics became marginalized. Putin's foreign policy slightly changed into a more active role in politics of other countries, like the annexation of Crimea of Ukraine (Armakolas et. al, 2019; Bieri, 2015). Now, Putin tries to make Russia an important player on the geopolitical level, a 'Great Power' again (Kotkin, 2016). For example, Russia seemed to have played an important role in the attempted coup in Montenegro in 2016, to try to block the country's NATO membership accession (Armakolas et. al, 2019). Russia also had its interest in the Republic of Macedonia. During the political crisis in the country, between 2015-2017, Russia supported VMRO-DPMNE's Prime Minister Gruevski, portraying the anti-corruption protests as a 'Western plot' (Armakolas et. al, 2019).

Like other countries in the Western Balkans, the Republic of Macedonia found itself in between Europe (EU/NATO) and Russia, as Bieri (2015) points out. With the sanctions against Russia in 2014, the Republic of Macedonia did not join the EU's invitation for alignment, in contrast to for example Albania (Hellquist, 2016). As a candidate country, the Republic of Macedonia did not have to align with the EU sanctions, but they were expected to as a candidate country (Hellquist, 2016). Alignment is used as an indicator of the commitment for EU integration, to share the EU's foreign policy, as the EU also mentioned in progress reports about candidate states (Hellquist, 2016). The fact that the country rejected the EU's invitation could be due to the VMRO-DPMNE leadership, that had good relations with the Russian government. The respondents see Russian influence differently. Naumovski, formerly in the Government for VMRO-DPMNE, said that Russia had no close ties with North Macedonia, while Andonovski, for example, pointed out his concerns about Russia's influence (personal communication, 21 May, 2019).

Russia's influence in the region, also in North Macedonia, has a lot to do with its natural resources. North Macedonia is heavily dependent on Russia for its natural gas (Bieri, 2015). The political impact of the conflict with Ukraine made it necessary for Russia to look for a new route for its gas pipelines, not through Ukraine, but through the Western Balkans (Bieri, 2015). Russia still wants to keep its influence in the region, although NATO is seen as a bigger threat to that than EU membership (Bieri, 2015). Like Hungary is doing now within the EU, more 'Russia friendly' EU member states would only be in favour of Putin's government (Bieri, 2015).

In a reaction to the name change of the Republic of Macedonia to the Republic of North Macedonia, Russian foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov questioned the legitimacy of the name change process, describing it as a Western plot to draw the state into NATO (Smith, 2019c). President Putin pointed out the interests of Western countries in the Balkans: “The policy of the United States and some other western nations in the Balkans, who seek to assert their dominance in the region, has been a serious destabilising factor.” (Smith, 2019c). The Russian leader mentioned earlier that he saw NATO expansion as a continuation of the Cold War (Smith, 2019c). The accession of North Macedonia into NATO could be, therefore, another blow for Russia’s influence in the Balkans, after Montenegro’s accession in 2017.

## **China**

In the last few years, China has started to play an important role in the Western Balkans, including in North Macedonia. As part of its goal to restore the old silk road (Belt and Road Initiative or BRI) to Europe to stimulate trade, the country is doing major investments in the Balkans (Rey, Ilievski, Aleksoski & Pašoski, 2018). Restoring these connections would make it easier to do trade over land and sea between China and Europe (Kuo & Kommenda, 2018). The country offers loans which are cheaper than the ones from the EU, without many preconditions (Andonovski, personal communication, May 21, 2019), often to finance major infrastructure projects (Hänsel & Feyerabend, 2018). China is looking to extend the boundaries of its growing economy and chose the BRI to gain more influence and secure infrastructure work for Chinese firms (Kuo & Kommenda, 2018). North Macedonia is one of the states of Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe that cooperate with China in a regional cooperation programme referred to as ‘16+1’ (Vangeli, 2017). Within this regional cooperation, China tries to intensify economic activities to create new opportunities for its production capacity (Vangeli, 2017). Chinese firms can help with the construction and earn money for China’s economies. Helping other countries develop their economies also means those countries could buy more Chinese products for example. In 2017, China was already the third biggest trade partner of North Macedonia (Nikolovski, 2019a). Next to that, with its economic programmes, China connects countries who had trouble cooperating before: “The complex historical legacy of the intra-regional relations between Greece, Macedonia, Serbia and Hungary along the route, external shocks (...) and the lack of proper economic stimulus from outside have made these countries inward looking, and created a preference for barriers over openness towards each other.” (Vangeli, 2017, p. 119). With the ‘China-Europe Land-Sea Express line’ (CELSE), China connected these countries to work together: “Through CELSE, China also challenges the cognitive barriers that have prevented policy-makers, experts and the public in the countries involved in the BRI to advance regional cooperation and connectivity.” (Vangeli, 2017, p. 119). In that sense, China’s role in the region could have a positive function.

## **Turkey**

Turkey, member of NATO and, therefore, soon to be in the same alliance as North Macedonia, has a historical interest in the Balkans. As described in the history chapter, the Ottomans controlled the geographic region of Macedonia for almost 500 hundred years. Turkey has always been one of North Macedonia's closest allies and was one of the first countries recognizing its independence from Yugoslavia in 1991 (Duridanski, 2011; Hänsel & Feyerabend, 2018). The countries work together on the military and economically level and Turkey invests in not only "the economic sector, but also in education, culture and religion (though it has no significant influence over the Muslim community in Macedonia)" (Rey et. al, 2018, p. 27). These investments could be done to secure Turkish votes. The Turkish influence in North Macedonia is still evident, with Turks being the third-largest minority in the country (Duridanski, 2011), accounting for 4% of the population (Buyuk, Clapp & Haxhijaj, 2019). Turks living abroad can vote for elections in Turkey, so for President Erdogan, this means keeping good relations with countries in the Balkans, where lots of Turks live, could be of strategic interest (Buyuk, Clapp & Haxhijaj, 2019). In future elections, keeping good ties with the Turks in North Macedonia could make a difference.

### **6.1.2 Geopolitics on the European/Atlantic level**

#### **European Union**

Since 17 December 2005, the Republic of Macedonia has been a candidate country for EU membership. The EU saw it as its ambition to keep peace and stability in the Balkans after the wars of the 1990s (Centre for Research and Policy Making, 2007). After the embargo of Greece, economic sanctions on Serbia, crises of Kosovo and the ethnic conflict of 2001, it was quite an achievement for the country to overcome its problems and match the criteria for EU candidate membership in 2005 (Centre for Research and Policy Making, 2007).

In a survey from the South-East European University in 2013, people in the Republic of Macedonia were asked about their opinion about the EU integration process and their prospects for the future (Azizi, 2013). They pointed out that they thought the Republic would join the EU in the coming decade (42% yes, 25% no), but a big majority thought EU members Greece and Bulgaria were hindering the path to EU membership (73% yes, 5% no) (Azizi, 2013).

Now, more than 13 years after becoming a candidate country, North Macedonia is still not a member. This had a lot to do with the name dispute (see chapter 4), although the country's economic situation could have also played a role. It is unclear if the prospect of getting EU membership will change on the short-term, since some member states, like France and the Netherlands, have doubts about further enlargement since they first want to deal with EU's internal problems (Zivanovic & Marusic, 2019). Germany can, however, play a crucial role in EU

membership, as Armakolas et. al (2019) point out, since Germany was the one who supported the government change in 2017 and took a leading role in convincing NATO and the EU to open up accession talks. This led to the decision of the EU's General Affairs Council (GAC) to "set North Macedonia on the path toward opening accession negotiations in 2019" (Armakolas et. al, 2019, p. 9). The real accession negotiations would have to start after the name change was fully implemented and after the EU elections of May 2019 (Armakolas et. al, 2019). France, supported by other countries like Denmark and the Netherlands, however remained sceptical to new enlargement of the EU, arguing that "widening runs counter to deepening" (Armakolas et. al, 2019, p. 12). The strengthening of the internal union was deemed more important than external expansion and the EU's problems with Poland and Hungary were stressed as a negative example (Armakolas et. al, 2019). Ceka (2018) writes in his political analysis about the changes in North Macedonia: "If the EU is worried about Russian bids for influence in this part of Europe, then Brussels should focus on taking a principled stance against authoritarianism before it has a chance to entrench itself. Otherwise, the EU risks waking up one day to find in its midst more illiberal and authoritarian governments like those of Hungary and Poland." (p. 153).

Figure 6: EU Delegation in Skopje



Source: Own photo

In Skopje, the government tries to get more visibility for the European Union on the streets. On one of the busiest roads in the city, on the office of the EU delegation, a giant billboard shows

the flags of the EU and North Macedonia together, as you can see in figure 6. On figure 7 you can see another example of EU visibility in Skopje. “One family, one home”: the words written on the window of the EU Info Centre. Next to the billboard of the EU Delegation and the EU flag at the government building, these examples show that the Macedonian government is trying to make the European Union more visible to its people. By doing this, the government is showing the people of Skopje, and North Macedonia, that EU membership is close, at least that’s what the Government hopes. Time will tell if and when North Macedonia will start negotiating on EU membership.

Figure 7: EU Info Centre



Source: Own work

## NATO

Just after the ratification of the Prespa Agreement by Greece in January 2019, North Macedonia signed its NATO accession protocol (Armakolas et al., 2019). Right now, NATO membership is likely to be official at the beginning of 2020 (Armonaite, 2019). Krzalovski in the interview pointed out how the former government started to be more open to Russian influence, which triggered interest by NATO:

“So, we started to move eastwards, and with Serbia as a neighbouring country, I guess NATO was looking at the map and said, this would be strange, how you call that, nail, in the whole, NATO area, with Croatia, Albania, Montenegro, Greece, Romania, Bulgaria, and then you have all this Russian entry into that. So I guess, that contributed a lot, so I guess Americans

pressured quite a lot on Greece, and I think Germany, is the European player, contributing significantly in persuading Greece to do this.”

Krzalovski, personal communication, May 21, 2019

Although NATO is a military organization and meant for security, NATO membership is, according to Krzalovski, not necessary from a military perspective. “. . .we're surrounded by NATO: Albania, Greece, Bulgaria, Kosovo is de facto NATO military base, so who will attack us? NATO?” (personal communication, May 21, 2019). There is, however, another and maybe more important reason to join NATO: it could bring economic opportunities. Krzalovski makes the comparison with other countries in the neighbourhood: Bulgaria and Romania. “most of the economic growth and catching up with other countries happened in the period when they became NATO member, but still were not members of EU.” (Krzalovski, personal communication, May 21, 2019). Bulgaria and Romania got membership of NATO in 2004 and of the European Union in 2007 (Krzalovski, personal communication, May 21, 2019). It was a period of a lot of investment: “the rise in those 3 years of 2004-2007, when they were members of NATO but not of EU, basically proved to be very useful, because I think companies have the security to invest, because they know, it's a NATO country, but they still don't have all the burdens that EU legislation is putting on businesses.” (Krzalovski, personal communication, May 21, 2019). Krzalovski explained to me he hoped North Macedonia would also profit from this situation and attract foreign investments.

