

ROMA IN THE MEDIA

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The study was carried out by young Roma professionals and students under the mentorship of Ilona Tomova from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS)

The study was conducted by:

Anelia Kostova

Atanas Stoyanov

Vergil Ibryam

Galina Nikolova

Kouzman Subev

Maryana Borisova

Ognian Isaev

Orlin Atanasov

CONTENTS

- 1.** Introduction – characteristics of systematic stigmatization, social marginalization and discrimination of individual persons
- 2.** Changes in attitudes towards stigmatized groups in the course of the European history
- 3.** The situation in Bulgaria regarding diversity – stigmatization and social exclusion
- 4.** Major factors facilitating the processes of marginalization and social exclusion
- 5.** Attitude of the media towards the Roma during the 90ies
- 6.** Stereotypes, prejudices, and social distances towards the Roma during the post-communist period - 1991-2001
- 7.** Essence of the media monitoring, carried out by young Roma students – selection criteria and selected media
- 8.** Profile of the publications on Roma – major themes
 - 8.1** “Ataka” Newspaper – the racist discourse
 - 8.2** “Dnes” Newspaper – the “moderate” nationalistic discourse
 - 8.3** “Novinar” Newspaper – the “folklore” nationalistic discourse
 - 8.4** “Monitor” Newspaper – the ambivalent nationalistic discourse
 - 8.5** “Dnevnik” Newspaper – “Neutral”? “Objective?” In fact, again the ambivalent discourse
 - 8.6** “Klassa” Newspaper – the liberal discourse
 - 8.7** “Trud” Newspaper – apparently-moderate, sometimes ambivalent, nationalistic discourse with racist bias (Ognian Isaev)
- 9.** References

STEREOTYPES AND PREJUDICES TOWARDS THE ROMA IN THE MEDIA

Ilona Tomova

¹ Several essential characteristics serve as a historically sustainable basis for systematic stigmatizing, social marginalization, and discrimination of individual persons and groups. These are gender and sexual orientation; racial, ethnic and religious diversities; physical and psychic health; physical appearance; as well as some forms of behaviors, rejected as especially unwanted and defined as criminal or deviant behavior.

² Attitudes towards the stigmatized have considerably changed in the course of European history. These changes, assessed as “humanization of society”, as stages of the development of the democratic processes and of the application of the principle of justice and fairness in social practices, became particularly visible during the post WW2 period. The shock of humankind from the millions of innocent victims of the 20th century wars and especially the genocide against Jews and others labeled as “racially inferior people”¹ arose strong scientific interest as well as significant political changes connected with the understanding of race, ethnic belonging and religion as systemic categories for social exclusion, dehumanization and various forms of discrimination (including – the annihilation) of large groups of people. The struggles for de-colonization of many African and Asian peoples as well as the powerful wave for the recognition of the rights of Afro-Americans in the United States additionally intensified sensitivity towards this type of diversity. This led to the development of international and national anti-discriminatory and anti-racist legislation and towards the drafting of special social policies for overcoming the implications of inequality, based on racial, ethnic, or religious diversities. The feminist movement in the United States and Western Europe from the 60ies of the 20th century contributed for the deep theoretical, political, and social re-consideration of

¹ I have in mind not only the Roma but also the Slavs. During the past two decades, international interest in mass annihilation of Roma during WW2 considerably increased and a series of profound and serious research on their destiny in different countries appeared in the scientific area. Yet now this is to be conducted with respect to the Slavic peoples as well. The reason lying behind this “oblivion” is both political and ideological: all of them after WW2 fell beyond “The Iron Curtain”, were considered as “part of the forces of evil” and their suffering and victims during the war did not attract the deserved attention, empathy, scientific interest and funding by the West European researchers. Within the socialist camp, on the other side, the paradigm was for “the self-sacrifice and heroism of the Great Soviet Union”, while, for political reasons, the fate of Poles, Serbs, Czechs, Ukrainians etc. during this period has been neglected and passed over in silence.

male dominance and for ensuring of conditions for the effective equality of women in different social spheres in these parts of the world. It also gave impetus to the movement for recognition of the right of people with different sexual orientation to have the right of choice in their way of life.

³ For decades, Bulgaria has been left aside the theoretical re-consideration of diversity in its specific forms: racial, ethnic, religious, gender, sexual, etc., as well as from the attempts to seek political and social solutions for the gradual overcoming of the related implication and consequences of century-long stigmatization and social exclusion. Paradoxically, but this lagging behind largely has been connected with the pretences for materialization of a “scientifically-grounded political leadership”, based upon “the supremacy of Marxism-Leninism” in the socialist countries. While in the West Marxism powerfully inspired theoretical research and political movements for the protection of the rights of racial and ethnic groups, of women and of people with different sexual orientation, on the other side of the spectrum the dogmas of socialism for the “practical liberation of women by their mass inclusion in productive labor” and for “the fading significance of ethnic belong and nation”² in practice marginalized these issues as a topic of scientific interest and as a field for social activism, different from the party/government policy.

As a result, at present in Bulgaria (and to a different but yet close extent – in all post-socialist countries) many real problems exist with regard to accepting and attitudes towards diversity, which as if though have to a greater extent been overcome in the West. That, what is uniting the citizens of the post-socialist counties from Central and Eastern Europe and from the former Soviet Union, is the significantly greater degree of conflicts in the different manifestations of nationalism, the more totalistic rejection of “the different”, the much more open and tolerated forms of sexism in these countries, the underdeveloped sensitivity to the consequences of stigmatization and exclusion and towards the problems of the stigmatized.

^{4.1} It should be kept in mind that the national model of the Bulgarians significantly differs from the one of the West Europeans. Like the other Balkan

² Initially, it was utopially expected that the national, ethnic, and religious diversities shall be dulled abruptly and shall gradually lose their significance as a result from the extinction of class exploitation and “the liberation of nations”, without any special efforts or political actions, just because of the “automatism” of the social processes. At a later stage, after the second half of the 50ies, the active policy for “national construction” in the former socialist countries manifested increasing attempts for assimilation or getting rid of the ethnic minorities, which, in some cases, accepted sinister dimensions, as for example the expulsing of the Germans from the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland, the “change of names” of the Bulgarian Turks and Muslims in Bulgaria or the attempts for assimilation of the Hungarians in Romania, the stigmatizing of Jews in the Soviet Union, etc.

peoples³ fighting for their national independence during the prolonged disintegration of the Ottoman empire, the Bulgarians adopted the German model for an ethnic nation, i.e. of a state of one single ethnic group, called to guarantee the political, economic, social, cultural and symbolic rule of this dominating group. This is the model, which Rogers Brookbaker calls “the nationalizing national state”, which is traumatically experiencing itself as “the still unrealized national state”, as a country, where the other ethnic and religious groups should “go away”, should be assimilated, or at least should learn “to know their place”. Moreover, this is the vulnerable and stigmatized place of the “others”, “aliens”, of the dangerous, of the “inferior”, because they are different. This model was preserved unchanged during the period of socialism; when, ideologically, achieving social homogeneity was put to the fore, while the stigma of “the disloyal aliens, of “the fifth column”, of the “bearers of religious prejudices, fanaticism, and backwardness” continued to lie heavily on ethnic and religious minorities, which, since the 60ies onward, had to be gradually assimilated.

In order to get rid of at least part of the Muslims, the communist leaders used to repeat many of the practices of the bourgeois politicians of the late 19th century until the end of WW2. They concluded emigrant agreements with Turkey and thus additionally exiled several hundreds of thousands of people from the country where these people were born. They also organized mass relocations of the Muslim population from the South-East regions to the Northern parts of the country (in the late 40ies), launched several campaigns to change their names, imposed bans on Muslim rituals, habits and commemorations, as well as limitations of religious freedoms, prohibition of people from large ethnic groups to speak their mother tongues at public places, to name but a few. The Bulgarian Turks, the Bulgarian Muslims and the Roma were to a much greater extent in comparison with the other Bulgarian citizens, an object of constant monitoring, control and violence by the secret services, the local party and “fatherland front” organizations. At the end of Todor Zhivkov’s rule, an attempt was made to completely assimilate them by force, to treat them as if they were invisible. In a nationalizing national state, really there is no place for the “different” (Gelner 1999).

It was only after the fall of communists from power that the model of ethno-national country was put on the agenda and consecutive measures were undertaken for its transformation towards the construing of a political nation. Quite naturally, these changes have been connected with many conflicts, with changing of the symbol significance of the minority communities and of the mainstream society, with re-structuring of power relationships. Many Bulgarians perceived these as a “relative deprivation”, as a loss of power and status in their own country. These moods are skillfully fomented by the politicians, who often resort to the “ethnic card” during

³ The same is valid for the Central European countries as well, which have gained their independence after the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

elections and at the time of any crisis that arises during their ruling. Thus, sustaining of the nation's ethnic model reproduces the negative stereotypes and the stigma, imposed over the Roma and the Muslim communities in the country and objectively leads to expansion of inter-ethnic conflicts and fears, as well as to deepening of the social distances.

^{4.2} Another powerful factor for sustaining the high degree of mistrust and dislike, of negative stereotypes and social distances towards the large minority communities, is the economic crisis. In Bulgaria, the transition from a state planned economy towards a free market happened in the form of depression, much deeper and lasting than the Great depression from the late 20ies of the 20th century. The loss of the Soviet Union markets, as well as of the markets of the other socialist and the Middle East and African countries, as well as the nontransparent privatization of the socialist assets led to closing down of one million and two hundred thousands jobs in country with population of less than 9 million people (Beleva 2005). Western Europe also traumatically went through the shrinking of the Soviet markets. It lost 4% of its jobs – the greatest cut of workforce in a peacetime period. However, these are simply incomparable values. Moreover, the rich Western countries had much more possibilities for quick recuperation from this shock as well as to provide social assistance to the affected. In Bulgaria during 2001, twelve years after the beginning of the changes, four years after the introduction of the currency board and of sustainable macro-economic development, employment in our country was a mere 39%, the average real salary was 55% of salaries during 1989, and the gross domestic product – 73% of the GDP during the year preceding the start of the reforms. A vast majority of the Bulgarians lived during all of these years of transition with the feeling of a loss of their social status, of uncertainty and impoverishment. These are conditions, which, everywhere in the world lead to strengthening of negative stereotypes and prejudices against “the others” and to unconscious (or conscious) attempt of the majority to transfer the larger part of the burdens on the backs of minorities. Frustrations from the worsened quality of life in Bulgaria lead to ferocious seeking of the persons to blame for the slow and painful transition. Thus, politician and the media purposefully used the Roma as the “scapegoat” for channeling of the social discontent and aggression. Part of the Bulgarian politicians and some of the ordinary people looked for support in nationalism, which, in the Bulgarian conditions and environment, often takes the form of legitimizing of the unconscious or institutionalized discrimination of the “different”.

In Bulgaria, the burdens of the crisis were borne unequally by the various ethnic groups. Job cuts affected firstly and mostly the Bulgarian Turks and the Bulgarian Muslims. In the Rhodope Mountain region for example, 80% of the jobs were closed down during the period between 1990 until 1992, and unemployment affected in practice the whole population of this mountain area. In the same time, the average unemployment rates in the country were around 20%. As yearly as 1990, the Roma began massively to drop out from the labor market. The second major wave of

unemployment took place after 1992, when cooperative and state owned farms were closed down and the land was restituted to its previous owners. During 2001, only 17.9% of the active Roma population in the age span of 16-59 years had permanent or temporary employment (National Statistics Institute (NSI) 2004). According to data from the representative for the whole Bulgarian population and for the Roma “*Generations and Gender Study*” (GGS) from 2007, only 27% of the Roma has permanent employment. By late 2008 (the year of the boom in foreign investments and construction in the country), the share of permanently employed Roma grew to 32.9%, while 14.5% more were engaged within the Temporary employment programs or in seasonal or temporary activities (according to data from representative for the Roma research *Health and the Roma community: Analysis of the situation in Europe*). After the above-mentioned year, employment within the Roma community dropped again. Poverty affected disproportionately more Roma and Turkish households and was much deeper and longer lasting for them than for the Bulgarians. As a result, the educational structure of the Roma as well as of part of the Turks and Muslims living in the villages deteriorated, albeit to a lesser extent. The stigma, connected with the ethnic origin and foreign religion, was added to the stigma of poverty and lower education.

^{4.3} Another factor, contributing for the sustainable greater social distances as well as for the stigmatization of Roma and Muslims in Bulgaria, is connected with the demographic changes in the country. Muslims in Bulgaria comprise about 13% of its population, and Roma, according to objective estimates, around 9%⁴. Roma and Muslims are young communities, where birth rates are (considerably) higher than the average for the country, and mortality rates – lower. At present, more than one-fourth of the children of pre-school and elementary school age are children from ethnic and religious minorities. The educational system is not sensitive to this fact⁵ and the rate of early drops out from school of Roma children (and to a lesser degree of Turkish children) is strikingly high. Bulgaria is facing a problem, which is increasingly difficult

⁴ Just for comparison: in most West European countries, Roma comprise less than half percent of the respective country's population. The greatest percentage is in Spain – about 2%, about 0.6% in France, 0.5% in Portugal, 0.2% in Italy. Despite that the prevailing percentage of Roma there have significantly lower education than the mainstream population and many are not included in the labor market, their small number allows these countries with stable economies to find easier solutions for their integration.

⁵ The major problems, connected with the unequal access of Roma children and the children of Bulgarian Turks, are several. In the first place, they are not fluent in the official Bulgarian language, which seriously hinders their learning of the school curricula. A serious problem is also the lower quality of teaching in the village schools, where two thirds of the Turkish children and the children of the Bulgarian Muslims study, as well as almost half of the Roma children. Quality and organization of the teaching process in segregated schools in the large Roma quarters is particularly low. Poverty is an additional and very serious factor, especially taking into consideration that for many years the Bulgarian state has not provided free textbooks to pupils even in the compulsory educational degrees during the first eight years of schooling. Egocentrism and institutional racism in the Bulgarian schools additionally lead to early drop out of school of children from the large minority communities.

to cope with. Great percentage of young people, predominantly from the large minority communities, are functionally illiterate and have a very low educational level, which hinders their inclusion in the national economy even at periods of economic boom. This fact creates permanent problems and conflicts. The representatives of the minorities increasingly feel that they are discriminated. On their part, the ethnic Bulgarians consider that they are paying too high price through taxes and levies to enable “the lazy Roma to lie idle”. Fears are also growing that early drop outs of Roma children from school, combined with the mass unemployment among the grown up Roma and their spatial segregation, which has grown during the years of post-communism, create two parallel worlds with different values, with different organization of time and different attitude towards work, laws and norms in the country. This will continue to reproduce sharp conflicts in the future if no measures are undertaken to change the situation and to create equal opportunities for education and training of children for which the Bulgarian language is not a mother tongue as well as for children from villages and from poor families. Yet for 20 years now no serious measures have been undertaken... That is why nationalists and populists wave “the demographic peril” as a flag, it is continuously repeated in the media and leads to reinforcement of fears and stigmatizing of Roma and Muslims, including their de-humanization.⁶

4.4 The fourth strong fear, connected mainly with the Roma (and with young people from poor families or drug addicts), originates from the growing crime rates in the country during the years of post-socialism and in the incapability of the authorities to ensure orders and security for the citizens’ lives and property, especially in the country’s smaller villages and in the biggest cities. This fear is exploited by politicians and journalists who channel the majority’s rage against the Roma instead of towards the incapability and unwillingness of the government institutions to set on resolving the problem. The first speculation has been effected in the early 90ies, when part of the politicians and some of the most popular printed media launched the idea that during the years of initial accumulation of capital the state should not interfere and control the processes of privatization and re-distribution of the national wealth. Gradually, the great misuse of power that led to the concentration of wealth in the hands of 2-4% of the households in the country and to the mass impoverishment of the majority of the rest of the population was accepted by the public opinion as a “normal development”. Neo-liberal laws and tax schemes were adopted that systematically led to the rapid growth of the wealth of the wealthiest and decreased the social rights of the remaining citizens and especially of the poor. Attitudes towards poverty changed. In unison with the neo-liberal ideology, poverty is interpreted as the result from the laziness or the social incompetence of the individual

⁶ See I. Krustev’s article, dedicated to the role of the demographic fears for the decay of the democratic values for equality, non-discrimination and respecting the dignity of minorities at a European-wide scale (Krustev 2011).

or the community rather than socially construed with the support of normative changes, ideologies, policies, and the judiciary.

