



Living Politics in the City

Architecture as Catalyst for Public Space

Marion Hohlfeldt
Carmen Popescu (eds)

LEUVEN UNIVERSITY PRESS

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While the symposia were funded by the research labs GRIEF (Groupe de Recherche sur l'Invention et l'Évolution des Formes, ENSAB) and PTAC (Pratiques et Théories de l'Art Contemporain, Rennes 2 University), by the Centre for Design Innovation (Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne) and the Centre for Urban Research (RMIT University, Melbourne), this publication received supplementary financial support from GRIEF (ENSAB), PTAC (Rennes 2 University) and the Graduate School for Creative Approaches to Public Space (GS CAPS, Rennes).

Negotiating the Present in the Balkans

Macedonia Square

Maja Babić

Macedonia Square, the central square of the North Macedonian capital of Skopje, has served as an actor and stage in the contemporary civic and socio-political processes in the country.¹ The post-socialist socio-political transformations have been regularly fought in the state's eponymous square.² Since September 1991, when Macedonia's first post-communist president announced the country's independence from Yugoslavia, Macedonia Square has been a battleground and a conductor for urban and political change. The square has been the site of frequent protests, both for and against urban remodelling projects, with Macedonians demonstrating against the ruling parties' corruption, nepotism and overall criminalities. Macedonia Square exemplifies the urban multitudes of Skopje's urban focal point: the long history of the square as a gathering point and its architectural and urban features standing witnesses to change.

By studying the urban and socio-political dualities and antagonisms, this chapter examines the architectural projects on Macedonia Square erected during the ten-year rule of the former conservative government in the early twenty-first century. This chapter explores the role of Macedonia Square in political shifts, social and cultural processes and the continuous discords that have impacted the creation of the state's political and urban identities since the dissolution of Yugoslavia. Finally, this chapter maintains that the shifts in the built environment of the square have emphasised and served as catalysts in the socio-political divisions in the city; still, they have also served as catalysts for widespread political activism.

Since taking its present-day form during the interwar period, Macedonia Square has functioned as a symbol and signifier of a state and nation, first foreign – that of Serbian and Yugoslav monarchies – and later Macedonian and Yugoslav.³ Since the early twentieth century, the urban space of Skopje was designed and constructed to convey ideological narratives, both legible by Macedonians and the country's minorities and demonstrative to foreigners. The role of architecture in the creation of public spaces is unmissable in



Figure 3.1. Macedonia Square. *Warrior on a Horse*, centre right. Front left, Dimitar Pop-Georgiev Berovski, nineteenth-century Macedonian national hero. May 2018. (Photo by author)

Macedonia: Skopje's historical urban layers only emphasise the ideological shifts, illustrating the centuries of different rulers' urban markings that claimed and produced space and were consequently challenged and appropriated. In this context, the square's materiality plays a poignant role: the layers of the architectural heritage of the past century show the urban, economic and political revolutions and the square's role in the facilitation of these processes.

Skopje's main square was erstwhile constructed during the interwar period and as a symbol of foreign Serbian rule. Intended for gatherings and manifestations, as evident in its open-space design and size, the square has maintained the role of an urban focal point of the city: since its earliest iteration, Macedonia Square has functioned as a central point of public life in the capital and served as a gathering spot for assemblies such as 1 May Workers' Day celebrations, as well as everyday activities of the inhabitants of Skopje (Fig. 3.1). The interwar design of the square exhibits a rectangular and mostly unobstructed space encircled by early twentieth-century buildings executed in the architectural language of academism. Broad streets led to the square's open space, then accessible to vehicles and further opened toward the river and the old Ottoman bridge leading to the Bazaar. After the war, the local urban planners and those dispatched from Belgrade sought to transform Macedonia Square into a 'typical' Yugoslav urban space. This space was created from

streamlined modernist structures intertwined with the remnants of an earlier architectural heritage; in the south-east corner, the square housed a modern shopping centre, along with shops, bars and cafes designed by Macedonian and Yugoslav architects spread around its perimeter. The catastrophic earthquake of 1963 erased a great majority of Skopje and significantly damaged the square. After the decades-long reconstruction, the square was again reaffirmed as a central urban segment and resumed its role as the central space for the city's public life. It boasted modernist structures and open space with greenery, and the citizens accessed it via radiating boulevards. It was characteristic of the Yugoslav architectural space: open and streamlined modernist structures similar to those found throughout the federation. Today, the twenty-first century Macedonia Square is a site where modernist architecture intersects with the neoclassical Skopje, the capital of the post-Yugoslav Macedonia, a city labelled by a *New York Times* reporter as the city of "dancing nymphs and pirate ships".⁴

