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Master thesis:

SYMBOL BEARERS AND THEIR UTILIZATION IN CONSTRUCTING SKOPJE'S IDENTITY

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Abstract

Inspired by the recent rapid transformation of Skopje, the capital of Macedonia, through the urban project *Skopje 2014* and the consequent influx of new symbol bearers in the urban landscape of the city, this thesis entitled *Symbol Bearers and Their Utilization in Constructing Skopje's Identity* focuses on identifying, synthetizing, and analysing the entirety of symbol bearers from the city, belonging to the pre-Skopje-2014 as well as the Skopje 2014 period. Symbol bearers is a term used by Peter Nas to describe elements or characteristics of the urban context such as rituals, statues, architecture, myths, people, poetry, etc. Within this thesis, the urban setting of Skopje and the entirety of its symbol bearers will be looked at and explored diachronically following a sequence of three research questions:

(1) What kinds of identity narrative lines do Skopje's symbol bearers produce?

(2) In what manner and why does the project *Skopje 2014* endeavour to form additional identity layers of Skopje?

(3) How should the research findings be organized in order to expose a recontextualized set of city identities?

Upon the critical discussion within the framework of these research questions, the findings will be used as a basis for developing a set of identities that represent the character of the city, which could be later on applied for the development of a guide related to Skopje.

Key terms: symbol bearer, identity, city identity, Skopje

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1 INTRODUCTION

The introduction will provide a detailed thesis overview. Divided into four parts, it will focus on explaining what the aim of this thesis is as well as list the main research questions whose line it will follow, then the focus will be shifted to describing the relevance of the research to be conducted, continuing with setting the theoretical framework, and accounting for the theories, terms and concepts which will be used in the thesis research, and, finally, it will provide a detailed description of the methodology which will be put to use during the research.

1.1 Thesis Aim and Main Research Questions

The *aim* of this thesis is to explore key aspects of Skopje's assemblage of symbol bearers and the narratives which they produce in order to develop a guide which would synthetize and utilize the research findings and propose the construction of a set of identities of Skopje to be presented in it. In order to achieve this, the thesis will incorporate (1) mapping and analysis of symbol bearers from the present and former urban landscape of Skopje, (2) a critical examination of imposed top-down symbol bearers, introduced through the project *Skopje 2014*, in the current urban landscape of Skopje and the new identity layers they attach to the capital, (3) an analysis of the approaches adopted for presenting Skopje in existing guides and literature, and (4) considering novel approaches for utilizing and reinterpretating Skopje's symbol bearers and bringing forward proposals for (re)constructing (new, underexposed, rediscovered, and recontextualised) city identities. To this end, this thesis will focus on the following main research questions:

Question 1: What kinds of identity narrative lines do Skopje's symbol bearers produce?

Question 2: In what manner and why does the project *Skopje 2014* endeavour to form additional identity layers of Skopje?

Question 3: How should the research findings be organized in order to expose a recontextualized set of city identities?

1.2 Research Relevance

Recently, the capital of Macedonia, Skopje, has received a lot of attention owing to the urban project entitled *Skopje 2014*. The so-called facelift project aims at redefining the urban and cultural landscape of the capital, and it almost completely obliterates any sense of historicity the city might have at the expense of building rather than preserving the already potent, to a greater or lesser degree, symbol bearers of the city. At times like these when it seems that the memory of the city is being rapidly erased, it might be useful to look back to history and identify specific symbol bearers which are still present in the landscape of the capital but have lost their meaning which could be (re)discovered and recontextualised. The research

will also concentrate on a renewed exploration of the present symbol bearers of the city. Literature related to the capital is not abundant and the guide or the practical applicative aspect of the undertaken research could provide new perspectives and a valuable addition to the small pool of guides related to the capital.

1.3 Theoretical Background and Definition of Key Terms

This thesis will unite several research areas such as cultural policy, memory politics, identity politics, urbanism, cultural studies, and urban and cultural anthropology. Dominantly represented within the research will be the areas of cultural policy, memory and identity politics and urban anthropology which form the core of the theoretical framework.

In preparing the ground for deeper analysis or discussion, the mapping and categorisation of the variety of symbol bearers present in the urban landscape of Skopje. This will be done by touching upon the area of urban anthropology through the seminal book by Peter J.M. Nas entitled *Cities Full of Symbols: A Theory of Urban Space and Culture*. This author is particularly active in the research field of urban anthropology and more specifically in the subfield of urban symbolic ecology. Urban symbolic ecology studies the cultural dimension of the city, namely how symbols and rituals are distributed within the cultural milieu and the meanings they bear in it. Urban symbolic ecology takes into consideration the processes of 'social production and consumption of symbolism and ritual' (Nas 2011: 7). The umbrella term that can be used to characterize both of these aspects – symbolism and ritual – is urban symbolism articulated through a set of symbol bearers ranging from rituals, statues, architecture to myths, people and poetry to name but a few. They are divided into four categories: *material*, *discursive*, *iconic* and *behavioural* (Nas, Jaffe and Samuels in Nas 2011: 9).

Material symbol bearers relate to the material objects of symbolic value within a city (architecture, statues, monuments, nature, etc.). *Discursive* symbol bearers are concerned with urban images and narratives. *Iconic* symbolic bearers are associated with people representing cities. And finally, *behavioural* symbol bearers are considered to be activities such as rituals, festivals and demonstrations. The exclusivity or the combination of specific symbol bearers constitutes the symbolic structure of a city, thus developing its identity. This set of symbol bearers will be taken into consideration when determining the dominant symbolic features of Skopje.

The symbolic structure of Skopje will be additionally analysed by determining the presence of top-down and bottom-up symbolism. *Top-down* symbolism relates to the official or state production of cultural symbols, usually taking the form of statues and monuments. *Bottom-up* symbolism is more informal in nature and it can be represented by discursive symbol bearers. In the process of dissecting Skopje through the prism of urban symbolism, special emphasis will be placed on critically examining its top-down aspects and unravelling its bottom-up aspects. Additionally, *disaster symbols*, or symbols created as a result of natural or man-induced disasters, will be sought within the urban symbolic space of Skopje.

Taking the paradigm of urban symbolism research proposed by Peter J. M. Nas as a starting point, I will set out to discuss the urban symbolism of Skopje through a group of questions. These are the following: (1) What are the main urban symbol bearers within a city; (1a) What kind of symbol bearers are they; (2) How does the city change historically; (3) Is there any conflict within the symbolism of the city; (3a) What is the degree of social cohesion of the city; (4) What is the image of the city. The discussion about symbol bearers will be woven through all of the thesis chapters, but most extensively in the second chapter entitled *Exploration of Skopje's Symbol Bearers and Identities*.

This initial urban symbolism analysis skeleton will be further supplemented by a discussion on the aspects of social and collective memory and remembrance which are also used as instruments of identity construction. The most significant carriers of memories are material objects and places, which makes urban symbolism an especially potent source for extracting socio-cultural meanings. The meaning of symbolic bearers is non-inherent as Nas points out, and its interpretation is dynamic and ever-changing; it is closely related to the process of identity construction, public memory and politics.

The aspects of collective memory, such as remembrance and forgetting, triumph and trauma, and additional aspects from the fields of memory and identity politics will be discussed at length in the third chapter entitled *Examining the Current Cultural Policy of Skopje* focusing on the ongoing project *Skopje 2014*. This project will be primarily looked at from the perspective of its nation-building capacities and also to a lesser degree from the point of view of aesthetics. The nation-building aspect will be simultaneously considered in light of historical events that took place in the 19th and 20th century. The Skopje 2014 project can be considered a top-down project that strives to be a public representation of 'lost' or 'untold' collective memory, thus enabling a reconstruction or reinvention of Macedonia's identity after it gained independence from Yugoslavia in 1991. Skopje as the capital of the country has to bear the burden of these nation-building tendencies, thus becoming a puppet in the hands of authorities who use it as a tool for gaining and perpetuating control and influence.

The framework for examining the social and collective memory and remembrance aspects will be established primarily through the concepts elaborated in the books *Der Lange Schatten der Vergangenheit (The Long Shadow of History)* and *Arbeit Am Nationalen Gedachtnis (Work on National Remembering)* by Aleida Assman, *Redefining Cultural Identites* by Nada Đokić-Švob, *Cultural Transitions in Southeastern Europe: Cultural Identity Politics in the (Post-) Transitional Societies* edited by Nada Đokić-Švob and Aldo Milohnić books discussing the identity-building of (post-) transitional societies, *How Societies Remember* by Paul Connerton, and *The Invention of Traditions* edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger. The concepts offered in these books are recurrent; the authors are borrowing them from one another, reinterpratating and reusing them in various case studies.

The binding quality of collective memory, as they emphasize, is crucial in the process of group identification, the citizens of a country or a city in this sense, and symbol bearers as collective memory points of reference build it and reinvigorate it on a continuous basis. Past

and present are the building blocks of (collective) memory. The present is contingent on the past; the past justifies the present, and the present is legitimized by the past, 'common historical experience is constitutive for communities and alludes to an unchanged cultural trajectory spanning from the past to the present' (Schroeder in Nas 2011: 245).

Collective memory is materialised through the practices of remembrance and recollection such as the participation in a commemoration of a ritual or the presence in or around sites of memory or 'lieux de mémoire', a concept coined by Pierre Nora, which possess high levels of symbolic valence. Connerton stresses the importance of the element of 'performativity' in the process of remembering which encourages participation from the members of a group and in the long run gives birth to habit and actualizes tradition.

The concepts of collective memory and remembrance are of particular significance when discussing the *Skopje 2014* project. One can perceive the Skopje 2014 project as a historical reconstruction project; historical reconstruction stimulates collective memory and when it is brought into play systematically by the state apparatus, as in the case of Skopje 2014, it can often turn into a process of organized forgetting – the aforementioned project is a mechanism of overturning the last remnants of the former socialist regime. In this thesis, I will also investigate the level of 'symbolic capital in invented traditions' that this project has introduced and the enactment of these neo-traditional ritual tendencies on the central square in Skopje, which is increasingly becoming a site of spectacle (Connerton 1989: 51). Case studies from the book *Public Monuments: Art in Political Bondage 1870 – 1997* by Sergiusz Michalski will be used as comparative points of reference in the critical examination of the project Skopje 2014.

Additional theoretical input is provided in the book The Image of the City by Kevin Lynch and Urbs&Logos: Ogledi iz simbologije grada (Urbs&Logos: Reflections of City Symbolism) in terms of the cities' establishment, development, and identity.

1.4 Methodology

Research Outline

This research outline gives an overview of the variety of research phases the overall thesis research will consist of.

Research Phase	Purpose
Qualitative content analysis of literature connected to Skopje	Data collection and extraction of themes ▪ To get acquainted with the history of the city; ▪ To extend knowledge about the city's history; ▪ To identify symbol bearers and narratives to be further analysed.
Qualitative content analysis of literature and	Data collection and extraction of themes

mass media outputs connected to the issue of Skopje 2014	▪ To get acquainted with the project in detail; ▪ To identify all elements the project is made out of; ▪ To have insight into the interpretations given to the project.
Theoretical sampling combined with secondary analysis	▪ Selection of key theoretical concepts and setting up the theoretical framework to be used as the analytical backdrop of the thesis; ▪ To have an overview of concepts and how they were interpreted by other researchers.
Open coding	▪ To examine, compare and categorize the collected data from the aforementioned qualitative content analyses.
Online survey	Extraction of attitudes and data collection ▪ To gather information concerning people's attitudes regarding various symbol bearers; ▪ To collect data concerning symbol bearers which are personally relevant to the respondents.
Qualitative interview with Nebojsha Vilikj (researcher of the *Skopje 2014* project)	Extraction of attitudes ▪ To gather information concerning his attitudes towards the project; ▪ To gather information concerning his attitudes towards Skopje's symbol bearers in general; ▪ To gather information about the aesthetic values of the project; ▪ To gain greater insight concerning the project.
Qualitative analysis of guides	Extraction of themes ▪ To identify the overarching structure in guides; ▪ To identify specificities in separate guides; ▪ To identify the narratives they present and the ways in which they are presented.

This thesis research will largely rely on qualitative research methods. The initial part of the thesis research will focus on qualitative content analysis of a large number of texts (monographs, books, (tourist) guides) related to Skopje, the focal point of this research, in order to acquaint myself with the history of the city and gain a more comprehensive

knowledge of it. The diachronic cross-section that will come out as a result of this research process will be useful for identifying a number of symbol bearers that are still prevalent in the urban landscape or were present there in the course of its history but have been lost or forgotten. The same research process will also involve the singling out of narratives which are visible or invisible but are induced by the discourse.

The second part of the research will again focus on qualitative content analysis of recently published literature and mass media outputs concerning the issue of *Skopje 2014*. This qualitative content analysis is aimed at familiarising with the project in details, identifying all its components, and finally gaining insight into the interpretations given to this ongoing project so far. The most important dimensions to be considered at this stage will be the aesthetic and critical reviewing of the project as well as the attitudes expresses towards it.

The process of qualitative content analysis will be supplemented and simultaneously accompanied by a defined theoretical framework of concepts accompanied by secondary analysis. After selecting the key theoretical concepts, they will be used as an analytical basis for the discussion thoughout the thesis. Secondary analysis will also be important at this point in order to have an overview of the concepts and the way in which they were interpreted by other researchers.

Online survey will be carried out for the purposes of data collection and extraction of attitudes from the citizens of Skopje. The survey will focus on open-ended questions which provide room for freer expression. This survey is aimed at gathering information concerning the citizens' attitudes and opinions as regards the various symbol bearers present in the city. The survey contains the following ten questions:

1. Which buildings/ monuments/customs/architecture/places from the urban space of Skopje first come to mind? List them!
2. Which buildings/monuments/customs/architecture/places from the urban space of Skopje are of special (emotional) significance for you? List them!
3. Do you remember some buildings/monuments/customs/places from the urban space of Skopje from your childhood or youth? List them!
4. What is the meaning of the project Skopje 2014? What do you think of it? Explain!
5. If you set aside the project Skopje 2014, which elements from the urban space of Skopje would you say is the most characteristic of the city?
6. How would you describe the monument 'Warrior on a Horse' from an aesthetic or any other point of view? Explain in a couple of sentences!
7. Which historical victory is represented through the newly-built Triumphal Arch?
8. Which (historical) person do you associate with Skopje?
9. Do you know when the structure 'The Shell' in the City Park was built and what its function is?
10. According to you, what is the most characteristic symbol of Skopje? Choose one.

The qualitative interview with Nebojsha Vilikj, an art historican and researcher of the the project *Skopje 2014*, will be done for the purposes of gaining greater insight into the project as well as acquire information about the aesthetic values and styles of the project from an art

historian's point of view. Additionally, the interview has a section dedicated to gathering the personal attitudes of the interviewee concerning the symbol bearers of Skopje in general. The structure of the interview is similar to online survey question with several additions. The interview consists of the following questions:

1. According to you, what constitutes the identity of a city?
2. What inspired you to start researching the project *Skopje 2014* in detail?
3. According to you, what is the meaning of the project Skopje 2014? Do you think that the project in question has a nation-building function?
4. Is the choice of neoclassical style intentional, and does it correspond to similar stylistic and architectural tendencies of nation-building which were taking place throughout Europe during the 19th century? Is *Skopje 2014* an attempt to copy such European projects which were based on the 'glorious past' model? And, do you think that in the Macedonian case there are preconditions in the form of historical victories to apply this model?
5. Do you think that the choice of monuments in this project is arbitrary?
6. If you could logically categorize the project monument, which principle would you use and how many categories would you form?
7. Is there logic to the arrangement of monuments?
8. How would you describe the 'Warrior on a Horse' monument from an aesthetic point of view and otherwise?
9. Has Macedonia ever had a developed or rich culture of monuments (before or after World War II, after the 1963 earthquake)?
10. What was the number of monuments in the region of Skopje before the project *Skopje 2014*?
11. Which monuments in the area of Skopje from socialist times could you enumerate?
12. Do you know the history behind the structure 'The Shell' in the City Park? How it got its name and what was its initial function?
13. Which architectural styles were the most dominant throughout the history of Skopje?
14. If you set aside the project Skopje 2014, which elements from the urban space of Skopje would you say is the most characteristic of the city?
15. According to you, which are the most relevant symbol bearers of Skopje?
16. Which (historical) person do you associate with Skopje?
17. Do you remember some buildings/monuments/customs/places from the urban space of Skopje from your childhood or youth?
18. According to you, what is the most characteristic symbol of Skopje?

Finally, the last part of the research will focus on the qualitative analysis of guides related to both Skopje and other cities as comparative models. The analysis will focus on the extraction of themes from the selected examples in order to identify the overarching structure in guides (the selected number of guides), to identify the idiosyncratic or specific characteristics from each of them (what makes them stand out) as well as to identify the narratives they present and the ways in which these narratives are presented (in this case, specific characteristics will be looked at again).

2 EXPLORATION OF SKOPJE'S SYMBOL BEARERS AND IDENTITIES

This chapter, as the title itself suggests, will serve as a focal point for an initial exploration of Skopje's symbol bearers and identities. This exploration will be carried out through the course of three sections. The section *Skopje as a Palimpsest: a Historical Dissection of the City and Its Identity Excerpts* will highlight the historic development and growth of Skopje and pave the way for identifying its historical identities which are implicitly or explicitly implied through the narratives from its 'historical dissection'. The second section will concentrate on *analysing the results from the survey* conducted for the purposes of pinpointing the urban and cultural identities of Skopje from the perspective of the survey participants in order to determine which symbol bearers are relevant to them, which ones are dominantly represented or underexposed but also for the purposes of providing a fresh and broader (supplementary) perspective into the milieu of symbol bearers which might have otherwise been overlooked. The survey provides an introduction to the following section entitled *Mapping and Analysis of Skopje's Symbol Bearers* which will offer an exhaustive list of Skopje's symbol bearers classified by using Peter Nas' symbol bearer categories (material, discursive, iconic, and behavioural) followed by an analysis and a complementary discussion as regards the potential narratives stemming from them, which could be utilized as a starting point for the construction of the city's multiple identities.

2.1 Skopje as a Palimpsest: a Historical Dissection of the City and Its Identity Excerpts

The section Skopje as a Palimpsest: a Historical Dissection of the City and Its Identity Excerpts shall examine the historical case study of Skopje at the same time seeking to unravel and derive notions and narratives regarding its possibly multifarious (historical) identities. The key concept *palimpsest* needs to be taken into consideration before continuing with the discussion in this section. The term *palimpsest* was chosen to allude to the nature of the city which has experienced a long and troubled history. Defined by the Oxford Dictionary as 'an ancient document from which some or all of the original text has been removed and replaced by a new text', the term *palimpsest* is a striking metaphor of Skopje's disposition (and, generally, all cities), the city as a document from which the original or primordial contents have been brushed aside, perhaps unintentionally, only seemingly holding the remains of the original, gradually becoming stratified in the process of destruction and re-creation. Surviving its long history, Skopje has become the epitome of a palimpsest.

Characterizing a city as a palimpsest implies the existence of that city's sense of continuity. As Bogdanović points out, drawing a comparison between cities and complex organisms or people, cities display a sense of historicity. He distinguishes between two types of cities in which their continuity or duration is highlighted to a greater or lesser degree. Explicit historicity is displayed in cities which have great and important monuments and remarkable ensemble of old inherited city tissue. Less explicitly displayed historicity, termed as reduced historicity, is present in cities which have significant accumulation of architecture from earlier historical periods, but considering that the architecture in question does not have

exceptional works (exceptional memory landmarks), it can be regarded as a cultural-historical value only as part of a greater and more scenic whole, thus becoming subject to protection and custody. The lesser degree of historicity but the presence of historicity nonetheless is evident in this case as well (Bogdanović 1976: 18). Skopje belongs to a greater degree to the second type of cities categorized by Bogdanović. After putting Skopje in this category and before carrying on with the historical narratives related to this city, perhaps it would be of help to highlight an initial identity excerpt from the aforementioned classification: Skopje as a city which harbours feelings of inferiority, Skopje – the Inferior City. This identity excerpt might be considered as having its reflection in the city's current cultural policy to be discussed in the third chapter.

Apart from historicity, cities also rely on other types of memories or 'memory containers' to support their development and their sense of continuity. Bogdanović makes use of the term 'parahistory' to describe this phenomenon which shows the non-factual historical side of a city which also informs the city's personality and is perhaps even more important in the process of constructing a city's self-image, imbuing it with greater degree of viscerality and vividness. In the quest for Skopje's identity excerpts, special attention will be paid to the parahistory aspect of the city by way of analysis and synthesis of Skopje's symbol bearers (some of which represent the parahistory aspect) in the last section of this chapter.

In order to embark on the historical dissection and identity quest, a general introduction to the city of Skopje should be made. Skopje is the capital of the Republic of Macedonia. Being also the largest city, it assumes the role of the country's political, economic, cultural and academic centre. It hosts a third of the overall country's population. Having a central position in the mid-Balkan area, it is a crossroads of important roads from the North to the South and from the West to the East. This fact attributes geopolitical significance to the Skopje Valley, which in turn has reflected upon the political and cultural history of this area. These important roads were bearers of huge influxes of material and cultural impulses from the more developed centres; they provided opportunities for profit, the dissemination of new ideas and prosperity. But these important roads also provided instant access to invaders, who by resorting to violence colonized this region. The region of Skopje was in the midst of all these influences, conquests, migrations and instances of colonization, which created its rich history and complex physiognomy. The key attributes implied by this initial general introduction to Skopje, which can at the same time be taken to signify Skopje's identity excerpts are: capital, located in the mid-Balkans (in the heart of the Balkans), important crossroads, geopolitical significance, exposed (naïve, susceptible, affected, malleable, non-resistant).

Before going back further to the alleged beginning of the city, it would be important to mention some other phenomena which contribute to or have contributed to the founding and subsequent growth of cities throughout the history. Taking ancient cities as a starting point, one is able to perceive that they relied heavily on primary or imaginary memory based in cosmogonic mythology of the the city's establishment which was usually associated with a founding hero who played a leading role in erecting the city. A plethora of archaic urban mythologems, some of which have been written down, show that from times immemorial

many cities utilized mythology as a tool for exploring their parahistorical origins, or in other words, in the quest for their inner self and identification they were 'writing a novel about themselves' (Bogdanović 1976: 23). This city soul-searching usually led to the creation of urban genesis myths of grand proportions. In order to create an initial historic continuity, cities or people for that matter looked for hints or initial inputs from the surroundings to help them write the story of that city. Such initial inputs could have been some specificity of the surroundings, such as a climate phenomenon or a topographic phenomenon, the legend of that particular place or its genius loci.

The topographic specificities of the Skopje Valley where the city of Skopje is situated and the surrounding area have inspired the urban geo-myhtology of the city. Skopje is enclosed and confined by seven mountains – Vodno, Jakupica-Karadzica, Kitka, Osoj, Žeden, Skopska Crna Gora, and Gradištanska. Its territory is criss-crossed by the largest river Vardar, which passes through the very city. Zigzagging on its periphery are the rivers Treska, Lepenec, Kadina River, Pčinja and Markova River which form the most arresting canyons in the area of Skopje: Matka, Kačanik, Taor, Žeden, Dreven and Badar. These natural characteristics have been incorporated in the genesis myth of Skopje.

A word for word rendering of Skopje's genesis myth ensues:

Once at the location where the city is today, there was an enormous head but without a single opening. Everybody simply called it 'The Head'. It has not been identified when, but a certain evil magician cursed The Head to be incapacitated: blind, deaf, mute. It was many years after that a big hero came armed with a huge spear. As soon as he had defeated the magician, with his spear he opened all the seven roads in the bewitched head. That was the way the eyes were created, by means of which the head became capable of seeing: Kacanicka Klisura gorge and Matka/Treska Gorge, with Lepenec and Treska rivers; the nostrils: Raduski Derven ravine, Grupcinski Derven ravine (Zeden mountain, which divides the eyes and joins the nostrils, is the nose, and its name comes from the fact that water only flows out from it but does not flow in, which is the reason why all noses are always thirsty!); the ears: Kitka mountain saddle and Matejce saddle passes through mountains, hidden like the ear canals in the head; the mouth: Taorska Klisura gorge on the river Vardar.

As the head was revived, its body woke up, too. It enquired of the hero how he had managed to release it from the spell. He showed his great spear that opened all seven paths. At that instant, seven winds began blowing through all the seven access roads to the city. The spear driven into the earth started clanging, chanting. Ever since then, the city has been called the city freed With Spear-That-Sings (So-Kopje-Koe-Pee)! Later on, the shorter name Skopje was derived from that form, and all letters from the older name have been retained in the present name.

Fatigued due to the battle and perspiring all over, the hero lay down to sleep for a while. At that place, a mountain (Vodno) rose soaked with the hero's sweat. Vodno indeed resembles a man lying with the arm underneath his head. He laid down the spear in lilac shrubbery at the side of his legs. Osoj Mountain, with the finest and longest ridge in Macedonia, later

emerged above the long spear. Even nowadays, every year in May, the ridge is covered by lilac. Simultaneously, a large red flower, which is not to be found anywhere else in the world, sporadically comes into sight. The flower grows out of the magician's blood drops that once stained the spear.

According to this genesis myth, Skopje has had its founding hero who instigated its growth (in the myth metaphorically represented as capacitating or improving The Head's sight, hearing and breathing). This cosmogonic aspect and generally the imaginativeness of the whole myth might be interesting to be presented and arouse interest into the representation of the city. Perhaps the myth itself cannot be considered in terms of an identity excerpt but some of the pieces of information it mentions, for example the meaning behind the city's name, can be used as starting points for further identity exploration. The onomastic aspect of the city's name is quite interesting. The myth suggests that the hero brandished his great spear and opened The Head's seven paths. After carrying out this action, wind started blowing through the seven opened paths. As a result of the wind, the spear started clanging and chanting. The whole story has accorded Skopje the attribute – the city freed With Spear – That – Sings (So-Kopje – Koe – Pee). Even if one disregards this part of the myth and take a look at the word 'Skopje' (which is today's designation of the city, but which has historically gone through a condensing process) from a semantic point of view, one would be able to extract valuable meanings which could be later on used in the process of identity construction, as a separate layer in the city's identity stratification. The literal translation of the word 'Skopje' as suggested earlier is 'with spear'. The interpretation of the description 'with spear' brings to mind attributes such as violence, intensity, force, destructiveness, fervour, roughness, struggle, vehemence, turbulence, all of which can be applicable for depicting the spirit or character of the city as well as the natural surroundings in which it was founded. Nature has extended an overwhelming and, at the same time, limiting influence upon the development of the city. Proneness to earthquakes and natural disasters has imbued the city with characteristics such as resourcefulness, perseverance, and humility.