## **Germany**

Germany is the biggest foreign trade partner of North Macedonia and around 95.000 Macedonians live in Germany (Federal Foreign Office, 2019). Germany is, therefore, of great importance to North Macedonia. When it comes to EU membership, Germany also holds a key position: its parliament can vote on EU enlargement. “due to changes in German legislation in 2009, the Bundestag must be consulted on matters concerning EU enlargement. This makes the chamber unique amongst the EU's 27 parliaments.” (The Economist, 2013). The consequence of this legislation is that Germany is one of the most important actors in EU enlargement: “Unlike many other EU members, where enlargement policy is firmly within the hands of the government and receives scant wider attention, in Germany, the Parliament has extensive powers to shape the process. This makes enlargement truly political in a way that has rarely been the case elsewhere.” (Ker-Lindsay, Armakolas, Balfour & Stratulat, 2017, p. 515).

Since 2014, Germany's influence in the Western Balkans has increased drastically, thanks to the 'Berlin Process', a programme set up by Angela Merkel's government to stimulate cooperation and prepare countries for EU accession (Nikolovski, 2019b). The programme was set up in response to the President of the EC, Juncker, who did not want to accept new member states

during his mandate (Nikolovski, 2019b). While In North Macedonia, the German influence was also evident. I spoke to the GIZ (B. Mohr) and e-mailed with the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung; both German organizations active in North Macedonia. As mentioned above by Krzalovski and also in the part about the EU, Germany was one of the key players in the road to a solution to the name dispute. Hegedüs (2019) criticizes, however, Germany's role supporting EU enlargement in Eastern Europe: "By favouring short-term geo-economics over long-term geopolitics, Germany has failed to counter growing authoritarianism in its own neighbourhood." (Hegedüs, 2019). While Germany in the beginning invested a lot in EU candidate countries in Eastern Europe, since they got membership Germany's attention shifted elsewhere, giving room for other influences in the region (Hegedüs, 2019). It is the question how this would work if North Macedonia, for example, gets EU membership.

As mentioned above, Germany plays a special role in deciding about EU enlargement (The Economist, 2013). After ratification of the Prespa Agreement, the Bundestag voted in June on supporting the opening of EU accession negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia (Marusic, 2019b). Back then, the German Parliament was still sceptic about enlargement and postponed the vote to September. On the 26th of September, 2019, the Bundestag eventually voted on the matter again and this time, a big majority supported giving both Albania and North Macedonia a date for negotiations (Marusic, 2019b). While the Bundestag is not decisive in EU enlargement, without its support it's not possible to start negotiations (The Economist, 2013). Now, in October 2019, the EU Council will have to decide about the two countries (Marusic, 2019b). At least the vote means the German government will back Albania and North Macedonia at that meeting.

### **6.1.3 Geopolitics on the regional level**

#### **Greece**

Although the dispute between Greece and North Macedonia had been going on for years before Prespa, day-to-day relations between Greeks and Macedonians were not that bad, as the respondents told me in the interviews. Messineo (2012) points out the same: after the Interim Accord in 1995, high tensions between Greeks and Macedonians went away and the relations became normal again. The Macedonians told me most people go to the Greek coast, often in Greek Macedonia, to spend their summer holidays (Krzalovski,, personal communication, May 21, 2019; Marusic 2012). Coming there as tourists, they never experienced serious problems. The Greeks, however, did not visit North Macedonia that much. Grigoriadou (personal communication, May 23, 2019) pointed out in the interview that Greeks don't know that much about North Macedonia. Only with the name change going on did people suddenly become interested in the neighbouring country. Grigoriadou, raised in Athens but living in Skopje, told me a lot of Greek friends suddenly

wanted to come to Skopje to see how it actually is there, while they did not care about it before (personal communication, 2019, May 23).

Moving from Greece to North Macedonia to visit is, however, still not that easy. Grigoriadou pointed out you always need visa's to visit North Macedonia if you would want to stay longer (personal communication, 2019, May 23). Next to that, only recently, after the Prespa Agreement, new border crossings opened. Before that, there were not that many options to cross the border. This closeness of borders can have negative influences on the image people have of the 'other', on the other side of the border. The border between Greece and North Macedonia has been relatively closed, especially after the big amount of migrants coming in around 2015 (BBC, 2016). During the name change process, the biggest protests against the name were in the Greek part of Macedonia, close to the border (BBC, 2018a).

Newman (2019) describes how closed border relations can create 'invisibility' of the 'other': "It creates a serious lack of knowledge." (p. 107). The fear of the unknown is always bigger than the known. A more open border relation between Greece and North Macedonia could, therefore, also mean a change in the perception of the people living in border areas. Cross-border relations have a big impact on the way people see each other, and more openness could eventually bring both groups of people more together. Instead of fighting over the ownership of a name, people could celebrate the richness and diversity of the Macedonian region. Grigoriadou pointed out that the Prespa Agreement could change these relations:

So in a way, and also the relations between universities will change. Because there had been Erasmus students who wanted to come, but because of the previous name, it was impossible for the universities to agree on what kind of papers to sign. Also for Macedonians, there have been so many people who don't want to go to Greece, because they can not go with their passport, because the passport writes the Republic of Macedonia. They have to have an extra paper from the Greek authorities. This will not be part of the whole procedure anymore. Because both sides are obliged to recognise, citizens of Macedonia.

personal communication, Gregoriadou, May 23, 2019

There are, however, also fears that the Prespa Agreement will not stand the test of time. Director of the Institute of International Relations Constantinos Filis (2019) writes about the disagreement with the name change in both countries. He points out that a change of government could mean a threat to Prespa (Filis, 2019). This is a fear also pointed out in the interview with Grigoriadou (personal communication, 2019, May 23), who was afraid a change of government would bring the more nationalistic, anti-Macedonian voice back. In July 2019, this eventually happened: the party of Prime Minister Tsipras lost the elections and the centre-right New

Democracy party got an absolute majority (Large, 2019). Newly elected Prime Minister Mitsotakis was one of the bigger critics of the Prespa Agreement when his party was still in opposition (Kapllani, 2019). Currently, as leader of Greece, he respects the Agreement between Greece and North Macedonia, as he expressed in a meeting in September with Prime Minister Zaev (Marusic, 2019c). Although Mitsotakis said he would have never signed the Agreement, he now pledges to honour it (Marusic, 2019c).

### **Bulgaria**

In August 2017, Bulgaria and the Republic of Macedonia signed a 'Friendship Treaty', to bring the relations between the two countries closer in an EU oriented way (Marusic, 2017). Eventually, the Macedonian parliament ratified the Agreement at the beginning of 2018 (Marusic & Cheresheva, 2018). A joint commission to decide about 'common' history was installed, to decide about arguments over historic territory (Marusic, 2019d). Heroes from the past are sometimes claimed 'ours' by both countries, like Gotse Delchev (earlier described as one of the most important historical persons of the Republic of Macedonia) and the commission needs to decide about these issues (Marusic, 2019d). For years, North Macedonia has been in dispute with Greece about the 'Macedonian' history, but in the background, Bulgaria and North Macedonia did also not agree about their history. Bulgaria was one of the first countries to recognize the independence of the Republic of Macedonia, but it didn't want to acknowledge a Macedonian ethnicity or Macedonian language (Marusic & Cheresheva, 2018). The Agreement was supposed to solve issues like this. It restored the relations between the two countries and the Agreement served as an example for the Prespa Agreement (Marusic, 2019d). Ironically, now after years of struggle, Bulgaria, like Greece, is one of North Macedonia's closest allies in its process towards NATO and EU membership. While in the past, Macedonians feared Bulgaria as a threat to its territory (Wilkinson, 1952), now it could be one of the most important allies.

### **Serbia**

Unlike Bulgaria and Greece, North Macedonia did not have to sign an agreement with Serbia to restore relations. Bulgaria and Greece both have a part of the geographic area of Macedonia within their borders, Serbia only has a tiny area. This makes the relation between North Macedonia and Serbia different. Still, I think, Serbia has some role to play in the geopolitical play around the new-named country. Serbia was one of the three Great Powers in the Balkans at the end of the 19th/beginning of the 20th Century. It conquered the part that's now North Macedonia from the Ottomans and for years, that territory was part of Serbia. Only when Tito decided to make the Serbian Macedonia a Republic within Yugoslavia did Serbia 'lose' that territory again. The relevance for the Prespa Agreement for the Serbian government lies in resolving their own dispute with

Kosovo. While a lot of different countries and governments congratulated Zaev and Tsipras over the Agreement, Serbia did not (Zivanovic, 2018). The Agreement reached by North Macedonia and Greece, after a 27-year long dispute, puts more pressure on Serbia to resolve its relations with Kosovo. Although both countries are a candidate country, people in Belgrade I spoke to told me they thought the Prespa Agreement would mean North Macedonia could enter the EU earlier than Serbia. The EU Council urged Kosovo and Serbia to solve their dispute with a legally binding agreement, “which is key for their respective European paths and essential for sustainable regional stability” (Council of the European Union, 2018, p. 10). The fear in Serbia now, is that the attention of the EU countries regarding conflict resolution will now be fully focused on Serbia and Kosovo (Zivanovic, 2018).

## ***6.2 How geopolitics influenced North Macedonia internally***

From the international level to the neighbouring countries: a lot of parties are interested in North Macedonia. The geopolitical actions and strategies these parties use eventually influence the situation within North Macedonia. In this part, I will zoom in even more, to the national level: to the country itself. While geopolitics is about states competing over territory (Flint, 2006), the practices of these states have an impact on the territory itself. Within the country, the birth of the ‘North’ is, from what I’ve seen, heard and read, a topic that created division in society. Some people were in favour, some against, but everyone talked about it. I try to look at, what I think, the most important groups or actors in the geopolitics of the country itself: the leading party SDSM, the main opposition and former governing party VMRO-DPMNE and the opinion of the public.

### **SDSM**

The social-democrats of Prime Minister Zaev came to power after the wiretap scandal, as mentioned in chapter 4. During the name change process, the SDSM got heavily criticized by the former ruling party, VMRO-DPMNE, because it did not agree with the name change. For the future of the country, Prime Minister Zaev and his party want to stay in power and move North Macedonia towards NATO and EU membership. NATO membership will probably be realized at the end of 2019 when all members ratify North Macedonia’s entry into the Alliance. EU membership is, however, still a process that will take a lot of time. Respondent 10 pointed out that some people in favour of the name change expected the new name would instantly give the country EU membership: “Yeah, and we will be awarded EU membership immediately. But that’s wishful thinking. That was populist approach, of course, including by the government, but this is what politicians do, they sell myths, they sell stories, and for many people, these stories are potable, but it’s not about that.” (personal communication, June 14, 2019). The longer the wait, however, the sooner the ‘impatient’ people

will start to question the current government and, perhaps, vote differently in the next elections. For the SDSM, the period after the name change can be critical. A change of government could mean a change of direction in the whole country, like the earlier mentioned change of government in Greece. Recently, an 'extortion' scandal came up, threatening the anti-corruption policies of Zaev's government (Marusic, 2019a). An Italian newspaper published three videos of a crime suspect meeting with an influential businessman, demanding money in exchange for a 'lighter' conviction, promising the cooperation of the Special Prosecutor (Marusic, 2019a). In one of the three videos, it was also suggested Prime Minister Zaev would cause no trouble in the process (Marusic, 2019a). At the moment of writing, Zaev and his government still need to deal with the consequences of the scandal. It could be an opening for VMRO-DPMNE to win votes back.

