

GYPSIES / ROMA IN BULGARIA PROFESSING ISLAM - ETHNIC IDENTITY (RETROSPECTIONS AND PROJECTIONS)

**Georgi KRASTEV¹
Evgeniya I. IVANOVA²
Velcho KRASTEV³**

ABSTRACT:

GYPSIES/ROMA IN BULGARIA WHO PROFESS ISLAM HAVE HETEROGENEOUS ETHNIC AND GROUP IDENTITY. IN THE YEARS AFTER SEPTEMBER 1944 TO 1990 (THE TIME OF THE SO-CALLED SOCIALISM IN BULGARIA) AMONG MANY OF THEM THERE IS A STRIVING FOR SELF-DETERMINATION WITH A TURKISH IDENTITY, AT THE SAME TIME THE STATE POLICY IS TO PRESERVE THEIR GYPSY IDENTITY, AND SUBSEQUENTLY-TO ASSIMILATION.

DEMOCRATIC CHANGES IN BULGARIAN SOCIETY AFTER 1990 LEAD TO THE OPENING OF BORDERS AND FREE MOVEMENT, ACCESSION TO THE EUROPEAN UNION. IN THIS CONTEXT, A PART OF THE UNEMPLOYED ROMA (GYPSY) COMMUNITY MIGRATES IN SEARCH OF WORK FROM VILLAGES AND TOWNS TO THE CAPITAL AND SOME OF THE MAJOR CITIES IN THE COUNTRY, OTHERS EMIGRATE AND SETTLE IN DIFFERENT EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, THIRD AND MARGINALIZED IN THEIR TRADITIONAL HABITATS. DURING THE LAST TEN YEARS, THERE HAVE BEEN PROCESSES OF REISLAMISATION OR ISLAMIZATION IN THE ROMA, WHO PROFESS ISLAM. REISLAMIZATION IS PRESENTED AS A RETURN TO TRADITION, BUT IN FACT IT IS A VISIBILITY OF THE PROCESS. THE COMBINATION OF LACK OF EDUCATION, NON-INTEGRATION INTO SOCIETY, SOCIAL EXCLUSION, MARGINALIZATION, ACCOMPANIED BY ATTEMPTS TO PERSISTENTLY IMPOSE CONSERVATIVE RELIGIOUS UNDERSTANDINGS AND PRACTICES, CREATES PREREQUISITES FOR RADICALIZATION IN INDIVIDUAL POPULATED SOME GROUPS.

KEY WORDS: MUSLIM ROMA, ISLAM, ETHNIC IDENTITY, RE-ISLAMIZATION.

INTRODUCTION

Gypsies/ Roma have been living in Bulgarian lands for centuries along with other ethnic groups. Many Gypsy groups with their own ethno- and sociocultural characteristics, differing

¹ Georgi Krastev, PhD, Assistant, Academy of Ministri of Interior of Sofia, Bulgaria, e-mail: krastev.g@gmail.com

² Evgeniya I. Ivanova, PhD, Assoc. Prof., Regional Historical Museum town of Stara Zagora, Bulgaria, e-mail: evgenia_iv@abv.bg

³ Velcho Krastev, PhD, President of a managing committee - Regional society "Technitary" town of Stara Zagora, Bulgaria, e-mail: tehnitari@abv.bg

in the religion they profess, are being resettled and displaced. Over the centuries, the number of Islamic faith groups has been different (chorochae/ millet, ferdjeliy, sacharats, reshetary, futadjiy, bivolyary/ danukolary, etc.). Very often, the surrounding are called Turkish Gypsies or Horohane Roma, and this name also dates back to the Ottoman Empire when mixed religion and ethnicity. Horohane Roma are a heterogeneous community, and identity is complex, defined on different levels, which are often blurred, and with a dual orientation towards the Turkish or the Gypsy community⁴. They are scattered all over the country, and in some areas are the most numerous ethnic minority.

