

## **The Issue of Confessional Affiliation Concerning the Construction of Ethnic Identity: The Example of Macedonians with Islamic Religion**

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***Abstract:** This article examines the relation between ethnic/national identity and religion, i.e. confessional affiliation of the individual or of the group/community at the Balkans, focusing upon the situation in the Republic of Macedonia. The emphasis is put upon the terms “Macedonian Muslim”, “Islamized Macedonian” and “Torbesh”, in cases where they are used either as a ethnic name or an exonym, and upon their transformation during the last two decades in the Macedonian political discourse. The text also speaks about the role of religion in the (re)construction of Macedonian identity, as well as the way in which this relation shaped the change of the discourse. The issue of the Macedonian, examined from the aspect of ‘otherness’ and ‘the self’, as someone “radically Other”, or “insufficiently One’s own”, or “insufficiently Ours”, are issues that lead to emphasizing differences in a negative connotation, making them available for politicization. The role of the global changes related to confessional affiliation and its relevance in the construction of ethnic affiliation are also important factors, examined in this text. If contemporary society finds that the democratic process is insufficiently representative if it does not reflect the versatility of the population, first of all through qualitative representation, as well as implementing its core interests and its subcultures, one can expect that each isolation and neglect opens a possibility for the emergence of constructions/politicization of different kind, especially of ones that are related to religion.*

Although confrontations usually emerge between different ethnic communities/nations and different religions, recent history shows that such confrontations with different intensity are possible in the frames of the same ethnic group, in case where its members have different religious beliefs. The theory of identities states few possible reasons for the emergence of such situations, which differ according to the level of separation from the previous, original community and its intensity on one side, and on the time that has passed since this process of separation started, on the other. If this process has taken place a long time ago, that is, if the

entity is undergoing a formation or is already an individual one, it starts to attain new ethnic characteristics that at the beginning contain mutual elements, but in time also develops new ones, that promote differences, not common elements. Both religious and cultural changes that take place as a result of the change of confessional affiliation can have a decisive role in the formation of a new entity. There are few such cases at the Balkans.

Islamization, as a process that was continuously implemented by the Ottoman Empire, especially during the period when it was military and institutionally weak, was not related only to Macedonians, but to all other Balkan communities (Albanians, Vlachs, Serbs, Bulgarians, Montenegrins, and a lesser part of Croats from Bosnia). Islamic teachings did not make a difference between the confessional and the ethnic affiliation of the individual or of the group. As a theocratic state, in Ottoman Turkey all Muslims had privileged position, regardless of their ethnic background. The so called “Millet system” was in place, while Islam was identified less as a theological ideology, and more as something that is related to the Turkish authorities and the state. This is why Macedonians, and all other Balkan Slavs and non-Slavic people, that have accepted Islamic faith, for a long time thought that “to be a Muslim means to be a Turk”

<sup>1</sup>. The different ethnic affiliation did not play any role. A unifying element of the population of the Empire was Islam.

When analyzing the term ethnic/national identity one has to take into account few regularities. First, the mechanisms through which the individual connects and identifies with a certain group or with the society in general should be identified. Since the 1970-ties the general examination of identities became quite trendy, especially the ones whose theoretical research focused or is still focused upon the ethnic group, i.e. the nation through culture of identities (that is, through cultural changes), as a social category. Thus, when it comes to nation and its definition, there are at least two concepts: the first one states that the nation stems from the ethnos/ethnic community, that is based upon kinship, mutual origin, language, culture and customs, and the other is the civic concept, a economic and political category, according to which a nation is a community of citizens that live in a mutual state. A nation according to this second definition consists of a number of ethnic communities and groups that live in a concrete state. This is the example of a number of European states, and especially of the USA. Not so long ago, the ethnic group was understood exclusively as a

term that is defined/manifested through tradition, collective memory on the mutual origin, mutual territory, language and relation, which presupposes a collective identity. There were no major problems to come up to this definition, since the collective versus personal identity was always extremely dominant. This presupposes an existence of a solid system of kinship present in traditional cultures, that according to their own concept did not allow public manifestation of distinctiveness. Today, there are attempts to study it and analyze it on another level, an individual one, manifested through personal feelings of the individual in society. The definition of ethnic/national identity as a historic category, mutually connected through static cultural categories (mutual origin, territory, language, customs, religion), that are in any case objective indications of certain affiliation, holds merit. However, today's circumstances show that these are not always the right indicators of ethnic identity, considered in a wider sense of the term, as a contemporary category upon which cultural, historical and socio-political events are reflected.