The Square and the Nation

The transformation of the Yugoslav federation into six new states fundamentally altered the political and urban fabric of the region. The rejection of the Yugoslav architectural space of the second half of the twentieth century has been paired with the intense discourse on Europeanisation in the architecture of the newly independent states. Nation-building and reinforcement of nascent nation-states became a project of vital importance across post-communist Europe, though rarely in a manner as radical as in the urban space of Skopje. The decades-long companions of nationalism – economic hardships and political and social fracturing – became pervasive features in the construction of the new states and were further exemplified by their built environments.

The independent Macedonian state was established in 1991, and ever since, the politics of the republic have remained in constant flux.⁵ Almost immediately after Macedonia gained its independence, long-standing divisions between the republic's majority Orthodox Christian population and minority Albanian Muslims splintered the country, finally culminating in 2001 with a nine-month conflict between the Macedonian government and Albanian insurgents. The conflict – contained to enclaves in northern Macedonia – consumed the state, and a fear of its escalation into a civil war infused public life. In the aftermath of the violence, the state granted the Albanian minority greater political power and cultural recognition. Although the violent hostilities had ended, the contentious relations between the majority Macedonians and minority Albanians were never fully resolved.⁶

With this in mind, the post-Yugoslav Macedonian conservative and nationalist government took upon the burdensome task of creating a new nation, and Skopje's architectural production has come to play a vital role in the process. In the formation of its urban and national identity, in 2011, the Macedonian leaders envisioned and later conducted a dramatic refurbishment of the city centre with the intention of constructing a 'Western' city. The project, Skopje 2014, was envisioned to transform the city and emphasise the 'Europeanness' of the centuries-old Macedonian state as expressed through a cautiously labelled neoclassical architectural style applied to the pre-existing and new buildings around Macedonia Square and the city centre. The Skopje 2014 reconstruction project exemplified the creation of the Macedonian national brand, one to be exhibited to locals, foreign politicians, and local and international investors. The cultural and linguistic anthropologist Andrew Graan contends that the local political leaders were not only interested in creating distinct architectural features to strengthen the perception of the Macedonian national identity and its supposed links with the ancient past, but they also positioned the project as the "cornerstone of broader government efforts to construct a *national* brand" (emphasis from the original text).⁷ This Macedonian urban space was, to an extent, similar in its nation-building and enforcing function to the one designed during the early twentieth century and in the aftermath of the 1963 earthquake; however, the allegiances had significantly shifted, and now the urban space of the square was to emulate the notions of independence and 'Westernness', no longer of post-war Macedonian or Yugoslav urban and geopolitical identity.

The many creators of Skopje 2014 proposed to alter the Yugoslav open-space urban paradigm and create a brand-new city, one that would help negotiate Macedonia's complicated political reality and supposedly settle its domestic and foreign disputes. The proposed reconstitution of the urban narrative of Skopje was devised to accentuate the post-Yugoslav and post-communist legitimacy of the country in the European political and economic arena, assigning the architecture a role of an artificial link to a Western past that was to support this claim. Similarly, in the context of the strife with the Albanian minority, the 'Westernisation' of the city would firmly position Skopje as the urban and political space of the Orthodox Christian Macedonians. The forging of historical connections to emphasise one nation's longevity and claims to independence is far from a new concept, and the utilisation of architecture in that process has been documented throughout history. However, the Macedonian government took Skopje 2014 to an almost farcical extreme in their attempts "to invent a cultural heritage to fit the new version of history."⁸

