Finding the Forgotten
‘Finding the Forgotten’
A project that invigorates the cultural identity of Macedonia through architecture.

Explanatory Document
Cultural identity is an issue within architecture which has been discussed by architectural theorists for many decades. The identity of culture is what sets apart one country from another, and has always been an important value of which people relate to. An identity of a country consists of many factors; architecture, religion, art and craft, music, traditions, and so on. Once there is negligence in the cultural identity of a country through the design of architecture, confusion and misunderstanding between the people and the city they reside in ensues.

The issue of cultural identity is evident in the city of Skopje after the urban development project of Skopje 2014. Throughout the 21st century in Skopje, there have been various events that have led to the disoriented character of the people within the city; and Skopje 2014 was the instigator. Skopje 2014 introduced an architecture that is not associated with the authentic history of Macedonia and used it as an experiment to increase the tourism revenue into the city.

The role of the architecture in this project will be focusing on addressing design objectives that have a direct link to solidifying the cultural identity of the country. These objectives; economic, aesthetic and cultural are explained throughout the literature that has been interpreted from national and international authors. Precedent studies of other successful projects that respond to similar issues of culture will also be considered.

The design solution for this project has resulted in the design of the Cultural Museum of Skopje. This project will work in three stages to re-establish the identity of Skopje; create a reinstated understanding and appreciation of the cultural heritage, communicate the true heritage of Skopje through the architecture and programme of the building, and to protect the authenticity of the site from any inaccurately represented future developments.
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Research Question

How can an architectural intervention help the city of Skopje to re-establish its identity?
Introduction

1.1 Background

“Buildings are produced as the result of complex interactions of social and economic forces that put some decisions within our reach, while leaving others beyond our control or escaping our consideration.”

Skopje, the capital city of Macedonia, has recently had a major urban development project implemented into its city centre. This project is called ‘Skopje 2014’ and consisted of many new builds of civic buildings, various monuments and re-construction of starting facades. The biggest problem with the development is that the project has ignored the historical context of Skopje by designing the new buildings in a Neo-Classical and Neo-Baroque style; which is not authentic to the culture of Skopje and has left a feeling of detachment within the people.

This was the starting point for the research of how a new architectural intervention can be introduced in the city so that it can re-establish its cultural identity within the nation, and its presence in the city that was lost through the new development. The literature for this research project has created a basis for understanding the importance of connecting cultural identity in architecture and the people that it affects. We must take into account the certain codes of conduct when creating architecture that is unique to a culture. Lastly, it is important to take inspiration from several international precedent studies that have successfully associated their buildings with the context of the country that they reside in.

The new building has responded to the city and its people in specific ways, socially, culturally, and physically. It is vital that all of these factors are united into a building that takes into account the architectural history that defines Macedonia and its people. This is how Skopje will re-establish its national identity and become more self-defined as a city of the people.

1.2 Project Outline

This research project aims to enhance public appreciation and understanding of cultural heritage sites around Skopje through an architectural intervention in the city centre. This has been achieved through the introduction of a Cultural Museum of Skopje. The museum has created a connection between the older, traditional part of the city with the new, developed urban part of the city through an embodiment of architecture. The site is located in the metropolitan city, and the building reflects design elements of the traditional architecture, to achieve a sense of self-contemplation and reinstatement into the authentic cultural identity of Skopje.

Chapter 1.
This book aims to achieve an architectural intervention that does not make the same mistakes as past urban developments which have obscured the cultural identity of Skopje. This project aims to create an architectural connection between the two different parts of the city, the old and the new, and also a connection between the people of Skopje and their cultural identity through architecture.

This will be done through the following objectives:

1.3 Aims and Objectives

• Represent the nations true cultural identity, historical composition of the city and its cultural values. This is achieved through the design of the building in terms of its form, materiality and connectivity between the site and the context.

• Create opportunities for economic growth within the community that have been lost with major urban developments. This is done by providing programmes in the building that encourage the growth of small businesses.

• Engage the public by communicating an authentic experience through the building that promotes future protection and conservation. This protects the project from any future inaccurate interpretations. Education is a vital part of the building programme. There are workshops, classrooms, lecture theatres, arts and crafts classes and a library that will strive to teach locals and visitors about the history and traditions of Skopje. This will secure a future education onto the public that will help avoid misperception of their culture and will encourage a new connection of the nation with the architecture.

1.4 Scope and Limitations

The scope of this project explores the history and culture of the city of Skopje in Macedonia. The range of history that this project has researched ranges from the Neolithic period to the 21st century period of architecture. This timeline of history is important to the project as these periods are the most relevant to the issue and the events that resulted from these periods influence the design objectives. Anything outside of the timeline as mentioned above is not relevant to this project because it does not affect the major issues at hand.

The research on the topic of cultural identity has been divided into three groups; literature dedicated to the specific events and issues that have occurred in Skopje, international theories on cultural identity and conservation, and internationally recognised design guides on how to design culturally sensitive buildings. The scope of the research allows for the particular issue of this project to result in a design that follows this literature; any limitations would be that this exploration does not go any further than those specific themes.

The issue of cultural and national identity within the architecture of cities is a subject that has been broadly researched by many architectural theorists and academics. It is an issue that does affect many cities that have lost their architectural identity to an urbanisation of architecture that can diminish the amount of traditional architecture in the city. The state of knowledge for this topic is relevant to the problem in Skopje.

The literature on this research includes many authors that have written specifically about the national perspective of the problem of Skopje 2014. This includes Rentina Dimova and her book Ethnic-Baroque: Materiality, Aesthetics and Conflict in Modern-Day Macedonia. This book aims to describe the attempt to link the aesthetic style of traditional Balkan furniture in Skopje and the new Baroque style of architecture of the Skopje 2014 project. Marijana Lunowska wrote the journal article Kosovo Tang’s Forgotten Master Plan for the Reconstruction of Skopje; this has given the project an insight into the international architectural influence that Skopje had before the Skopje 2014 project. Another journal article called Turkish Office and Beton Brat: An Architectural Portrait of Skopje, written by Iacov Tolic touches on the Skopje 2014 project but in a way that describes the importance of the Ottoman and Modernist influence that is evident in the city.
Literature written by international authors that do not talk specifically about the Skopje 2014 project is still applicable to this research project. Kevin Lynch’s book, The Image of the City, Jukka Jokilehto’s book, A History of Architectural Conservation, and Andrew Ballantyne’s writing called Architecture as Evidence are used. This literature gives the project an insight into how important the topic of cultural identity and connectivity is. By combining their ideas of identity, connectivity and truth, it can conclude international design principles and how they can be applied specifically to this project.

The ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites was able to give an insight of the internationally recognised rules, regulations and guidelines on how to design culturally sensitive buildings. This document took into account the importance of communicating the meaning of the culture through the architecture, how to respect the authenticity of a nation’s history and ways to promote an understanding within the public that secures future appreciation of the architectural history. This Charter defined the design objectives of this research project, and how to establish the most appropriate programme for the building.

International precedent studies are included within this state of knowledge as they provide a model of a building that responds to similar issues within this research project. The Ningbo Museum by Wang Shu deals with the idea of utilising traditional building techniques and vernacular materials to link the building with the culture from Ningbo, China. Zvi Hecker uses the form of his Palmach Museum to connect the building with the context of Tel Aviv. He also incorporates the plan of the building with telling the history of Israel. The National Museum of African-American History and Culture uses architectural design elements such as open-planned spaces, light and orientation to create a building for self-contemplation and reflection for the people that visit Washington, D.C. All of these studies will be applied to the design of the building in Skopje.

1.6 Methodology

This research project has been using several methods to obtain important data for the design process. This consists of:

• A historical, architectural and urban analysis of Skopje. This analysis is important as it gives the project a basis on how we can connect the historical, architectural and urban context with the design of the building. This included interpretations of old maps and diagrams along with recent urban plans of Skopje that were sourced from the Faculty of Planning and Architecture in Skopje. This has led to the choice of the specific site as the best place for the design of the new building. Systematisation of literature on the history of Skopje has had crucial importance and has imposed conclusions that are important for the design development of the project in its next phases.

• An urban analysis of the context around Skopje has been executed; major connectivity points, places of intersection, positions of buildings and their general heights has been represented through diagrams and maps. The historical information has researched into the locality of Skopje’s history within the city and how this is connected to, and has given reason for, the proposed site. An architectural analysis has been conducted to understand the character of the buildings around the proposed site. Exploration of the frontal facades of the surrounding buildings has given an indication of how to connect their characteristics with the new building.