The communication will follow the processes that run among the Roma/ Muslim Roma for self-determination of their identity during the second half of the twentieth century (the so-called socialism in Bulgaria) and in the first decades of the 21st century. How different socio-economic conditions influence the transformation of religion into a major marker of national and ethnic identity. The topic is a problem of the present day although some studies and publications have been made in separate strands, it regularly appears in the media, the ongoing processes of radicalization in Bulgaria in this community need an even more accurate and clear picture. Muslims of Gypsy/ Roma ethnicity are quicker to Islamize and change their religious habits and lifestyle.

Our thesis is that the combination of lack of education, nonintegration into society, social exclusion, marginalization, accompanied by attempts for permanently impose conservative religious beliefs and practices, creates preconditions for radicalization in certain settlements in some Gypsy/ Roma groups.

The thesis is built upon the introduction of previously unused historical data, narrative sources and ethnological research into scientific circulation and its analysis and comparison. The empirical data that is utilised in the article is mainly derived from our fieldwork. The field inquiries have been carried out for a period of more than a decade (late 20th - early 21st century). We have systemised and analysed the accounts of our fieldwork by putting them in broad historical, societal and cultural context. They have been corroborated with various sources (public and official information, reports, decrees and correspondence) found in a number of archives - Bulgarian State archives and the archives of the Ministry of Interior, access to which was granted after 2006. The historical method has been deployed in the tracking and analysis of the patterns of development of the studied processes. The historical method has been deployed in the tracking and analysis of the patterns of development of the studied processes. In view of the limited volume of the message, the thesis will be supported only by separate examples.

RETROSPECTION: THE YEARS OF SO-COLLED SOCIALISM IN BULGARIA (1944-1989)

The new socio-political system in Bulgaria, established after 9 September 1944, is by its very nature totalitarian. All power is in the Communist Party, as there is a merging of the party with the state functions. Without commenting on the reasons for declaring the existence of national minorities in the country, we will note that the policy of the Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP) governing in the period 1944-1989 about so-called „national question" is largely inconsistent and contradictory.

Periodic censuses, as well as statistical data collected by specialized institutions, show that ethnic minorities in those years are under 15% of the population. The largest groups are

⁴ Evgeniya I. Ivanova, Velcho Krustev, *The Roma Woman – dimensions and margins in her life* (Munich: Lincom, 2013), 5; Elena Marushiakova, Veselin Popov, *The Gypsies in Bulgaria* (Sofia: Club 90, 1993), 128-131.

those of Turks and Gypsies/ Roma, with the number of the latter constantly rising. While in 1946 they were between 167481 and 170011 (from different sources) or 2.4% of the total population of the country, 1956 were 197865 or 2.6% in 1978-1980 were 523519 (5.9%), and in 1989 they reached 576927 (6.4%)⁵. According to information from the Ministry of Interior (MI) of 1950, there are 167481 Gypsies Mohammedans in the country, 250000 in 1986, or about half of all Gypsies⁶.

In the first years after the Second World War, certain demographic processes also took place in Bulgaria, including the mass exodus of Jews to the newly formed state of Israel and Muslims to Turkey.

According to the Convention from 1925, between 1948 and 1949 Bulgaria and Turkey gave permission for Muslims to leave Bulgaria and it turned out that many were willing. According an information of the Communist State Security, most of the Gypsies are hold themselves for Turks, and the enemy elements, and especially the Turkish Intelligence Service, use this situation for their own purposes. The Turkish agency and the Turkish radio stations are fueling the emigration question among the Turks, Pomaks and Gypsies Mohammedans. A large part of the Gypsies in Plovdiv, Stara Zagora, Bourgas, Rousse, Pleven and others. counties along with the Turks filed for expulsion, engrossed in the general psychosis for departure in Turkey. Some of them, concealed as Turks, get permission to leave. An especially characteristic example of this is the Turkish Gypsies from the Veliko Tarnovo District, which are recorded in the registers of the respective People's Councils by nationality „Turks". They themselves are also considered as such, and during the resettlement some are able to leave for our southern neighbor. For their part, the MI authorities have determined the submission of requests by the displaced Gypsies for "*hostilities*". The documents clearly show the negative attitude towards both as holding themselves for Turks and their intentions for emigrating⁷. Also reported in the 1947 Intelligence Department of the General Staff of the Ministry of War is that the Gypsies are mostly Muslims, and it is their honor to call themselves Turks, although Turkey does not allow them in their territories and local Turks do not recognize that they are part of them. The behavior of the Turkish government, which has begun to advocate for the Gypsy population as Muslims, is disturbing. In a report to Ankara of the Turkish Legation in Bulgaria of 17 March 1947, „*the number of Turkish and Gypsy populations is generally given as a homogeneous minority element*"⁸. The deportation process ceased in October 1951 with the closure of the Bulgarian-Turkish border.