### **VMRO-DPMNE**

VMRO-DPMNE, the party of former Prime Minister Gruevski, has been in opposition since Zaev's party took over in 2017. In this new role, the party criticized Zaev over his policy to make Agreements with neighbouring countries Bulgaria and Greece. The party boycotted the referendum because they did not agree about a change of the name (Marusic, 2018). Eventually, after the referendum and the vote in parliament, the name change was ratified and VMRO-DPMNE did not manage to stop it.

After the vote in the parliament, Respondent 8 points out that there were no major protests on the streets (personal communication, May 23, 2019). It could be that VMRO-DPMNE realized there were no other options, like Respondent 8 suggests: "... even the stance of the VMRO was unclear, because they did not urge for their members to come out and protest. So, they're, they would like to use, in my opinion, and also many other analysts, they are trying still to use the issue to score some points for the citizens, but in reality, they're aware that this is the only compromise that can be reached with Greeks, because of the Greek standpoint." (personal communication, May 23, 2019). The 'extortion' scandal mentioned above gave a new opportunity for the party to criticize the current government and take votes away from them.

### **Public opinion**

As I noticed during my time in Skopje, the name change is something almost everyone has a (passionate) opinion about. Public opinion can be important in (geo)politics of the country, as Fidanovski (2018) points out: "In a country with no democratic history, democratic competition is inevitably understood in its most primitive form: it is about who can respond better to public opinion, and not about who can convince the public of his or her vision for the future of the country. Thus, any substantial digression from the commonly accepted name discourse, which is popularly labeled as 'we shall not give up the name' (imeto ne go davame), is seen (or at least used to be seen

until recently) as guaranteed political suicide for both parties.” (Fidanovski, 2018, p. 20). Because the two major parties, SDSM and VMRO-DPMNE, are (by far) the biggest parties in the countries, a misstep by one party can mean the victory of the other. Winning the public’s opinion can, therefore, have big consequences.

Figure 8: Graffiti in Skopje City Park



Source: own photo

Of course, there are always signs of people protesting if you walk around Skopje. On figure 8 you can see a ‘map’ of graffiti on a wall in Skopje City Park. It portrays geographic Macedonia, containing North Macedonia, Greek or Aegean Macedonia and Bulgarian or Pirin Macedonia. The idea of a unification of geographic Macedonia does, however, get almost no support at all: parties that used to advocate for it already ceased to exist or did not get enough votes to come into Parliament (Saveski & Sadiku, 2012). I could not find protest signs to the name change itself on the streets in Skopje, but maybe they are apparent in less obvious places.

Regarding EU/NATO membership, Naumovski pointed out that people in the country, although divided in political parties, share the same opinion: “Unlike other countries, everyone in the Republic is in favour of NATO membership, there’s no opposition, everyone wants it. (...) Even, all parties and people were in favour of EU membership as well. So, everyone has the same goal but does not agree about the way to that goal.” (Naumovski, personal communication, May 21, 2019). Polls support this view, like the one of the Center for Insights in Survey Research (CISR) of July 2018. Membership of the EU and/or NATO still got a lot of support, but on the name change, people

are more divided. Although 83% supported the country to join the European Union, only 49% said to vote in favour of the referendum on the name change, that would be held later on in September 2018 (Center for Insights in Survey Research, 2018).

In the referendum of 2018, people were asked: “Are you in favour of NATO and EU membership, and accepting the name agreement between the republic of Macedonia and Greece?” (Walker, 2018). The question was formulated in a way that the name change connects with achieving EU and NATO membership, causing criticism that the question was ‘manipulative’ (Walker, 2018). Now the name change, regardless of the referendum, eventually got ratified, it would not be strange of people to expect EU and NATO membership on the short term. Respondent 10 points, however, out that people should not expect immediate changes after the name change: “I think, most of the people are used to be patient and they understand that there will be no, instant solutions. Of course, the Prespa Agreement opens opportunities, it's a really game changer, but it will take time of course. And, the people should, really be smart, and hopefully enthusiastic about adapting to the situations, and opening new windows, using new windows of opportunities, and this one is really a great one.” (Respondent 10, personal communication, June 14, 2019). The question is how long the public has the patience to wait for these achievements and opportunities.

### ***6.3 Prespa Agreement as an example for other disputes***

Armakolas and Petkovski (2019) examine the Prespa Agreement and try to extract its most important elements. The two researchers (Armakolas from Greece and Petkovski from North Macedonia) point out what they see as the main reasons that made the Agreement possible. The researchers break out the Agreement into 6 main components. First, they see a creativity to deal with disagreements: “Landmark deals are not about agreeing on everything, but much more about the willingness to live side by side despite disagreements.” (Armakolas & Petkovski, 2019, p. 3). The Prespa Agreement focused on accepting differences, not on making both parties believe the same. The second and third important aspects are about leadership and political strategy. Armakolas and Petkovski (2019) point out the change in both countries when Zaev and Tsipras took over as leaders of the government. Despite difficulties with getting the deal through parliament, both leaders showed willingness to resolve the conflict, even if they had to make political sacrifices for it (Armakolas & Petkovski, 2019). In their own countries, both leaders changed the political direction, aiming for a more positive atmosphere after a difficult time with the economic crisis (Greece) and the wiretap scandal (North Macedonia). The 4th component also focuses on both Prime Ministers, emphasizing the attention both men created on the international level. Zaev and Tsipras became ‘important’ leaders who brought a positive message from a turbulent region. The fifth aspect is how both governments realized the Agreement despite massive opposition and protests. Especially in Greece, a lot of people took to the streets in opposition to the

name change of its neighbour. Despite problems in the public and parliament against the Agreement, the deal went through. Finally, the researchers see international support as the 6th important aspect, arguing that the 'European/Western support' helped to establish a solution to the name dispute.

These aspects could function as an example for other disputes in the world. The willingness to compromise from both parties would be needed in cases where negotiations are getting stuck, like in Kosovo and Serbia. It is comparable to the Good Friday Agreements in Northern Ireland, where nationalists and unionists both had to make compromises to come to an Agreement (Edwards & McGrattan, 2010). Leadership and political strategy are important, since leaders of both parties need to be able to work together. In North Macedonia's case, Tsipras and Zaev were able to do this. Tsipras and Gruevski would probably have never been able to find a solution together, in my opinion. Like in the conflict between Israel and Palestine, right now it is unlikely that Netanyahu would ever make compromises and negotiate about peace, giving his policies over the last few years (Benn, 2016). With willingness of leaders, solutions to disputes could come closer. The political strategy then is, as Armokolas and Petkovski (2019) point out, important. The same goes with the impact on the international level. If leaders of parties in disputes have a good reputation on the international level, it is more likely they will get support in their attempts for peace. Finally, making an end to a dispute despite major protests is tough. Sometimes unpopular decisions have to be made now, if it can lead to a better situation in the future. Although a big group of people was not happy, in sensitive issues about identity, it's almost impossible to not have protests around. People deeply care about identity and 'their' identity marks a difference with the 'other' like Guibernau (2007) and Newman (2019) point out. There's a fear for the 'other' because of this different identity (Newman, 2019) and with an Agreement that would bring identities together, people could fear the 'other' to come too close. In the long term, people, however, might cooperate again, like the results of the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland (Edwards & McGrattan, 2010). Prespa could also be an example as a way to bring identities together, in order to move forward, regardless of protests on both sides. Hopefully it can function as an example to other disputes in the future.

## ***7 Conclusions and discussions***

### ***7.1 Answering the sub questions***

**'What does the history of the geographic region of Macedonia look like and what role did maps play in it?'**

Looking at the map of 'geographic Macedonia' showed how the area now is split up between three countries (Map 1, by Rossos, 2006). That's just one small part of the changes the area has known in history. From the Kingdom of Macedon, through the Ottoman rule and the Balkan Wars; Macedonia has always been a region of change. With the maps I tried to show how the ethnicity of the people living in Macedonia was debated by the different powers in the region. Some maps, like the ones of Safarik and LeJean (see Map 6 and 7) shaped the perception of the ethnic groups living in Macedonia (Wilkinson, 1952). It even influenced politics, in ways that eventually would end a 'cartographic battle' for Macedonia (Wilkinson, 1952). It fits into what Bueno Lacy and Van Houtum (2015) call 'cartopolitics': the political 'power' maps can have to legitimate territorial claims. The example of the cartography of Macedonia make clear how authors of maps have the power to even influence politics (Wood, 1992). Explaining the history of the region makes the Treaties with Bulgaria and Greece of 2017 and 2018 easier to understand. It also shows how a map is a 'picture' made at a certain moment. One moment later and the picture would have been different. A lot is still unclear about Macedonia, but the situation might change again in the future. When this happens it's good to turn back to the complex history of the region. It helps to better understand how North Macedonia came from a province in big empires to an own independent country that it is now.

### **'How did the conflict between Greece and North Macedonia emerge?'**

Macedonia's history is often a topic where nationalistic approaches, from both Greece and North Macedonia, conflict. The name dispute emerged, in my opinion, because two competing nationalities claimed the same name and the identity of that name. The concepts of national identity and the value of names came together in the Macedonian name dispute. On the one hand, the Republic of Macedonia emphasized its right on self-determination, deciding about your own name. It had been known as the People's and Socialist Republic of Macedonia, so independence meant removing this 'political' acronym in front of 'the Republic of Macedonia'. The name 'Macedonia' for the country meant a recognition of an own state for the 'Macedonian' ethnicity, a 'national state for the Macedonians', as was put in the constitution (Walsh, 2018) (although this would be rephrased after criticism from the Albanian minority). The Greeks saw the use as a territorial threat, although the small country would have never had the capacity to put this threat into reality (Rossos, 2006). The use of the Vergina Star in the national flag was the issue used by Greece to (in a way) proof this claim (Brown, 2000). The 'cultural dimension' of national identity as Guibernau (2007) described was, in this case, important: flags can be seen as a symbol of national identity and national pride. The 'power' relation of Greece and the Republic of Macedonia was as such, that the dispute did not get resolved. For Greece, the only disadvantage was the international reputation of 'bully' which it (partly) resolved with the Interim Agreement. For the Republic of Macedonia, integration into the

international community was much harder because of the dispute. The dispute, therefore, emerged and continued because Greece did not experience that many disadvantages.

### **'How did Greece and North Macedonia find a solution to the name dispute?'**

After years of negotiations, under supervision of UN mediator Matthew Nimetz, in 2018 the two countries finally found a solution to the dispute. Naumovski told me the negotiating parties were close to an Agreement several times in the last two decades (Naumovski, personal communication, May 21, 2019). Still, a definitive Agreement could not be reached. Options with 'Macedonia' in it were often rejected by Greece, while the Republic of Macedonia did not want to accept a name without 'Macedonia'. After Prime Minister Zaev came to power in 2017, the negotiations started to accelerate. Zaev and his Greek counterpart Tsipras came together in the beginning of 2018, reaching an Agreement a few months later in June. Suddenly, after years of dispute, there was a solution: 'North'.

Why did they agree now and could not agree before? The respondents and the literature pointed me at a few differences with previous negotiations and governments.

**1).** Both Prime Ministers, Zaev and Tsipras, were from a left-wing political party. Most opposition for the name change (in both countries) came from the right-wing and more nationalist parties. Nationalist views were often cause for conflict between both countries, like the 'antiquization' under Prime Minister Gruevski (Vangeli, 2011). Having left-wing parties in government in both countries could contribute to a solution, without the problem of nationalistic views.