Quite often, when it comes to certain ethnic communities, besides these objective indicators, there are subjective ones, that especially during the last few decades are favored by science that deals with examining ethnic identity. These subjective indicators include personal feelings of the individual concerning his/her ethnic affiliation, i.e. his or her individual feeling regarding belongs to a certain community. In the analysis made focusing upon this, subjective level, the focus is put upon ethnic identity as a process of self-identification and identification by others. Self-identification depends on the individual, but also on the group to which he or she belongs.<sup>2</sup> It can go deeper and be more precise, so that the person could have a double or triple identity, created upon ethnic basis (tribal, ethnic/group, national, confessional), and at the same time all three could mark a realistic identity affiliation without being contrary to each other.<sup>3</sup> Each of these individual identities is a scheme for socialization of the individual, through which one attains a capability for communication in the frames of the community, i.e. self-awareness on the origin, position and power of the individual and the group in a certain social context.<sup>4</sup> At a local level, it is very important that the individual is accepted by the members of his or her group, as equal, since it is the place where he or he fulfills his/her basic needs. According to my belief, there are differences in the very approach towards the examination of ethnic identities, that is, one can separate notions that start from the individual, but also such that start from institutional level. This is how potential conflicts are created, that could be used for different purposes.

An almost equally important category is the identification that the individual attains on the side of a neighboring or a more distant group. Such a feeling of separation US/THEM in essence proves the different identity between people or the groups. For example, the population of the village of Vrbjani is not accepted by others from Gorna Reka (community to which they actually belong). This is why they were enforced to change their national costume, so that it differs from the one from Gorna Reka, an act through which they publicly manifested “otherness”.<sup>5</sup>

As a conclusion, it is obvious that when it comes to defining ethnic/national identity one should have in mind both levels, the objective and the subjective ones, as well all other elements that influence the ultimate affiliation of the individual or of the group constituting a concrete ethnic identity. If any of these two levels or elements are completely or partially abstracted, then lesser or major deviations appear. It is very difficult, when it comes to ethnic identities, especially at the Balkans, to establish so called one-dimensional ethnic identities. If a researcher takes such a categorical attitude, he/she risks choosing a certain position, that will be applauded by one group, but strongly criticized by others in the frames of the same community. At a higher level, this becomes a politic (politicization) of an identity, that is easily recognizable at the Balkans.

Ethnicity understood as an orientation towards national origin, religion or language, has become more intense during the last years. On the other side, ethnicity is a powerful model that includes feelings, opinions and behavior. The theory of ethnicity is constantly facing challenges of category attribution, according to which actors are being identified, or according to which they identify themselves, as well as with the problem of separation of a certain group that serves as a basis of dichotomization us/the,y and the one of fixing the identity symbols upon which the belief in common origin is based. According to Wallerstein, affiliation to a certain ethnic group is a subject of social definition, of the interaction between self-definition of its members and the definition given by other groups. This dialectic relationship between the outsider’s and insider’s definition of ethnic affiliation makes ethnicity a dynamic process that is always susceptible to re-definition and re-composition<sup>6</sup>. The former definition covers all processes of labeling a group from outside.

When we use solely this definition, it pinpoints a situation in which certain identity is being attributed to communities that “at the same time are denied their right to define themselves”<sup>7</sup>.

