

Islam on Trial:
Normalisation of Islam in Bulgaria and the role of intellectuals

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Abstract

The purpose of the thesis is to analyse the symbolic violence intellectuals exert in constructing politically effective representations of Islam in Bulgaria. This is done through the close investigation of expert witnesses' discourse in a recent trial against thirteen Muslims from Bulgaria, who were accused and convicted of propagating a "foreign" and "political-ideological" Islam against the "democratic-liberal order." The expert witnesses opposed this "political" and "foreign" Islam to "traditional" and "everyday" Islam. I argue that this discursive strategy could be read as *normalisation* in Foucauldian terms. In contrast to Foucault's understanding of normalisation and the role of psychiatric expertise within the juridical field, what is normalised in the case of the trial I studied are not individual pathologies, but forms of ("everyday") Islam that are compatible with the current post-political liberal regime. I also consider intellectuals' conflicting relationships to the trial by taking into account their positioning within *the field of power*.

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All my efforts here are devoted to my parents Tsvetelina and Ivan.

Needless to say, responsibility for any errors and oversights is my own.

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List of abbreviations

BCC	Bulgarian Criminal Code
BCP	Bulgarian Communist Party
BSP	Bulgarian Socialist Party
GERB	Political Party Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria
MRL	Political Party Movement for Rights and Liberties
PCA	Plovdiv Court of Appeals
PDC	Pazardzhik District Court
PF	Patriotic Front
RB	Reform Bloc
SANS	State Agency For National Security
SCCRB	Supreme Court of Cassation Republic of Bulgaria
SJC	Supreme Judicial Council

Introduction

In 2012, after a series of raids widely covered in media (Webcafe 2010) by the State Agency for National Security (SANS) thirteen Bulgarian Muslims were accused and subsequently convicted, of propagating “anti-democratic ideologies, expressed in opposing the principles of democracy, separation of powers, liberalism, statehood and the rule of law, basic human rights and the equality of men and women and religious freedom” (NOHD 330/2012). They were also suspected for spreading “foreign, non-traditional” Islam in Bulgaria, as members of an unregistered branch of the Saudi *Al Waqf al Islami* Foundation. The trial gained immense publicity. Some prominent intellectuals became involved as expert witnesses. Others voiced public criticisms of Islamophobia produced through the trial.

What types of representations of Islam, elaborated by intellectuals sharing similar biographical trajectories, are perceived as legitimate within the juridical field? What purpose does the figure of Islam forged in the trial serve? What determines intellectuals positioning towards the trial?

As the court protocols show, the prosecution, the judges and the expert witnesses focused on the “foreignness” of the funding of some of the defendants’ activities and of their education. The court protocols present the imams as conveying “radical,” “non-traditional,” “wahhabi” Islam. The expert witnesses present “radical [or political] Islam” as “dangerous” and new “totalitarian ideology,” manipulating subaltern ethnic groups. Muslims were simultaneously vilified (as “terrorists and warring Islamists”) and victimised (as “ignorant” and thus “prone to foreign influence”). Another type of Islam, supposedly native to Bulgaria, was constructed in opposition - an “apolitical everyday Islam” which does not inform a political ideology or behaviour. Similar discourses delineating the boundary between “traditional, civil, acceptable to

Europe,” and “radical, foreign” Islam are also present in Kosovo, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (Rexhepi 2015a: 201).

I argue that the expert discourses in the trial against the thirteen Muslims¹ sanctioned particular “political” and “ideological” Islam as the aberration of the *normalised* through the court’s holding apolitical Muslim practices. The sanctioned “political” practices are constituted as dangerous ideologies by the expert-witnesses’ and the court’s performative utterances. The “ideological” and “radical” Islam comes to replace Communism as the Constitutive Outside of Bulgarian liberalism. The symbolic efficiency of Communism exhausted itself and, especially after 2001 when the two-party model collapsed and both left and right parties accepted a technocratic “consensus” positions (Raychev and Stoychev 2004), liberalism needed to forge new enmities in order to sustain itself. The figure of “radical,” “political” Islam is formative, especially given its legitimacy with Bulgaria’s geopolitical partners in NATO and the EU. Piro Rexhepi describes similar cases of arrests of Kosovo imams on charges of “terrorism, threatening the constitutional order, [and] incitement of religious hate speech” and understands them as responses to “the call to subdue extremism” coming from EU and NATO (Rexhepi 2015a: 204-05). I see the trial has been the epitome of this trend.