^{4.5} The withdrawal of the state from the control over re-distribution of ownership and from ensuring order and security for the citizens naturally brought to the sharp growth of crimes against property and the person. The clumsy and corrupted judicial system served as the excuse for increased mob laws in inter-personality recourse or in conflicting business relationships. Illegitimate violence became part of the daily lives of the Bulgarian citizens. When those changes caused concerns and mass indignations and protests, politicians and part of the media showed the “culprit” for the increased crime rate: “the Gypsies”, the drug addicts and the raging youths, whom we called “ultras”. Nevertheless, the major “culprit” came out to be the ethnically different – the Roma. The goal was not to focus social attention on institutional inaction and incompetence neither on the unjust distribution of the “national wealth” and on the mechanisms leading to deepened of social inequalities in society, but rather to find a visible, easily recognizable, powerless and disliked group, which to be blamed for the high crime rates, insecurity and lawlessness as well as for the scarcity of financial funds for the social assistance of the most needy groups: pensioners, children, single mothers, handicapped...

^{4.6} Great part of the politicians and the media neglect the most frequent and most significant violations and offences, defrauding every year the state by millions of Leva – tax evasion and draining of value added tax, which are “crimes of the majority” and in which Bulgaria takes a leading place in the European Union. Rather than that, the same politicians and media focus their auditoria’s attention on “petty thefts”. Such petty thefts are incomparably guileless from the perspective of stolen property. However, due to judicial inaction, they create strong discomfort and worsen the quality of life of the most vulnerable part of the population – the pensioners, the rural population, and the urban poor. Institutional incompetence and the language of hatred, freely practiced by media and politicians, lead to the deepening of the negative stereotypes and hatred for the “thievish Gypsies”, despite the fact that crimes and offenses are committed by a small part of the victimized community. Thus, the Roma had to bear the cross of three characteristics, which systematically lead to stigmatizing and social exclusion: ethnic belonging, poverty, and the more visible criminal activity...

⁵ The content analysis of the most popular national and regional newspapers during the 90ies, carried out by the Helsinki Committee, IOHR, Foundation SEGA, The “Open Society Institute” and other non-governmental organizations has shown, that systematically a language of hatred, as well as stereotypical and prejudiced presentation are used regarding the Roma. Most newspapers during that period quoted the ethnic belonging of the perpetrators of the crimes, especially if the offenders were Roma. The sharp worsening of the social and economic situation of

the Roma is explained mainly with “the personal and group inferiority of the Roma” – laziness, irresponsibility, unreliability, inclination to live only on social welfare, disloyalty, inclination to theft, unreliability, or by the particularities of their culture: they remain nomads, live from hand to mouth and for the day, and isolate themselves from the mainstream society. Many of the printed media systematically represent them as morally inferior, as semi-humans. Thus, the media contribute to the strengthening and deepening of the negative stereotypes, of ethnic mistrust and hatred, which lead to systematic discrimination and social exclusion of the stigmatized groups.

Various international organizations and embassies have committed with organizing and funding of projects targeted at sensitizing of editors and journalist to their own racism and ethnocentrism as well as to lessening of the language of hatred in the media. Changes in the code of ethics of journalist and legislation have been introduced, negatively sanctioning the topic for “kindling of racial, religious, and ethnic hatred”. Attention to these issues has been increased in university curricula for journalists. Nevertheless, the media image of the Roma remains negative, construing, and imbedding negative prejudices and stereotypes; and continues to generate hatred and violence against the members of this community. The 2011 census “surprisingly” showed one of the results of the negative social and media representation of the Roma: great part of the people who, during the previous census have declared their Roma identity, during 2011 have preferred not to identify themselves, or selected to indicate another options: that they were Bulgarians, Turks, or Romanians...

⁶ A series of sociological and social-psychological research of the representations, the stereotypes, the prejudices and the social distances towards Roma during the period 1991-2011 show that during the post-communist period the social distance between the Roma and the other ethnic groups in the country increased. Besides, the negative representations, stereotypes, and prejudices concerning them are much more stable, sustainable, and rigid, and are shared by the vast majority of the population. Unlike in the other West European countries, where higher education is usually the partition in the manner of representing and talking about the Roma, in Bulgaria higher education as a rule is not the indicator for liberal and/or democratic principles or for refraining from racist rhetoric and language of hatred⁷. The Bulgarian educational system, where civil training is extremely scarcely taught, does not contribute enough for the formation and molding of democratic and tolerant attitudes towards the diversity and the minorities.

⁷ See the results of the four waves of the European research on values, part of which have been interpreted by different authors in a digest edited by Prof. Fotev: “*European values in the contemporary Bulgarian society*”. G. Fotev, compiler. Sofia 2009. See also the results from the European research on inequality EUREQUAL.

Moreover, during the years of post-socialism, freedom of speech very often is understood as the freedom for open manifestation of xenophobic and racist attitudes towards some minorities, and more rarely – with respect to immigrants (who, objectively, are not many in the country). This trend has been reinforced by the nationalistic rhetoric of political activist, representing themselves as “patriots” (especially during pre-election periods, in order “to mobilize the electorate”), as well as by the policy of most periodicals and part of the electronic media, which, for various reasons, speculate with the fear from the minorities. By their publications, they strengthen the negative stereotypes and prejudices towards the minorities. The free expression of negative feelings and attributing by politicians and journalists of negative characteristics of the minorities brought to the beliefs among great many of the Bulgarian citizens that this was “normal” because “they deserve it” and because “problems should be named clearly and precisely”. Any attempts to introduce a proper tone are usually perceived negatively – as a censorship or as hypocrisy, as well as an unnecessary attempt to copy the mocked “political correctness” – “the fashion” of the liberal press in the United States and Western Europe.

The problem is that the open expression of negative feelings with offensive words towards a particular group usually reinforces the negative attitude towards this group among both the listeners and the authors. Thus begins the escalation of negativism, racism, and discrimination with regard to vulnerable groups. The tendency increases such groups to be blamed for their disadvantaged position. When this becomes a mass and widespread practice and attitude, any attempts to introduce policies targeted towards overcoming of the objective inequalities between the groups are being ragingly rejected as a “discrimination against the majority of decent citizens” and as a useless spending of the scarce resources. Prerequisites are created, despite the existing legislation, not to hold responsible the authors of discriminative actions and practices with respect to the marginalized communities, the quality of provided social services for them to be inferior in comparison with the country’s average, and guilelessly to misuse funds from the state budget or European financing, allocated for their integration. Finally, the result is deepening social inequality, blocked willingness to seek democratic solutions of the problems, where, by all means to take into consideration the minorities’ perspective, nurturing clashing ethnic interrelationships, decreasing the opportunities for formulation and attainment of the common goals for the development of society.

⁷ A group of young Roma – students and activists in various non-governmental organizations, agreed to participate in a project of INTEGRO to study the media image of the Roma and to pass training in order to prepare for a media monitoring in this theme. They reviewed publications on the Roma in several national and regional newspapers during the period between August 2010 and February 2011.

For the purposes of the study, several rules were adopted on how to select for analysis the ethnic publications on the Roma minority. A consensus was reached these to be:

1. Publications where the endonym “Roma”, or the exonym “Gypsies” appears in a heading or subheading of a particular article. The pejorative label “mangal” (“char-coals”), as well as the euphemisms “murgavi” (“dark-skins”), “bratchedi” (“cousins”), “minority”, were also added to the above.
2. Publications, where any of the above ethnonyms are mentioned within the framework of a particular text, including a commentary to a picture.
3. Publications, where there are key words, characteristic for the Roma culture and language, such as: “meshere” (Gypsy justice), “chave” (Gypsy child), etc.
4. In the absence of an explicitly quoted ethnonym or a key word, the publication is accepted as an ethnic one if oriented towards public figures of Roma origin or if it concerns segregated neighborhoods populated with predominantly poor inhabitants, usually labeled as “Gypsy quarters (Gypsy “mahala”), or “ghettos”.

⁸ The studied newspapers strongly differ in their ideological orientation and in the quality of the presented materials. Thus, the aim was to carry out a more comprehensive review of the printed periodicals in the country. The reviewed newspapers and tabloids are: “Ataka”, “Dnes”, “Dnevnik”, “Klassa”, “Monitor”, “Novinar”, “Struma”, and “Cherno more”. The Roma theme is reviewed there from various perspectives. Most often, publications concerning the Roma appear on the pages of the newspaper “Ataka”. There, representations of the community are most often negative, stereotypical, and intimidating. Roma issues are mentioned most liberally and democratically in the newspaper “Klassa”, but this newspaper has little interest in the social and economic problems of this community.

Below, we are presenting a brief profile of the publications on Roma in the reviewed newspapers, organized around the major representations and stereotypes that we have analyzed above and which have been reflected as essential topics of the publications from the 90ies: the Roma as “the peril for the nation”; the Roma as “social parasites”; the Roma as “demographic threat”; the Roma as “criminals”.

8.1. Newspaper “Ataka” (the racist discourse)

During the months of August 2010 – February 2011, “Ataka” newspaper has published 135 materials on the Roma (almost everywhere demonstratively referred to as “Gypsies” – in 87.3% of the publications). The major themes, connected with the Roma, reviewed by this extremely rightist printed media, are three: *“Roma criminality”* and *the changed reaction of West Europeans with respect to the “Gypsies”, after they began to immigrate more massively in their countries.* An additional theme is *political*

party "Ataka" – defender of the Bulgarian population, suffering from the Roma outrages.

Ninety-nine journalist materials (73.3%) have been dedicated to the various manifestations of "the Roma criminality". However, in practice, this topic has been either directly or indirectly mentioned or discussed in all publications and articles. Moreover, the newspaper "succeeds" almost every day to find a cause to write about some offense or violation committed by a Roma somewhere in the country or abroad, or just meanwhile to define the Roma as "criminals". The offense or violation of one person or a small group of Roma is generalized as "Gypsy raids" committed by "Gypsy gangs", "from which whole towns and districts suffer". (*ATAKA stopped Roma raids of houses in the town of Gabrovo* – this is the heading of a text, from which it becomes clear that several Roma have squatted in the house of a Bulgarian who has gone to work abroad for several years. *Nova Zagora is also wailing from the gypsy raids*, etc.). The brief releases by the Ministry of Interior on incidents where the ethnic origin the offender is mentioned, hinted or just supposed, are often expanded by journalists on the pages of the newspaper, reminding other similar crimes committed months ago by other people elsewhere. (For example, a depressing announcement about a beaten old woman from the town of Karnobat, from whom 6 Leva were stolen, was supplemented by the information, published three months before, about an old man from the village of Karanovo in the Nova Zagora district, who has been beaten and robbed. Another example is the sentence about the stolen church bell in the village of Levka, committed by unknown offender, but the newspaper already "knows" and spreads that the violator is a Roma. This sentence is supplemented by information about stolen electric meters in the village of Malevo and 12 meters of cable in the town of Dimitrovgrad, attributed to "other gypsy gangs". Thus, a text of seven lines is compiled in order to suggest that Roma are not simply thieves; they are sacrileggers and blasphemers who are afraid neither from human laws nor from God).

In the cases when there is information about caught or suspected Roma offender or violator, it is not only that his or her ethnic origin is underlined. Moreover, the publication underlines that he or she is with criminal record, that there are at least two or three dozens previous crimes in her or his police file, and very often that he or she has been already sentenced before, that he or she is the member of a criminal gang, lest somebody should imagine that the theft or the attempted theft is accidental in "Roma daily lives". In the publications, it is often underlined that Roma commit violence mainly against the most vulnerable and helpless Bulgarians – lonely (old) women, lonely seniors, children. (*A gypsy cut to pieces an old man in a village in the Kotel region; Drunk gypsies beat to death a pensioner to rob him of 250 Leva; Gypsies beat to death an old woman to steal 6 Leva from her; Gypsies beat a schoolboy from the town of Kyustendil; Gypsies that have robbed an old man put at a court trial; ATAKA rescued a schoolboy from the paws of 8 gypsies-rapists; After ATAKA gave a signal: gypsies who have raped a schoolboy, were arrested*, etc.)

Thus, panic is created that violence against old and lonely people is a widespread and everyday practice and that all of our grandmas and grandpas as well as our children continuously become the victims of robbery and violence from Roma. (04.10.2010: *“Gypsies robbed the stock of food supplies for the winter of pensioners in the Vidin region”: “Gypsy hordes are raving unpunished and loot the crops of the people, thus dooming older people to starvation... Thefts are committed during the day as well, even when the farmers and the owners are there. Objects of their thefts are the last remaining valuable belongings of the people: copper buckets, boilers, and electrical tools. Despite signals (to the police), thieves remain unpunished...”*) This is the way to suggest that hundreds of thousands of Roma, united in gangs, are robbing us all the time, without respecting neither laws, nor God. In another publication, 90% of the Roma in the country are represented as criminals. It is constantly underlined that crimes are an essential part of Roma’s way of life; i.e. that this is “their” main occupation... It is never supposed that the vast majority of crimes are committed in practice by a very small part of the group and that this happens among all ethnic communities. The daily repeating, “Gypsies commit every sort of crimes” is generalized as “the vast majority of the Roma systematically commit crimes” and reinforces the stereotype for the Roma as criminals.

The rare headings on cases of violence or murder of a Roma by Bulgarians on the other side are represented in a manner that excludes the possibility even to think that responsibility should be sought from the Bulgarians who have committed the violence. This is because the Roma has deserved his fate, because he is a recidivist, and because after the state is not in position to give justice, the victims of the “Roma criminality” should take it in their own hands. In some separate cases, the heading could be interpreted even as a call to take the law in one’s own hands (Ataka, February 2011, *“A bullet for a Gypsy who has committed more than 30 thefts”*).

Most often, on the pages of “Ataka”, Roma are represented as **thieves** – in 51 of the texts (51.3% of the crimes; 37.8% of the publications about Roma). Twenty-six articles (26.3% of the crimes; 21.5% of the publications about Roma) are dedicated to violence against the personality, committed by Roma (murders or beatings and rapes), but in another 13 texts, the Roma are represented generally as tyrants and violators, whom the whole population fears, including civil servants and the police. (*100 Roma trespassers jumped up to beat a policeman; 15 gypsies beat a policeman in the town of Bourgas; Gypsies intimidate a doctor with a lynch; Serious verdicts for a gypsy, who has killed the guard of a cherry tree garden; Gypsies killed a truck driver in an attempt to steal his truck*). In 10% of the publications, the Roma are generally described by the expression “criminals”. In the remaining cases, the Roma are characterized as **vandals, frauds, robbers, burglars, racketeers, blackmailers, fire-raisers, bribe-takers, traffickers, smugglers, drug dealers, prostitutes, beggars, selling their children to foreigners abroad.** (*Hundreds of Roma in Bulgaria shamelessly sell their babies in Turkey for a couple of thousands of Euro. The dark skinned parents do not care at all, because usually they have much*

more than one child and thus de facto they get rid of an unnecessary and unwanted burden. These Roma however, who cannot reach such profitable smuggling channels, have to think about a moneymaking "profession" for their children. The major variants are two: either an international channel for traffic of prostitutes or involvement in the beggars' schemes. These market variants however periodically feed the Roma family budget, the income being of purely criminal nature. "Ataka", 08.02.2011). Even Roma with higher education and good social and economic status are labeled as criminals. This generalization is made through unfounded mass accusation of all Roma activists that they steal the foreign funding for Roma integration, or by quoting as an example the former MPs Toma Tomov and Tzvetelin Kunchev, who have been investigated for various crimes. (Where do the millions allocated for the Gypsy integration sink? Personal bank accounts soar thanks to the "Roma integration"). Thus, "Ataka" is construing a new stereotype: "thievish Roma intelligentsia and activists", whom the other newspapers usually present as "a positive exception supporting the rule".