The urban processes that had unfolded during the period of the rule of the right-wing government between 2006 and 2016 – termed by architectural

historians and anthropologists as the ‘antiquisation’ of Skopje – are inextricably related to both the previous state-socialist period and the contemporary European and global economy and politics.⁹ The reinforcement of neoclassical architectural elements in contemporary Skopje through Skopje 2014 is not only a symptom of nationalist politics’ intertwined nature with the city’s urban fabric, but it is also a tool for the reproduction and negotiation of political and socio-cultural processes in contemporary North Macedonia and post-socialist Europe. Amongst the neoclassical facades of Skopje 2014 that architects affixed onto formerly modernist structures – or the newly constructed ones – the most striking are those perched on Macedonia Square. The ruling party’s hand-picked sculptors and architects erected monuments on the square to emphasise a heroic Macedonian past; however, a fictitious one.¹⁰

The ultimate testament to the problematic character of Skopje 2014 is the sculpture of a *Warrior on a Horse* by Valentina Karanfilova Stevanovska, a 22-metre-tall equestrian statue sat atop a stone pedestal and clad in marble and gold.¹¹ The *Warrior* – presumably representing Alexander the Great – is positioned almost centrally on the square, disproportionately large compared to the sparse structures around. Sitting in the centre of a fountain adorned with sculptures of lions, *Warrior on a Horse* serves as a symbol of the Macedonian urban and nationalist transformation, one espousing a ‘Westernising’ narrative of the state through its supposed links with European antiquity, omitting the centuries of Ottoman and Yugoslav urban history. The statue of the *Warrior* stands in visual interplay with the sculpture of Philip II of Macedon, an ancient leader of the land and Alexander’s father, located in front of the Ottoman Bazaar, a historically Muslim space in the city and executed in a similar sculptural style to that of the *Warrior* (Fig. 3.2). Together, they signal the links between the Macedonian present and past, its ties to antiquity and the rejection of the Ottoman and Yugoslav histories as represented by the Bazaar and the nearby modernist structures.

The social anthropologist Goran Janev argues that this cherry-picked and largely forged heritage “has to demonstrate links to and continuity with Western civilisation, as well as establishing its origins in antiquity.”¹² Janev argues that the “‘Skopje 2014’ project serves as a bridge to Western European civilisation which vaults over five centuries of Ottoman rule”, with its primary goal being to “obliterate the Modernist-dominated reconstruction of the city which followed the disastrous earthquake of 1963 and was a reminder of Communist achievements.”¹³ Therefore, the apparent objective of Skopje 2014 was to reject and exclude the Ottoman heritage in the city and its communist counterpart – signs of backward and regressive pasts – and forge a link to Western European architectural and political narratives. The transformations of Macedonia Square stand as the symptomatic and symbolic example of this process and its far-reaching ramifications.



Figure 3.2. Philip II of Macedon, background. *Fountain of the Mothers of Macedonia*, front. March 2019. (Photo by author)

Both the Macedonians and international scholars and journalists refer to the architectural style employed by the architects of the twenty-first-century Skopje as neoclassical. The structures often include various historical styles, baroque in particular, and the design narratives regularly fail to convey a sense of unity or consistent design development. Initially, when first employed in the nineteenth century, neoclassical architecture was firmly tied to the progressiveness of the era of Enlightenment and was perceived as authentic and rooted in ancient antiquity; as such, it was used for civic architecture in France and for architecture that emulated the rise of the nation-state in Germany. Following the historical elaboration of the neoclassical style, it would be simplistic to infer that the Macedonian government elected this modified version of neoclassicism as the visual identifier of Skopje 2014 for the associated connotations of stability and reform. On the contrary, the completed structures in Skopje's city centre and architectural and political processes that unfolded during the construction reject this narrative and almost exclusively emphasise the links with the ancient European past and its westward geopolitical symbolism.

The architectural neoclassicism in Skopje was not selected for its authenticity and stability but for national and nationalist objectives, in regard to both the Albanian minority and the state's diplomatic struggle with Greece. A Macedonian foreign minister went so far as to proclaim in 2010 that the statue of Alexander the Great was "our way of saying [up yours] to them", in

reference to the Greeks' vetoing of Macedonia's name.¹⁴ The architect Aleksandar Božinovski – the author of the *Memorial House of Mother Theresa*, yet another contentious addition to Skopje's city centre – contends that Skopje 2014 will carry out the long-term desires of Macedonians and that “people are loving it”.¹⁵ Clamouring against the exorbitant costs of Skopje 2014, the Macedonians not only refused to ‘love it’, but brought up questions of citizens’ benefits from the construction.¹⁶ The local intellectuals, artists and architects deemed the project an “embodiment of ‘retarded nationalism’”, almost exclusively tied to nationalist rewritings of the state’s past.¹⁷

