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Macedonian national identity

A study about the current construction of Macedonian national identity in national history
narration

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Abstract

The subject of the study is the contemporary national identity of the Macedonians which reflects the actuality and importance of national identity and nationalism in present time. Grounding the research in theoretical frameworks which explore the shaping of national identity and the meaning of history in relation to it, using Rusen's typology of historical narration as a methodological tool and pointing the impact national historical narratives in school education have in that creation, the research question is; how is national identity in the republic of Macedonia shaped today through national historical narration? The "significant for us in history" perspective framed with theoretical accounts about the significance of national identity aims to open up new perspectives in the discussion of the contemporary Macedonian identity.

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Abbreviations and definitions

FYROM-Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia

EU-European Union

UN- The United Nations

Pirin Macedonia- the part of geographical Macedonia located in Bulgaria

Vardar Macedonia- the part of geographical Macedonia located in the present republic of Macedonia

Aegean Macedonia- the part of geographical Macedonia lying in northern Greece, called likewise in Greece

Geographical Macedonia- territorial location of the 3 previously mentioned parts dating from ancient history

ASNOM- anti-fascistic assembly of the national liberation army of Macedonia

1 Introduction

The revolutionary battle-cry of “Vive la Nation” during a decisive battle for the French revolutionaries in 1792 was interpreted by Goethe as the symbol of a new epoch in world history.¹

Two centuries later that new epoch, the one of the organization of political space along national lines, showed aspects of its collapse with an increasingly internationalized world setting the tone in questioning the legitimacy and functionality of the nation-state system. In Europe, a post-national era was anticipated through the institutionalization of the ambition of a “supranational European union”.² This eventual transcendence beyond the nation-state was put on hold by, among other events, the reconfiguration of political space along national lines in Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia in the first half of the 1990s. Yet what is remarkable is that the break-up of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia did not only show a revival of the nation-state and national idea but instead of its transcendence into a post national era, transcendence towards a post-multinational era. As Brubaker notices “far from moving beyond the nation-state, history-European history at least- was moving back to the nation-state.”³ This could be interpreted as a fragmental regressive trend of a larger, more post-national friendly one. Despite what analysts may argue about the future of the national-states, their contemporary significance together with the significance of contemporary national identity issues is undeniable. Among the newly created states, national identity and nationalism remain central to politics. Curtin assert on that subject that “political identity became nationalized in modern Europe to the point where nationality equaled identity(including democratic political identity)and became another sort of social fact or social construction that is taken for granted, a cognitive frame in which to threaten nationality is to threaten identity.”⁴

¹Brubaker, Rogers *Nationalism reframed – nationhood and the national question the new Europe*, Cambridge, New York,1996, p.1

² Brubaker,p.2

³ Brubaker,p.2

⁴ Curtin, Deirdre M. *Postnational democracy – The european union is search of a political philosophy*, Kluwer Law International, The Hague, 1997, p.15

1.1 Introducing the Subject

The case of the republic of Macedonia and its national identity, which is at the centre of interest in this study, undeniably reflects the actuality and importance of national identity and nationalism. Since the break-up of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s Macedonia which was the only republic that seceded peacefully, became at the centre of nationalist contestations. After its declaration of independence in 1991 Bulgaria recognized the new state but not the nation to which the majority belongs nor the language, claiming that the nation is Bulgarian and the language a Bulgarian dialect. The new Yugoslavia refused the ratification of the frontier between Macedonia and Serbia and denied the status of the Macedonian one. Yet the most fervent opposition came from Greece, who challenged the status of the republic of Macedonia by interpreting its constitution, new flag and name as expressions of extraterritorial ambitions.⁵ Greece opposed the application of the name because according to them Macedonia refers to the area in northern Greece called Aegean Macedonia, and denied the existence of any Macedonian national minority, claiming that those calling themselves Macedonians are Slavophone Greeks. The first Macedonian national flag with the Star of Vergina, a symbol from ancient Macedonia, was perceived by Greece as a part of its own cultural heritage, and was denied by Greece who “exerted pressure as a member of the European Union to deny the new republic diplomatic recognition unless it changed its name and flag”.⁶ In an absence of a resolution to the dispute Greece declared an embargo on Macedonia in 1994 which was criticized by most of EC/EU countries and the UN. After an interim accord between Greece and Macedonia in 1995, with which both parties agreed to respect each territory’s integrity, Greece recognized Macedonia as an independent state and Macedonia agreed to change its flag and to make amendments to its constitution to prevent any claims on Greek territory.⁷ The question of the name and of the Macedonian minority in Greece remains unsolved. The shrillness of Greece’s official campaign against the recognition of Macedonia and the public support that it gained initiated a critical rhetoric among Western commentators about regional recidivism which rested on claims about Balkan perspectives of history as different from “our own”.⁸ The described Greek perspective on the subject was viewed by many observers as Balkan rather than European “for a key dimension of this alleged character was an unhealthy concern

⁵ Cowan, Jane K. *Macedonia – the politics of identity and difference*, Pluto press, USA, 2000, p.4

⁶ Cordel, Karl; Wolff, Stefan *The ethnopolitical encyclopaedia of Europe*, PalgraveMacmillan, 2004, p.436

⁷ Cordel, p.436

⁸ Cowan, p.5

with the past.”⁹ While theorists may argue about the character of this concern with the past, the impact it has for the republic of Macedonia and its nation is significant both geopolitically and socially as Greece enjoys a more favoured geopolitical position. Macedonia had been admitted as a member state to the UN in 1993 but under the provisional name of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). Greece vetoed the entrance of Macedonia in NATO and a threat remains for the same opposition to an entrance in the EU. Diplomatic pressure has been constant to solve the problem with the name “Macedonia” which is yet to be solved today. The provisional solution with the name, specifically the use of another name in international relations than its own constitutional one, is unique in diplomacy. Nevertheless, the one responsible for the EU commission assigned to Macedonia signifies that it is the right of any country to choose its name and that similar situations, where a neighbouring region bears the same name as another country, exist and do not cause any complications. The actual diplomatic attempts to solve the problem with propositions of other names such as Vardar Macedonia , Northern Macedonia , Macedonia-Skopje or others are not solving the situation and as is usually the case , the fervent nationalism of one country towards another is only strengthening the other one’s nationalism in return. The situation is appealing to many human rights organizations who are pointing out the right to self-determination and the identity issues from this conflict, both in the republic of Macedonia as a national identity issue and in Greece as a minority rights issue.

1.2 Purpose and Research Question

The inspiration for this study is the character of the fervent concern in the republic of Macedonia for its often denied and challenged national identity, on the basis of nationalist claims as well as the character of those claims grounded in history. According to the author of this thesis, quite too often, in order to defend national identity, political or civil society claims reach a dead end by using historical counter-arguments instead of pointing out the inadequacy and illegitimacy of using historical claims in contemporary issues related to national identity. As Eley states

⁹ Cowan, p.5

As the claims to nationhood metastasize into the evils of ethnic cleansing and genocide, the task of intellectuals remind us all of the imaginary quality of much of the ideology and history that has gone into the making of nations becomes all the more acute.¹⁰

The subject of the study is the contemporary national identity of the Macedonians. The author highlights the constructiveness of national identity as a general frame highlighted by modernists, yet what can be named “felt “ history deserves no less attention for a sociological account on a nation’s self understanding. In that logic, grounding the research in theoretical frameworks which explore the shaping of national identity and the meaning of history in relation to it and pointing the impact national historical narratives in school education have in that creation, the research question is; how is national identity in the republic of Macedonia shaped today through national historical narration? The study’s purpose is to emphasize one of the internal processes of national identity formation underplaying the wider ideological, political and economic forces which shape such processes. Finally, the “significant for us in history” perspective framed with theoretical accounts about the significance of national identity aims to open up new perspectives in the discussion of the contemporary Macedonian identity.

1.3 Limitations

Due to the author’s native language being Macedonian and the empirical material being written in Macedonian, parts of it have been translated into English. It has to be highlighted that there is a possibility of errors in translations.

The impossibility of embracing all the possible relevant elements to the study from the empirical material led to a necessary selectiveness, and even if the intention has been to make the right selection, possible deficiencies may exist.

The study does not incorporate the existing parts about the historical development related to the Albanian minority for two reasons. Firstly the sequences about “Macedonian national history” are about the ethnic Macedonians, giving ethnicity an essential place. Secondly the study’s length would hardly permit it.

¹⁰ Eley, Geoff;Suny, Grigor *Becoming national – a reader*, Oxford, 1996, p.12

1.4 Methodology, material and structure

The study is an in-depth qualitative analysis of historical narration in Macedonian history schoolbooks in relation to national identity. The theoretical framework had an implicit impact on the selection of the elements perceived through the analysis as relevant. The theoretical accounts through oppositions like “what is a nation” versus “when is a nation”, tend to explore divergent theoretical perspectives as well as the link between them in order to get an adequate perspective on the subject. Perspectives on the meaning of history are acknowledged and Rusens’ methodological account on the functions and the typology of historical narration are used as an analytical tool.