As far as the theme concerning the Roma criminality is practically present in all texts about the Roma on the pages of "Ataka", the readers are left with the conviction that criminality is "genetically inherent" in the members of this community. In their comments after the successive publication with similar contents, many of the readers share their convictions in the correctness and validity of such representation and freely express their rage, indignation, and hatred for the Roma. The editors of the electronic copy of the newspaper never censor such comments. The publications aim to nurture definitely such emotional reaction and very often, some of them are published in the column "The Voice of the People".

"The Gypsy criminality" has a second dimension on the pages of this newspaper. According to the editorial board of "Ataka", the "gypsies" are placed outside whatever laws. They refuse to work and study, to take care of their children, to teach the younger generations of the values and norms of the mainstream society. They do not pay taxes and fees. They do not pay the bills for the water, electricity, and heating that they use. They are systematically breaking the environment protection laws. They are daily violating the norms of co-existence such as for keeping quiet, not making noise, keeping living areas clean, preserving public property, observing traffic rules, etc. Thus, even articles that should be typologized as "social problems" seem to be immersed in the frightening theme of "Roma criminality". It will be enough to quote as a proof several of the numerous headings of articles and texts. *Roma integration is impossible if they refuse education and socialization; More than 300 000 gypsy children drop out of school; The Gypsies are not part of the Bulgarian culture; The gypsies are a peril and a mortal threat for Bulgaria.*

It is explicitly underlined that “*The gypsies are not a part of the Bulgarian culture*”⁸. They are systematically destroying and annihilating everything, connected with the culture. (*Gypsy gangs demolished a school building in the town of Straldja; A Roma stole folklore costumes from a museum; Gypsies stole a 50-kilogram church bell; Gypsies are destroying the “Pobitie Kamuni” natural sight; Gypsies robbed a catholic church in the town of Stara Zagora; Gypsies looted two churches over a single night; Gypsies broke down a necropolis in the town of Sozopol; Three Gypsies excavate for antiques near Archar*, etc.). “Obviously”, according to the editorial staff of the newspaper, “the gypsy culture” is related only to crime, theft, living parasitically only on social welfare funds. The Roma are represented as systematically violating all legal, moral, ethical, and religious norms. Below are some of the headings of publications about Roma during the period of the study. *Roma crashed the skull of a baby; Gypsies killed one of their children after a drinking-spree; A Gypsy baron beat to death a woman with an iron; Gypsies strangled a woman with a shoelace; Drunk Roma slaughtered each other in a village in the Haskovo region; Gypsy gangs rob tourists on the Bourgas beach; Gypsies stole the winter supplies of the pensioners in the Viding region; Roma stole an irrigation system, they destroy it; Gypsies steal as crazy ferrous metals in the town of Smolyan; The Gypsies do not deserve grants.*⁹

According to the editors and the author is “Ataka”, such mass inobservance of “our” norms and rules places the offenders completely “outside the culture”, i.e. outside the human society. That is why the expressions, which the journalists from “Ataka” use to describe their “deeds” in fact characterize them as “non-human”, as “inferior people”, as animals. The Roma *easily reproduce*, they are *shot* at as a wild game (*A policeman shot at a Gypsy after a persecution in the capital city of September 2010*), they *eat up* train compositions, *die as flies*, etc. In the attempt to represent them completely outside the cultural norms, the Roma are denied even instincts, inherent in most animals – even their parental and relations instincts have become extinct, let alone feelings of love, affection, selflessness, etc, characteristic of parental love. (*Gypsies killed one of their children after a drinking-spree; The Gypsies created a new profession: that of “childbearing”; Gypsies sell babies in Greece for 500 Leva the piece; A Bulgarian Roma was sentenced for traffic of babies in Italy; A drunk gypsy slaughtered with an axe his relative; Our gypsies have made a living for 10 years from the export of babies*).

Despite that according to the editors and journalists from “Ataka” newspaper, “the main threat” for the Bulgarian nation are not the Roma but rather the Turks and the Muslims, they do not miss the opportunity to warn us that the Roma also are “a mortal threat for Bulgaria mainly thanks to the corrupted Bulgarian politicians, who

⁸ A heading of an article of 07.01.2011.

⁹ Theo van Dijk defines the heading as “the strongest point” of the journalistic material, as a “subjective definition of the situation” (van Dijk 1996, 2000). That is why it is indicative that in almost half of the publications on the Roma on the pages of the “Ataka” newspaper, the heading bear even more negative and intimidating connotation than the text behind them

are tolerating this population because they rely on buying their votes during elections. (*A red mayor is tolerating Gypsy lawlessness*). The second reason the “rascals” to become “a fatal threat”, according to the editorial staff of the newspaper, is the ill-understood Bulgarian tolerance. (*Tolerance, which can obliterate us as a nation; Tolerating gypsies threatens all of Europe*).

When reading the publications on Roma in “Ataka” newspaper, it “becomes clear” that the Roma are threatening the national security in a couple of ways. First, they represent **a demographic and cultural threat for the country because of their uncontrolled and irresponsible reproduction**. (*Is it discrimination to give birth to hordes of children with the only purpose of getting children allowances and an income to make a living instead of working like all other people? Children, which later on are brought up in inhumanly miserable conditions, children, which die like flies!*). Similarly, the theme is discussed in a number of other publications: (*“The Gypsies want tolerance? Let them learn where bills are paid!”; “Allowances will be cut, if gypsy children do not go to school”, “The gypsies will continue to behave outrageously, while the authorities close their eyes”; “Gypsies make criminals out of their children”; “Three laws encourage the gypsies to produce children”, etc.*).

The authors’ theses, posing the key stereotypes and representations, unlock the readers’ reactions, which are not censored at all by the persons responsible for the electronic variant of the newspaper. (Comments: *The second major issue again is left outside attention – part of which society the Bulgarian Roma are. Which society do they represent both inside and outside the country? The Roma definitely are not part of our society; they cannot be called Bulgarian citizens. Why? Because every Bulgarian citizen by virtue of the Constitution has rights and obligations, which he or she must observe. The Gypsies have only rights. Ninety percent of them breach the Constitution in one way or another, i.e. they are criminals. The State however is negligent and pampers the Roma...* ... *It is very simple – THE ROMA are citizens of ROME, and they are not Bulgarians. There are GYPSIES in Bulgaria, which, instead of being sued, sentenced and regularly imprisoned for thefts, violating the order, etc., etc., are left to live undisturbed. They enjoy living in misery and dirt, because thus they can plead to the innocent and naïve people that they are poor. No one is going to ask the question whether this has been his or her own choice.*).

Another insinuation of “Ataka” is that because of their great number, youth, and self-organization as well as because of the mercenariness and corruptness of Bulgarian politicians, who are spreading an umbrella over their crimes, **the Roma daily rob, destroy, and loot our country, our land, our houses, our property, our culture, our institutions, our rights**. *Gypsies – thieves of electric cables, doomed to blackout Western Bulgaria; Gypsies stole a bridge to sell it for scrap; Gypsies – thieves of cables, stopped the water of a whole village; Gypsies robbed cables for more than 100 000 Leva from the Danube Bridge II; Gypsies left the town of Kozloduy as well as three more villages without electricity; Gypsies stripped Vitosha Mt.; Gypsies occupied the Rhodope Mt. The Bulgarian have fallen under a new*

slavery – this time – of the Roma (“Ataka”, 02.11.2010: *“The Gypsies want tolerance...” It is sad, pitiful, and insulting for any patriot to go along the streets and to see fear, depression, and humility because of the Gypsy slavery. First, it was the Turkish and now – the Roma slavery – how many more?*)

The enormous social inequality between Roma and non-Roma in the field of employment, education, housing conditions, access to health services, participation in the political life and in the citizens structures are not pinpointed as an issue at all, as an eventual characteristics of discrimination towards the Roma. On the contrary, the explanation of this inequality is represented one-sidedly. The reason is the **laziness and the wish of the Roma to live like parasites on social and personal charity; the Roma parents’ denial to send their children to school and to teach them the values and ethical norms of the mainstream society; in the ethical and intellectual inferiority of the Roma; in their sloppiness and irresponsibility.** Moreover, it is continuously repeated that in fact the Roma are the privileged community in the country. (“Ataka”, 09.11.2010. *Recently, there is much talk and discussion going on about discrimination against the Roma, both in our country and abroad. The European Union has allocated billions of Euros to fund programmes aimed at their integration in the European societies, but, alas, this integration has never happened. We could ask the question: Why? Another important issue is this our fault or the Roma’s? I would like to ask the question: Is it discrimination to live without working and keep on social welfare, financed directly out of the pocket of the working taxpayers? Is it discrimination to build a dwelling on an illegal /unregulated plot of land without anyone keeping you liable? ... Is it discrimination to terrorize the peaceful rural population by constant robberies and thefts? Or, maybe it is discrimination to apply the mob law to people who do not wish to listen to the loud music and noise that they are suffering all the day and night long? If this is the so famous discrimination, from which the gypsies incessantly complain all the time, obviously it would be better if we would be discriminated as them.*). It is exactly this “reversal” of attitudes: a “*criminal*” minority to be privileged, while the national majority suffers *under its oppression, shameless and arrogant exploitation* and nevertheless is obliged to comply with it and to “integrate” it, no matter what this might mean, is the main feature according to the editorial staff of “Ataka” newspaper of a “mistaken national model” and for a threat for the national interests of Bulgaria by the Roma.

The second theme, discussed in all newspapers reviewed during the period of the study, is the “*changed reaction of West Europeans with respect to the “Gypsies”, after they began to immigrate in greater numbers to their countries.* This theme has been discussed in the “Ataka” newspaper in 32 articles (23%.7 of the publications analyzed during the period of the study). Most of them are dedicated to the “sobering” of France and the reactions of the European institutions to the country’s “essentially correct measures”. The message, implied by most of these publications is that many of these measures could serve as an example for the Bulgarian authorities.

The briefings about the actions of Mr. Sakcozy's government always mention "the Roma criminality and lawlessness" that explain and necessitate the respective repressive measures. Repression is legitimized as the only efficient manner to deal with this community. The newspaper with obvious pleasure comments the actions of the French politicians, judiciary and police, most of which are highlighted in the headings of the series of publications on this topic: *Expulsing of gypsy bandits is an example for state governance; France adopts anti-gypsy law; France destroyed two more gypsy camps; France will continue to repatriate illegal immigrants; France sentenced our gypsies, who have stolen 4 tons of copper from a railway company; A fire turned into ash a Roma bivouac in France; France wants our experts with university degree but does not want our gypsies; Dimitar Stoyanov: EP missed its chance to resolve the gypsy problem; Tolerating gypsies threatens all Europe*. In order to reinforce its effect, "Ataka" newspaper published another whole series of materials, informing that "anti-Roma" laws and deportation are being drafted and implemented by other West European countries as well: Italy, Belgium, Austria, as well as by Russia, Hungary and Finland.

The readers perceive this message impeccably. They express their understanding, support and inspiration in their numerous comments, full of hatred, despise and aggression towards the Roma. However, even the most man-hating writings are not censored or deleted by the editors of the electronic issue of the newspaper. Thus, "the West European policy" together with "the voice of the people" legitimizes the extreme rightist populist ideology of the newspaper and of the political party "Ataka". It is symptomatic, that in its role of the "defender of the suffering Bulgarian population", the political party "Ataka" is represented by the newspaper through the pronouncement of similar calls and political promises¹⁰: To demolish the ghetto in the town of Petrich; to use force for "subduing Roma wrongdoings" in the towns of Sliven, Stara Zagora, and Nova Zagora, anywhere in the country; to cut social allowances to families whose children do not go to school or are not vaccinated; to destroy illegal buildings no matter that no municipal housing has been ensured for their inhabitants; to imprison as many Roma as possible; to speed up procedures for sentencing Roma for each and any violation; to reinforce police control and the use of force, etc.

Nevertheless, in "Ataka"'s publications on this second major theme during the period of the study there is not only support for the harsh measures of the French government. In some of the articles irritation surfaces that the French and the Italians "very soon became aware" and began returning emigrants, from which "we" were so happy to get rid of. This irritation is expressed mainly with accusations against France for the country's hypocrisy: this wealthy country refuses to accept and

¹⁰ The "gem" here is a quote of Dimitar Stoyanov, European Parliament MP from the political party "Ataka", outlined as a heading of the publication: "ATAKA and Barroso share a common approach for resolving the gypsy problem", September 2010.

integrate a few Roma, while in the same time is requiring from such poor countries like Bulgaria and Romania to spend funds for the integration of an enormous number of “non-integratable” representatives of this community. On its territory, France copes with the Roma only with repressive measures, but requires from “us” tolerance and unbearable economic sacrifice...

8.2. DNES” DAILY NEWSPAPER (the “moderate” nationalistic discourse)

Publications on the Roma during the period August 2010 – February 2011 were analyzed. These publications were altogether 127, as most of them were brief announcements. Anywhere in the headings and almost everywhere in the texts, the endonym “Roma” is used. However, in most headings and articles (68.4%) it is used with negative connotations. Two thirds of the headings represent at the first glance an objective and correct presentation of facts, but the emotional suggestions of these “announcements” are negative and 16% of the headings are openly frightening. The ethnic group of the crime suspect / offender is explicitly highlighted.

Seemingly, the editorial staff of the newspaper presents “objective information”, quoting statements by foreign and Bulgarian politicians, decisions of European institutions, briefings of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, or a resolution of a regional court. Usually this newspaper re-prints summaries or whole texts, submitted by the information agency for international and internal news BGNES and does not carry out their own journalistic investigations, analyses, commentaries, essays, or interviews. The newspaper’s position is revealed by the selection of texts, by the abbreviations in these texts, by the repetition of particular texts or quotes from various publications, by the wording of the headings and manipulations with picture material.

The major themes, connected with the Roma on the pages of the “Dnes” newspaper, are “the Roma criminality”; (thirty-eight % of the texts are dedicated to this theme or it is mentioned there); how Western Europe reacts to “the mass immigration of Roma” from Bulgaria and Romania and to the measures undertaken against some of the Roma by France and Italy; the opinions and reactions of the Bulgarian politicians to the European requirements for non-discrimination and integration of the Roma (totally for both themes – 43.3% of the texts); social issues – 29.9%; articles, dedicated to Roma culture or traditional festivities – 3.9%.

In two-fifths of the publications, Roma are represented as **criminals**, most often as **thieves and violators** (in each of the one-thirds of the publications, dedicated to “the Roma criminality”). In some of the materials, the Roma are attributed a **multitude of crimes: thefts, traffic of people, exploitation of children for beggars, prostitution**, other violations and offences such as **illegal**

construction on municipal plots, breach of the legislation for temporary residence abroad, for registration at another address, etc. It is exactly because of this reason that the authorities in France and in Italy have decided to extradite or expulse the Roma from their countries. In Bulgaria, Roma are represented as the committers of other crimes against the individual (a group of 4 persons **raped** a 16-year old girl from a poor family, and after that load pictures of the outrage in Internet; a drunk Roma at a wedding stroke the head of a policeman with a brick; traffic of babies; nine Roma killed a field guard). The non-governmental Roma organizations misuse and steal funds disbursed by international donors for the integration of the poor Roma. If they do not commit crimes, the representatives of this ethnic group **create other social problems** and headaches. A statement of the Deputy Prime Minister Tzvetanov was quoted that due to Roma massive migrations, Bulgaria's and Romania's admittance into the Schengen area is jeopardized (Tzvetanov promised to eliminate the mass migration of Roma). In their hometowns on the other side, they sue for years the owners of bars and mayors, because in a bar they refused to serve them (A "salty" fine for an owner of a coffee bar, who has discriminated Roma)...