In the earliest history of Skopje, which has not existed as such at the time, the Skopje Valley, in fact, has accommodated a centre or a number of centres successively starting from Late Antiquity and continuing through to the Middle Ages. Recent archaeological finds in Skopje and its surrounding area have helped revive its oldest history. According to Mikulcikj, the city of Skopje has been relocated on several occasions, moving from one place to another, having renewed values each time, having a different size, characterized by a variety of internal and external features, but during all of these relocations it has preserved the characteristics of a real town (Mikulcikj 1982: 9). In the past, fortification was the main feature and the true value that distinguished a village from a town. During Late Antiquity and medieval times, these fortified places (town walls) were considered to be towns, ensuring the safety of the citizens who lived in these enclosed spaces, whereas today they bear the name 'fortresses'. Such fortresses were strewn around the Skopje Valley and its surroundings. They varied in size and use. At times, some of the smaller fortifications took over the administrative power of the main 'urban centre' of the time; others developed into new towns, or were used as military strongholds and places of refuge for the population during

war. The first predecessors of today's Skopje can be found in the Early Antiquity times, around fifth and fourth century BC. In this period, in the Skopje Valley a number of fortified places were located on Kale Hill, in today's central area of Skopje, Zajchev Rid (Zajchev Hill) in the vicinity of Zlokukjani and Gradishte in the vicinity of Sredno Nerezi. As a material symbol bearer from that historical period remains Kale Fortress, one of the most popular landmarks of the city, which supports the historical continuity of the city. Kale Fortress has outlived its historical period, imprinting a lasting identity excerpt into the current urban landscape of the city.

Skopje goes through a period of Roman occupation. During that period Skopje is still not known under its current name but under the name Scupi, becoming the biggest urban centre in the mid-Balkan area. The historical changes that took place in Late Antiquity caused the decline of Scupi and the emergence of a number of smaller towns and a multitude of fortresses in the peripheral parts of the Skopje Valley. After the earthquake in 518, Scupi loses its former function and a new centre is formed on Vodno Mountain. This new centre, adapted to the hard conditions in the Late Antiquity, had an exceptionally strong fortification, and this is the state in which it bids welcome to the Slavs in the seventh century. Owing to the Roman presence, the city acquires structures such as the Acqueduct in the vicinity of today's city which remains the most visible material symbol bearer from this period. Skopje has been imparted a Roman flavour, yet another identity excerpt.

From the tenth century onwards, the Slavic and Byzantine town Skopje started growing on the hill Kale by the river Vardar and in the centuries that followed it played a leading role in the political events taking place in the mid-Balkans. Apart from Skopje, during these centuries several smaller towns existed in its surroundings. In terms of the identity excerpts inferred by this paragraph's small discourse, one may note the importance of the city's perpetual subjugation which in turn brought new strata of identities every time an occasion like this had occurred. Even at this point in history but also in the subsequent development of the city the diversity of cultures would mould the city's personality.

The period of Turkish occupation which lasted for five centuries left the greatest number of identity marks in the the urban landscape of the city. Even though after their initial settling in the area of Skopje, these identity marks were not created immediately, as time past they were reinforced and became more visible. After the Ottoman occupation, almost all towns, including Skopje, lose their former role. The upper town of Skopje performs a reformed function – it is used as barracks for the Turkish garrison troops. As Mikulcikj points out a Turkish town, seher, was built in the open space by the river Serava, spreading on a considerably big area and without the limitations of fortification, based on a model close to the contemporary concept of a town/city. Shortly after this, it would assume the role of the former fortified town of Skopje. Nature would take its toll on the city. In 1555 it was hit by an earthquake which destroyed the urban centre, but it soon recovered. The Turkish oppression was particularly strong during the seventeenth century, when the Turks tried to expand their empire to the West. This instigated the Austrian-Turkish war (1683-1699). During the war, the Austrian army led by the Austrian General Ottavio Piccolomini took over Skopje in 1689. After defeating the Turkish army, he burnt the city to the ground. The

Macedonian resistance at the time, inspired by the Austrian victory over the Turks, staged a rebellion against the Turkish rule which was led by the legendary hero Karpoš. The nineteeth century was abundant with uprisals as Macedonia was making attempts to separate itself from the Ottoman Empire, achieve its independence, and establish its statehood. This was not achieved up until the Balkan wars (1912 – 1914) when it was finally liberated, but parts of its territories were annexed to its Balkan neighbours, Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece, who assisted it its liberation. The Turkish presence in the city has left an abundance of material symbol bearers which have become so inextricably linked to the urban fabric of the city that it is extremely difficult to dissociate them from it. They are particularly conspicuous and they still hold their ground within the urban space despite recent sweeping changes and additions made to it as a result of a vociferous cultural policy that is currently being carried out in the capital.

After the Balkan wars, Skopje as a military, political and administrative centre became part of the Vardar county of King Alexander's Yugoslavia. After World War I, it became part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. In World War II, Skopje was occupied by fascist Bulgaria after it was initially bombarded by the German troops in 1941. On November 13, 1944, Skopje was liberated from the fascist occupiers and it became the capital of the People's Republic of Macedonia, as part of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia. This thirty-year period brought adjustments to the architectural image of the city pulling away from the oriental influences and shifting towards more modern influences. Some buildings as material symbol bearers still inhabit the urban space of Skopje showing the former 'royal' identity layer of the city. The majority of these material symbol bearers were lost during the 1963 earthquake.

The period that followed was marked by two catastrophes – first, a flood which struck on November 16, 1962, and caused significant material damages, and a massive earthquake that occurred on July 26, 1963, and almost completely obliterated the urban landscape of the city and had an overwhelming influence on the further development of the city. The city acquires a modernist feel as a result of the post-war urban project by Kenzo Tange and a group of Yugoslav architects which focused on introducing urban changes and architectural novelty styles. A new architectural identity layer was formed as a result.

After the Referendum for Independence in 1991, Macedonia gained its independence from Yugoslavia becoming Republic of Macedonia. Skopje remained the capital of the newly formed republic. The post-independence period was marked by urban tranquillity in which no significant identity changes were woven into the city's fabric. An influx of material symbol bearers in the form of monuments part of the project *Skopje 2014*, a dominant representative of the cultural policy of the city, started appearing as early as 2009/2010. The *Skopje 2014* project is in full swing now, unscrupulously overcrowding the city with new material symbol bearers inevitably producing unfavourable identity layers.

Obtaining a brief chronological insight into the historical developments of the city has stimulated our familiarisation with the city's narrative which in turn would inform the initial creation and synthesis of the city's identities based on the historical periods. Performing this task would enable easier categorisation and description of symbol bearers in the next chapter.

Based on the city's historical development, a comprehensive set of identities could be put forward. Alluding to the city's long history, Skopje can be characterised as the Ancient City. Having experienced the Roman Empire's presence, the city can be attributed the characteristic the Roman City; this attribution has its validation even today being supported by the survival of material symbol bearers from this period. Being closely related to the Roman identity of the city is its Byzantine identity. The most dominant sets of symbol bearers have been produced during the Ottoman occupation of the city, giving the city the epithet the Oriental City. Related to the post-World War I historical developments and the accession of the city within the Kingdom of Yugoslavia is what I have termed the 'royal' aspect of the city, which has imbued the city with impressive material symbol bearers (some of which have been destroyed in the 1963 earthquake) which even today hold fascination for the older citizens of Skopje. This post-World War I and pre-earthquake era of Skopje has been unofficially termed by many as the Old Skopje. The post-earthquake Skopje was marked by the introduction of a vast influx of material symbol bearers, mostly in the form of modernist architecture, so the identity narrative which could be extracted from this period is the Modern Skopje.

This short historical overview of the city highlighted the evolution of the city and the most important events and influences that shaped it. Perhaps, the most dominant and decisive elements that have had an impact on the city are nature and the natural disasters that have taken place on its territory, ultimately and incessantly imbuing it with shape-shifting and chameleon-like qualities. Being also the naval of the mid-Balkans and a point where important roads meet has made Skopje exposed to major cultural influences that have found their place in the cultural fabric of the city and have 'complemented' the natural disasters in terms of the city's development. Referring back to these historical events and developments and the narratives derived from them will further inform the city's construction and consolidation of identities in the last chapter of this thesis.

2.2 Survey Analysis of Skopje's Identity

This second section of the first chapter is concerned with the analysis of the results from the online survey entitled *The Urban and Cultural Identity* of Skopje which was undertaken in order to receive evaluative responses from citizens of Skopje as regards the plethora of symbol bearers present in Skopje's urban landscape. The survey contained a list of ten open-ended questions allowing survey participants the freedom to give their responses and personal input without feeling constricted. Citizens' input is invaluable especially in this instance, when the required input will be utilized for the further development and construction of narratives and identities related to the city. The survey involved 53 participants in total having a balanced gender and age ratio. In analysing the survey, special attention will be paid to finding out which the dominant symbol bearers are. Additionally, idiosyncrasies will be sought in order to reveal underexposed symbol bearers. The results of the survey and their interpretation are presented below. A complete list of tables and results can be found in the appendices section.

The first question from the survey attempts to uncover which symbol bearers are the most impressionably present in the urban space or which symbol bearers come to people's minds when they start thinking about the multitude of symbol bearers in Skopje. The Stone Bridge, the Old Bazaar and Kale Fortress are in a tie for the top three places, each of them with around occupying one seventh of the responses. This trend is quite comprehensible and it can be attributed to the fact that these material symbol bearers are the oldest and the most enduring symbol bearers in the area of Skopje, dating back to the period of Late Antiquity (Kale Fortress), being erected during the Turkish occupation (Stone Bridge, Old Bazaar), or being reinvented or revived during the aforementioned Turkish occupation (Kale Fortress). One eleventh of the responses cite the Old Railway Station as a symbol bearer which first comes to their mind when they think about Skopje. This symbol gains prominence after the 1963 earthquake when it becomes relevant as a reminder of this catastrophic event. The new 'Warrior on a Horse' has garnered one fifteenth of the answers and comes in fifth place on this list. This highly visible new material symbol bearer from the ongoing project *Skopje 2014* is thrown into sharp relief by the ritualization of its surroundings (the organising of ceremonies, parades, and performance around it); additionally, the sheer size of it makes it particularly noticeable imparting impressionability on the bystanders. The Palace of Ristikj and the City Park have less than one fifteenth of the responses each. The former represents one of the last standing remnants of the pre-World War II Skopje (often being characterized as The Old Skopje) when Macedonia (not yet a sovereign state) was part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The City Park might be an obvious choice by many.

From the responses that occupy smaller percentages, the ones which are more conspicuous and less expected are the government building, a material symbol bearer merited as an architectural piece which was built as part of the post-earthquake (re)building efforts, the church Ss. Arhangel and Mihail, as a religious material symbol bearer, and Maksim Gorki Street with its tree avenue of cherry blossom trees (which were donated by the Japanese government after the earthquake), as a particularly interesting and offbeat material symbol bearer.

In responding to the second survey question relating to identification of symbol bearers which are of particular emotional relevance to the survey participants, an overarching trend is detectable, notwithstanding the responses' percentages, of people choosing places as material symbol bearers rather than monuments, or more obvious symbol bearers. The City Park has received the largest percentage with one fifth of the responses. The Old Bazaar is in second place occupying one sixth of the responses. The bank of the river Vardar is represented with almost one fourteenth of the answers. Interesting responses which shoud be taken into consideration during the process of mapping are the number of neighbourhoods mentioned such as Madzir Maalo and Debar Maalo (in this question represented by Leninova Street), which show the pre-World War II side of Skopje, Luna Park, an old theme park and childhood memory container for many generations which not having undergone significant changes can also represent an older aspect of Skopje, and Vodno, a mountain as a strong natural material symbol bearer.

The responses to the third question which asked of the respondents to enumerate symbol bearers from their childhood or youth follow the same trend elaborated in the analysis to the second question, namely, people were more likely to choose places than any other type of (material) symbol bearers. In the case of the third question, there are several additions to this trend. Square 'Macedonia' has been cited the most with one thirteenth of the responses. The City Park and Park Zhena hold one seventeenth of the responses each. An interesting instance perhaps is that one fourteenth of the respondents were not able to mention symbol bearers which could possibly be attributed to the fact that past symbol bearers were less pompous (alluding to the project *Skopje 2014*) and therefore more invisible. As interesting responses for this question can be listed the following: GTC (Old City Mall), the Goce Delchev monument (in the City Park), the Skopje Liberators monument (in the government building complex), the building block on the bank of river Vardar (built after the earthquake), the old bus station (formerly near the Stone Bridge), the cobblestone on the main square (which is now replaced with concrete blocks), and a number of eateries and taverns which still exist (Ezerce in the City Park) or have been closed ('Bulls' and 'Kermes').

The fourth question has been more qualitative in nature seeking opinions and asking respondents to express their attitudes towards the project *Skopje 2014* as well as identify the meaning behind it. Even though there were a great variety of answers, for the purposes of the survey analysis they were condensed and categorized based on the general ideas they convey. One sixth of the respondents have characterized the project as a waste of money. Almost one eighth of the survey participants think that the project has no underlying meaning. The project has been identified as way to attract tourists by one ninth of the survey participants. One eleventh of the participants think that through the project the city loses its identity. In the rest of the responses, the negative characterizations of the project outweigh the positive ones.

The fifth question bears similarities to the first one. It seeks to identify the most characteristic symbol bearers of Skopje, if the symbol bearers of the *Skopje 2014* project were to be set aside. The responses are not at all surprising. The first place is shared by the Old Bazaar and Kale Fortress with one seventh of the responses. The Stone Bridge positioned as second by occupying one ninth of the responses. The Old Railway Station has been cited in one tenth of the survey responses, followed by the bank of the river Vardar with one twelfth of the responses. The Palace of Ristikj, GTC (Old City Mall), the City Park, and Square 'Macedonia' follow. What can be characterized as an interesting response is the mentioning of the Millenium Cross, a material symbol bearer built after the 2001 armed conflict as an implicit reaction to it which perhaps also heralded the Skopje-2014 monument-building era.

The sixth question shifts the focus onto the project *Skopje 2014* once again. It is related to the 'Warrior on a Horse' monument, its appearance and connotative function. One third of the comments are related to its grandiose size and appearance which are taken to denote something negative. Generally, the negative comments surpass the positive ones. What the responses express ranges from comments related to the unsuitability of its position, its aesthetic value which is characterized as kitsch and amateurish in terms of the way it has been executed. In terms of its connotative function, some respondents have characterized it as

political and provocative. The instances when it was aesthetically praised are by far outnumbered by the negative comments.

The seventh question is again related to the *Skopje 2014* project, namely to the Triumphal Arch, which is one of the more recent additions to the urban landscape, seeking answers as to the historical victories that it endeavours to represent. All of the responses were quite interesting. Almost one half of respondents did not know how to respond to this question, which is quite indicative of the possible irrelevance of this material symbol bearer. One fifth of the respondents that the Triumphal Arch was not related to any historical victory. The rest of the responses were quite varied ranging from the independence of Macedonia, the eternal defeat of the Macedonian people, an imagined victory, the conquests of Alexander the Great, to the victory of the Macedonian basketball players (who won the fourth place at the 2011 European Championships) and the Macedonian National Liberation.

The eighth question focused on identifying the iconic symbol bearers of Skopje in the form of which have been part of the city's history or are still living there. People associated Skopje the most with Mother Theresa, followed by Byzantine Emperor Justinijan I, and Austrian General Piccolomini who burnt Skopje to the ground during the Austrian-Turkish War, and Karposh who staged a rebellion against the Turks around the same period. An especially interesting response was the mentioning of Kenzo Tange, the architect responsible for the post-earthquake urban resurrection of the city, who came in fourth place (after Mother Theresa, Justinijan I, and Piccolomini) holding one tenth of the responses.

The ninth question was connected to a specific material symbol bearer from post-earthquake Skopje, 'The Shell' located in the City Park. This question was an attempt to discover its original function and the exact year when it was built, or its history, in general, but to no avail. As a conclusion that one can derive is that the structure in question is used as a stage for concerts and events, and as a meeting place for youngsters. The phantom-like quality of it and its mysteriousness will be analysed in the next section.

The tenth question is more general in nature and is linked to choosing the most characteristic symbol bearer of Skopje. Almost forty per cent of the respondents have chosen the Stone Bridge as the most characteristic symbol bearer of the city. This information could be used to derive a quite potent narrative which would greatly inform the development of the one of the city's identities. In second position is the Kale Fortress, followed by the Old Railway Station. This question has yielded a number of peculiar and idiosyncratic responses which were quite eye-opening and should be utilized in the process of building the different threads of identities of the city. The tree linden and the smell of linden could be the leading symbol bearers in developing an unusual or offbeat identity streak of the city.

The results from the survey will be used more comprehensively in the next section, where the enumerated symbol bearers will be included in a more comprehensive list of symbol bearers which are going to be further analysed.

2.3 Mapping and Analysis of Skopje's Symbol Bearers

The mapping process in this section will be started off with a comprehensive list of symbol bearers produced from the survey results. It will also be supplemented by additional symbol bearers. All symbol bearers will be classified using Nas' urban symbolism categories: material, behavioural, iconic, and discursive. Each symbol bearer after having been put into a category will be described and analysed as regards its relevance and the ways it can be used to help develop narratives about Skopje's identities. This section will focus solely on symbol bearers which existed before the Skopje-2014 period. The symbol bearers from the Skopje 2014 project will be analysed in a separate chapter.

Material Symbol Bearers

Bit Pazar

Bit Pazar nowadays is primarily a green market which forms part of the Old Bazaar. It is a material symbol bearer which dates back to the period of Ottoman Empire adding to the Oriental identity layer of the city. This material symbol bearer has also contributed to the development of the behavioural symbol bearer of 'going to the marketplace', an additional orientally inspired component which permeated the city tissue and became inextricably linked to it.

Bristol Hotel

This hotel is one of the oldest hotels in Skopje, a material symbol bearer which is connected to the Old Skopje (the period before the catastrophic 1963 earthquake). It is one of the last remnants of this period along with the Palace of Ristikj. It stands as a symbol bearer of an earlier time which people romantically reminisce about.

City Park

This material symbol bearer is one of the most cited symbol bearers in terms of how emotionally relevant it is to the citizens of Skopje in general. It is related to the pre-earthquake as well as post-earthquake Skopje as a town within a town, or a place with its own life. This life was mostly connected to the taverns which existed in it (Kermes Tavern, for example).

Clock Tower

The Clock Tower is one of the less exposed material symbol bearers of Skopje, perhaps because it is a bit off the usual visitors' tour. It is located relatively close to the Old Bazaar in the yard of the Sultan Murat Mosque. It dates back to the 16th century, unmistakably represents the oriental aspect of the city's identity layers.

Daut Pasha Hamam

Daut Pasha Hamam is a material symbol bearer which is part of the tissue of the Old Bazaar. Dating back to the 15th century, this building was initially used as a public bath. After its restoration in 1948 it has taken up the role of a gallery and a concert venue. Again this material symbol bearer is connected to the city's oriental identity layer.

Fountain in the City Park

Built in the post-earthquake period, this Fountain is a representative of the Modern Skopje. It is impregnated with emotional relevance for the generation of citizens who are in their twenties and thirties as a 'lieu of souvenir' – a hangout haunt which was and still is, although to a lesser degree, linked with the behavioural symbol bearer or the traditional practice of young people of 'hanging in park'.

Gjergj Kastrioti Skenderbeu by Thoma Thomai Damo (2006)

Gjergj Kastrioti Skenderbeu is a monument (material symbol bearer) located in the Old Bazaar commemorating the most important Albanian national hero and a key figure of the Albanian National Awakening. He defended the region of Albania against the Ottoman Empire in the 15th century. Although not officially part of the Skopje 2014 project, this monument was the harbinger of the monument-building era which was initiated with this project. Currently this monument represents the core of what is planned to become an additional square in the area of the Old Bazaar (as opposed to the central city square which features the 'Warrior on a Horse' monument), which increases the level of controversy this monument has already caused, being considered a 'monumental ode' to the Albanian minority (the biggest minority in the country) and harbouring serious political implications.

Goce Delchev by Dalchev (1946/7)

This material symbol bearer commemorating the Macedonian national hero Goce Delchev built after World War II is one of the earliest instances of monument-building in Skopje. This bronze monument is located in the City Park.

Goce Delchev (students' dorm), **Goce Delchev Bridge**, and **GTC** (the old shopping mall)

These three material symbol bearers can be cited as examples of Skopje's modern identity tissue, or the Modern Skopje. All three symbol bearers were created after the 1963 earthquake. The students' dorm Goce Delchev and GTC despite being cited for their architectural value, they also have been attached emotional relevance primarily because they also function as places where meaningful activities take place.

Jahya Pasha Mosque

Built in the 16th century, Jahya Pasha Mosque is one of the many material symbol bearers which present the oriental image of the city.

Kale Fortress

Kale Fortress is perhaps the most enduring material symbol bearer of Skopje, dating back to the earliest period of the city in Late Antiquity. Represented in the city's coat of arms along with the Stone Bridge and the river Vardar, this material symbol bearer stands as remarkable testimony to the city's historicity. This material symbol bearer stands first in the line of symbol bearers which attribute the characteristic 'ancient' to the city.

Kapan Han and **Kurshumli Han**

Kapan Han and Kurshumli Han are material symbol bearers which can be found in the area of the Old Bazaar. Built in the 15th and the 16th century respectively and initially functioning as inns, they were made over and their functions changed throughout their existence. Kurshumli Han functioned even as a prison during the 19th century; it also became the Lapidarium of the Archaeological Museum after World War II. Both of these oriental material symbol bearers are imprinted on the citizens' minds as places which host cultural events.

Krste Petkov Misirkov by Boro Mitrikjeski (2007)

The monument to Krste Petkov Misirkov paying tribute to one of the most important Macedonian historical personalities who was especially active in the development of Macedonian nationalism from the perspective of the Macedonian language as an identity builder was a precursor, along with the monument to Gjergj Kastrioti Skenderbeu, to the Skopje 2014 monument inundation. This small-scale bronze monument is currently located close to the Triumphal Arch 'Macedonia' in the city centre and blends in within the central monument milieu.

Leninova Street

Leninova Street has been cited as an emotionally relevant material symbol bearer. Located in Debar Maalo (a central city neighbourhood), it is one of the most famous 'café streets' in Skopje. In spirit this street and the neighbourhood it part of are reminiscent of the relaxed and 'small town' life this city had around the period of the earthquake after which it started its rapid growth.

Luna Park (old theme park)

Luna Park is an old theme park located in the area of the City Park dating back to the period of the 1970s. Having been built in the post-earthquake period, this emotionally relevant material symbol bearer which people often link to their childhood is somewhat of a modern relic, now largely outdated in terms of the entertainment equipment it has, it is still connected to the identity of the post-earthquake Modern Skopje.

Maala (neighbourhoods): Novo Maalo, Debar Maalo, Pajko Maalo, Madzir Maalo

Maalo is a popular colloquial term which describes a neighbourhood. Even though it is being used by people to describe any kind of neighbourhood or the area where they live, in essence this essence truly describes the administrative units of Skopje in the pre-earthquake period.

This administrative structure of Skopje dates back to the nineteenth century when this city was still under Ottoman rule, so one could say that this administrative characteristic implicitly represents an oriental identity layer in the city although these neighbourhoods are often associated in people's minds with the Old Skopje's identity (the period after the world wars). Remnants of 'maalas' are still present in the urban landscape of Skopje. Novo Maalo is the most well-preserved neighbourhood of this kind. Located centrally it bears the characteristics of the original 'maalas' (it is purely residential, with small houses). Madzir Maalo and Pajko Maalo are now almost completely obliterated, whereas Debar Maalo which is also centrally located despite its initial residential function, now also has a commercial function (cafés and businesses are located there). This neighbourhood which to a certain extent still preserves the Old Skopje identity is slowly becoming gentrified, a process which might undermine this already frail city identity layer.

Macedonia Street

Macedonia Street is a centrally located material symbol bearer and one of the oldest streets in Skopje. It connects the central square with the Museum of the City of Skopje and the Old Railway Station. As the former site of the lost art of promenading as a characteristic behavioural symbol bearer of Skopje, this street is now used commercially giving prominence to shops and cafés.

Main Post Office

The Main Post Office is a material symbol bearer created after the 1963 earthquake. As a material symbol bearer it formed part of the new post-earthquake modernist architectural wave which established the identity of Modern Skopje.

Maksim Gorki Street with the cherry blossom trees

Maksim Gorki Street is a centrally located street stretching from the city's central square. What constitutes this material symbol bearer's peculiarity is the natural material symbol bearers contained in it, namely the avenue of cherry blossom trees which the City of Skopje received as a gift from the Japanese government after the catastrophic 1963 earthquake. This one-week blooming curiosity, unconventional for the urban landscape of Skopje and therefore quite unique, bears strong symbolic valence. Being used as a metaphor for the ephemeral nature of life in the Japanese context, the cherry blossom trees after the earthquake in Skopje imbued the urban landscape of the capital with an annual reminder of its fleetingness, which is quite appropriate for the context of the city primarily because natural disasters have dominated the identity formation of the city. Chronologically, the cherry blossom trees can be put in the Modern Skopje identity layer. However, their symbolic significance can also be utilized in the development of a more universal identity layer connected to the city.

Mala Stanica

Mala Stanica is a material symbol bearer which is related to the Old Skopje identity. It is a former train station which was turned into a gallery and also at one point in its history it functioned as a gallery-cum-café-cum-book shop. Nowadays, it functions as a gallery imbued with and chased by its former identity layers.

Matka

Matka is a canyon located in the vicinity of Skopje. It is one of the many natural material symbol bearers of Skopje, which share the lead as the most dominant type of symbol bearers along with the newly created material symbol bearers from the Skopje 2014 project.

MKC (Youth Cultural Centre)

Located close to the bank of the river Vardar MKC or the Youth Cultural Centre is an especially emotionally relevant material symbol bearer for the generation of Skopje citizens which are now in their thirties and forties as a 'lieu de souvenir', a place that helped their cultural development and exerted its cultural power as a concert venue and a gallery.