**2).** The European Union realised leaving the dispute without a solution could mean opportunities for other countries (Russia, China, Turkey) to jump in and get more influence. Now, the EU could push for a solution, to prevent those powers to gain more influence. Leaving the dispute unsolved could have been a problem for EU's own influence sphere.

**3).** Time was in favour of Greece. The longer an Agreement was going to take, the longer North Macedonia would have been trapped in a situation with no future ambitions. NATO and EU membership would not have been possible without an Agreement with Greece. The Greeks had a strategic advantage, since they were already member of NATO and the EU and did not have the need to rush an Agreement. Concessions had to be made and now, the Macedonian government realized the longer they would wait with a solution to the name dispute, the more it would 'cost'.

These factors were crucial in finding a way to end the name dispute. Prespa Agreement could function as an example for other disputes. There are a few things that could be applied in other cases. With North Macedonia and Greece, strong, decisive leadership contributed to an Agreement. Both parties were not afraid to make concessions, for what they saw as the greater good. Although big groups of people in both countries were opposed to the Agreement, Zaev and

Tsipras did push through. In other conflicts, this could mean a way to make changes and end disputes. It might cause protests from certain groups of people in the beginning, but it could benefit to peace on the long term.

### **‘What could the name-change mean for the international geopolitics of North Macedonia?’**

The name change for North Macedonia is, in my opinion, connected to several external geopolitical actors. I tried to identify the most important ones and describe their role and interest. In line with the view of critical geopolitics according to Flint (2006), I did not want to look just at countries.

First I looked at the international level, where, based on the interviews and literature, I focused on Russia, China and Turkey. These three countries have increased their influence in North Macedonia over the last years. The name change means North Macedonia will probably move towards the EU and slightly away from at least 1 player. Russia already criticized the Prespa Agreement and especially sees NATO as a threat to its influence sphere (Armokalis et al., 2019; Smith, 2019b). The name change will probably mean North Macedonia will not be engaging with Russia that much anymore in the future. With Turkey and China, things will be likely to stay the same. China continues to invest in the region, regardless of EU membership or not. The only thing that China will concern is stricter rules when North Macedonia would join the EU. For Turkey, influence is (for a great deal) about the Turkish minority in North Macedonia. Joining the EU will not change this minority. North Macedonia would, like Turkey, even become a member of NATO, which will perhaps increase cooperation.

Secondly, I looked at the Euro/Atlantic level, where the biggest organizations, the EU and NATO, are the most powerful players, together with Germany. The name change was supposed to end the dispute with Greece and, therefore, end Greece’s boycott of EU and NATO membership. North Macedonia already signed an accession protocol with NATO, all members still have to ratify it, but it is expected this will happen in 2020 (Armonaite, 2019). North Macedonia has been an EU candidate country since 2005, but it never started accession negotiations. This, for a long time, was difficult because of the name dispute with Greece. This was, however, not the only thing the country was dependent on. With EU enlargement, the German Bundestag has to approve in order to decide about a starting date of the negotiations. In September 2019, the German Parliament approved backing North Macedonia’s negotiations, so a date could be set in October. After several positive recommendations (since 2009) from the European Commission (European Commission, 2019), the support of the German Bundestag could be the final push towards negotiations. Although this would probably be received as a major win for Zaev’s government, the example of Turkey shows that negotiating can also take a while. It remains to be seen if and when North Macedonia will finally reach its goal of joining the European Union.

Finally, I looked at the 3 key players that divided geographic Macedonia after the Balkan Wars: Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria. These 3 countries have had an interest in Macedonia for a long time. In the 19th Century, they all tried to gain influence and territory, by putting themselves 'on the map'. Macedonia was inhabited by Bulgarians, Serbs or Greeks, depending on the author of the map. In 2019, these countries do not try to gain territory. Now they would rather have an influence to stimulate (economic) cooperation. With the Friendship Agreement and the Prespa Agreement, North Macedonia restored its ties with two 'brothers' (the one a bit more of a bully than the other) (Fidanovski, 2018; Floudas, 2002). Now, the small brother is finally recognised as part of the 'family'. In the future, this could change in the EU family, if Bulgaria and Greece continue to help North Macedonia on its way towards membership. Although the country does not have to be afraid of territorial claims anymore, it still needs the help of its neighbours, to help achieve their goals. A good relationship is, therefore, crucial. For North Macedonia, it is good news that new Greek Prime Minister Mitsotakis promised to honour the Prespa Agreement (Marusic, 2019c). For the first time in history, cooperation rather than competition has the winning hand in Macedonia.

#### **'What could the name-change mean for the internal geopolitics of North Macedonia?'**

North Macedonia's society has gotten more and more polarized over the last years. The name change is, in that sense, a continuation. I tried to look at the main political parties, SDSM and VMRO-DPMNE to see what the name change means for their position and influence. After that, I looked at public opinion on the matter. The SDSM came to power after the elections in 2017. Prime Minister Zaev promised to bring the country forward. Now he has to live up to that promise. The Prespa Agreement with Greece and the Friendship Agreement with Bulgaria were necessary in the way towards EU and NATO membership. While Zaev promised the name change is helping the country move forward towards EU membership, changing the name will not be the only factor determining that. It is his task to convince the EU that the country is ready for membership. If this will take too long, VMRO will be ready to make use of dissatisfaction among the public, to win votes and perhaps a change of government. While VMRO also aimed for Euro-Atlantic integration, they were opposed to the name change. If in the coming years they would be able to win back the leadership of the country, the question is what they will do with Prespa. If they would change the name back, perhaps the common goal of EU membership would not be realistic anymore. Since they did not come up with a workable alternative yet, it remains to be seen how they would handle leading North Macedonia. It is, of course, dependent on the public and their votes as well. Public opinion shows a division in people for or against the name change. Although most people find the name change a good way to achieve EU and NATO membership, they had rather seen the name to stay the same (Fidanovski, 2018). Several respondents pointed out the name issue is dividing the country (Stefanovski; Respondent 6; Mohr; Respondent 8) and this could continue in the coming years. With

the small majority of the SDSM, a change in public opinion could in elections have a big influence on the country. I think the longer it takes for North Macedonia to get EU membership, the sooner public opinion will take VMRO's side again. This would not mean the Prespa Agreement would be in danger: in Greece the new governing party was opposed to the Agreement, but it decided to honour it, since it was signed before them (Marusic, 2019c).

## ***7.2 Answering the main question***

### **'What are the geopolitical consequences of the name change of North Macedonia, inside and outside of the country?'**

The name change of The Republic of Macedonia to The Republic of North Macedonia is caused by historic events, constructed by present leaders and will have an influence on the future of the country. To understand the 'bigger picture' means combining these three periods of time. Macedonia has always been a region of change and competing histories. During the years of time, several powers and countries have tried to make Macedonia 'theirs'. All these changing views and competing claims led to a diverse region, eventually split up by the three big Balkan powers of that time. The cartographic 'battle' for Macedonia made clear that consensus about its ethnicity was impossible. The different maps used in this thesis make clear how they shape perceptions and legitimize political actions (Wood, 1992). While these maps influenced history back then, they eventually helped shaping Macedonia to the way it is now. So to say, the power of maps does not only change people's perception today: it also shapes the (carto)politics of tomorrow. The name dispute was caused by competing toponymical claims: Macedonia was a contested name. The value of this name was so big, to both Greece and the Republic of Macedonia, that a compromise was not possible. Although the Interim Agreement brought some progress in the relations between the countries, the name issue was still not resolved. After Greece continued to boycott the Republic of Macedonia's Euro-Atlantic integration, Gruevski's government chose 'antiquization' as a strategy to mobilize Macedonians, putting emphasis on its Ancient roots. The 'cultural' and 'historical' dimension of national identity that Guibernau (2007) described were triggered by the project of Skopje 2014. This project can be seen as a 'construction of identity', but it did not last long. The new Government eventually found a solution to the name dispute that did not include looking back to ancient kingdoms. It did, in a way, still 'construct' an identity: that of North Macedonia. This construction will need time to be implemented and accepted. While the previous 'constructed' identity was heavily criticized for its costs and hostility towards Greece (Vangeli, 2011), this identity is criticized as selling the identity in exchange for (yet unfulfilled) promises. North Macedonia will at least be a full member of NATO in 2020, but there's not guarantee for EU membership (yet). Accepting this new 'construction' of identity will depend on achieving the promise of Zaev's government: becoming member of the European Union. The longer that takes,

the more opposition will come to the name change. Implementing the 'North' will take time, but that time is costly. The question is how long the Macedonian government will get.

Regardless of achieving this EU membership, the Prespa Agreement at least showed how disputes can be overcome by decisive leaders, fighting through despite strong resistance. If the Agreement means North Macedonia will be able to join the EU and benefit from cooperation, then in a few decades, people would appreciate the compromise more. The name change should, therefore, be an example to other disputes, as a way to overcome differences and make compromises. While opposition to the Agreement will probably not go away, the people in North Macedonia will eventually have to adapt to the new situation. Just like they did when the country joined Yugoslavia, became a separate nation and eventually got independent. Macedonia has always been a place of change, which will probably happen again, in the future.

### ***7.3 Relevance and recommendations***

After answering the research questions, here I will try to look back at the relevance and make some recommendations for further research. Of course, the subject of the name change in North Macedonia is a new one: although a lot of publications dealt with the name dispute, not much had been written about the name change itself. With my thesis I tried to jump in this scientific 'gap', in order to help understand the name change better.

In my thesis, I tried to look at the name change by zooming out and looking at the big picture: the history of the region and the development of the dispute. By using old ethnographic maps I hoped to make clear why the region has been contested that much. Although scientific research on the history of this region is quite extensive, it was useful to better understand the current situation. The important relevance for my thesis lies, I think, in connecting this history (and historic players) in one research to the name change that occurred in 2018. I hope I made clear how certain historic events shaped the things going on in the country right now. Maps played an important role in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, by shaping perception of the ethnicity of the region. By connecting the relevance of these maps in my thesis, I hope my research can be relevant, adding to the literature on the dispute. Like Bueno Lacy and Van Houtum (2019) did with Cyprus, I think analysing disputes with cartographic analysis is a useful way to understand the origins of the conflict.

Because it's a recent phenomenon, I think my research can be a start point for further research on the name change of North Macedonia. I hope my overview can be useful for scientists who want to understand the background of the dispute, why the name has changed and who is involved. The situation in North Macedonia in the coming years will probably be of interest to a lot of people. If new changes occur (like the start of EU negotiations or a change in government), new

scientific attention will be put on the country. I hope, no matter what happens to the country in the future, that my research will be relevant for those who want to write more about the name change.

I think some parts in my thesis did not get enough attention. For example, the role of the Albanian minority. This could be interesting for further research. In both governments, Gruevski's and Zaev's, an Albanian party cooperated in a coalition to get a majority in parliament (Ceka, 2018). People opposed to the name change told me they thought the Albanian minority was the reason the change went through, while under ethnic Macedonians more people were opposed to Prespa (Center for Insights in Survey Research, 2018). Research on the Albanians in North Macedonia has already been done (see: Azizi, 2012; Griessler, 2014), but not connected to the name change. This could be of interest to further research on the topic.