In 55 from the 127 reviewed publications (43.3%) the scandal connected with extradition of Roma from France is discussed as well as the respective attitudes and standpoints of the local communities, international institutions, non-governmental organizations, Bulgarian institutions, and politicians. Unlike the newspaper "Klassa", the staff of "Dnes" newspaper either directly or indirectly, by the used expressions, shows that it approves the actions of Mr. Sarkozy's government or at least understands and pardons them. Some author's commentaries like the one of Aneliya Dimitrova "*The minorities, the rights, and the hypocrisy*" are very clear and explicit in its position: "*Is there indeed anyone who thinks that Nikola Sarkozy was wrong when he called the gypsy camps in France "the breeding-ground of prostitution, traffic of people and exploitation of children"? Is there indeed anyone who believes that Sarkozy is a racist, fascist, and xenophobe? Chancellor Angela Merkel on her side declared that multi-culturism was "a completely failed model" and opposed the idea, rejecting the need from the existence of a dominating culture in favor if integration – in other words, of adaptation (still she has not been called any names, but this will happen soon, too)... This is exceptionally serious change in the way of thinking and in the behavior of the European leaders with regard to the immigrants, the minority communities, and the policies towards them. And, partial rejection of political hypocrisy...*

Two facts are a public secret. The Roma are electoral reserve pool for every party or a politician who could afford them, morally and financially. Moreover, every politician who takes the liberty to call things by their real names becomes the object of attacks, as it happened with Tzvetan Tzvetanov, who "disgraced" us in Brussels by admitting that the gypsy ghettos are the incubators of crimes...

Tell me, have you ever entered a Roma quarter? Let us not even mention have you been there after sunset. Do you have the courage for this? What about the

so-called “meshare” (the Roma judges)? What are these judges, for what kind of jurisdiction are we talking about? Where in the Constitution is it written that there could be two jurisdiction systems? What, in your opinion are briefings and information in the media about the 12-year old mothers? About the gypsy girl, whom her parents have sold here twice as a bride: she used to run away, and they used to return her repeatedly. Every year television crews compete to shoot in Bachkovo the “market place” for Gypsy girls (children). It looks somewhat colorful and merry. What do we say to ourselves if we pay attention at all? That these are “Gypsy affairs”?! Moreover, the matter is about a marketplace (for the purchase and sale) of people. And what about the drugged babies at crossroad, the children, crippled for the purpose to make more money from begging? What about the prostituting, unhealthy, uneducated, deprived of any chance children? Don’t they have human rights, aren’t the human rights defenders going to jump and protect them from their parents?... A community, which is existing isolated and does not comply neither with written nor with unwritten norms of a country...

When they decide that it is not always good to demonstrate their standpoint so openly, the editors and the journalists of the newspaper use various social and psychological methods of insinuation, which could not be so easily identified by the readers as manipulation or discrimination on an ethnic basis. For example, the text of the article *France began to demolish the gypsy camps* (despite the negative connotation by calling the illegal settlements *Gypsy camps* both in the heading and in the text), in dispassionate tone tells about the expulsion of 100 people after *demolishing their gypsy camp in Saint-Etienne on Friday* and Sarkozy’s government’s intention to eliminate 300 more similar camps.¹¹ The last sentences of this “objectivist” text are those that will be the longest remembered. They say: *According to a recent inquiry, the French approve the government’s line, which declared that it cannot “tolerate” the camps. They are the “source of illegal traffic, harrowing living conditions, exploitation of children for begging, of prostitution and crimes”*¹² These sentences unlock a wave of negative images, associations and stereotypes and completely eviscerate the mentioned in-between above in the text *criticism of the actions of the government by human rights organizations*. The information that the French are supporting the extradition of Roma is included as the essential message or as an important part of the journalistic publications in several more articles on this topic and thus legitimizes “our” negative attitude towards the Roma. After all, isn’t this the attitude of the whole world towards them?

The information is repeated several times in some brief announcements that *245 Members of Parliament voted “against” the resolution*, i.e. subtly, but yet insistently it is underlined that the resolution of the European Parliament

¹¹ Pointing out these three-digit figures aims to suggest what numerous pestilences has flooded poor France.

¹² The same quote is used again in another publication.

reprimanding the actions and the rhetoric of the French government, was adopted by an insignificant majority, while more than two fifths of the Members of the European Parliament have demonstrated their solidarity with France. Other articles are highlighting that the French Secretary of State for the European Issues Pierre Lellouche has defined the statements of the Members of the European Parliament as “exceptionally extreme and unjust with respect to France’s policy regarding the Roma”, according to AFP. *“Everything that France is doing is to support the Lisbon Treaty, the European law and the Directive of 2004. The right of residence of Romanian, Bulgarian, Irish or Belgium as well as of citizens of other countries, is limited to three months and depends on several conditions; it is strictly limited”, explained Lellouche the measures for extradition of Roma from France*¹³. The words of the French Secretary of State for the European Issues are again supported in the next article, from which we understand that *“expulsion from the country is reviewed on a case by case basis*¹⁴.

The editors of “Dnes” daily have preserved the skill to speak Aesopian language, something that was a must during the socialist period. Thus they are in position clearly to convey their negative attitude towards the Roma as well as to any programs and actions for their social inclusion, and simultaneously to keep away (very unlikely) from sanctions for breaching (the toothless) articles of various laws for banning fomenting of ethnic hostility and hatred, as well as to refrain from violating the Code of Conduct of the Bulgarian media, which stipulates two clauses against discrimination of different social groups: *“... We shall not publish materials fomenting or enhancing hatred, violence or any form of discrimination”* and *“We shall not indicate racial, religious, ethnic belonging [...] if these facts do not bear considerable significance for the sense of the information”*. We have already mentioned that “Dnes” newspaper **explicitly indicates the ethnic belonging of people who have committed any crime or violation**, but only if the offenders are not ethnic Bulgarians.

What else is this newspaper doing? “Dnes” daily has specialized to subject texts to re-evaluation and re-consideration, which it is re-printing from web-sites of telegraphic agencies or from other sources by an ironic, derogative, or negative heading. It has used such approach in 37% of its publications on Roma during the period in question.

Like “Klassa” newspaper for example, “Dnes” has decided to popularize a statement that has been published on the web-page of the ex-Prime Minister of Bulgaria Simeon Saxe Koburg Gotta. The text is very positive. In it, the vision of the ex- Prime Minister is laid down about the need from equal integration of Roma in the Bulgarian society. Besides, the efforts of his government are mentioned for the support of the commencement of a mid-term well-thought about programme for social

¹³ *Members of the European Parliament exert pressure on the EC regarding the Roma*

¹⁴ *France on the Roma: We are applying the European law*

inclusion targeted at ensuring equal access to education and health care, involvement of long-term unemployed in the labour market and improvement of the housing conditions for the Roma. The ex-Prime Minister accentuates on the role of education for the integration of Roma children and youths and indicates that efforts in this direction are often blocked by the Bulgarian parents, who move their children away from integrated schools because they do not want them to study together with Roma pupils. Another issue that he is discussing, is that many highly educated Roma refuse to identify themselves as Roma (because of the stigma to be a Roma in the Bulgarian society). This is depriving their community, decreases its opportunities for a positive representation and image, strongly limits the opportunities its young representatives to identify themselves with a successful highly educated member of their group and to accept education as a value towards which to strive.

The newspaper's editorial staff did not like this text. Maybe they have comprehended it as the naivety of a politician that has obviously been frozen in the past, who has for many years lived abroad and who does not know well the real situation... And they have decided to undermine his statement by demonstrating their mocking attitude towards the major theses by putting an ironic heading: *And so the King said: Education will affiliate the Roma!*"

The approach has totally succeeded. The comments below the article in the electronic issue of the newspaper were abundant with abuses, slander and despise towards the expressed humanistic and practical ideas as well as towards the personality of the ex-Prime Minister: *Obviously, you have never before seen the "dark skinned char-coals" – otherwise you would clearly know that it is easier to teach a rat to walk on two legs than a gypsy to study and work. The gypsies just are not human beings, they are inferior, undermost, inadequate race – even if all the money in the world are thrown down into their insatiable dirty throats, they won't become human. The gypsy can be compelled to work and to observe the laws only in one way – by beating. Everything else is stupid prattle of light-headed ecologists. Look, this guy's grandfather brought two national catastrophes upon our country, his father – one national catastrophe, and he for four years has committed 800 national catastrophes. Forget about this old senile creature; we witnessed what bullshit he made and we ate it. Now he is commenting and advising us... He can not utter even one sensible word. Don't mention this senile fool again. We don't want to see this senile ever again... Didn't you understand that the people hate him... I am angry to set eyes on this greedy creature who has opened his enormous mouth to gulp down the whole of Bulgaria... But God punished him enough...* All comments (with the exception of the comments published by Simeon's office) were in the same spirit.

Here is another example: uninteresting announcement in itself, that during the forthcoming census of the population and the housing to be conducted in March 2011, also Roma will be hired as enumerators in the Roma quarters or as escorts of the enumerators, has obviously irritated both the journalist and the idiot. A boring text, full with quotes of National Statistics Institute employees, a civil servant in the

regional administration of the town of Bourgas and a future Roma enumerator, each one guileless in herself or himself, are brought out of the context or untied by linking sentences in such a way as to make it clear how dangerous it is to enter a Roma quarter even for such an innocent procedure as a census (*“During the trainings, the enumerators expressed their concerns that it would be much more difficult to work with the Roma population”*; *“They (i.e. the Roma enumerators – I.T.) agree that it is more difficult to work with minority groups and it would be better if “somewone from their people” go to their homes*). The text also casts other concealed and subtle negative suggestions, such as: the Roma are uncivilized; they even cannot comprehend the sense of a census; no reliable information can be obtained from them on any questions and that its why the mediation of “someone from their people” is necessary. In the same time, these Roma escorts are privileged, all the time they receive a lot of money for nothing: (*30 Leva per person will be paid to all Roma census mediators*). Lest anyone could not understand what is the real message of the text, under the heading *Enumerator – Roma – enumerator ... for the Roma in Bourgas*, a picture of a Roma in a threatening posture with an axe in his hand, frowingly looking out of the balcony of his house was published.

Similarly to the newspaper “Ataka”, the journalists and editors from “Dnes” newspaper express their negative attitude towards the Roma by dehumanizing them through various language techniques: they use verbs and images, associating this ethnic community with animal herds, packs, swarms, or clusters: the Roma are also devastating with their multitude, mobility, uncivilizedness and aggression, such as: *A flock of Roma ate up a forest close to the main road E-80*; *“Almost every day the Roma attack the forest”*, *tells the 76-year old grandpa Kotze*; *Roma seiged the hospital in the town of Blagoevgrad*. Subtitle: *They want explanations why a 30-year old woman died: More than 50 Roma from the towns of Petrich and Blagoevgrad arrived in the late afternoon of last Tuesday in front of the Gynecological department of the Blagoevgrad hospital, informs BGNES Agency. The Roma required explanation from the doctors why Nedyalka Todorova has died. Three police patrol cars guarded the Roma throng, as well as the entrance of the morgue, because the relatives wanted to take away the body of the deceased woman, which was impossible, because autopsy was scheduled...*

The tone of the publications regarding the Roma in “Dnes” daily newspaper is definitely “softer” than that of “Ataka”. It could be defined as definitely “milder” than the language in “Ataka”. It could be defined as “proper” in 25.6% of the articles; rather proper – in 36% of the articles; improper or ironic – in 38.4% of the texts. Nevertheless, more often the connotations are improper and ironic. Besides, we have already seen how “successfully” the meaning of articles written in absolutely proper tone, could be “converted” thanks to the ironic or negative heading...

Usually the authors in the newspaper “Dnes” do not write about the Roma with open hatred as in the newspaper “Ataka”, but the feeling is that for the editorial staff the Roma are something like a natural disaster: one cannot get along with them; they

do not comprehend the social norms and values, their behaviour is anti-social; moreover they are so menacingly many, they are so young and quickly reproducing... The absence of whatever attempt for social analysis of the reasons and causes for the objective inequalities between Roma and non-Roma, freezing at the level of the non-reflective cliché of the routine way of thinking that “*they are such in their nature*”, strengthens the feelings about them as for a “**natural disaster**”.

8.3 “Novinar” daily newspaper (“the folklore” nationalistic discourse)

During the first 10 days of the period of the study, “Novinar” has published 96 articles, where the ethonyms “Roma” or “Gypsy”, or their derivatives were mentioned. About half of these publications are announcements, reprinted from the information agencies with additional comments. The remaining publications (“the lesser half”) are author’s texts, analyses, commentaries, and essays. Pamphlets of dubious literary quality are published, abounding with mockery regarding the Roma. The most conspicuous one is “*Discussions are underway whether the Roma to make their own state*”.

An essential theme in representing the Roma during the period of the study is connected with the various social problems of the Roma. Forty-five publications are dedicated to this topic (46.9% of all texts on the Roma). There is no other daily newspaper to dedicate such detailed attention to the social problems of this ethnic community. The housing problem occupies particular place in this column, and especially two examples in connection with this issue: the destruction of residential block No. 20 in the town of Yambol, and the willingness of the government of the ruling political party GERB to begin expropriation of land plots and construction of new dwellings for the Roma, and the Roma to be actively involved in the construction works. Serious attention is paid to education, health care, poverty, unemployment, and various problems connected with integration and social inclusion. The essential thesis is that the Roma are Bulgarian citizens and that to a great extent the quality of life of all of us depends on their education, labor, and quality of life. Moreover, that this trend will increasingly continue to grow in the future, that “their problems” are in fact part of our common problems and will begin to be resolved when the civil society and the politicians really comprehend this simple truth. This serious message is sometimes packed in a specific “packaging”. The headings declare: “*Djelem, djelem (I have traveled, I have traveled – from the Roma hymn – translator’s note) around the health card of power; Residential block No. 20 was demolished, so what?; How happy we are with the foreigners’ problems with the Roma*”; *The Roma strike back to the French Blow*”; *The Djibrovi children are a bad loan; Roma are integrated by making them construction workers; New dwelling are built only for the working Roma.*

Another topic that occupies a very important place on the pages of “Novinar” is discrimination against the Roma, both in our country and in abroad. Twenty-three texts are dedicated to the identification and rejection of discrimination, or 24% of the

publications about the Roma. The critical pathos is not limited only to “*The hypocrisy of France*” or to re-printing of information about Western institutions, politicians, and prominent public figures who are criticizing the actions of Sarkozy and Berlusconi. Almost half of the articles are critical commentaries or analyses of the discrimination against the Roma in Bulgaria. Besides journalistic commentaries, which could be summarized with the ironic text of an advertisement – “*Take it easy*”, the newspaper has published analyses by Krassimir Kunev, Chair of the Helsinki Committee, by Michail Ivanov, Adviser of the President Zhelev on ethnic issues, etc. The ironic comments about various manifestations of discrimination against the Roma or of openly xenophobic words of hatred in the readers’ forum of Vesselina Sedlarska, Anguel Zafirov (Xenography; Euroroma), are memorable. Even Kalin Rumenov has some flashes in which he expresses (with horrific expressions) the pain from the fact that the court may in practice pardon by sentencing to probation a man who is caring for stray dogs that have killed a child (*A Gypsy child has died – who cares?*). Nice articles dedicated to discrimination are: *Parents delist their children from school, because they do not want them to sit on the same bench with Roma pupils; Racisms gains momentum in our country*; even the “very professional” informative-style “*The penises of Roma are said to be better than these of the Bulgarians*. When crimes were depicted a couple of times, it was not mentioned neither openly nor indirectly that the violators were Roma (we know the ethnic belonging of the violators from publications in other media). More often than other newspapers¹⁵, “Novinar” expresses the opinion of the Roma themselves or gives the opportunity for other Roma authors to express their standpoint. During the period of the study, this was the case in nine texts, while three of the publications were written by Roma.