• Precedent studies have been explored to understand how international examples have used their site context and applied it within their building design, successfully. This has given an indication of the design principles that are considered to represent the context of Skopje appropriately.

• The design process of this project has been documented and presented in a systematic manner to clearly represent the steps taken to get to the final product. This indicates how the research was implemented into the design.

These methods were used to obtain the information necessary to inform a design approach for the new building in Skopje.
1.8 Results of Research

All the examined research has led to the different stages of this design process. By following the methodology of this project, the issues, design strategies and possible outcomes have been outlined. This has given a basis of design for the Cultural Museum of Skopje.

The importance of connectivity, identity and truth are evident through the review of literature. This literature speaks on the issue of cultural identity directly about Skopje, international sources from theorists and historians, and several precedents. The three concepts became the main points to come out of the review. Then, it led to the programme and site that was researched to fit this issue appropriately, resulting in a Cultural Museum in the urban city block of Skopje.

The programme and the site reviews followed the design objectives of economic, aesthetic and cultural importance to build the design of the proposed museum. By investigating into the backlash of the recent Skopje 2014 urban development, it was made clear that a connection between the people and the cultural history of Skopje needed strengthening.

This was addressed through materiality, urban design techniques such as connection, circulation and form, along with the programme of the museum, which comes together to relate city occupants with their history, once again.

1.7 Definitions

The definitions of the terms used in the research have derived from a general dictionary of the English language as a starting point. However, most of the terms have been defined in a similar way in the ICOMOS Charter and have been checked and respected in this project. Although, this project is not dealing with reconstruction of a heritage building but rather a creation of a new one, respecting of general principles defined by ICOMOS has been prioritised.

Identity: “the distinguishing character or personality of an individual”2

Authenticity: “conforming to an original so as to reproduce essential features”3

Materiality: “the quality or state of being material”4

Heritage: “something possessed as a result of one’s natural situation or birth”5

Conservation: “the preservation of a physical quantity during transformations or reactions”6

Kitsch: “something that appeals to popular or lowbrow taste and is often of poor quality”7

Antiquisation: “to imitate the style of the classical antiquity”8


Figure 2: People enjoying the city center of Skopje in the 1970's
2.1 Architectural History of Skopje

2.1.1 Neolithic
Macedonia is a country with an extensive history and various styles of architecture that define the heritage and traditions of the country. In the book The Image of the City, Kevin Lynch states that every citizen has a certain connection or long association with some part of his city, and our image of the city is soaked in memories and meanings, other important ideas from this text will be thoroughly explained in the literature review. This research project is based in the capital Skopje and will be the focus of research into the long history that its citizens have associated with. One of the earliest periods of architecture that is present in Skopje is Neolithic. The most known piece of Neolithic architecture within the city is the Kokino Megalithic Observatory, it is 50 kilometres away from central Skopje and is considered to be the fourth oldest megalithic structure in the world. Another important Neolithic structure is the Tumba Madzari settlement. It is located in the Skopje valley and is an excellent example of very early vernacular construction using primitive techniques and materials.

2.1.2 Roman
The most well-known architectural example of the Roman period in Skopje is The Ancient Roman City of Scupi and its Amphitheatre. It is located a few kilometres away from Skopje, and it is an important archaeological site as it has an immense amount of information on how the Romans planned their cities. Scapi is said to have been urban development around the late 1st century BC and is one of the largest Roman cities in the Balkans. The Skopje Aqueduct is another example of Roman architecture in the city. It was built to supply water from the river Vardar to the ancient city of Scipi and it remains a vital monument to the history of Skopje.

2.1.3 Byzantine
Byzantine architecture has heavily influenced Skopje from the 12th century, and many of the major buildings are still around today. The Golden Age of the Byzantine Empire occurred in Macedonia from the years 862 to 1056, this was known as the Macedonian Renaissance time. During this period there was an immense increase of art, culture and architecture around the country. The Church of St Panteleimon has become iconic of Byzantine architecture in Skopje. It was built in 1164 and houses one of the most treasured frescoes of the Byzantine era in Macedonia. The Kale Fortress that overlooks the city of Skopje was built in the Byzantine period and has become iconic to Skopje and Macedonia as a symbol of security as it stands dominant on Kale Hill.

2.1.4 Ottoman
The Ottoman influence in Macedonia was one that turned Skopje into a hub of commercial and cultural interaction within the Central Balkans. The important architectural characteristics of the Ottoman period are open planned spaces, large domes and detailed ornamentation. This is apparent in buildings such as the caravanserais (today we can compare this to a hotel/motel), mosques (a building complex for a place of worship, study and reflection) within the Old Bazaar centre of Skopje. Kursumli An is one of the more iconic caravanserais in the Stara Carsija (Old Bazaar) in Skopje, it was built in the mid-16th century and used as a motel and storage centre for visitors with livestock. Chifte Hammam, located in the Bazaar of Skopje, it was constructed in the 15th century and used as a public bath with two separate wings for men and women to bathe. Finally, the most iconic Ottoman structure is the Stone Bridge built disputably around the 15th century. It is the landmark of Skopje as it features in the Skopje Coat of Arms and is also the vital connection between the Old Bazaar in the old part of the city and the Macedonian Square in the new part of the town across the River Vardar.

16 Tolic, “Turkish Coffee and Beton Brut,” p24
19 HAEMUS | Center for scientific research and promotion of culture, “Ottoman heritage (Skopje).”

2.1.5 Neo-Classical
Even though it was not as influential as Byzantine and Ottoman architecture, there are still some significant works of Neo-Classical architecture that are important to Skopje’s history. The National Theatre built in 1927 and the National Bank established in 1935 were two icons of classical architecture in Skopje. Devastatingly, they were both destroyed in the 1963 earthquake. However, the infamous Risteka Palace located on the Macedonian Square was built in 1926 and commissioned by the Ristovski family and has become iconic to the square.

2.1.6 Modernism
The most recent style of architecture came from the master plan that renowned Japanese architect Kenzo Tange and his team designed for the city after the 1963 earthquake. This project was called ‘The 9th Version’ and will be thoroughly explained further on. The movement he brought to Skopje through his architecture was called Japanese Metabolism but was represented in a brutalist manner. His use of great, concrete cast panels and steel structure using monolithic elevations are what put his buildings in the brutalist category. Skopje’s Post Office is also a major brutalist building, it was built in 1982 and designed by Janko Konstantinov. Janko worked for Alvar Aalto and his team for some time in Finland. His influence from Aalto is evident through Janko’s way of designing his monolithic buildings. The Post Office has been considered to be possibly the most impressive abstract, brutalist works in the city of Skopje.


History is incredibly important to this project. The layers of architectural periods in this city represented in buildings and spaces are what make Skopje so culturally different. Due to this importance, this project will be proposing three main cultural routes of connection from the site of the project to the major Ottoman, Byzantine and Modernist buildings and spaces within the context of the city. An example of this is in Auckland; the Auckland Heritage Festival exhibits the city’s heritage and culture; applying this idea of the historical exhibition around the city, this project will attempt to do the same however with a visual connection. This will be a way of showing how rich in architectural history this city is and how it is possible to connect this history to the proposed design project.
Neolithic  Roman  Byzantine  Ottoman  Neo-Classical  Brutalist

Figure 7: Timeline of architecture in Skopje
The literature review for this research project is vast and ranges from national to international sources. The information can be separated into three main groups; the first contains research about particular historical and architectural events and projects that occurred in Skopje in the 20th and 21st century that are relevant to this topic. The second group consists of books that deal with similar problems that are theoretically analysed by international architectural theorists and applied in different parts of the world. In the third group, it is vital to follow the official ICOMOS policies, rules and charters that are internationally recognised and deal with architecture at a heritage level.

Chapter 3.

3.1 Group I

The first group of literature is based on two main projects that occur in Skopje; the post-earthquake masterplan project by Kenzo Tange and the major urban development project in the city centre called Skopje 2014. The events that occur before and after these projects will also be addressed as they give insight into the design actions that were carried through and are present in Skopje today.