The politicisation of space has been a common practice throughout history, particularly evident during the twentieth century. Architecture conveyed messages and espoused and exemplified ideological narratives. Nevertheless, the politicisation of spaces is a multi-field process: as much as architecture was an ideological tool of those in power, it was equally employed by its users. The open space of Macedonia Square illustrates this vividly: the square was appropriated by its users to convey messages to those in positions of power.

Protesting (in) Macedonia Square

During the second half of the twentieth century and the Yugoslav era in Macedonia, Macedonia Square was used for public gatherings: celebrations of Workers’ Day parades – the definitive Yugoslav and socialist holiday – New Years’ celebrations and the Communist Party’s proclamations. Pointedly, following the four decades as a part of the Yugoslav federation and the prominent place the square played in the reaffirmation of the role of communism and Yugoslavism in Macedonia, in 1991, Kiro Gligorov proclaimed Macedonian independence in front of a large gathering at the square. Effectively, the significance and symbolism of the square in the national imagination remained untouched, albeit adjusted and amended, and the vital role it played in the post-communist ideological and political transformations affirmed its importance in the urban and public continuity of Skopje.

In the last decade, Macedonia Square has been a site of frequent protests, showing a rising civic involvement in political events during the contentious first two decades of the new millennium. Since 2009, the protestors have opposed urban transformations planned and executed in public spaces in Skopje, essentially rejecting the government through the rejection of the built environment it produced. In 2015 and 2016, the political protests helped topple the government and instigate the political shift desperately needed in Macedonia. Demonstrations that took place in Skopje over the span of almost ten years utilised the architecture of the city itself, both as a tool and an incentive, most

notably Macedonia Square and the surrounding streets. By attempting to appropriate the space of the square in 2009, the demonstrators claimed the space as symbolic of historical processes and continuity; by tarnishing the neoclassical facades in 2015–2016, the demonstrators rejected the space that signified the government and consequently rejected the government itself.

The first protests took place in 2009. Led by Architecture Faculty students from the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje, the protests were instigated by a government-supported plan to construct an Orthodox Christian church – the Church of Saint Constantine and Elena – on Macedonia Square, based on the plans of the one demolished in 1963. To underline the importance of the square's function, the students ardently argued against any construction on the site of “one of the liveliest places in Skopje, frequented by pedestrians and small happenings.”¹⁸ They fervently objected to the politicisation of the urban planning process and the private urbanisms of investors that excluded any public debate and the announcement of the construction as a *fait accompli*. The protesters outlined their many concerns regarding the construction of the church, the key one focusing on the proposed construction site as being too small; the students argued that the state should preserve the location for much-needed public space. Further, the government planned to donate the site for the church and help build it through financial assistance, all in a nominally secular country. If the construction were to proceed, the square's public space – a historic site of gatherings and an urban gravitational point – would shrink, limiting the space utilised by the citizens of Skopje. The church's construction would ultimately solidify and enshrine the link between the state, Church and public space: here, the citizens would have no place and no say as it would ultimately belong to one ethnic and religious group and exclude all others.

The Architecture Faculty students organised under the moniker of the First Arhi Brigade. They asked for transparent competitions and input from independent non-party Macedonian and foreign organisations in the interventions in the urban fabric of the city, as well as for the creation of a long-missing urban masterplan. When the city government rejected these demands, the students called for a protest entitled the First Architectonical Rebellion.¹⁹ Demanding the preservation of the public – and publicly accessible – space on the square, the protestors, organised by the Brigade and the Progressive Youth Syndicate, planned the “first architect uprising”²⁰ for noon on 28 March 2009. To emphasise how much of the open space of the square would be lost, the students intended to create a human wall to outline the planned perimeter of the church. In enclosing the public space that would become the church grounds, the Brigade and the Syndicate members sought to exemplify the connection between the urban and the spatial, between the square and its users through the physical exclusion of the space intended for the church on the square.