The accused in the Bulgarian trial were convicted of propagating anti-democratic ideologies contradicting “liberal principles.” The production of the Islamic Other of European liberalism is conditioned by the work of intellectuals’ exerting effective symbolic violence through naming procedures. However, I do not claim *all* intellectuals had identical positions regarding the trial. This is why I study both its critics and the expert witnesses.

I will inquire into the contemporary intellectual production of the figure “[foreign] political Islam” opposed to “everyday [Bulgarian] Islam” by focusing on the body of knowledge

¹ Referred to as “the trial” from now on.

expert witnesses produced outside of the courtroom, and through which they informed the verdict of the thirteen Muslims. One of the main evidence implicating the imams was the “complex expertise” provided by the intellectuals. The distinction between “everyday” and “politico-ideological” Islam was key for the prosecution’s charge, based on Art. 108 of the BCC². The Muslims were tried for propagating anti-democratic ideologies, but the prosecution, relying on expert witnesses’ statements, added in the charge that these are ideologies contradicting “the principles of liberalism” despite it is not part of the legal norm.

The defendants

The accused were Nayme Gorelska, a former teacher in the school of the village Gorno Kraishte; Youssuf Gorelski, Nayme’s husband, also a former teacher, both owners of a small business; the regional Mufti of Smolyan Nedzhmi Dabov; the imam of Rudozem Hayri Sherifov; the former regional Mufti of Sofia and Smolyan Ali Hayredin; the guest preacher in the Blagoevgrad area Ahmed Abdurahmanov from the village of Pletena; the imam of Lazhnitsa Mohamed Kamber and the imam of Kochan Izzet Dzhalev; the employee of the Bulgarian Mufti Office responsible for the Pazardzhik and Gotse Delchev areas Ali Hodzha, the teacher of Quran for children Bayram Ushev from Madan; Ahmed Moussa Ahmed - a religious leader in the Roma quarter Iztok in Pazardzhik who is not associated with the Grand Mufti’s office; the regional Mufti of Pazardzhik Abdullah Salih; and the Sarnitsa imam Said Moutlou (all imams are associated with the Grand Mutfti’s office). In March 2014 at the first instance, the PCD convicted all of the defendants. In July 2015 the PCA, i.e. the second instance court, acquitted

² BCC: Article 108(1) (Amended, SG No. 38/2007) A person who preaches fascist or another anti-democratic ideology or forceful change of the social and state order as established by the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria, shall be punished by deprivation of liberty for up to three years or a fine of up to BGN five thousand.

Said Moutlou and Abdullah Salih, convicted Ahmed Moussa and sentenced him to two years in prison, and all other defendants were fined 4000 BGN each³.

Early in the morning, on the 6th of October 2010, Youssuf and Nayme Gorelski's home in the village of Gorno Kraishte was raided by SANS agents. The agents confiscated CDs, personal computers, notebooks, and a large amount of money. At that time Youssuf was still a gym teacher at the local school, while Nayme was already fired from the same school and was running a small shop, the family's business.

Gorelski and I met in April 2016 when I conducted my research in Sofia at the high school which Yousuf and Nayme's son Ahmed attends.⁴ It is a private high school where teaching is conducted in English, and Turkish is one of the foreign languages which can be studied. The whole interview with Nayme and Youssuf revolved around the raid conducted by SANS agents at Gorelski's home in 2010 which Youssuf described as nothing else than a "harassment" of their family. They did not get a copy of the search warrant after the SANS agents entered. The SANS agents themselves were anxious and scared, and stood in the hallway for a while taking a long look at the house to see if it is safe before continuing the search, Nayme told me. After the initial shyness, the agents went through the backpacks of Gorelski's children before the kids left for school. The daughter even wrote an essay to express her distress of the raid. Minutes before searching the childrens' belongings, a SANS agent was surprised by another essay at their home: the daughter had won a competition for an essay on the topic "My path to Europe". Nayme held that the agent's expectation of the family was of anti-EU and anti-secular beliefs.