3.1.1 20th Century Project

The 1963 Earthquake

On the 26th of July 1963 at 5:17am, the centre of Skopje was hit by a 6.1 magnitude (Richter scale) earthquake. This earthquake was the largest that the city had ever experienced and the devastation caused just over 1,000 people to die, 200,000 to lose their homes and 80% of the city’s buildings to be destroyed completely to the ground or majority of the structure to fall apart. Some of the most important and iconic buildings of Skopje were transformed into ruins after the earthquake. This included The National Bank, The Macedonian National Theatre, The City Hall of Skopje and the Army House. The only significant building that partly survived was a piece of the old Train Station that has become a symbol...
After the tragedy of the earthquake, there came the idea to suit Skopje. Tange was a pioneer of Japanese architecture firm from Zagreb, Miscevic and Wenzler were awarded the remaining 40% to help further develop the project. This was made possible through the funding from the United Nations to the city of Skopje. This project was made possible through the UN awarding the remaining 40% to help further develop the city. Tange had the most influence on the design. He intended to use materials such as rough reinforced concrete, bricks and steel in his designs to give his structures a grand appearance; this was the introduction of modern brutalism in architecture in Skopje. Tange chose to work with on his buildings. He intended to use materials such as rough reinforced concrete, bricks and steel in his designs to give his structures a grand appearance; this was the introduction of modern brutalism in architecture in Skopje.

The Prize
It board organising the competition decided that this project would be a conjoint first prize. Kenzo Tange and his team from Japan won 60% and a Yugoslav architecture firm from Zagreb, Moscov and Wostar were awarded the remaining 40% to help further develop the idea to suit Skopje. Tange was a pioneer of Japanese architecture firm from Zagreb, Miscevic and Wenzler were awarded the remaining 40% to help further develop the city. Tange had the most influence on the design. He intended to use materials such as rough reinforced concrete, bricks and steel in his designs to give his structures a grand appearance; this was the introduction of modern brutalism in architecture in Skopje.

The Design
Tange had the most influence on the design. It stood out from the rest due to his idea of creating a City Wall and a City Gate. These key design elements help to capture the ‘transhistorical foundation of architecture as an idea of place’28 quoted by Zrinka Popovski, a principal architect in Macedonia. The idea of ‘place’ within architecture was evident through Tange’s approach to this master plan. The City Wall that surrounds the perimeter of the city shaped and centralised the geography of the buildings within the ‘shape’ of the city.29

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Metabolism30, which at the time was an avant-garde movement brought on from the post-war reconstruction of cities that also combined the idea of human metabolism as a biological concept of growing and transforming to suit the environment that it is in.28 This movement brought innovation into the city of Skopje after the earthquake because not only would the architecture be inspired to cultivate and transform, but the people of Skopje were also encouraged to grow and come together after the immense loss of lives and property.

Throughout the years of 1970 and 1980’s all efforts were put towards rebuilding Skopje and making Tange’s city masterplan come to life. However, the focus of construction was very central around nestling apartment buildings for people that have been left homeless after the earthquake that most of the master plan was abandoned.21 After realising how successful the design of the master plan was in theory, the city of Skopje decided to implement the construction of the City Wall and the new train station, every other design element to this master plan was deserted. Skopje decided that Tange had it for to become a cultural and economic hub31, but instead it was forgotten about, and Macedonia decided to rebuild the city of Skopje differently. The master plan by Tange will be taken into consideration through the design of this research project. His planning of the city and the prominent axis will be analysed in the design of this research project and how it creates a connection to the context around it and the rest of the city.

The Peka
The City Wall and Gate have become a metaphor for strength and amalgamation to reinforce a sense of community within the town after the devastation of the earthquake. This idea was supported by the materials that Tange chose to work with on his buildings. He intended to use materials such as rough reinforced concrete, bricks and steel in his designs to give his structures a grand appearance; this was the introduction of modern brutalism in architecture in Skopje.

2 29 Jasna Stefanovska and Janez Kozelj, “Urban Planning and Transitional Development Issues: The Case of Skopje, Macedonia” 2013
This image shows the master plan developed by Tange. The colours represent different areas and zones within the city.

The green and brown are the existing Old Bazaar and old town centre. The red and yellow are the new projects of the plan. The red being the new axis/City Gate. The yellow is the new City Wall.

This image shows the location of the City Gate in the Skopje master plan developed by Tange and his team.

This image shows the location of the City Wall in the Skopje master plan developed by Tange and his team.
Independence of Macedonia

On September the 8th, 1991, Macedonia gained its independence from Yugoslavia and became the Republic of Macedonia with a new president. The country was part of Yugoslavia along with six other states; Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia. The people of Macedonia voted to become independent from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. 20 years later, one of two main Macedonian government parties called VMRO-DPMNE came up with a project that promised benefits to the economic, political and cultural way of life in Macedonia; they called this project Skopje 2014.

Nationalism

In February 2010, VMRO-DPMNE and the leader of the government party, Nikola Gruevski announced that they would be implementing an architectural project for the city of Skopje with a timeframe for completion in 2014. The primary goals of this project were said to have been an opportunity to better the tourism industry in Macedonia, uplift the economy and to revive the identity of Skopje. They proposed to build new buildings and monuments, including many statues, fountains and urban spaces. The biggest impression that this presentation made was the style of which the party decided to design these buildings in; they called it Neo-Baroque and Neo-Classical.

Andrew Ballantyne wrote in his book, Architecture as Evidence, that buildings that are built tell us a lot about the value-system of the society that produced them. Therefore, this project became proof of the priorities that the state thought were most important for the people. The project entails an entirely new build of; a new national theatre, a new philharmonic hall, three new government buildings, three new museums, three new bridges and over 20 new statues made of bronze and marble. The ambitious project would be estimated to cost €80 million; however, the actual amount of this development has come to reach roughly €640 million.

The proposed building that will come from this research project will introduce a programme within the building that will inspire more jobs to be created for the people of Skopje. This will aim to give back to the people what was lost through the expenditure of the Skopje 2014 project.

Media

Skopje 2014 has received a lot of national and international attention with many news articles, books and journals addressing the issue by architects, academics and organisations. There are two reasons why this project was unsuccessful. The first is because of how the government decided to go about implementing this project (in terms of how it was forcefully applied which goes against ICOMOS's principles).


3.1.2 21st Century Project

Figure 15: Skopje in 1950
and because of their design and style choices of the newly constructed buildings and monuments. Before this project, planners and architects were working together to engage the city with the modern movement that had become popular in the post-war period in 1970. 39 However, when the government party VMRO-DPMNE announced what they were planning for Skopje in 2010, they did not consult with the public in any way to gauge what their opinions or feedback would be for this project and what the government was planning on spending their tax money on. The lack of communication with the public about the urban development is going against the ICOMOS Charter guidelines of how to handle such interpretation projects. The ICOMOS Charter will be explained further in the literature review. The proposed building will avoid any possible public criticisms by following the rules and regulations of the ICOMOS Charter. 40

Deceit

There was another issue with the early beginnings of this project. VRMO-DPMNE said in their promotional video that they would start construction in 2010, but what most people didn’t realise is that construction of the ‘revival’ of Skopje had already begun in 2008. 41 Government buildings and public spaces had already started to be erected along the River Vardar embankment. People were not aware that those buildings were part of the Skopje 2014 project for another two years after it was announced. Once construction had begun on the project, the government also did not inform the architects and designers of existing buildings in the square that they would be defaced with the new Neo-Baroque and Neo-Classical facades. The issue caused an uproar from the architects that had never given consent or rejected the permit for this project to change the façade of their buildings. Slavko Brezoski is an established architect that designed the Department Store building that was one of his best-known works around the city. Now it is one of the dozens of buildings that are hidden by the new facades of the project, this is shown in figures 16, 17 and 18. “It hurts when I see how the life’s work of many architects of my generation has disappeared under a Styrofoam tent”, says Brezoski referring to the Neo-Classical hollow colonnades and embellishments that had covered his once Post WWII Modernist building. This is primarily where the diversity and attachment that people living in Skopje had and how it was lost through the urban development. This project will be bringing back the diversity of that was lost through a building that references many periods of architecture within Skopje. As well as implementing a programme that offers education about the diversity and history that has since been masked.

Barok vs Baroque

Neo-Baroque and Neo-Classical are one way to describe the style in which the new buildings and monuments were designed. Another opinion from authors and critics such as Rezica Dimova, Andrew Graan, Jana Stefanovska and Janez Kozel, have described the project as ‘kitsch’ and a victim of ‘antiquisation’. The designers intended to draw

36 Dimova, Ethno Baroque, p.117
inspiration from the traditional style of wood-carving and craft that was vernacular to Macedonia and use it as a means of repositioning style, wealth and grandeur through the city as it brought those characteristics to people’s homes. Therefore, the government and its designers took on the design elements from the Barok style to create a new brand/image of Skopje. They noticed how attractive and wealthy cities such as Paris and Berlin looked with their Neo-Classical, Baroque, Romantic urban buildings and spaces and they decided to bring these designs to Skopje, and quite literally imitate the “European” style. The idea is evident through the museums and government buildings on the Vardar embankment, the hotel facades around the Skopje Square, and the triumphal arch in the centre of the city, Porta Macedonia. This project is going against the ‘Baroque’ idea of representing a cosmopolitan style of architecture in Skopje, and will be promoting the traditional craft and style of Barok in a more genuine way, in comparison to how Skopje 2014 has attempted it.