Schoolbooks in relation to the purpose of the subject are chosen as empirical material, supported by several scholars acknowledgement of the use of the educational system as one of the instruments for the shaping and representation of national identity. The empirical material chosen for the analysis is extracted from present day history schoolbooks used in general high school education for their wide content in comparison to other schoolbooks used in more specialized programs. The material consists of 3 books, one for each respective educational year. High school education is divided into 4 years of study, yet the schoolbook for the fourth year is omitted from this analysis because the period between 1945 and 2001 is already assessed in the last part of the third book, without the period between 1991-2001 which is not of interest. The focus lies on the period from ancient history until the independence of Macedonia, which is the basis for the new nation–state in terms of historical and national consciousness while the chapters analysed are the ones about “the history of Macedonia”.

The structure of the analysed empirical material is similar to the structure of the analysed books, yet with a necessary diminution of chapters and particularly under-chapters, in order to follow the historical continuity chronologically and attempting to stay true to the original approach and to permit a better understanding of the intended continuity of the authors.

2 Theoretical Foundations

It is significant to underline that there has been a growing distance between the more recent academic thinking about nations and nationalities and popular and journalistic views of ethnic conflicts and nationalism. Eley and Suny suggest that this is due to a radical transformation of the perspectives of theoreticians and researchers upon these topics. Only decades ago the idealist and organic thinking about nations was still prevalent in academic works. The nation was perceived as “natural and objective in a world fatally divided into nations based on cultural and linguistic diversity with national self-realization as a legitimate goal of political struggles and wars”.¹¹ Modernization theorists connected the notion of the nation and the emergence of nationalism to the rise of modernity moving theoretical accounts from primordialist and essentialist views towards the currently predominant views of the nation as constructed or invented.¹² Modernist theoretical approaches still diverge in different ways but as implied in this research, can still be intertwined in a complementary manner.

2.1 What is a nation versus when is a nation

Nation, nationality and nationalism are irrevocably significant features of the contemporary world. As Andersson states, “The reality is quite plain: the “end of the era of nationalism”, so long prophesied, is not remotely in sight. Indeed, nation-ness is the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time”.¹³ A vast amount of literature exists trying to explain and analyse these complex features yet Huth Sethon Watson, an imminent researcher in this field, observes “I am driven to the conclusion that no scientific definition of the nation can be devised; yet the phenomenon has existed and exists.”¹⁴ This observation is sustained among numerous theoreticians. Yet Brubaker stresses the inadequacy of the question “what is a nation”. Nations should be thought of as categories of practice and not as substantial, enduring collectivities. Nationhood is to Brubaker an “institutionalized cultural and political form” and nation-ness a

¹¹ Eley, p.4

¹² Eley, p.6

¹³ Anderson, p.3

¹⁴ Anderson, p.3

“contingent event”.¹⁵ According to him nation-ness and nationalism should be at the heart of theoretical research.

According to Anderson, the notion of nation-ness incorporates the wide signification of nationality. Andersson’s point of departure is that nation-ness and nationalism are specific cultural artefacts. In an anthropological spirit, he describes the nation as “an imagined political community and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.”¹⁶ His perspective is that all communities larger than primordial villages are imagined because the people living in it will never meet and still they will apprehend each other with an image of their communion. Nations are limited because all have boundaries with other nations and as a community they are conceived as “a deep horizontal comradeship.”¹⁷ Gellner argues that true communities exist which can be advantageously juxtaposed to nations. He states that “Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist”. Yet according to Andersson, “communities are to be distinguished not by their falsity but by the style in which they are imagined”.¹⁸ It is the invention of the pretences of nationalism that is the mutual element of their two statements. The first one being in favour of creation and the later one in favour of falsity. Yet attention has to be drawn to the place they give to culture. Anderson searches answers in the cultural roots of nationalism for the reason that colossal sacrifices are made in the name of nations. Gellner also argues in favour of an understanding with culture and continuity as central to national identity. Modernists approach early origins as an illusion or as irrelevant. It is culture that goes with continuity through history and through different forms of organization of the society which is relevant.¹⁹

Gellners vision that nationalism invents nations where they do not exist made him a lot of opponents, one of them is his former student A. Smith. Smith agrees that nationalism is a modern phenomenon but insists that “ethnies “, which are much older than nations, existed before nationalism.²⁰ According to Smith it is important to trace the cultural foundations of

¹⁵ Brubaker, p. 21

¹⁶ Anderson, p.6

¹⁷ idem

¹⁸ idem

¹⁹ Gellner, Ernest, Nationalism, Ernest Gellner 1997, bokförlaget Nya Doxa 1999, p.115

²⁰ Gellner, p.10

nations in different periods of history with an analysis of the nation's social and symbolic resources. He explores the question "Is there a single concept of the nation and how would that concept relate to different concepts of the nation through history?"²¹ Smith argues that those forms of national community "are dependent on certain cultural traditions stemming from antiquity which have shaped their members ethos and sense of national identity"²². In order to explore those traditions questions of definition and periodization have to be addressed as issues. He perceives the question "When is a nation" as central. Smith refers to Connor, according to whom nations are self-aware ethnic groups which formed on the basis of a conviction that they are ancestrally related. Yet the fact that they may not be ancestrally related is also irrelevant because "it is not factual history but felt history that counts in the making of nation".²³ While ethnic groups may be a "fixture of history" existing nations are seen as modern and really quite recent.²⁴ If according to modernists the relevant history for discussing the nations is the one dating from the late 18th century, Smith is questioning "the dating of the nations" and its relevance for shaping the sense of national identity, referring to different forms of nations in different periods of history.²⁵ Hutchinson points out that in order to analyze national identity it is more suitable to have a historical approach because identity politics are too complex to allow sociological prediction. He adds that in order to form a national identity there must be a bank of historical memories and a solid popular heritage on which to build, since shared historical experiences and traumatic pasts reinforce national identity and cannot simply be forgotten.²⁶

2.2 A general understanding

In order to understand nations, according to Anderson "it is important to consider how they have come into historical being, in what way their meaning has changed over time and why today they command such profound emotional legitimacy."²⁷ To understand a nation it is useful to apprehend it by aligning it with the large cultural systems that preceded it. Andersson refers to religious communities and dynastic realms as relevant cultural systems that preceded nationalism

²¹ Smith, , Anthony D., *The cultural foundations of nations-Hierarchy, Covenant, and Republic*, Blackwell publishing, 2008,p.1

²² Smith, 2008, p.2

²³ idem

²⁴ Smith, 2008, p. 1-2

²⁵ idem

²⁶ Delanty, Gerard; Hutchinson, John; Kaufmann, Eric, Özkirimli, Umut and Wimmer, Andreas "Debate on John Hutchinson's *Nations as Zones of Conflict*" nummer 2-journal "Nations and Nationalism"-Blackwell publishing, 2008, p. 22

²⁷ Anderson, p.4

and made its self-evident plausibility possible. Yet according to him, what buffered the spread of nationalism were the technical means which made the representation of an imagined community such as the nation possible. Those were the novel and the newspaper, which flowered in Europe in the 18th Century. ²⁸ “Everywhere, in fact, as literacy increased, it became easier to arouse popular support with the masses discovering a new glory in the print elevation of languages they had humbly spoken”.²⁹The narration of history through print media shaped the transcendence of an experienced event into a concept and to a model. Andersson’s illustration of this concept of shaping events through narration is clear as he points out that “The overwhelming and bewildering concatenation of events experienced by its workers and its victims became a “thing” and with its own name: The French revolution. The experience was shaped by millions of printed words into a “concept” on the printed page, and in due course, into a model.”