Instead of the “static” understanding of ethnicity Barth offers a “dynamic” definition, that presupposes flexibility. According to him, ethnicity stems from actions and reactions among ethnic groups, inside the social organization that is constantly developing. This means that ethnic identity is formed and is changing through interaction between ethnic groups, and due to the processes of inclusion and exclusion that establish the limit between them. Barth emphasized that in the frames of these processes of social organization that continuously sustain the distinctions between different ethnic groups, “cultural features” that are taken into account do not present a sum of “objective” differences, but only those that are considered important by the actors themselves. Thus, certain existing differential elements of certain ethnic groups can, in a given period, change or lose their meaning, and give way to other features. In this sense, the same author emphasizes the importance of the choice of cultural contents, that a concrete ethnic community would accept as defining, marking ethnic boundaries between groups.<sup>8</sup> Ethnic identity as a changeable feature is susceptible to different influences in time and space. During different historic periods the members of groups or communities (or parts of them) can partly or completely exchange one ethnic identity with another.<sup>9</sup>

One of the most important factors in defining a certain ethnic identity is religious affiliation. In this context there are great differences between the individual feeling and the examination of ethnic identity at an institutional level. In a number of examples, especially at the Balkans, religion is one of the roots of ethnic differentiation and “a very important factor in making the decision for a public affiliation to a certain ethnic group”.<sup>10</sup> Simon Enloe finds that religion is one of the roots of ethnic differentiation.<sup>11</sup> It is a multi-layered social phenomenon, which has constantly changed over history, evolving and adjusting to every-day changes in society. In Macedonia, at a local level, a non-verbal ethnic symbol, for example Christian faith for the Poreche population (Western Macedonia), is an objective element for determining Macedonian ethnic identity, while for the neighbors from the village of Plasnica, Preglovo, Debreshte, their Muslim religion is a subjective element, through which during different periods, and at individual level, they ethnically declare themselves (in the censuses) as Turks, Albanians, Muslims, Macedonians, Macedonian-Muslims or others.<sup>12</sup> This duality in relation to ethnic identity solely based upon religious affiliation, today leads to creation of preconditions for their politicization, that is realistically taking place. Thus, confessional affiliation as a determining factor in the formation of ethnic identity of the group or the

individual can lead to different results in the same conditions, depending on the feelings of the individual. In this way, the same cultural element presents an important ethnic symbol for the members of the group, while for the non-members it is an objectively existing ethnic element. An ethnic group that would live in a total isolation, no matter the reasons, unconscious of one's own individuality, would not in fact have awareness for itself as a separate entity, and their members would not develop awareness for its ethnic identity. Due to these reasons, culture understood in the widest sense of the word is a key factor for analyzing cultural identities that are susceptible to different influences from "outside". Although, according to Taylor, culture is a characteristic of all humans, it is also a characteristic of the "local" and of the "individual" living<sup>13</sup>, still "limitation in local frames in a way is an abstraction, since there is no pure local culture or culture of a separate social group (national or ethnic)".<sup>14</sup> Finally, we witness that the religious element could lead to formation of a new national identity, domination of an element that defines the separate character of a nation. This is especially valid if the community owns a concrete territory that is marked or defined in a form of a state, with a concrete name that is the source of the nation's name, as well. Sometimes, through efforts to mark differences and to establish them as dominant, as in the case of religion, this means marginalizing essential elements, and going into extremes, "finding" elements according to which one tries to prove that the separateness is ancient, that religion is not the determining factor of the newly formed individuality, a phenomenon that is scientifically known as "late national romanticism". This is the way in which religion becomes a tool of identification and mobilization.<sup>15</sup> There are a number of examples in the world when members of one ethnic group or nation have different religious affiliation, due to historic evolution. If the state and the society in which the named nation that is religiously differentiated is stronger and more conscious concerning the connection at national level, living in such a state is not an obstacle. Obstacles appear in states that have weak societies and poorly developed nations, since then there are many possibilities for a negative reflection through religious conflicts, lack of interest about the others, that finally results with polarization of society and mutual lack of interest of the members of a nation that have different religious affiliation. This situation often leads to prescribing special rights to the group, which start from the level of cultural rights. However, later on this could lead to requests for territorial autonomy, that could further lead towards final territorial separation or becoming a part of another state. Another fact that should be taken into account is the one that nations are often originally (without taking into account contemporary migrations)

distributed in one, or in a number of neighboring states, while religions go beyond state borders and spread to other, near-by or distant regions, even to other continents.