Artisan craft vs Embellished style
Macedonia has a small group of master wood-carvers that have become internationally renowned for their craft. This group of mentors are relevant to the background of this project as they are believed to have been the inspiration of the style of the project Skopje 2014. Wood-carving has always been a long-standing tradition in Macedonia; however, it became more popular in the 1990s. This style of decoration of furniture in Macedonia, developed by a manufacturer from the city Struga, the company was called ‘Barok’. Due to the economic wealth that arose in Macedonia at that time, it allowed the richer families to be able to purchase the luxurious furniture that had been embellished in wood-carving and even design their houses to have wood-carving on the exterior of their homes. People that bought the products from this company primarily used it as a means of representing the family as stylish, wealthy and prosperous. Nevertheless, as more people could afford this style of decoration for their own houses, the luxurious standard that it upheld started to lose its value.

The designers of the project Skopje 2014 referenced the style of Barok into their interpretation of Neo-Baroque architecture. This was a way to surprise their style of architecture as grandiose, monumental, stylish and wealthy. They intended to make the city of Skopje seem economically stable through the building style that they used through the new urban spaces, buildings and instruments, whether that was successful or not came down to the criticism that this project received by the media nationally and internationally.

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83 Dimova, Ethno-Baroque, p.118.
85 Dimova, Ethno-Baroque, p.3.
87 Dimova, Ethno-Baroque, p.1.
88 Dimova, Ethno-Baroque, p.2.
National Image
The economic aim of this project was to show the outside world that Skopje is financially stable and can stand on its own as an independent European city that is worthy of national pride. The €640 million project is more than just a makeover for Skopje. It had become a campaign, with press releases, promotions, media coverage with a goal to prove to outsiders that this vision of the new and creative Macedonia can be distinctive. The issue with this ‘new image/new face of Skopje’ is that the government and its designers have ignored the vast history of architecture that was already existing in Skopje. They have undermined the city’s actual national image and turned it into a representation of history that never existed, and one that was also going against the ICOMOS charter and all of their recommended rules and policies for interpreting and presenting a cultural heritage site accurately.

Unrecognizable City
This project has also had a tremendous impact on the people that live in the city and how they experience it. For many locals, they have lived there all their lives, through the natural disasters and all the changes that Skopje had occurred with its urban development in the past. They were able to walk through the city and be able to recognise which building belonged to which era. Now, the new buildings and public spaces are unrecognisable since they have been demolished, defaced and disconnected. Skopje is a city with an immense diversity of religion, ethnicity and demographics. Ultimately, what this project has forced unto the people has taken all of the differences in who they are, where they come from and what they believe in and transformed them into a mono-ethnic city of one dominant style that was never defining of Skopje, its history and its people.

The Colorful Revolution
The population became upset with the government and its hasty decisions on how they have decided to implement the project, the design of the buildings but most importantly the recklessness in which they have spent the funding of this initiative. An outrage swirled with the public and brought people of all ages, gender, temperaments, occupations, ethnicities and religions together to express their anger towards the government. This movement was called the ‘Colorful Revolution’, and it began in April 2016. Protesters fired at many monuments and statues with paint guns that would represent their anger towards the expensive and corrupt urban project Skopje 2014. The 22 meter Alexander the Great tribune statue and fountain that stands tall in the centre of the main square that had cost the taxpayers roughly €11 million was the centre-point of the protest. It had been covered in paint, and the water had been contaminated with a red dye to symbolise the corruption that this project has carried through. There was also graffiti that reads “I do not pay my taxes for this” scribbled on the fountain by an angry protestor. The Porta Macedonia was also one of the main attractions of the protest; the Parisian look-a-like did not get excluded from the protests. The Colorful Revolution


Graan, “Counterfeiting the Nation?” p.151.
Graan, “Counterfeiting the Nation?” p.171.
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Figure 23: Bronze and marble statues that are scattered around the city center
Figure 24: Fountain and statue of Alexander the Great in the center of Skopje
Figure 25: A new civic building in the city center part of the Skopje 2014 project
Figure 26: The new museum and bridge part of the Skopje 2014 project

Figure 27: A large civic building in the city center part of the Skopje 2014 project
Citizen Reactions
When media were interviewing citizens throughout the protest, they made many remarks about the project. “I don’t think it’s the time for statues. People need to eat, work and live,” “the intention, they say, is to make Skopje look like Paris,” “We never grew up hearing about the feats of Alexander the Great; any mention was very obscure. Gruevski (the prime minister) is turning this city into a theme park, a place that looks like Las Vegas every day”. These accusations from the public about how the project is turning Skopje into something it isn’t, was confirmed earlier to the protests by the Mayor of Skopje, Koce Trajanovski. In a press statement in April 2011, Trajanovski announced that they would be placing palm trees on the river Vardar embankment so that it would look more like a “city beach”. He has also said that this project would give Skopje a “new face, a classical face” that would resemble cities such as Paris and Berlin. Statements like that one, in particular, are what inspired the Color Revolution to begin and the public, who were never involved with the project in the first place, decided to take it into their own hands to make sure the government knows how unhappy they are with the development of Skopje 2014.

Burning of the Archives
In April 2017 there was a fire in The Institute for Town Planning and Architecture in Skopje. This Institute was the home to all of the plans, sketches, models, reports and books of the post-earthquake reconstruction project by Kenzo Tange and many other architects and planners. All of these historical archives have now perished in the fire that broke out in the building. The Institute was located in a construction barrack that was the temporary home for the archives; however, they never did find more of a permanent place to store them. The next step for the Institute would be to relocate any remaining files that survived the fire into a more permanent and safer location dedicated to storing and preserving the architectural history of Skopje and Macedonia; this new site will be the archive tower that is inclusive of the Cultural Museum of Skopje. This new location for the archives will be included in the programme for the proposed building. It will strive to regain the historical importance of the documents and architectural plans of Skopje by dedicating a tower to them. This tower will become a place-maker on the proposed site, it will guide people to visit the project. Therefore it will re-establish a sense of dignity within the city, so that the people can become educated on their history and feel a sense of connection with their past that was lost through the Skopje 2014 project.
3.2 Group II

The literature that deals with similar problems internationally, and that has been analysed in the research, will be examined in the second group of this review. The authors whose theoretical concepts are used in this group are Kevin Lynch, Andrew Ballantyne and Jukka Jokilehto, they are renowned architectural theorists and historians. This group has therefore been systematised into three main subheadings that will become design principles, and the most important moves of the design strategy for this project. These strategies will aim to address all the problems presented in Group I through the literature of Group II.

3.2.1 Connectivity

Through the research of the historical context around Skopje, it is clear that there is a noticeable division between the old part of the city with the new part of the city. The Old Bazaar is home to a majority of the Ottoman, Byzantine and Roman architectural sites, and the new Macedonian Square is home to the buildings belonging to the Skopje 2014 project. The main connection between these two locations is the iconic Stone Bridge that crosses the river Vardar. This vital architectural element will be used as a more accurate design element in this research project. As the bridge connects the two opposing styles of architecture in the city, the old and the new, as will a bridge element connect the two building masses to show an evolution of the old and the new story that the architecture of this project will be presenting. Kevin Lynch is of vital importance in this project. His book, *The Image of the City*, states that it is vital to have visual exposure of a path between elements as it heightens its image. This path could be shaped in a way that it allows for self-contemplation through the flow of the buildings. That is what the bridge will aim to achieve through connecting the old and the new through the architecture.

This bridge will become the primary connection point between the two most important buildings in the design. It will become the ‘Stone Bridge’ monument within this project that will help define the relationship between the old

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37 Lynch, *The Image of the City*, p.98
and the new architecture that is existent in Skopje. Lynch has talked about a clarity of joints between buildings and has said that high visibility of a joint or seams, an apparent relation and interconnection are strategic moments of structure and should be highly perceptible. Therefore, to make this bridge as representative of the Stone Bridge, it will be a monumental scale and distinguishable in the planning of the new architecture as the main interconnection of the buildings, this is shown in figure 31.