2.3 A specific approach

Smith acknowledges a critical difference between the model of the nation in Western Europe versus the Eastern Europe and Asia. He characterizes the non-western model as being an “ethnic conception of the nation”. This new ethnic model challenged the western one and added new elements to it. The main difference between the two models emerges in their distinguishing features, namely the emphasis in the eastern model on a community of birth and native culture opposed to the possibility of choosing which nation one belongs to in the western one. ³⁰ Descent, whether presumed or factual, is focused on more than territory in the eastern model. “Whether you stayed in your community or emigrated to another, you remained ineluctably, organically a member of the community of your birth and were forever stamped by it.”³¹Languages and customs in the eastern ethnic model replace the use of law in the Western civic model, making the part played by lexicographers, philologists and folklorist significant in the early nationalisms in the east. Smith’s theory meets Andersson’s when stating that the linguistic and ethnographic research in the past and present culture provided materials for a blueprint of the “nation-to-be” even when linguistic revivals failed. It was by creating a widespread awareness

²⁸ Anderson, p.25

²⁹ Anderson, p.80

³⁰ Smith, Anthony D. *National identity*, Penguin books, London, 1991, p.11

³¹ Smith, 1991, p. 11

of the myths, history and linguistic traditions of the community that they substantiated and crystallized the idea of the nation.³²

He asserts that the components of the Western model of the nation are historic territory, legal-political community, legal-political equality of members, and common civic culture and ideology while the components of the Eastern model include genealogy and presumed descent ties, popular mobilization, vernacular languages, customs and traditions.³³ Despite these divisions it is important to stress that every nationalism is multidimensional and contains civic and ethnic elements in varying degrees and forms.³⁴ Yet he stresses that the functions of the national identity can be divided into "external" and "internal" objective consequences. The territorial, economic and political functions are embedded in the external one. The important aspects in the territorial function are social space of the nation, historic territory locating communities in time and space, and sacred centers or objects revealing their "moral geography". The economical function is distinguished by the quest for control over territorial resource, manpower and division of labor. Political personnel, regulation and election of government taken as "grounded in criteria of national interest" reflecting national will and identity.³⁵ In contrast to the external functions the internal functions are more intimate, incorporating the socialization and binding of members as nationals and citizens with shared values, symbols and traditions. Flags, coinage, anthems, uniforms, monuments and ceremonies are used symbols reminding members of their common heritage. Finally an important internal function is the meaning that is given to individuals when defining and locating themselves in the world through collective personality and distinctive culture. It is this process of self-definition and location that Smith finds to be the key to national identity.³⁶

Today this is according to Smith achieved through compulsory, standardized, public mass education systems, through which state authorities hope to inculcate national devotion"³⁷ Similarly Andersson argues in his approach of national identity -building that besides the rise of

³² Smith, 1991, p.12

³³ Smith, 1991, p.11

³⁴ Smith, 1991, p.13

³⁵ Smith, 1991, p.16

³⁶ Smith, 1991, p.17

³⁷ Smith, 1991, p.16

“genuine” nationalist enthusiasm there is even a “Machiavellian instilling of nationalist ideology through the mass media, the educational system, administrative regulations and so forth.”³⁸

2.4 National in form or in substance

Even the language used to refer to the nation is reviling. The language describes its object using the vocabulary of kinship (motherland, patria) which denotes something to which one is naturally tied.³⁹ A special kind of contemporaneous community is suggested by language as well as national anthems sung on national holidays. Andersson even speaks about national songs as “the echoed physical realization of the imagined community.”⁴⁰ According to ethno-symbolism, the power of national identity lies in history and cultural symbols, where “historical myths and a sense of cultural distinctiveness lie at the core of national identity and an analysis of nation builders must include their cultural assumptions and symbolic resources as well as the political setting in which they act.”⁴¹ Harrowitz argues that issues such as the status of languages, the names of town and states, the identity of incumbents in honoric positions, national anthems “have been significant and deadly in various times”⁴². He asserts that what appears like a minor issue involves deeper disputes over group status and acknowledges the role of politics for the determination of status. It is what demarcates the contestants that define the symbolic issues. He states that “The objective of symbolic demands is a public affirmation of legitimacy where legitimacy is contested.”⁴³ Important to notice is that status conflict can have an impact on shaping group culture which affects group identity as well. Specific to symbolic claims is that compromises are hard to be found. Harrowitz explains “Whereas material advancement can be measured both relatively and absolutely, the status advancement of one ethnic group is entirely relative to the status of others. Ethnic claims are expressed in moral language and are not quantifiable.”⁴⁴

³⁸ Anderson, p.18

³⁹ Anderson, p.143

⁴⁰ Andersson, p.145

⁴¹ Delanty, Gerard; Hutchinson, John; Kaufmann, Eric, Özkirimli, Umut and Wimmer, Andreas “*Debate on John Hutchinson’s Nations as Zones of Conflict*” nummer 2-journal “Nations and Nationalism”-Blackwell publishing, 2008, p.22

⁴² Harrowitz, p.286

⁴³ idem

⁴⁴ Harrowitz, p. 291

Yet Andersson raises the question “But have states become national only in form or in substance too, meaning nationalist?”⁴⁵

He treats nationalism as a pathology of modern developmental history and as the equivalent of infantilism for societies being closer to “kinship” and “religion” rather than to liberalism or fascism. Important and quite reviling divergences being:

The objective modernity of nations to the historian’s eye versus their subjective antiquity in the eyes of nationalist. 2 The formal universality of nationality as a socio-cultural concept versus the irremediable particularity of its concrete manifestation. 3 The political power of nationalism versus their philosophical poverty and even incoherence”⁴⁶

Breuilly argues that approaches to nationalism have to take into account that there are three different kinds of subjects involved which are ideas, sentiments and politics which vary in intensity in different societies. Smith, on the other hand, argues that nationalism consists of ideology, language and sentiment⁴⁷. Nevertheless approaches tend to concentrate on only one of these subjects, thereby simplifying nationalism.⁴⁸

2.5 Meaning and interpretation in history

It is important to acknowledge that contemporary scholars in the field of history tend to stress the importance of the way a society makes sense of its history in order to understand the society itself. In that sense Andersson acknowledges that for the identity of a society it is the consciousness of the past that is of greater significance than the representation of its present. He stresses that “the understanding a nation has of its history says a lot about its perspective on its present and future ability to develop and change.”⁴⁹ Yet another hermeneutic perspective is important to add to that assumption, which is the one that this identity is never unchangeable, complete and definitive but is constantly connected to new experiences and interpretations of reality. A critical approach of identity valuable to take into consideration is Karlsson’s description of identity as “a historical, cultural and social phenomenon.”⁵⁰ Relevant to notice is Karlsson’s

⁴⁵ Anderson, p.3

⁴⁶ Anderson, p.5

⁴⁷ Smith, 2008, p.72

⁴⁸ Breuilly, p.404.

⁴⁹ Karlsson, Klas-Göran; Historia som vapen, Natur och kultur, 1999, p.11

⁵⁰ Karlsson, p.11-12

acknowledgement about the significance of history, which has changed not only over the last decades but over the centuries as well. He acknowledges that what was called history writing in the middle ages could easily be named something different today, since a fine line used to exist between history and political debate as well as between history and literature back then. The choice of what was relevant for history was demarcated by its ends and what used to be “objectively” significant in history is replaced by the “subjectively” significant today.⁵¹ With a hermeneutic perspective history is always a result of “an interpretative activity built on preconceptions”⁵², which can easily be paraphrased about national history as well. The relationship that historians have to their material is far from uncomplicated and needs to be taken into consideration about the interpretation of history, as Beverly Southgate stresses in regard to historians “they are of course themselves historically constituted beings – affected in multifarious ways by the pasts they have encountered –and it is as such that they then, with consequent aspirations for the future, look back and try to make some sense of what they see.”⁵³

To make sense of a history is then what is central according to Jörn Rüsen, and to understand historical consciousness it is necessary to analyse historical narration. He defines historical narration to be a “system of mental operations defining the field of historical consciousness.”⁵⁴ He perceives history as an interpretation of the threatening experience of time made through the process of narration which implies the process of making sense. “Narration is a process of poiesis, of making or producing a fabric of temporal experience woven according to the need to orient oneself in the course of time...and the product is ‘a history’ ”. ⁵⁵ Yet it is important to emphasize that a historical narration is a specific type of narration with specific qualities which bring up the necessity of orientating practical life in time.

Rüsen presents an account of the three functions a historical narration has. The first one is the mobilization of the experience of past time in order to make the experience of present time more understandable and the expectation of future time possible. The second one is to organize the unity of these three dimensions- past, present and future, by a concept of continuity. This

⁵¹ Karlsson, p.22

⁵² Karlsson, p.36

⁵³ Beverly Southgate, 2008, *The Authors*. Journal compilation © 2008 The Historical Association and Blackwell Publishing, 97-98

⁵⁴ Rüsen, J. *Historical narration :Foundation,Types,Reason*. History and theory, vol.26no.4,p.87-97

⁵⁵ idem

implicates the adjustment of the real experience of time to human intentions and expectations. It makes the past relevant to the present and influences the future. Establishing the identity of the authors and listeners of the historical narration is the third required quality which brings up the plausibility of the concept of continuity by “convincing the listeners of the permanence and stability of themselves in the temporal change of their world and of themselves.”⁵⁶ In short, the general function of historical narration is to orient life in time by an act of selectivity of temporal experience which has to achieve continuity in order to stabilize identity. Logically, this account can be used to understand present perspectives on what is or should be relevant for the listener according to the authors view. In order to understand the narrative fundamentals of historical knowledge materialized in a historiography, Rüsen gives us the means of typology as a method of passing from abstract to concrete. He accentuates the 4 different functional types of historical narration with corresponding forms of historiography: affirmation, regularity, negotiation and transformation. The following table illustrates Rüsen’s concept used as a methodological tool in the study.