The anti-discriminatory pathos of some of the journalists and the editors of the newspapers co-exists with the reproduction of traditional stereotypes and prejudices against the Roma in other texts and commentaries, so that the overall assessment of the newspaper is that it shows ambivalence with respect to the Roma and that it has not overcome the “traditional” nationalism, even though expressed in a milder form.

Like the other newspapers during the period of the study, major topics for “Novinar” are the reactions of various foreign governments, political parties, and international institutions with regard to the Roma. Forty-one materials are dedicated to these “news from abroad” (42.7% of all publications about the Roma). The majority of these publications concern problems, connected with the Roma emigrants from Bulgaria and Romania and/or their extradition. (*France towards Bulgaria: Integrate your Roma; France shall prosecute for aggressive begging; The Council of Europe calls a meeting on the Roma issue; The UN is criticizing Paris because of the Roma; European Commission is organizing a conference on the Roma; A MP is criticizing Paris’ actions against the Roma; The French haughtiness; The European*

¹⁵ Ognian Isaev is the author of two of the articles, and Georgi Parushev is the author of one of the articles.

Commission starts a penal procedure against France because of the Roma; Barroso is criticizing France because of the Roma; A Roma camp was ablaze in France; French representative goes to Romania because of the Roma; Borisov: France does not want us in Schengen because of the Roma; the Hungarian representation shall work for the integration of the Roma; the European Parliament requested France to stop deportation of Roma; France is taking fingerprints of the Roma; A fire in a Roma ghetto in Rome killed four children; Finland too considers the deportation of a Roma; The Roma, expelled from France, return to Western Europe; In France, one of "our" Roma was caught with 4 tons stolen copper; None of the Roma expelled from France and Romania does have a court record; The Roma in France do not anticipate help from our institutions; etc.).

Several of the publications are dedicated to extreme forms of rejection of the Roma by political parties or individuals in other countries in Central Europe with large Roma communities – Hungary and Slovakia, as well as the reflection of similar events on the political life in Bulgaria. *A Hungarian party wants the Roma to be put in camps. "Jobbik" proposes to create special zones for the representatives of this minority; Racist motive lies behind the mass murder in Bratislava; (The political party) VMRO wants referendum because of a Roma ghetto; Xenography; Tzonko Tzonev wiped away the shame on Bulgaria in Brussels.*

If we try to derive the summarized meaning of all of these publications, it would be the following. Neglecting the issues concerning the Roma integration increases the danger from marginalization and social exclusion of an enormous number of people. This on its part leads to massive emigration for the search of a better life, to increased number of crimes and the danger from all sorts of conflicts. That is why the European institutions and the governments of the West European countries undertake various political resolutions and actions in order to speed up the Roma integration in the Central and Eastern European countries, to decrease the number of Roma immigrants to the West as well as to ensure more acceptable living conditions of those who have already emigrated (for example, by building of legal camps for immigrants). No massive deportation of Roma should be allowed only because of their ethnic belonging. In the same time, different countries have already adopted or are drafting laws, which allow them to extradite Roma from other EU-member countries, if they make living from begging or theft. Western Europe is ready to elaborate and adopt a common framework/strategy for the integration of Roma. It is already realizing that more assistance and support are needed in order the CEE countries to be able to integrate their Roma. Before that however, it calls for more and better control on the spending of the European funds and financial assistance, dedicated to this purpose. The Bulgarian Vice Prime Minister Tzvetanov is supporting such an approach and has already started to check how several Roma NGOs are spending the funds allocated for the Roma – an undertaking, supported also by the Roma leaders (Iliya Iliev). Bilateral agreements for resolving particular problems, connected with Roma immigration and the traffic of people, are also supported. In

Romania, a deputy minister will be responsible for the integration of Roma and especially for solving the problems with the Romanian Roma who have immigrated to France. Austria and Bulgaria are elaborating common measures for coping with the problems of traffic of underage pickpocket girls and are seeking external financing for some of these measures.

We must admit however that sometimes it is difficult to read and comprehend such articles because of the ironic style and improper tone of some of the journalistic materials.

The third most frequently discussed theme on the pages of "Novinar" daily newspaper and related to the Roma, is again dedicated to the "Roma criminality". Fifteen publications (15.6% of the articles about the Roma) are dedicated to this theme. There is particular characteristic feature here: if "Ataka" newspaper represents the "Roma criminality" as "a peril for the nation" and the "Dnes" newspaper depicts it as a "disaster", "Novinar", which is an "entertaining" tabloid, more often highlights the sensation, the funny, ridiculous, and this "lightens" even crimes. The journalists are amused by the fact that the Roma also become the victims of theft (*Apaches robbed a gypsy camp*). The heading *A Roma hits a police officer with a spade* sounds somehow funny rather than menacing. The sensation, the mockery, the ridicule, is the aim of the publication of the articles *Roma from the Montana region kidnapped the ossifrage eagle "Bulgarian lady" for a ransom*, *The art of hitting with brick*; *Roma palmed off unexploded mine for scrap*, and even *A gang that was selling babies for 5 000 Leva each was caught*.

The Roma are depicted as ridiculous and funny "heroes of our times" in the pamphlet *Discussions are underway whether the Roma should make their own state*. "The Roma" state is supposed to outline clearly its boundaries and to indicate its national language. *One will be able to enter the notorious Roma quarters in our country only with an entry visa, while inside the obligatory language will be the Romani language... Plastic fences and barriers shall surround the residential complexes, populated with Roma, because this is the only thing that the poor people cannot sell... The state must establish a personality cult towards its heroes: monuments of the heroes from their national history shall be erected. In every town, a monument of the heroic mother Korteza shall be erected, who became a mother at 11 years in order to help her peoples. Another remarkable personality, which will be perpetuated in each settlement, will be Kondyo, who helps thousands of his girlfriends and fellow-country women to start a new business in the Netherlands for example.* The political parties must present their major political platforms for the future development of the country: *We want to boost our economy to get back on its hind legs, but not whatever legs, this shall be horse legs, explicitly state some of the candidates for members of the new local governments... The construction of kindergartens shall be among the main priorities of the councils of ministers. In the big Roma ghetto "Stolypinovo" in the city of Plovdiv and the "Faculty" in Sofia, they have already cleared three caravans for this new cause.* This state has found its

place in the international economy and the international division of labor: *Collection of scarp shall already become part of the national policy for life in a more environmentally friendly city.* International relationships shall be regulated in the following way: *The embassies of the mini-states shall be situated just on their entrance and so the whole population shall decide whether someone to enter or not. The resolution shall be adopted by ordinary majority: the loudest group shall decide what to do with the person willing to enter the state.*

This pamphlet very precisely reflects some of the stereotypes, the typical representations, and images of the Roma in the Bulgarian folklore. It shows a **traditional (“folklore”)** attitude and perception of this ethnic group: as **not at all equal, but not menacing...**

8.4. “Monitor” Newspaper – the ambivalent nationalistic discourse

During the period August 2010 – February 2011, “Monitor” daily newspaper has published 132 articles that directly concern the topic about the Roma. The Roma theme takes significant place in this newspaper, both as a number of publications as well as size, author’s texts, journalistic investigations and commentaries. Even when the source of information is one and the same, for example BGNES, one is left with the impression that the volume and number of publications in “Monitor” is on the average more than twice larger than in the other newspapers.

The author of the predominant part of the publications is indicated – 74 out of 132, i.e. 56.1%. In no other of the surveyed printed media, the author’s materials about the Roma are as many. That what impresses however is that most of these author’s materials leave a very strong negative feeling about the studied community (59 of all articles, or 79.7%). The majority of these materials are dedicated to depicting of crimes, as the ethnic origin of the offenders is explicitly highlighted. The journalistic investigation of Yordan Yochev about the “real estate mafia”¹⁶ shocks the reader with the naturalism of the described horrors and creates repulsive image of the Roma as a whole. Many of the author’s texts strengthen the massive wide spreading of the negative stereotypes about the Roma and the various rumors about them: demographic, social, and cultural. In parallel with such texts however there are also attempts for more individualistic representation of the Roma, for describing their experiences, which enables the reader to understand the motives behind the actions,

¹⁶ The matter is about a criminal group of four persons – two men and two women, in practice two couples who live together as well as about two accomplices, one of them with mental disorder.

which, in principle cannot be approved (*Roma blockaded a hospital because a pregnant woman died there*).

When looking for the reason for the negative characteristics of the Roma way of life, the reason is most often found in the Roma themselves. Even when respected public figures such as Prof. Michail Konstantinov attempt to provide a more profound explanation or to reveal the historic roots of the discrimination against the Roma and mention the mass violence (massacres, deportations, prison, forced labor, etc.) against them in Western Europe during the period between the 15th and the 20th century, still the impression remains that nevertheless it is only the Roma's fault, they are to blame, because always and anywhere they have had anti-social behavior. (*The Gypsy issue and the double standards. The actions of France are legal; the society is asking whether they are moral*).

More than two thirds of the texts about the Roma (70.5%) are written in neutral tone and *correct*, or *rather correct* style. The tone of 33 publications (25%) is negative. Six texts (4.5%) are written in a positive tone. A negatively sounding heading could be seen, below which there is a text without such sounding – in 17 cases (12.9%). Sometimes in the heading the ethnic attribute “Roma” is included only to attract attention, despite that the larger part of the text does not refer to the Roma (*Roma conceal bills by plasmas*).

The newspaper attempts to observe the good journalistic standards and presents different opinions on disputable issues. Often however behind the seemingly objectiveness, neutrality, and impartiality, standpoints appear that could be summarized by Theo van Dijk's expression “modern liberal racism”, which is characterized by the victimization of the victim¹⁷ as well as by absolutizing of the principle of equality, which is only reproducing and strengthening social inequalities because of neglecting of the unequal starting point of the vulnerable individuals and groups. As a typical example of this standpoint, we could use two texts, published in one and the same day. One of them presents the article from¹⁸ DW *The Roma as a “social enemy”*, and the other one is the commentary to this article by Prof. Michail Konstantinov. I am tempted to quote almost the complete text, because it is the ideal example for what van Dijk is calling “modern liberal racism”.

This article is written in a language, which the quoted human rights defenders will declare for politically incorrect. For them and for their likes I declare that political correctness is the other name of the lie. I can be accused in many sins but in lying. Not because I am righteous and humble. But because from my long experience I

¹⁷ i.e. to impute a fault about what happened (or for the situation) upon the victim, for example, the low social status of the group or the individual are explained with its “inherent” social and moral deficits (laziness, carelessness, lack of responsibility, anti-social behavior, low intelligence, etc.)

¹⁸ The editorial staff of “Monitor” daily newspaper has replaced the expression “gypsies”, used by the German media, with the politically correct “Roma”.

have understood that there is no more powerful weapon than the truth. It is not by incident that Jesus Christ said: "You will know the truth and the truth will make you free" (John 8:32). Freedom as a choice and a supreme value and the truth as an instrument for its attainment – these are the pillars of Christian ethics. Here permanently employed human right defenders do not have the saying.

After our accession to Schengen together with Romania, nearly 5 million illiterate and unemployed gypsies will move quite freely all over Europe.

Four years ago, the mayor of the Sofia region "Vazrajdana" and Sofia city mayor Boyko Borissov tried to remove a gypsy camp that has illegally sprung in the quarter "Batalova vodenitza". Then for days, the whole country was dealing with something elementary from administrative and legal perspective: there was an illegal settlement and it had to be removed according to all European and national laws. Immediately.

I will give an example. If the idiotic idea comes to my mind to erect a shackle from tin plates in any of the Sofia parks and bury everything around in waste and garbage, then instantly, for a mere few hours, I will be kicked out of there and fined respectively. Quite righteously kicked off and quite righteously fined. Moreover, if I continue to behave stubbornly in this idiotic thing, I will be arrested or at least sentenced to probation. Also, quite righteously, and according to the European and the national standards. Every normal Bulgarian can conduct this experiment, although I am not recommending it. In addition, every normal Bulgarian, if he or she is traveling without paying the fare in the public transport for quite a long time, will be caught and fined. As they do all over the white world with fare dodgers.

These experiments show that nevertheless, there is a state in this country and it treats strictly but justly most of its citizens. For example those from the Bulgarian ethnos. It also treats justly Armenians, Jews and Turks, if and when they do not violate the rules. There is however one group of people for whom the laws are not valid. People, who are all the time demanding constantly and continuously new and new privileges, which, on top of everything else, is an absolute arrogance. I would like to remind to the permanently employed human rights defenders that giving privileges to ones means discriminating the others. And that because of this fact, giving privileges, i.e. conducting of discriminative policies, has devastating effect on society's morale. Privileges destroy also the very idea for social solidarity, in the name of which such privileges are considered to be given. Moreover, finally yet importantly, privileges do not help to those to whom they are given.

What happened four years ago in "Batalova vodenitza" as well as in other similar cases, for example in the Sofia city quarter "Zaharna fabrika"? Well, the following thing happened. Very urgently, four Western human rights defenders landed near to the gypsy camp that had to be removed, also permanently employed at human rights defenders' positions. They were led by the notorious member of the European Parliament Els de Groen, from whom many people in her home country -

The Netherlands – have bitterly wailed. This dame shared with the Bulgarian authorities a number of her politically correct ratiocinations. Definitely, this woman had some correct and executable ideas. Only that the correct ideas were not executable, while the executable ones were not correct. However, we are living in a free European Union, and anyone has the right to tell her or his opinion on any sort of issues independently on her or his competence. At that point, in the meantime, still we were not in the European Union and we were forced to listen to any sort of things just like a poor student struggling to pass an exam.

One of the comments in connection with the illegal gypsy camp in “Batalova vodenitsa” and its removal that anyway did not take place, was in the form of a question. This question was: What will the Westerners do when after a couple of years we become EU members and the inhabitants of the gypsy camp massively flood the home countries of the permanently employed European human rights defenders? Quite recently, it came out that this question has been remarkably prophetic. In reality, this happened for what it has been until recently politically incorrect even to mention, but is done now. First France, then Italy, and a number of other EU-member countries began to repatriate or are planning to repatriate gypsies from Romania and Bulgaria. Let the permanently employed human rights defenders do not make much noise, but instead read European Directive 2004/38/EC of 29 April 2004. It reads that repatriation is admissible only if several conditions have been complied with. Therefore, the actions of France are legitimate. But these actions, as we will see, are the bad manifestation of a double standard and are profoundly immoral in the light of the historic facts...

As a tool for exerting pressure on Romania and Bulgaria, the threat to postpone their accession to the Schengen area is used, planned for 11 March 2011. Here there is one essential reason, which is not mentioned at all because of false politically correct considerations. Besides, when Romania and Bulgaria enter the Schengen area, repatriation will become impossible. And then, between the some 2.5 million Romanian gypsies, 1 million Bulgarian gypsies and God know how many Hungarian ones, on the one side, and the whole of Western Europe on the other, there will not be any barriers at all. This means, that more than 5 million people without any education, without any profession and with dangerous social habits will re-settle from their homelands into the rich West European countries. The rich West European countries, which anyway are suffocating from the unbearably high number of immigrants from their former colonies, with whom they also are not in position to cope. This problem of theirs also does not have any democratic solution.

Buy why the gypsy issue arose in Romania and Bulgaria and why there is so much hypocrisy in the conduct of the Western politicians? Because the historical roots of the phenomenon are intentionally concealed, and these are decisive. During the Middle Ages, as long as 1945, the gypsies in Europe were subjected to genocide. They were caught and slaughtered as animals not only when they stole, but also just like that, because they were gypsies. In the late 15th century in the German towns of

Landau and Freiburg, at several sessions of the Parliament, all gypsies were declared for criminals, plague-bearers, and Turkish spies. Emperor Maximilian respectively ordered them to be slaughtered all over the German lands. Later, already in the early 18th century, Emperor Friedrich Wilhelm I ordered every caught gypsy to be hanged. There was similar practice in the Czech lands, too. Paris was not left behind. During the 16th century, France expelled the gypsies from its lands, and every gypsy caught after that was hanged. It was as late as the 17th century when hanging was replaced by hard labour. Napoleon continued this practice. He applied it in the conquered Spanish lands. In the same time in The Netherlands they beat, branded and sent to hard labour all gypsies. Measures there even become harsher and crueller, when permission has been issued for every citizen to catch and kill a gypsy. Thus, not a single gypsy remained in The Netherlands. In Austria, people amused themselves by hunting gypsies. The successful hunters were awarded with prizes. Sweden purged all of its gypsies in the 17th century. Any gypsy that has remained in the country was shot. Such inhuman practice could be observed in Denmark, Switzerland, and Italy. The Catholic Church not only did not interfere to defend the gypsies, but even participated in their purges and extinction.