Throughout our conversation, both Nayme and Youssuf repeatedly took pride in their own and their children's literacy and command of Bulgarian language. That left me feeling very perplexed and uneasy, as I was not in any position to assess their literacy. Both of them are

³ Lev is the currency of Bulgaria. 1 BGN equals 0.51 euro.

⁴ Youliana Metodieva, a human rights activist and journalist, provided me with the contacts of people involved with the trial and reached out to Nayme Gorelska on my behalf.

Pomaks (or “Bulgarian Muslims,” as they identify themselves), i.e. Bulgarian is their native language and they also taught in Bulgarian while employed at the local school. As a friend of mine, of Pomak and Turkish origin, shared with me, the feeling of anxiety over the command of Bulgarian stays with Muslims throughout their lives, as an anticipation of illiteracy is inculcated already in schools (sometimes segregated). Gorelski’s social position in the village (well educated and owners of a few shops in the area) burdens them with yet another constant feeling of insecurity. They try to act the way they imagine is expected of people of their status. These expectations require of them to meet the demands of the linguistic market and to acquire more linguistic capital (Bourdieu 1991: 81). I, as an “ethnic” Bulgarian, have never experienced such linguistic anxiety.

The principal of the school where Youssuf and Nayme were employed was “too ambitious,” which leads to him adjusting his position according to the current political conjuncture, Nayme told me. Yousuf’s application for the position of school principal is what triggered the principal at the time to put his “connections in the secret services” into action, according to Youssuf. Youssuf thought he became uncomfortable to the principal, as Youssuf could have potentially acquired symbolic power that would have complemented his economic capital. In Youssuf’s understanding, the accusations of “islamism and radicalism” were a way of getting rid of him as a competitor.

Such accusations at that point in time were truly attractive both to media and the SANS, as EU officials assumed there are “terrorist cells throughout Europe,” Youssuf held. The interpretation of the trial on the part of the accused goes like this – it is an effect of the conjuncture at the time: a right-wing Bulgarian government trying to please whatever it perceived is the EU’s wish by lumping together many diverging and unverified signals.

The narrative is conditioned by Youssuf and Nayme's surprise by the accusation. It could be argued that the sudden experience of the investigation and the trial they were sucked up left them in urgent need to rationalise the accusation. One possible strategy to alleviate anxiety was to look for problematic personal relationships (e.g. with the school principal). Even so, I heard other stories of the prosecution's suspicions of Muslims evading taxes, for example, which were transformed into cases of "radical Islam" in order to get the attention of judges and media. Supposedly, such pressure would lead to an effective verdict. Moreover, crimes like tax evasion or "corruption" are often not regarded seriously by the public and there are rarely effective verdicts, as Evgeniya Ivanova, a sociologist studying Muslim communities in Bulgaria, told me. Ivanova held that this is why the prosecution sometimes abuse their powers and rely on the panic revolving around "radical Islam".

Other cases of "radical Islam" in Bulgaria

Accusations of spreading "radical Islam" were mobilised in various cases in Bulgaria for the past 10 years. These were not the first raids caused by suspicion of propagating "radical Islam" and encouragement of "national conflicts" which drew media attention. In early 2007 the Muslims Ali Hayredin (a former regional Mufti for Sofia), Aniola Dimova and Moustafa Redzheb were arrested on the same grounds as in the trial I am studying. According to SANS⁵, two websites administered by Hayredin were propagating "religious hatred and a change of the established legal order in the country." The prosecution accused the arrested of spreading "anti-democratic ideology" (Belchev, Tsonev 2007) but they were released shortly after and eventually acquitted for lack of evidence (Apostolova 2011). Ali Hayredin is also among the accused in the 2012 trial as a representative of the Union of Muslims in Bulgaria.

⁵ At that time the title of the agency was National Agency for Security.

In 2009 the mayor of the village Garmen, Ahmed Bashev, together with a teacher of Islam of the village Ribnovo Mourat Boshnak, were arrested in their homes by agents of SANS and taken to Sofia for questioning. SANS were alarmed the leader of a conservative political party complaining of death threats from the suspects and claiming that the two Muslims received funding from Saudi Arabia. The regional Mufti held that the action was directed against the Muslim community as a whole and invoked the memories of the repressive policies against Muslims during socialism⁶ (Valkov 2009).