	Memory of	Continuity as	Identity by	Sense of time
Traditional narrative	Origins constituting present forms of life	Permanence of originally constituted forms of life	Affirming pre-giving cultural patterns of self-understanding	Time gain sense of eternity
Exemplary narrative	Cases demonstrating applications of general rules of conduct	Validity of rules of covering temporary different systems of life	Generalizing experiences of time to rules of conduct	Time gain the sense of spatial extension
Critical narrative	Deviations problematizing present forms of life	Alteration of given ideas of continuity	Denying given patterns of identity	Time gains the sense of being an object of judgment
Genetical narrative	Transformation of alien forms of life into proper ones	Development in which forms of life change in order to establish their permanence dynamically	Mediating permanence and change to a process of self-definition	Time gains sense of temporalization

⁵⁶ Rüsen, p.89

3 Analysis

3.1 Introducing the subject

In introducing the subject of history in the first year history textbook a well known proverb related to the significance of history is cited, “Historia est magister vitae”, which means history is the teacher of life. This proverb is integrated in the introductory chapter, where the purpose of learning about history and the importance of this discipline is underlined. While it describes the character of history as being educative, it testifies for a general exemplary type of narration which is explicitly quoted by Rösen illustrating exemplary narration.⁵⁷ It further asserts that the aim in learning about the history and culture of the European states and the European Union is to “acknowledge the positive historical and cultural experience of the past of the European countries and the European union, our wider future homeland”.⁵⁸ This is an explicit version of Rösen’s perspective on linking the three dimensions of time yet the function of plausibility may be questioned. The use of the notion of “positivity” without its assumed counterpart “negativity” and the allusion about the European union as “our wider future homeland” tends to establish the identity of the author/reader relationship as showing great subjectiveness yet establishing one of the narrative functions, namely establishing identity “convincing the listeners of the permanence and stability of themselves in the temporal change of their world and of themselves”.⁵⁹ The content of the schoolbooks about Macedonia does not reflect this explicitly formulated intention, yet noteworthy and arguable is that it reveals an element of relating the three dimensions of time through an extreme case of what in hermeneutics is referred to as “significant for us in history”, extended to a projected “significant for our future”. Keeping in mind the desire and ongoing process of the republic of Macedonia to enter the European Union, it can be viewed as an extremely explicit way of mobilizing the experience of time so that the experiences of present

⁵⁷ Boskoski, Milan; Dervishi, Nebi;Neziri, Safet;Magovski, Dime;nikoloski, Sasho. *History – first year highschool education*, Prosvetno delo, Skopje, 2006, p.7

⁵⁸ Boskoski, p.7

⁵⁹ Rösen, p. 82

time becomes understandable and the expectation of future time possible which is the central function of history.⁶⁰

3.2 Ancient History

The historical narration related to Macedonia begins early in prehistoric times, which correlates with the suggestion some scholars make of the importance of having a past as ancient as it can be for the stability of an identity. It is worth noting that “Macedonia” as a name is directly introduced without additional notifications bounding it with its geographical location, specifically “Macedonia takes the central part of the Balkan Peninsula”⁶¹, notifying further that her southern parts reached the Aegean sea. It is also noticeable that the described territory is as traditional narratives describe it, the memory of “a pre-given cultural pattern of self-understanding” which embraces territories not comprising the actual territory of the republic of Macedonia but implies its antiquity. The territory is described as having been populated already in the Palaeolithic, the way of life of the population is depicted and the narration continues in the same fashion with the stone and iron ages. One could argue that the narration assesses the origins constituting present forms of life and implies continuity by enumerating numerous archaeological localities present on the territory of today’s republic of Macedonia, as well as out of its actual borders which stresses that the territory is perceived as having been located out with its present borders. The identification with the denoted geographical territory is related to the way traditional narratives do “form identity affirming given or pre-given cultural patterns of self-understanding”. Numerous archaeological localities and artefacts⁶² are enumerated and used as well as visual narration, namely pictures of some of the localities and artefacts which emphasize the link to the territorial past. Those localities and artefacts are publicly known which intensifies the sense of permanence of the origins and give plausibility to self-understanding which is typical for traditional narrative.

The next chapter approaches Antiquity. It begins by assessing the territory and population in separate chapters, continues with the period before and then during Phillip the second, the time of the Macedonian state during Alexander the third Macedonian, the life and culture of ancient

⁶⁰ Idem

⁶¹ Boskoski, p.16

⁶² Boskoski, lying around several enumerated cities located in contemporary Macedonia. the founded artifact of that period and cave paintings. Several archeological localities are enumerated that exists in the territory of the republic of Macedonia today like the “megalithic observatory in Kokino” built 4000 years ago and pictures of popularly known artifacts are used as illustration like the “big mother” “ or “the golden mask” dating from this epochs. p.16-20

Macedonians, the fall of the state of Alexander the Macedonian and ends with a part on the Hellenic culture. The authors emphasize the importance, antiquity and specificity of the Macedonian population in that period stating "the Antic period of the Balkan peninsula is characterized by the populations which by origins are the most ancient in this land, like the Hellenics, the Illyrians, the Thracians and the Macedonians."⁶³ "The geographical and ethnical frontiers" of Macedonia are firstly assessed denoting frontiers that go beyond the actual ones towards current Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia. It is mentioned that Ancient authors used the names "upper and lower Macedonia" to describe the territory which demonstrates the application of the relation name/territory in an exemplary manner using memories of cases that demonstrate applications of general rules. It can be deducted that importance is given to the relation between the name and the territory emphasizing the application of the use of the name Macedonia in order to describe the territory already in ancient time.

In regards to the population living there it is said that there were many tribes among which the one of the most known were the Macedonians. Here the narration continues to approach the memory of origins. The creation of the Macedonian state is then assessed, which began as described with the unification of the Macedonian tribes and it is stated that "the creation of the Macedonian people was a long process which started in the 8th century BC."⁶⁴ What is significant is the introduction of the use of "the Macedonian people" which can be viewed as a characteristic of exemplary narrative, namely "identity by generalizing experiences of time to rules of conduct "⁶⁵, generalizing identity. The connotation that is suggested by the longevity of the process of the creation of the Macedonian people gives place to the connection of ancienty to present time. The several kings as well as the politico-economical and social circumstances in the Macedonian state and all the reforms that occurred in different segments of life are assessed. Myths are presented through pedagogically added informative sequences like the text from an ancient historian in which he describes the virtues and mythological powers of the Macedonian king Perdika.⁶⁶ Mythology is emphasized by a pedagogical assignment to investigate about the mythological hero" Makedon."⁶⁷ The importance myths have for the creation of a national

⁶³ Boskoski, p.50

⁶⁴ Boskoskip.70

⁶⁵ Rusen, p.91

⁶⁶ Boskoski, p.72

⁶⁷ Boskoski, p.73

identity is emphasized in the perspective of several scholars. The geographical enlargement towards the sea and the relations with the city states like Sparta or Athens are described as the origins and genealogy of the kings, which is a characteristic for traditional narratives which incorporate enumerations of rulers, yet Rüsen stresses that stories about accomplishments, capacities, importance and virtue or vice of rulers are exemplary. The rules of the different kings in the period of Antiquity are assessed stressing the way they consolidated and enlarged the state and emphasized their virtues. An example is the following extract introducing the rule of Phillip 2:

The Macedonian state strenghtebed during the rule of Phillip 2, from 359 to 336 BC. He was a sharp *statesman*, a great diplomat and skilled army leader. Under his reign Macedonia grew into the greatest economical, military and political power in the Balkan. ⁶⁸

His military reforms are also emphasized and his army, the “Macedonian phalange”, as the most powerful military power from that time. The demonstrative case of Phillip2 ‘s virtues are assessed through the stories of successful wars against its neighbours, the enlargement of the Macedonian state, until the war with the Hellenic states and his proclamation as hegemon of the Hellenic states and then his death during his decision to invade Persia .⁶⁹ The narration continues with the successor of Phillip 2, namely “the Macedonian state in the time of Alexander 3 the Macedonian.” In the same fashion superlatives are used and the continuity of the Macedonian kingdom and its enlargement is sustained as well as the way of narrating qualities. While describing his successful raid towards the East, it is stated that “he was perceived as liberator” in the conquered lands.⁷⁰ The narration, by highlighting the succession of Macedonain rulers , the link between Alexander ‘s predecessor and himself tends to also highlight the continuity of the Macedonian identity of the rulers. It is emphasized that Alexander the Macedonian was of great importance in the history of “the old “Macedonian state. “Under his reign Macedonia became a world power. The territory was on 3 continents Europe, Asia and Africa.” The life and culture of the ancient Macedonians is assessed and called into attention are their own specific cults and gods which are described and in a methodological question are called into attention, emphasis is put on the link between past and present, namely “think about: Have the sun and the lion, as symbols been respected by the Macedonians from antiquity to our days? Where and when? ⁷¹