The inconsistent and contradictory policy of the authority towards the Gypsy minority is evident in the first decade of the government. In the beginning, BWP (c)⁹, through party-propaganda rhetoric, relies on the policy of concessions to minorities to win them on their side. At the end of the 1940s, preconditions were created for strengthening the gypsy identity by

⁵ The Committee for Disclosing the Documents and Announcing Affiliation of Bulgarian Citizens to the State Security and the Intelligence Services of the Bulgarian National Armed Forces (CDDAABCSSIBNAF), f.2, inv.1, a.u.731, p.3; a.u.1837, p.2; Marushiakova, Popov, *The Gypsies...*, 92-93.

⁶ CDDAABCSSIBNAF, f.13, inv.1, a.u.758, p.155; *State Security and religions*, Part II - Muslim Religion and the Catholic Church in Bulgaria (1944 – 1991), Documentary Volume, (Sofia, 2017), DVD, 235, available at: https://C:/Users/DELL/Desktop/Downloads/DVD_43-2.pdf, accessed on 20.05.2019.

⁷ CDDAABCSSIBNAF, f.2, inv.1, a.u.1815, p.3-4, 9, 11; a.u. 219, p. 1, 3-4; f.13, inv.1, a.u.625, p.1; a.u.759, p.11, 44-45; a.u.769, p.7; a.u.776, p.3; *State Security – Change of Names – Revival Process (1945-1985)*, Documentary Volume, vol.I, (Sofia, 2013), DVD, 368, available at: https://comdos.bg/media/DVD_DOKUMENTALEN%20SBORNIK-12-TOM-1.pdf, accessed on 20.05.2019

⁸ *State Security – Change of Names...*, 42, 45-46.

⁹ The Bulgarian Workers' Party (Communists) was renamed the Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP) at its Fifth Congress in 1948.

initiating and building mass gypsy organizations, cultural institutions, by creating and tolerating a gypsy press. Gradually totalitarian communist rule began to seek to involve minorities in the Marxist-Leninist ideology and, in the future, to create an ethno-nation state. Consequently, a concept for the integration and affirmation of the Gypsies as part of the Bulgarian nation is being developed. In 1950, the Communist State Security collected detailed information about the established gypsy cultural and educational organizations, their leadership, the names, and the brief characteristics of the gypsies with authority. The Secretariat of the Central Committee of the BCP in 1952 ordered „*the existing Gypsy organizations and committees to be self-discharged, and all the work of the Gypsy population to be carried out by other mass public organizations*“, such as the Fatherland Front, the Dimitrov Union of Folk Youth and others¹⁰.

Towards the end of the 1950s a course on the inclusion of minorities in the Bulgarian nation was launched, which also affected the Muslim Gypsies. The Mohammedan religious customs are silently limited, steps are being taken to „*volunteer*“ change the Turkish-Arabic names with Bulgarian. With Politburo decisions Central Committee of the Communist Party of 1959, and since 1962, the process of renaming the Muslim Gypsies has been formalized. Not everywhere the gypsies agree with the change, express dissatisfaction, refuse to receive official documents with the new names¹¹. This led to a second campaign to renaming the Muslim Gypsies in the 1980-1984 period, which also did not go smoothly anywhere. In many places in the country they are differently opposed. In 1983, for example, there were „*separate sharp enemy manifestations*“ in the Varna District in connection with the change of the Turkish-Arab names. In spite the measures taken by the District Administration of the Ministry of Interior - State Security in Varna, separate arrant gypsies continue to hold themselves as a turksand refuse to change their names. In Plovdiv they in a mass and demonstratively visiting the mosque, loudly and magnantly celebrating the Muslim religious holidays to show that they are Turks. In Shumen, however, Gypsies from the quarter the White soil say that „*with them, the work is easier, where push them, they are agree. They will wear their new names without problems, they will still be gypsies*“¹².