Having in mind the previous theoretical notions, it seems that it is relatively easy to explain the ethnic-national-cultural identity of Macedonians with Islamic affiliation today. Analysis made at a historical level are known, and things are almost clear in this sense. Partly under pressure, especially at the beginning of the process of Islamization of the Macedonian population, and afterwards as a result of the privileges that were offered for the transfer to Islamic religion, Macedonians, as well as parts of other Balkan nations, through decades started to lose the feeling of belonging to the same ethnic group as Macedonian Christians. Thus, a possibility was created to identify with other nations, that have also accepted Islam. This was a long and difficult process, that led towards distancing from the Macedonian ethnic core and towards partial Albanization or Turkization of the Macedonian population. In accordance to the theory of identities' changeability depending on the categories "cultural time" and "cultural space", certain analysis should be made on the situation of this population in contemporary context, on their feeling of affiliation(s). Surely, there were previous attempts to define phenomena related to their identity. However, it seems that a suitable ethnonym that they would accept has not been found. During the last thirty years, the term "Islamized Macedonians" was used. Starting from 1979, after the establishment of the Cultural and Scientific Gatherings of Macedonian-Muslims from the Republic of Macedonia, the term "Macedonian-Muslims" is used simultaneously. During the period while these manifestations existed (up to the dissolution of Yugoslavia), they were held in the villages where Macedonians with Islamic faith lived, these events were very popular, and were accepted by the population as their "own". There were exhibitions organized, poetry was read, folklore ensembles performed, and maybe most important of all was the sense of community manifested during these few days, among Macedonians from both religions – Christian and Muslims – since they lived their every-day lives in the same villages, and faced the same problems. However, the term "Macedonian-Muslims" had a relatively limited use, mostly by researchers and the state structures, but not in the local community where they lived. In fact, they were used by 'others, while not by themselves. The dilemma was why only this ethnic community is described through a religious attribute, when this is not the case for other Macedonians.<sup>16</sup> On the other side it is clear that the act of accepting Muslim faith did not introduce changes only in the religious sphere, but it influenced concrete cultural segments,

initiating certain cultural changes in every-day life. Through the centuries, members of this population were named by their closest neighbors with different exonyms, besides the fact that basically there were no major differences concerning the language and the general folk culture, especially in those parts that had no relation to confessional-religious rules of behavior. One of the many ethnic names of a local type, and most popular, is the exonym Torbesh. Basically, it refers to Islamized Macedonian population from Western and South-Western Macedonia, that lives in few ethnographic areas at the Macedonian-Albanian border, as well as to part of the emigrated Islamized population (above all in Turkey, Istanbul, Izmir, Manisa, Bursa, but also in other countries).<sup>17</sup> There are few explanations of the above mentioned term<sup>18</sup> from a historical aspect, that are not covered by this article. Generally, the interest regarding the problem of this exonym can be understood through articles on internet blogs, especially the web portals established exactly by the members of this cultural community<sup>19</sup>. It is evident that the relation towards this term in the sense of self-definition is changeable. In the frames of the field research conducted during the last 15 years in the villages of Strushki Drimkol (Labunishta, Podgorci and Oktisi), inhabited with Islamized Macedonian population, there are visible changes in self-definition in comparison to the 1960-ties and the 1970-ties. Until the beginning of the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the oral cultural history among the population was relatively easily accessible<sup>20</sup>, while today the access is almost impossible if one lacks a personal, private connection that would enable trust towards the researcher. In the past informants gave away their personal data, they were willing to be photographed, especially when it comes to folk costume. Today, only a few of them are ready to disclose their identity, or they prefer to stay anonymous. Taking photographs is also minimized, since they are afraid that their published photograph could harm them or their family. When it comes to the immigration of their ancestors to the villages of Strushki Drimkol, in the past the male population knew (and was ready to tell) the name of the village where their ancestors emigrated from, as well as the time and the reason for emigration<sup>21</sup>. However, today it is almost impossible to obtain this information. They now say that they have been here since time immemorial, and that they do not remember another previous place where their ancestors lived.

According to the old tradition of 'millet system' at this territory, which identifies ethnic affiliation with confessional one, a part of Macedonians with Muslim religion in the latest censuses declare themselves Turks. This change is especially visible in urban environments.