The verdict

Nevertheless, none of these cases drew as much public attention as the trial against “the thirteen imams” which is the subject of this thesis. In 2014 the PDC’s decision, citing the complex expertise, held that Ahmed Moussa Ahmed, Said Moutlou and Abdullah Salih (and all other defendants) had been members of an organisation whose aim was to preach anti-democratic ideology based on Salafism that contradicts the democratic principles, the separation of powers, *liberalism*, human rights and the rule of law in Bulgaria. “Liberal values” were mentioned in the complex expert statement and in the prosecution’s statement, too.

Said Moutlou and Abdullah Salih were also convicted under art. 109(1)⁷ of the BCC for participating in an organisation aiming at forceful change of the social and state order in Bulgaria. The PDC sentenced Said Moutlou to a year in prison and fine of 3000 BGN. Salih received a sentence of 10 months in prison and the same fine. The court delayed the defendants’

⁶ I will elaborate on the socialist policies towards Muslims in Bulgaria in Chapter II.

⁷ BCC: Art. 109(1) (Amended, SG No. 99/1989, SG No. 92/2002, No. 75/2006) A person who forms or leads an organisation or group, which has set itself the aim of committing crimes under the present Chapter, shall be punished by deprivation of liberty for up to twelve years, but not more than the punishment provided for the respective crime.

serving and transformed the sentences to three years of probation. Their sentences were annulled at the PCA in 2015 and both defendants were considered not guilty.

In 2014 at the PDC Ahmed Moussa Ahmed was convicted under Art. 164 of the BCC⁸ for propagating hatred on a religious basis against Christians, Jews and non-Salafi Muslims when preaching in Plovdiv and Pazardzhik in the period between 2007-2011. Ahmed Moussa was convicted under articles 108, 109(2)⁹, and 164 but, due to his criminal record, received an effective sentence of one year in prison under these articles, another three years of prison because of a suspended sentence in a previous trial, and a fee of 5000 BGN. His sentence was increased to two years in prison by the PCA in 2015.

Nedzhmi Dabov, Hayri Sherifov, Bayram Ushev, Ahmed Abdurahmanov, Mohamed Kamber, Izzet Dzhalev, Youssuf Gorelski, Nayme Gorelska, Ali Hodzha, Ali Hayredin were also sentenced under articles 108(1) and 109(2) of the Criminal Code and each received a fine of 2000 BGN, with the exception of Ali Hayredin who received a fine of 3000 BGN. Their sentences were confirmed by the PCA in 2015.

Methodology and data

The topic of this thesis is a logical continuation of my work dealing with reflexivity and racism in Bulgaria. My BA thesis studied intellectuals' participation in protest movements in Bulgaria and the symbolic violence they exert in political struggles, sometimes stigmatising and racialising populations. This drove me to the study of Islamophobia in the context of the so-

⁸ BCC: Art. 164(1) An individual who propagates hatred on a religious basis by speech, through the press or another mass media devices, through electronic information systems or by the use of another means, is subjected to a penalty of imprisonment for a term of up to four years or probation and a fine from five to ten thousand BGN.

⁹ BCC: Art. 109(2) (Amended, SG No. 92/2002, supplemented, SG No. 75/2006) A person who is a member of such an organisation or group shall be punished by deprivation of liberty for up to ten years, but not more than the punishment provided for the respective crime.

called “War on Terror” and especially when debates about the attacks in Paris in January 2015 were multiplying and taking form in Bulgaria as well. At the end of 2015, when I decided to focus on intellectuals and on the trial, a sentence was already pronounced at the second instance in the PCA. The timing was useful in the sense that most public discussions surrounding the trial were over and I could rely on all protocols from court proceedings.