#### ***7.4 Reflection own process***

At the end of this thesis, I'd like to take a moment to reflect on my own process. I worked on this project for almost a year and during that time, a lot of things changed. Every now and then I got new ideas to add to the topic, or I decided to cut some things out. Speaking to my supervisor helped me focus on what's important and what's not. Now that the thesis is finished, I want to look back on that process.

In the beginning of the process, choosing a topic was the most important thing. At first I thought about extending my bachelor thesis research about Brexit and the Irish border, but I wanted to do something different. Eventually choosing a topic turned out to be quite easy, since the name change of North Macedonia immediately caught my attention. For me, it seemed like a unique topic, since you don't hear about a country changing its name that often. I'm happy with my choice to look into the name change and now, to understand the topic better.

First, I needed to find an internship to help me with my research. My aim was to find something in North Macedonia, in order to be close to my topic. I emailed with several organizations but they either did not have place or did not reply. While time to find a place as intern was closing in, I tried a teacher I knew from the Czech Republic, who worked in Brussels and knows many people. He suggested me to contact the AEBR Centre for Balkans in Belgrade, since he knew the head of that organization, Ana. I thought this would be suitable, since the AEBR is doing projects on the whole Balkans. Looking back at this choice, I think a place at an organization in North Macedonia would have given me more options and opportunities to speak to people and get to know the country better. Maybe I should have tried more organizations or contacts. It would have given me more information and data. When, eventually, I stayed in Skopje in May, I found out almost everyone in the country has a (strong) opinion on the name issue. Seeing this made me think being an intern at a Macedonian organization could also have 'pushed' me in a certain direction or opinion about the name change, which would not have helped for my neutral position as a researcher. From

Belgrade, I could still do my fieldwork without working in an organization who wanted me to be in favour or against the name change. Now, I felt it was easier to speak to people from both sides.

In Skopje, I did 9 interviews, later on another interview through Skype. Arranging the interviews was harder than I expected. I emailed a lot of people and organizations, but most of them did not reply. Finally, when Ana from the internship emailed them from the organization, people replied to my requests. Everything was arranged quite last-minute. Ana told me this was normal in the Balkans, but I was afraid I did not have enough interviews planned a few days before I went to Skopje. Eventually, several people replied a day before and it worked out, but it was not the way I expected it to go. If I could do this research again, I would probably have gone to Skopje for interviews in April instead of May. In this way, I could have had time to go another time in May to speak to people or organizations that could have been a useful addition to the research. I decided to work on the background and history of my thesis in April first, in order to be well prepared before I went to Skopje. After my trip in May, I could have gone back to Skopje, to speak to the organizations and people that were not able to meet me during my stay. This could have given me more relevant information. I could have tried to speak to more people from the political parties, from the Greek side and the Albanian minority. I think these groups are underrepresented in my research.

If I look back at my internship, I think that I had hoped to be more of use for the organization. On the other hand, I had plenty of time to work on my own thesis, which was very useful. It was very useful and interesting to see how an organization like the AEBR works and I'm very thankful for their help with arranging the interviews.

All in all, I think I put a lot of different information in this thesis. I chose to zoom out from the topic to look at the background and the geopolitical role that different actors played in the name issue. By doing this, I made the scope of this thesis quite broad. Some parts get less attention than they, perhaps, deserve. Other parts are maybe overrepresented. If I would do another research on this topic, I could maybe select one specific part of the name issue to examine. For now, I'm happy with the result. Of course, everything is not exactly as I wished, but I look back at a project in which I learned so many things. I'm curious how the situation in North Macedonia will develop. The country will be of interest to me, probably for the rest of my life.

## 8 References

- AEBR. (n.d.). *Association of European Border Regions, Profile*. Retrieved on 11 March 2019, from <https://www.aebr.eu/en/profile/profile.php>
- Agnew, J. (2007). No Borders, No Nations: Making Greece in Macedonia. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 97(2), 398-422. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8306.2007.00545
- Anson, E. M. (2010). Why Study Ancient Macedonia and What this Companion is About. In Roisman, J., & Worthington, I. (Eds.), *A Companion To Ancient Macedonia* (pp. 3-20). Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Armakolas, I., Bandovic, I., Bechev, D., & Weber, B. (2019). *North Macedonia: What's Next?*. Retrieved on 19 February 2019, from <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/reports/north-macedonia-what-s-next>
- Armakolas, I., & Petkovski, L. (2019). *Blueprint Prespa? Lessons learned from the Greece-North Macedonia agreement*. Retrieved on 13 June 2019, from <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/skopje/15509.pdf>
- Armonaite, A. (2019). *The Republic of North Macedonia: Political change, NATO accession and Economic transition* (Report No. 142 ESCTD 19 E). Retrieved on 1 October 2019, from <https://www.nato-pa.int/document/2019-republic-north-macedonia-political-change-nato-accession-and-economic-transition>
- Atkinson, R., & Flint, J. (2001). Accessing hidden and hard-to-reach populations: Snowball research strategies. *Social Research Update*, 33(1), 1-4. Retrieved on 14 May 2019, from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/46214232\\_Accessing\\_Hidden\\_and\\_Hard-to-Reach\\_Populations\\_Snowball\\_Research\\_Strategies](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/46214232_Accessing_Hidden_and_Hard-to-Reach_Populations_Snowball_Research_Strategies)
- Aurousseau, M. (1957). *The Rendering of Geographical Names*. Westport: Greenwood Press.
- Azizi, A. (2012). Euro-Atlantic Integration of Macedonia and the Name Issue: Viewed from the Prism of Albanians. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 3(8), 307-311. Retrieved on 15 April 2019, from [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Eva\\_Teqja/publication/265378537\\_True\\_New\\_Agenda\\_for\\_South\\_East\\_Europe\\_and\\_EU/links/540a977f0cf2df04e74928a5.pdf#page=307](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Eva_Teqja/publication/265378537_True_New_Agenda_for_South_East_Europe_and_EU/links/540a977f0cf2df04e74928a5.pdf#page=307)
- Azizi, A. (2013). *Problems of European Integration in Region: The Case of Macedonia* (Conference paper). Retrieved on 15 April 2019, from [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Abdula\\_Azizi/publication/259874871\\_The\\_1st\\_International\\_Conference\\_on\\_Research\\_and\\_Education\\_-\\_Challenges\\_Toward\\_the\\_Future\\_ICRAE2013/links/0a85e52e618596b9bf000000/The-1st-International-Conference-on-Research-and-Education-Challenges-Toward-the-Future-ICRAE2013.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Abdula_Azizi/publication/259874871_The_1st_International_Conference_on_Research_and_Education_-_Challenges_Toward_the_Future_ICRAE2013/links/0a85e52e618596b9bf000000/The-1st-International-Conference-on-Research-and-Education-Challenges-Toward-the-Future-ICRAE2013.pdf)
- Barribal, K. L., & While, A. (1994). Collecting data using a semi-structured interview: A discussion paper. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 19(1), 328-335. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2648.1994.tb01088.x
- Barrow, I. J. (2003). From Hindustan to India: Naming change in changing names. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 26(1), 37-49. doi:10.1080/085640032000063977
- BBC. (2014, August 30). *The makeover that's divided a nation*. Retrieved on 29 November 2018, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-28951171>
- BBC. (2016, February 29). *Migrants break down Macedonia fence on Greek border*. Retrieved on 17 August 2019, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35687257>

- BBC. (2018a, September 8). *Greek riot police fire tear gas at Macedonia name protesters*. Retrieved on 18 August 2019, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-45460423>
- BBC. (2018b, June 12). *Macedonia and Greece: Deal after 27-year row over a name*. Retrieved on 29 November 2018, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-44401643>
- Bieri, M. (2015). The Western Balkans Between Europe and Russia. *CCS Analyses in Security Policy*, 170(1), 1-4. doi:10.3929/ethz-a-010398137
- Biernacki, P., & Waldorf, D. (1981). Snowball sampling: Problems and techniques of chain referral sampling. *Sociological methods & research*, 10(2), 141-163. doi:10.1177/004912418101000205
- Benn, A. (2016). The end of the Old Israel: How Netanyahu has transformed the nation. *Foreign Affairs*, 95(4), 16-27. Retrieved on 27 September 2019, from <https://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/fora95&id=1&collection=journals&index=>
- Benson, L. (2004). *Yugoslavia: A Concise History* (Revised and Updated Edition). New York: Palgrave MacMillan. doi:10.1057/9781403997203
- Bourdieu, P. (1992). Identity and Representation. In Bourdieu, P. (Ed.), *Language and Symbolic Power* (pp. 220-251). Retrieved on 12 September 2019, from [https://is.muni.cz/el/1423/jaro2010/SOC763/um/lecture\\_10/10\\_1\\_10-Bourdieu.pdf](https://is.muni.cz/el/1423/jaro2010/SOC763/um/lecture_10/10_1_10-Bourdieu.pdf)
- Brown, K. S. (2000). In the Realm of the Double-Headed Eagle: Parapolitics in Macedonia 1994-9. In Cowan, J. K. (Ed.), *Macedonia: The Politics of Identity and Difference* (pp. 122-139). London: Pluto Press.
- Buchan, J. (1923). *Yugoslavia. The Nations Of To-Day: A New History of the World*. Retrieved on 31 July 2019, from <https://dspace.gipe.ac.in/xmlui/handle/10973/35948>
- Bueno Lacy, R., & Van Houtum, H. (2015). Lies, Damned Lies & Maps: The EU's Cartopolitical Invention of Europe. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 23(4), 477-499. doi:10.1080/14782804.2015.1056727
- Bueno Lacy, R., & van Houtum, H. (2019). The Glocal Green Line: The Imperial Cartopolitical Puppeteering of Cyprus. *Geopolitics*, 24(3), 586-624. doi:10.1080/14650045.2018.1508014
- Buyuk, H. F., Clapp, A., & Haxhiaj, S. (2019). *Diaspora Politics: Turkey's New Balkan Ambassadors*. Consulted on 29 July 2019, from <https://balkaninsight.com/2019/03/19/diaspora-politics-turkeys-new-balkan-ambassadors/>
- Ceka, B. (2018). Macedonia: A New Beginning?. *Journal of Democracy*, 29(2), 143-157. Retrieved on 31 July 2019, from <https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/articles/macedonia-a-new-beginning/>
- Center for Insights in Survey Research. (2018). *Macedonia National Public Opinion Poll*. Retrieved on 18 September 2019, from [https://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/iri\\_macedonia\\_july\\_2018\\_poll\\_public\\_final.pdf](https://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/iri_macedonia_july_2018_poll_public_final.pdf)
- Centre for Research and Policy Making (2007). *The Macedonian Experience With Cross-border Cooperation Programmes* (Occasional Paper 14). Retrieved on 10 April 2019, from <http://www.crpm.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Occasional14ENG.pdf>
- Christidis, Y., & Paschalidis, P. (2017). *Greece and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: The Experience of Cooperation in the Fields of EU Funded Cross-Border Projects and Higher Education and What Does it Mean for the Future* (Research Report - December 2017). Retrieved on 10 April 2019, from <https://www.eliamep.gr/en/publication/greece-and->

fyrom-the-experience-of-cooperation-in-the-fields-of-eu-funded-cross-border-projects-and-higher-education-and-what-does-it-mean-for-the-future/