Before the Communist Party took power in September 1944, the Gypsies in the neighborhoods had spiritual municipalities, mostly Muslim. Religious rituals are served by both as a imams gypsies and a imamsturks¹³. At the end of the 1940s, Gypsies Muslims were almost everywhere in the country and included in Turkish religious communities. Turkish minority religious communities are acutely reacting to this and declaring they do not want Gypsy interference in their affairs. For them the Gypsies are Mohammedans, but they are not Turks. However, for example, in the five-member leadership of the Turkish religious community in Varna in April 1948 there were two Muslim Gypsies, members of the BWP (c)¹⁴. Other Gypsies, like the so-called buvolari/ danakolari –nomadic gypsies, numbering about 220 people, are highly religious. Their Hodges, who have a great influence on them, are kept in secret and remain unknown to the militia¹⁵.

¹⁰ Central State Archive, Sofia (CSA) f.1B, inv.25, a.u.71, p.1-3; inv.27, a.u.20, p.2-3; CDDAABCSSIBNAF, f.13, inv.1,a.u.776, p.1-7, 21-24, 42-43.

¹¹ CSA, f.1B, inv.6, a.u.4034, p.1-3.

¹² *State Security and Minorities*. Documentary Volume, (Sofia, 2015), DVD, 541, 543, available at: https://comdos.bg/media/DVD%20SBORNIK%2032_Minorities%20opt.pdf, accessed on 20.05.2019; CSA, f.1B, inv.55, a.u.1350, p.2; CDDAABCSSIBNAF, VI-L, a.u.46 (Shumen), p.95.

¹³ CDDAABCSSIBNAF, f.2, inv.1, a.u.729, p.1.

¹⁴ CSA, f.165, inv.9, a.u.106, p.1-10; CDDAABCSSIBNAF, f.13, inv.1, a.u.271, p.50; f.2, inv.1, a.u.183, p.3, 8, 19.

¹⁵ Archive of the Ministry of the Interior (AMI), f.26, inv.1, a.u.431, p.9-10.

Public development in the first half of the 1950s necessitated the suppression of the influence of religion and, in particular, of Islam, and later, systematic, targeted, and offensive action to curb and intercept the harmful ideological impact of Islam among Bulgarian citizens. Despite this state policy, at the end of the 1970s, State Security reported that „*still a part of the Gypsies who profess the Mohammedan faith are hold as Turkish. This leads to political instability and national division among them, to alienation and detachment from the Bulgarian nation*". Islamic religiosity serves as a means of preserving certain family-household and cultural-psychological traits as well as ethnic self-preservation. In the mid-1980s, on base of islamization among the Gypsies was formed a process of differentiation and demarcation from the Bulgarian ethnic. At the same time, their turkizing and activating of Islamic customs and traditions continue. Thus the Gypsies enter in the mosque trustees, become imams, and some of them appear as one of the most fanatical and active figures of Islam¹⁶.

PROJECTIONS: YEARS OF DEMOCRACY (1989 -...)

The disintegration of the so-called socialist system in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and the departure of Bulgaria on the road to democracy and market-based economic relations affect adversely for the industrial sector. Reforms are starting are halved, incomplete and inadequate by market mechanisms until the mid-1990s. At their core is the transformation of state property into a private one. The socio-economic and political cataclysms in this transition also reflects on the lifestyle and social status of the population in Bulgaria. The living standard of the Gypsy/Roma population was aggravated sharply. Due to their low education and insufficient qualification, they are uncompetitive on the labor market and more and more of them start looking for food outside the neighborhood and the city.

Democratic changes also lead to the opening of borders and free movement, accession to the European Union, expansion of economic, trade and cultural relations. In this situation, part of the Gypsy/ Roma community covered by unemployment migrates in search of jobs from villages and small towns to the capital and some of the big cities in the country. Others are marginalized in their traditional habitats, and others emigrate and settle in different European countries. Emigration is a way of finding a way out of the negative economic situation and an opportunity to raising the family's standard of living. They target those countries, and especially areas where they have close people or relatives wich can help them¹⁷.