I planned to conduct semi-structured interviews both with intellectuals who were involved in the trial as expert witnesses and with intellectuals critical of the trial. I reached out to the expert witnesses who also commented on Islam publicly, but they either did not respond, or did not agree to speak to me. I could not get in touch with Antoniy Galabov (sociologist and political scientist, expert on ethnic minorities and integration) after multiple attempts. Simeon Evstatiev (Arabic studies scholar) declined to be interviewed explaining that he never speaks about the trial publicly¹⁰ but will instead later publish a peer-reviewed article on the topic which he suggested I cite. Klara Stamatova-Toneva, a Christian theologian, who doubted she can tell me anything relevant, initially agreed to speak to me but stopped answering calls. I also failed to obtain an interview from an Arabic studies scholar who refused to participate in the trial as an expert witness. These expert witnesses were reluctant to speak on the topic even though I used connections with other intellectuals to gain their trust. Interestingly, the expert witnesses posed as the ones who produce knowledge about Islam and provide interpretations, but are not the ones to be studied, as I understood from Evstatiev’s refusal to be interviewed. This is telling of the kind of anxieties raised by the trial and its immense importance for other debates surrounding Islam in general.

The intellectuals who criticised the trial publicly or who have important works on Islam in Bulgaria, on the other hand, all agreed to speak to me. I first contacted Youliana Metodieva, a human rights activist and journalist, who followed the trial and who helped me situate it in the

¹⁰ Even though he commented on the trial publicly as I show later.

wider context of racism in Bulgaria. I also spoke to Evgeniya Ivanova, a sociologist working on Muslim communities in Bulgaria. I interviewed Alexey Kalionski, a historian working on Muslim communities in Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire. Hayri Emin, an expert at the International Relations department at the Bulgarian Grand Mufti's Office, was another interlocutor of mine. I supplement the interviews with public statements by these intellectuals and their articles or books. I also studied statements by relevant organisations such as the Grand Mufti's Office, political parties and politicians, human rights organisations.

Youssuf and Nayme Gorelski, two of the defendants, helped me understand the effects of such a trial on an already marginalised population and the actual experience of being accused of threatening the state order. All interviews were about an hour long and were conducted in Bulgarian.

I used media accounts of the trial. Because these were often partial and incomplete, I also studied the court protocols available online on the websites of the PDC and the PCA. Press coverage helped me situate intellectuals within the public debates on Islam. Detailed reading of the protocols enabled me to analyse the discourses and the effects of the expertise in the trial. In fact the extensive reconstruction of the expert discourses is a significant part of the protocols. All citations of expert witnesses' statements and court's holding in chapter III are taken from the protocols from the PDC (NOHD 330/2012).¹¹

In conclusion, I point towards the recent draft bills proposing bans on veiling in Bulgaria and foreign funding for religious institutions, as I perceive them as only possible after the trial against the 13 Muslims. The draft bills are available at the National Assembly of Bulgaria's website.¹²

¹¹ The protocols are in plain text format and thus it is impossible to refer to page numbers or sections.

¹² All English translations of interviews, media publications, public statements, and draft bills are mine. I used the official English translation of the BCC at the SCC website.

In order to provide a formal and detailed analysis of intellectuals' discourses surrounding Islam and Europe, I will make use of the approach of the Essex School of discourse analysis, as these scholars have a clear research agenda focusing on the construction of political polarities (Laclau 1994).

Structure

In the first chapter I construct the theoretical model underpinning my analysis. I rely on the work of Pierre Bourdieu to understand the role of intellectuals' performative utterances during the trial. I then compliment his analysis with Foucault's understanding of the role of expert witnesses in courts as the colonisation by the scientific discourse of *normalisation* in the juridical field. In my case what is normalised are not individual pathologies but European apolitical Islam. To elaborate on the effects of the normalisation of Islam I refer to the work of the Essex discursive school. They have forcefully argued that there is a current shift towards post-political technocratic governance. Radical antagonisms are still needed to form stable political identities by negation of their others (against "terrorism," "totalitarianism," "radicalism," "islamism").