- Council of the European Union (2018, 26 June). *Enlargement and Stabilisation and Association Process - Council Conclusions*. Brussels: General Secretariat of the Council. Retrieved on 12 August 2019, from <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/35863/st10555-en18.pdf>
- Cowan, J. K., & Brown, K. S. (2000). Introduction: Macedonian Inflections. In Cowan, J. K. (Ed.), *Macedonia. The Politics of Identity and Difference* (pp. 1-27). London: Pluto Press.
- Craven, M. C. (1995). What's in a Name - The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Issues of Statehood. *Australian Year Book of International Law*, 16(1), 199-239. Retrieved on 20 March 2019, from <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/AUYrBkIntLaw/1995/4.html>
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design. Choosing among five approaches* (3rd edition). Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Danforth, L. M. (1993). Claims to Macedonian Identity: The Macedonian Question and the Breakup of Yugoslavia. *Anthropology Today*, 9(4), 3-10. doi:10.2307/2783448
- Danforth, L. M. (2000). "How can a woman give birth to one Greek and one Macedonian?" The construction of national identity among immigrants to Australia from northern Greece. In Cowan, J. K. (Ed.), *Macedonia: The Politics of Identity and Difference* (pp. 85-103). London: Pluto Press.
- Danforth, L. M. (2010). Ancient Macedonia, Alexander the Great and the Star or Sun of Vergina: National Symbols and the Conflict between Greece and the Republic of Macedonia. In Roisman, J., & Worthington, I. (Eds.), *A Companion To Ancient Macedonia* (pp. 572-598). Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Delauny, G. (2018, September 28). *New name, same country? A choice for Macedonians*. Consulted on 29 November 2018, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-45665069>
- Duridanski, D. (2011, February 10). *Macedonia-Turkey: The Ties That Bind*. Consulted on 29 July 2019, from <https://balkaninsight.com/2011/02/10/macedonia-turkey-the-ties-that-bind/>
- The Economist. (2013, February 26). *The pivot in the Balkans' EU ambitions*. Consulted on 10 September 2019, from <https://www.economist.com/eastern-approaches/2013/02/26/the-pivot-in-the-balkans-eu-ambitions>
- Edwards, A., & McGrattan, C. (2010). *The Northern Ireland Conflict: A Beginner's Guide*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications.
- Encyclopaedia Britannica. (2019). *William Robert Shepherd, American historian*. Consulted on 19 September 2019, from <https://www.britannica.com/biography/William-Robert-Shepherd>
- Engström, J. (2002). The power of perception: The impact of the Macedonian question on inter-ethnic relations in the republic of Macedonia. *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, 1(3), 3-17. doi:10.1080/14718800208405102
- European Commission. (2019). *North Macedonia 2019 Report* (Report no. 218). Retrieved on 1 October 2019, from <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-north-macedonia-report.pdf>
- Federal Foreign Office. (2019, June 18). *North Macedonia: Bilateral Relations to Germany*. Consulted on 10 September 2019, from <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/north-macedonia/228106>

- Fidanovski, K. (2018). What's in a Name? Possible Ways Forward in the Macedonian Name Dispute. *Slovo*, 31(1), 18-44. doi:10.14324/111.0954-6839.073
- Filis, C. (2019, March 28). After Prespa: Could the North Macedonia name agreement fall apart? *European Council on Foreign Relations*. Consulted on 31 July 2019, from [https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary\\_after\\_prespa\\_could\\_the\\_north\\_macedonia\\_name\\_agreement\\_fall\\_apart](https://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_after_prespa_could_the_north_macedonia_name_agreement_fall_apart)
- Flint, C. (2006). *Introduction to Geopolitics*. Oxon: Routledge. Retrieved on 5 July 2019, from [https://www.academia.edu/3354871/Introduction\\_to\\_geopolitics](https://www.academia.edu/3354871/Introduction_to_geopolitics)
- Floudas, D. A. M. A. (2002). Pardon? A Conflict for a Name? FYROM's dispute with Greece revisited. In Kourvetoris, G. A. (Ed.) *The New Balkans: Disintegration and Reconstruction* (pp. 85-128). Boulder: East European Monographs. Retrieved on 24 September 2019, from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.598.6662&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Fontana, G. (2016). *Education policy and power-sharing in post-conflict societies: Lebanon, Northern Ireland, and Macedonia*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. doi:10.1007/978-3-319-31426-6
- Forbes, N., Toynbee, A., Mitrany, D., & Hogarth, D. G. (1915). *The Balkans: A history of Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, Rumania, Turkey*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press. Retrieved on 17 August 2019 from <http://intersci.ss.uci.edu/wiki/eBooks/MidEast/BOOKS/Toynbee/The%20Balkans%20Toynbee.pdf>
- Georgievski, B., Adonov, D., & Trajkoska, Z. (2016). Restoring Government Accountability through Citizen Protests Communication Practices during the Protests in Macedonia. In Hodžić, S., & Pajnik, M. (Eds.) *Communicating Citizen's Protests, Requiring Public Accountability: Case studies from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia* (pp. 283-382). Retrieved on 18 April 2019, from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321998502\\_Communicating\\_Citizens'\\_Protests\\_Requiring\\_Public\\_Accountability\\_Case\\_studies\\_from\\_Albania\\_Bosnia\\_and\\_Herzegovina\\_and\\_Macedonia\\_ed\\_S\\_Hodzic\\_M\\_Pajnik](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321998502_Communicating_Citizens'_Protests_Requiring_Public_Accountability_Case_studies_from_Albania_Bosnia_and_Herzegovina_and_Macedonia_ed_S_Hodzic_M_Pajnik)
- Goodchild, M. F. (2006). Geographic Information Systems. In: Aitken, S., & Valentine, G. (Eds.), *Approaches to Human Geography* (pp. 320-333). London: Sage Publications.
- Griessler, C. E. (2014). *The Albanians in Macedonia: The Role of International Organizations in Empowering the Ethnic Albanian Minority* (Working Paper No. 79). Retrieved on 18 August 2019, from [https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/185198/ECMI\\_WP\\_79\\_Final.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/185198/ECMI_WP_79_Final.pdf)
- The Guardian. (2018, October 20). *Welcome to North Macedonia: parliament votes for name change*. Consulted on 8 April 2019, from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/20/welcome-to-north-macedonia-parliament-votes-for-name-change>
- Guibernau, M. (2007). *The Identity of Nations*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hammond, N. G. L. (1967). *A History of Greece to 322 BC*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hänsel, L., & Feyerabend, F. C. (2018). Introduction: The role of external actors in the Western Balkans. In Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (Ed.), *The influence of external actors in the Western Balkans: A map of geopolitical players* (pp. 4-8). Retrieved on 29 July 2019, from [https://www.kas.de/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=194afc48-b3be-e3bc-d1da-02771a223f73&groupId=252038](https://www.kas.de/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=194afc48-b3be-e3bc-d1da-02771a223f73&groupId=252038)
- Harley, J. B. (1989). Deconstructing the map. *Cartographica: The international journal for geographic information and geovisualization*, 26(2), 1-20. doi:10.3138/E635-7827-1757-9T53

- Harley, J. B. (2009). Maps, knowledge, and power. In Henderson, G., & Waterstone, M. (Eds.), *Geographic thought: a praxis perspective* (pp. 129-148). New York: Routledge.
- Hegedüs, D. (2019, July 24). *Germany neglects Central and Eastern Europe at its peril*. Consulted on 25 July 2019, from <https://balkaninsight.com/2019/07/24/germany-neglects-central-and-eastern-europe-at-its-peril/>
- Helleland, B. (2012). Place Names and Identities. *Oslo Studies in Language* 4(2), 95-116. Retrieved on 12 September 2019, from <https://journals.uio.no/index.php/osla/article/view/313/438>
- Hellquist, E. (2016). Either with us or against us? Third-country alignment with EU sanctions against Russia/Ukraine. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 29(3), 997-1021. doi:10.1080/09557571.2016.1230591
- Heyes, C. (2018). Identity Politics. In Zalta, E. D. (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2018 Edition). Consulted on 9 September 2019, from <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/identity-politics/>
- Joseph, E.P. (2018, June 15). *Alexis Tsipras Deserves the Nobel Peace Prize*. Consulted on 18 December 2018, from <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/06/15/alexis-tsipras-deserves-the-nobel-peace-prize/>
- Kadmon, N. (2004). Toponymy and geopolitics: The political use—and misuse—of geographical names. *The Cartographic Journal*, 41(2), 85-87. doi:10.1179/000870404X12897
- Kapllani, G. (2019, July 15). *Under Greece's New Government, its Future Remains Uncertain*. Consulted on 13 August 2019, from <https://balkaninsight.com/2019/07/15/under-greeces-new-government-its-future-remains-uncertain/>
- Ker-Lindsay, J., Armakolas, I., Balfour, R., & Stratulat, C. (2017). The national politics of EU enlargement in the Western Balkans. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 17(4), 511-522. doi:10.1080/14683857.2017.1424398
- Kirby, P. (2019, January 25). *Macedonia and Greece: How they solved a 27-year name row*. Consulted on 4 February 2019, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-46971182>
- Kocs, S. A. (1995). Territorial disputes and interstate war, 1945-1987. *The Journal of Politics*, 57(1), 159-175. doi:10.2307/2960275
- Kofos, E. (1999). *Greece's Macedonian adventure: the controversy over FYROM's independence and recognition*. Retrieved on 10 March 2019, from <http://www.macedonian-heritage.gr/VirtualLibrary/downloads/Kofos19990705.pdf>
- Kolozova, K., Lecevska, K., Borovska, V., & Blazeva, A. (2013). *Skopje 2014 Project and its Effects on the Perception of Macedonian Identity Among the Citizens of Skopje* (Policy brief). Retrieved on 18 June 2019, from <http://www.isshs.edu.mk/skopje-2014-project-and-its-effects-on-the-perception-of-macedonian-identity-among-the-citizens-of-skopje/>
- Kondonis, H. (2005). Bilateral relations between Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In Vlasidis, V., & Kofos, E. (Eds.), *Athens-Skopje: An uneasy symbiosis, 1995-2002* (pp. 55-88). Retrieved on 4 April 2019, from [http://www.macedonian-heritage.gr/InterimAgreement/Downloads/Interim\\_Kondonis.pdf](http://www.macedonian-heritage.gr/InterimAgreement/Downloads/Interim_Kondonis.pdf)
- Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung (2018). *The influence of external actors in the Western Balkans*. Retrieved on 29 July 2019, from [https://www.kas.de/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=194afc48-b3be-e3bc-d1da-02771a223f73&groupId=252038](https://www.kas.de/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=194afc48-b3be-e3bc-d1da-02771a223f73&groupId=252038)