Even in the 20th century, the persecution of gypsies continued in some German provinces. Again in this country, the last serious attempt was made to eradicate gypsies from Europe. During the time of the Third Reich, half a million gypsies were sent to concentration camps where most of them found their death.

Facing the peril of complete extermination, in the course of many centuries the gypsies have been running away from Europe to the comparatively tolerant in ethnic respect Ottoman Empire. They settled mainly in the semi-vassal Romanian lands as well as in the Bulgarian lands, which were part of Turkey then.

That is why the gypsy problem in Romania and Bulgaria is not a local one. The great-grand parents of the present-day permanently employed European human rights defenders have lumbered it to us. That is why the present-day policy of a number of European countries on this issue is deeply immoral and made up of double standards. Isn't it that "our" gypsies that are flooding Europe are in fact returning to their birthplaces?

What yet has to be done? Here are three proposals, which shall not resolve the issue, but shall give us a gulp of air. First of all, uncompromising punishments for all that violate the law, independently on their ethnic belonging. Even if we have to build three times more prisons. Second, allowances only for the first and the second child, and partially, for a third child. Childbearing and dooming these children to poverty and illiteracy is not and must not be a profession. And, at the third place, joint European actions on this issue, but definitely without double standards. Because double standards are "a gypsy way of doing things".

As far as in this commentary many morbid for the Bulgarian society issues have been mentioned and the essential arguments for the theses have been laid down, shared by the majority of the Bulgarian citizens, I will comment this text not only in connection with its discourse analysis but in its subject-matter, too.

The author relies on his reputation of a scientist with the highest academic degree – a professor, to persuade us even in his first paragraph that what he is telling is the truth and only the truth, without any ideologies and without any moralizing. In practice, his thesis is completely ideological; however, the ideology of neo-liberalism is presented as a scientific truth. This ideology really defends the thesis that all positive practices for the attainment of an equal start of the people and the groups in disadvantaged position are a privilege for them and discrimination for the mainstream society. Shall he from the position of a staunch neo-liberal call to forbid the blind to use leading dogs in public offices for example? Is it acceptable the measures for overcoming the results of a long period of social exclusion and for the attainment of a more equalized start of the different groups to be qualified as “privileges” for ones and discrimination for the others? Such measures are usually more often undertaken to raise the educational status of the marginalized communities. They involve early inclusion of children in kindergartens (even if targeted social allowances have to be budgeted for children from poor families); free textbooks so that poor children should not drop out early from school because they can not afford to buy them; additional curricula and extra-curricula training and classes in order to help the children learn better the official language if it is not their mother tongue; in the primary school degree to decrease the number of pupils in one class if for more than one quarter of them the official language is not their mother tongue; financing of training courses for matriculation exams and university entry exams; scholarships. Several of such measures have been used in the USA with respect to Afro-Americans and more or less the attained results have been positive. Anyway, after such measures have been introduced, a stable middle class among this group was created. That is why the neo-liberal thesis that “privileges” do not lead to a positive change is mildly speaking arguable. It is obvious that such measures can not last forever and that some of them shall not be applied for the whole vulnerable group, because part of its representatives are not poor, for example. Do they more quickly erode social solidarity and morale than the great social inequalities? Besides, if the professor insists that he is telling the truth and only the truth irrespective to moralizing, why then he is continuously underlying that positive measures are immoral?

In the same time, no one would seriously declare that a positive measure is the absence of control and sanction for violations of laws or other social norms. If the institutions do not perform and exercise these sanctions and control, then it is their fault!

As far as housing is concerned, this issue is really very serious. During socialism, when in Bulgaria there were shortages of everything, including of

workforce, the authorities used to close their eyes for the illegal construction in the Roma (and sometimes in the Turkish) quarters, because from these quarters they used to recruit low skilled and unqualified workers to fill in the shortages of workforce. In the same time, the authorities did not include these quarters in the detailed urban plans of the settlements because that would require building also the technical and social infrastructure for their normal functioning as urban quarters. Funds were never sufficient for this. On the other side, such illegal status of the quarters and of the housing there ensured the possibility to exert control and pressure on the “illegal” citizens. Whenever this became necessary, these people could always be fired on the grounds of the fact that they did not have the relevant citizenship for the respective town or village. This was a benefit for the employer in the conditions of a social labour legislation, protecting the worker. This was also a way to make them leave the settlement for the reason that they inhabited an illegal dwelling. We witnessed in 1989 how “comfortable and convenient” it has been to maintain such illegitimate status, when a whole residential quarter in the town of Haskovo, inhabited “illegally” by Bulgarian Turks, was demolished, in order to “clean” the town from this unwanted population... Thus, the housing problem of the Roma is really part of the grave historic heritage¹⁹, and it only worsened during the past 20 years. However, for any administrator it is difficult simply to demolish the illegal buildings, because, according to the law, if this is the only housing of the family and the family cannot afford to buy another housing at the free market or to pay market rents, it should be accommodated in municipal housing. Just there is not enough municipal housing, not for tens of thousands of families...

Much efforts, funds, time and social solidarity are needed in order to resolve such a difficult issue. With view of the shortage, it is easier to fabricate “the scientific truth” – the Roma live in shackles, shantytowns, and tents, because this is part of their culture, and has not changed for centuries. That is why we have to be strict and uncompromising, to demolish their quarters, and to eliminate eventual clashes, to build three times more prisons. This is the neo-liberal understanding of morality and social justice.

Another “scientific truth” is that the home countries of the Bulgarian and Romanian Roma (who were born in Bulgaria and Romania and are citizens of these countries) are the West European countries. By virtue of the “historic law” centuries ago, their ancestors have maybe relocated from there and have come to our territory. That is why now Western Europe should take the responsibility for in fact “its own” Roma with whom we do not want to have anything to do anymore. The problem is that obviously in Western Europe also great many of the people and the politicians do not want to accept the Roma from Bulgaria and Romania and close their eyes for

¹⁹ Slavka Draganova (2008), on the basis of Ottoman tax registers shows that in the 19th century the Roma, inhabiting the Bulgarian lands, had significantly smaller and poorer houses than the Bulgarians. This difference has not been overcome; it rather deepened in liberated Bulgaria.

the “historic truth”, that in fact the Roma are “their fellow countrymen”. This standpoint must be objectively and impartially assessed. This assessment is categorical: the policy of Western Europe is profoundly immoral and rests on double standards...

The major goal of such type of analyses is the continuous repetition of the essential neo-liberal theses and their representation as the only rational social behaviour. The society must be persuaded in several simple things, namely: The Roma alone are to blame for their situation. The reason for their social exclusion is their culture and anti-social conduct. “They” need to be disciplined with a “firm hand”. Any social measures targeted towards their integration are privileges that discriminate the mainstream society. Moreover, these measures are inefficient and that is why it is harmful to be undertaken. The role of the media is to form such attitudes among the mainstream and to impose it on the politicians. To be honest however, other liberal theses are represented on the pages of “Monitor” daily too, objecting neo-liberalism.

The large number of analysed texts allows making a more subtle analysis of the major themes concerning the Roma on the pages of this daily newspaper.

Crimes or violations of the legislation committed by Roma are the main theme or are mentioned as grounds for different institutional measures undertaken against the community in 59 texts (44.7%). Fourteen of the articles (10.6%) mention participation of Roma in organized crime: traffic of children for begging or thefts, “the wooden mafia”, “the real estate mafia”, “organized trade with vouchers for heating”, and pick pocketing. In 49 articles (37.1%), the Roma are described as generating various social problems or offences (construction of illegal camps, clashes with the police, blocking of hospital, aggression, making high noise, alcoholism, non-payment of electricity bills, unwillingness to work everyday, misuse of social allowances, early marriages, mass migration, etc.). Often in one and the same publication, the Roma are represented as systematically causing multiple problems. On the other side, quite a few articles (21 – 15.9%) show the Roma as victims of discrimination, social exclusion, or violence.

The second theme that has caused very strong interest on the pages of “Monitor” is connected with the deportation of Roma from France and other countries, and the respective reaction of the European institutions and of the local community. This topic is discussed in 48 publications (36.4%). The grounds, motives and variety of reasons that have led to the rightist reaction of Sarkozy’s government are presented in detail. Contradictory standpoints are usually reflected – from understanding, empathy, and solidarity with the actions of the French authorities, to their serious criticism and rejecting. The critical standpoints are explained by the inadmissibility of breaching the humanistic and liberal values as well as by revealing the political interests, which Sarkozy is pursuing by his actions against the Roma-immigrants, used just as the scapegoat in his struggle to preserve political power.

Sarkozy, who is a former interior minister, has always used uncompromising language and has applied the zero tolerance approach to illegal immigration and criminality. He likes to play with xenophobic reflexes, in order to court the extreme rightist voters. This policy took away votes from the National front and helped him to become a President in 2007. The case "Betancourt" – an affair about statements for illegal party financing and non-payment of taxes,... connected with Betancourt and Minister of Labour Eric Woerth, who is by coincidence responsible for the pension perform. After summer vacation, court investigations were renewed and Woerth will again be subjected to checks. Sarkozy has maybe hoped his uncompromising statements to put the affair to the back. Instead, they resemble an awkward attempt of a weakened leader to increase his popularity.

In 17 of the materials in connection with the expulsiing of Roma, opinions and actions of solidarity with the Roma are expressed, organized and carried out by institutions, international organizations, politicians and civil society structures. Simultaneously, there are memorable texts, showing that the local communities definitely reject the Roma – Bulgarian, Slovak, Hungarian, French, and together with those where both standpoints are represented (of solidarity by ones and of rejection by others), they become twice as more than the texts for solidarity with the representatives of this group (31, i.e. 23.4%).

"Monitor" gives expression of the ambivalence in the feelings and representations about the Roma to the greatest degree in comparison with the other dailies. On its pages, analyses with absolutely contradictory theses are clashing. In some of them, the great social inequalities between the Roma and the mainstream society are explained by the centuries-long discrimination against the representatives of this ethnic group. The pathos of accusation is the strongest in the article *Is France Europeanising the problem with the Roma?*, reprinted from the *Economist* magazine. Here are some of the theses discussed there. *"The Slovakian shootings and the expulsions from France highlight the difficulties faced by Europe's largest stateless minority. For long the Roma are the victims of prejudice, often violent, at home in Eastern Europe. Thousands have migrated westward to seek a better life, particularly as the expansion of the European Union has allowed them to take advantage of freedom-of-movement rules. Yet although conditions may be better in the west, the reception has rarely been friendly... Not much has been done to deal with the discrimination they face or the hopeless poverty that keeps them excluded from the mainstream... One of the biggest problems is schooling: Roma children are routinely placed in institutions for the mentally handicapped. A new survey by Amnesty International says that in Slovakia, Roma make up less than 10% of the school-age population but 60% of pupils in special schools. Unsurprisingly, many leave school early, without the skills they need to compete in the job market. Instead they drift into collecting scrap metal, begging or petty crime... Straightforward prejudice plays its part. A week ago an MEP from Jobbik, a far-right Hungarian party, called for the mass internment of Roma. Last year Hungarian police sought help from the FBI after*

a series of attacks on Roma settlements in which six people were killed, including a five-year-old boy, and his father. Gunmen firebombed their house and lay in wait as they fled, before opening fire. A few weeks later, six Roma teenagers arrested in the Slovak town of Kosice for allegedly stealing a purse were forced to strip naked, kiss and hit each other, as police filmed their humiliation. In western Europe Roma migrants have faced firebomb attacks in Italy, pogroms in Belfast and forcible evictions in Greece”.

Other texts explain the social exclusion of the Roma completely with their behaviour and mentality. In most cases they are signed by Bulgarian authors. The text of Maya Lyubomirska *The osterreich syndrome and the Roma* is emblematic:

“President Sarkozy has definitely decided to return to their homeland the Roma from Romania and Bulgaria, who are violating the laws. Not because they are Roma, but because they try to erect a camp, to pile in dirt, not to work, to listen loud music and on top of anything else to take social allowance which is at least 2 000 Euro. Their trick however did not pass. At the background of the loud uproar of human rights Roma organizations, whose activity is concentrated on the permanent spending of funds for integration, the French Minister of the Interior defined the action as “the national war against criminality”. No way to be like this, after the larger majority of our dark-skinned fellow-men go to the rich Western countries either to steal or to live on social allowance... The predominant part of our dark-skinned fellow countrymen prefer to wait the state to do everything for them... The issue is how our society will cope with this issue, because some people continue to think that it is a privilege to be a gypsy in this country. Because the Roma in our country do not pay their electricity nor their water bills. And nobody dares even to imagine to cut off their electricity or water, because an horde of human right defenders will jump. Haven’t you seen how the controllers in the public transport turn their heads away and do not bother the Roma who do not have tickets? But nobody even thinks of putting them off the bus or the tram because a flood of curses will pour. The gypsies do not let their children go to school and nobody can make them do so. Then, these children remain uneducated, they can not find work – they even do not look for a job – and begin to steal. And thus the circle is closed. And not only the Roma issue does not have its solution; it is even deepening. Moreover, according to the latest official statistical data, Bulgaria has the highest percentage of Roma – 4.5%. Let us not mention that birth rates are in times higher than that of the Bulgarians...”

This text explicitly expresses the main stereotypes and fears connected with the Roma, popular among the Bulgarian society, without any reflections on them, represented as undisputable facts and unconditional truth, without any attempt to look for an explanation, different from accusing them for their own destiny. In another 17 publications (totally 13.6%), the Roma in Bulgaria are represented as “a privileged minority”.

No matter what their representation is, as discriminated or as privileged, the authors of the articles, dedicated to the Roma, often discuss possible ways for their integration. These issues are discussed from various perspectives and in different contexts in 31 publications (23.5%). For Bulgaria, it seems as if consensus has been reached: integration must be concentrated in four major fields: education, employment, housing, and access to health care. Better utilization of the European funds is also necessary for this purpose. In the same time however, funds from the national budget and the municipal budgets should also be allocated for the implementation of the separate projects. This will most probably happen within the framework of a common strategy for the European Union. It is interesting that the issue of the equal inclusion of the Roma in the citizens and political structures of the Bulgarian society are not discussed at all, neither the problems of discrimination, institutional racism, the speech of hatred, the lack of solidarity on the part of the mainstream society, and the predominant understanding that “integration” means just the Roma to become like the Bulgarians, i.e. that this is one-lateral process.

8.5. ‘DNEVNIK’ DAILY NEWSPAPER (“Neutral”? “Objective?” In fact, again the ambivalent discourse)

During the period of the study, “Dnevnik” daily newspaper has published 136 publications on the Roma. The major theme was the extradition of Roma from France and the reaction of the European institutions, politicians, and other countries towards these actions. 82.6% of the publications were dedicated to this theme.

7.6% of the publications are dedicated to “Roma criminality” and to the various social problems of the Roma, most often connected with the demolishing of residential block No. 20 in the town of Yambol. Five publications are dedicated completely or partially to the Roma culture. Four of these are positive.