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3.2.2 Identity

“We are not simply observers of this spectacle, but are ourselves a part of it, on the stage with the other participants.”

This quote by Kevin Lynch resonates with this research project because it is an example of how important people are in situations where cultural history and identity of a nation is involved and how closely locals can have a connection with their city.

Lynch states that the city is the ultimate symbol of an ever-changing and complex society, and so every change in the evolution of the city tells a story about the people that live in it. Many people grow up in a city becoming familiar with every street corner, city bench and historical building around them. After Skopje 2014, it’s hard to see where the architectural styles came from as they have no resemblance to any previous styles that are local to Skopje. Therefore, this research project will aim to re-establish the true national identity while still acknowledging the progression of the growing city through architecture.

Identity can be present in architecture through many ways; location, topography, materiality, form, public spaces and so on. Any way that a person has made a connection to an element of a building or a site is related to its identity. Therefore, the identity of this project will have to be a combination of the most recognisable icons and buildings in the city that have had a longstanding history with the locals.

Lynch, Kevin. The Image of the City, p. 106

Lynch, Kevin. The Image of the City, p. 2

Lynch, Kevin. The Image of the City, p. 5

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Lynch, Kevin. The Image of the City, p. 106

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This will be achieved through the use of materials and building techniques that are inspired by historic buildings around the city. Planning of the building internally and externally will also be inspired through the transitions of the different architectural styles that have evolved in Skopje. The external public spaces that are connected to the existing street facades will resemble the typical piazza layout; this will help to re-establish the connection between the current street façades that people are connected to with the new architecture that will be contributing to re-establish the true identity of Skopje.

Examples of the combinations of brick and stone elements are shown in figure 34. They illustrate how the composition and shape of the stone and bricks are organised within the buildings/structures. This is analysed in figure 35 and breaks down the specific shapes and colours used in the typical materiality from buildings in Skopje.

3.2.3 Truth

There is lot controversy about the importance of truth in architecture. An architect should aim to be truthful throughout their career; to acknowledge the importance of the period that they are designing in, the construction of the building, use of material and how the context will accept or decline the building. In Jukka Jokilehto’s book, A History of Architectural Conservation, he communicates the views of John Ruskin (Ruskin was an architectural theorist with strong views on conservation issues). Ruskin states that an original structure contains the nations “real heritage and the memorial of the past” [61], and that any replica of another monument would reflect the true workmanship of the architect.

This project is treating the idea of truth as a way to re-establish the cultural identity of Skopje. This will be done through application of design principles that help the project present all periods of architectural history as opposed to the approach of project Skopje 2014. This will be shown in the the research of the history and how it can be applied within the current context of the proposed site.

The buildings in Skopje that have evolved through history reflect the periods that the city has experienced and how they are specifically built to fit that certain chronological context. Ruskin solidifies this idea by stating that “a historic building… as a unique creation by an artisan or artist in a specific historic context. Such a genuine work of art resulted from personal

![Figure 34: Buildings/structures in Skopje that the materials are inspired from](image1)

![Figure 35: Analysis of local materials and their shapes, colours and composition](image2)

![Figure 36: Conceptual model of how to apply transitions of material into the architecture](image3)
sacrifice; it was based on man’s perception of beauty in nature,” 62 this strengthens the idea that the buildings that resulted from the architectural periods through history are pieces of work that represent a particular era. A building can only become relative to its context through the architect taking careful considerations into social, economic and aesthetic forces 63 while making design decisions. These principles are important as they affect the outcome of the building and should not be ignored during the design process. The research on the Skopje 2014 project has proven that it has failed to address these forces through its construction and design. They have ignored the current 21st century aesthetic, economic and social factors and have instead commissioned a project that has become a political performance. In the book Rethinking Architectural Historiography, Andrew Ballantyne states that “…if we find a new monument being built in a place of national prominence, then we know to read it as the announcement of the arrival of a new power, a new establishment…”, this approach will be used in the project because it creates a link between the intentions of Skopje 2014 and an international perspective on where large urban movements originate from.

This project aims to apply all of the above-mentioned factors that affect a city’s context within the architecture within the building; this is so that it does not have the same adverse effect as the Skopje 2014 project.

The ICOMOS Charter is an international organisation that provides specific rules and policies for architects and planners to follow in their design process. They work closely with UNESCO and focus on many architectural issues. An important subject for this research is heritage and ICOMOS have outlined guidelines that could be applied to this certain project, they have been analysed and proved to work in many cases. Another technical source that is used in this project is the Skopje Urban City Plan, this outlines specific rules and regulations for building within the city of Skopje; this source helps to inform the design. Literature review of Group III is therefore systematised through two main subheading that will be theoretical principles drawn from Group II. In this literature review many of their objectives and principles are directly applicable to the proposed design of Skopje.

3.3 Programme

The research acquired through this project is based on the architectural history of Skopje. Cultural, political and social events that have occurred throughout the years and seminal traditions discovered through this research. This research shows how everything is connected to the current architecture. All of these factors have influenced the design process for this research project and have brought on the need for an architectural intervention that will re-establish the recently confused identity of Skopje.

Through the guidance of The ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites document, the decision was clear what the most suitable programme for the issue of re-establishing identity that Skopje is facing. To enhance public awareness and understanding of the cultural heritage through a building, the activities that will be implemented within the programme include 65:

• Print and electronic publications; this will be included within a library and a centre for architectural and planning archives of Skopje.
• Public lectures; classrooms and theatres will be provided to have a space for the public to gain an education on the history and traditions of Skopje.
• On-site and directly related off-site installations; guided walking tours will be available to the public so that they can be educated on the history around them.

62 Ibid
65 International Council on Monuments and Sites, The ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites, Canada ICOMOS, 2008, p.2
• Museum exhibition areas with informational panels and displays of the history and architecture of Skopje.
• Educational programmes; classes that offer education on artisan craft and the importance of traditional materiality in architecture.
• Community activities; public exhibitions spaces will be provided for art/creative showcases for the people of Skopje.
• Continuous research, training, and evaluation of the past, present, and future of Skopje and its development of architecture.

Finally, the building typology that would be able to accommodate all of these activities is a museum. In the book *The Image of the City*, Lynch talks about the possibilities that could be created through a building that offers so many activities, citizens could be taken into the street, classes could be held in the schools, the city could be made into an animated museum of our society. He continues by underlying that this kind of education within the city not only help to develop the wider image but also to re-orient the people after some difficult change. Therefore, this project will be focusing on providing the people of Skopje a Cultural Museum that offers the type of possibilities as Lynch suggests. The organisation of this programme is shown in figure 39.

It will be called the Cultural Museum of Skopje. The name is important in this case; Lynch says that to enhance the image of an element and to truly crystallise its identity, the name of the building should strongly reinforce the programme, structure and identity. This building will help to identify with the people of Skopje through not only the architecture but the function and programme that occurs within the architecture. Staff and volunteers involved with the museum will be engaged in the public communication of information relating to the values and significance of the site.

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Macedonia is a landlocked country in the south of Eastern Europe and is home to a population of two million people, the capital and largest city in Macedonia, Skopje, has an estimated population of 500,000 people. Macedonia is part of the Balkan region of Europe, it is surrounded by Greece, Serbia, Albania and Bulgaria and was once a state of Former Yugoslavia. It is a hotspot of history, culture, architecture, religion and politics and is the site of this research project.

The site of this research project is located in Macedonia Square in the centre of Skopje. The square is surrounded by blocks of buildings organised in triangular forms; this allows for the main roads and pedestrian roads to connect from the outer edge of the city where it is mainly residential to the centre of the square. The location of the site is on the western corner of a block that is surrounded by different typologies of commercial buildings, ranging from small souvenir stores, internet cafes, hotels, large shopping centres and restaurants. The site is 150m away from the heart of the square, 300m away from the Stone Bridge and 750m from the Old Bazaar. It is in a location that has been identified in the Urban Plan of Skopje as a space for commercial activity. The urban plan also states that the regulations for that particular area allow the building to be built to a maximum of 18 metres high with 4-5 storeys. The choice of this site has resulted from the research that has been carried out. It is most appropriate to place this building on the ‘city’ side of the Stone Bridge, where newer developments are allowed to occur. The site is very close to many of the buildings that were implemented through the Skopje 2014 project, making it an ideal location to introduce a building that re-introduces the true national identity of Skopje amidst the false Neo-Baroque and Neo-Classical style buildings. The building designed on this site is considered to be the starting and ending point of cultural connections to historical figures in the city.
Analysis of site and urban block around the proposed location of the building has taken into consideration the relationship between the proposed site with the main vehicle dominated roads (in purple) and the pedestrian dominated streets (in orange).