⁶⁸ Boskoski, p.75

⁶⁹ Boskoski, p.77

⁷⁰ idem

⁷¹ Boskoski, p.83

The narrative function of linking the dimensions of time, namely past to present through symbols is evident, indirectly emphasizing the present use of the symbols for national means, like the sun in the national flag. Symbols have a major importance for the successful maintenance of national identity, to emphasize a sense of communion as several scholars assert. That the Macedonians had their own language is also highlighted and it is stated that Alexander the Macedonian communicated with that language to his soldiers as well. The importance of languages and symbols as ethnical characteristic is used as a demarcating device between "us and the others" underlining identity. It is said that

"The Macedonians had their own language. It differed from the language from the one of the other neighbouring people- the Helens, Illyrians and Thracians."⁷²

The existence of a Macedonian calendar and of Macedonian Olympic games are two other mentioned cultural characteristic that once again stress the distinctiveness of the Macedonians, which is explicitly highlighted in the following statement "the Macedonians were a separate populace which was distinguishing by the way of life , customs, traditions, way of clothing, symbols, warring, and more."⁷³

The narration continues with the change that occurred for the Macedonian kingdom. It is described that after Alexander's death three separate states were created from the Macedonian kingdom. In the Balkans it was the Macedonian kingdom and the others were in Asia and Egypt. The Macedonian kingdom is described as being dominant in the Balkans in that period when several cities were built, and it is stressed that one of the most important of these cities was Thessaloniki.⁷⁴ Noticeable is that the information concerning the territorial location of Macedonia is given a constant importance, and that the territory included Thessaloniki.

The period after Alexander's death until the great conquerors of the Roman Empire is called "Hellenic" or "Macedonian", giving the narration a critical characteristic and opening minds to alternatives. Hellenism is described as being the mixture of the culture of the Macedonians as rulers, the Hellenics for the language, literature and philosophy and the culture of Egypt, Persia and the people of the Middle East. It is notified that a lot of the Macedonians who went to conquer the east never came back and "propagated the Macedonian and the Hellenic culture". Attention is placed on the influence of the Macedonian culture on the Hellenic one. The

⁷² idem

⁷³ idem

⁷⁴ Boskoski, p.86

importance culture has in framing an identity and the older kind of logic that national identity builds on gain through the narration of this period's traditional virtues by affirming "given or pre-given cultural patterns of self understanding". Important to notice is that significance is given to the existence of a noteworthy Macedonian culture beside the Hellenic one, yet one can view that importance is also given to the fusion of both the Hellenic and the Macedonian.

It is assessed that the last dynasty of the Macedonian kingdom ended with the roman invasion in the 3rd century and the Macedonian cities became a progressively Roman province. The territorial and political changes and the division in Macedonia prima and Macedonai secunda are also assessed, yet a more significant change is noted in the culture of the people. Romanisation occurred with the implementation of the Latin language, religion and culture, money, colonization with roman citizens and the creation of "new cities-roman colonies".⁷⁵ It is stated that the amount of cities augmented while the older cities developed. Some of the most important cities in Macedonia in that period are described and illustrated with pictures of the actual archaeological localities lying in the present territory of the republic of Macedonia.⁷⁶ One could argue that those pictures, linking that period with present time, as well as the pictures of coins, especially the one showing the name Macedonia engraved on it, are visual exemplary narrations.⁷⁷ The narration describes the beginning of the implementation of Christianity in Macedonia and its proliferation through Europe from there, which is significant for the narration of identity due to the role it played in the preservation and elevation of literacy which is, as Andersson mentioned, important for the development of a national identity.⁷⁸ Stories of the origins of rulers and of foundations are typically traditional narratives. These stories shape identity by affirming pre-given cultural patterns of self-understanding and the narration of this ancient period is, one could argue, a mainly traditional narrative. The ancienty of Macedonia is assesed with the use of many superlatives, symbols and even myths as illustrations and is emphasized as mostly a greatness in territorial, political and cultural achievement.

3.3 The (early) Middle Ages

⁷⁵ Boskoski, p.113

⁷⁶ Boskoski, p.114-117, the archeological localities are Heraklea Lynkestis, Stoboi, Scupi and Lichnidos.

⁷⁷ Boskoski, p.110

⁷⁸ Boskoski, p.118

The subsequent chapter is named "The Slavs in Macedonia", supporting the course of history yet calling attention to what is significant for the Macedonians, specifically the place of the Slavs.

It is said that:

After the unsuccessful siege of Thessaloniki, between the years 581-584, a part of the Slavs stayed to live in Macedonia, and the other returned behind the Danube. Around the end of the 6th century, Macedonia, excepting Thessaloniki, was populated by Slavs.⁷⁹

Yet it is stressed that after several unsuccessful attempts, the Slavs succeeded in populating Thessaloniki as well.⁸⁰ Continuity in describing events in geographical frames is sustained in Macedonia as well as regularly assessing the situation with Thessaloniki (Aegean Macedonia). A distinguishing narrative figure in this part is the explicit information of the used references which can be seen as a willingness to support the credibility of the assertions, which emphasize the significance of the asserted parts. One could argue that significance is given to this part of history because of the change that has occurred for the ethnicity of the population.

The notion of "antic Macedonians" is firstly used here in order to describe the relation between the new-coming Slavs and the ones living in the territory before, namely "the Antic Macedonians". The Macedonians are described as Christians who have a higher culture than the Slavs. Identity and representation are both assessed through the means of culture, yet important to notice is the following information:

The Slavs accepted the name of Macedonia for their new homeland and started to call themselves Macedonians, and the native Macedonians accepted the Slavic language and later the Slavic letters. With mutual blinding the Macedonian people were progressively forming.⁸¹

This passage is significant for the shaping of the Macedonian identity. One could argue that the identity of the Macedonian people, which is described as forming progressively, is grounded in the binding of the two ethnies, the Slavs and the native Macedonians. It is a genetical characteristic to find change itself meaningful and significant. The continuity is sustained through the perceived changes as a development in which forms of life change in order to establish their permanence dynamically. In this case, the change is in the ethnicity which is interpreted as a temporally dynamic process. This kind of narrative alters the previous idea of continuity as critical yet it goes further by referring to the Macedonian people-to-be and it accepts the alteration of forms of life as necessary to establish permanence. As Rösen says, "They take away

⁷⁹ Boskoski, p. 163

⁸⁰ Boskoski, p.164

⁸¹ idem

the threat of losing oneself in the temporal movement of human subjectivity interpreting it rather as a chance of gaining oneself.”⁸²

It is mentioned that in the second half of the 7th century the Macedonian Slavic tribes joined together to remove the Byzantine rule in Thessaloniki in order to create their own state but it ended unsuccessfully and the union of the tribes fell apart. It is deductable that emphasis is put on the unwillingness of being under the Byzantine rule and a sense of union between the different tribes is highlighted.

The meaning of the language in relation to a collective identity is significant for both the cultural distinctiveness and the way of spreading ideas of its consciousness. This issue is given importance. It is said that the Slavs used a primitive “alphabet, letter” in their homelands and after their migration they used Greek and Latin letters which prevented them from rightly expressing themselves. The significant place Andersson is giving to language and literacy for their role in identity shaping can be related to the following statement:

The Byzantine empire, in order to gain the Slaves in their circle of cultural influence, through some of their persons created a Slavic “alphabet” and spread Christianity in Slavic language.⁸³

St. Methodius and later his brother St. Cyril were sent to Macedonia and for the faster spreading of Christianity they created the Slavic alphabet. The Slavic alphabet, called Cyrillic, was then created in 855. Its importance for the Macedonian people and the other Slavic people is especially emphasized, as well as the monasteries and their importance for the spreading of literacy since schools were created where monks were learning the Slavic alphabet. Weight is also placed on St. Kliment who in the following period was also sent to spread Christianity to a part of Macedonia that was conquered by the Bulgarian kingdom at that time. In Ohrid, he built a well-known monastery, St Panthelemon, which evolved into “the first Slavic university”.⁸⁴ It is through exemplary narration that the spread of literacy and the Slavic language in that period are assessed, which means that continuity is sustained and generalized to a way that validates continuity.