The following event is quite illustrative when it comes to this transfer from one ethnic identity to another:

. . . "I sat in a warm kitchen in Tetovo, listening to a 62-year old woman and her 74-year old husband engage in an agitated debate about her "Turkish" and his "Albanian" identity. In a perfect Istanbul accent, she proudly declared herself "the only Turk in this family" and „all of these people (her children) turned out to be Albanian“. Her husband mumbled under his breath, „Oh, sure you are Turkish. When I married you, your Torbesh (Muslim Macedonian) parents could not speak a word of Turkish!“ She snapped back „So when on earth did you become Albanian? You spoke Turkish all your life, and you still cannot put together two sentences in Albanian!“ To this, he roared back, shaking his finger at her furiously: But I have the Albanian soul! The Albanian soul got to me!“<sup>22</sup>

Today, in the latest variant of using the old Millet tradition for political purposes, an equation sign is put between Islam, and not the Turkish, but Albanian nationality.<sup>23</sup> The total political situation, when the political parties of Albanians in Macedonia, desiring to gain votes, put pressure upon “the other” Muslims (especially from the village of Labunishta, where a major part of the population has declared itself Albanian, although there have never been ethnic Albanians in that area before), aiming to “turn” their identity into an Albanian one. Thus, according to Arben Xhaferi (the late ex-president of the Democratic Party of the Albanians), Macedonian Muslims are a political fantasy, and the identity of the Torbesh should not be found in history and in the tradition, but in the political attempts of ex-state leaders to soften the Albanian issue on the territory of ex-Yugoslavia<sup>24</sup>. The politicization of the Torbesh during the last ten years has been institutionalized, through the Party for European Future (formed in 2006)<sup>25</sup>, better known as the Party of Torbesh. The president of this party, who is the main initiator for its formation, Fijat Canoski, was at the same time a deputy in the Macedonian Assembly.<sup>26</sup> Although in the political program of this party, published in Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish, the party states that it will equally represent the interests of all cultural and ethnic communities in Macedonia, it is evident that its primary aim is to represent the interests of the Islamized Macedonian population – Torbesh. It says: “...in the regions of Struga, Ohrid, Drimkol, Debar, Zupa, Reka, Kichevo area, Gostivar area, Gora and Skopje area there are ‘forgotten’ citizens for whom time has stopped in the 19<sup>th</sup> century...”. Since the state has forgotten them, while “...the parties from the Macedonian political block have distanced themselves, and have discarded us due to our religious difference, the parties

from the Albanian and the Turkish block are discarding us due to the language that we speak...”, they were forced to establish a political party that would take care of the need of the Torbesh population. The President, declaring himself a Torbesh, puts efforts in promoting the exonym as an ethnic name, that would be used among the Torbesh population in the local communities where it lives. However, not all Macedonian-Muslim communities, and not all Islamized Macedonians accept this term. Many of them, especially the ones that have obtained higher education, clearly accept their Macedonian ethnic identity, but at the same time, are equally aware of their Islamic confessional affiliation. Gellner is right when he says that “...the education of man is his most precious investment, and it provides him his identity”<sup>27</sup>. The population of Gora is especially against this ethnic name, since besides the individual feeling of ethnic identity which may differ (Macedonian, Serbian, Bosnian, Muslims), they have created their own Goran identity, Goranci, and as they say “they do not have the need to become Torbesh now”. On the other hand, they do not have the support of the Association of Macedonians with Islamic faith, and they find the attempt for separation from the Macedonian nation due to different religion offensive. This Association has in a number of cases reacted through public media, expressing their dissatisfaction, asking the Government institutions to scorn the denationalization program of the Party of the Torbesh.<sup>28</sup> The background for this reaction is the request of this party that the Torbesh should be a separate ethnic group, that would enable them to have more Parliamentarians in the Macedonian Assembly. “...Torbesh are neither Turks, Albanians, nor Macedonian-Muslims, they are a separate ethnic and cultural community, and as such should enter the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia”.<sup>29</sup> The situation when one state marginalizes some of the distinctive cultural communities can lead towards certain separation of these communities, so that they “forget” that they are a part of the national community, which can be noted by the current formation of a “new” identity of the Torbesh, that is not based upon ethnic, but upon political and social identities, something that Anderson calls “imagined community”<sup>30</sup>, and according to Gellner this type of communities slowly dissolve since they lose their cultural features.<sup>31</sup> None of those who negate the Macedonian identity of the Torbesh quotes scientific, expert arguments that would explain the (non)affiliation towards another ethnic or cultural community. However, even today, only a part of the Torbesh population is related to this party, and they do not feel as completely their own. The opinion characteristic for all parties dominates: that through it someone wants to profit individually, and not to make life better for the Torbesh from the rural Western Macedonia.