Through this analysis of the vehicle dominated roads and pedestrian dominated roads, becomes evident a connection between the proposed site. These connections are important to consider for this project as it will be how the people will interact with the building site. It is vital to know where they will be entering from and what the major access points to the site are.

All of the following analyses will be inspired for the design scheme. It shows how the new building will be able to respond to all of the access points of the proposed location.

Figure 45 shows the main viewpoints that will be available from the proposed site once the building has been designed. The main views are towards the city square and to the residential block at the back of the site. The project will strive to provide the best views towards the most historical locations in the city. This will strengthen the idea of re-invigorating the cultural identity of the city through the proposed building.

The analysis of the building heights around the proposed will be important for the new building as it indicates the average height of structures within that city block. Figure 46 shows the maximum building height restriction for the proposed building in accordance with the Skopje Urban Plan, and its relationship to the rest of the heights of the building within that block.
The Skopje Urban City Plan

This plan sets out urban rules and regulations for every city block and site within it. It has been created so that there is a consistency with the building site sizes, heights and locations in the city of Skopje.

It provides details of how many levels a particular site is allowed to build up to, the amount of parking spaces necessary for that site and also the programme that is most suitable for that site.

In the case of this project, the site chosen has particular regulations to follow. The maximum height the building on that site can reach is 16-18m high with roughly 4-5 storeys. The area of the land is 2318m² and the building coverage is 1955m². The amount of parking spaces needed for a site of that size is 268.

The programme that has been assigned for that site according to the urban city plan is a commercial building with retail spaces. The building of this project will respect the regulations and strive to keep to most of the assigned rules of the urban plan.

However, to achieve the goals set out from the research of the ICOMOS Charter the building will be a cultural museum, with a combination of commercial functions at a smaller scale.

Analysis of the heights of buildings around the proposed site of the research project shows that directly next to the site, the buildings are relatively low ranging from 3-5 storeys. The heights of the existing buildings will inform the height of the proposed building and will accommodate the programme and functions. The proposed building will provide several volumes of different heights, ideally in accordance of existing buildings within the context of the site. This is so that the new building follows similar characteristics around it. Not forgetting that the archive tower will be rising many stories higher than its surrounding buildings so that it can become a placemaker for the site and the programme. The specific heights of the other volumes will be developed in further design stages.
Figure 49: Frontal facades of contextual buildings around the proposed site

Figure 50: Functions of contextual buildings around the proposed site

- Hotel
- Shopping
- Restaurant
- Internet Cafe
- Private Business
- Notary
- Cafe
- Embassy
- Bank
- Casino
This is an urban analysis of the three most prominent city zones in Skopje, and their relationship to the proposed site.

- **Zone One** is representative of the Old Town/Bazaar, this area is separate to the rest of the city as it is not urban or residential.
- **Zone Two** is the urban city zone, this includes all business, shopping and transportation districts in the city.
- **Zone Three** is the outskirts of the urban city zone, and it is where the residential area of Skopje is located. The city is organised with an urban core and residential on the perimeter. This attracts movement to the centre from all areas surrounding the core.

The central city square is the largest point of intersection. As it is in the central core, it becomes the most compact part of the city.

The linear pattern of the Old Bazaar and the urban city points of intersection create a path that leads straight to the proposed site. This could potentially become another major point of intersection in the future.
An urban analysis of levels of historical ambience in the city centre. This is divided into four zones showing the different concentration of ambience:

- **Zone One** is inclusive of the oldest standing historical architecture in the city, the Kale Fortress and the Stone Bridge.
- **Zone Two** shows the historical ambience of the Old Bazaar.
- **Zone Three** includes the entire city centre where urban development is present.
- **Zone Four** is the area with the least amount of historical ambience as this is mainly residential Skopje, and does not have any important historical architecture within this zone.

This analysis of green spaces takes into consideration of elements that will hopefully inform the building design. The green spaces will create zones that will be dedicated to outdoor public and community spaces and therefore this analyses will help to inspire the location of them within the site.
Chapter 4.

Precedent Studies

Precedent studies of the particular issue of cultural identity are vast. For this precedent review the most characteristic projects for this issue have been chosen to be analysed in detail. The following precedent studies are international examples of historical and cultural museums that show a relationship to the identity of the city that they are based in through their architecture. They use materiality, form, planning of the building and the functional programme to illustrate a story of their country's culture. All three studies are relatable to this project in different ways and provide valuable strategies of how this project could achieve the same results.

Ningbo provides lessons on using traditional materiality and building techniques and how to combine them with contemporary material successfully. Palmach is an excellent precedent on how to use a floor plan to tell a historical story and give an experience through the architecture. Finally, NMAAHC illustrates how the use of architectural elements can inspire a sense of self-contemplation and reflection into the exhibitors of the museum.

4.1 Ningbo Historic Museum
Architecture Firm: Amateur Architecture Studio
Location: Ningbo, Zhejiang Province, China
Architect: Wang Shu
Year: 2008

This precedent is directly related to this project through the way that it utilises traditional building techniques and vernacular materials that have been locally sourced around the town. The façade of the building is built partially from demolished farmhouses in the area with different types of bricks that have been repurposed into the exterior walls. The seemingly random placement of the bricks, tiles and locations of the penetrations give the building a free-form feel; an imitation of the nature that surrounds the building which is unpredictable and untamable. This design element makes the building an example of how it can respond to its topographical environment, a topic that is important to Shu and within Chinese architecture.

The building is located in a large public park in the middle of the city Ningbo, the city has a population of 7.6 million people and therefore is incredibly dense. The location of this museum is comparable to the proposed project site because even though they are both distant from the historical areas where their material inspiration comes from, they still create a connection to the newer part of the city with the older. The context of buildings around this site is unrelated to the design of this museum. The design is entirely independent.

Figure 13: Traditional materials of Ningbo farmhouses implemented into the architecture of the museum
of anything around it as it is so isolated in its location. This is a benefit as it had given Shu freedom to design the building completely in an abstract way that does not affect the context of the buildings around it. This project is located in a city block that is surrounded by other buildings and will, therefore, acknowledge the context through its design.

“Ningbo has demolished all of its history,” Shu says that after such drastic urbanization, the historical culture of architecture was losing its presence in the city. This is similar to the issue of Skopje and therefore makes this museum a good precedent on how to revitalize the traditional culture through a building. “…the remnants of the ruins, that can give us a more physical feeling,” says Shu.

Figure 57: Location of Ningbo Historic Museum in the urban area of the city

Figure 58: Isolated location of Ningbo Historic Museum in the city

Figure 59: Traditional farmhouses in a Ningbo Village

Figure 60: Traditional house in Skopje’s Old Bazaar

Figure 61 shows how the traditional materials of Ningbo can be compared to the traditional materials of Skopje. This comparison is important for the design of the proposed building as it gives precedent on how to create a relationship between traditional materials and contemporary materials as illustrated in the Ningbo Museum. This is a design element that this project will strive to perfect as materiality is one of the main drivers of this building design.


Icon Eye. “Ningbo Historic Museum by Amateur Architecture Studio”
This museum is located in Tel Aviv, Israel. The population of Tel Aviv is approximately 430,000 people which is similar to the population of Skopje. This relation of density between the two cities is necessary as we can get a sense of how the people will use the structure and what is the appropriate scale to build compared to the context around it.

It is on a main street in the city that separates the residential area with the urban area. The context of the building is surrounded by various universities, a community centre and other museums. On the opposite side of the road is a large residential area. The purpose of this museum is to pay homage to the Israeli independence and to provide a public education of the modern history of Israel. This is done through the materiality of the museum, similar to Wang Shu’s design elements, and the arrangement of the floor plans.

“The museum uses the walk-through experience as a unique way to combine education and entertainment in a style known as ‘edutainment,’ this is a way of utilizing the plan of the museum and turning it into an exhibition in itself. The fragmented arrangement of indoor and outdoor...”

4.2 Palmach Museum of History

Architecture Firm: Zvi Hecker
Location: Tel Aviv, Israel
Architect: Rafi Segal
Year: 1998

This museum is located in Tel Aviv, Israel. The population of Tel Aviv is approximately 430,000 people which is similar to the population of Skopje. This relation of density between the two cities is necessary as we can get a sense of how the people will use the structure and what is the appropriate scale to build compared to the context around it.