When the students arrived at Macedonia Square in the early morning hours on 28 March, they encountered a larger group of counter-protesters. The students argued that these counter-protesters were not from Skopje and that they had arrived in the city earlier that morning; they further maintained that the quality of their posters and the costly means of transportation signified financial support from the government and undermined the principles of spontaneous gathering. The day before the announced students' protest, a now-defunct local blog, *Jadi Burek*, put out the call for a pro-church gathering. The call symbolised the rhetoric of the moment that has permeated the region since the end of the Yugoslav wars: "Tomorrow at 12 pm, on the square of Skopje, probably a group of gays and atheists will gather and try to spread rubbish under the hidden motive of caring for the architecture of the city, and against the church."²¹ The square's public space was deemed no more than a ruse in an expression of the "atheist and gay" agenda; this argument was first brought up by an anchor of a local television station the night before the protest and spread quickly.²² Urban and secular rhetoric – defined as "atheist" and "gay" – was effectively deemed anti-Macedonian, rejected as "other" and "foreign" by the counter-protestors, rendering the students' protests anti-Macedonian and anti-Christian.

The counter-protesters demanded that the construction of the church proceed. They argued that "each European capital has a church in the main square" and that a "church had existed where the city's shopping centre was today and had been destroyed in the 1963 earthquake."²³ During the 1970s, a modernist shopping centre was constructed on the former site of the church; it would also see protests in 2013 against the remodelling of its facade in a neo-classical fashion. On 28 March 2009, the students were unsuccessful in creating the human wall. As the day unfolded, the counter-protesters became more aggressive, and the police refused to intervene, passively observing verbal violence against the students.²⁴ After several hours, the students surrendered their space in the square. Promptly, the public discourse of the protest expanded and morphed. Its entwined political and architectural meaning took upon another layer: the left-leaning party expressed their support for the students, while the right-leaning politicians blamed the opposing party for instigating violence. Finally, the police announced that they would press charges against the student organisers of the protest for not providing security for the event.²⁵ A similar charge would not be filed against the counter-protestors.

The church was not constructed in 2009, though not because of the protests or the financial unfeasibility of the project. The government and the Church leaders halted the construction due to increasing pressure from the Muslim community, who "asked for reconstruction [*sic*] of a mosque destroyed around a century ago on the other side of the same square."²⁶ To emphasise



Figure 3.3. Saint Constantine and Elena Orthodox Church. March 2019. (Photo by author)

the bizarreness of the situation, “as a joke, a (citizens’) group was also asking for a Jedi temple.”²⁷ The city’s leaders deemed the potential ethnic tension between the Albanian Muslims and Macedonian Orthodox Christians to be too contentious of an issue to be dealt with within the public arena of Macedonia Square – although this was arguably the precise reason for the initial plans for the construction of the church – and temporarily abandoned the project. In 2012, in a compromise decision, the construction of the Church of Saint Constantine and Elena commenced several hundred metres away from the square.²⁸ Today, its domed structure, gilded in a golden sheen, stands unfinished; the Church ran out of funds, and since the change of government in 2016, it lost the support of the state budget (Fig. 3.3).

What Will Become of Contemporary Skopje?

In June 2013, thousands gathered at the edge of Macedonia Square to protest the neo-baroque remodelling of GTC, the 1970s modernist shopping centre. Led by the Association of Macedonian Architects, the protestors demanded that the reconstruction plans be abolished and space remain open for pedestrian corridors connecting the square with the surrounding streets. In December 2014, the protestors once again took to the streets to rally against the remodelling of GTC: now, they formed a human chain and ‘embraced’ the

building. The government chose to continue with the remodelling, and the plans definitively halted only following the 2016 elections triggered by yet another series of protests.