The main impression is that this newspaper strives to “preserve correct and neutral tone” and “objectively and impartially to inform what is the policy of France and the other Western countries towards the Roma, what is the reaction of the European Parliament, of the European Commission, of the democratic and human rights organizations in Western Europe, of the governments of the Central European countries (Hungary and the Czech Republic) on the issues connected with the expelling of Roma and their integration. The tone of 94% of the publications (71.2%) is assessed as correct; of 16.7% of the publications – as essentially correct, and as incorrect – of 13% of the publications. The texts on Roma in Bulgaria are 23 (17.4%). Their tone is more of “correct” and “incorrect”. The ethnic origin of the committers of

crimes and of other violations of the legislation in the country is mentioned. Thus, “Dnevnik” daily newspaper joins the incorrect tone in discussing this theme.

“Dnevnik” daily newspaper is a typical high quality liberal newspaper, where openly racist text are rare, but behind the correct tone sometimes “the modern/subtle racism” is hidden, if we could use van Dijk’s terminology. I will quote a classic example – the article “*France began its march against the Roma camps*” from 06.08.2010. The text relies on an AFP publication of, which, on its side, is based upon the information of the association “Network for Roma solidarity”. All these are reliable sources that decrease the critical attitude of the reader that the information might suggest negative stereotypes about the Roma. The tone is moderate, full of details and facts, by which it again aims to suggest that the text is completely objective and targets only the precise and detailed representation of an event. Nevertheless, the general feeling after one reads the article, is that the Roma are a *serious threat*, systematically violating the norms and rules of the mainstream society, and that “hard measures” with respect to them are a necessity.

How is this suggestion achieved? The discourse analysis offers a possible way for deconstruction of the text. Here is the text itself, in which I have underlined the expressions, showing the real interpretation of what is happening, and it is that the word is about a real “**war with the illegal Roma camps**”.

*The police evacuated today **an illegal camp**, where about **hundred** Romanian Roma have lived since May. The camp was built on **municipal grounds** in Saint Etienne, Southern France, announced AFP, quoting information by the Association “Network for Roma solidarity”.*

*This is the first **illegal camp of Roma, evacuated** from France after President Nikola Sarkozy declared on 28 July a **series of measures against “some” Roma and nomads**. He also announced **plans for the demolishing of 300 illegal Roma camps in the course of the following three months**.*

***The operation of expulsing the Roma began** a little after dawn and **was over** a little before noon. **The region was completely closed off by the police for many hours**, which had to keep journalists and associations away from the camp.*

*The camp in Saint Etienne was quickly built of **improvised buildings and tents** by the Roma, who were **expulsed in May from two residential buildings in the town, where they have squatted**. That is what explained for AFP Marie-Pierre Manevi, a representative of the association. “We have refused this plot two years ago, proposed by the municipality to nomads, because it did not seem fit to us. Since the Roma settled there, the municipality has organized nevertheless the assembly of two water sources and of chemical toilets”, she clarified.*

*On July 30, Roma families **were expulsed from a deserted house, which they have squatted for months** in Montreuil, in the region of Paris.*

The text unlocks many layers of “unarguable knowledge” about the Roma, which are read unmistakably by the readers and activate strong negative stereotypes: they are many (about hundred people in this camp, the need to evacuate for three months another 300 similar camps, which suggests the significant number of at least 30 000 Roma living in illegal camps in France). “Those people” **all the time squat** deserted houses. The addition of the last sentence, at the first glance unconnected with the main text, which tells about another incident with Roma that have squatted deserted houses, this time in Montreuil, aims exactly this suggestion. **Everywhere they are building hovels from whatever materials they could grab around on municipal and private plots. They live in misery and dirt** that would be unimaginable and perpetual, if the local authorities have not provided at least water supplies and chemical toilets. The associations with the “uncontrollable situation” in all Central and East European countries is imposed by itself. France, however, shows us how we have to react in such situations: the problem is assessed and localized – 300 illegal camps in various places all over the country; a meticulous plan is drawn up for evacuation within a strictly fixed period – three months; the police has been instructed to act firmly – it closes off the region for a number of hours; it acts as precisely and as uncompromisingly as in Montreuil. The used terminology is typical for depicting of military actions.

It is exactly the same approach that is used in the article of 01.09.2010. *“France accuses Romania that it is deserting its Roma”*. The strongest insinuation of the text comes from the first paragraph²⁰: *Romania must not perceive the freedom of movement in the European Union as the right to get rid of its Roma for the sake and at the expense of other countries. That is what declared the French Secretary of State Pierre Lellouche before the media as his response to the sharp reaction from Bucharest after Paris’ decision to expulse hundreds of Roma from Romanian origin back to their country.* Both the French and the Romanian authorities demonstrate a firm resolution to “get rid” of the Roma, who speculate with political terminology and accusations, in order to conceal their attitude towards the Roma as towards “second best quality” European citizens or citizens of the respective country. The geography of the analogous measures is additionally expanded in the article, at the first glance unconnected with the text, by the inclusion of four paragraphs about similar actions of the Italian police, which *“demolished shackles and camps, inhabited by nearly 250 Roma”* in Milan and about similar action that has taken place near to Rome. Even Livia Jaroka, the only European MP from the Roma origin, was quoted to say that *“the right to movement ... is not unconditional”*. The text affirms the stereotype, that the Roma create problems everywhere and that no country sees a way how to integrate them and that is why they resort to extradition or to the policy of “discrete discomfort” in order to make them emigrate...

²⁰ The first sentence / paragraph after the heading is the second strongest standpoint in a journalistic text, according to van Dijk.

The suggestion of the article of 09.09.2010 is similar. *The French Minister of immigration: No way to stop expulsing the Roma*”, from which we understand about the firm position of France, expressed in the first sentence of the Minister of Immigration Eric Besson, *no way France to stop returning Roma, as the resolution of the European Parliament requires from the country ...* This thesis is further developed: *“The European Parliament went beyond its prerogatives and we quite obviously do not want to obey to a political dictate”, added Besson and declared that France is strictly applying Community Acquis and is strictly observing the French republican law. The resolution of the European Parliament, requiring from Paris and from other European countries to stop the expulsion of Roma to their home countries, does not have obligatory character,* underlines the newspaper’s editorial staff.

The text *“France is planning to take the fingerprints of expelled Roma”* of 01.10.2010 is without any commentary or political assessments. On the contrary, the repetition in three places that the Roma return again and again *in order each grown up Roma to receive 300 Euro and each child – 150 Euro*; the clarifications that *during 2009, France has made more than 15 000 payments in order to return to their home countries predominantly Roma immigrants, as the total amount reaches about 9 million Euro*, are a silent attempt to substantiate, understand and pardon the French policy, and more especially, the proposed discrimination measure.

Simultaneously, on the pages of “Dnevnik” daily newspaper, one can very often read critical articles, which are discussing the discrimination and social exclusion with regard to the Roma as the main reasons for their migration and for the negative behaviour of some of the members of their ethnic group. (Please see the articles *The French Gendarmerie has kept illegal lists for the Roma genealogy; The Council of Europe is shocked by the attitude towards the Roma in France; Member of the European Parliament: The attitude towards the Roma is ridicule with the values of the EU; Europe cannot lose another generation of Roma; thinks George Soros; UN Committee called France to stop the massive expulsion of Roma; France is preparing a national demonstration in defence of the Roma; The Roma as a symptom*²¹, and many others. These articles reinforce the assessment of “Dnevnik” daily newspaper as a “high quality liberal media”. Nevertheless, the presence of quite a few texts, revealing “the hidden racism” with respect to the Roma lead to defining the newspaper as “ambivalent”, as the herald of a softer version of modern racism in the high quality Bulgarian printed media.

²¹ This text by Ivaylo Dichev is one of the strongest analyses on the pages of the newspaper about the social exclusion of the Roma as the actual root of their problems in contradiction to the liberal myth for the “particularities of the nomadic culture”.

8.6. “KLASSA” NEWSPAPER (the liberal discourse)

“Klassa” Newspaper pays least attention to the Roma themes among all studied printed media. During the period of the study, it focused only on one aspect connected with the Roma – the rights of the minorities through the prism of the democratic liberal principles of equality of the citizens and non-discrimination independently on their race, religion, ethnic group, gender, or another social characteristics; as well as on the principles of respecting the dignity of every person and the recognition of the value of the different cultures. During the whole period of seven months, only 30 publications, dedicated to the Roma, have appeared on the pages of the “Klassa” newspaper. All of them were dedicated to the deportation of Roma from France and Italy as well as to the reactions of the anti-Roma actions and the rhetoric of the European Parliament, the European Commission, the UN, different governments, as well as of some Bulgarian politicians.

The democratic position of “Klassa” newspaper is expressed by the selection of the articles about the Roma. None of them stereotypes the Roma; none of them attempts to present them as the ones to blame for their position or for the problems in the country and in Europe. The standpoints of international institutions such as the UN, the European Parliament, the European Commission, the European Committee for Social Rights are objectively represented. The opinions of prominent political figures are also given; as well as those of governments, writers, artists, NGO representatives and ambassadors, which criticize the policy of France and Italy of expulsion of Romanian and Bulgarian Roma as well as the policies of lack of interest and inaction with respect to the integration of Roma in the Bulgarian society. There are texts, which remind the centuries-long discrimination to which the Roma have been subjected in Europe, which objectively leads to their lagging behind in most social spheres.

The newspaper’s message is clearly expressed: **The actions of France and Italy are violating the essential principles on which the European Union was founded: indiscriminate, respect for human dignity, the right to free movement, and the right to work.** Moreover, they are reprimanding, because “... *they create dangerous precedent in the treatment of the ethnic minorities on the territory of the EU member countries by legitimizing discrimination and enhancing the factual existence of European citizenship from the first and the second quality*” and because “*they send exclusively negative message to the institutions and societies in Eastern and Central Europe. Such actions undermine the efforts made thus far for the integration of Roma and do not allow them to become a European norm*”. The newspaper’s editorial staff, by publishing the texts of the protest letter of the Bulgarian organization “People against Racism”, of the interview of Simone Schoenett for the Austrian “Die presse”, of Navanethem Pilei, UN’s High

Commissioner for human rights, etc., is standing by the concern expressed in the resolution of the European Parliament of 9 September 2010 on the *“inducement and the openly discriminative rhetoric, characterizing the political discourse during the deportation of Roma, legitimizing the racist statements and actions of extreme rightist groups”*.

The texts are written in correct and objective tone. Sometimes they are re-prints from articles from West European media, interviews, or statements of politicians in the Bulgarian electronic media. For many Roma the only issue is that the editorial board prefers the exonym “gypsy” instead of “Roma”, but it is never used with negative connotation.

The published materials are not editorials or author’s texts. The Roma theme is not among the main ones for the newspaper. “Klassa” is however taking a clear and definite position on the issue in connection with the repatriation of the Roma and the growing racist rhetoric in the re-prints and the selection of texts, disseminated by the information agencies, which it is publishing.

8.7. “TRUD” DAILY NEWSPAPER – apparently-moderate, sometimes ambivalent, nationalistic discourse with racist bias

By Ognian Isaev

The publications on Roma from the first decade of the months August 2010 – February 2011 were analyzed or altogether 48 materials. Otherwise, during the whole period of the study, the publications were 185, mostly announcements. Almost everywhere, the expression “Roma” is used in the heading or in the body of the texts (179). In very few of the headings, the expression “gypsy” is used (6). “Roma” is used in the negative, ironic, and threatening context. (***“Roma again siege the hospital in the town of Blagoevgrad”***, ***“The Roma from residential block No. 20 were left without social allowance”***, ***“The Roma from Boulevard “Europe” are still not in Europe”***, ***“Roma with knives do not let a citizen of the town of Gabrovo to enter his house”***, ***“In the Roma school classes – belly dances, sex, and very few lessons”***, etc.). Almost all headings look at the first glance objective statements of facts, but the emotional suggestions of these “announcements” are negative, and quite a few of the headings are frightening (***“Roma intimidate doctors with murder”***, ***“A drunk Roma broke the head of a policeman with a brick”***, etc.). The ethnic belonging of the suspect/violator is explicitly highlighted (***“Roma beat a doctor, because one of their boys has died”***, ***“Roma again siege the hospital in the town of Blagoevgrad”***, etc.). There is only one article with a positive message published during the period of the study (***“I want to live with dignity as a Bulgarian, European, and a Roma”***). About 15 of the publications are of neutral informative character.

It could be clearly seen that the editorial staff of the newspaper claims to represent “objective information”, quoting statements of foreign and Bulgarian politicians, resolutions of European institutions and other public figures and institutions. The newspaper is re-printing abbreviated texts from information agencies on international and domestic news but is also carrying out its own investigations. In some of the articles, there are own journalistic investigations, analyses, commentaries, essays or interviews. The newspaper’s position is revealed by the selection of summaries from various information agencies, quotations of opinions of public figures and in most of the cases, ironized statements by Roma. By the headings and different at the first glance but inherently similar standpoints, the newspaper pretends to provide reliable information.

The major themes connected with the Roma on the pages of the “Trud” daily newspaper, are the “Roma domestic crime”, opinions of victims; the reaction of Western Europe to “the mass migration of Roma” from Bulgaria and Romania and the measures undertaken against part of these Roma by France, Italy, and Finland; the opinions and reactions of the Bulgarian politicians to the European standpoints on non-discrimination and integration of the Roma; the miserable standard of living of the “Roma” in Bulgaria; as well as the dangers that spring from them (contamination, diseases, etc.).

In the majority of the publications, the Roma are depicted as violators of laws and criminals, most often endangering the lives of people, as a burden for society and an obstacle for Bulgaria’s admittance in Schengen. In some of the publications, the Roma are attributed serious crimes: thefts in both Bulgaria and abroad (*“**Bulgarian Roma stole four tons of copper in Bordeaux**”*), domestic thefts and raids, exploitation of children for begging, offences such as illegal construction on municipal and private lands, violations of the law for temporary residing abroad, for registration in the case of change of address, etc.). It is because of this reason the authorities in France, Italy and Finland have decided to expulse them from their countries or not to grant them residence permits for residing in their countries for more than three months and to refuse to grant them “asylum on social grounds”. In Bulgaria, they are a menace for society: “Here, **the minority has long ago become the majority. 5500 of its inhabitants are Roma, while the Bulgarians are only 500. Maybe it is just a rumour, but people say that there were mothers, giving birth twice a year. The children according to the registers are more than 1 500. But the school, consisting of two beautiful buildings that could accommodate 800 children, does not have enough pupils...**” On top of everything, the Roma over wit also the Bulgarian laws: “According to information from the Civil Status Service, **the Roma have used gaps in the regulations** in order to indicate this house as their permanent address of residence...”

More than 30 of the publications review the topic connected with the expulsion of Roma. The discourse is either ironic or negative. **“Old Europe can demolish the gypsy camps, but it will face great difficulties to expel their inhabitants from**

the respective countries, because the EU legislation is defending them, the European Commission definitely pointed out last Monday". In an interview with Bulgaria's new ambassador to Paris, Mr. Marin Raykov, and with the French ambassador in Bulgaria Mr. Philippe Autié, both of them were asked the same biased question presupposing a particular way of answering: « ***As if the Roma issue obstructed our mutual relationships more than the failure with the purchase of the crovettes. As if nobody in Paris heard that our expelled Roma are « negligently lesser » than the Romanian Roma?*** » Simultaneously, the heading of another article on the topic attempts to inspire confidence in our European partners and the mainstream society. « ***Tzvetanov : We shall take measures against the migration of Roma to the EU*** ». During this period, the Minister of the Interior enjoyed exceptionally high rating. Moreover, his position provides guarantees that the police is the only mechanism, which can accelerate our membership in Schengen by limiting « *Roma migrations* ». In several publications on the theme, identical expressions and structures of the texts are used to attribute blame on the Roma for Bulgaria's membership in Schengen. The theme is represented exceptionally objectivistically, with clear arguments and the opinion of a public figure, in this case Minister Tzvetan Tzvetanov. The editors attempt to suggest to the readers that it is only the Roma's fault, applying a tactical psychological approach and using an array of words and expressions straight to the point and bearing acute contents. « ***... to prevent the mass migration of Roma to other countries from the European Union...*** », « ***... to prevent the organized migration of Roma to countries from the EU...*** », « ***... however, the Roma issue causes tensions in the relationships within the area (i.e. Schengen)...*** », « ***... illegal Roma immigrants...*** », « ***... also began to expel the foreign Roma citizens...*** », « ***... The observers there forecasted that the unsuccess of both Balkan countries to stop Roma migration might jeopardize their attempts to become Schengen members...*** », « ***... Minister Tzvetanov however declared that the government is preparing a comprehensive strategy, uniting the efforts of various institutions, in order to cope with the problem connected with the mass illegal migration...*** ». Repetitions also could be noticed, which are not at all incidental, but rather insinuating. Moreover, one of the publications precludes the theme with the strongly menacing and alarming sentence (author's) : « *The face of European Sofia still looks like a suburb of Mumbai. Moreover, the correspondence between Commissioner Hammarberg and Prime Minister Borisov is very unlikely to preclude soon...* ».