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Although according to the prognosis of a number of theoreticians, the influence of religion in contemporary post-industrial society will be weaker until its complete disappearance (Emil Durkheim, Max Weber), the role of the religion in all aspects of life, in all sectors, is significant and often even crucial for the changes that happen in different societies. The secularization that took place until the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century today is completely replaced with global revitalization of religion. All research that has been conducted in contemporary societies, and concerns religion, speaks in favor of this argument. The strong position of religions is characteristic not only for the post-socialistic states where the public manifestation of religion has not been promoted (if not forbidden)<sup>32</sup>, but also in societies where there is a continuity of public religious manifestation. Surely this desecularization includes changed cultural functions of religion, that often leads to the so called politicization of religion (i.e. of the Church). A relatively close relation between the ethnic and the religious identity takes place, where religion is a tool for strengthening ethnic identity. In almost all of the ex-Yugoslav republics, which are now independent states, this example is highly visible.

As well as the consequences thereof.

Finally, the statement that the personal and the collective identity are two sides of the same process of the maturation of every human<sup>33</sup>, can refer both to the religious identity of the individual, or of the community of any kind.

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<sup>1</sup> Лиманоски Н., *Исламизацијата и етничките промени во Македонија*, Македонска книга, Скопје, 1993, 39-40, 361. On the topic of Islamization at the Balkans and in Macedonia there is an abundant bibliography and first-hand material, presented in the book.

<sup>2</sup> Obrembski J., *Problem grup etnicznych w etnologij i jedo sociologiczne ujęcie*, Przegląd Socjologiczny, t.4, Warszawa, 1936, 177-196.

<sup>3</sup> Светиева А., *Миграции – прашања за идентитетот*, Етнолог, бр. 9, Скопје, 2000.

<sup>4</sup> Svetković N.V., *Nacionalni identitet i (re)konstrukcija institucija u Srbiji (ideologje, obrazovanje, medij)*, Beograd, 2009.

<sup>5</sup> Мирчевска П.М., *Вербални и невербални етнички симболи во Горна Река*, Институт за етнологија и антропологија, посебни изданија, кн.2, Скопје, 2007, 212.

<sup>6</sup> Putinja Filip; Stref-Fenar Zoslin, *Teorije o etnicitetu, XX vek*, Beograd, 1997, 159-160

<sup>7</sup> Putinja Filip; Stref-Fenar Zoslin, *Teorije o etnicitetu, XX vek*, Beograd, 1997, 160.

<sup>8</sup> Барт Ф., *Етничките групи и нивните граници*, Теории на другоста, ед. Ристески Љ. и Јакимовска И., Скопје, 2007, 69-107.

<sup>9</sup> Мирчевска П.М., *Вербални и невербални етнички симболи во Горна Река*, Институт за етнологија и антропологија, посебни изданија, кн.2, Скопје, 2007.