The so-called Colourful Revolution that effectively toppled the government occurred throughout Macedonia between 12 April and 20 July 2016. The protesters took to the streets, organised by the civic group 'I Protest'.²⁹ Demonstrators flooded the city, throwing packets of paint onto government buildings, specifically targeting Skopje 2014 monuments, the urban representation of the government and a signifier of an enduring socio-political rift. Culminating on 20 June with the gathering of tens of thousands of citizens of Skopje, the months-long crisis ended with reinitiated proceedings to impeach the president and the scheduling of parliamentary elections for December 2016. In the national elections of 2016, the party that had run the country for a decade was overthrown, and the Socialist Democratic Union coalition came to power. The statue of Alexander the Great, the *Warrior on a Horse*, still stands tall in Macedonia Square, surrounded by the bright white neoclassical facades. The bright paint residue from the Colourful Revolution has become a permanent feature of some of the neoclassical buildings; both are remnants of the long era of nationalist battles fought in the public arena of Skopje.

Overall, the demonstrations on Macedonia Square and in its vicinity in 2009, 2013 and 2014, and 2015–2016 exemplify the appropriations of urban space in the highly politicised and contentious processes that have unfolded in Skopje. The architecture has been appropriated in a dual manner: formerly by political entities and then by Macedonian citizens. By calling attention to the value of the public space of Macedonia Square and GTC – or by rejecting it, as was the case with neoclassical structures – the citizens utilised architecture as a discursive tool and expanded the political narrative of the state. Rarely in the post-communist world is the problematic of the deeply entwined nature of the built environment, economy and nation-building better demonstrated than in Skopje, a city of exaggerated architectural transformations emblematic of the post-Yugoslav nationalist political and urban shifts. Today, the question of the architectural remnants of Skopje 2014 looms large. *Warrior on a Horse* and the sculpture of Philip II of Macedon overlook the pathway between the square and the Ottoman Bazaar. Following the extensive remodelling of the city centre that unfolded over the better part of a decade, Macedonia Square and its immediate surroundings stand unrecognisable from their Yugoslav iterations.

Still, these processes and projects facilitated change. Since the instigation of drastic architectural transformations of Skopje's city centre in 2009 and 2014, and since the outrage over the socio-political discourse of the Macedonian state has been amplified, more and more citizens have taken notice and expressed their dissatisfaction in the public realm. Although their impact on the

government's decisions was initially minimal, the 2009 student protests in Macedonia Square galvanised the public. They produced action that facilitated political activism and the decade of rejection of political intervention in Skopje's central square. The protests that followed toppled the conservative and corrupt government. The remnants of the illegal urban transformations of Skopje 2014 in the city centre and on the square, however, do not only lie in the 'antiquisation' of the city centre and the neoclassical transmutations that overtook the city. While the sculptural remnants may be partially erased and removed, the economic and political uncertainties are not as easily eradicated.³⁰

Notes

1. The research conducted for this essay was generously supported by the University of Michigan's Islamic Studies Program and the Weiser Center for Europe and Eurasia Research Grant.
2. As of February 2019, the name of the country is North Macedonia. Between 1991 and 2019, the country was internationally known as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia due to the prolonged rift regarding its name between the Greek and Macedonian governments. In this period, the Macedonian government and the citizens colloquially used only the name "Macedonia". This chapter refers to the country as Macedonia when pertaining to the events in this period.
3. First as part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and later the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the communist Yugoslav federation.
4. Marc Santora, "Dancing Nymphs and Pirate Ships: Notes from a Capital of Kitsch", *The New York Times*, 28 March 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/28/world/europe/macedonia-skopje.html>.
5. After centuries of Ottoman and decades of Serbian rule, Macedonia was first recognised as an independent nation in the aftermath of the Second World War and under the patronage of the Yugoslav communist federation. While politically stable during the second half of the twentieth century, Macedonian politics have been contentious since the dissolution of the former socialist union. The post-Yugoslav Macedonia has been challenged over the use of its name by neighbouring Greece and for the uniqueness of its language by Bulgaria; the Serbian Orthodox Christian leaders questioned the legitimacy of the state's Church. Most importantly, the country is internally overcome by the deeply seated divisions between the majority Orthodox Christian Macedonians and the minority Muslim Albanians.