MTV (the building of the national television and radio), **Museum of Contemporary Art**, **Museum of Macedonia**, and **Museum of the City of Skopje**

These four edifices are representative of the post-earthquake Skopje architecture, being part of the reconstruction process the city went through. These buildings are still present in the urban landscape of Skopje and form part of the Modern Skopje identity.

Officer's Home and **Palace of Ristikj**

The Officer's Home and the Palace of Ristikj are material symbol bearers of the pre-earthquake Skopje, or what has been earlier described as the Royal Skopje or the Old Skopje. Today, only the Palace of Ristikj remains; the Officer's Home was destroyed in the earthquake. Built immediately after World War I, it was the private property of the famous pharmacist Vlada Ristic. Being one of the rare buildings to survive the 1963 earthquake, it is also one of the rare instances that testify for the existence of and ensure the continuation of the 'old Skopje' identity layer.

Zena Park

Rapidly losing its former appearance as a result of the changes taking place in it within the context of the Skopje 2014 project, this park which is associated in the minds of people with the post-earthquake Skopje is also losing its identity as a material symbol bearer host of informal activities (such as playing chess), and a place which unites the younger and the older generation of Skopje citizens. This material symbol bearer has fallen victim to the new city identity layer being introduced as part of the project Skopje 2014, and what used to be an open green space is now being transformed into a garden of monuments.

Skopje Double-Deckers

The red Skopje double-deckers as material symbol bearers which were a prominent feature in the 1950s urban landscape of the city formed part of the Old Skopje identity. They are currently being reintroduced as an accompaniment to the Skopje 2014 project in an attempt to bring back characteristic symbol bearers from the past. Even though the double-deckers were originally material symbol bearers that one could have found in the urban context of Skopje, today they are more often associated to some other cities such as London, which creates confusion among the younger generations who consider the double-deckers a non-inherent part of Skopje's identity, thus characterising their renewed inauguration as a form of copying other cities' identities.

Skopje Liberators by Ivan Mirkovikj (1948)

Skopje Liberators is a material symbol bearer dating back to the post-World War II period of Skopje. Authored by Ivan Mirkovikj and located next to the government building, it commemorates the fallen soldiers from the National Liberation movement and it is the only monument which was created in the tradition of the socialist realist artistic style.

Ss. Arhangel and Mihail, **St. Dimitrija**, **St. Pantelejmon**, and **St. Spas**

The urban fabric of Skopje is interspersed with churches as religious material symbol bearers. They are one of the most dominant types of symbol bearers in the urban landscape of Skopje, some of which date back to Byzantine times, providing the city with this identity layer.

St. Clement of Ohrid by Petar Hadzi Boskov (1977)

This material symbol bearer, a monument to St. Clement of Ohrid, is one of the rare examples of a public monument from the pre-Skopje 2014 period. Representative of the Macedonian modernist scultural tradition, the sculpture of this Slavic scholar portrays him with his arm lifted in the air and transforming itself in a wing. Formerly located in front of the National University Library 'St. Clement of Ohrid', this sculpture has been removed from its original position and disappeared from the urban landscape of the city, perhaps to give way to the new renderings of this historical personality within the Skopje 2014 project.

Stone Bridge

The Stone Bridge is one of the most important material symbol bearers of Skopje incorporated in the city's coat of arms along with the Kale Fortress and the river Vardar. Believed to have existed even before the Ottomans settled in this area, it was revamped during their rule continuing its life in the present-day Skopje. As in the case of the Kale Fortress, this material symbol bearer gives support to the city's historicity, contributing to the 'ancient' and 'oriental' city identity layers.

Taverns (Kermes, Ezerce, Pirin Planina)

Taverns as material symbol bearers or the tavern lifestyle as a behavioural symbol bearer were associated with the identity of Old Skopje (the pre-earthquake period). Out of the three

above mentioned only Ezerce functions nowadays, but in a renovated format. However, it is still a reminder of the Old Skopje, or the small town Skopje of simpler times.

The Acqueduct

The Acqueduct is one of the oldest material symbol bearers of Skopje, a witness to the city's Roman times. A formerly impressive structure of 200 arches, today it features remaining 55 arches and stands in support of the city's historicity.

The Anchor

The Anchor located on the bank of the river Vardar close to the Stone Bridge is one of the least exposed and the most mysterious material symbol bearers of the city. Its story is unknown to many and its presence rather puzzling. The Anchor is the last remaining part of a ship built in 1948 which bore the name 'Skopje'. This ship came in being in Rijeka, then part of Yugoslavia, and throughout its existence it sailed around the world. After ending its career, the ship was dismantled and the Anchor was sent to its final destination in Skopje.

The bank of the river Vardar

The bank of the river Vardar as a material symbol bearer and the river Vardar as a natural material symbol bearer are one of the most characteristic symbol bearers of Skopje which have found their way in the city's coat of arms. The river Vardar as a natural material symbol bearer was present in the city's landscape from ancient times, inspiring and supporting the historical development of the city. People often associate the physical side of the river's bank with the activities that take place there (promenading, hanging out) as behavioural symbol bearers.

The Government building and **the New Railway Station**

The Government building and the New Railway Station are post-earthquake material symbol bearers representing the Modern Skopje city identity layer. They are usually cited as excellent examples of the post-earthquake city architecture.

The Millenium Cross

The Millenium Cross is one of the more recent material symbol bearers of Skopje. This steel structure in the form of a cross which resembles the Eiffel Tower was placed on the peak of the Vodno Mountain close after the 2001 ethnic conflict in the country. The fact that the symbol bearer's coming into being coincided with the aftermath of the Macedonian-Albanian conflict can be interpreted as a politically motivated act of nationalist, religious and ethnic territorial marking.

The Monument to the Fallen Soldiers by Jordan Grabuloski – Grabul

The Monument to the Fallen Soldiers is a material symbol bearer from the post-World War II period of the city. This monument by Jordan Grabuloski – Grabul commemorating the fallen soldiers from the World War II National Liberation movement is located in the Skopje

cemetery belongs to the modernist sculptural tradition and is one of the rare examples of monuments present in the urban space of Skopje from this period.

The Old Bazaar

The Old Bazaar is an emotionally relevant material symbol bearer of Skopje associated with the long history of this city. This material symbol bearer achieves its prominence during the Ottoman Empire's presence in the city, keeping its original commercial function till today but also performing an additional, more pronounced cultural function. The Old Bazaar can be cited as an 'umbrella' material symbol bearer which contains a plethora of other material symbol bearers (hans, hammams, mosques, etc.).

The Old Railway Station Clock

The Old Railway Station Clock even though it belongs to the category of material symbol bearers, it also forms a category of its own; it can be put in the category of the so-called *disaster symbols*, again defined and elaborated by Peter Nas. The Clock as a disaster symbol will be comprehensively and comparatively analysed along with an elaboration of the identity layer it brings to the city, namely Skopje as a wounded city. The term 'wounded city' refers to cities which have been hit by a natural disaster or a tragedy. The Skopje example will be compared to the examples of New York City after 9/11 and the Indonesian city of Banda Aceh. These cities have gone through the process of creative destruction which leaves them room for reinvention or an occasion to face the negative consequences of the destructive event positively.

Cities are changing incessantly. Giving a rather poetic description to this characteristic, Kevin Lynch has emphasized the inherent fleetingness and ephemerality of cities when faced with the destructive forces of nature or man as well as the importance of mnemonic input from people.

Environments change. A sudden disaster may destroy a city, farms will be made from wilderness, a loved place is abandoned, or a new settlement is built on an obscure frontier. Slower natural processes may transform an ancient landscape, or social shifts cause bizarre dislocations. In the midst of these events, people remember the past and imagine the future. (Lynch, 1972: 3)

Disasters should not necessarily be seen as something negative. They are indeed traumatic but they can also provide an occasion for testing the cities' flexibility and adaptability, as well as their ability to apply their resourcefulness in the process of post-disaster transformation. Often disaster remnants are utilized in the transformation process and made visible in the transformed city. These disaster remnants are known in the urban symbolism terminology as disaster symbols.

Banda Aceh is an example of a wounded city which suffered a massive earthquake in 2004 followed by a tsunami resulting in sixty per cent of the city being destroyed and a two-and-a-half year recovery process following this catastrophic occasion. The case study of the city provided in *Cities Full of Symbols: A Theory of Urban Space and Culture* by Peter Nas deals

with the pre-earthquake and post-earthquake perceptions or memories related to the urban symbolism and the changes that took place within this context after the disastrous event. Van Leeuwen categorises disaster symbols into natural (made by nature) and cultural (man-made), and the subgroups of natural symbols transformed by culture and cultural symbols transformed by nature. He defines natural symbols transformed by culture as instances when objects in nature are being accorded cultural meaning, thus initiating the process of them becoming monuments. On the opposite side are the cultural symbols transformed by nature, following the reverse pattern, namely a disastrous event instigating a transformation in cultural symbols, such instances might be ruined buildings and streets.

In the Banda Aceh landscape, examples of cultural symbols transformed by nature are multifarious triggered by the region's proneness to natural disasters. Two such cultural symbols have acquired greater significance – a boat which landed on top of a house in Lampulo and the PLTD Apung ship washed up on the shore after the tsunami. These cultural symbols are considered by the citizens of region as especially important, impregnated with an emotional valence. Acting as remembrance triggers, these cultural symbols remind people of the power and the intensity of the tsunami and are turned into unofficial monuments commemorating the catastrophic event.

Another city which has gone through the process of creative destruction provoked by a 'man-made' tragedy, so to speak, is New York City which suffered the September 11 tragedy and the destruction of the World Trade Centre and the landmark twin towers. In the aftermath of the event, tragedy was what brought people together and helped reinforce social cohesion. The city in this instance was likened to the concept of 'body politic', and 'New Yorkers, who were faced with unspeakable tragedy, for the most part rallied around the ideals of community, togetherness, solidarity and altruism as opposed to beggar-thy-neighbor individualism.' (Kay in Nas 2011: 261). The tragedy assisted the process of collective identity formation for the citizens of New York simultaneously changing the city's identity by adding new layers of meaning and opening up the possibility for creating new city narratives and identities.

The World Trade Centre and the twin towers, considered dominant capitalist cultural symbols in the New York City context and worldwide, even after being completely obliterated after the 9/11 attacks, were incorporated in what would become their resurrected life several years later. Possessing a strong connotative symbolic and identifying valence, the creators responsible for reviving this cultural symbol thought that keeping the remnants of the symbol's former life would ensure its continuity and elevate its symbolic quality. *Tribute in Light* was the initial remembrance tool utilized for the purposes of reviving the twin towers and the World Trade Center. *Tribute in Light* is an art installation consisting of 88 searchlights placed on the site which produce two vertical columns shining in place of the twin towers. Initially being only a temporary one-month installation in 2002 and after this running as an annual event on the occasion of the anniversary, the art installation assumed the role of a behavioural cultural symbol. The more permanent memorial structure was selected and inaugurated a bit later. *Reflecting Absence*, comprising a pair of reflecting pools in the footprints of the tower, with the edges of the pools containing names of the victims, was the

initial stage of what would later become the *National September 11 Memorial & Museum (9/11 Memorial)*. A prominent feature in the 9/11 Memorial is, what was defined in the introductory part of this section - a natural symbol transformed by culture, the *Survivor Tree*, a callery pear tree recovered from the World Trade Center site a month later after the accident. After spending some time in a nursery in order to be taken care for and brought back to life, the *Survivor Tree* was replanted at the site of the memorial centre, becoming a central character in the narrative emanating the concepts of human perseverance and hope.

The tumultuous history Skopje has experienced has accorded the city the label 'wounded city'. Throughout the centuries, the city has been the victim of a wide spectrum of (natural) disasters ranging from floods and earthquakes to man-induced tragedies, for example, the 17th – century destructive fire set by Austrian General Piccolomini during the Austrian-Turkish Wars which left the city completely annihilated. A more recent catastrophe the city faced was the 1963 earthquake, a 6.1 magnitude earthquake of catastrophic proportions which struck the city on July 26, 1963, leaving it almost completely destroyed (about eighty per cent of the city was razed to the ground), also inflicting heavy casualties (1070 people were killed, around 4000 people were injured) and leaving 200,000 people out on the streets.

An obvious disaster symbol that was created as a result of the accident and has survived till this day is The Clock located at the front of the Museum of the City of Skopje, behind which the Old Railway Station was located. The clock, which shows the exact time when the earthquake struck – 5:17 a.m., can be described as a cultural symbol transformed by nature, and keeping its original appearance with almost no alterations being made (the only alteration, perhaps, was the repainting of the clock pointers) in the meantime, it has remained a sole silent reminder of the Skopje earthquake. When compared to the Banda Aceh and New York disaster symbols, the Skopje clock is smaller in size and therefore less impressive as a result, perhaps. Also, the fact that the earthquake happened almost forty years ago, younger generations are becoming less aware it, in part probably due to the generation shifts. This forgetfulness is additionally inspired by the fact that no special commemorative activities take place on the anniversary, which is usually marked only by short media announcements remembering the day. A site of memory after the event was created by installing a commemorative plaque, on the left side of the Museum of the City of Skopje, inscribed with a statement by Yugoslav President Josip Broz Tito:

Skopje suffered a terrible calamity. But we will build Skopje anew. With the help of our whole community, once again it will become a source of pride and a symbol of brotherhood and equality, of Yugoslav and world solidarity.

July 27, 1963   TITO

The commemorative plaque was recently removed from its original position on account of construction work which was supposed to commence in the area of the site. Its destiny at this point is still unknown. It is somewhat uncertain and arguable whether the plaque will be returned to its original position after the construction work's completion, and if the construction work situation provided solely a pretext for the current government to discard

and disregard the words, that is to say the ideology implied via the plaque inscription, of a former political regime (socialism), concurrently obliterating the last faint traces of it.

The distaster and the consequences it brought were soon to be remedied. In the immediate aftermath of the event, Skopje became the city of solidarity, or as in the case of New York after 9/11, the concept of the city as a body politic came to be fully expressed, the city was living it and evolving with it. One could feel a sense of solidarity in the city as it started receiving assistance and aid from the countries of the world. The United Nations organized a relief operation which involved the aid of 78 countries. The United Nations also had a deciding influence in helping the city recover, transform itself, and experience urban development by organizing a competition for its redevelopment in 1965 and asking Kenzo Tange, a prominent Japanese architect, to enter the competition. In the end, Tange won the competition, winning sixty per cent of the prize, sharing it with the team of Yugoslav architects who were awarded forty per cent of the prize. Tange's proposed urban plan brought about novelties to the city's urban development, which gave the city a modern feel. Up until this point, this plan has not yet been completely implemented.

The Shell

The Shell is an emotionally relevant material symbol bearer located in the City Park. Built to perform its primary function of an open-air stage in the park, it also functions as a 'lieu de souvenir', a place to which a lot of people are associated emotionally because they used it as their hangout haunt (behavioural symbol bearer) during their youth.

The Square

The Square has also been cited as material symbol bearer of emotional relevance. People usually cited the former version of the square, before it went through the transformation process forming the core of the Skopje 2014 project, being impressed by its former openness as opposed to its current state of congestion.

The tree linden and the smell of linden

The mentioning of the tree linden (and the smell of linden) as a material symbol bearer of the city was quite interesting. It definitely forms part of the group of underexposed symbol bearers, one that would be worthy to further explore and expose.

Vodno Mountain

Vodno Mountain as a natural material symbol bearer is one of the most enduring symbol bearers of Skopje. It has even received a mention in the city's genesis myth. Located in the city, this symbol bearer is the leader of the second most dominant group of symbol bearers (the first one being the newly formed group of monuments from the Skopje 2014 project).

Behavioural Symbol Bearers

Compared to the long list of material symbol bearers, the list of behavioural symbol bearers (activities and customs associated with a city) seems rather poor. The first behavioural symbol bearer which has been indicated is the custom of *'drinking coffee'* or *'having coffee'* which in today's globalised terms does not render the city unique. However, this originally Turkish-influenced behavioural symbol bearer has implicitly contributed to the oriental aspect of the city. The second behavioural symbol bearer related to Skopje is *'promenading'*. 'Promenading' or the activity of taking a leisurely walk in a public place as a social activity in the case of Skopje was originally connected to the post-World War I period when this activity was first introduced. It constitutes part of what was considered the Old Skopje period, it continued to exist after the 1963 earthquake, up until quite recently. This behavioural symbol bearer utilized the spaces of the square and what is now the Macedonia Street. It is no longer present in its original form in the urban landscape of the city.

Iconic Symbol Bearers

The number of iconic symbol bearers is rather small when compared to the amount of material symbol bearers in Skopje. The list of important personalities which have been inextricable linked with the city, becoming synonymous with parts of its identity, is not that comprehensive, featuring a Roma singer (Esma Redzepova), a Byzantine Emperor (Justinian I), a revolutionary (Karposh), a Japanese architect (Kenzo Tange), a humanitarian (Mother Theresa), a Serbian emperor (Tzar Dushan), and a tavern owner (Zabarot). Some of these personalities are more prominent at the expense of others. The 'iconic' contribution of Kenzo Tange in the post-earthquake reconstruction of Skopje puts him on the forefront of this group of personalities, having had a serious influence on the development of the Modern Skopje identity layer.

Discursive Symbol Bearers

In the search of Skopje's identities, two discursive symbols will be put to use; namely, two popular songs which narrate about the city's life. The first one is a song by the Macedonian band 'Leb i Sol' entitled 'Skopje', whereas the second one is a children's song from 1974 entitled 'A Song for Skopje'. What I will look for in these songs are the specific bits and pieces that represent the city's identity.

'Skopje' by Leb i Sol

Скопје има микроклима, изгор лето кочан зима
градски цигли голи брда, сино небо, земја тврда
Матен Вардар брзо тече, тајни носи, време влече
Скопје прави падни стани, има девет лути рани
Скопје има славни маала – Дебар мала ни е шала

Скопје јава брзо коњче, а бре момче македонче

The song 'Skopje' by the popular Macedonian rock band Leb i Sol gives a wonderful description of Skopje life, mentioning the peculiar aspects of its identity. The first line of the song indicates the extreme weather conditions this city is familiar for 'the scorching summers and the freezing winters'. In the third line the river Vardar is mentioned, one of the most prominent natural material symbol bearers of the city. Describing the river's murky waters, the author simultaneously emphasizes the long history of the river in the region saying that time has elapsed with it and it has been the carrier of many secrets. The next line characterizes the city as being in a constant process of 'falling down and standing up', which can be connected to its troubled history and the many developmental drawbacks it has experienced. This line emphasizes Skopje's 'wounded city' identity. The famous 'maalas' are the topic of the next line – 'Skopje has popular neighbourhoods, Debar Maalo is not a joke'. The small town identity is accentuated with this line of the song. This song confirms some of the already elaborated identity lines, at the same time giving reference to some material symbol bearers which validates their presence and importance in the urban landscape of the city.

'A Song for Skopje' (perfomed by the Zlatno Slavejce choir)

<u>Градот убав пак ќе никне</u>
Среде песни дружен пак
Пак под сонце цел ќе бликне
Како топол нежен град

Скопје младост ти ќе бидеш
Скопје ти ќе бидеш цвет
Ти ќе бидеш израз иден
На се братско в овој свет.

Покрај Вардар ќе се крене
Ќе го буди детски вик
И ќе брои ново време
Радост ќе му краси лик.
Скопје младост...

'A Song for Skopje' is a song which was performed in 1974 at the children's festival Zlatno Slavejce. Being created after the catastrophic earthquake, it is an expression of hopefulness about the future development of the city ('the beautiful city will spring up again'); simultaneously, being created during the socialist regime, the song features references of comradeship ('you'll be an expression of solidarity'). This song as well as the previous one accentuates the 'wounded city' identity of Skopje as one of its most dominant identity layers.

3 EXAMINING THE CURRENT CULTURAL POLICY OF SKOPJE

The chapter entitled *Examining the Current Cultural Policy of Skopje* will explore the current cultural policy of the city represented thorugh the project Skopje 2014. Divided into three sections, this chapter will bring different aspects of the project into focus. The first section entitled *New Idenitity Construction through the Project Skopje 2014* will provide initial introduction to the project, analysing the general ideas behind it as well as its constituent elements. Furthermore, throughout the discussion the focus will meander around in order to determine the set of new identities which are attached to the urban landscape as a result of the project. The second section entitled *Applying Politics of Memory in a 'Heroless' Country: When Urban Identity Becomes Synonymous with National Identity* will analyse the Skopje 2014 project as a memory and identity politics tool with pronounced nation-building tendencies. A comparative analysis of other similar projects will also be included in this section. The chapter's third section, *The Mythicizing of Alexander the Great and Its Embodiment in the 'Warrior on a Horse' Monument*, will specifically focus on the 'Warrior on a Horse' monument, offering a more political interpretation of it.

3.1 New Identity Construction through the Project *Skopje 2014*

Described as kitsch, building bonanza imbued with baroque and rococo influences in an article in the Guardian, *Skopje 2014* is a project that has not yet been defined completely and one can characterize it at first glance as whimsical and arbitrary (but only initially), attributes which are to a great extent inspired by the general confusion and spatial chaos this project has created in the urban space of Skopje. Even though the project is still being implemented, the lack of a definite list of material symbol bearers and alterations planned to be introduced in the urban landscape as part of the project adds to the aforementioned confusion that surrounds this project. The only information that is provided is that the 'sculptural part' of the project envisages 50 statues to be built in a 1.5 kilometre radius in the city centre. The project was presented for the first time in February 2010.

This undemocratically imposed project on the part of the Ministry of Culture began to infiltrate the urban fabric of the city without any prior announcement or public debate, attracting validly infuriating remarks and adverse criticism from the citizens of Skopje. Characterized as abundantly productive, this project focuses primarily on creating and implanting monuments in the urban landscape of Skopje. This process is accompanied by an additional auxiliary aspect, namely the introduction of aesthetic alterations in the area surrounding the monuments (façade renewal to match the newly introduced style of the monuments). The third aspect of this project is the creation of new institutions from scratch (the Museum of Macedonian Struggle, the Archaelogical Museum) or the relocation of existing institutions into newly erected and aesthetically altered buildings (Constitutional Court, State Archive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, etc.).

Characterized as an aesthetic eyesore, the project makes use of styles which have been officially (although erroneously) referenced as baroque, neoclassicism, and romanticism. As

a Xeroxed version of 19th century European nation-building projects, the only novelty this project offers along with a new set of 'invented traditions' (Hobsbawm) is a new aesthetic style termed 'macedonianism', described as 'an eclectic mishmash of 1/2-applied, 1/4-explained, and 1/10-understood historical references' (Vilikj). In an attempt to create precedents of explicit historicity (great and important monuments) in a somewhat inverted and belated process, the project's end results seem overly amateurish, and instead of giving the city the desired historical sensibility, they embellish the city fabric with grotesqueness, a quality prominently displayed in the material symbol bearers of Las Vegas, inviting comparison between the two. The inexistence of an artistic tradition in the aforementioned aesthetic styles can be cited as another factor contributing to the overall impression of 'insufficient greatness' the Skopje 2014 monuments produce, as Macedonia's sculptural tradition is firmly based in the modernist movement and the greatest sculptural examples can be found under this aesthetic reference (Vilikj).

Trying to incorporate a new city identity layer, the project Skopje 2014 fuses together a contradicting set of identity narrative lines: 'Europeanization' (referenced as a term which expresseses modernization) and 'antiquisation' (a term which refers to the Renaissance practice of classically organizing city structures in order to resemble ancient Rome or Athens). In order to become a more European (meaning modern) city or to have more visible European-like characteristics and perhaps also endeavouring to subdue or shrug off the characterisation of 'in-betweenness' (not belonging here nor there), which is often associated with the Balkans in general, the project introduces a set of outdated European-looking material symbol bearers, as a means of 'modernizing' itself. The antiquisation identity line is reflected in the elaborated choice of artistic styles (styles connected to prior historical periods) and not in the classical spatial arrangement of the newly introduced material symbol bearers (staple of authentic antiquisation processes), making the project Skopje 2014 an alloyed version of 'original' antiquisation schemes, the degree to which they can be original.

Formulating a set of rules on its own, starting from the invention of a new aesthetic style up to the absurd, non-systematic spatial arrangement of all of its the material symbol bearers, the Skopje 2014 project creates a fascinating unprecedented category in its own right. Saying this makes the project 'uncategorizable' (Vilikj). However, in order to be able to go into deeper analysis of the constituent material symbol bearers of the project, it would be of use to attempt to produce a thematic classification all these components. Since no attempt has been made so far to produce a classification of the project's material symbol bearers, in the following part I will endeavour to produce a classification of my own based on the prevalent themes represented in the project's material symbol bearers.

The initial batch of monuments, almost all of which were built in 2009, is listed in Nebojša Vilikj's book *Rape Skopje*. This list provides an initial flux of useful information which would be later on further supplemented. Browsing through the list of monuments and structures that are currently available, five general trends are recognizable which could be subsequently translated into three categories. Units that try to imitate world renowned monuments and statues, epitomized by the statue entitled *Bull*, for example, which bears strong resemblance to the *Charging Bull* statue by Arturo Di Modica thematically placed near

Wall Street in New York and interpreted as symbolizing the capitalist values of financial optimism and prosperity, which compared to the elusive concept of the Macedonian *Bull* statue is truly representative of American society in general and the New York City mindset in particular. The second trend relates to European style statues that follow the neo-classical and baroque sensibility (at least at first glance, even though the aesthetic style of the statues can be interpreted differently); this trend or category can also include statues that vulgarly copy concepts and styles of similar statues that can be found in various European cities, which were perhaps linked to the past nation-building tendencies of the countries where they are set; the lion statues on the Goce Delchev Bridge can be cited as an example depicting this particular trend (also easily interpreted as an imperialist allegory). The third trend is reflected through statues which portray everyday life in general (*Family*, *Observer*, and *Girl* statues, for example) and the specificities of Skopje everyday life in particular (the *Popular Girl* statue, for instance). The fourth trend, and simultaneously the most prominent one, is related to representations of historical figures and historical events. This category, in essence, is the most representational and iconographic for the whole project and the one that is mostly associated with the underlying idea of the project as a whole. The fifth trend is related to the representation of more abstract concepts. Examples which illustrate this trend are *Cosmo-Integral* and *Infinite Circulation*.