In the 10th century the largest part of Macedonia was under the Bulgarian kingdom and a smaller part was under the Byzantine Empire.⁸⁵ It is said that a Macedonian was ruling on behalf of the Bulgarian tsar in the largest part of Macedonia. Through insurgency against the Bulgarian rule,

⁸² Rusen, p. 91

⁸³ Boskoski, p.166

⁸⁴ Boskoski, p.168

⁸⁵ Popovski, Dimko; Boskoski, Milan; Dervishi, Nebi;;Ilioski, Jordan;Kotlar, Natasha;Sidorovska-Cupovska, Silvana *History – second year highschool education*, Prosvetno delo, Skopje, 2006, p. 173

and then against the Byzantine rule, Macedonia gained independence. Most significant of all is the rule of one of his sons, Samuil, who enlarged the state significantly and proclaimed himself as the Tsar⁸⁶. The narrative has traditional features, especially when tracing the genealogy of rulers, yet it exemplifies continuity. After his death and the fall of the Macedonia under Byzantine rule, the Macedonian state was eradicated and added to Roman rule. As mentioned, with a blending of traditional (using genealogy) and exemplary (using pictures or stories of successes) manner continuation is sustained and followed by a period of several Macedonian kingdoms and kings and then the enlargement of the Serbian state towards Macedonia. It is noticeable that North Macedonia was now to belong to Serbia and recognized through a pact between Byzantine and Serbia. The Macedonian nobles who did not accept the Serbian government were deported and went to central and south Macedonia. Briefly after the fall of the Serbian kingdom smaller feudal states were established. In Macedonia and in a part of south Serbia 3 feudal independent states were formed. What is significant for the narration here, approaching it through the perspective of sustaining continuity in identity issues, is that the changes that occurred get a peripheral meaning, and sustaining continuity as independent of the main events.⁸⁷ The continuity and significance of literacy in that period, from the 11th to the 14th century, is once again stressed. Books with religious content were written in Slavic language with Glagolyc and Cyrillic letters and in Greek. The authors were monks and religious persons and some of their works are assessed. Exemplified in these accounts are significant centers of literacy and culture, and churches and monasteries which are characteristic artistic features of that period and connecting the past and present through territorial connections.⁸⁸

3.4 Macedonia under Ottoman rule

The first of the Balkan states to experience the threat of the Ottomans was Macedonia. After the death of the last Macedonian king Macedonia fell under Ottoman rule and it is assessed that the city of Thessaloniki fell several times but was conquered 35 years after. The territorial importance is once again discussed. The Macedonian population in the time of Ottoman rule is portrayed as having been subjected to processes of colonization and “islamization”. It is accentuated that the Macedonian population was never truly threatened by this colonization, having remained the most numerous one. Both voluntary and forced islamization are mentioned .Voluntary

⁸⁶ Popovski, p.180

⁸⁷ Rusen, p.

islamisation occurred among rich feudals who wished to keep their land and privileges, while it occurred in order to avoid taxes in the poorer population. An example of forced islamization is the forced recruitment of young boys to serve in the Ottoman army. It is highlighted that islamization occurred in parts of Macedonia but it is mentioned that the Islamized population in the entire Balkan region kept its ethnical characteristics like the language, culture and traditions.⁸⁹ This testifies for the importance given in assessing continuity of ethnicity and implies a perspective noticed in Hutchinson and Smith's evaluation of the importance of ethnicity as well as the place language, culture and tradition have in Smith's assessment of the internal functions of identity. The narrative has a critical sense, approaching time as a judgment and approaching memories of deviations. In the second half of the 16th century the Ottoman Empire began to weaken and to implement higher taxes. The resistance which occurred in Macedonia is described. Unarmed resistance took place by those refusing to pay taxes and refusing islamization. The way parents protected their children is underlined, for instance "the parents hid their children to protect them and they married them at 8-9 years old, mutilated them, they marked them with crosses on their forehead".⁹⁰ Armed resistance took place in the mountains. Here the narration has a distinctive note of pathos. "There, with weapons in their hands, they were fighting against the Ottoman army"⁹¹ The unarmed resistance who were killed were given the status of saints while the armed ones are described as protectors of the people. The existence of numerous popular folk songs existed about the "ajduti" and the participation of women is also brought up.⁹²

The significance of different insurgencies that occurred notably in the 17th century is mentioned, emphasizing the will to make a Macedonian state, as well as the plans for the "renewal of the famous antic states". Symbols are stressed, like the creation of the first "Macedonian emblem" with a picture as illustration.⁹³ The rebellions became a significant insurgence for freedom. A part of the territory of the "Macedonian people" was freed but the insurgence was finally suffocated by the Ottomans. The importance of this insurgence is assessed, being described as "the first time after the fall of the Ottoman power, the Macedonian people show the decisiveness for freedom and for the creation of its own state." The idea pointed out in this part of history is the

⁸⁸ Popovski, p.56

⁸⁹ Popovski, p.60

⁹⁰ Popovski, p.61

⁹¹ Popovski, p.61

⁹² Popovski, p.62

⁹³ Popovski, p.81

people as an entity that in continuity sustained the idea of its own community, implying the consciousness of identity.⁹⁴ It is said that, fearing the Ottomans, most of the population of the north west Macedonia emigrated to Hungary and Austria while Albanians from north Albania started to mass migrate into the deserted territory.⁹⁵ This feature is of importance, especially when noting that Albanians make up the largest minority in the republic of Macedonia. The oriental features and influences from that period in art and architecture are mentioned through a genitive narrative that creates identity, “mediating permanence and change through a process of self-definition.”⁹⁶ The evolution of language in the centers for literary work, the monasteries, is reviewed and the language used, the Old Church Slavonic language and the Macedonian folk speech, is discussed. In translations, the Slavic-church language was progressively left out and elements of the Macedonian language were used. In the 17th and 18th century the commerce development and the bourgeoisie was strengthening which led to the formation of religious and secular schools.⁹⁷ The development of the secular literature influenced the development commercial connection with the west-European countries which influenced the beginning of printed literature and it is said that “the Macedonian culture was spreading in Europe”⁹⁸. Several Macedonian writers are enumerated in order to exemplify the process of printing literature in western European countries⁹⁹. From the perspective of Andersson, as well as the creation and spreading of ideas of unity and national consciousness, the period gains importance.

3.5 The nineteenth century

What is specific for Macedonians in this period are the socio-economical consequences of the fall of the Ottoman power. The Macedonian peasants began losing their land and began migrating to the cities. Artisanal work and commerce were in progress which led to the creation of “a rich Macedonian commercial faction”.¹⁰⁰ Insurrections are mainly assessed in this part of the history. A significant but unsuccessful one is assessed for its goal, namely the freedom of the Macedonian people, and it is stated that the revolutionary center was located in Thessaloniki. A picture

⁹⁴ Idem, p.83

⁹⁵ Idem, p.83

⁹⁶ Rusen, p.

⁹⁷ Popovski, p.88

⁹⁸ Popovski, p.89

⁹⁹ Popovski, p.90

¹⁰⁰ Popovski, p.153

illustrates the flag of the insurrection where a lion, the slogan relating to freedom and the name of Macedonia are visible.¹⁰¹ Another insurrection is assessed and the north east part of Macedonia was the location for the preparation of this insurrection. It is said that the Macedonian emigrants in the kingdom of Bulgaria organized themselves under the name “unity”, with the task of helping the insurgents with armaments and other supplies. The success of the insurgents is highlighted, assessing that they successfully freed 54 localities with 32000 citizens and organized a “government” and other institutions. Weight is placed on the written goals and “aspirations of the Macedonian people for freedom and for the creation of a Macedonian state.”¹⁰² Significant for the identity issue is the standing of the unity of the people territorially and the mutual desire to create a state for the Macedonian people. External functions of identity as assessed by Smith have a significant place in the narration, reaching identity by denying given patterns of identity. The significance of the insurgency for “the history of the Macedonian people, first and foremost for the idea of the independence, of the war for freedom of the Macedonian people and the creation of an independent Macedonian state” is pointed out.¹⁰³

In the second half of the 19th century, negotiations about the future of Macedonia took place and these are assessed through the recounting of the different interests of the Balkans and the great powers. “At the congress the San Stefan accord was reviewed and Macedonia, in her natural and ethnical frontiers was separated /delimited and staid under the Sultan’s rule.” A certain administrative autonomy was mentioned in the Berlin pact which became central to the requests of the Macedonian national and liberating movement. ¹⁰⁴With the Berlin accord the situation of Macedonia stayed the same for 34 years, until 1912. After the Berlin accord the Balkan states started with mutual negotiations for the division of Macedonia. The elements approached are memories of deviations, problematizing the present and testifying for identity by denying given patterns. ¹⁰⁵ Those are the assessments of the propaganda which took place in Macedonia and threatened its identity. The Greek propaganda is described as being the oldest, aiming to “show the ‘Greek character of Macedonia’”.¹⁰⁶ It was characterized by Greek patriarchs destroying the Slavic writings and books in the Macedonian churches and monasteries and the implementation

¹⁰¹ Popovski, p.156

¹⁰² Popovski, p.159

¹⁰³ Popovski, p.161

¹⁰⁴ Popovski, p.164

¹⁰⁵ Rusen p. 94

¹⁰⁶ Popovski, p.166

of Greek schools to spread the Greek language and history. The Serbian propaganda was less successful, merely sending teachers and books to Macedonia. The Bulgarian propaganda was also sending teachers and books and opening schools which were taught in Bulgarian.¹⁰⁷ The fight for freedom from the Greek language and clerks in the churches and the revival of the Ohrid part continued.¹⁰⁸