Going abroad, some Gypsies/ Roma seek support and are supported by different religious institutions, depending on their group and religion. Religious, even on a manner of life Islamic, receive support and assistance from mosques, prayer homes, and their boarding houses. Upon their return to Bulgaria, most of them undertake a recovery of their Turkish-Arab nam

On the other hand the Balkans, and Bulgaria in particular, as an important economic and socio-cultural crossroads, in the presence of multiethnic, multicultural and very diverse confessional societies, are being subject to the activity by radical organizations and ideological movements that spread their ideas by unacceptable way.

Social inequality, poverty, social exclusion, and other processes among Gypsies/ Roma professing Islam imply the penetration of radical currents among them, although most profess a traditional Islam that categorically rejects radicalism. This activates religious awakening primarily among young people who are part of the global process of reislamization. These are also the main interests of the various organizations in Bulgaria funded by the Middle East.

¹⁶ CDDAABCSSIBNAF, f.22, inv.1, a.u.104, p.10; *State Security and religions...*, 237-238.

¹⁷ Evgenia I. Ivanova, Velcho Krastev, *Gender relationships among the Gypsy/ Roma in Bulgaria*, (Stara Zagora: Litera Print, 2013), 145-149.

These young people are acquainted with the doctrines of Islam, argued by Islamic theology, uncharacteristic for the country. With money from global and regional organizations, funding for the construction of mosques in the Roma neighborhoods, going to the Hajj, open religious schools and imam courses, putting into summer Koran courses, imports literature coming in most of the Middle East.

Here are some examples. The construction of the mosque in the Roma neighborhood of Nova Zagora began in the second half of the 1990s. At the beginning of the 21st century, the mosques were built in the Roma neighborhoods “Iztok” in Pazardjik and “Nadezhda” in Sliven. It is no coincidence that Bulgaria is one of the leaders in Europe by number of mosques - 1280 (by 2015). The figure is impressive on the background of our neighbors, with only 258 mosques in Greece, and only 77 in Romania¹⁸.

After the 90s of the twentieth century, visit to Mecca (pilgrimage) was started from Gypsies/ Roma. There everyone gets the Koran in Arabic. For example, in Nova Zagora, two people in 1992 reached 14 people (including three family couples) in 2006, same organized and sent by the foundation of the former chief mufti, Nedjim Genchev, and others from the Chief Mufti's Office. All Hadjies, upon their return, become chairmen and members of the Mosques's Board of Trustees in the city. After 2010, 5 people went on a pilgrimage at their own expense. In the Gypsy/ Roma district of “Lozenets” in Stara Zagora, the first was from 2002 and by 2017 three more went. In Asenovgrad until the end of the east year, there are 8 Hadji, and in the Gypsy/ Roma district of “Stolipinovo” in Plovdiv - there are almost 400 people, including women and children. According to Dr. Asen Kolev (Roma, theologian and researcher of the processes in the Roma neighborhoods), „*Nedjim Genchev with his Islamic Foundation continues to send people to a pilgrimage from Stolipinovo by using money from the Arab countries*”.

The introduction to the doctrines of Islam, argued positively by the Islamic theology and most of the uncharacteristic for Bulgaria, is mostly in the religious schools that were opened at the end of 1990s. The most famous one is this in Sarnitsa, Pazardzhik region. It was opened as a course for imams in 1999 by a decision of the Chief Mufti and the Supreme Spiritual Council. It has to prepare young cadres for imams and hatibies because of the large number of mosques and schools in Bulgaria and the lack of a sufficient number of qualified staff to serve these religious homes. On graduated students are issued a certificate of imam-hatib by the Chief Mufti's Office. The Arabic language is also taught in the imam course. Teachers are highly qualified lecturers both from Bulgaria and graduates of higher religious education in Saudi Arabia and others countries. By 2005, more than 100 young people have completed, many of whom work as imams or others lead Koran courses. In 2003/2004 a course for imams was organized in the Roma district of “Nadezhda” in Sliven in order to oppose Evangelical churches in the city and to literate the imams preaching in the villages¹⁹.