The current urban identity of Skopje personified through the *Skopje 2014* project at this point can be thematically categorized in five groups: (1) the world-inspired – material symbol bearers that bear strong resemblance to monuments that can be found world-wide; (2) the European-inspired – material symbol bearers that are directly and visibly influenced by past trends from various European cities; (3) the everyday-inspired – monuments and statues depicting the everyday life and practices of the city; (4) the historically-inspired – monuments which aim at realistically representing historical figures and events; and (5) the abstract-inspired – statues representing abstract concepts. The following part will focus on categorising and analysing material symbol bearers from the project using the proposed categorisation framework. Even when applying this categorisation framework, some of the material symbol bearers' presence in the urban landscape remains non-sensical; they cannot be fully validated or functionalized except to accept their presence in light of the 'art for art's sake' philosophy.

World-Inspired Material Symbol Bearers

The group of world-inspired material symbol bearers in the project consists of the *Golden Cat*, *Bull*, and *Prometheus* sculptures. The first three were created in 2009 and were one of the first installed sculptures of the Skopje 2014 project.

Bull (Бик)

The *Bull* statue has been briefly elaborated in the introduction to the statue/monument classification. This statue has been classified in the world-inspired group due to the fact that it bears remarkable resemblance to the *Charging Bull* statue by Arturo Di Modica in New York City. Standing near Wall Street, the *Charging Bull* has become a symbol of this financial

district and its mentality. While the *Charging Bull* is strongly conceptually supported and splendidly executed to represent the bull's aggressiveness, the *Bull* statue placed on the Macedonia Street close to the *Golden Cat*, *Popular Girl* and *Hey* statues is nondescript and conceptually vague. The context in which it is put does not contribute to attaching meaning to it.

Golden Cat (Златна мачка)

Golden Cat is a small-scale statue representing a cat. Placed on the Macedonia Street which stretches from the main square to the Museum of the City of Skopje, it is one of the many statues from this area, which can in a certain sense be considered as a newly created statue park. This statue is made in the fashion of an Egyptian statue of a cat. It is placed on a spherical plinth and although it resembles an Egyptian cat statue it is slightly elongated producing a non-identical likeness. It is by no means representative of the (image of the) city.

Prometheus (Прометеј)

Prometheus is another of the world-inspired examples in the *Skopje 2014* project. Stylistically completely different than any of the other project monuments and sculptures, which usually fit into some common patterns of execution and sensibility, it is a mid-scale gilded statue of Prometheus, wearing a 'diper' as some of the media have described the the 'cloth' that is covering Prometheus' private parts. Originally appearing as a Greek mythology hero, Prometheus has also been adopted in the Western classical tradition, and he was a prominent character in works from the Romantic period. In Greek mythology, Prometheus was characterized as the hero who created man from clay and stole fire from the Gods and made it available to humans, thus facilititating advancement and bringing civilization. Being adopted in Western Classicism, Prometheus and his character became synonymous with human striving. During the Romantic era, the rebellious essence of Prometheus' character was further accentuated and used as a symbol. Visually similar sculpture to the Macedonian Prometheus, a guilded sculptural representation of Prometheus by Paul Manship can be found at the Rockefeller Centre in New York dating back to 1934. The sculpture of Prometheus is located in the Zena Park in Skopje, opposite the Macedonian Parliament, being the central figure in an assemblage of classical white columns, guilded horses and an angel.

European-Inspired Material Symbol Bearers

Being characterized as a copycat project which attempts to imbue the material symbol bearers it introduces with European-looking charactertistics, a number of them will be emphasized in the following part in order to support this claim. Examples of European tendencies can be found more explicitly in one of the sets of lion statues placed on the Goce Delchev Bridge as well as the erection of the Triumphal Arch 'Macedonia' as the last of the more impressive material symbol bearers of the project. The set of historically-inspired material symbol bearers in terms of the concept they formulate are also explicitly European, but they will

undergo a separate analysis later on. More implicit European tendencies are felt in the predominance of bronze as material being used for the creation of monuments.

Lion Statues on the Goce Delchev Bridge

The Goce Delchev Bridge in Skopje features two stylistically different sets of lion statues made out of bronze on its opposite ends. The first set is a realistic representation in the fashion of 19th-century bestiaria statues symbolizing wealth and power. The second set adopts a more distinctive and idiosyncratic modernist style with a tinge of cubist influences on the opposite end of the stylistic scale.

Triumphal Arch 'Macedonia'

The Triumphal Arch 'Macedonia' is the second grandiose piece of the *Skopje 2014* project by Valentina Stefanovska who is also the author of the *Warrior on a Horse* monument. Originally planned to be inaugurated on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Macedonia's independence, due to construction delay it saw the light of day on January 6, 2012. The façade of the Arch displays an assemblage of historical personalities and events in a relief form. Standing as 'a symbol of the outstanding victory of the Macedonian civilization of peace and the centuries-long struggle for liberation', the Triumphal Arch makes an attempt to present the entirety of Macedonian 'victories' (or attempts at victories) in the non-traditional, non-military sense of the word, and instead ends up presenting the 'martyrological map' of Macedonia's troubled history. Having its roots in ancient Rome, the concept of a 'triumphal arch' as a form of representing victories has now become almost completely outdated (the last instances of erecting triumphal arches followed the end World War II), reflecting the antiquisation aspect of the project.

Everyday-Inspired Material Symbol Bearers

Applying the thematic category of the 'everyday-inspired' on the Skopje 2014 material symbol bearers, it can be concluded that there is an abundance of material symbol bearers which fall into this category. The ones which will be further analysed are either connected to a specific local phenomenon from Skopje or the country or their aesthetic and artistic merit warrants commendation.

Popular Girl (Шмизла)

Popular Girl is a representation, albeit a poor one, of a specific type of girls from the area of Skopje (a curiosity from Skopje, to a certain extent) imbued with a specific set of (tolerably negative) characteristics which set them apart. Because the statue is connected to a particular aspect of the life of Skopje, its presence can be legitimated. The *Popular Girl* statue is placed on the Macedonia Street along with the aforementioned *Golden Cat* and *Bull* statues. Almost the same bronze sculptural renditions clearly bounded by the same concept bearing the title *Popular Girls* can be found in the main square and at the entrance of the *City Park* in Skopje.

Shoe Shiner (Чистач на чевли)

The *Shoe Shiner* statue is a literal representation of a shoe shiner. The act of shoe shining is a particular behavioral symbol bearer of Skopje from the city's past, although this behavioural symbol bearer is to a lesser degree present in the current urban landscape of Skopje. The image of a particular shoe shiner sitting in front of the City Department Store (GTC) comes to mind when I think of my childhood, and perhaps this person or the trade of shoe shining in general (I can also distinctly remember other shoe shiners in the area around the main square and the Macedonia Street) can be regarded as the most visible profession/trade of the city's past, a lost 'staple' image of its past life.

Swimmers (Пливачки)

'Swimmers' is a sculptural representation of two female swimmers. One of the sculptures is located on one of the Stone Bridge's abutments showing a swimmer preparing to jump into the water of the river, whereas the other sculpture shows the second swimmer aleady plunging in the water, its feet protruding from the water. This set of sculptures articulates a regular activity from the Skopje citizens' past -- the bank of the river Vardar was used as a beach site and Vardar welcomed swimmers and bathers in its waters, epitomizing one of the past behavioural symbol bearers of the city.

The Hard Dance (Тешкото)

The Hard Dance is an elaborate statue that presents an intrinsic aspect of the identity of the Macedonian emigration and the so-called guest workers and their send-off to a foreign country. This occasion is marked by performing the male-only 'hard dance'. Not solely connected to the area of Skopje, this ritual is also typical for the whole territory of the country and is in accordance with the national identity-building propensity of the *Skopje 2014*. This statue is located halfway between the main square and the Museum of the City of Skopje close to the Memorial House of Mother Theresa.

Wedding Musicians from Štip (Штипските свадбари)

The *Wedding Musicians from Štip* is a humorous representation of wedding musicians holding various wind instruments. Located close to the main square, it is a signature piece of the distinguished sculptor Blagoj Čuškov. Even though the title of the piece specifies that what is being represented has its origins in Štip, the fact that it evokes a particular aspect of the Macedonian mentality and tradition (wind instrument musicians are almost inextricably linked with the general concept of a Macedonian wedding), while simultaneously endowed with a strong artistic and aesthetic sensibility, *Wedding Musicians from Štip* is one of the rare sculptural examples from the city's urban landscape showing originality and aestheric merit.

Historically-Inspired Material Symbol Bearers

The categoty of historically-inspired material symbol bearers is the most dominant project category, perhaps not by way of the highest number of material symbol bearers but by way of their impressiveness and grandeur which stifles the central urban space. Two general trends are reflected in the historically-inspired material symbol bearers (in this case -- monuments): their big-scale and the prevalence of bronze and marble as materials used for the monument production. Examining the plethora of historically-inspired material symbol bearers, it becomes evident that the project has put forward material symbol bearers which are representative of *all* historical periods of the city's development, perhaps even the complete entirety of historical personalities from Macedonian history. This non-selectiveness may on the one hand indicate a lack of concept coherence. However, it might also be an attempt to demonstrate not just a cross section but the sum total of the city's and the country's historical wealth. Starting from the Byzantine historical period (represented by the monument to *Justinian I*), the Skopje 2014 project provides material symbol bearers for each historical period, commemorating events even from the most recent past (*Monument to the Fallen Soldiers of the 2001Armed Conflict*).

The marble monument of *Justinian I* is a tribute to one of the earliest historical periods of the city's development – the Byzantine times. This Byzantine emperor is believed to have been born in the area of today's Skopje. The monument to the Bulgarian emperor *Tsar Samuil* showing the same aesthetic sensibility as the *Justinian I* monument, a large-scaled white marble sculpture, perhaps tries to bring to mind and narrate about the historical period of the city when it was under the occupation of the First Bulgarian Empire – which comes chronologically after the Byzantine Empire. The project also pays tribute to the Slavic scholars Ss. Cyril and Methodius and Ss. Clement and Naum of Ohrid even though in the city's urban landscape they are already sculpturally represented (Ss. Cyril and Methodius monument in front of the University which bears their name) or have been represented (the now removed St. Clement of Ohrid monument by Petar Hadzi Boshkov, an example of modernist sculptural aesthetics, formerly in front of the University Library). Reflecting upon this set of monuments one can say that they defy the prevalent trends of nationalist reasoning following the independence in 1991, propounded by the government currently in power, which were along the lines of 'antiquisation', the wholehearted acknowledgement of the supposed 'antique' roots of the nation, while at the same time discarding its Slavic roots.

The city commemorates its hero *Karposh*, a revolutionary who staged the Karposhovo Uprising against the Ottoman Empire, representing an aspect of the city's history when it was under Ottoman rule. From the more recent 19th-century history, even though not directly related to the history of Skopje but to the national romantic tendencies of the Macedonian people, a great number of revolutionaries from this period have wielded their way in the project (*Goce Delchev*, *Dame Gruev*, *Nikola Karev* to name but a few). The two equestrian statues of *Goce Delchev* and *Dame Gruev* are replacing the pre-World War II equestrian statues of King Peter I of Serbia and King Alexander I of Yugoslavia by Antun Augustincic originally located there (in front of the Stone Bridge) and cited by Vilikj as one the first important instances of figurative sculpture of the area. The act of reinstalling the new

material symbol bearers might be interpreted as an attempt to use the 'imaginary props' (what I have termed to represent the sites of former material symbol bearers) of what might be considered the Old Skopje (the identity layer which has been previously elaborated). It might also be taken to signify a performative act in support of the reshuffling of political regimes. The project also honours Macedonia's statehood gained after the World War II through the sculptural representation of the leading actors in this process – *Metodija Andonov Chento*, President of ASNOM (represented as a white marble sculpture fashioning the same aesthetics as Justinian I and Tsar Samuil monuments) and the collective of people involved in the first session of the *Anti-Fascist Assembly of the National Liberation of Macedonia (ASNOM)* – the second of the two most important events in the national mythology of the country. An event from the recent history of the country has also wielded its way in the project – namely, the 2001 armed ethnic conflict. Unlike any of the other monuments from the project, standing on its own in terms of the aesthetics it employs, this material symbol bearer portrays the fallen soldiers in the conflict forming a circle by gripping and pulling their arms and a ruptured spherical object in their midst. This monument also includes a commemorative plaque containing the names of all of the fallen soldiers (of Macedonian and possibly Albanian ethnic origin, deduced from my personal observation, even though no information on the monument are currently provided), perhaps in an attempt to unite both sides and facilitate reconciliation.

Commenting on the project, the majority of critics explicitly reference some of the project's historically-inspired material symbol bearers for their controversy, namely the fact that even though the historical personalities they represent might have been active in the region, they are attached to or have been 'appropriated' by the histories of other neighbouring countries (for example, Tsar Samuil is connected to Bulgaria, or Alexander the Great to Greece). Whether the erection of monuments to these personalities is simply an acknowledgement of their former historical presence on this territory or it is politically motivated is quite arguable. In the process of providing reminders of these historical periods, the project Skopje 2014 holds the city of Skopje hostage stimulating political entanglement rather than historical illumination.

Abstract-Inspired Material Symbol Bearers

The category of abstract-inspired material symbol bearers is the least represent one in the project and also the least visible one. The material symbol bearers from this category were the first ones to be placed in the urban landscape of the city, but a portion of them have now been removed. Initally located on the bank of the river Vardar, probably relocated or removed at this point, the sculpture *Macedonia* by Zoran Kostovski is an obelisk-resembling abstract-looking metal statue which might be understood as a sculptural longing for a better and technologically advanced country. The statue *Cosmo-Integral,* a unit consisting of several smaller pieces, is one of the more peculiar looking material symbol bearers of the project, supported by the fact that its author, Antoni Maznevski, employs post-modernist aesthetic sensibility. The fact that the abstract-inspired material symbol bearers were among the first ones to be incorporated in the urban landscape of Skopje might signify the 'Europeanization'

line of the project, considering this aspect in the ways it was previously elaborated, as a form of modernization and coming closer to contemporary European trends (but only at the most visible and superficial level).

Considering the entirety of newly introduced material symbol bearers with the project Skopje 2014, one can conclude that there is a prevalence of historically-inspired material symbol bearers (monuments) which add an 'antiquated' identity layer to an ancient city. The historically-inspired symbol bearers (monuments) supported by an additional onslaught of alterations, considered novel city material symbol bearers, such as façade renewals and aesthetically different buildings employing non-traditional artistic styles, namely the invented 'macedonianism' which was reflected upon previously, and sacral buildings (which favour the Christian religion) characterize this project as overly nationalist and ethnically exclusive towards the various minorities and therefore non-compliant to current European cultural policy tendencies dealing with cultural diversity.

3.2 Applying Politics of Memory in a 'Heroless' Country: When Urban Identity Becomes Synonymous with National Identity

Monument-building is a rather powerful memory policy instrument within a country's national cultural policy directed towards constructing or transforming collective memories, processes which mark the post-Yugoslav social and cultural milieu. The project *Skopje 2014* is an example of this.

Lagging behind more than a century from the European nation-building tendencies, with the current urban project Skopje 2014 Macedonia makes use of the XIX-century "glorious past model" as an identity-builder, materializing it in the overproduction of monuments strewn across the capital. This section will closely examine all of the monuments representing Macedonian historical figures and simultaneously look back upon historical events from Macedonia's past and determine whether there are indeed grounds to reflect upon its alleged 'glorious past.'

The project *Skopje 2014* as a memory-policy and identity-building instrument is perhaps an attempt to put an end to the struggling with (national) identity Macedonia has been experiencing as a post-Yugoslav state but also as a post-colonial country of the Ottoman Empire since the mid-nineteenth century. Within Skopje 2014, the effort to (re-)build a country's national identity has caused drastic changes to the urban identity of the city. Basically, the urban identity of the capital has become synonymous the country's national identity.

Identities are ever-changing; they are 'far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power' (Atanasov in Hall, 1990: 225). Perhaps instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, with the new cultural practices they represent, we should think instead of identity as 'production', which is never complete, always in process (Atanasov in Hall, 1990: 222). 'Production' alludes to something being created, constructed, designed, concocted, something

which is purposeful. Building a national identity 'is less *what* resources political actors draw upon than *how* they put these resources to practical use…' (Atanasov in Zimmer, 2003: 181). This quote perhaps best articulates the way the current political elite has used the project Skopje 2014 or has a pick-and-choose method of rewriting or justifying the Macedonian identity by violating the urban space of the capital city.

In analyzing national identity, Smith has cited the role of myth, memories, values, traditions and symbols as elements that distinguish one culture from another and make it unique. When looking at the *Skopje 2014* project one can notice all of the aforementioned constituting elements. All of these elements are almost equally represented within the project. In order for the nation-building process to start, the state utilizes a set of strategies such as creating symbols and rituals with the purpose of 'constructing and disseminating a certain *image of the nation*' and 'reinforcing a sense of community among citizens…' (Atanasov in Guibernau, 2004: 140). And it seems that this nation-building process is well under way through the project *Skopje 2014*, where symbols and rituals merge to build social cohesion. An example of this dynamic is the newly-built Triumphal Arch, which has been used on several occasions as a site of celebration of quasi-victories, for example the Macedonian national team winning the fourth place at the European Basketball Championships 2011. The ritualistic aspect of this event was represented through a victory parade of the national basketball team passing through the arch (the symbolic representation of a victory). It nevertheless had the effect of instigating and developing a sense of community and solidarity within the Macedonian nation.

With these new symbolic representations of the Macedonian state, a process of (re-)building and continual maintenance of the 'refreshed' bonding collective memory has been started, contributing to the process of 'reconstitution of a groups' self-image and distinctiveness' (Nas 2011: 245). As Schroeder points out 'the belief in a shared history and a unique culture as a result of common historical experience is constitutive for communities and alludes to an unchanged cultural trajectory spanning from the past to the present (Schroeder in Nas 2011: 245). Symbols and rituals also provide a means of socialization, creating a 'pressure towards uniformity' which reciprocally contributes to identification and social cohesion (Friedkin in Nas 2011: 284).

When analyzing Skopje and the current project *Skopje 2014*, certain parallels can be drawn with other (post-colonial) cities. Similar (post-colonial) reconstruction processes have been initiated both in Jakarta, Indonesia, and Gdansk, Poland. A combination of various aspects from both of the examples is visible in the *Skopje 2014* project. Jakarta is an example of a post-colonial city which needed to go through the nation-building process and become an exemplary center of power, a capital of the new independent centralized state. For this purposes 'Jakarta developed for the 'imagined community' of the Indonesian nation state a symbolic universe of meaning, a virtual world of monuments, parade grounds and significant buildings' (Nas 2011: 189). This process has been branded as the creation of a 'theatre state,' or as Nas characterized it, the creation of a 'city full of symbols'. Perhaps Skopje can also be identified as a 'city full of symbols'. Other attributes which have been given to Jakarta, such as a 'city without urbanism' and a city of 'virtual urbanism' can also be attached to Skopje,

the only difference being that with the current project Skopje 2014 the solid urban foundations which were laid after the catastrophic 1963 earthquake are becoming obscured, whereas in the case of Jakarta, the city did not have solid urban foundations to begin with. Skopje is slowly turning from the 'city with urbanism' into the 'city with virtual urbanism'. Virtual urbanism is characterized by monument-placing. In the case of Jakarta, monuments such as the freedom fighter monument or the National Monument, MONAS, whereas in the case of Skopje, the various monuments strewn around the city square.

Skopje and its current urban project Skopje 2014 can also be compared to the urban reconstruction tendencies that were taking place in Gdansk after World War II, which were complemented by efforts towards strengthening the national identity by way of accentuating the characteristics of what is considered to be 'Polish' at the expense of applying the politics of forgetting when it comes to the German influences; Gdansk has a complex history, being under both German and Polish rule as well as a self-governing city. However, it has been part of Poland since 1945; the period thereafter has seen the urban reconstruction initiation. The most important segment in the post-war urban reconstruction process was 'to recreate documents of the past because they are indispensable links to understanding the development of Polish culture' (Zachwatowicz in Nas 2011: 111). The emphasis in these reconstruction efforts was placed on creating architecture that would 'evoke a sense of patriotism' (Nas 2011: 111). Similarly, as in the case of the reconstruction project Skopje 2014, one of the prevailing architectural styles was baroque, which in this case, might be legitimate as baroque architecture has been historically present in the city. Baroque architecture which dates back to the late sixteenth century is closely associated with the Catholic Church. Poland has a tradition of baroque architecture; the Royal Chapel in Gdansk, for example, has been built in this architectural style. On the other hand, Skopje never throughout its history has fashioned this architectural style. Both reconstruction processes can be marked as the invention-of-tradition processes, a term coined by Hobsbawm, wherein buildings of the day are disguised in the 'garments' of old historically relevant or irrelevant architectural styles respectively, to serve a specific reinvigorating nationalistic purpose.

In addition to or as part of the reconstruction process in Gdansk, the city made an attempt to reinvent itself even further during the nineties when the myth of the multi-cultural and multi-ethnic pre-war Gdansk was reintroduced to give a firmer shape to the city's contemporary image. Rather than focusing on strong unifying efforts, 'the new symbolic myth of Gdansk is devoid of the idea of stable relations between a particular national group and the city' and thus it can be thought of as 'a city of return for anybody who feels a connection with it.' (Nas 2011: 119).

The *Skopje 2014* project does not try to reintroduce a once familiar image of the capital city and create a narrative out of it but rather makes an attempt to invent an almost completely new image of it – Skopje – the European city, by a copy/paste process of European historical styles. The multi-cultural/multi-ethnic aspect which has been used in the case of Gdansk can be thoroughly applicable in the case of Skopje as well because it would give the city a softer representation and simultaneously it would be a true representation of the spirit of the city from the turn of the XX century and onwards.

But the urban project *Skopje 2014* clearly aspires to create something else. It does not only try to reflect or develop the city's identity but also the nation's identity. Its supposed unifying character centres on the representations of historical (victorious?) figures, some of which have been contested and are also represented in the histories of other Balkan nations. As Frusetta has pointed out several years before the inauguration of the *Skopje 2014* project, 'in the Macedonian case, there are few historical symbols utilized by the Republic of Macedonia that are not disputed by conflicting historical traditions in neighbouring states' (Frusetta in Atanasov). Furthermore, with their country being the last in line of all the Balkan countries when it comes to the efforts in achieving its statehood, its romantic nationalist tendencies and its historiography, Macedonians were faced with the challenge 'to begin from scratch in their efforts to present a long history of their nation' with almost all of the myths and narratives being taken up by other Balkan nations (Brunnbauer in Atanasov). Such contested historical figures are Tzar Samuil and Alexander the Great, connected to the histories of Bulgaria and Greece respectively, and both of these figures sculpturally represented in the project *Skopje 2014*.

Both of the aforementioned historical personalities and their representations go hand in hand with the mythology the urban project employs. The project attempts to present a glorious past. The glorious imperialist pretensions are lead, so to speak, by the central statue of the Skopje 2014, the one representing Alexander the Great, but timidly entitled 'Warrior on a Horse'. The 'Warrior on a Horse' located centrally in the main square is supported by the marble statue of Tzar Samuil located to its right. The imperialist aspirations of the project as a whole can also be seen in the rich bestiaria incorporated in the project, two sets of bronze lion statues placed on the Goce Delcev Bridge and a number of them surrounding the 'Warrior on a Horse' statue in the central square.

Historically, the practice of mass public (political) monument building dates back to the 1800s, although initially public monuments started to develop somewhere at the end of the Middle Ages, 'with the category becoming difficult to discern among monuments with sepulchral connotations or public decorative statue of the Renaissance and Baroque (Michalski 1998: 8). The first statue specifically commissioned for public space use was *Don Juan of Austria* (1572) erected in the Sicilian town of Messina in honour of the victor of Leptano. As Michalski points out, monuments preceding this one were 'designed for or kept in the non-civic space of a castle or a court' (Michalski 1998: 8).

Public monuments since their inauguration toward the end of the XVIII and the beginning of the XIX century have served the purpose of commemorating important historical personalities and events, their inauguration coinciding with crucial social changes taking place at that point in history instigated primarily by the French Revolution. A more consistent public monument building was first introduced again in France (the vanguard of novelties and changes) in 1871. It was followed by Germany around the same period of time. The political changes following World War I have provided fertile ground for an even more comprehensive and persistent memory tool for legitimizing new political systems, the National Socialist regime in Germany can be cited as an example here. This practice has taken off in Soviet Russia which has also adopted it as a useful instrument that would support

the communist regime, and in terms of its semblance has combined aspects of the French and the German idiosyncrasies but also introduced avant-garde qualities of its own. Similar, if not the same, patterns of monument building in terms of representation, style and building materials used have emerged in developing countries starting from the 1970s up until the 1990s. The project Skopje 2014 can certainly be put in the same category as in the aforementioned monument-building schemes, but even when compared to the projects or instances of monument building in developing countries it is somewhat of a neophyte. In the following part, I shall elaborate on and make references to various monument-building programmes and draw parallels between them and the *Skopje 2014* project. All of the elaborated projects have points of tangency with the *Skopje 2014* project, or it is rather the other way round. It seems as though this specific project 'borrows' or has the habit of 'borrowing' (because it still does not have a rounded off programme/plan) all the elements or aspects that are convenient from other similar projects that were taking place throughout history and will be discussed in detail in the section that ensues. I will make comments about the *Skopje 2014* project as I go along explaining the variety of aspects these projects contain.

With the dissolution of the Soviet communist regime and other communist regimes and even earlier, for that matter, the more comprehensive monument-building schemes have subsided. In a similar fashion, monument-building schemes of this kind have been almost completely discarded in Western countries becoming almost obsolete and heralding an era where 'traditionally-clad' monuments will lose their visual and semantic appeal. Developing countries are tailing and emulating Western countries regarding concepts and styles of building monuments. As mentioned earlier, the *Skopje 2014* project can certainly fall into this category of monument-building schemes. Large-scale monument-building programmes which have emerged in the 1980s and 1990s have come to be associated with non-democratic regimes as a means of adding lustre to the governments that have commissioned them. Mexico, North Korea, and Iraq have been cited as examples of countries that have followed the Western pattern of monument building simultaneously infusing it with some idiosyncratic characteristics of their own, the most striking example of which is perhaps the Pop Art sensibility of Iraqi monuments such as *The Victory Arch* in Baghdad distancing itself from the traditional appearance of triumphal arches displaying opposing hands (the bases of the arch) holding swords which form the apex of the arch; the eccentricity of this triumphal arch is further complemented by a mirroring arch; this arch has the same appearance as the one described earlier but it is placed further down the road presumably to enhance the 'victorious' route used for ceremonies.