A genetical narrative takes place assessing the roll of the Macedonian emigration. In the 19th century a lot of Macedonians emigrated to the near Balkan countries or further. The reasons named were mainly economical, political and educational. It is important to notice that “outside of their homeland, most of them continued their activity for the affirmation of the Macedonian specificity.”¹⁰⁹ Several societies were formed in the end of the 19th century in Bulgaria, Serbia, Russia and Switzerland. Important to the narrative function related to the identity of the nation and its affirmation is the description of the aims, works and representatives of those societies. Examples of these are the numerous organizations formed by Macedonian students. One is the “Slavic-Macedonian literacy circle” in which stress was put on the “need of building a Macedonian literature language and the need of the renewal of the Ohrid archbishopric as a Macedonian national church”.¹¹⁰ The “Macedonian working socialist group” was formed in Sofia, Bulgaria which “thought that only with a revolution it was possible to liberate the enslaved territory”. In Belgrade a group formed whose principle aim was to study Macedonia from historical, geographical and historical perspectives. A Macedonian club was also formed with reviews with names like “Autonomous Macedonia” with the aim of “propagating the national idea of the creation of an autonomous Macedonian state”.¹¹¹ The revolutionary organization is of importance, it is said that “the existence/appearance of MRO (the name of the organization) marked the beginning of the organized revolutionary fight of the Macedonian people.”¹¹² Their aim was the fight against the Ottoman power in Macedonia and to create an independent state through armed insurgence. “Its most high achievement was the insurgence of Ilinden (1903)”¹¹³, which is described as significant for the Macedonian nation and the creation of a state. It is this insurrection which is celebrated as the national day in Macedonia. The insurgency created the

¹⁰⁷ idem

¹⁰⁸ Popovski, p.167

¹⁰⁹ Popovski, p.169

¹¹⁰ Popovski, p.170

¹¹¹ Popovski, p.171

¹¹² idem

“krushevian republic” with its council, a temporary government and president on its liberated territories. It is worth noticing that Krushevo’s manifest was “a declaration of the aims of the insurrection and a call for the other ethnic groups to support it”.¹¹⁴ The republic lasted 10 days yet the consequences were severe and its historical impact is described as being “the biggest national insurgence of the Macedonian nation against the Ottoman rule”.¹¹⁵ The fervency deployed for its suffocating echoed in the entire progressive world. The damage was estimated as 70 000 people being left homeless, 30 000 fugitives and 8800 killed. The consequences and armed propaganda of the Greek, Serbs and Bulgarians are assessed stating that the most ferocity was coming from the Greek garrisons.¹¹⁶ The identity of a nation is stressed and the narration is mainly exemplary in the different sequences, generally it is a genetical one that as Rösen states incorporates all the others yet it is the abstract space between memories of deviations, and alterations that denies the previous patterns of being under the rule of others, and the memories of the transformation and development that is characteristic for identity issues of the narrated period. The continuity of the entity is sustained yet a change is occurring in the consciousness of the character of that identity, opening for national consciousness.

Another important element for the cultural heritage of that period is the first Macedonian print and the establishment of non-religious schools. The writing of the first book in popular Macedonian is depicted as the beginning of the Macedonian *renaissance*¹¹⁷. Several authors and novels are assessed. The first books in Macedonian popular language were printed in Thessaloniki. In the thirties of the 19th century several secular schools were opened followed by the opening of other educational and cultural institutions. The importance of the writers of the first school books for “the cultural and educational influence in Macedonia“ is mentioned, with discussion of the Macedonian language being adapted to a level suited to the children. The attempts of writing grammar in Macedonian were stopped by the strong Bulgarian propaganda. The significance of the implementation of Macedonian schoolbooks in the schools is emphasized as ” they represented one of the testimonies for the existence of the Macedonian nation, which

¹¹³ Popovski, p.175

¹¹⁴ Popovski, p.186

¹¹⁵ Popovski, p.188

¹¹⁶ Popovski, p.200

¹¹⁷ Not to be confounded with the western one in terms of meaning

under the strong pressure of the neighboring propagandas, clearly expressed its wish to create an independent national education and culture.”¹¹⁸

3.6 The twentieth century

3.6.1 *The Balkan wars and the First World War*

It is assessed that besides the strategic facet, economical interests were the motives for “the aggressive politic of the government of the Balkan states towards the territory of Macedonia.”¹¹⁹ Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece and Montenegro created an armed coalition and declared war on Turkey. The Macedonian nation,” expecting freedom”, supported the coalition in the armed conflict with thousands of volunteers¹²⁰ yet after this First Balkan war Macedonia was divided between the coalition forces and divided into 3 parts between Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece. The second Balkan war occurred among the coalition “for the repartition of the conquered Macedonian territory”, with Serbia and Greece on one side and Bulgaria on the other. The peace treaty signed in Bucharest divided Macedonia in 4 parts. The largest part belonged to Serbia, Thessaloniki belonged to Greece, and the eastern part was accorded to Bulgaria. Shortly after, a small western region became a part of the newly formed Albanian state.¹²¹ It is stated that this treaty with its territorial, ethnical and commercial consequences, interrupted the “unique” historical development of the Macedonian nation”¹²² It is noteworthy that the ethnicity is stressed. This sequence critically assesses continuity of identity patterns denying given ones. The continuity is alternated, interrupted as quoted, and “time gains the sense of being an object of judgment.”¹²³

The next period assesses the First World War and what is stressed is that the question of Macedonia was once again actualized. The issue of gaining Bulgaria, who was neutral on the side of the two blocs, by offering her parts of the territory of Macedonia is described. The Vardar part of Macedonia as well as the Aegean one was promised and Bulgaria went to war on the side of

¹¹⁸ Popovski, p. 202.

¹¹⁹ Popovski, p.196

¹²⁰ idem

¹²¹ Popovski, p.198

¹²² idem

the Central powers.¹²⁴ It is important to stress that succeeding the information on the unfortunate geopolitical position of Macedonia, requests exemplifying and emphasizing the continuity of the identity of the Macedonian people are assessed. Presented is the work of the Macedonian emigrants in Russia which wrote a “manifest for the unification of the entire Macedonia in on state”¹²⁵ aiming the affirmation of the rights of the Macedonian people to independency and to her own nation state. One can, in an example of such requests, read the following ”We are stating that we, the Macedonians, are not Serbs, are not Bulgarian and are not Greek...”¹²⁶ The distinctive identity that the Macedonians had, through opposition with “the others” and the continuity of national consciousness is stressed, which is a critical type of narration.

It is interesting to point out the stress often placed on “the difficult situation of the Macedonian people”.¹²⁷ The Macedonian front is described as having divided Macedonia into two occupational zones who were fighting against each other. ¹²⁸ It is stressed that “Nationally depicted from rights, the Macedonians were forced to fight ones against each other for foreign interests. For some of them the war became a true drama getting dimensions of brotherly killings”¹²⁹ The narration gains elements of pathos highlighting that in spite of the obviously divided and opposed sides the population was put in, it was the same people, opposed against their will. The brotherly element employed implies continuity in the unity of the nation despite the connotation one could give of such a division, especially in enemy sides. What is distinguishing is the sustaining of continuity through a contradiction specific to Rüsen’s critical narrative. Besides the many articles and memorandums and activities of Macedonians as well as foreigners¹³⁰ to gain interest and support at the Paris peace conference for their cause of national liberation, the Macedonian question was reduced to a minority question and the Bucharest act

¹²³ Rüsen, p. 95

¹²⁴ Veljanovski, Novica; Pletvarska, Gordana; Cvetkovska, Sonja; Shiceri, Dzaferi *Hisrory – third year highschool education*, Prosvetno delo, Skopje, 2006, p.40

¹²⁵ Veljanovski, p.41

¹²⁶ Veljanovski, p.41

¹²⁷ Veljanovski, p.42

¹²⁸ Veljanovski, p.41

¹²⁹ Veljanovski, p.43

¹³⁰ Stressed is the British journalist James Baucher journalist who was engaged for the autonomy of Macedonia. He wrote several articles in the times and “in February 1918 he send a Memorandum to the president of the USA W. Wilson, the British premier and the public about autonomy for Macedonia”

was sanctioned with little territorial changes in favor to the kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.¹³¹