In the second chapter I turn towards the way liberal intellectuals (both expert witnesses and critics of the trial) relate to Islam in Bulgaria. In order to understand this, it is important to conceptualise their interpretation of repressions against Muslims in late socialism. The intellectuals who were involved in debates about the trial are from a generation that witnessed heavy repressions against Bulgarian Muslims during late socialism. Furthermore, they are of anti-communist political persuasion, and understood repressions against Muslims as expression of the totalitarian, and anti-liberal, character of Communism. Now in some intellectuals' discourses Muslims are cast not as victims of Totalitarianism, but as its bearers. In this chapter I

also reflect on the different trajectories of intellectuals, and on the difference between critics, and expert witnesses.

In the third chapter I turn to the trial itself and analyse the expert witnesses utterances and the construction of the pathological double of the accused as “politico-ideological”, “foreign” Islam opposed to the “everyday,” “non-political”, “pre-ideological” and fundamentally European and liberal Islam, the model to conform to.

In the concluding chapter I focus on the aftermath of the trial and the shift towards forging new legal norms which sanction Muslim practices on municipal and national level.

Chapter I: From Symbolic Power to Normalisation

In this chapter I delineate a critical theoretical model that would enable my comprehension of intellectuals' role in the production of effective figures of Islam. In trials expert witnesses' utterances have scientific status and are the preferred type of proof by the judges. Experts may not pronounce a verdict but can determine it. Their statements are perceived as truthful because of their academic career. The trial I study relies heavily on experts in Arabic language, Islam, and on more general expertise on liberal democracy. It is in the juridical field where scientific knowledge and the institution governing justice meet to produce truths exerting immediate effects on defendants - making or breaking groups, objectifying them, classifying them. These truths belong neither exclusively to the academic field, nor to the law, but are often produced in media, too. I point to the effects of normalisation of Muslim practices which are produced with the help of expertise within the juridical field.

Bourdieu's approach to the juridical field

Bourdieu's theory of the juridical field is particularly useful in stressing the social conditions that enable the symbolic efficacy of experts' performative utterances. Bourdieu's conceptualisation of the juridical field deals with the effects of symbolic power exerted by actors (be it expert witnesses or prosecution) in the field. His approach to law sets a task similar to post-1970s Marxist approaches (Spitzer 1983: 108-117) of denaturalising law's objectivity, self-referential autonomy and apparent coherence, and of uncovering the *relative* autonomy of the legal field. Bourdieu's approach can grasp the performative and symbolic dimension of utterances inside courtrooms. His understanding of the juridical field is an extension of his general understanding of the working of fields. The juridical field is where "juridical authority is

produced and exercised,” (Bourdieu 1987: 816) a space of *practical* struggle for control over determining the law. The control secures a legitimacy to exert symbolic violence by effective performative utterances. Struggles surrounding the right to determine the law entail hierarchisation, as only one group at a particular moment holds the monopoly over juridical competence (Bourdieu 1987: 816-7). Monopoly does not only affect dynamics within the field, but it also requires the common to all fields “boundary work” to delineate lay people from professionals (Gieryn 1983).

The juridical field is perceived as a space of the discovery of naturally objective and neutral truth by “the free and rational application of a universally and scientifically recognized norm” (Bourdieu 1987: 830). According to Bourdieu, this is due to a feature of the operation of the juridical field, namely “mediation”. Mediation means that the jurist is a third party to a confrontation and transcends the conflict (Bourdieu 1987: 831). He holds that jurists are the ones who translate everyday concerns of lay people into the language of the law (Bourdieu 1987: 834). While tackling the role of ‘jurists’ in general, Bourdieu does not address the inclusion of expert witnesses inside courtrooms. He simply sees experts as “juridical professionals” possessing knowledge distinct from lay people’s knowledge .

The stress Bourdieu puts on *naming procedures* as only effective if corresponding with pre-existing principles of vision and division within the field (Bourdieu 1987: 839) is relevant to the study of expert witnesses. What distinguishes the juridical field from others is its ability to produce immediate effects with its naming operations. When requiring expertise, an institution gives a mandate to the expert witness in advance (similarly to a commission, Bourdieu 2014: 26). Such act of authorisation only adds to the authority carried by an academic due to their position in the academic field. Therefore, law and expertise can, by virtue of the symbolic power they exert, performatively create social groups through classification and attach these classifications as permanently as to objects. Effective naming procedures are related to the

notion of *symbolic stimulations* which achieve their aim (not necessarily consciously plotted by the one who utters them) only if they come across someone conditioned to respond to them (Bourdieu 2013: 76). The emphasis put on this condition of effectively exerting symbolic power shows that Bourdieu understands it as a two-way process requiring the co-existence of the addressant and the addressee in one and the same symbolic order, sharing certain presuppositions (Bourdieu 1991: 153). Relating these points to the role of the expert witness one can think of the experts' anticipation of the presuppositions the prosecution or the court may have. The presuppositions are also structured through the struggles over defining juridical competence and the interpretation of the law within the juridical field.