The practice of monument building in France, aptly dubbed 'statuomania', was well under way as early as 1870 when the first of a series of statues was installed in the urban fabric of Paris that would set the standard for future monument development in France and elsewhere. The *Monument to the 1814 Defence of the Barrier of Clichy* by Amédée Doublemard in the square Place de Clichy in Paris was the archetype for the 'triadic model of later statuary' (Michalski 1998: 13). This allegorical monument, paying tribute to the defence of the Barrière de Clichy, a battle which was led by General de Moncey against the anti-Napoleonic coalition troops in 1814, integrated the representation of General de Moncey brandishing a

sword standing in front of the personification of Lutetia (Paris), protecting her, and a patriotic wounded student on the other side of this sculptural triad (Michalski 1998: 13). This monument would lay the foundations for the future building of monuments during the Third Republic.

Other examples of monuments showcasing the shift in ideologies are the *Monument to the Republic* by Leopold and Charles Morice at the Place de la Republique from 1883 and the *Triumph of the Republic* by Jules Dalou at the Place de la Nation in Paris from 1889. Both of them are a variation on a theme – the allegorical representation of the Republic (represented as a woman) and in the first case three personifications of the Republic's slogan – Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, whereas in the second case one could notice the personifications of Freedom, Labour, Justice, and Peace. Both monuments feature lion(s) as a symbol of democracy. In the former, the lion is guarding a ballot box, whereas in the latter the lion is being ridden by the personification of Freedom, which in both cases is suggestive of the concept of the 'republic'. They were built after France suffered a defeat from Germany in the battle of Sedan and thus have a pronounced nation-rejuvenating quality. Both of them sport neoclassical and baroque styles. Parallels can be drawn between these two examples and examples of monuments from the project *Skopje 2014* which perhaps have utilized the ideas presented in the monuments of the Third Republic, for instance, the prominence of lion statues within the project. Could one entertain the possibility that they are used to symbolize the democratic system established after the dissolution of Yugoslavia? On the other hand, the allegorical aspect of the Third Republic monuments is lacking in the *Skopje 2014* case. No abstract concepts are personified in any of the project monuments; the majority of them are literal representations of historical personalities.

Perhaps equal, if not greater degree of importance, is attached to the ceremonies taking place around monuments or in their honour, so to speak. In the case of Dalou's monument, it was accompanied by two unveiling ceremonies which in essence took place amidst great political tension. The amalgamation of monuments as structures that freeze a specific point of time in an inflexible representation and the reviving role of ceremonies (rituals) surrounding them has been used as a successful political formula for strengthening the nation (which as a concept has been introduced ensuing the democratizing French Revolution). When it comes to the French Republic, the erection of monuments dedicated to ideological and political forefathers (female characters were not represented exept as allegorical representations of abstract concepts) was seen by many state functionaries and aspiring members of the bourgeoisie as 'a congenial field for meritocratic expression and self-enhancement' (Michalski 1998: 27). Paris, the capital of the Republic, has been chosen as the hotbed for the monument-building endeavours of the Republic, with some smaller towns playing only supporting roles, compared to similar efforts in Germany which used the German landscape as their backdrop. 'Only in Paris was the ideological message propounded by the agglomeration (it would be far-fetched to speak of a closely knit system) of public monuments discernible by even an uninvolved layperson' (Michalski 1998: 28). This observation by Michalski certainly appropriately describes the aspirations of the project Skopje 2014, its in-your-face aggressiveness and grandiosity (the sheer scale of the

monuments and their crammed arrangement) makes it hard for people not to be aware of their presence. In terms of the appearance of Parisian monuments, they were both 'grandiose', secured on a socle, erected at important street sections and squares, and smaller-sized monuments, 'companions of the flâneur', or monuments within the eye level of the urban wanderers, abiding by the English model of 'random' placing in public parks and gardens (Michalski 1998: 29). Interestingly enough, Skopje 2014 gives prominence to both types of monuments, the grandiose ones representing important historical figures, whereas the companion-of-the-flâneur type show off the behavioural cultural symbols of the capital such as the ritual of drinking coffee immortalized in a monument entitled 'Having Coffee', then the pre-earthquake custom of taking a dip in the Vardar River memorialized in 'Swimmer', etc. Perhaps, the decision to separate the two different types of monuments was premeditated and follows the elaborated logic.

What was happening in Paris, starting from the 1870s up until around the time of the Great War, was proper statue frenzy, or as Gustave Pessard succinctly described it in the title of his book - *La Statuomanie parisienne* (1912). The totality of monuments built in Paris during the Third Republic was close to two hundred. The *Skopje 2014* project perhaps strives to achieve this number, even though the totality of monuments intended to be built as part of the project is still unknown.

Germany was another western European country that had an elaborate Nationaldenkmäler programme, or a programme dedicated to the building of national monuments, which started around the same time as the building craze of the Third Republic but contrary to the urban building practices in France, the building practices at least in the initial period were mainly directed to the German hinterland. In the German case, the national programme did not only envisage commemorating noteworthy contemporaries or antecedents from the recent past of the nation; they went even further in the quest for finding the true German national identity. One of the first monuments was the one dedicated to the first German hero – Arminius. The grand nation-building programme which kicked off during the Wilhelmine era was quintessentially exemplified by the *Niederwald* monument, which has been described as a derivative of the Statue of Liberty in New York, representing the nation's personification – Germania, holding a crown of the new Empire, the *Kaiser Wilhelm Monument* (an equestrian monument) by Bruno Schmitz, the *Porta Westfalica* and the *Monument to Wilhelm I* (Kyffhäuser monument), the latter two seen as attempts to 'mythologize the past' even further (Michalski 1998: 62). The Kyffhäuser monument portrays the new Emperor Wilhelm I as well as the famous medieval Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa. The *Monument to the Battle of Nations* (1913), conceivably the most flamboyant piece of all of Schmitz's monuments, succeeding the previous two, became the most popular nonetheless, conveying the impression that it perhaps had the most elaborate conception and execution, placed on a symbolic location on the southern outskirts of Leipzig where Napoleon had been defeated in 1813 and thus celebrating Germany's victory in the Battle. The surrounding area of the monument encompasses a memorial complex (with a more toned-down appearance than originally envisaged by Schmitz) consisting of a water basin, two processional streets and a walled

enclosure, whose ritualistic significance was strongly emphasized and put to use during the National Socialist regime.

Another important aspect of the German Nationaldenkmäler programme is the embodiment of cult of Bismarck (the 'Iron Chancellor') in a series of monuments set up in the 1890s and the beginning of the twentieth century. The observation concerning these monuments giving 'voice' to the Bismarck cult made by Karl Scheffler reveal a country with low self-confidence, making endeavours to assert its political and cultural supremacy within the European continent.

Especially interesting in the case of German monument-building is the intentional use of granite as a material for the majority of the monuments and certainly the ones considered to be the most important ones for the nation, on the grounds that it is the epitome of 'peculiar Germanic qualities like strength, simplicity and uprightness' (Michalski 1998: 70). The French programme lacked this conceptual subtlety, or perhaps this was not elaborated as explicitly, while *Skopje 2014* mirrors the French programme using bronze as one of its primary monument-building materials as well as marble which is frequently associated with the Greek culture.

The next stage, or the continuation of the Nationaldenkmäler programme, was taking place during Hitler's National Socialist regime. This segment of the programme again centered on grandeur, the only difference being that precedence was given to architecture rather than statues or monuments, although their presence could also be noted and it was used to complement the architectural grandeur. Monuments did not materialize historical personalities but were apotheosizing the ideal types of professions or personalities of 'the warrior', 'the athlete', 'the labourer', 'nude woman' (the logic of which is quite skewed and highly chauvinistic!). Once again all of the physical elements or structures of this programme are being enlivened by the final goal of being used as props for rituals and processions. Describing the Nazi aesthetic, Michalski has stated that in essence it had a propensity for 'semi-religious, cultic, scenographic effects, intended to enthral the crowds', with Hitler acting out the role of a communal 'Pontifex Maximus' eager to interact with the public comprising ordinary German people. Exactly this disposition added to the ritualistic stupor of these ceremonies.

The Soviet Union was another country that made use of a comprehensive monument-building programme through which monuments were given the role of 'visual symbols of power' (Michalski 1998: 107). Again in this case, some analogies can be drawn between the Soviet monument endeavours, or rather the execution of the monuments incorporated in their pre-World War II national programme, and examples from the Macedonian *Skopje 2014* programme. Integrating a 'democratic' monument decision-making component which ultimately had lost its egalitarian facet, Lenin and his team envisaged executing monuments of non-durable materials such as plaster, clay, plywood and based on mass appeal (the populist approach of seeming letting people decide) making them anew out of more durable materials such as bronze, for example. This, in the end, proved to be impractical resulting in most of the monuments being left in the 'material state' they were initially in. Materials-wise,

in the *Skopje 2014* project, either as a latent future mass appeal democratic decision-making, or out of thriftiness, or as a way of making the job easier for future regimes to effortlessly destroy the structures, some of them, such as the pillars of the currently under construction Archaeological Museum are made out of plaster. Points of resemblance between this communist project and the *Skopje 2014* project can also be found in the fact that one of the sets of lion statues placed on the Goce Delchev Bridge are 'executed in a semi-Cubist idiom with strong Futurist elements' much alike the bulk of Soviet monuments from the Lenin period (Michalski 1998: 110).

The post-World War II period ushered in a whole new era of communist monuments which started in 1949 and ended with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1989. The general pedestrian quality of the monuments from this era, even when compared to the pre-war communist monuments, is invigorated by their formidable large scale, not unlike the *Skopje 2014* monuments scattered around the central monument 'Warrior on a Horse', whose initial awe-inspiring grandeur is marred by aesthetic clumsiness.

As a common thread to the entire aforementioned case studies one can emphasize the central role of triumph played in the nation-building processes. As Assmann points out not only triumph but also trauma has its share of influence in the process of a nation's identity construction and the triumph and trauma dichotomy plays a significant part constituting the nation's mythomoteur. Taking into account various historical events and experiences so as to create an image of themselves, nations engage in a processing method wherein they select their nation's moments of exaltation as well as their nation's moments of deepest humiliation and shame (Assmann 2011: 12). Assmann points out that in the case of Germany, the dynamics of exaltation and humiliation is represented through the reunification in Berlin considered as an instance of triumph and Auschwitz as an instance of trauma. Three instances can be mentioned when it comes to Macedonia's moments of exaltation; the first one is the Ilinden Uprising, one of the final attempts against the Ottoman subjugation and the short-lived republic that was formed afterwards, the official gaining of the status of a republic within Yugoslavia after World War II as the second moment of exaltation, and finally the instance of gaining independence from Yugoslavia and the formation of the Republic of Macedonia in 1991 as the third instance of exaltation. Aspects from these instances of exaltation are duly incorporated within the *Skopje 2014* project. The Triumphal Arch, part of this project, attempts to pay tribute to all of these moments of exaltation by amalgamating all of them, and at the same time, representationally not being loyal to any one of these moments in particular. It is perhaps also an attempt to create a site of memory for the celebration of future moments of exaltation. When it comes to Macedonia's moments of humiliation, these are more often than not related to the country's inferiority in the Balkan milieu reaching its climax after the Balkan Wars and also its five-century colonial status as part of the Ottoman Empire. The more controversial aspects of the *Skopje 2014* project, such as the representation of contested historical figures, which are also considered to belong to the histories of other Balkan nations, can perhaps be understood as a continuation of the historical holding of grudges, teeth-baring and growling at these nations.

The dynamics of triumph and trauma as integral to a nation's memory is fickle and dependent upon the 'needs and opportunities of the current reality' (Assmann 2011: 15). Storytelling is the engine that ignites and perpetuates memory. It is an act which requires 'real time' and participants. French sociologist and founder of social memory research, Maurice Halbwachs, has stressed that the most important element in perpetuating memory is communication, or the 'linguistic exchange with other people' (Halbwachs in Assmann 2011: 24). The fact that the linguistic exchange is hampered for people belonging to different generations is comprehensible when one takes into consideration that people as well as society and memories change over time. People of different generations identify themselves with different memories; this has been characterized as a generation shift. People and societies use currently relevant recent memories or dig into the past to find relatable memories as benchmarks for (the process of) their identification. Memories can take the form of mental, material and media images as well as storytelling, places, monuments, and ritual practices and they are being "eternalized" by a set of memorizing strategies such as repetition, "anecdotization" and media notation (Assmann 2011: 34).

In order for (cultural) memory to be released, one needs cultural objects such as symbols, artifacts, media and practices and their institutions which ensure that they are transferred. On the other side of this communication process are the people or the cultural group to whom these cultural objects are dedicated, or rather put to disposal, in order to jump start the process of identification. Identification is a layered process which depends on 'externalized' and 'objectified' symbols as representations 'devoid of corporeality', their materially fixed and institutionally stabilized quality which provides a longer life expectancy, and finally their link to the 'living memory' which needs to adopt them (Assmann 2011: 36). Indicating how we experience the world, semiotician Jürgen Trabant has emphasized that much of our knowledge is acquired through the mediation of signs rather than through direct mimicking or adaptation, direct experience, our own actions and our own manipulation (Trabant in Assmann 2011: 270). In order for our experiences to become cultural memory one needs as prerequisites symbolic expansion and psychological identification (Alexander in Assmann 2011: 271).

Memory creation is a dual process comprised both of the process of remembering and forgetting (oblivion). These aspects are not always equally utilized on the part of the "memory creators" – media and institutions; more often than not, they are selectively used to set the stage for a purposeful living memory. This 'purposeful living memory' is closely connected to the workings of national memory. The concept of nation and consequently national memory came to the forefront during the national romanticism movement at the end of the XVIII and the beginning of the XIX century being straightforwardly connected to the French revolution and the repercussions and changes which were felt after it. The XIX century was marked as the century when flesh was put on the bones of the notion of nation. Nations are created using historic(al) experiences which by way of assimilation and interpretation are transformed into myths and turned into monuments, memorials, and places which "perform" these myths on a regular basis until another batch of myths takes precedence. 'In collective memory, mental images become icons, and stories become myths

whose most important property is their persuasiveness and affective efficiency. These myths, to a great extent, separate historical experience from the specific conditions of its origin and transform it into a timeless narrative which is handed down from one generation to the next. How long these myths will be handed down depends upon their necessity, namely whether they fit the desired image the group has of itself as well as the goals this group strives to achieve. The myths' longevity is not limited by the fact that their carriers pass away but because they become dysfunctional and are replaced by others' (Assmann 2011: 43/44). By employing the collocation - the cultivation of national myths, one indicates the exact nature of this process; it is a purposeful process after all just as crops are cultivated to supply food which is one of the human's basic needs, national myths supply narratives that assist the nation's growth and provide the basic needs in the process of national self-identification. Taking a look at the Macedonian mythomoteur, one becomes aware of some inconsistencies and ambiguities as to the formulation of the general concept of the national myth emphasized by the fact that it oscillates between the narratives of magnitude (a small country that has accomplished so much for its size) and martyrdom (a small country that has suffered a great deal throughout its history). Instead of focusing on only one of these aspects (Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic emphasize the concept of martyrdom in their national narratives, whereas Russia is interested in highlighting its victoriousness), the Macedonian national myth narrative leans towards both of these aspects creating a sense of confusion which perhaps also hinders its identity development.

The nation-building processes which were taking place during the XIX century were, as Ernest Renan points out, based on the social capital of a heroic past, great individuals, and glory. Victories rather than defeats were commemorated, but as Renan has once again emphasized, sometimes defeats are more effective as sources of inspiration and 'shared suffering' builds stronger bonds among people. The 'suffering' which is a legacy from Macedonia's colonial days under the Ottoman Empire has found its vocalization within the oral tradition of the country (the syntagma 'the five-centennial Turkish subjugation' found in numerous instances as an apology and justification) has been continuously used as a connecting tissue within the community even a century after the occupation officially ceased.

As Schivelbusch has pointed out in his book *Kultur der Niederlage* (Culture of Defeat), defeats at times stimulate greater cohesion within a group, namely because they can be used and processed via various methods. Spiritual and moral uplifting, cathartic cleansing, the formation of a new myth of honor, and the scapegoat myth have been enumerated as some of the ways in which defeats can be interpreted and further utilized. The aspects of defeat and 'shared suffering' are inextricably linked and to a certain extent are taken advantage of in the *Skopje 2014* project. The model of 'shared suffering' is put to great use in the project *Skopje 2014*, in part perhaps due to the fact that Macedonia's history has been more frequently 'blemished' by defeats rather than been imbued with historical victories which one could use as "benchmarks of pride". This aspect lends the quality 'heroless' to the country, although the rare historical victories and the main personalities, i.e. heroes, have not been neglected in the project *Skopje 2014*. The Ilinden Uprising and the establishment of the Ilinden state as a result of it, as well as the formation of the Macedonian state in 1944 after World War II. Both

of these victories have found their place in the historically comprehensive project *Skopje 2014*. Almost all of the historical personalities which have been represented within the framework of this project are categorized as national heroes. Even though these historical personalities have been accorded the epithet 'heroes', and perhaps rightfully so, they can perhaps be more aptly classified as martyrs. This is especially true when it comes to the revolutionaries who participated in the Ilinden Uprising and whose sculptural representations prevail in the Skopje 2014 milieu. The presence of the martyrs' sculptural representations gives off a whiff of nobleness and conforms to the model of 'shared suffering' that this project is partly attempting to put forth. Goce Delchev, a Macedonian national hero and martyr, and perhaps the most prominent revolutionary from the Ilinden Uprising, has his sculptural representation in the project, along with other similar personalities that fall within the same category of martyrs. 'A martyr is a person who believes in something, in an ideal, in a nation, or in God. A martyr's death is appalling but imbued with profound meaning.' (Buruma in Assmann 2011: 89). 'Martyrdom' as a concept is socially constructed within the moral public community (Assmann 2011: 109). The sculptural representation of martyrs is quite possibly premeditated as the project Skopje 2014 can be described in part as a nation-building project, which means that creating a sense of unity within the nation, or the community, is of utmost importance. However, if it were not for the representation of mythical and controversial heroes (Alexander the Great, Samuil) whose greatness would lead one to consider the possibility of *Skopje 2014*'s adherence to the 'glorious past' model and one could argue whether there are grounds to employ this model based on the selected controversial figures and the degree to which they are related to Macedonian history. In essence, the *Skopje 2014* project can be described as an amalgamation of the 'shared suffering' and 'glorious past' models.

This chapter's section extended its focus to include comparative case studies and models on nation-buildings against which the Skopje 2014 was comprehensively analysed. The project was analysed from the perspective of 19th European nation-building projects based on the 'glorious past' model. The project was analysed as a project based on such model, although the grounds for the choice of this model should be taken with a grain of salt. Taking into consideration Assmann's examination of national identity construction as interplay between trauma and triumph, the project Skopje 2014 was also analysed through this prism.

3.3 The Mythicizing of Alexander the Great and Its Embodiment in the 'Warrior on a Horse' Monument

The verb 'to mythicize' has been defined in two ways. The first meaning provided for this verb is the following: to turn (a person or an event) into myth. The second meaning attributed to this verb is defined as as going through the process of being interpreted as a myth or in terms of mythology. The ensuing analysis of Alexander the Great will for the most part take into account the first definition of the term, at the same time not neglecting the second one. Without going into much detail about the 'life and works' of this historical personality, I will

attempt to make sense of his presence within the urban narrative of Skopje through the *Warrior on a Horse* monument/fountain, and illuminate the reasons behind this.

Before embarking on the analysis of the reasons for incorporating the aforementioned historical personality, attention should be paid on introducing the concept of 'myth' which would be the backbone for further discussion. From a structuralist point of view, myth has been almost fully equated with language. More precisely, using Saussure's terminology to elaborate the structure of language, language consists of *langue* and *parole*. 'The social, impersonal phenomenon of language as a system of signs' is how the 'langue' aspect has been defined, whereas 'the individual, personal phenomenon of language as a series of speech acts made by a linguistic subject' is the definition that has been provided for the 'parole' aspect of language by the Swiss linguist. In explaining the concepts of langue (representing the firm side of language) and parole (representing the effervescent side of language), Saussure has emphasized that langue belongs to reversible time, whereas parole is attached to non-reversible time (once it happens, the speech act cannot be changed). Levi-Strauss has identified that the elaborated language structure by Saussure, namely, the langue – parole distinction, applies to myths as well only it uses 'a third referent which combines the properties of the first two' (Levi-Strauss 1963: 209). Constituting the myth are the events which (supposedly) happened in the distant past (the previously elaborated *parole* aspect) and the structure of the myth, the patterns through which it is being narrated (the langue aspect). Levi-Strauss has emphasized that what makes myth function is its structure, which renders it timeless and applicable for the present, past, and future. Equating myth with the politics of modern societies, he provides an example which focuses on the different ways the French Revolution might be perceived. To a historian, he argues, the French Revolution can represent a series of events that took place in the past and the repercussions thereafter. On the other hand, to a French politician, the French Revolution similarly provides a link to the past but also a 'precedent', a 'timeless pattern' which should be sought out in the present and used as a basis for interpretating current events and a guiding force for the future.

Whatever our ignorance of the language and culture of the people where it originated, a myth is still felt as a myth by any reader anywhere in the world. Its substance does not lie in its style, its original music, or its syntax, but in the *story* which it tells. Therefore, the story is the most important aspect of it, whereas the act of storytelling is what sets this story into motion. Both of these aspects, the story and the act of storytelling, have been instrumental in Alexander the Great's mythicizing process on the territory of 19th century Macedonia, still under Ottoman rule at the time and susceptible to the influence of the neighbouring countries in the assimilating processes of what is popularly termed the various 'propagandas'.

The unification of the Macedonian people and the process of developing Macedonia's statehood and self-determination has been built around the myth of the Krushevo Republic (the 10-day republic established as a result of the Krushevo Uprising, one of the last attempts of dismissing the Ottoman rule) and ASNOM (the Anti-Fascist Assembly for the People's Liberation of Macedonia). However, as Vangeli points out, the coming into being and the perpetuating of the antique myth, which was kept as a popular story among some parts of the

population, not forming part of the official national mythology of the country, has recently been introduced as an official reference to the Macedonian people by the current government.

The origins of the aforementioned antique mythology can be found in some 19th –century historical developments that took place on the territory of Macedonia while it was still under the Ottoman rule and unrecognized as an independent country – namely, in the Greek foreign policy towards Macedonia or the popularly known Greek Propaganda. The Greek Propaganda (or the dissmenitation of the Greek national narratives, or the implementation of Greek foreign policy) of the Greek Patriarchate towards the Slavic population in Macedonia was given impetus after 1870 and reached its zenith towards the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century (Vangeli, 2009). The Greek Propaganda was active in many forms, some of them violent and financial, but it was also performed through education – namely, through the application of the narrative of Alexander the Great. Greek Patriarchate clergymen disseminated stories about Alexander the Great as a form of assimilating the Slavic population and in order to justify this process they referenced Alexander the Great as their forefather – the 19th century disseminated myth of Alexander the Great has become the key instrument in the perpetuated mythicizing process of this historical figure. The parole aspect of myth dissemination, or the act of storytelling, must have been particularly fascinating in order to pull people into the story (the myth), but it was not the only prop that was used during the process of assimilation – in order to support the myth's story line historical events were being narrated, people were being shown Greek coins bearing the images of Alexander the Great and his father Philip II with Greek letters 'suggesting the 'Greekness' of the antique-Macedonian heritage' (Vangeli, 2009). It has been suggested by Tashkovski that the antique-Macedonian mythology has been an integral part of the 19th –century national romantic tendencies or the national awakening of the Macedonian people, when many eminent revolutionary advocates (Gjorgjija Pulevski, Dimitar Miladinov) seduced by the grandness of the myth started sermonizing it themselves.

Being integral to every society and culture, myths provide an appealing guiding force; by means of referring to their myths societies and cultures can find their sense of belonging, encouraging contemplation and exploration which in turn leads to identification (or an occasion that supports the development of the society's or culture's self-image). Taking into consideration the fact that at the time of the emergence of Alexander's myth and by that time for that matter, the history of Macedonia was marked by recurrent onslaughts of colonizers and futile efforts to tear away from them, a history marked by defeats and no real heroes (thus the allusion to the country being 'heroless'), the implanting of Alexander's myth supplied the necessary degree of fascination and compelling qualities.

In the Skopje 2014 project, the sole justification provided for the presence of Alexander the Great in the urban space of Skopje through the 'Warrior on a Horse' monument has been attributed to the fact that he is a 'historical personality of universal esteem', as Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski pointed out, without articulating additional reasons. The grandeur of the 'Warrior on a Horse' monument and its possible inherent signification invites comparison with the Statue of Liberty in the United States of America.

Impressive in size (especially the 'Warrior on a Horse' monument compared to its surroundings), both monuments could be described as awe-inspiring solely on account of their large scale. Additionally, reflecting upon these monuments as bearers of an imagined national memory of grandness, both of them can be characterized as 'monuments luminaries' or the leading monuments that stimulate this continual process. The Statue of Liberty is a colossal neoclassical sculpture depicting a robed female figure representing Libertas, the Roman goddess of freedom, who bears a torch and a tabula ansata (a tablet evoking the law) upon which is inscribed the American Declaration of Independence. A broken chain lies at the statue's feet, symbolizing liberty and freedom. The Warrior on a Horse monument depicts Alexander the Great mounted on a horse holding a sword; he is placed on a high plinth surrounded by a fountain with sculptures of lions on its edges. None of this monument's explicit characteristics alludes to liberty or freedom as in the case of the peaceful 'broken chains' allegory of freedom when it comes to the Statue of Liberty. However, looking at it from the perspective of recent political developments (the Macedonian-Greek name dispute, Greece not recognizing Macedonia by its constitutional name), the Warrior on a Horse monument might be seen as an attempt of political release from the chains of this dispute as an act of freedom or a political spiteful growling (this might be supported by the fact that the sword that Alexander bears is pointing towards Athens). Furthermore, in light of the elaborated reasons for the process of mythization lying in 19th-century historical developments, the Warrior on a Horse monument might be considered as an instance of the ultimate appropriation of Alexander's myth as a way of validating the claims of the fictitious antique-Macedonian origins of the Macedonian people.