6. The anthropologist Vasiliki P. Neofotistos argues that neither side made any “significant efforts to establish what happened and who committed wrongs” during the nine-month clash but instead mostly reiterated the claims that “one’s own ethnic community did not engage in any wrongdoing at all, and only those in the ‘other’ community committed abuses.” The Albanians maintained that they had been continuously treated as second-class citizens. At the same time, the ethnic Macedonians asserted that “Albanians enjoyed all rights a minority could possibly enjoy in any state”, accusing them of being unappreciative and “launching an attack against Macedonia’s national sovereignty”. Such accusations never subsided even years after the conflict, and the contemporary Macedonian political realm still suffers under the familiar nationalist infighting. The Albanian minority leaders have continued to seek equal political rights and representation in the country – including access to its institutions, cities and culture – and the right-leaning Macedonian parties have resumed pursuing the “recognition that Macedonia remains the national state of the Macedonian people and that Macedonians have the allegedly inalienable right to protect the state against all external and internal enemies – including the Albanian minority living in the state.” For further reading, see Vasiliki P. Neofotistos, “War Criminals, National Heroes, and Transnational Justice in Macedonia”, in *Everyday Life in the Balkans*, ed. David W. Montgomery (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2018), 220–229.
7. Andrew Graan, “Counterfeiting the Nation? Skopje 2014 and the Politics of Nation Branding in Macedonia”, *Cultural Anthropology* 28, no. 1 (2013), 161–179, 162.
8. Goran Janev, “‘Skopje 2014’: Erasing Memories, Building History”, in *Balkan Heritages: Negotiating History and Culture*, ed. Maria Couroucli and Tchavdar Marinov (Farnham/Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015), 111–130, 112.
9. For further reading, see Anastas Vangeli, “Nation-Building Ancient Macedonian Style: The Origins and the Effects of the So-Called Antiquization in Macedonia”, *Nationalities Papers* 39, no. 1 (2011), 13–32.
10. While Valentina Karanfilova Stevanovska designed the most prominent sculptures on the square, other sculptors partook in the process: Damjan Gurov, Žarko Bašeski, Konstantin Janev, Roza Pavleska and Mile Brceski, to name a few.
11. For further reading on the naming concerns regarding the sculpture, see Helena Smith, “Macedonia Statue: Alexander the Great or a Warrior on a Horse?”, *The Guardian*, 14 August 2011, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/aug/14/alexander-great-macedonia-warrior-horse>.
12. Goran Janev, “‘Skopje 2014’: Erasing Memories, Building History”, 112.
13. *Ibid.*, 112.
14. Smith, “Macedonia Statue: Alexander the Great or a Warrior on a Horse?”

15. "Macedonian Artists Keep Silent Over Skopje 2014", *BalkanInsight.com*, 27 January 2012, <https://www.eurasiareview.com/27012012-macedonian-artists-keep-silent-over-skopje-2014/>.
16. Smith, "Macedonia Statue: Alexander the Great or a Warrior on a Horse?"
17. "Macedonian Artists Keep Silent Over Skopje 2014".
18. Snezhana Domazetovska, "How Architecture Students Became Activists in Macedonia", *[polis]*, 1 March 2012, <https://www.thepolisblog.org/2012/03/how-architecture-students-became.html>.
19. "Macedonia: Student Protest Ends in Violence", *GlobalVoices*, 31 March 2009, <https://globalvoices.org/2009/03/31/macedonia-student-protest-ends-in-violence/>.
20. "Violence Disrupts Student Protests in Skopje", *BalkanInsight.com*, 30 March 2009, <https://balkaninsight.com/2009/03/30/violence-disrupts-student-protests-in-skopje/>.
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25. "Violence Disrupts Student Protests in Skopje".
26. Domazetovska, "How Architecture Students Became Activists in Macedonia".
27. Ibid.
28. Sinisa Jakov Marusic, "Construction of Controversial Skopje Church Begins", *BalkanInsight.com*, 14 May 2012, <https://balkaninsight.com/2012/05/14/construction-of-controversial-skopje-church-begins/>.
29. "Macedonia Protests Demanding President's Resignation Continue", *Novinite.com*, 16 April 2016, <https://www.novinite.com/articles/174057/Macedonia+Protests+Demanding+President's+Resignation+Continue>.
30. While some sculptures have been removed, most remain, and the ones still standing show signs of decay disproportionate to their short life span and poor construction. "The Tricky Politics of Tearing down Statues of Alexander the Great", *The Economist*, 19 March 2020, <https://www.economist.com/europe/2020/03/19/the-tricky-politics-of-tearing-down-statues-of-alexander-the-great>.

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