- <sup>10</sup> Svetieva A., Politicization of the ethnic identity of the Torbesh (the „Nashinci„), *EtnoAntopoZum*, 4, Skopje, 2004, 69.
- <sup>11</sup> Enloe S., *Religion and Ethnicity*, Perspectives in ethnicity, Hague-Paris, 1978, 347.
- <sup>12</sup> Мирчевска М., *Сумарен осврт за етничкиот идентитет врз основа на неколку теории*, Зборник Етнологија, 3, Скопје, 2005, 66-67.
- <sup>13</sup> Цитирано според: Čačić-Kumpes J., *Politike reguliranja kulturne i etnicke razlicitosti: o pojmovima i njihovoj upotrebi*, Migracijske i etničke teme, 20, Zagreb, 2004, 143-159.
- <sup>14</sup> Čačić-Kumpes J., Heršak E., *Neki modeli uređivanja etničkih i kulturnih odnosa u višeetničkim i višekulturnim društvima*, Migracijske teme, br. 3-4, god. 10, 1994, 191-199.
- <sup>15</sup> Cvetkovska-Ocokolji V., Cvetkovski T., *The influence of Religion on the creation of National Identity in Serbia*, Journal of Identity and Migration Studies, vol. 4, br.2, University of Oradea, 2010, 89.
- <sup>16</sup> In this sense, it is important to emphasize the example of Montenegrins, as a nation whose members have different religious affiliation – Orthodox Christians and Muslims. There is no mention of a term “Montenegrin-Muslim”, or “Islamized Montenegrin”, neither on individual, nor at the institutional or scientific level. Montenegrins have a saying: the surname tells you the nationality, while the first name the religious affiliation.
- <sup>17</sup> In Mustafapasha, Republic of Turkey, there is a population that after the exchange of population between Greece and Turkey, executed according to the Lausanne agreements from 1924, has been forcibly moved from the village of Zerveni, Kostur area and brought to Mustafapasha. The population that is now from the second and the third generation speaks Macedonian with a Kostur Dialect. Research that I have conducted in 2013-2014 showed that this is an issue of a changed ethnic identity (Turkish), but with a strong feeling for one’s own Macedonian origin, through the conserved spoken Macedonian language.
- <sup>18</sup> Svetieva A., *Politicization of the ethnic identity of the Torbesh (the „Nashinci“)*, *EtnoAntopoZum*, 4, Skopje, 2004, 49, 51. The ethnic name Torbesh is an exonym, term that covered the Islamized Macedonian population by “others” that lived close-by and had a pejorative connotation. Today there are attempts, by the political party PEI, this exonym to become an ethnonym.
- <sup>19</sup> [www.tropiko.com.mk](http://www.tropiko.com.mk) was first entertainment web-portal from Labunishta
- <sup>20</sup> Мирчевска П.М., *Етнологишкe одлике Струшког Дримкола*, Београд, 1995. (MA thesis defended in July 1995 at the Department of Ethnology and Anthropology, University of Belgrade, manuscript)
- <sup>21</sup> Лиманоски Н., *Исламизацијата и етничките промени во Македонија*, Македонска книга, Скопје, 1993, 105-106.
- <sup>22</sup> Burcu Akan E., *Shadow Genealogies, Memory and Identity Among Urban Muslims in Macedonia*, East European Monographs, Boulder, Columbia University Press, New York, 2003, 77.
- <sup>23</sup> Clayer N., *L islam, facteur des recompositions internes en Macédoine et au Kosovo*, La nouvel islam balkanique: les musulmans, acteurs du postcommunisme (1990-2000), ed. Bougarel X., Clayer N., Paris: Maisonneuve et Lerose, 2001.
- <sup>24</sup> Xhaferi A., *Storm in a glass of water*, (Published in newspaper „Shekulli„, 06.02.2004, (Tirana, Albania) and in Macedonian in the weekly newspaper „Delo„, (Skopje, Macedonia), No.517 27.02.2004), *EtnoAntopoZum*, Skopje, 2004, 45-49
- <sup>25</sup> [http://macedoniainfo.com/Bulgarien\\_not\\_Macedonian.htm](http://macedoniainfo.com/Bulgarien_not_Macedonian.htm)
- <sup>26</sup> There were other representatives of Macedonian with Islamic religion in the previous period, but they were members of other parties.
- <sup>27</sup> Гелнер Е., *Нациите и национализмот*, Скопје, 2001, 51-52.
- <sup>28</sup> <http://www.idividi.com.mk/vesti/makedonija/Razno/399635/index.html>
- <sup>29</sup> [www.makfax.com.mk/look/novina.printer.tpl?ldLanguage=10&](http://www.makfax.com.mk/look/novina.printer.tpl?ldLanguage=10&)
- <sup>30</sup> Андерсон Б., *Замислени заедници*, Култура, Скопје, 1998, 286-287.
- <sup>31</sup> Гелнер Е., *Нациите и национализмот*, Култура, Скопје, 2001, 69-70.
- <sup>32</sup> Mirchevska P.M., *Anthropology of festivities: could the church and nationally related festivities replace the socialistic ones?*, Acta Ethnographica Hungarica, 57, Akademiai Kiado, Budapest, 2012.
- <sup>33</sup> Голубовић З., *Ја и други*, Београд, 1999.