4 SYMBOL BEARERS AND THEIR UTILIZATION

This tripartite chapter will deal with the exploration of some of the available guide literature connected to Skopje as well as a short overview and analyses of urban guides from other European or world cities. The principle of analysis applied will be the same for both batches of guides – it will focus heavily on the analysis of the guides' discourse by looking at the ways in which the information related to the cities is presented, the type of information being presented, the guides' structure and organisation, the guides' legibility, coherence and the factors or characteristics these guides possess which command attention. The analysis findings will be synthetized in the section *Recommendations for Developing a Guide* and presented in a clear and concise manner and later on applied in the case of the development of a Skopje guide. The next section *Presentation of a Set of Skopje Identities* will be dedicated to the synthesis of identity narratives connected to Skopje based on what has been previously discussed throughout the thesis. In the final section, *Guide Proposal*, a description will be provided of a guide that is going to be developed for the purposes of presenting the various identities of Skopje.

4.1 Analyses of Guides Related to Skopje

The Analyses of Guides Related to Skopje section deals with the analysis of an imagined entirety (those that I was able to find) of guides linked with Skopje.

Skopje: More than a City (Tourist Guide)

This guide is one of the most easily available guides and one of the most recently published ones. Divided into numerous sections, it is quite comprehensive and covers various aspects of the city. The number of sections amounts to fifty-two. The first seven sections are not related to Skopje but to Macedonia, they provide an introduction to a variety of aspects from the country: *Republic of Macedonia* (a general introduction to the country), *Macedonia on the Balkan Peninsula* (provides a map which places Macedonia in the context of the Balkans), *Basic Characteristics of the Republic of Macedonia* (provides information on the language, currency, flag, etc.), *Natural Beauties in Macedonia* (lists some typical natural curiosities), *National Parks* (provides information on Macedonia's national parks), *Macedonian Art*, and *Architecture* (give a short overview of the prevalent architectural styles and specific forms of art).

From the more general, the guide turns to the more specific, dealing with Skopje and its aspects in the following sections. *Where is Skopje?* gives a description of Skopje within geographical terms. The next section *Legend of Skopje* narrates the geo-urban myth of Skopje. *How Does the City Work* [sic] describes the municipal aspect of the city (this would be of no particular importance to a city visitor but is perhaps a promotional tool for the guide's publisher – the City of Skopje municipality). The chronological sequence of historical periods the city went through is presented in the next section entitled *History of the City of Skopje*. The entirety of archaeological sites in the area of Skopje is introduced in the section *Archaeological Sites*. Next, the focus is shifted to two of the most popular Skopje symbol bearers in two separate sections: *Skopje Fortress* and *Old Bazaar*. More specific sections ensue elaborating upon various characteristics of the Old Bazaar – *Crafts in the Old Bazaar* and *Inns in Skopje*. The Old Bazaar is also presented through a map. Skopje's architecture is described and given a historical overview in *The Architecture in Skopje*. The *Macedonian National Theatre* and the *Officer's Home* sections pay tribute to two Skopje symbol bearers which were destroyed during the 1963 earthquake. There are special sections dedicated to the *Stone Bridge* and the *Square 'Macedonia'* as one of the most characteristic symbol bearers of the city. Collections of grouped building descriptions are provided in the sections *Christian Sacral Objects*, *Churches and Monasteries in the Diocese of Skopje*, and *Islamic Sacral Buildings*. Two sections are devoted to the old and new monuments: *Cultural – Historical and Memorial Monuments* and *Sculptures in Skopje*, providing information about the representations found in the sculptures and monuments and citing the authors' names. A special section is allocated to the *Memorial House of Mother Theresa*, which is followed by sections listing *Famous People from Skopje* and Skopje's *Honorary Citizens*. The next three sections are dedicated to a variety of cultural institutions: *Museums*, *Macedonian Opera and Ballet* and *Theatre Halls*. In a mixed sequence one can find the following sections: *May Opera Evenings* (a cultural event), *City Events*, *Sport and Recreation*, *National Arena 'Philip*

II of Macedon', *Sports Hall 'Boris Trajkovski'*, *Concert Halls*, *Ss. Cyril and Methodius University*, *Libraries in the City*, *Shopping in Skopje*, *Daylife and Nightlife in Skopje*, *Where to Eat in Skopje*, and *Hotels*. The list of more practical sections is complemented by the following ones: *Passengers' Needs* (lists travel agencies, petrol stations, and such), *A Tour around Skopje*, *Skopje City Map Legend*, *Street Index*, *Important Telephone Numbers*, and *Phrase Book*.

Based on the analysis of the textual and structural aspect of this guide one can characterize it as a typical tourist guide employing the typical tourist guide structure and language. The structure is rigid and predictable, and the language is factual and dry. This tangible tourist guide (as opposed to a website) is easy to navigate through, one of the prerequisites for a guide, even though from a visual point of view, this guide seems cluttered and heavily adorned with photos and illustrations. This clattered quality translates in the structure of the sections which are high in number and sometimes repeat themselves. Perphaps a tidier structure with more general chapters and more specific sections within the chapter would have been more appropriate. The guide's name - *Skopje: More than a City* (Tourist Guide) indicates an attempt to open up a pathway into storytelling that would unravel Skopje's identity (more than a city! – whatever this might entail), but this is not actualised and reflected upon within the course of the guide.

Skopje and Its Surroundings

Skopje and Its Surroundings is a pocket, A5-sized guide through Skopje published in 1986. This guide is currently out of print, but stumbling upon it has provided the opportunity to take a look at an older version of a guide connected to the city, presenting a valuable point of reference and comparison with the guides that are currently available. What makes this guide attractive at first glance is perhaps its small size which is both practical and eye-catching. Compared to the cluttered structure of the 'Skopje: More than a City' guide, this guide has a more minimal look, boasting separated batches of textual and visual narratives. The guide's text is cut in the middle with a separate booklet of photos and then it fills up the rest of the guide. Perhaps, this could have been a more practical solution based on the technology available at the time but it nevertheless contributes to the guide's conciseness. No contents page is included at the beginning which although unpractical adds the quality of a fiction novel to the guide.

The content of the guide is kickstarted with the inspirational quote by Josip Broz Tito given after the 1963 earthquake, which illustrates a recurring side of the city and paves the way for the textual development of the guide:

Skopje suffered a terrible calamity. But we will build Skopje anew. With the help of our whole community, once again it will become a source of pride and a symbol of brotherhood and equality, of Yugoslav and world solidarity.

The guide's textual unravelling begins with a playful short description of Macedonia, followed by the drier sections *Geography of the City*, *Communication Possibilities* (providing reflections concerning Skopje's position and locality), *Population*, and *Industrial Potential*. The historical development of the city as well as the plethora of historical events that took place on its grounds is covered in the sections: *The City through the Centuries*; the *Revolutionary and Liberation Struggle of the Macedonian People*; *Skopje's Liberation*; and *The Catastrophic 1963 Earthquake*. The next sections put various symbol bearers of Skopje on display through short descriptions. The section *A Tour around Town* is conveniently divided into the *Upper Town* and *Lower Town* (the urban division of the central part of Skopje), listing the symbol bearers which can be found in these areas. There is a special section called *Excursions in the Vicinity of Skopje* which enumerates all the possible locations one could visit. The guide ends with some practical tourist information and a map.

Compared to the first guide, this one shows a higher level of structural organisation, some novelties in terms of visual information presentation as well as an attempt to employ more playful language.

Skopje: a City to Be Discovered

In terms of the contents it presents it is no different than any of the previously elaborated guides, but what distinguishes it from the other ones is the manner in which the contents are arranged narratively. Envisaged as a travelogue, this guide employs storytelling as a tool that engages the reader with higher levels of attention span and interest, pushing the information forward in a rather informal manner. The guide's title itself announces in a way what it strives to achieve – to provide an opportunity for letting you discover the 'contents' of the city. The narrative sequence of this guides starts with the introductory section '*How Did Skopje Come into being?*' which tells the story of the urban geo-mythology of the city. The following sections are arranged in a travelogue fashion. *Day One: the Old Town* lets the reader explore the possibilities offered by the Old Bazaar. *Day Two: Downtown*, on the other hand, concentrates on the central area of the city and what is on offer there. A complementary part is added at the end entitled *Around Skopje* which lists the sightseeing possibilities found in the vicinity of Skopje. A map of Skopje and practical tourist information is added at the very end. This succinctly organised and beautifully written guide, a quality which sets it apart from regular guides, should be taken as an example in the process of guide development; namely, the importance of the narrative and way it is being presented, or the narrative structure.

Skopje: Capital of Seven Gates

Skopje: Capital of Seven Gates is a guide which in its title suggests a possible narrative connected to Skopje. Portrayed as the capital of seven gates, Skopje is actually being presented by way of its genesis myth, but one is unable to decipher this without being familiar with the narrative of the city's genesis. Nevertheless, the effort of introducing an identity narrative should be saluted and be taken into account as a possible guide

development model. The guide initially focuses on a wider context dealing with Macedonia through the chapters *'In the Dawn of Prehistory'*, *'Scenography of Antique Play'*, and *'Holy Land in the Heart of Feudal Empires'*. The next chapter is a reflective musing on the question *'Why Skopje?'*. The urban geo-mythology of the city is presented in the next chapter. The rest of the guide focuses on more comprehensive descriptions and reflections of the most important symbol bearers of the city. An interesting novelty is the last page of the guide which shows a 'calendar of fruits and vegetables' according to their availability in the markets; each month of the year is represented by a fruit or a vegetable which can be found seasonally during that particular month, or perhaps a fruit or a vegetable is that month's staple. This is an interesting promotional approach, especially because the green market culture is such an important aspect of the city's life, and this visually alluring and appealing arrangement could be utilised in the development of the city's image as one of the multifarious city identities. Even though this guide shows narrative potential and novelties, the fact that it lacks focus and an elaborate structure makes it seem unfinished.

Skopje in Your Pocket

Skopje in Your Pocket is a guide from the standardized 'in your pocket' series which feature guides from cities all around the world. These standardized series provide an excellent example of well-organised and easy-to-navigate guides; they are being republished annually in order to be updated with more current information, but, in essence, the format they take up and the contents structure remain unchanged and consistent. Its contents are organised in a simple and intelligible. The structure this guide fashions is the following: Arriving (Stress-free landings in Skopje), Glossary (Things you need to know), History (Macedonia through the ages), Culture&Events (Cinema, theatre and what's on), Where to stay (A bed for all budgets), Restaurants (Buffets, burek and bourgeois nosh), Cafés (Taking a break), Nightlife (The best places to be seen after dark), What to see (Magnificent mosques and more besides), Pantelejmon (Get thee to the monastery), Getting around (Making travel easier), Mail&Phones (Keeping in touch with the rest of the world), Shopping (Credit cards at ready), Directory (The best addresses in town), Maps&Index (City map, Street index, Country map, Index). Although the emphasis in this guide is put on presenting information in a practical and meticulous way, the fact that it is written in a style which employs short and engaging sentences and sequences makes it an easy read and a model some of whose components should be followed and taken as an example.

Electronic Guides

skopjeonline.com.mk

Skopjeonline.com.mk is a website which contains information related to Skopje as well as practical information about getting around town. Well-organised and understandable, this website does not create confusion and is extremely easy to navigate. It is divided into four

sections: *Home page* (which contains some news related to current events); *About Skopje* (this chapter contains the following sections: General Information; the History of Skopje; Why Visit Skopje; and Location of Skopje); *Experience Skopje* (which features information about cultural and business events, festivals and concerts, children's events, sports and recreation, as well as a cinema, theatre, and clubbing repertoire, and an additional guide which contains information about shopping, sports halls, the culinary scene and Skope by night), and the final chapter is entitled *Tourist Services* offering practical tourist information. This website displays efficiency and usefulness, qualities which should be taken into consideration as positive ones.

oldskopje.net

Oldskopje.net is a website dedicated solely to the Old Bazaar (the old part of Skopje). It is an example of a well-set-up website in visual and structural terms. However, when one starts browsing its contents, it becomes obvious that some of the structural components have been left empty. The whole website is divided into the following five structural chapters and accompanying sections: About the Old Bazaar (Historical Development and The Old Bazaar Today); Monuments (Hammams, Kale Fortress, Stone Bridge, Historical Monuments, Mosques, Hans, Churches, Skenderbeg Monument); Shops and Accomodation (these chapters have been left empty); and Tourist Services (it contains the sections Accomodation and Recommendations). Additionally, the website contents are available in three languages- Macedonian, Albanian, and English, which should be taken as a good point. Employing a classic format, dry and factual language, multilingual contents, and overlapping themes within the structural website sections, this guide has some positive aspects which could be taken and applied in guide development but also provides room for reflection on some negative aspects – missing contents.

volanskopje.blogspot.com

Volanskopje.blogspot.com is a personal blog which covers various aspects of Skopje. The fact that it is a personal blog adds the quality of informality which distinguishes it from the rest of elaborated guides and websites. The blog is high in content variety but low in structural composition – which is not necessarily a negative aspect because it might contribute to developing a sense of exploration and 'content immersion'. The blog fashions posts on a regular basis which date back as early as 2006. Structurally, the blog can be accessed via the year archive as well as sections such as *My Photo Stories*, *Children's Games*, *Churches and Monasteries*, *Old Skopje*, etc. Some of these sections are not always necessarily connected exclusively to the area of Skopje; they expand to include other parts of Macedonia as well. Even though not presenting a guide in the classical sense, the choice of contents and the personal, or informal, approach this blog employs should be considered as interesting points of reference for guide development.

4.2 Analyses of Unconventional Guides

The section Analyses of Unconventional Guides will also focus on exploring a number of what I consider to be 'unconventional' or 'out-of-the-box' urban guides again putting an emphasis on how they are structures and how their contents are presented as far as language and discourse is concerned simultaneously looking at elements of their distinctiveness which could be taken as points of reference.

Belgrade Alternative Guide (belgradealtguide.com)

Belgrade Alternative Guide is an initiative started by students whose idea was to show a different side, or rather the different sides of Belgrade which are not at the tourists' immediate disposal. As these students say in their mission statement found on the website their purpose is to offer real immersion in the city to their guests, providing them with the opportunity to become real 'Belgraders'. This is perhaps the quality which displays this guide's 'alternativeness'.

If we consider the website as a form of guide, then we would have to conclude that the information provided in it would not help you get around town on your own. Almost no information is provided on the website except the idea behind the initiative and the people (guides) involved in it. The website has seven sections: Home (a short explanation about the initiative and the idea behind it), Guides (a list of people involved in the initiative), Gallery (it presents photographs taken around Belgrade), Why Belgrade (lists some reasons categorized in sections such as Kafana or Market of why people should visit this city), Guestbook (contains testimonials of people who have seen Belgrade through the Belgrade Alternative Guide), and, finally, Contact (or the point which connects the possible visitors and the guides).

Based on the website it can be concluded that the Belgrade Alternative Guide functions more as a service rather than as a tangible guide which could be used as a way of acquainting yourself with Belgrade and its city contents. Albeit the initiative members state that they abstain from showing monuments or cultural symbols to visitors, opting for what they call 'Belgrade's alternative side which might also be unknown to Belgrade locals', still some interesting aspects from this guide can be adopted and recontextualized in the development of an urban guide. The personalised aspect of a guestbook is an interesting example which could possibly be adopted; for example, instead of having visitors comment upon the guide service, they could actually leave comments about their impressions about the city they are visiting which could later on be turned into narratives. A personalised gallery of photos taken by visitors could also be incorporated.

Urban Travel Blog (urbantravelblog.com)

As it is stated in the About Us section of this blog, 'Urban Travel Blog is a collective blog of expert travel writers, reporting on trends/culture, experiences, eco-tourism as well as

nocturnal adventures in cities around Europe and the world'. Despite a more random set of regularly published articles on the blog, there is a specific section on it which is solely dedicated to a city guide series entitled 'The Juice'. Fulfilling the responsibility of presenting information connected to the city, these guides do this in a manner which is both effortless and compelling, producing short stories which would enlighten you even if you do not plan to visit the specific city they are describing. Perhaps the fact that travel writers take care of the guides' contents could be cited as a reason which makes these guides a compelling read, thus letting us draw the conclusion that incorporating beautifully embellished language and storytelling puts this type of unconventional guides on a level higher than the regular, more traditional type of guides.

Open House Helsinki (openhousehelsinki.fi)

Open House Helsinki is not a guide in the classical sense. The official website of the Open House Helsinki project serves as a form of guide in this sense. This two-day event in Helsinki, the 2012 World Design Capital, gives visitors and citizens a chance to go into places which are not normally available to the public. The guided walks are organised with the support of designers and specialist and includes a long list of places to be visited (a printing house, design studios, churches, personal homes, etc.). The innovativeness of this initiative, and the reason why I have chosen to present it in this section despite it not being an actual tangible guide, lies in its 'accessible exclusivity', an unusual collocation which refers to the limited time framework of the event (its ephemerality, if you will), the exclusivity of places to be visited, and the openness to the public supported by the free-of-charge nature of the project.

4.3 Recommendations for Developing a Guide

The previously conducted guides' analyses were done for the purposes of exploring the 'market' of guides about Skopje which are on offer and readily available. Furthermore, the critical exploration of this set of guides has provided some insight into the ways in which these guides have been developed, their positive aspects as well as shortcomings, their discourse and structure, all to end of putting forward a set of recommendations that would aid the process of developing a new version of a guide related to Skopje.

Being practical

The primary purpose a guide should fulfil is to be practical; this is its most essential characteristic. Guides should aid the visitors' city navigation but also provide them with a wide range of information which would help them make decisions about what they would like to see in the city they are visiting.

Discourse

Discourse is a rather important aspect which is more often than not overlooked in guides. Almost the whole set of guides related to Skopje which have been critically examined earlier show off almost the same discourse style; they make use of factual and dry language as it has been characterised earlier. As mentioned in the analysis of the unconventional guides, the flowery and literary use of language in The Juice city guide series found on urbantravelblog.com has been stressed as an outstanding characteristic which needs to be employed more often.

Innovation

Innovation in this case is a general term that refers to any or all of the characteristics of a guide which make it stand out and readily noticeable. These aspects can be related to introducing novelties in the way information is presented, either visually or textually, or its forms of availability (either as a tangible book, an e-book, or a guide which also stimulates other forms of activities as in the case of the Helsinki Open House project).

Multilingual contents

It is of particular importance to have the contents translated into multiple languages so as to ensure as wider availability as possible.

Structure without stricture

The structural aspect of a guide should be emphasized without, however, it restraining the contents of the guide. A well-structure guide is a priority because it allows easier navigation or exploration of the guide's contents. On the other hand, however, if a guide contains too many chapters and sections, instead of allowing smoother navigation, it might restrict people, having too many transitions. Structure is an important element to consider when exploring the possibilities of developing a guide; it also allows a plethora of possibilities in terms of the ways in which it can be molded. Usually guides have linear (chronological or traditionally anticipated structure) structure but it would also be interesting to consider ways in which the structure can be made more non-linear in order to allow playfulness but not at the expense of a well-organised guide.

4.4 Presentation of a Set of Skopje Identites

Based on the historical dissection of the city, the various symbol bearers and narratives from the urban landscape of the city it is possible to create a set of various identities of the city. Some of them refer to the historical periods the city has gone through, while others are more general in nature but make an effort to show the intrinsic character of the city. This section will contain a set of titles encapsulating the most important qualities of city, namely the variety of its identities, articulated by the use of clusters of symbol bearers to represent those identities.

The title and the implied corresponding identity narrative that best describing one of the most important inherent characteristics of Skopje is *Skopje: The Pop-Up City*. It synthetizes the characteristics of the city as a 'wounded city', or a city prone to natural disasters, as a result of which it has been transformed many times. The semantic quality of the characterization 'pop up' also alludes to suddenness and unexpectedness which also could be associated with new identity layer produced as a result of the Skopje 2014 project. Generally, it makes an allustion to the city's ability for reinvention. The Old Railway Station clock is a leading symbol bearer in the cluster of symbol bearers for this identity layer. Also, the symbol bearers from the Skopje 2014 project can be put here (as they are still popping up); however, they will be included in a special category of their own.

Skopje: The City of Ugly Monuments proposes an identity narrative dedicated solely to the symbol bearers from the Skopje 2014 project. As instances of top-down symbolism, the introduction of this identity narrative would attempt to decontextualize them from this characterization and present them from a bottom-up perspective. For example, instead of presenting the historically-inspired symbol bearers as instances that articulate Macedonia's 'glorious past', this identity narrative could present these historical personalities as ordinary people or could put them in an 'anecdotized' setting.

Small Town Skopje would concentrate on presenting the remnants of the former life of the city (the pre-war period up until the 1990s) in a positive manner, disregarding the negative connotations that might be denoted by the characterization 'small town'. This part will present Skopje's old neighbourhoods (so-called 'maala') as material symbol bearers (Novo Maalo, Debar Maalo), the behavioural symbol bearer of 'coffee drinking' as associated with the 'maala' and Leninova Steet as a material symbol bearer contained in another material symbol bearer, Debar Maalo.

Quirky Skopje will make room for the uncategorizable symbol bearers of Skopje which show an unconventional and underexposed aspect of Skopje's identity. Prominent place in this identity layer will have The Anchor, the linden trees and smell of linden trees, and Maksim Gorki Street with the cherry blossom trees.

The other identity narrative lines are more conventional in nature and are representing the various historical periods of the city. These narratives will be supported by specific symbol bearers which have originated in those historical periods (already elaborated in the section *Mapping and Analysis of Symbol Bearers*).The *Ancient City* as a general characterization which refers to the long history of the city (it can be represented by the oldest symbol bearers of the city such as the Acqueduct or Kale Fortress). Following the historical line of the city's development, the following identities can be listed: the *Roman City*, the *Byzantine City*, the *Ottoman City*, and the *Royal City* (referring to the period between the World Wars when the city was under the Kingdom of Yugoslavia). Two strong additional identity narratives are provided by the characterizations the *Old Skopje* and the *Modern Skopje*, referring to the pre-earthquake and post-earthquake aspect of the city respectively.

4.5 Guide Proposal

Taking into consideration the recommendations for the development of a guide, in this section I would like to propose an original idea for a Skopje guide. I would like to propose the development of a *Self-Guide through Skopje*, essentially a website platform based on the set of identities proposed in the previous section. Website visitors will have access to each one of the identities from the set, and by clicking on the identity title (for example, Skopje: The Pop-Up City) they will be provided with an explanation of the identity narrative and the accompanying cluster of symbol bearers for that specific identity narrative along with their description. The cluster of symbol bearers will be mapped (presented in a map) that could be printed and used in the exploration of the city. Each of the identity titles will contain the same characteristics.

An additional, more physical aspect, of this Self-Guide will be the introduction of an urban signage system, or a guerrilla wayfinding system, which would allow the city visitors to navigate their way through the various city symbol bearers more easily. The urban signage system implies that all of the symbol bearers presented on the website would have to go to the process of being marked (provided a sign stating their name) in order for the process of guerrilla wayfinding to be possible. An initial point of departure for the wayfinding process will be assigned (for example, the main square) which will provide signs and directions to follow the desired 'identity' or 'identities' by the visitor marked with signs of different colours and showing the time it takes to get there.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Recently, the capital of Macedonia, Skopje, has received a lot of attention owing to the urban project entitled *Skopje 2014*. The so-called facelift project aims at redefining the urban and cultural landscape of the capital, and it almost completely obliterates any sense of historicity the city might have at the expense of building rather than preserving the already potent, to a greater or lesser degree, symbol bearers of the city. At times like these when it seems that the memory of the city is being rapidly erased, a look back to history is warranted in order to identify specific symbol bearers which are still present in the landscape of the capital but have lost their meaning which could be (re)discovered and re-contextualised. Within the thesis research, emphasis was also placed on a renewed exploration of the present symbol bearers of the city.

The aim of this thesis was to explore key aspects of Skopje's assemblage of symbol bearers and the narratives which they produce in order to develop a guide which would synthetize and utilize the research findings and propose the construction of a set of identities of Skopje to be presented in it. In order to achieve this, the thesis incorporated (1) mapping and analysis of symbol bearers from the present and former urban landscape of Skopje, (2) a critical examination of imposed top-down symbol bearers, introduced through the project *Skopje 2014*, in the current urban landscape of Skopje and the new identity layers they attach to the capital, (3) an analysis of the approaches adopted for presenting Skopje in existing guides and literature, and (4) considering novel approaches for utilizing and reinterpreting Skopje's symbol bearers and bringing forward proposals for (re)constructing (new, underexposed, rediscovered, and re-contextualised) city identities. To this end, this thesis focused on a sequence of three research questions: (1) What kinds of identity narrative lines do Skopje's symbol bearers produce?; (2) In what manner and why does the project *Skopje 2014* endeavour to form additional identity layers of Skopje?; and, (3) How should the research findings be organized in order to expose a re-contextualised set of city identities?

The theoretical framework for the thesis research united concepts from the fields of cultural policy, memory and identity politics and urban anthropology at its core. In order to identify and categorise Skopje's symbol bearers, theoretical background was sought in the Peter J.M. Nas' book *Cities Full of Symbols: A Theory of Urban Space and Culture* which proposes the categorisation of symbol bearers into material, discursive, iconic and behavioural. This categorisation model was applied in the process of mapping the symbol bearers present in the urban landscape of Skopje. Furthermore, his proposed paradigm of urban symbolism research was also applied within the symbol bearers' analysis. The aspects of collective memory, such as remembrance and forgetting, triumph and trauma, and additional aspects from the fields of memory and identity politics were incorporated in the critical discussion concerning the *Skopje 2014* project, having their theoretical background primarily in the books *The Long Shadow of History* by Aleida Assmann, *How Societies Remember* by Paul Connerton, and *The Invention of Traditions* by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger.

Following the sequence of research questions, the second chapter of the thesis entitled *Exploration of Skopje's Symbol Bearers and Identities* elaborates at length on the historical

narratives linked with the development of the city in the section *Skopje as a Palimpsest: a Historical Dissection of the City and Its Identity Excerpts* likening the city to a palimpsest in which a stratified concentration of identities can be discovered. In this section, in the process of looking at the process of historical development of the city from its establishment in Late Antiquity till its survival in the present, some initial city identity excerpts were found and categorised according to the historical period they represent. This process has produced several identity narrative lines: Skopje – The Ancient City, Skopje – The Roman City, Skopje – The Oriental City, Skopje – The Royal City, Skopje – The Modern City. Even though these identity narrative lines seem oversimplified and somewhat pedestrian (they were synthetized in more sophisticated identity narrative lines to be used in the guide), they aided the initial connection and categorisation of symbol bearers. Based on the conducted survey on the urban and cultural identity of Skopje, the section *Survey Analysis of Skopje's Identity* makes use of its results and upon the applied analysis it can be concluded that the citizens of Skopje indeed see the city as a palimpsest, implicitly inferred from their responses which identify symbol bearers from various historical periods. Furthermore, symbol bearers whose origin could be traced in the past dominate and bear more considerable relevance at the expense of the newly created symbol bearers. The symbol bearers which were listed as part of the survey were used and further complemented in the process of symbol bearers' mapping. The listed symbol bearers and their subsequent analysis were presented in the last section of this chapter entitled *Mapping and Analysis of Skopje's Symbol Bearers*. In this section, Skopje's symbol bearers were categorised using Nas' model and linked to a certain identity narrative line, simultaneously offering a description of their origin and a short analysis of their relevance.