The school in Sarnitsa continues to work, both Bulgarian and foreign media are regularly interested in it, and different state institutions keep it under surveillance (including with respect to the rights of children). According to State Agency for National Security (SANS), it is funded by the Al-Wahl-al-Islam based in Niderland organization, which is banned for participating in terrorist attacks²⁰.

¹⁸ Tsvetana Kirilova, *I want an immediate referendum to ban the construction of mosques in Bulgaria!*, available at: http://bgpravda.blogspot.com/2015/01/blog-post_46.html, accessed on 20.05.2019.

¹⁹ G. Yusufova, *Islamic Religious Education in the Transition to Democracy*. Diploma work, protected in 2005, available at: http://isamveri.org/pdfdrq/G00005/2011_3/2011_3_YUSUFOVAG.pdf, accessed on 20.05.2019.

²⁰ “Rhodope Mountains - in the embrace of Islam”, available at: <https://www.dw.com/bg/родопите-в...на.../a-14991369>, accessed on 20.05.2019.

The same school ends Ahmed Musa, imam in the Abu Bekir mosque in the Roma district of "Iztok" in Pazardjik. His name made a stir after the action of SANS in 2010 and the lawsuit against him and 13 of his adherents from Pazardzhik, Plovdiv and Asenovgrad. In 1990, Musa left Bulgaria and to make a living in Austria, working in Vienna, where his religious awakening was triggered by Islamic radicalism. Later in Cologne, Germany, joined radical Islam and established contact with the Turkish extremist group Kalifaatsstat. In Bulgaria preaches banned ideologies such as Salafism and Wahhabism, and in some of his sermons in Pazardzhik and Plovdiv calls for war, persuades Muslims to join Islamic country. Ahmed and his adherents have profiles in social networks, showing photos with quotes from Islamic state leader Abu Bakr Al-Baghdad. The new mosque in Pazardjik, built in a private property funded with money from abroad, is also named after the leader of an Islamic state. This speaks of a certain radicalization in Pazardzhik's Roma neighborhood, a case without analogy, concealing new dangers for ethnic and religious peace²¹.

The process of re-Islamization among Muslims of Gypsy/ Roma ethnicity flows rapidly and manifests itself through a sharp change in religious habits and lifestyle. For them the norms of „traditional" Islam are illegitimate and they seek a new argumentation of their beliefs outside the authorities and traditions of the Balkans. Most the members of the community have a vague national identity and are often legitimized in publicity as Turks, even though the Turkish community in Bulgaria rejects them. However part of the Muslim Roma, thanks to the re-Islamization, have been converted to Islam, formerly atheists of Muslim or Christian origin²².

In less than ten years a number of Roma neighborhoods (especially those in Pazardzhik, Plovdiv and Asenovgrad, Nova Zagora, Haskovo, Bourgas) is Islamized. There are also attempts to Islamize Roma in Northwest Bulgaria, where traditional Islam is less popular. The process of returning Turkish-Arab names among the Gypsies/ Roma in Sofia, Vratsa, Vidin, Lom, Montana is also very strong. Poverty, social exclusion and the search for identity are the main reasons for the rediscovery of Islam in them. Nowadays the Roma neighborhoods in Pazardzhik resembles Arab neighborhoods of the Middle East, where men must wear beards and women burqas²³.

An analogous picture Velcho Krastev and Evgeniya Ivanova observed in the spring of 2017 in "Stolipinovo" in Plovdiv. It was remarkable that expensive cars contained bearded, well-dressed men who demonstrated self-esteem and well-being. There were no hurrying many women, dressed, with long black clothes and richly decorated long vests. Some were accompanied by their husbands, all with their characteristic beards. On noisy groups moved young men wearing black trousers and short black jackets. They were all trimmed and bearded. Against this background, there were three „Taliban" - both in long white robes and

²¹ "Who is Ahmed Musa, who was accused of preaching war in Pazardzhik", available at: <https://www.24chasa.bg/novini/article/4444874>, accessed on 19.05.2019; "They arrested the radical Imam Ahmed Musa in Pazardzhik", available at: https://clubz.bg/11112-restuvaha_radikalniq_imam_ahmed_musa_v_pazardjik_obnovena, accessed on 19.05.2019; "Bulgaria: Romani "imam" arrested last year for allegedly joining the so-called Islamic State", available at: <http://www.romea.cz/en/news/world/bulgaria-romani-imam-arrested-last-year-for-allegedly-joining-the-so-called-islamic-state>, accessed on 19.05.2019.