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It is on a main street in the city that separates the residential area with the urban area. The context of the building is surrounded by various universities, a community centre and other museums. On the opposite side of the road is a large residential area. The purpose of this museum is to pay homage to the Israeli independence and to provide a public education of the modern history of Israel. This is done through the materiality of the museum, similar to Wang Shu’s design elements, and the arrangement of the floor plans.

“The museum uses the walk-through experience as a unique way to combine education and entertainment in a style known as ‘edutainment,’ this is a way of utilizing the plan of the museum and turning it into an exhibition in itself. The fragmented arrangement of indoor and outdoor...”

4.2 Palmach Museum of History

Architecture Firm: Zvi Hecker
Location: Tel Aviv, Israel
Architect: Rafi Segal
Year: 1998

This museum is located in Tel Aviv, Israel. The population of Tel Aviv is approximately 430,000 people which is similar to the population of Skopje. This relation of density between the two cities is necessary as we can get a sense of how the people will use the structure and what is the appropriate scale to build compared to the context around it.

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spaces, stairs moving through the levels of the museum create movement through the building, and all come together to a central courtyard. This creates a relationship between building as a whole and becomes an example of how the architecture itself can tell a story through the floor plan as shown in figure 68. This will be a design strategy that I will implement in this project as it is important to understand the cultural history of Skopje through the movement of the building as well as the materiality.

The form of the museum also gives clues to the relationship between the city and the building. The angular, irregular and dominant facades of the building show the relationship between the form and the landscape. This creates a connection to the people that live in Tel Aviv and the building as the changes of movement through the facades mimics the movement of the contours that the building sits on. This is another way of providing a connection between the building and the people that will be explored in this project.

![Figure 66: Diagram showing how the building form follows the contours of the site](image)

![Figure 67: Diagram showing the center point that the building plan leads to](image)

![Figure 68: Plan analysis of walk-through experience leading to central courtyard](image)

![Figure 69: Outdoor area of the museum](image)

![Figure 70: Front facade of museum](image)
4.3 National Museum of African American History and Culture

Architecture Firm: Freelon Adjaye Bond
Location: Washington D.C, United States
Architect: David Adjaye and Philip Freelon
Year: 2016

“This building will sing for all of us.”
– Lonnie G. Bunch (Founding Director of the Museum)

The common ground that all three of the precedent studies have is that they all aim to stimulate a sense of connection between the building and the history of the country that it is based in. The building functions to tell the story of the African-American struggle through the lens of the architecture.

The plan of the building is indicative to the story of the African-American history and culture. The large open-plan spaces, triple height galleries and pivotal views out of the building towards the monument grounds25 are symbolic design elements that encourage visitors to feel contemplative and reflective of their past.

The location of the building is unique to the other precedents as it is part of the Constitution Avenue and is near many monumental buildings that also hold a unique

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history. The designer and architect of this project had to carefully take into account the masterplan that exists on the site and how they can incorporate their architectural ideals into it. The architect David Adjaye had this to say on how to create that connection between the building and the context, “...we always conceived of our building as a kind of turning point, a knuckle, a joint, which articulates the two things, neither one nor the other, but bridging between the two things.” This design principle can be applied directly to this project as bridging the connection between the old Skopje and the new Skopje; which is vital in the representation of the people and their cultural identity.

Concluding Precedent Studies

The lessons taken from the precedent research and analysis has helped frame the design strategy for the proposed building. Through the materiality and building techniques illustrated in Wang Shu’s museum in Ningbo, it has shown how locally sourced materials embedded into the architecture can re-establish a connection with the people.

Zvi Hecker’s Palmach History Museum gives lessons on how to use the floor plan to guide visitors through his building. The walk-through experience allows people to learn about the history of Israel while following the movement of the building form that directs them to a central core.

Opening up the floor plans and having high ceiling galleries are design strategies that give a sense of reflection and self-contemplation within the visitors. This specific feeling was achieved in David Adjaye’s museum in Washington D.C. The new museum will aim to accomplish this similar feeling in the future design of this project.

Material, form, plans that interlock and connect with each other, the context and its relationship with the architecture, will all be explored further in the design stages of the project of the Cultural Museum of Skopje. These approaches of design strategies will become the starting point that will strive to produce a building that respects the cultural identity of Skopje in every sense.
Chapter 5.

5.1 Design Objectives

Through all of the research of the architectural history of Skopje, the issues that have resulted from the recent urban development project Skopje 2014, and the study of relevant precedent studies, it was made clear that there was a gap between the true cultural identity of Skopje and what has been implemented in the most recent urban development.

Is it possible to ignore all of the history and architecture that exists in the capital, and place a mask of generic Neo-Classical and Neo-Baroque façade only to gain international recognition? Is it morally correct to spend nearly as much public finances as the national healthcare budget on an experimental tourism ploy? This research project will attempt to create a possible architectural intervention that could re-establish the true identity of Skopje.

The instigator of this research topic has been the urban development project of Skopje 2014, and through the research and literature review, there have been certain issues that stand out from the rest. These can be organised into three categories: economic, aesthetic and cultural.

Economic

The immense amount of money spent on Skopje 2014 has had a negative response by the residents of the city. Primarily, because it was as much as the national healthcare budget, and also because Macedonia has had issues with the unemployment rates in the country which have remained consistently at a high rate of 23%17. The priority of developing the project of Skopje 2014 instead of using the money towards creating better jobs for the citizens has been viewed as a negligent action by the government. Response to this issue will need to be something put in place to give back to the people of Skopje and create future opportunities, and provide a space for growth and development.

Aesthetic

The architectural styles in place for Skopje 2014 are controversial between different groups of people. This is inclusive of how the government and its private designers think of the methods implemented in the project, and the positive effects they think will come from designing in the particular style, and how the public thinks the styles have affected their cultural background and history regarding disguising the old architecture with their new façades.

To re-establish the true identity of Skopje and the people, there would need to be an architectural aesthetic that re-visits the historical style of architecture that has been ignored in the past decade.

Cultural

Culture is important to the people of Macedonia as it is what sets them apart from any other country in the Balkan region. It is what has inspired their diversity, architecture, art, music, and anything that makes Macedonians who they are. Ideally, the culture of a country would be celebrated through architecture in a way that inspire the people to hold on to the longstanding styles but also make room for

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new developments. This can be represented through this research project by choosing a program for the architectural intervention that can also give back to the people, inspire their cultural activities and at the same time leave it flexible for the growth of the nation and any changes it goes through.

5.2 Design Principles

These design principles have been influenced by the ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites. This worldwide organization works closely with UNESCO and specializes in architectural heritage projects. They have set out certain guidelines that could be followed throughout the design process of a project such as this one. The most applicable principles for the research project at hand include:

Understanding
To enhance personal experience, increase public respect and understanding, and communicate the importance of the cultural identity within the city. To encourage individuals to reflect on their own perceptions of a site and assist them in establishing a meaningful connection to it. To stimulate further interest, learning, experience and exploration. All of the activities occurring within the project will be accessible to the public to help re-establish a sense of community.

Context
The project should explore the significance of a site in its multi-faceted historical, political and artistic contexts. The project should clearly distinguish and date the successive phases and influences in its evolution. The contributions of all periods to the significance of a site should be respected.

Authenticity
The design of the architectural interpretation should respect the traditional context of the site and cultural traditions and dignity of local residents.

Research
The programme should be designed in a way that facilitates constant revision and expansion through research facilities and educational.

80 International Council on Monuments and Sites, The ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites, Canada: ICOMOS, 2008, p.6
Design Stage II

6.1 Axis

The axis of the site in relation to the context of the city is a major driver of this design. The linear axis from the Old City moving through the New City and ending at the site of the Cultural Museum of Skopje gives a firm connection basis for this research project. The axis will ensure that the cultural identity of the Old City is connected to the museum in the new and urban part of the city through the linear transition. This is reminiscent of the master plan by Kenzo Tange, and his vision for the city developing in a linear axis to allow for growth. By including this design element in the Cultural Museum of Skopje, it engages the building to be connected to every part of the city that the linear connection allows it to, therefore continually educating the public of the context around them, this is represented in figure 79. The smaller, linear axes that come from the residential area of the city also act as connections to the site. This is important too as they do not ignore the public on the west side of the city and make them a part of the context also.
Previous research has led to the map that focuses on the main three access points into the building site that are derived from the axis shown in figure 79. By following through with the movement of the lines within the site, it is possible to conceptualise a shape.