The next chapter '*Examining the Current Cultural Policy of Skopje*' dealt specifically with the second proposed research questions seeking to identify the reasons and the ways in which the project *Skopje 2014* as a representative of the current cultural policy of the city attempts to transform Skopje's identity. In the first section *New Identity Construction though the Project Skopje 2014,* a general introduction to the project was provided and all of the project components were listed and critically examined. It was concluded that new identities are indeed attached to the city through the set of contradictory narrative lines of 'Europeanization' and 'Antiquisation' which the project endeavours to infiltrate by means of aggressively overcrowding the city centre with newly built material symbol bearers in the form of monuments. A more thorough discussion concerning the second research question was provided in the second and third sections of this chapter. The second section *Applying Politics of Memory in a 'Heroless' Country: When Urban Identity Becomes Synonymous with National Identity* examined the project Skopje 2014 as a nation-building project which applies the 19th century European 'glorious past' model of nation-building and attempts to put an end to the struggling with (national) identity Macedonia has been experiencing as a post-Yugoslav state but also as a post-colonial country of the Ottoman Empire since the mid-nineteenth century. Looking at historical events and historical personalities from Macedonia's past throughout this whole section using Aleida Assman's theoretical concepts of triumph and trauma, it was concluded that even though there are no grounds to apply the 'glorious past' model, it is nevertheless being used controversially. As a conclusion of this section, it was argued that the amalgamation of the 'glorious past' and 'shared suffering'

models is perhaps how this project can be best described, the 'shared suffering' aspect being more appropriate as a response to greater number of instances of trauma rather than triumph. The third section of this chapter entitled *The Mythicizing of Alexander the Great and Its Embodiment in the 'Warrior on a Horse' Monument* concentrated specifically on the historical personality of Alexander the Great, intentionally using the verb 'to mythisize' (to turn a person or an event into a myth) in order to put an emphasis on the century-long referencing of this historical figure as a form of propaganda that falsely supplies the national mythomoteur. In this section, the 'Warrior on a Horse' monument was characterised as an imposed top-down material symbol bearer which carries massive political implications. At the core of the renewed national mythomoteur which is being introduced with the Skopje 2014 project, this monument has been likened to the Statue of Liberty and the symbolic connotations it carries.

Symbol Bearers and Their Utilization is the last chapter of this thesis. Practical in nature, it dealt with the analysis of guides related to Skopje in order to determine the number and the type of guides on offer. Analysing a list of nine Skopje guides, it was concluded that what is currently being offered is what one might term 'classical' tourist guides, almost all of which are well-structured, practical, and useful. However, during the analysis a need was recognized for an out-of-the-ordinary or out-of-the-box type of guide. After the examination of two unconventional guides in the next section, namely the Belgrade Alternative Guide and The Juice City Guide Series from the Urban Travel Blog, a set of recommendations was put forward that would aid the process of future guide development. The proposed recommendations stressed the need for multilingual contents, well-structured but not overly structured guides that would restrict the guide's effortless flow of information, paying attention to the discourse, or the importance of introducing language that is not just simply factual but also somewhat authorial or original, and finally the importance of the guide being practical, as this is one of the essential characteristics of a guide. In the penultimate section of this chapter entitled *Presentation of a Set of Skopje Identities* the previously mentioned Skopje identities connected to the various historical periods the city went through and whose symbol bearers it still carries were listed once again, some of them remained the same, while others were combined or made more sophisticated. This set of identities (The Ancient City, The Modern City, The Pop-Up City, The City of Ugly Monuments to name but a few) will undergo additional reworking before being introduced in the guide planned to be developed. The last section presents the Skopje guide proposal. The idea is to create a so-called SELF-GUIDE through Skopje which would be a website platform based on the proposed set of identities which would allow the visitors of the website to choose an aspect of the city they would like to explore (for example, by clicking on the title 'Skopje – The Pop-Up City' they would be provided with a map of all the symbol bearers that represent this identity narrative that they could print and use during their exploration of the city). A great number of identity narratives will be provided, each of them following the same pattern of mapped symbol bearers. An additional, more physical aspect, of this Self-Guide will be the introduction of an urban signage system, or a guerrilla wayfinding system, which would allow the visitors of the city to navigate their way through the various city symbol bearers more easily. By choosing an initial point of departure of the visitors' tour, for example, the main square, the guerrilla

wayfinding signs which will be installed will show the direction and the time it takes to get to the next symbol bearer(s). The separate identity narratives will have different colours.

This summary provided a short introduction to the thesis *Symbol Bearers and Their Utilization in the Construction of Skopje's Identity* and a brief insight into the discussion aspects it covers.

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7 APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Survey Results' Tables

53 Surveys in Total		
1. Which buildings/ monuments/customs/architecture/places from the urban space of Skopje first come to mind? List them!	Number of Responses	%
Stone Bridge	31	14,83%
Old Bazaar (Чаршија)	30	14,35%
Kale Fortress	29	13,88%
Old Railway Station	19	9,09%
Warrior on a Horse	14	6,70%
Palace of Ristikj	10	4,78%
City Park	10	4,78%
Museum of the City of Skopje	7	3,35%
Vodno (mountain)	7	3,35%
Kurshumli Han	6	2,87%
Square 'Macedonia'	4	1,91%
GTC (Old City Mall)	4	1,91%
Millenium Cross	4	1,91%
Mother Theresa (monument)	4	1,91%
Macedonian Opera and Ballet	4	1,91%
Canyon Matka	3	1,44%
St. Spas (church)	3	1,44%
Kapan Han	3	1,44%
Aqueduct	2	0,96%
Triumphal Arch 'Macedonia'	2	0,96%
Skopje Liberators (monument)	2	0,96%
Government Building	2	0,96%
Bank of river Vardar	2	0,96%
Daut Pasha Hamam	1	0,48%
The Shell	1	0,48%
Dramski Theatre	1	0,48%
St. Arhangel and Mihail	1	0,48%
The Fountain (City Park)	1	0,48%
Maksim Gorki Street	1	0,48%
Park Zhena	1	0,48%
TOTAL	**209**	**100,00%**

2. Which buildings/monuments/customs/architecture/places from the urban space of Skopje are of special (emotional) significance for you? List them!	Number of Responses	%
City Park	21	21,88%
Old Bazaar (Чаршија)	16	16,67%
Kale Fortress	10	10,42%
Bank of river Vardar	7	7,29%
Old Railway Station	7	7,29%
Stone Bridge	6	6,25%
Square 'Macedonia'	3	3,13%
Vodno (mountain)	3	3,13%
Leninova Street	3	3,13%
GTC (Old City Mall)	3	3,13%
Kurshumli Han	2	2,08%
Warrior on a Horse	2	2,08%
Macedonia Street	2	2,08%
No Response	2	2,08%
The Fountain (City Park)	1	1,04%
Goce Delchev (monument)	1	1,04%
Novo Maalo (neighbourhood)	1	1,04%
Madzir Maalo (neighbourhood)	1	1,04%
Mother Theresa (monument)	1	1,04%
Gradski Dzid (neighbourhood)	1	1,04%
Park Zhena	1	1,04%
Luna Park (old theme park)	1	1,04%
MKC (Youth Cultural Centre)	1	1,04%
TOTAL BUILDINGS	**96**	**100,00%**
Customs		
The 'life' on the bank of Vardar	1	20,00%
Playing marbles and hide-and-seek	1	20,00%
Having a bite at Vegera (pastry shop)	1	20,00%
Going to MNT discoteque (closed now)	1	20,00%
Playing football on the street	1	20,00%
TOTAL CUSTOMS	**5**	**100,00%**

3. Do you remember some buildings/monuments/customs/places from the urban space of Skopje from your childhood or youth? List them!	Number of Responses	%
Square 'Macedonia'	7	8,05%
No Response	6	6,90%
City Park	5	5,75%
Park Zhena	5	5,75%
Kale Fortress	4	4,60%
Palace of Ristikj	4	4,60%
Old Bazaar (Чаршија)	4	4,60%
Old Railway Station	3	3,45%
Stone Bridge	3	3,45%
GTC (Old City Mall)	3	3,45%
Luna Park (theme park)	3	3,45%
The Zoo	3	3,45%
Goce Delchev (City Park monument)	2	2,30%
Treska Lake	2	2,30%
Leninova Street	2	2,30%
The old cinemas (closed)	2	2,30%
Army Hall (venue)	2	2,30%
Old Department Store (in the Old Bazaar)	2	2,30%
Bear (monument in the City Park)	2	2,30%
Bank of river Vardar	2	2,30%
The building block on Vardar (built after the earthquake)	1	1,15%
Government building	1	1,15%
Eatery 'Bulls'	1	1,15%
Restaurant 'Pirin Planina'	1	1,15%
Skopje Liberators (monument)	1	1,15%
Old Bus Station (near the Stone Bridge)	1	1,15%
The cobblestone on the square	1	1,15%
Museum of the City of Skopje	1	1,15%
Pajko Maalo (neighbourhood)	1	1,15%
Vodno (mountain)	1	1,15%
MNT (theatre)	1	1,15%
Dramski Theatre	1	1,15%
Saraj Pool	1	1,15%
Novo Maalo (neighbourhood)	1	1,15%
Madzir Maalo (neighbourhood)	1	1,15%
Zhito Luks (pastry shop)	1	1,15%
Officer's Home (destroyed in the earthquake)	1	1,15%
Wooden Bridge (in the City Park)	1	1,15%
Kermes Tavern	1	1,15%
Ezerce Tavern	1	1,15%

Skopje Liberators (monument)	1	1,15%
TOTAL	**87**	**100,00%**

4. What is the meaning of the project Skopje 2014? What do you think of it? Explain!	Number of Responses	%
Waste of money	9	16,98%
No meaning	7	13,21%
A way to attract tourists	6	11,32%
The city loses its identity	5	9,43%
Overcrowded and badly executed	4	7,55%
Beatifies the city	3	5,66%
Money laundering and financial gain	3	5,66%
Ugly	3	5,66%
Unclear Response	3	5,66%
Political project	2	3,77%
Kitsch	2	3,77%
Disfiguring the image of the city	2	3,77%
Confusing	1	1,89%
Strengthens the sense of identity	1	1,89%
Megalomanic	1	1,89%
Anarchical	1	1,89%
TOTAL	**53**	**100,00%**

5. If you set aside the project Skopje 2014, which elements from the urban space of Skopje would you say is the most characteristic of the city?	Number of Responses	%
Old Bazaar (Чаршија)	17	13,82%
Kale Fortress	17	13,82%
Stone Bridge	13	10,57%
Old Railway Station	12	9,76%
Bank of river Vardar	10	8,13%
Palace of Ristikj	8	6,50%
GTC (Old City Mall)	7	5,69%
City Park	6	4,88%
Square 'Macedonia'	4	3,25%
Millenium Cross	3	2,44%
Stadium	3	2,44%
Gradski Dzid (neighbourhood)	3	2,44%
Macedonia Street	2	1,63%
There aren't any.	1	0,81%
Clock Tower	1	0,81%
The buildings around the square	1	0,81%

Debar Maalo (neighbourhood)	1	0,81%
Bristol Hotel (an old hotel)	1	0,81%
Buildings by architect Kenzo Tange	1	0,81%
St. Pantelejmon (church)	1	0,81%
St. Dimitrija and St. Spas (churches)	1	0,81%
Main Post Office	1	0,81%
Rekord (centrally located bus stop area)	1	0,81%
The taverns in Debar Maalo (neighbourhood)	1	0,81%
City greenery	1	0,81%
Bit Pazar (marketplace)	1	0,81%
Leninova Street	1	0,81%
Jaja Pasha Mosque	1	0,81%
MKC (Youth Cultural Centre)	1	0,81%
Park Zhena	1	0,81%
Vodno (mountain)	1	0,81%
TOTAL	**123**	**100,00%**

6. How would you describe the monument 'Warrior on a Horse' from an aesthetic or any other point of view? Explain in a couple of sentences!	Number of Responses	%
Too big	18	29,03%
Grandiose, megalomanic	7	11,29%
Kitsch	7	11,29%
Installed in an unsuitable place	5	8,06%
Aesthetically pleasing	4	6,45%
Provocative	4	6,45%
Good	3	4,84%
Aesthetically unpleasing	2	3,23%
Beautiful and graceful	1	1,61%
Politically well-suited	1	1,61%
Redundant	1	1,61%
Confusing	1	1,61%
Impressive	1	1,61%
Catastrophic	1	1,61%
No historical symbolism	1	1,61%
Amateurish	1	1,61%
Cannot be described	1	1,61%
Beautiful	1	1,61%
Modern and antique (old)	1	1,61%
No response	1	1,61%
TOTAL	**62**	**100,00%**

7. Which historical victory is represented through the newly-built Triumphal Arch?	Number of Responses	%
I don't know	20	37,74%
None	10	18,87%
The independence of Macedonia	5	9,43%
No response	3	5,66%
Undefined responses	3	5,66%
The eternal defeat of the Macedonian people	1	1,89%
No comment	1	1,89%
An imagined victory	1	1,89%
The reality	1	1,89%
To develop the spirit of patriotism	1	1,89%
The victory of vulgarity	1	1,89%
Several historical victories	1	1,89%
The victory of the basketball players	1	1,89%
VMRO (political party)	1	1,89%
Nikola Gruevski (Prime Minister)	1	1,89%
Alexander the Great's conquests	1	1,89%
The Macedonian National Liberation	1	1,89%
TOTAL	**53**	**100,00%**

8. Which (historical) person do you associate with Skopje?	Number of Responses	%
Mother Theresa	12	18,18%
Justiijan I	9	13,64%
Pikolomini	7	10,61%
Kenzo Tange	7	10,61%
Karposh	6	9,09%
No responses	6	9,09%
None	4	6,06%
Tzar Dushan	2	3,03%
Goce Delchev	2	3,03%
Metodija Andonov Chento	2	3,03%
Alexander the Great	2	3,03%
Petre Prlichko	1	1,52%
Josip Broz Tito	1	1,52%
Kasandra	1	1,52%
Kiro Gligorov	1	1,52%
Zhabarot (tavern owner)	1	1,52%
Esma	1	1,52%
Assassins of Salonica	1	1,52%
TOTAL	**66**	**100,00%**

9. Do you know when the structure 'The Shell' in the City Park was built and what its function is?	Number of Responses	%
I don't know	25	42,37%
Used as a concert and event venue	19	32,20%
1970s	8	13,56%
After the 1963 earthquake	3	5,08%
1990s	2	3,39%
19th century	1	1,69%
Decorative function	1	1,69%
TOTAL	**59**	**100,00%**

10. According to you, what is the most characteristic symbol of Skopje? Choose one.	Number of Responses	%
Stone Bridge	24	39,34%
Kale Fortress	8	13,11%
Old Railway Station	4	6,56%
Millenium Cross	3	4,92%
Old Bazaar (Чаршија)	3	4,92%
Alexander the Great	3	4,92%
Museum of the City of Skopje	2	3,28%
Main Post Office	2	3,28%
Mother Theresa	1	1,64%
The view over the Stone Bridge from Kale	1	1,64%
Bank of river Vardar	1	1,64%
Clock Tower	1	1,64%
Square 'Macedonia'	1	1,64%
Palace of Ristikj	1	1,64%
Vodno (mountain)	1	1,64%
Linden	1	1,64%
Old Railway Station and Macedonia Street	1	1,64%
None	1	1,64%
MTV (building of the national TV station)	1	1,64%
The smell of linden	1	1,64%
TOTAL	**61**	**100,00%**

APPENDIX B: Interview with Nebojsha Vilikj (in Macedonian)

1. Што според Вас го сочинува идентитетот на еден град?

Идентитетот на еден град го сочинуваат неговиот визуелен, наративен и мнемониски идентитет или, земено сè заедно, наслоеноста и наслојувањето на материјалната и духовната култура низ времето врз еден определен населен и ограден простор.

2. Што Ве инспирираше да се зафатите со детално истражување на проектот Скопје 2014?

Пред сè, моето зафаќање со истражувањето на проектот „Скопје 2014" не произлегува од инспирација (којашто најчесто, или колоквијално, ја употребуваме како позитивна категорија), туку од изнудата. Проектот беше наметнат без никаква претходна најава или, пак, демократска расправа (односно, не помина низ сите демократски и, пред сè, законски процедури) и заради тоа сите проявени реакции беа своеводно изнудени. Како историчар на уметноста имам професионална обврска да ги истражам формите и содржините на пројавувањето на проектот, како мислител имам обврска да ги определам причините, побудите и последиците, а како граѓанин имам обврска да го искажам својот (во границите на сопствените можности) став кон радикалната промена во и на градот во којшто живеам и согранствувам. Алогичноста на целиот потфат, пак, ја издејствува принудата да скршнам или привремено да ги одложам моите тековни истражувачки интереси.

3. Според Вас кое е значењето на проектот Скопје 2014? Дали мислите дека се работи за проект чијашто можна функција е да помогне во градењето државност (nation building)?

Иако имам проблем со второто прашање (дали „nation building" треба да се преведе како „градење државност" (како квантитативна категорија) или „градење државничкост" (како квалитативна категорија)), сепак еве некои размисли.

1. „Градење државност" (како квантитативна категорија). Доколку се сложам дека во овој проект постои идејата за помагање на градењето државност, тогаш би се запрашал: по кој тоа пат (мислам, редоследно) во последниве седумдесетина години (треба да) градиме државност? Или, до кога тоа ќе градиме државност? Вон од ова, сметам дека во проектот не постои вака дефинирана линија во овој проект.

2. „Градење државничкост" (како квалитативна категорија). Доколку и постои оваа линија, тогаш трагично би било не само што на овој начин се сака да се спроведе тоа, туку дека некој смета дека во населението на оваа држава не постои чувство, убедување и мислење дека сите ние ја остваруваме субјектната и квалитативната компонента на државност.

3. „Nation building". Доколку се мисли на овој термин, тогаш веднаш треба да се разлачи градењето на чувството на припадност кон државата (без разлика на етничката определба на субјектите) во смисла на граганскост (државата им припаѓа на сите субјекти), од градењето (или зајакнувањето) на националното чувство како државотворно, во смисла на етничкост (државата им припаѓа на Македонците, Албанците, Србите...).

Оттука, проектот „Скопје 2014" земен во целина (а не само како поединчени аспекти: архитектура, урбанизам, скулптура, институции) се смета дека има значење на „градење државност" којашто треба да го зацврсти „градењето државничкост", додека зад сè ова се крие „градењето/зацврстувањето на етничкото" (и тоа македонското, над сите и пред сите). Овој проект е во целост антиграгански, односно, противуставен

(согласно граѓанскиот концепт на уставното уредување). И противуставен е и заради тоа што не само што не ги почитува одлуките на Уставниот суд и рамништата (институциите) и процедурите за донесување на одлуките за него, туку заради тоа што фаворизира еден етникум.

Затоа, овој проект е од значење само за еден (и тоа не многу поголем) дел од не само од граѓанството во Македонија, туку и од самите етнички Македонци. Затоа овој проект не е од значење за сите граѓани на Република Македонија. За тоа говорат (или тоа го потврдуваат) огромниот број на реакции (досега не пројавени во македонското ошшество во неговата цела историја) коишто, дури и после три години од објавата на проектот, не стивнуваат.

4. Дали изборот на неокласичниот стил е намерен и соодветствува на сличните стилски и архитектонски тенденции на градење државност кои се случувале низ Европа во текот на XIX век? Дали Скопје 2014 е обид да се копираат таквите европски проекти кои се базираат на моделот „славно минато“? И дали во македонскиот случај има услови, во форма на историски победи, за ваквиот модел да биде применет?

Уште на почетокот сакам да нагласам дека ниту една стилска одредница којашто се употребува за (во тендерите на Владата) и околу (реакциите во јавноста) овој проект не е точна: ниту една од повиканите стилски одредници (барок, неокласицизам, романтизам) не е соодветен ниту за градбите, ниту за скулптурите, ниту за новите урбанистички решенија. Во оваа смисла повеќе сум на страната на апологетите на овој проект (Иљоски и Божиновски) кои го употребуваат терминот „македонизам“, отколку да се сака да се објасни овој проект преку наведените историски одредници. Зошто Владата и нејзините службеници (ресорните министри), Градоначалникот на Градот Скопје и неговите советници и Градоначалниците на Општина Центар и нивните советници и понатаму ги употребуваат, мене навистина не ми е јасно, кога пред себе имаат еден термин („македонизам“) којшто многу посоодветно ќе ја објасни оваа еклектичка каша од 1/2-применети, 1/4-објаснети и 1/10-разбрани историски одредници.

Во смислата во којашто Вие прашувате, градењето на државност во Европа се врзува за периодот на романтизмот. За волја на вистината, романтизмот нема свое автохтоно архитектонско издание туку се повикува на изминатите периоди, пројавено во серијата на архитектонски неоизми од втората половина на 19 век. Како второ неокласицизмот се врзува, и понатаму, за периодот пред појавата на националната свест. Тој е наднационален и само заради тоа тој се наврака на античката класична уметност (особено на римската, а не грчката). А се наврака токму на римската, а не на грчката (елинската), и тоа токму заради царистичката логика на целата римска уметност (и архитектура и скулптура): Наполеон се носи со идејата за наследник на Римското царство (како што неколку пати пред него и уште еднаш подоцна со Трето царство („Третиот рајх“) се носеле и други) и тоа не само заради тоа што нему лично многу му се допаѓала римската уметност. Тој е идеолошка инструментализација на, во периодот на просветителството и рационализмот, пројавениот класицизам во 18 век (и затоа е нео-класицизам) којшто се темели на вредностите на елинскиот антички антропоцентризам (којшто, исто така, е наднационален).

Повикувањето на „славното минато“ или „славните претци“ или „источниците“ е легитимна и постајана појава во европската култура, особено на оние новопројавените. Секој сака не само да покаже, туку и да докаже дека не е „дрво без корен“ и дека неговото постоење има своја основана причина. Разликата меѓу нив е само кој колку далеку оди наназад во историјата. Самиот Александар Македонски, на пример, за да го

обезбеди својот легитимитет на владетел, а како варвар (или, поточно, барбар, според тогашната елинска терминологија) се повикал на наследството на Херакле (дека е Хераклид) и за да го покаже тоа, во својата иконографска претстава (на монетите, на пример) тој е огрнат со одрана лавја кожа, односно, со кожата на Немејскиот лав убиен и одран од митскиот јунак Херакле. [Оттука, ние не само што сме „наследници“ на Александар, според новите убедувања, туку, силогистички, сме наследници и на Херакле, односно: ние не сме Македонци, туку сме Хераклиди!] Своевидно, и Хитлер за да го покаже и докаже легитимитетот на својата идеја за наследство на римското царство (неговиот „Трети рајх“), се повикува на севкупната организација на римската војска, заедно со сите свои инсигнии (од поздравот со косо кренатата рака („Ave caesar“) сѐ до устројството на војската на царството во римски формации)). Во основа, потребата од ваквото докажување произлегува од немањето вистинско потекло.

Во оваа смисла - да, проектот „Скопје 2014“ до детал ги копира „европски проекти кои се базираат на моделот 'славно минато“. Но, загрижувачки е што настојува да ги копира најнесоодветните: и римската антика, и барокот и неокласицизмот - и обата врзани за идејата и остварувањето на апсолутистичката власт, било на римските цареви, било на Ватикан, било на француските кралеви или, пак, на Наполеон. Конечно, начинот на којшто проектот „Скопје 2014“ се спроведува и остварува не е ништо друго и поинакво од апсолутистичкото издавање на наредби без никаква (демократска, согласно времето во коешто живееме) расправа, чиј врв е почитувањето на одлуките на Уставниот суд на Република Македонија.

5. Колку сметате дека изборот на спомениците во проектот е произволен?

За изборот на спомениците (претпоставувам мислите на изборот на прикажаните историски личности) не можам да зборувам, бидејќи проектот е во тек. За жал, одговорните не нѐ ни удостоија со објавување на конечен список (без разлика кога ќе се постават). необјавувањето на списокот мене ми укажува на отвореност на постапката за измени и дополнувања. Мислам дека е тоа одличен тактички потег, бидејќи така се овозможува амортизација на можните критики упатени кон досегашниот дел од списокот. Како што сега се чини (врз основа на веќе поставените споменици), можам да мислам дека изборот воопшто не е произволен, туку е исклучиво програмски, односно, строго програмски осмислен.

6. Доколку би требале логички да ги категоризирате спомениците од проектот, врз кој принцип и во колку групи би ги поделиле?

Пред да одговорам на ова прашање би сакал да додадам нешто, врзано со горното прашање за произволноста, а е врзано со едно прашање подолу. Не е произволен ниту изборот на нивното стилско обликување: посакувањето е тоа да биде академски реализам, а добиена е карикатурален спој на немушта фигурација. Уште во моето прво јавно пројавување во печатот 2009 реков дека македонската уметничка сцена нема доволен авторски и творечки капацитет за да се остварат сите овие нарачки, осносно, дека нема доволно (а сега можам да кажам - нема воопшто) покажани и докажани уметници за фигуративни и академско-реалистички скулптури. „Сликата“ за овие скулптури е, всушност, слика за образовниот процес и квалитет на вајарскиот отсек на Факултетот за ликовни уметности. (Исто како што „сликата“ за сликите во Музејот на македонската револуционерна борба“ е, всушност, слика за образовниот процес и квалитет на сликарските отсеци на истиот факултет.) А тоа, пак, се должи на скоро едновековната традиција на модернизмот во македонската ликовна уметност, на којашто, до овој проект, бевме (некои од нас и сѐ уште се) особено горди.