²² Stefan Ilchevski, *The Muslim community in Bulgaria: choice between tradition, re-Islamization, secularization and radicalization*. <http://svobodazavseki.com/broj-13/37-myusyulmanskata-obshtnost-v-balgariya-13.html>, accessed on 20.05.2019.

²³ Asen Kolev, "Muslim Gypsies and Islamic Terrorism". - In: *Risks for Bulgaria from Islamic Fundamentalism*. (Sofia: IFI-BAS, 2005), 175; "The 13 defendants of Imams were part of Al Wahh al-Islam". <http://www.cross.bg/ahmed-islyami-popova-1393417.html#axzz3S2j4kMsq>, accessed on 20.05.2019.

the third - gray. Equally long beards, clothes of high-quality cloth, shoes - alpine type. They stopped in front of the groups, saluted, and slowly moved down the street. From them there was arrogance, haughtiness, superiority over the others. They were followed by a lot of people, and so they demonstrated that there were always many adherents with them.

These are also some of the specific manifestations and symptoms of radicalization processes. In the 2016 issue of the Center for the Study of Democracy, „Guidance for Practitioners in the Field of Understanding, Assessment and Monitoring of Processes and Guidelines for the Development of Radicalization", four groups of visible indicators are mentioned. They are related to individual and group behavior (social exclusion, engagement with propaganda materials, abrupt change of religious habits and their imposition on others, aggressive behavior and immaculate behavior, etc.), appearance (beard, traditional Islamic clothing and etc.), the identity and the moods (strong commitment to the change, using of pseudonyms, critical statements to the government and etc.) and high-risk factors that precede violence (contacts with extremist groups, acquirement of weapons and explosives, organizing protests, criminal acts, etc.)²⁴.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the above pointed out, the following conclusion can be drawn: In Bulgaria, over the last ten years, there have been processes of re-Islamization or Islamization among Gypsies/ Roma who practice Islam. Re-Islamization is presented as a return to tradition, but in fact it is a visibility of the process. There are also significant differences, especially in the spread of Islam among the until recently evangelized communities, inasmuch as those who preach Islam today among Roma communities have received education in schools and universities that did not have a presence before the Territory of Bulgaria. It is quite clear that the re-Islamization provides an opportunity for radicalization of the Muslim community in Bulgaria through the penetration into the country of Muslim currents, professing to a different extent „radical" Islam. Roma Muslims who, to one degree, are permanently isolated or anader, are turn out in insulation, are subject to such an impact. The state is taking appropriate measures to limit these processes. The Strategy for Counteraction to Radicalization and Terrorism (2015-2020) has been developed and adopted. In 2016, the National Assembly adopted amendments to the Criminal Code, which criminalized radical Islam.

²⁴ Tihomir Solakov, Hristo Hristov, „Background radicalization of the muslim community in Bulgaria". – In: *Collection of reports from an annual university conference 2018 at the National Academy of Sciences "V. Levski" VelikoTarnovo*. (VelikoTarnovo: HUV Publishing Complex, 2018), 633-634.