Another important theme in the publications in the « Trud » daily newspaper is the habitual quarrels and brawls of the Roma with the local population and institutions. Exceptionally structuralized texts, issues well argued and formulated with unprincipled attitude, profoundly transferring the blame upon the Roma, by pointing out the ethnic origin of the offenders in the context of other heavier violations or crimes : « *In the village of Dinkovo, people sleep with axes at their beds* » is the headline of one of the publications, describing a number of everyday crimes, to which the local populations has become already accustomed, with the intention and

suppositions that they have been committed by Roma, as in some parts the ethnic origin is mentioned or descriptive expressions are used : « *Some time ago, **the dark skinned thieves have also squeezed through**, stealing 120-litre copper tank. Mrs. Georgieva does not hide that she has turned into a guard and a **regular subscriber of the hot telephone line 112**. However, there **was not any salvation**. The junior **police inspector**, responsible for the village of Dinkovo, is also responsible for another two villages. « *Where is he supposed to go first ? **While he is registering the consecutive theft here, another theft is being committed in the neighbouring village** »*, tells Mrs. Georgieva ». Crimes are so dangerous and random, that even the policemen cannot cope. « ***The dark skinned apaches** have set up a whole network for the exchange of « news ». They « work » in combination with other « colleagues » from the neighbouring village of Drenovetz, inhabited by compact Roma population.. Thus it was known when the policeman is not in Dinkovo and has work to do in the village of Drenovetz or the other village. The arrogance of the thieves was so great, that they attacked homes even when their owners were inside. For only a month, a 74-years old man has been robbed five times. Every day or two Yakim comes to me and tells me « Mayor, they robbed me again », tells Mrs. Georgieva. During the last theft, **three apaches with masks attacked the house of the old man in mid-August. When they did not find anything worth stealing, they ate the jar with honey of the old man. Before, they have robbed him of his savings – about 200 Leva**. A week ago, the mayor personally caught three Roma while they were loading stolen tiles on a horse cart »*. This article is particularly insinuating, because it relies on the stories of the victims, but in the same time none of the envisaged violators is quoted. The end of the article in fact shows the hopelessness of the situation, because nobody is in position to cope with the Roma (even the policemen !). « ***There is no way to defend ourselves**. No matter how we are afraid, we will continue to live until we can, and the **only thing that is left for us is to pray to God** »*, says Mr. Petko from the village of Dinkovo... » These are people who do not respect any laws and are not afraid of the police.*

In another publication the image of menace is also depicted, from which the whole population of one town suffers. « *... the 47-years old moustached Roma for many years has been the nightmare of the Kotel region. His enormous family of 10 children, daughters-in-law and sons-in-law, and 17 grand-children, move from place to place. Moreover, **they have always been expelled** by the local population. Now their consecutive, fourth « excursion » is forthcoming... »* These are people who are unwanted everywhere and have been expelled all their lives.

Another important theme on which a number of publications in « Trud » daily newspaper focusses are the conditions and way of life of the Roma. The expressions insinuate repulse and unwillingness to get to know this community. « *... At the entrance of Sofia, **horses, dogs, cats, fleas, bugs, cock-roaches and people co-habitate** in conditions far away from the European standards. **Garbage and faeces** are everywhere. Whatever **grass or greenery are absent**. Children play with*

garbage and in puddles of waste. The men are engaged with « garbage collecting » and the women search the **waste bins** to collect clothes and shoes for their children, as well as anything that could serve for heating during the winter... ». There is a quotation from another publication : « ... **The inhabitants of the bivouac** are 14-15 families who **have accommodated in miserable resemblances of shelters.** In the best case, the « houses » **have one or two cardboard or tin walls.** The « support bims » are iron rods and **whatever else they could find around, stuck into the ground.** On them **blankets, and piceses of fabric are hanging.** Here and there are **matresses scattered around.** Instead of « roofs », **nylon pieces** are stretched. **The carboard boxes** are « multifunctional » : they serve to « support » the walls, they are used as carpets, and children roll over them while playing around. All inhabitants, 60-70 people, take water from one single tap. They carry water in plastic bottles, wash and cook with it. **There is a real danger from contamination.** **The small children, which are uncountable,** have fun in their own way. Most favoured pastime is to play around the waste bins. No outsiders are admitted into the camp. **Any stranger is met with hostility.** One of the reasons is that **the people from the near-by residential blocks are indignant.** « We can not open our windows. They do not have toilets ; they do « everything » under our balconies », **the neighbours complain...** ». That what could be noticed in the publications of « Trud » daily as well as in the newspapers « Monitor », « Dnevnik », « Klassa », Novinar », « Ataka », and the other analyzed media is that very rarely or almost never the reasons are analyzed that keep the Roma in such status or force them to resort to particular actions in sharp contradiction to the social norms. Their status is rather described in a colourful way, which is only repulsing the reader and is creating feelings against all representatives of this social group, no matter whether marginals or well-educated. Almost never the discussed persons, participants in the described particular case, have the saying (even if they are given an opportunity to express their opinion, they are ironized or very particular statements are selected, which are very seldom well argued). Rather, the opinion leaders and the affected are considered to be the parties, which could take part in the debates in the « publications ». This, on its side, is contradictory to the professional journalistic standards : the two different standpoints are missing.

Let us review in detail one of the publications in « Trud » daily newspaper. « *The Roma from Boulevard « Europe » are still not in Europe* ». The headline at the first glance is informative and objective. There is concrete language. The publication begins with abstracts from the correspondence between the Bulgarian Prime Minister and the EC Human Rights Commissar Thomas Hammarberg. « *The Council of Europe's Human Rights Commissar Thomas Hammarberg requested in a letter addressed to the Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borisso v to understand how do the Roma from the ghetto on the Sofia city boulevard « Europe » at the entrance of Sofia from Kalotina live. Hammarberg has visited the Roma a couple of years ago and was horrified by their misery. In reply, Borissov sent a letter on November 3 saying that 134 Roma were temporarily accommodated in the « mobile dwellings » in*

« *Republika* ». These Roma were not entitled to municipal housing because their address registration was not in Sofia. The remaining Roma who were entitled to municipal housing, have been moved to various quarters of the city. The letter said that there was sewerage in the caravans on Boulevard « Europe ». Naturally, this information was provided by the municipality. » Thus far, the language is correct, objective, and does not insinuate anyone's fault. In the course of the article, one can read three powerful quotations of one of the inhabitants of the particular settlement in an attempt for credibility and availability of different standpoints. « *Come and see how nice it is, come, come !* » With these words Antoaneta, who lives in one of the caravans on Boulevard « Europe » invited our team. « *There are 27 caravans, and there are also sheds. Terrible misery ! We are two families accommodated in this caravan. Me and the child sleep on the bed, and my father sleeps on the floor* », the Roma woman complained. « *Sewage ? We do not have a bathroom, we do not have a toilet. We heat water on the stove and we wash ourselves inside in this tub* », shared the woman, a little bit ashamed. » The sentences are clear and without intentional irony, i.e. no several words or expressions were taken out of the context that could be used against this woman, as often happens on the pages of the newspapers « *Ataka* » or « *Monitor* », for example. The accented author's commentary follows these three sentences. « *At the entrance of Sofia , **horses, dogs, cats, fleas, bugs, cock-roaches and people co-habitate** in conditions far away from the European standards. **Garbage and faeces** are everywhere. Whatever **grass or greenery are absent**. Children play with **garbage and in puddles of waste**. The men are engaged with « *garbage collecting* » and the women search the **waste bins** to collect clothes and shoes for their children, as well as anything that could serve for heating during the winter...* » After this sentence, the reader already has a clear idea about several aspects of the life of these people. They are uncivilized, they do not have any hygienic habits, they live together with a wide variety of animals, one must not go near to these people because it is very probable to be contaminated with a disease. The next paragraph is even stronger and insinuating that the Roma have the right to everything. « *The inhabitants of the ghetto swear that they were born in the capital city. « I was born here, I grew old here ! That is what the mayor provided. He told us that we would be here only for half an year and thereafter he shall move us somewhere. Ten years have already gone by. It is unbearable. We want to get away from this inferno, but no one can hear us* », a local inhabitant said peevishly. **The Roma were receiving social allowance, but they were not provided with the housing they had the right to** ». The last sentence shall for sure remain long in the reader's memory and very often serves as a statement about the Roma in an usual conversation : « *they live on social welfare* » or « *They are giving them free housing* », and all this – « *because they are Roma* ». The attempt for objectivism could be seriously seen in the next quotation, where the saying has a public figure. « *The mayor of the « Lyulin » region Mrs. Venetka Serafimova said that the municipality has provided apartments to part of the people in residential block of flats No. 021 in « Lyulin » residential estate. **It cannot be established with what documents they have been accommodated. Loose*** »

pieces of paper, without any signatures, without a date, or a reference number, nothing, just with their names written down. We do not know who has issued these », the mayor explains the method of accommodation from the period of the ex-mayor Sofiyanski. That is how the region's mayor explains the situation on Boulevard « Europe ». « **The carbage containers stay empty. They throw away their garbage in the river bed. It is too expensive for the municipality to clean this river bed. Even if we clean it, come two months later to see how it looks again. They are in the same position in which we find them.** » Mrs. Serafimova was definite that the issue with the Roma is not within the capacity of the municipality but rather there should be a government policy. « In general, this issue cannot be resolved with this so famous integration », concluded the mayor. »

This is where the journalist shows also the stand point of the public figure, of the representative of the authorities, who is also stating that these people can not be integrated. That is why the thesis is established and deepened, that it is only these people's fault, because they do not want to integrate. Besides, the state is powerless (the mayor). Last but not least, the final sentence of the author plays its role to consolidate the thesis that the Roma are uncontrollable. « *The face of European Sofia still looks like a suburb of Mumbai. Moreover, the correspondence between Commissioner Hammarberg and Prime Minister Borisov is very unlikely to preclude soon...* ».

The thus formented reactions in the commentaries are not surprising for the journalist nor for the editorial staff, having in mind their thesis. Here are some of the comentaries. « *For the Roma, the most European places are **Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Dahau, Maydanek, Mathausen** (the ex-concentration camps !) etc. pleasant places to live all over the world. Regretfully, all of these places were famous with their « all-inclusive » promotions 66 years ago. All of these places have to be repaired to accommodate the Roma brethren* », « *How long shall we have to endure these **parasites, who are thinking that we are obliged to give, provide and ensure them everything while they reproduce and squatter everywhere ?*** », « *In the 80ies, the Bulgarian Communist Party began to integrate the gypsies. There was a resolution to promote mixed Bulgarian-gypsy marriages. Then **the «dark-skinned charcoalers** » were given apartments among the Bulgarians. **The first thing they did when they entered their new flats was to break the windows and put instead a piece of nylon. Gypsy mentality. During the winters they burnt the parquet floor. When they grab five Leva, immediately they turn them into alcohol, put the powerful stereos to the maximum volume and sound the whole quarter.** What can we say about the misery in the entrance and around the building : their neighbours can not open their windows to get some fresh air because of the stench. **They must be forbidden to make more than one child. They cannot feed even one, but accumulate a whole horde of them. Isn't it that we, the Bulgarians, could also make children, but we have common sense.** » « *I saw on a TV show a Bulgarian family with seven children. They are forced to make a choice**

whether to cure one of their children or to go out to live in a tent ! A family, which is living according to the laws in Bulgaria. A family, which is not constantly wanting, but is giving, too. Why **this commissioner** does not defend this family, but instead **defends the lazy, illiterate, thieving dark-skinned char-coalers ? Why when Bulgarians decide to have more children, everyone is ridiculing them, and for the gypsies it is considered normal for them to reproduce and steal?** We are fed up ! », « Why this commissar does not ask these dark-skinned char-coalers whether they are working, are they paying their taxes, insurance, electricity and water bills? On top of everything, they are given also housing. **Who gives a house to me and to the other Bulgarians ?** Either you buy one and enslave yourself to the end of your life with loans, or you pay rent. Nobody has given anything to me just like that. And they are all the time demanding everything to be arranged for them. **We are fed up with these permanent defenders of the dark-skinned.** If they care for them so much, let them take them in their countries and care for them there. **I am fed up to the brim already !** » It could be clearly seen how the author's thesis and idea are tuned into a safety valve for quite a few of the Bulgarian citizens who face daily various social problems.

Like « Ataka » newspaper, the journalists and the editors of « Trud » daily newspaper are expressing their negative attitude towards the Roma by de-humanizing them using various language tools. They use verbs and images, associating this ethnic community with animal herd, pack, flock, or swarm. The Roma are also devastating because of their numerousness, mobility, uncivilizedness and aggression. The heading of one article is « **A Roma gang attacks the quarter of richer people** ». « A gang of Roma from the «Fakuteta» quarter tried to loot all copper drainage pipes in the prestigious Sofia quarter « Bokar » **on Christmas Eve.** Led by the 17-years old Roma Ani Yankova, the hooligans broke the electric boards and with **monkey-like dexterity climbed on the roof of a cozy building**, housing the office of a leading Turkish company. They split off the precious tin and were about to take it away. A resident of a nearby building heard the noise just a second before they sneaked off. » Their animal-like qualities, too, are described in this article. After this follows the sequence of explanations of the « victim », who openly and angrily complains from the gang. « *Immediately I jumped outside. I saw a young woman and two boys. I started chasing them and succeeded to catch the young woman's hand. She told me : « Don't do this to me, brother, I don't have anything to do with this !* » Maybe it was better that I caught only her, **because definitely the others had knives and could attack me** », Mr. Hristo Velkov told « Trud ». « The day before again they want to take my tin plates. Then I caught the two thieves – **ragged Roma.** I was very angry but I preserved composure and did not beat them. I only told them never again to come here. Obviously they heard me and did not made attempts at my house. Instead of this, they raided the neighbouring house, which is adjacent to mine. What an arrogance ! Would they do such a disgraceful thing for example in Switzerland ? », Mr. Velkov complains indignantly. » Here, it could be noticed how identical sentences are repeated in different ways in order to make the

insinuation stronger and more credible. Last but not least, the final sentence of the « victim » is quoted. A sentence, inviting and suggesting how « to cope with the under-age dark-skinned ». « *Should a person apply the mob law in order to protect his property ?* », asks Mr. Velkov. *My neighbours think the same. According to some of them, laws similar to these in the US should be introduced as soon as possible in Bulgaria, allowing every owner to shoot the offender who might take the liberty to raid his yard or property* ».

« Trud » daily talks about the Roma as of an obvious burden for Bulgaria. As a factor, which hinders the prosperity of the country in the European family, which also cannot stand the Roma. In the publications of « Trud », there is ambivalent racism – sometimes contradicting. At one point, the unhuman living conditions of the Roma are described, while at another, the Roma are depicted as « creatures » without any sense for comprehending the social norms and values and their anti-social behaviour and conduct supplements and nurtures their intimidating image. In the publications per se no attempts at all have been made to make a social analysis of the reasons for the objective in equality between Roma and non-Roma. Just the Roma are represented as quickly reproducing, multiplying, and surviving under any social circumstances, by which they threaten and jeopardize Bulgaria as a state and the Bulgarian people at large.

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Translated by: Mira Stefanova