Претпоставувам дека мислите на категоризација во однос на уметничките и естетските елементи и вредности. Но, пред тоа: која била категоризација не може да биде алогичка, та оттука и проблемот околу категоризацијата на овие споменици: тие не можат логички да се категоризираат. (Каква логика би можел да најдам доколку треба да го оценам остварувањето на најголемиот (а со тоа и најзначајниот) споменик - „Воинот на коњ“, кога негоиот автор е тотален анонимус на македонската уметничка сцена!? Вон од хонорарот за авторот, дополнителната „награда“ е нејзиното, „преку ноќ“, вработување како асистент на вајарскиот отсек на Факултето за ликовни уметности во Скопје!) Но, да повторам: посакувањето и нарачката е тие да бидат во рамките на академски реализам, а добиен е карикатурален спој на немушта и неумешна, скоро нагрдена фигурација. И затоа, обидот логички да ги категоризирам мора да остане неуспешен, како да кажам, тие се некатегоризирливи. Не се ниту едно, ниту друго. Но, и што е најстрашно, тие не се ниту кич. Нека ми простат сите кои сметаат дека се такви, но дури и кичот има свои правила, структура и содржина. И распнати помеѓу овие две ситуации, навистина не можеме да кажеме било што, а особено не можеме да ги категоризираме. И затоа остануваме неми.

7. Дали постои некаква логика во однос на поставеноста на спомениците?

Не. Никаква. Нивната поставеност е само можеби крајната или врвната компонента во апсурдноста на целиот овој проект.

8. Како би го опишале споменикот Александар Македонски од естетски и каков било друг аспект?

Колку што ми е мене познато, а според званичните наслови на скулптурите, споменик на Александар Македонски во овој проект не постои. Претпоставувам дека ме прашувате за споменикот „Воинот на коњ“, нашиот антички „каваљер“. Низ целата историја на уметноста коњаничките скулптури биле едновремено и предизвик за секој вајар и нејтешка задача. Не сите изведби на оваа тема се секогаш успешни. Едно заради сложената (иако фасцинирачка) форма на коњот, друго заради приказот на ликот (во некои периоди и портретот) на коњаникот. Анализата на посочената скулптура има еден суштински проблем: таа е потполно невидлива (заради овозможениот ракурс) скоро во 1/3, додека нејзината височина не го овозможува основниот услов за анализа - пристапот кон сите елементи; дополнителен проблем е што скулптурата не смее да се анализира без постаментот и фонтаната, бидејќи таа е и мислена и обликувана како дел од оваа комплексна композиција.

Оттука, зборувајќи само за скулптурата, таа е едно просечно вајарско решение коешто се обидува да се придржува до реалистичките аспекти со неколку анатомски и иконографски грешки. Но, нејзиниот главен недостаток е непропорционалноста на волуменот на телото на воинот со оној на коњот, со што се добива впечатокот дека воинот е прилично корпулентен маж (видлив од погледот од Камен мост, највисокиот можен ракурс). Преголемата оддалеченост од погледот од партерниот ракурс, од друга страна, пак, овозможува главно поглед на стомакот на коњот и нозете и на воинот и на коњот, што е сериозен недостаток на ваквото решение, додека ликот на воинот е скоро недостапен. Со тоа, сосема е основан заклучокот дека споменикот не ја остварува основната негова функција: комуникацијата со гледачот. Или, пак, му се доделува друга функција: предоминација над обичниот човек!, со што се доаѓа до заклучокот дека форматот на скулптурата е поважен од информациите коишто таа ги носи и пораките коишто сака да ги пренесе.

Целосното решение, пак, (скулптурата, постаментот и фонтаната) е сосема друга приказна и заслужува засебна анализа. Во оваа прилика само ќе ја нагласам

непропорционалноста на целото решение во однос на постоечкото и архитектонско и просторно опкружување. Решението е барем двојно поголемо од можностите коишто ова опкружување може да ги поднесе, и во габаритна и во визуелна смисла. Распафтаната коњаничка форма сосема непотребно се расфрла наспроти ветикалните и смирувачки линии на околните фасади (во кои спаѓа и онаа на здградата на „Пелистер“, порачана и проектирана од страна на самите порачувачи на фонтаната (sic!)).

9. Дали во Македонија некогаш постоела развиена споменичка култура (пред и по Втората светска војна, по земјотресот од 1963)?

Земено во целина, македонската скулптура има куса историја. Уметноста на православното христијанство воопшто забранува фигуративна пластика, та оттука ние и немаме историја на предмодерна скулптура во Македонија. Срамежливите, но многу важни појави на човековата форма во рамките на мијачката резба од 19 век, се првите обиди. Тоа значи дека првите фигуративни скулптури (не само споменици) се појавуваат дури во текот на 20те и 30те години на 20 век во творештвото на Димо Тодоровски, еден од основоположниците на македонскиот модернизам во уметноста. Тоа значи дека искуствата од оваа уметничка дисциплина не се постари ниту од едно столетие.

Зборувајќи за споменичната скулптура, пак, во досегашниот период мора да се нагласи дека таа има/ше поинакви премиси. Во оваа смисла тешко би можело да се каже дека имало „развиена споменичка култура“, особено ако се мисли на фигуративната.

10. Колкав бил бројот на споменици во регионот на Скопје пред проектот Скопје 2014? Дали би можеле да ги наведете? + 11. Кои споменици од социјалистичкиот период од регионот на Скопје би можеле да ги издвоите? Дали постојат (македонски) автори кои се занимаваат со оваа проблематика?

Првите поважни споменични фигуративни скулптури, секако се оние од коњаничкиот пар на Атун Аугустинчиќ пред Камен мост (од страна на плоштадот) посветени на Кралот Петар I Ослободителот и Кралот Александар I Обединителот (од времето на Кралството Југославија). Следна е групната скулптура на „Ослободителите на Скопје“ на Иван Мирковиќ од 1948 (денес пред зградата на Владата) изведена според принципите на социјалистичкиот реализам (која е единствената подигната во Македонија во тој уметнички правец). Во духот на модернизмот, а особено после земјотресот од 1963, Скопје има само неколку споменични скулптури. Периодот на НОВ (1941-44) е прикажан (и со тоа заокружен и затворен) во комплексот на Партизанските гробишта на гробиштата во Бутел од Јордан Грабулоски - Грабул (како најважен). На овој модернизам се надоврзува и скулптурата на Петар Хаџибошков посветена Св. Климент Охридски (пред зградата на НУБ „Св. Климент Охридски“), којашто е најуспешниот обид во македонската скулптура на спој на приказ на светител во духот на модернизмот.

Конечно, македонската уметност од социјалистичкиот период се заокружува со подигањето на неколку спомен-обележја од комплексен тип (Велес, Кочани, Гевгелија, Куманово, Крушево, Струмица), а во Скопје е оној на Грабулоски на гробиштата во Бутел. Авторите од овој период разработуваат поинакви теми. Од друга страна, и самите државни порачки од овој период сметаат за доволно што на повеќе места, во други градови, се подигаат вакви големи комплекси, коишто понекогаш задираат и во самото јадро на градот (Струмица, комплекс посветен на Гоце Делчев од авторот Бранко Конески). Со други зборови, концепцијата за спомен обележјата од овој период

не се однесува на исклучивоста на Скопје (центристички пристап), туку тие се
прошируваат на територијата на целата држава (дисперзирачки пристап). Нешто
сосема спротивно на концептот на „Скопје 2014".

**12. Дали го знаете историјатот на градбата „Школка" во Градскиот парк? Како го
добила името и која била нејзината првична намена?**
Историјатот не ми е познат, но знам дека градбата служела за музичарите кои
свиреле променаден концерт во стариот дел од паркот („Парк на кралицата Марија").

13. Кои архитектонски стилови биле најдоминантни низ историјата на Скопје?
Во Скопје од пред Втората светска војна се прекршуваат двете струи во
тогашната југословенска архитектонска мисла: модернистичката и
неороматичарската. Со тоа, од овој период имаме примери и од обете струи. Од
првата: денешната Гратска болница на Драго Иблер (чист пример на влијанијата на
Баухаус школата) или денешната Сити Галери (старата „НА-МА"); од втората: зградата
на Црвениот крст, Ристиќевата палата, зградата на Собранието - како најважни
примери. (Имињата на авторите во моментов не ми се достапни...)

**14. Доколку го тргнеме на страна проектот Скопје 2014, кои културни симболи би
ги издвоиле како карактеристични за Скопје?**
Камен мост, липите на бул. Партизански одреди, просторот „Идадија", Старата
чаршија, Гратскиот трговски центар, рекреативната патека покрај Вардар, групата „Леб
и сол", Музејот на современата уметност (заради концептот на „акропола на
уметноста"), Мајка Тереза (како личност), „пред Рекорд" (како топос), часовникот на
Старата железничка станица, „врбите" на Искра Димитрова во Вардар, стелите и
саркофазите пред Музејот на Град Скопје, крстот на Водно. (N.B. иако со овој симбол
не се сложувам, тој сепак е своевиден културен симбол на Скопје.)

15. Кои според Вас се најрелевантните културни симболи на Скопје?
Камен мост, часовникот на Старата железничка станица и Гратскиот трговски
центар.

16. Со која (историска) личност го поврзувате Скопје?
Со ниедна. Евентуално со Карпош (од Карпошовото востание, а не партизанот
Христијан Тодоровски - Карпош).

**17. Дали се сеќавате на некои објекти/споменици/обичаи/места од урбаниот
простор на Скопје од Вашето детство или младост? Наведете ги!**
Како дојденец во Скопје немам сеќавања од детството, но имам од младоста:
седењето на скалите (заедно со дружењето и муабетите) на Кејот на Вардар (кадешто
сега се наоѓа споменикот на Гемиџиите од Ангел Коруновски и кадешто денес скејтаат
скопските скејтери) на почетокот на 80те.

18. Кој според Вас е најкарактеристичниот симбол на Скопје? Наведете еден.
Недовршениот проект на Кензо Танге.

APPENDIX C: Alphabetical List of Symbol Bearers from the Survey

1. Aqueduct
2. Army Hall (venue)
3. Bank of river Vardar
4. Bear (monument in the City Park)
5. Bit Pazar (marketplace)
6. Bristol Hotel (an old hotel)
7. Buildings by architect Kenzo Tange
8. Canyon Matka
9. City greenery
10. City Park
11. Clock Tower
12. Daut Pasha Hamam
13. Debar Maalo (neighbourhood)
14. Dramski Theatre
15. Eatery 'Bulls'
16. Esma
17. Ezerce Tavern
18. Goce Delchev (City Park monument)
19. Goce Delchev (Skopje 2014 monument)
20. Going to MNT discoteque (closed now)
21. Government Building
22. Gradski Dzid (neighbourhood)
23. GTC (Old City Mall)
24. Having a bite at Vegera (pastry shop)
25. Jahya Pasha Mosque
26. Josip Broz Tito
27. Justiijan I
28. Kale Fortress
29. Kapan Han
30. Karposh
31. Kasandra
32. Kenzo Tange
33. Kermes Tavern
34. Kiro Gligorov
35. Kurshumli Han
36. Leninova Street
37. Linden
38. Luna Park (old theme park)
39. Macedonia Street
40. Macedonian Opera and Ballet
41. Madzir Maalo (neighbourhood)
42. Main Post Office

43. Maksim Gorki Street
44. Metodija Andonov Chento
45. Millenium Cross
46. MKC (Youth Cultural Centre)
47. MNT (theatre)
48. Mother Theresa (memorial house)
49. Mother Theresa (monument)
50. MTV (building of the national TV station)
51. Museum of the City of Skopje
52. Novo Maalo (neighbourhood)
53. Officer's Home (destroyed in the earthquake)
54. Old Bazaar (Чаршија)
55. Old Bus Station (near the Stone Bridge)
56. Old Department Store (in the Old Bazaar)
57. Old Railway Station
58. Old Railway Station Clock
59. Pajko Maalo (neighbourhood)
60. Palace of Ristikj
61. Petre Prlichko
62. Piccolomini
63. Playing football on the street
64. Playing marbles and hide-and-seek
65. Rekord (centrally located bus stop area)
66. Restaurant 'Pirin Planina'
67. Saraj Pool
68. Skopje Liberators (monument)
69. Square 'Macedonia'
70. St. Arhangel and Mihail
71. St. Dimitrija and St. Spas (churches)
72. St. Pantelejmon (church)
73. St. Spas (church)
74. Stadium
75. Stone Bridge
76. The building block on Vardar (built after the earthquake)
77. The cobblestone on the square
78. The Fountain (City Park)
79. The old cinemas (closed)
80. The 'life' on the bank of Vardar
81. The Shell
82. The smell of linden
83. The taverns in Debar Maalo (neighbourhood)
84. The Zoo
85. Treska Lake
86. Triumphal Arch 'Macedonia'

87. Tsar Dushan
88. Vodno (mountain)
89. Warrior on a Horse
90. Wooden Bridge (in the City Park)
91. Zhabarot (tavern owner)
92. Zena Park
93. Zito Luks (pastry shop)

SOMMAIRE

Récemment, la capitale de Macédoine, Skopje, a suscité beaucoup d'attention dûe au projet d'aménagement urbain intitulé *Skopje 2014*. Ce soi-disant projet de lissage du visage de la ville vise à redéfinir le paysage urbain et culturel de la capital, et il efface presque totalement tout sens d'historicité que la ville pourrait avoir aux dépens de la construction plutôt que préservant les moins ou plus importants puissant porteurs de symboles culturels de la ville. Dans des périodes comme celles-ci quand il semble que la mémoire de la ville est en train d'être rapidement effacée, un coup d'œil à l'histoire est certainement justifiée afin d'identifier les porteurs de symboles culturels spécifiques qui sont encore présents dans le paysage de la capitale, mais qui ont perdu leur sens qui pourrait être (re) découvert et remis dans un nouveau contexte. Egalement, dans le cadre de ce travail de thèse, l'accent a été mis sur une exploration renouvelée des porteurs de symboles culturels actuels de la ville.

L'objectif de cette thèse est d'explorer les aspects principaux de l'assemblage des porteurs de symboles culturels de Skopje et les récits qu'ils produient afin d'élaborer un guide qui synthétise et utilise les résultats des recherches et propose la construction d'un ensemble d'identités de Skopje qui seront présentées ici. Afin d'atteindre cet objectif, la thèse est composée de (1) identification et analyse des porteurs de symboles culturels du paysage urbain actuel et ancien de Skopje, (2) une considération critique des porteurs de symboles culturels imposées du haut vers le bas, introduits par le projet *Skopje 2014*, dans le paysage urbain actuel de Skopje et les couches d'identité nouvelles qu'ils disposent à la capitale, (3) une analyse des approches choisies pour la présentation de Skopje dans les guides et la littérature existants, et (4) institution de nouvelles approches pour l'utilisation et la réinterprétation des porteurs de symboles culturels de Skopje et présentation des propositions pour la (re) construction des (nouvelles, sous-exposées, redécouvertes, et mises en nouveau contexte) identités de la ville. Dans ce but, cette thèse se concentre sur une série de trois questions de recherche principales: (1) Quels types de lignes narratives d'identité produient les porteurs de symboles culturels de Skopje?; (2) De quelle façon et pourquoi le projet Skopje 2014 s'efforce t'il de former des couches d'identité de Skopje supplémentaires?; et (3) Comment les résultats de la recherche doivent être organisés afin d'exposer un ensemble des identités de la ville mises en nouveau contexte?

Le cadre théorique des recherches compris dans cette thèse unifie des concepts qui existent dans le domaine de la politique culturelle, la mémoire et les politiques identitaires, aussi bien que l'anthropologie urbaine placée dans son essence. Dans le but d'identifier et de catégoriser les porteurs de symboles culturels de Skopje, l'arrière-plan théorique a été fondé sur le livre de Peter J.M. Nas intitulé: *Cities Full of Symbols: A Theory of Urban Space and Culture* dans lequel l'auteur propose de la catégorisation des porteurs de symboles culturels en symboles matériaux, discursifs, iconiques et comportementaux. Ce modèle de catégorisation a été appliqué dans le processus d'identification des porteurs de symboles culturels présents dans le paysage urbain de Skopje. En outre, son paradigme de recherche du symbolisme urbaine proposé a également été employé dans l'analyse des porteurs de symboles culturels. Les aspects de la mémoire collective, comme la mémoire et l'oubli, le triomphe et le traumatisme,

et d'autres aspects des domaines de la mémoire et la politique d'identité ont été incorporés dans la discussion cruciale sur le projet *Skopje 2014*, ayant leur contexte théorique principalement dans les livres *The Long Shadow of History* par Aleida Assmann, *How Societies Remember* de Paul Connerton, et *The Invention of Traditions* par Eric Hobsbawm et Terence Ranger.

Après la série de questions de recherche, le deuxième chapitre de la thèse intitulée *Exploration des porteurs de symboles culturels et des identités de Skopje (Exploration of Skopje's Symbol Bearers and Identities)* élabore minutieusement les récits historiques liés au développement de la ville dans la partie intitulée *Skopje comme un palimpseste*: *Dissection historique de la ville et de ses extraits d'identité (Skopje as a Palimpsest: a Historical Dissection of the City and Its Identity Excerpts)* comparant la ville avec un palimpseste dans lequel une concentration stratifiée d'identités peut être découverte. Dans cette partie, dans le processus de considération du processus de développement historique de la ville depuis sa fondation dans l'Antiquité Tardive jusqu'au présent, quelques extraits d'identité initiale de la ville ont été trouvés et classés en fonction de la période historique qu'ils représentent. Ce processus a produit plusieurs lignes narratives d'identité : Skopje - l'ancienne ville, Skopje - la ville romaine, Skopje - la ville orientale, Skopje - la cité royale, Skopje - la ville moderne. Même si ces lignes narratives d'identité semblent excessivement simplifiées et un peu prosaïques et plates (elles ont été synthétisées dans des lignes narratives d'identité plus sophistiqués qui seront utilisées dans le guide), elles ont aidée la connexion et la catégorisation initiale des porteurs de symboles culturels. Sur la base de l'enquête menée sur l'identité urbaine et culturelle de la ville de Skopje, la partie intitulée *Analyse d'enquête de l'identité de Skopje (Survey Analysis of Skopje's Identity)* utilise ses résultats et sur la base de l'analyse employée, nous pouvons conclure que les citoyens de Skopje en effet voient la ville comme un palimpseste, implicitement déduit à partir de leurs réponses qui identifient différent porteurs de symboles culturels datant de différentes périodes historiques. De plus, les porteurs de symboles culturels dont l'origine pourrait être trouvée dans le passé dominent et gardent la pertinence plus considérable au détriment des porteurs de symboles culturels qui ont été créés récemment. Les porteurs de symboles culturels qui ont été cités comme une partie de l'enquête ont été utilisés et complétés dans le processus de l'identification des porteurs de symboles culturels. Les porteurs de symboles culturels cités et l'analyse ultérieure ont été présentés dans la dernière partie de ce chapitre intitulé *Identification et analyse des porteurs de symboles culturels de Skopje (Mapping and Analysis of Skopje's Symbol Bearers)*. Dans cette partie, les porteurs de symboles culturels de Skopje ont été classés en utilisant le modèle de Nas et ils ont été reliés à une ligne narrative d'identité, tout en offrant une description de leur origine et une brève analyse de leur pertinence.

Le prochain chapitre *«Considération de la politique culturelle actuelle de Skopje» (Examining the Current Cultural Policy of Skopje)* portait spécifiquement sur la deuxième question de recherche proposée cherchant à identifier les raisons et les façons dans lesquelles le projet Skopje 2014 en tant que représentant de la politique culturelle actuelle de la ville tente de transformer l'identité de Skopje. Dans la première partie *Construction de nouvelle identité a travers le projet Skopje 2014 (New Identity Construction through the Project*

Skopje 2014), une introduction générale au projet a été fournie et tous les composantes du projet ont été cités et examinés analytiquement. Nous avons conclu que les nouvelles identités sont en effet attachés à la ville à travers l'ensemble des lignes narratives contradictoires de «européanisation» et «antiquation» que le projet s'efforce d'infiltrer par une surpopulation agressive du centre-ville avec porteurs de symboles culturels matériaux récemment construits sous la forme des monuments. Une discussion plus approfondie concernant la deuxième question de recherche a été fournie dans les deuxième et troisième parties de ce chapitre. La deuxième partie *L'application de la politique de la mémoire dans un pays sans héros*: *Quand l'identité urbaine devient synonyme de l'identité nationale (Applying Politics of Memory in a 'Heroless' Country: When Urban Identity Becomes Synonymous with National Identity)* a examiné le projet Skopje 2014 en tant que projet de construction nationale qui applique le modèle européen du 19ème siècle de «passé glorieux» de la construction nationale et tente de mettre fin à la lutte avec identité (nationale) que la Macédoine a ressenti comme un état post-Yougoslave, mais aussi comme un pays postcoloniale de l'Empire ottoman depuis le milieu du XIXe siècle. Considérant les événements historiques et les personnalités historiques du passé de la Macédoine dans cette partie tout en utilisant les concepts théoriques d'Aleida Assman de triomphe et de traumatismes, nous avons conclu que, même si il n'y a pas base d'employer le modèle du «passé glorieux», il est néanmoins utilisé d'une façon controversée. En conclusion de cette partie, nous avons argumenté que la fusion du modèles de «passé glorieux» et de la «souffrance partagée» est peut-être la façon dont ce projet peut être décrit de meilleure manière où l'aspect de «souffrance partagée» est plus approprié pour répondre à un grand nombre des cas de traumatisme plutôt que de triomphe. La troisième partie de ce chapitre intitulée *La mythification d'Alexandre le Grand et son incarnation dans le monument «Guerrier à cheval» (The Mythicizing of Alexander the Great and Its Embodiment in the 'Warrior on a Horse' Monument)* concentre spécifiquement sur la personnalité historique d'Alexandre le Grand en utilisant intentionnellement le verbe «mythifier» (instaurer une personne ou un événement en tant que mythe) afin de mettre l'accent sur le référencement qui avait lieu pendant des siècles de cette personnage historique comme une forme de propagande qui alimente faussement le mythomoteur national. Dans cette partie, le monument «Guerrier à cheval» a été caractérisé comme un porteur de symboles culturels imposé du haut vers le bas qui porte d'énormes implications politiques. Au cœur du mythomoteur national renouvelé qui est mis en place avec le projet Skopje 2014, ce monument a été comparé avec la Statue de la Liberté et les connotations symboliques qu'elle présente.

La partie intitulée *Les porteurs de symboles culturels et leur utilisation (Symbol Bearers and Their Utilization)* est le dernier chapitre de cette thèse. Etant de caractère pratique, ce chapitre aborde l'analyse des guides relatifs à Skopje afin de déterminer le nombre et le type de guides disponibles. En analysant une liste de neuf guides dédiés à Skopje, nous avons conclu que ce qui est actuellement disponible est ce qu'on pourrait appeler des guides touristiques «classiques», dont la presque totalité est bien structurée, pratique et utile. Toutefois, lors de l'analyse nous avons reconnu la nécessite pour un type de guide qui sortira des clichés ou qui

sera d'un concept nouveau. Après l'analyse de deux guides non conventionnelles qui sont présentés dans la section suivante, plus précisément, Le guide alternative de Belgrade (Belgrade Alternative Guide) et La série de guides touristiques Juice (Juice City Guide Series) de l'Urban Travel Blog, un ensemble de recommandations a été présenté qui aiderait le processus de développement des guides dans l'avenir. Les recommandations proposées ont souligné la nécessité pour les contenus multilingues et des guides bien structurés mais pas trop structurés qui pourraient limiter la circulation des information naturelle dans les guides, en accordant une attention au discours ou à l'importance de la langue d'introduction qui n'est pas simplement factuelle, mais porte aussi l'esprit d'auteur et est originelle, et enfin la mise de l'accent sur l'utilisation pratique des guides simplement car c'est l'une des caractéristiques essentielles d'un guide. Dans la partie pénultième de ce chapitre intitulé *Présentation d'un ensemble des identités de Skopje (Presentation of a Set of Skopje Identities),* les identités de Skopje mentionnées précédemment liées aux différentes périodes historiques que la ville a vécu et dont les porteurs de symboles culturels qu'elle porte encore ont été répertoriés une fois de plus, certains d'entre elles sont restées les mêmes, tandis que d'autres ont été combinées ou rendues plus sophistiquées. Cet ensemble d'identités (l'ancienne ville, la ville moderne, la ville pop-up, la ville des monuments laids, n'en citant que quelques-uns) feront l'objet d'remaniement supplémentaire avant d'être introduit dans le guide qui devrait être élaboré. La dernière section présente une proposition de guide de Skopje. L'idée est de créer un soi-disant AUTO-GUIDE de Skopje qui serait une plate-forme web basée sur l'ensemble d'identités proposées qui permettrait aux visiteurs du site de choisir un aspect de la ville qu'ils aimeraient explorer (par exemple, en cliquant sur le titre «Skopje - La ville pop-up» ils gagneront accès à la carte de tous les porteurs de symboles culturels qui représentent le particulier récit narratif qu'ils pourraient imprimer et utiliser au cours de leur exploration de la ville). Un grand nombre de récits d'identité narratifs seront fournis, chacun d'entre eux suivent le même schéma des porteurs de symboles culturels indiqués. Un autre aspect, plus physique, de cette auto-guide serait l'introduction d'un système de signalétique urbaine, ou d'un système d'orientation guérilla, ce qui permettrait aux visiteurs de la ville de naviguer leur chemin dans les différents porteurs de symboles culturels de la ville d'une manière plus facile. En choisissant un point de départ initial de la tour des visiteurs, par exemple, la place principale, les signes d'orientation guérilla qui seront installés montreront la direction et le temps qu'il faut pour arriver au porteur de symboles suivant. Les récits d'identité différents auront des couleurs différentes.

Ce sommaire a donné une brève introduction à la thèse intitulée *Porteurs de symboles culturels et leur utilisation dans la construction de l'identité de Skopje (Symbol Bearers and Their Utilization in the Construction of Skopje's Identity)* et un bref aperçu des aspects de discussion qu'elle couvre.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lea Linin was born in 1986 in Skopje, Macedonia. After graduating from Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje with a BA in Translation and Interpreting, she took a different career path than she previously envisaged. Inspired by a thirst for dynamism, new experiences, knowledge and self-improvement, she gained valuable professional experiences working as a project assistant in a non-government organisation, a journalist and editor for a youth website, an English teacher, and a project writer and assistant at a documentary film festival. As part of the internship programme at the UNESCO Chair in Cultural Policy and Management, she broadened her professional experience interning at the European Centre for Culture and Debate *Grad*.