In one phase of the design development and preliminary exploration of the shape of the building, the negative space becomes isolated and has the possibility of becoming the outdoor space of the site. By removing the larger masses, it is possible to see the location of the access points coming together in the centre of the site. This could drive the central core of the new building.

Taking another step in the design process and further focusing on the positive shape of the form, it is possible to see the potential internal building mass. Connection of the axis points is an appropriate design step in the next phase of the process, from the city into the building site.

Finally, by including the building mass shapes into a clean design it is easy to see the development of the building taking shape. This is a design that follows the main axis of the city into the site. Thus, creating a linear connection from the most historical part of the city (shown in figure 79) to the proposed location of the Cultural Museum.
6.2 Explorations of Form

The form of the building will derive from the research of the site, the historical context and knowledge gained from analyses of how the precedent studies have achieved a form of their own. The main objective of the building is to represent a connection between the form and its context. It needs to have a clear link between the major historical architecture sites. Once the connection has been made clear, the access point to the building will fall into place. These access points will come from the main pedestrian and vehicle roads that connect the site with the historical context; this is so the public can engage with the connection of the proposed site to the history of Skopje.

Through the design of the main access points to the site, we can begin to look at the connections within the actual site. The three main access points all come to a central area in the middle of the proposed site as shown in figure 82. This is referenced in the Palmach museum precedent, where the building form circulates to the central courtyard. The main building will be separated into three parts that all point to the focal point of that central area. This will allow the three separate building masses to have a connection in the centre that will bring them together.

Another connection element will be the bridging level between the two major masses that connect them in the centre. This is a reference to the Stone Bridge in the city centre that connects the Old City with the New City as illustrated in figure 84. Within the site, the bridge element will connect to the main masses and represent them as the connection between the new style of architecture concerning the traditional style of architecture in Skopje.

To fit the building within the analysed programme requirements of the Cultural Museum of Skopje, the archive tower will become the most dominant building on the site. The archive tower holds the historical documents and plans of the entire city’s architecture. It will become the beacon of the site, and the tower will rise above the rest of the forms. Thus, becoming the place maker of the site where the public will be able to connect to the museum visually at any location within the city. This will become another connection the public can evolve with the site and the museum.
Figure 81: Wider map of Skopje, the proposed site and its connection to main points of architectural interest in the city.

Figure 82: The proposed site and its connection to main points of architectural interest in the city.

Figure 83: The proposed site and its connection to the old Stone Bridge.
This analysis shows the linear connection between the Old Bazaar and the urban part of the city. The main connecting element is the Stone Bridge in the middle of the sketches.

These sketches represent the proposed building site and the possible spatial connections that could be created within the site.

This will become a vital part of the proposed building design as it represents how successfully it can connect the two different parts of the city.

By analysing the iterations it is clear that the most successful form is the three-part building that comes together at a central core. This will become a vital part of the proposed building design as it represents how successfully it can connect the two different parts of the city.

These sketches are explorations of different types of building shapes that can accommodate the access points created by the axis that was explained in 6.2. By analyzing the iterations it is clear that the most successful form is the three-part building that comes together at a central core.
External Spaces

Internal Spaces

Figure 85: Organisation of internal and external spaces within building site

Figure 86: Access points into building site from main axis studies

Figure 87: Organisation of internal and external spaces within building site

Figure 88: Access points into building site from main axis studies

Figure 89: 3D model of building masses and their relationship
The development of the circulation of the building is vital to show the connection between the programme and the architecture. The circulation will follow knowledge gained from the analysis of the design techniques used in David Adjaye’s African American Culture and History Museum, where they used the circulation between the levels of the museum to tell the story of the history of the African American people. As you move through the building, the different periods of the history of Skopje will be present through the architecture. This will become an educational gallery of cultural identity that is important to the people of Skopje. The public will be able to reflect, contemplate and understand their personal connections that they have with the city while experiencing the architecture periodically as they walk through the museum.

It is also essential to develop the internal and external connection of the building and site through the circulation. This will be explored through the use of grand stairs leading to external public spaces, and ramps that flow through from the outside of the building to the inside. There needs to be a subtle connection between the two spaces as not to disturb the subtle changes of the architecture. This subtle change will be enforced throughout the building so that it brings a calm to the context around it that was disrupted drastically by the Skopje 2014 project.
Figure 91: 3D model of building masses and their vertical circulation.

Figure 92: Ground floor plan of building showing circulation through the site.

Figure 93: First floor plan of building showing circulation through the site.
Through this analysis of the best possible viewpoints from the proposed site, this project will strive to have the strongest connection between the new building and the contextual architecture around it.

The main connections represented in this diagram are the buildings directly opposite the site, the main square of the city and the City Wall residential apartments that are to the back of the site.
Materiality

Visual connection is vital in the identity of a building, place or space. People take notice of the colour of the brick, the shape of the stone or the texture of the concrete panel before anything else. On a building, this can be noticed from afar or up close. Therefore, materiality plays a big role in reflecting the character of a historical building into the proposed design. The people of Skopje have a personal connection with the buildings around them. They can recognise what building a specific brick came from, or what bridge was the inspiration for a composition of stone. Therefore, the integration of prominent building materials that are traditional and well known to the people of Skopje is important to represent a cultural identity. The most important buildings from the historical timeline will be evaluated regarding their materiality and how it can be applied to the design of the proposed museum. This will be applied on the external facades, as well as the internal museum exhibitions. Therefore, the entire building will slowly become an exhibition of the Skopje cultural history as the public experiences all the different periods of architectural material.

Materiality is essential to reflect today’s period, too. To encourage growth and evolution through the architecture, there will be a combination of contemporary materials such as glass, concrete and monolithic panels, that is relevant in today’s architecture. Still, the building will pay respect to the vernacular materials and construction methods of Skopje. In connection with aforementioned design strategies there is a possibility that more materials can be found and used in the building of this project. There are certain sites around the city of Skopje that have been partially demolished, and their materiality could be reused in this project. For example, at the Skopje Aqueduct there are a few brick and stones that have naturally fallen which could be integrated into the building. This would bring a strong connection between the vernacular material and the new building. However, this project does not exclude brick and stones, in the building there will be a clear difference made between the materials and what was produced in which architectural period. This could be one horizontal layer of old brick from the Roman period, one horizontal layer or brick from the Ottoman period, and one horizontal layer of concrete from the Modernist period, all linked together with the contemporary use of glass.

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Figure 97: Map of where the most prominent vernacular materials will be sourced from.

Figure 98: Conceptual material design applied to building form.

Roman stone

Ottoman brick

 Brutalist concrete
Conclusion

The city of Skopje has a long and beautiful history. Through the process of this research project, the aim is to highlight the history through the architecture. By making selective design decisions that influence the connection between the architectural identity of Skopje and the people, I was able to design a possible solution for this issue.

By analysing the extensive research of the context of Skopje, historically and geographically, the lessons from precedents and international theorists, and considerations of international Charters, the design has envisioned the vital issues of Skopje. By combining the objectives of aesthetic, cultural and economic design issues, they were able to reflect the elements of connectivity, materiality and form through the building.

However, some things could have been done differently through this design. The issue of cultural identity is vast. It is not possible to implement every personal connection the local people of Skopje have with the architecture, and the city itself into a building. To reconnect the public with the traditional and historic architecture, this design has chosen the most distinct periods of architecture to include in the building. The question still remains, however, even with this design of cultural identity through an architectural intervention, is the public more connected to their city after Skopje 2014? This will be something to investigate and elaborate on in the future.

This research project has given me an insight on the importance of the relationship between people and architecture. Architecture evolves with the people, the periods that pass and the movement of the context around the city. Everything is interconnected and influenced by each other. It is insensitive to force a style of architecture onto a group of people that it doesn’t reflect culturally. The research project has given a possible answer that will reignite the cultural identity of the city of Skopje and bring back the forgotten memories of the past.

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10.0 Appendix
Declaration

Name of candidate: 

This Thesis/Dissertation/Research Project entitled: FINDING THE FORGOTTEN

is submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirements for the Unitec degree of MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE (PROFESSIONAL)

Principal Supervisor: RENATA MILIC

Associate Supervisor/s: CHRISTOPH SCHNORR

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Research Ethics Committee Approval Number: N/A

Candidate Signature: 

Date: 10/10/17

Student number: 1417775
Full name of author: IVANA VAGLENAROVA

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Full title of thesis/dissertation/research project ('the work'):
    FINDING THE FORGOTTEN

Practice Pathway: ARCHITECTURE

Degree: March (Prof)

Year of presentation: 2017

Principal Supervisor: RENATA MILIC

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