- Kotkin, S. (2016). Russia's perpetual Geopolitics: Putin returns to the historical pattern. *Foreign Affairs*, 95(3), 2-9. Retrieved on 26 July 2019, from [https://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/fora95&div=50&g\\_sent=1&casa\\_token=&collection=journals#](https://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/fora95&div=50&g_sent=1&casa_token=&collection=journals#)
- Kuo, L., & Kommenda, N. (2018, July 30). *What is China's Belt and Road Initiative?*. Consulted on 10 September 2019, from <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/ng-interactive/2018/jul/30/what-china-belt-road-initiative-silk-road-explainer>
- Large, T. (2019, July 12). *Democracy Digest: Greek Elections and other Populist Parables*. Consulted on 13 August 2019, from <https://balkaninsight.com/2019/07/12/democracy-digest-greek-elections-and-other-populist-parables/>
- Leuenberger, C., & Schnell, I. (2010). The politics of maps: Constructing national territories in Israel. *Social Studies of Science*, 40(6), 803-842. doi: 10.1177/0306312710370377
- Levine, L. (1914). Pan-Slavism and European Politics. *Political Science Quarterly*, 29(4), 664-686. Retrieved on 23 September 2019, from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2142012.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A39464f283a206ed3654e74e3a67e8f8c>
- Loy, W. G. (1989). Geographic Names in Geography. *Yearbook of the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers* 51(1), 7-24. Retrieved on 19 February 2019, from <http://muse.jhu.edu/article/430809>
- Marusic, S. J. (2012, June 21). *Greece 'FYROM-izes' Macedonia's Car Plates*. Consulted on 19 August 2019, from <https://balkaninsight.com/2012/06/21/greece-fyrom-izes-macedonian-car-plates/>
- Marusic, S. J. (2017, August 1). *Macedonia, Bulgaria Sign Landmark Friendship Treaty*. Consulted on 31 July 2019, from <https://balkaninsight.com/2017/08/01/macedonia-bulgaria-sign-friendship-treaty-08-01-2017/>
- Marusic, S. J. (2018, September 30). *Macedonia Referendum Records Low Turnout, Both Sides Claim Victory*. Consulted on 9 August 2019, from <https://balkaninsight.com/2018/09/30/macedonia-name-referendum-marks-low-turnout-09-30-2018/>
- Marusic, S. J. (2019a, August 12). *'Extortion' Scandal May Determine North Macedonia Govt's Fate*. Consulted on 13 August 2019, from <https://balkaninsight.com/2019/08/12/extortion-scandal-may-determine-north-macedonian-govts-fate/>
- Marusic, S. J. (2019b, September 27). *German Parliament Backs Albania, North Macedonia EU Talks*. Consulted on 27 September 2019, from <https://balkaninsight.com/2019/09/27/german-parliament-backs-albania-north-macedonia-eu-talks/>
- Marusic, S. J. (2019c, September 25). *New Greek PM Pledges Respect Macedonia Deal*. Consulted on 26 September 2019, from <https://balkaninsight.com/2019/09/25/new-greek-pm-pledges-to-respect-macedonia-deal/>
- Marusic, S. J. (2019d, August 1). *North Macedonia, Bulgaria Celebrate Friendship Treaty Anniversary*. Consulted on 13 August 2019, from <https://balkaninsight.com/2019/08/01/north-macedonia-bulgaria-celebrate-friendship-treaty-anniversary/>
- Marusic, S. J., & Cheresheva, M. (2018, January 15). *Macedonia Approves Landmark Friendship Treaty with Bulgaria*. Consulted on 31 July 2019, from

<https://balkaninsight.com/2018/01/15/macedonia-approves-landmark-friendship-treaty-with-bulgaria-01-15-2018/>

- McCall, C. (2013). European Union cross-border cooperation and conflict amelioration. *Space and Polity*, 17(2), 197-216. doi:10.1080/13562576.2013.817512
- Medway, D., & Warnaby, G. (2014). What's in a name? Place branding and toponymic commodification. *Environment and Planning A*, 46(1), 153-167. doi:10.1068/a45571
- Messineo, F. (2012). Maps of Ephemeral Empires: The ICJ and the Macedonian Name Dispute. *Cambridge Journal of International and Comparative Law*, 1(1), 169-190. doi:10.7574/cjicl.01.01.37
- Michailidis, I. D. (2000). On the Other Side of the River: The Defeated Slavophones and Greek History. In Cowan, J. K. (Ed.), *Macedonia. The Politics of Identity and Difference* (pp. 68-84). London: Pluto Press.
- The National Herald. (2018). *The Full Text of the Greece-FYROM Agreement (Pdf)*. Consulted on 2 October 2019, from <https://www.thenationalherald.com/204203/the-full-text-of-greece-fyrom-agreement-pdf/>
- Naumovski, V. (2013). *Bilateral Disputes in the European Union Enlargement*. Skopje: Matica.
- Newman, D. (2019). Managing Borders in a Contrasting Era of Globalization and Conflict. In Gyelník, T. (Ed.), *Lectures on Cross-Border Governance* (pp. 91-112). Budapest: Central European Service for Cross-Border Initiatives (CESCI).
- Newman, D., & Paasi, A. (1998). Fences and neighbours in the postmodern world: boundary narratives in political geography. *Progress in Human Geography*, 22(2), 186-207. Retrieved on 5 August 2019 from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1191/030913298666039113>
- Nikolovski, I. (2019a, May 13). *EU Accession Will Challenge North Macedonia's China Deals*. Consulted on 13 August 2019, from <https://balkaninsight.com/2019/05/13/eu-accession-will-challenge-north-macedonias-china-deals/>
- Nikolovski, I. (2019b, June 3). *Europe Must Speak with One Voice on North Macedonia*. Consulted on 4 June 2019, from <https://balkaninsight.com/2019/06/03/europe-must-speak-with-one-voice-on-north-macedonia/?fbclid=IwAR0f-bRbnem3JGmViiaN85Qltv5crzUtN1twvJYbYyldiRxL0FAupKKPHao>
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (2019, February 15). *Relations with the Republic of North Macedonia*. Consulted 18 August 2019, from [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_48830.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_48830.htm)
- Noy, C. (2008). Sampling knowledge: The hermeneutics of snowball sampling in qualitative research. *International Journal of social research methodology*, 11(4), 327-344. doi:10.1080/13645570701401305
- Ó Tuathail, G., & Agnew, J. (1992). Geopolitics and Discourse: Practical geopolitical reasoning in American foreign policy. *Political Geography*, 11(2), 190-204. Retrieved on 5 August 2019, from [http://www.elsevier.com/locate/S0927-6460\(92\)90001-1](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/S0927-6460(92)90001-1)
- Ó Tuathail, G. (1996). *Critical Geopolitics: The politics of Writing Global Space*. London: Routledge
- Paasi, A. (1999). Nationalizing Everyday Life: Individual and Collective Identities as Practice and Discourse. *Geography Research Forum*, 19(1), 4-21. Retrieved on 25 July 2019, from

- [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/290428589\\_Paasi\\_Anssi\\_1999\\_Nationalizing\\_everyday\\_life\\_individual\\_and\\_collective\\_identities\\_as\\_practice\\_and\\_discourse\\_Geography\\_Research\\_Forum\\_vol\\_19\\_pp\\_4-21](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/290428589_Paasi_Anssi_1999_Nationalizing_everyday_life_individual_and_collective_identities_as_practice_and_discourse_Geography_Research_Forum_vol_19_pp_4-21)
- Paasi, A. (2001). Europe as a Social Process and Discourse. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 8(1), 7-28. doi:10.1177/096977640100800102
- Poster, M. (1982). Foucault and history. *Social Research*, 49(1), 116-142. Retrieved on 1 June 2019, from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1297193122/fulltextPDF/7AD3F27C0244B53PQ/1?accountid=11795>
- Poulton, H. (2000). *Who Are The Macedonians?* (2nd Edition). London: Hurst & Company.
- Radding, L., & Western, J. (2010). What's in a name? Linguistics, geography, and toponyms. *Geographical Review*, 100(3), 394-412. doi:10.1111/j.1931-0846.2010.00043
- Rey, J. D., Ilievski, Z., Aleksoski, S., & Pašoski, D. (2018). Macedonia. In Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (Ed.), *The influence of external actors in the Western Balkans: A map of geopolitical players* (pp. 25-28). Retrieved on 29 July 2019, from [https://www.kas.de/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=194afc48-b3be-e3bc-d1da-02771a223f73&groupId=252038](https://www.kas.de/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=194afc48-b3be-e3bc-d1da-02771a223f73&groupId=252038)
- Rhodes, P. J. (2010). The Literary and Epigraphic Evidence to the Roman Conquest. In Roisman, J., & Worthington, I. (Eds.), *A Companion To Ancient Macedonia* (pp. 23-40). Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Roisman, J., & Worthington, I. (2010). *A Companion To Ancient Macedonia*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Rose-Redwood, R., Alderman, D., & Azaryahu, M. (2010). Geographies of toponymic inscription: new directions in critical place-name studies. *Progress in Human Geography* 34(4), 453-470. doi:10.1177/0309132509351042
- Rossos, A. (2006). *Macedonia and the Macedonians*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press.
- Rothenbacher, F. (2013). *The Central and East European Population since 1850*. Retrieved on 3 April 2019, from <https://ub-madoc.bib.uni-mannheim.de/35091/>
- Rubeli, A. (2000). Threats to Sovereignty: The Case of Macedonia in the 1990's. In Rubeli, A., & Vucenik, N. (Eds.), *A Captured Moment in Time: IWM Junior Visiting Fellows Conferences*, (pp. 1-15). Retrieved on 3 April 2019, from <https://www.iwm.at/wp-content/uploads/jc-10-05.pdf>
- Rymes, B. (2001). Names. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 9(1/2), 163-166. Retrieved on 24 September 2019, from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43102455>
- Saveski, Z., & Sadiku, A. (2012). *The Radical Right in Macedonia*. Retrieved on 9 September 2019, from <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/id-moe/09568.pdf>
- Schwartz, J. M. (2000). Blessing the Water the Macedonian Way: Improvisations of Identity in Diaspora and in the Homeland. In Cowan, J. K. (Ed.), *Macedonia: The Politics of Identity and Difference* (pp. 104-121). London: Pluto Press.
- Shepherd, W. R. (1911). *Historical Atlas*. Retrieved on 19 September 2019, from [https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/history\\_shepherd\\_1911.html](https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/history_shepherd_1911.html)
- Smith, H. (2017, June 13). *Macedonia and Greece appear close to settling 27-year dispute over name*. Consulted on 8 April 2019, from