3.6.2 *Macedonia between the two world wars*

A significant and interesting part about the Macedonian identity is the part about Macedonia between the two world wars. It is noticed that after the peace conference the repartition of Macedonia between Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria and Albania was confirmed and the demographic, economical, cultural and national development of the Macedonian people was made impossible. The narration concentrates upon the issues of the process of denationalization, assimilation and colonization of the Macedonian people. It is accentuated that the Macedonians were not recognized nationally and did not have the right to political or cultural associations or any other on national basis.¹³² In that fashion, in the kingdom of SCS-Yugoslavia, the national identity was not recognized. The Macedonians were seen as South Serbs and Macedonia as Southern Serbia. The narration preserves the continuity of the Macedonian identity and national consciousness assessing the illegal political activities that occurred through several organizations in that period.¹³³ The instruments of denationalization and assimilation are assessed, one of them being colonization.¹³⁴ It is assessed that 4200 families were brought in 280 quarters. The educational politics were also a way of assimilation. Macedonian high schools were closed, journals were restricted and the continuity and persistence of the Macedonian students in their associations and active work for the recognition of national identity in Belgrade and Zagreb is emphasized. In the western part, the one under Bulgaria, Macedonians are also described as being under terror and denationalization. The southern part, in Greece, is approached more in depth and the wish of Greece “to keep the territory and change its ethnical constitution with the deportation of the Macedonian population and the colonizing of non-Macedonian one” is described as a constant political issue.¹³⁵ Important displacements of population are assessed¹³⁶ and the Aegean

¹³¹ Veljanovski, p.46

¹³² Veljanovski, p.82

¹³³ Veljanovski, p. 83

¹³⁴ Veljanovski, p.84

¹³⁵ Veljanovski, p.85

¹³⁶ Veljanovski, Said is that the convention on ‘voluntary’ exchange” of population between Greece and Bulgaria led to the displacement of 86000 Macedonians to Bulgaria. After the war between Greece and Turkey a convention was signed about the displacement of the Muslims of Greece and the Christians of Turkey. “From the Aegean part were displaced 350 000 Muslims amongst whom were 40 000 Macedonian Muslims. On the place of the displaced Macedonian population (126000) and Muslims, Greece colonized 618 000 persons of Greek and non-Greek origins ...”, p.86

Macedonia lost its ethnical Macedonian character and the Macedonian language became the domestic language of a minority.¹³⁷ The change of the names of the mountains, villages, and rivers, and town which got Greek names is also mentioned. The importance thrown to language in relation to identity is distinctive in the statement:

The most important restriction was about the use of the Macedonian language and the expression of the Macedonian identity through the church, songs, folkloric dance and cultural manifestations.¹³⁸

It could be argued that the enumerated significant features for the Macedonian identity embedding cultural distinctiveness are the same that Antony Smith refers to when speaking of internal functions of identity.

The critical type of narrative when telling about assimilations and deportation are directly followed once again with the description of organizations and works in the different parts of Macedonia for the affirmation of the Macedonian consciousness having described the national activities in the three regions, the Vardar part, the Pirin and the Aegean one, assessing that the abundant nationalistic activities had different intensities according to circumstances. In the Aegean part of Macedonia, the restrictions were made severe due to the dictator of Metaxas yet illegal forms of night courses were organized, and the Macedonian families had a major role in the preservation of the identity, where the language was constantly present in different forms. It is important to acknowledge the use of pictures, articles and reviews with the name Macedonia on them and the use of pictures and symbols to strengthen the narrative and in this case give credibility to the continuation of the identification with the name Macedonia.

3.6.3 *The Second World War*

In the Second World War, Macedonia found itself under new occupation and divided between Germany, Italy and Bulgaria. The denationalization and assimilatory politics of the occupiers are once again assessed. Bulgarian and Albanian propaganda are said to have been implemented mostly in the educational system and state institutions.¹³⁹

The national liberation war and the anti-fascistic one are assessed and their activity in each part of Macedonia is described. It is said is that the communist party of Yugoslavia had a “rightly” approach to the Macedonian question which opened perspectives for the liberation of the

¹³⁷ Veljanovski, p.86

¹³⁸ Veljanovski, p.86

Macedonian people. The armed organization of the Macedonians is described as having begun right after the occupation and by the local leaderships of the communist party. The different operations and units of “Macedonian” partisans are also discussed, as is creation of the Macedonian communist party which had an importance for the organizations and decisions about the creation of a Macedonian army. After the capitulation of Italy the Macedonian army succeeded to liberate larger territories from western Macedonia and the the creation of the first school in Macedonian language is assessed. There follows a description about the creation of the Macedonian state and an emphasis on the 1944 foundation of the “Antifascist assembly of the national liberation of Macedonia“ and its historical meaning as the basis for the creation of the Macedonian state in the frame of the democratic federative Yugoslavia. One could assert that the first conference of ASNOM gains symbolic dimension in the narration. The several declarations like the establishment of “ASNOM” as the highest organ of government of democratic Macedonia, the declaration for the fundamental rights of the citizens of democratic Macedonia, the decision for the implementation of the Macedonian language as an official language of the Macedonian state are stressed.¹⁴⁰ The following is stated: “In the national war of liberation, the Macedonian people won national liberation with its own forces (except in the Pyrenean and egean part of Macedonia) its own state which as an equal entity became a part of the new Democratic Federative Yugoslavia.¹⁴¹

About the period between 1945 and 1991, it is signified that Macedonia was a part of the Yugoslavian federation as the democratic federative Macedonia. The creation of the autonomous and independent Republic of Macedonia occurred after the fall Yugoslavia and is described as it “was the result of the desire of the Macedonian people to have its own independent state”.¹⁴²

Great meaning is given to the situation with the language throughout all of the narration and it is underlined that the Macedonian language was established by the linguistic committee in 1945 followed shortly by the establishment of the orthography of the Macedonian language which is as several theorists argue an important feature of national identity. The organization of the basic forms of education was important in order to solve the problem of illiteracy and the creation of all the educational institutions is evaluated. An appraisal is made about the Macedonian people

¹³⁹ Veljanovski, p.144

¹⁴⁰ Veljanovski, p.157

¹⁴¹ Veljanovski, p.158

¹⁴² Veljanovski, p.216

living in the neighboring countries, stating that Albania and Bulgaria recognized the Macedonian national minority unlike Greece.¹⁴³

¹⁴³ Veljanovski, p.227

4 Conclusion and discussion

The study aims to analyze the way Macedonian identity is constructed in present-day Macedonia and discuss it in the context of theoretical accounts about the creation of national identity and the meaning of history in this creation. The typology used to approach the different element selected or emphasized through the text reveals the way meaning is achieved in relation to national identity.

The first function that a history has to fulfill is the mobilization of the memory of time. The analysis reflects that the mobilized time that is firstly included in the analysis is quite ancient, dating from prehistory followed by the period of antiquity. This period is mainly approached with a traditional type of narrative describing the succession of rulers and giving a sense of greatness to the period. The relation to the present is mainly achieved through the evocation of symbols, archeological localities and artefacts. The assertion of the distinctiveness of Macedonian people and the territory that they lived on is central to the narration of this period, shaping identity as traditional narrative do by affirming given or pre-given culture and patterns of self-understanding through memories of origins constituting present forms of life, yet element of exemplary narrative are present.

The following period, the one about the venue of Slavs is assessed with a genetical type of narration. Significant is that continuity is preserved by assessing the alteration, the venue of Slavs and the blending of the new and old ethnicity as a development in which change is viewed as a dynamic process that does emphasize the identity this process of change is creating. The identity of the Macedonian people includes this change as a feature of creating new ways for self-understanding, which is typical for genetical narrations.

The next episodes of the history of the Macedonians are mainly critical by nature. They describe the events of oppression, assimilation, deportations with a parallel emphasis on the continuity of the consciousness of being one people. The place of literacy in the process of national awareness exemplifies Anderson's theoretical accounts according to whom "Everywhere, in fact, as literacy

increased, it became easier to arouse popular support with the masses discovering a new glory in the print elevation of languages they had humbly spoken”.¹⁴⁴

The development of a national agenda is described and placed in continuation of the previous more ethnical consciousness. The shift between ethnical and national consciousness is influenced by global events yet the struggle for the liberation is constantly stressed, in ethnical terms or in national one, depending on the period.

The narration of the national history tends to answer to the question of when is a nation, meaning the perspective that Smith has on the subject. The narration of the national identity implies a typical eastern concept of nation-ness emphasizing descent. Ethnicity is central and the forms of identity that preceded nation-ness. Significance is given to ancient roots placed in ancient history yet changes are described as not threatening the identity of the Macedonian but are incorporated in their self-understanding. The general meaning that the narration gives to the Macedonian identity is genetical about the crucial period of change that could be seen as threatening the necessary continuity in order to create a legitimate identity. Every history has elements of all the narrative and the genetical narrative is often intertwined with the critical one. The created national history reflects the way orientation toward the future is meant, namely by assessing change as a factor of steadiness.

This study emphasizes, in the theoretical accounts, that history is central to national identity, even when perceived as created. It could be argued that the role subjectivity has in the creative process of national history in general, accentuates the basis upon which present Macedonian national identity is created, namely on the basis of what is perceived or propagated as “felt “ history. This can lead to the observation that such a national identity can easily engender nationalism especially in the actual nationalistic challenges towards Macedonian national identity, and understanding for such processes. As Anderson asserts, “it is important to consider how they have come into historical being, in what way their meaning has changed over time and why today they command such profound emotional legitimacy.”¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ Anderson, p.80

¹⁴⁵ Anderson, p.4

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