REFERENCES

1. Archive of the Ministry of the Interior (AMI), f.26, inv.1, a.u.431.
2. "Bulgaria: Romani "imam" arrested last year for allegedly joining the so-called Islamic State". Accessed 19.05.2019, <http://www.romea.cz/en/news/world/bulgaria-romani-imam-arrested-last-year-for-allegedly-joining-the-so-called-islamic-state>.
3. Central State Archive, Sofia (CSA) f.1B, inv.6, a.u.4034.
4. CSA, f.1B, inv.25, a.u.71.
5. CSA, f.1B, inv.27, a.u.20.
6. CSA, f.165, inv.9, a.u.106.
7. **Ichevski, Stefan**. *The Muslim community in Bulgaria: choice between tradition, re-Islamization, secularization and radicalization*. Accessed 20.05.2019, <http://svobodazavseki.com/broj-13/37-myusyulmanskata-obshtnost-v-balgariya-13.html>.
8. **Ivanova, Evgeniya I. and Velcho Krustev**. *The Roma Woman – dimensions and margins in her life*. Munich: Lincom, 2013.
9. **Ivanova, Evgeniya I. and Velcho Krustev**. *Gender relationships among the Gypsy/ Roma in Bulgaria*. Stara Zagora: Litera Print, 2013.
10. **Kirilova, Tsvetana**. *I want an immediate referendum to ban the construction of mosques in Bulgaria!*. Accessed on 20.05.2019, http://bgpravda.blogspot.com/2015/01/blog-post_46.html.
11. **Kolev, Asen**. "Muslim Gypsies and Islamic Terrorism". - In: *Risks for Bulgaria from Islamic Fundamentalism*. Sofia: IFI-BAS, 2005, 175-185.
12. **Marushiakova, Elena and Veselin Popov**. *The Gypsies in Bulgaria*. Sofia: Club 90, 1993.
13. Rhodope Mountains - in the embrace of Islam. Accessed on 20.05.2019, <https://www.dw.com/bg/родопите-в...на.../a-14991369>.
14. **Solakov, Tihomir and Hristo Hristov**. "Background radicalization of the muslim community in Bulgaria". - In: *Collection of reports from an annual university conference 2018 at the National Academy of Sciences "V. Levski" Veliko Tarnovo*. Veliko Tarnovo: HUV Publishing Complex, 2018, 631-641.
15. *State Security and religions, Part II - Muslim Religion and the Catholic Church in Bulgaria (1944 – 1991)*, Documentary Volume, Sofia, 2017, DVD. Accessed on 20.05.2019, https://C:/Users/DELL/Desktop/Downloads/DVD_43-2.pdf.
16. *State Security and Minorities*. Documentary Volume, Sofia, 2015, DVD. Accessed on 20.05.2019, https://comdos.bg/media/DVD%20SBORNIK%2032_Minorities%20opt.pdf.
17. *State Security – Change of Names – Revival Process (1945-1985)*, Documentary Volume, vol.I, Sofia, 2013, DVD. Accessed on 20.05.2019, https://comdos.bg/media/DVD_DOKUMENTALEN%20SBORNIK-12-TOM-1.pdf.
18. The Committee for Disclosing the Documents and Announcing Affiliation of Bulgarian Citizens to the State Security and the Intelligence Services of the Bulgarian National Armed Forces (CDDAABCSSIBNAF), f.2, inv.1, a.u.183; a.u. 219; a.u.729; a.u.731; a.u.1815; a.u.1837.
19. CDDAABCSSIBNAF, f.13, inv.1, a.u.271; a.u.625; a.u.758; a.u.759; a.u.776.
20. CDDAABCSSIBNAF, f.22, inv.1, a.u.104.
21. CDDAABCSSIBNAF, VI-L, a.u.46 (Shumen).
22. "They arrested the radical Imam Ahmed Musa in Pazardzhik". Accessed on 20.05.2019, https://clubz.bg/11112-restuvaha_radikalniq_imam_ahmed_musa_v_pazardjik_obnovena,
23. "The 13 defendants of Imams were part of Al Wahh al-Islam". Accessed on 20.05.2019, <http://www.cross.bg/ahmed-islyami-popova-1393417.html#axzz3S2j4kMsq>.
24. "Who is Ahmed Musa, who was accused of preaching war in Pazardzhik". Accessed on 19.05.2019 <https://www.24chasa.bg/novini/article/4444874>.
25. **Yusufova, G**. *Islamic Religious Education in the Transition to Democracy*. Diploma work, protected in 2005. Accessed on 20.05.2019, http://isamveri.org/pdfdrgr/G00005/2011_3/2011_3_YUSUFOVAG.pdf.