- <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jun/13/macedonias-nato-hopes-rise-as-deal-with-greece-looks-feasible>
- Smith, H. (2018a, June 17). *Macedonia changes name, ending bitter dispute with Greece*. Consulted on 29 November 2018, from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/17/macedonia-greece-dispute-name-agreement-prespa>
- Smith, H. (2018b, October 1). *Macedonia facing crisis after name change referendum hit by low turnout*. Consulted on 8 April 2019, from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/sep/30/macedonia-to-vote-on-name-change-and-ending-greek-dispute>
- Smith, H. (2018c, October 22). *US throws diplomatic support behind Macedonia name change*. Consulted on 8 April 2019, from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/22/macedonia-name-change-north-us-diplomacy-greece-skopje>
- Smith, H. (2019a, January 25). *Greek MPs ratify Macedonia name change in historic vote*. Consulted on 8 April 2019, from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jan/25/greek-mps-ratify-macedonia-name-change-historic-vote>
- Smith, H. (2019b, February 12). *Macedonia officially changes its name to North Macedonia*. Consulted on 19 February 2019, from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/feb/12/nato-flag-raised-ahead-of-north-macedonias-prospective-accession>
- Smith, H. (2019c, January 16). *Putin says US wants to 'assert dominance' in Balkans as Macedonia changes name*. Consulted on 17 April 2019, from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jan/16/putin-says-us-wants-to-assert-dominance-in-balkans-as-macedonia-changes-name>
- Spaskovska, L. (2012). The Fractured 'We' and the Ethno-National 'I': the Macedonian Citizenship Framework. *Citizenship Studies*, 16(3-4), 383-396. doi:10.1080/13621025.2012.683249
- Spencer, P., & Wollman, H. (2002). *Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publishing.
- Spooner, D., Swithinbank, C., & Hall, D. N. (2001). Obituaries. *The Geographical Journal*, 167(2), 190-192. Retrieved on 18 September 2019, from <https://rgs-ibg.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/1475-4959.00017>
- Stewart, G. R. (1945). *Names on the Land*. New York: Random House.
- Tataki, A. B. (2012). Ancient Macedonia and 'Macedonia'. *The Classical Review*, 62(1), 224-226. Retrieved on 18 September 2019, from [https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/137C6DD3B479A3BAB5720365EDEE1821/S0009840X11003647a.pdf/ancient\\_macedonia\\_and\\_macedonia\\_j\\_roisman\\_i\\_worthington\\_edd\\_a\\_companion\\_to\\_ancient\\_macedonia\\_pp\\_xxviii\\_668\\_ills\\_maps\\_bw\\_colour\\_pls\\_malden\\_ma\\_and\\_oxford\\_wileyblackwell\\_2010\\_cased\\_110\\_132\\_us19995\\_isbn\\_9781405179362.pdf](https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/137C6DD3B479A3BAB5720365EDEE1821/S0009840X11003647a.pdf/ancient_macedonia_and_macedonia_j_roisman_i_worthington_edd_a_companion_to_ancient_macedonia_pp_xxviii_668_ills_maps_bw_colour_pls_malden_ma_and_oxford_wileyblackwell_2010_cased_110_132_us19995_isbn_9781405179362.pdf)
- Turnock, D. (2002). Cross-border cooperation: A major element in regional policy in East Central Europe. *Scottish Geographical Journal*, 118(1), 19-40. doi:10.1080/00369220218737134
- United Nations (UN Audiovisual Library) (2019, February 27). *Briefing by Matthew Nimetz, Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General* [Online video]. Consulted on 12 June 2019, from <https://www.unmultimedia.org/avlibrary/asset/2362/2362151/>

- Vangeli, A. (2011). Nation-building ancient Macedonian style: the origins and the effects of the so-called antiquization in Macedonia. *Nationalities Papers*, 39(1), 13-32. doi:10.1080/00905992.2010.532775
- Vangeli, A. (2017). China's Engagement with the Sixteen Countries of Central, East and Southeast Europe under the Belt and Road Initiative. *China & World Economy*, 25(5), 101-124. Retrieved on 30 July 2019, from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/cwe.12216>
- Vankovska, B. (2019). *The Prespa Agreement, Ethnicity and Nationality*. Consulted on 23 September 2019, from [https://www.academia.edu/39390181/THE\\_PRESPA\\_AGREEMENT\\_ETHNICITY\\_AND\\_NATIONALITY](https://www.academia.edu/39390181/THE_PRESPA_AGREEMENT_ETHNICITY_AND_NATIONALITY)
- Van Houtum, H. (2002). Bordering, Ordering and Othering. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*, 93(2), 125-136. Retrieved on 3 October 2019, from <http://www.ncbr.ruhosting.nl/html/files/TESG2002.pdf>
- Van Houtum, H. (2013). Van Atlas naar Hermes: Pleidooi voor een bevrijding van de cartografie. *Geografie* 6, 96-99. Retrieved on 2 March 2019, from [https://henkvanhoutum.nl/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/vHoutum\\_Geografie2013-6.pdf](https://henkvanhoutum.nl/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/vHoutum_Geografie2013-6.pdf)
- Van Houtum, H., & Bueno Lacy, R. (2019). Ceci n'est pas le Migration. In Mitchell, K., Jones, R., & Fluri, J. L. (eds.), *Handbook on Critical Geographies of Migration* (pp. 153-169). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Verschuren, P., & Doorewaard, H. (2010). *Designing a Research Project* (2nd Edition). The Hague: Eleven International Publishing.
- Vucinich, W. S. (1962). The Nature of Balkan Society under Ottoman Rule. *Slavic Review*, 21(4), 597-616. doi: 10.2307/3000575
- Vukadinovic, D. (2019). Democracy as Collateral Damage. Implementing the Prespa Agreement on Macedonia. *Journal of International Relations and Sustainable Development*, 13, 218-227. Retrieved on 23 September 2019, from <https://www.cirsd.org/files/000/000/006/50/89c62028ac15748f204896323e351ccfd125a3dc.pdf>
- Vuolteenaho, J., & Berg, L. D. (2009). Towards critical toponymies. In Vuolteenaho, J., & Berg, L. D. (Eds.). *Critical Toponymies: Contested Politics of Place Naming* (pp. 1-18). Retrieved on 16 August 2019, from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download;jsessionid=50243F9CD3D93368A04BE981B4CC7ABC?doi=10.1.1.606.9174&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Walsh, D. (2018). The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Enhanced Local Government and Ethnic Conflict. In Walsh, D. (Ed.), *Territorial Self-Government as a Conflict Management Tool* (pp. 103-140). doi:10.1007/978-3-319-77234-9
- Wilkinson, H. R. (1951). *Maps and politics: A review of the ethnographic cartography of Macedonia*. Retrieved 19 February 2019, from [https://www.fulcrum.org/epubs/8910jt915?locale=en#/6/342\[xhtml00000171\]!/4/1:0](https://www.fulcrum.org/epubs/8910jt915?locale=en#/6/342[xhtml00000171]!/4/1:0)
- Williams, M. (2019, January 20). *Violent protests in Athens as thousands rally against Macedonia deal - gallery*. Consulted on 3 September 2019, from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/gallery/2019/jan/20/athens-violent-protest-macedonia-thousands-rally-against-deal-gallery>
- Wodak, R., & Boukala, S. (2015). European Identities and the revival of nationalism in the European Union. A discourse historical approach. *Journal of Language and Politics*, 14(1), 87-109. doi:10.1075/jlp.14.1.05wod

- Wood, D. (1992). *The Power of Maps*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Wood, M. C. (1997). Participation of Former Yugoslav States in United Nations and in Multilateral Treaties. *Max Planck Yearbook of United Nations Law*, 1, 231-257. Retrieved on 24 September 2019, from [https://www.mpil.de/files/pdf1/mpunyb\\_wood\\_1.pdf](https://www.mpil.de/files/pdf1/mpunyb_wood_1.pdf)
- Wright, J. K. (1929). The Study of Place Names: Recent Work and Some Possibilities. *Geographical Review* 19(1), 140-144. doi:10.2307/208082
- Zakem, V., Rosenau, B., & Johnson, D. (2017). *Shining a Light on the Western Balkans: Internal Vulnerabilities and Malign Influence from Russia, Terrorism, and Transnational Organized Crime* (CNA Occasional Paper Series). Retrieved on 17 April 2019, from <https://apps.dtic.mil/docs/citations/AD1035185>
- Zivanovic, M. (2018, June 20). *Serbia Refuses to 'Congratulate' Macedonia over Greek Deal*. Consulted on 12 August 2019, from <https://balkaninsight.com/2018/06/20/there-is-nothing-to-be-congratulated-in-macedonia-greece-name-deal-serbian-fm-06-20-2018/>
- Zivanovic, M., & Marusic, S. J. (2019, April 11). *Facing Elections, EU Puts Balkans on Backburner*. Consulted on 11 April 2019, from <https://balkaninsight.com/2019/04/11/facing-elections-eu-puts-balkans-on-backburner/>

## ***9 Interview guide***

This interview guide will be used in interviews about the name dispute between North Macedonia and Greece. I will use semi-structured types of interviews, as described in the methodology. For the structure of the questions, I will try to follow the structure of this paper, by focussing first on the history, then the current situation, the name change process and finally the future of the cross-border cooperation and the possible influence of the name change.

### **Introduction**

- 1) Introduction topic of my research:
  - a) My background
  - b) What i'm studying
  - c) Why I'm doing the internship in Belgrade
  - d) Why I asked this specific respondent
- 2) Introduction respondent
  - (a) Background
  - (b) Study
  - (c) Current work
  - (d) Relation to North Macedonia/Greece

### **History of the dispute before 2018/2019**

- 3) Question: Why did the dispute between your country and Greece emerge in your opinion?
  - Influence of conflicting national identities?
  - Value of the name? (Toponymy)
- 4) Question: What is your opinion of the dispute in general?
- 5) Question: Did the name dispute with Greece have an influence on your job?
  - Restrictions
  - Possibilities

### **Name change to North Macedonia**

- 6) Question: What do you think of the name change to North Macedonia in general?
  - (a) Good way to end the dispute?
- 7) Question: What do you think of the process of the name change? How it came about?
- 8) Question: Do you see a difference in the country after the name change?
  - (a) Daily life
  - (b) On the streets
  - (c) In media
- 9) Question: Does the name change influence your work?
  - (a) If so, already now? (CBC)

### **Future**

- 10) Question: Do you expect the name change is going to influence your work in the future?
  - (a) If so, in what ways? (CBC)
- 11) (if the person is not directly working in CBC)
 

Question: Do you think the name change will have an influence on cross-border cooperation between North Macedonia and Greece?

  - (a) If so, in what ways?
- 12) Question: Do you expect the name change is going to change the country's future in relation to EU/NATO membership?
  - (a) The EU seems to postpone enlargement in the coming time to work on internal differences, do you think North Macedonia could enter on a short term because of the name change?
- 13) Question: Do you expect the name change to have an influence on the country's position in the region (Balkans)?

14) Question: Do you think the name change has divided the country?

(a) Or will do in the future?

### Ending

15) Ending: anything you want to add, highlight or advise me?

16) Thanking the respondent for the time. Important: asking permission for using their name or organization's name in the thesis!

## 10 Observation scheme

Subject	Concept	Observed	Interpretation
History	Museum of Macedonian struggle	A former VMRO museum, where the struggle with the Ottoman rulers is highlighted. A lot of nationalistic feels walking through this museum. The independence struggle is the most important thing. Also, the negative consequences of Yugoslavia were highlighted. The guy who showed me in, however, introduced it as the museum in North Macedonia.	
	Statues Skopje 2014	Everywhere in the city centre, from ancient greek kings and warriors, to the leaders of the resistance in Macedonia (founded in thessaloniki) to fight the ottomans.	
	Small talks with locals		

	Signs/billboards on the street	Almost nothing, only saw the big billboards on the EU delegation building. Did not see protest signs, however, there was one graffiti sign with geographic macedonia, the big territory	
Name dispute and name change	Signs/billboards on the street, protests and support	You don't see 'North' anywhere on the streets.	
	Name visible on the street	No. Maybe just on the parliament and some official buildings, but at all other places, like souvenir shops, everything is about 'Macedonia'.	
	Small talks with locals	Locals seem to be disappointed in the name change. Although they want to move forward, they say there are too many problems inside the country to join the EU now. They feel betrayed and say that it's not a fair compromise.	
Future	Small talks with locals	EU membership will still be far away they guess. They did not seem optimistic.	
	Signs/billboards on the street	Some EU prospect signs. (see pictures)	

--	--	--	--