Genealogy of expertise within the juridical field

While Bourdieu's approach to law allows for a general understanding of performative utterances in the courtroom, it pays little attention to the specificity and the history of the figure of the expert witness in the juridical field. It is Foucault who problematises and emphasises precisely their role in the juridical field.

In his history of incarceration as the epitome of modern punishment, Foucault shows the genealogy of the universalisation and egalitarianisation of punishment through depriving individuals of something perceived as having the same value for all: liberty. This liberty expresses something universally quantifiable - *abstract time* - "wages-form of imprisonment," as Foucault puts it (Foucault 1995: 232).

In his lectures *Abnormal* Foucault (2003) shows that in early modernity there was in fact an algebraic logic of proof of guilt and punishment within the juridical field. Proofs were arithmetically added up, "a three-quarters proof corresponds to a three-quarters penalty, to a semi proof, a semi penalty" (Foucault 2003: 7). With the reforming of the juridical field

scientific expert discourses entered the modern juridical field. The expert witnesses step into courtrooms to assist in judgement, to determine suspects' guilt *or* innocence. *Modern conviction necessitates certainty* based on references to scientific expertise. In order to provide certainty, expert witnesses need to present evidence convincing "any mind whatsoever open to truth" (Foucault 2003: 8). There is a passage "from the arithmetico-scholastic and ridiculous regime of classical proof to the common, honorable, and anonymous regime of truth for a supposedly universal subject," to a "regime of universal truth" (Foucault 2003: 8).

Foucault's problematisation of modern conviction and the universality of the subject convinced that certain claims are "truths" relates to the question of the "ensemble of shared assumptions," constituted in the juridical practice that enables the effective recognition of the supposedly "universal subject" of judgement (embodied by judges). Bourdieu's notion of *symbolic power* means that pronouncing a truth and naming can be effective only if they correspond to pre-existing principles of vision and division within the field. However, those expectations may function within the field, but cannot be understood as produced in the field, but as coming from the academic or media fields. In Chapter III I relate expert witnesses' imaginaries of Islam to the expectancies of the prosecution and subsequently to the court's decision.

The field of power

Conforming to the prosecution's expectancies, however, does not explain the selection criteria of the expert witnesses. Bourdieu's notion of field of power is productive to unravel the social conditions enabling the inclusion of some and the exclusion of other experts. The field of power is the space where struggles over the state (holder of meta-capital) happen (Bourdieu 2014: 197). It is a differentiated space of relations between agents whose common features are

possession of the capital necessary to secure dominant position their field and controlling exchange rate of capitals corresponding to different fields (Deyanova 2015: 136).

Hierarchies within each relatively autonomous field hinge on hierarchies between representatives of fields within the field of power. Therefore, the field of power also structures the relationship between the academic field and the political field, the non-governmental sector or business (Bourdieu 1993: 194). The academic field is structurally subordinated within the field of power, similarly to the literary field. The two intermediaries which condition this subordination are the market (of research and policy projects commissioned by governmental and non-governmental institutions) and enduring personal connections based on affinities of lifestyle, values, or simply social capital (Bourdieu 1993: 194).

Foucault on normalisation

Hierarchies within the field of power have particular effects which I will consider using Foucault's approach to normalisation. In his *Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France*, Foucault turns to the genealogy of normalisation in juridico-medical practices. The course can be read as a history of the *colonisation* of the juridical field by modern medico-scientific discourses of *normalisation*. In his lectures Foucault deals specifically with the role of scientific expertise in the courtrooms.

Foucault's approach needs to be placed in his general critique of *the repressive hypothesis*. Foucault does not treat modern power in negative terms, but sees its productive aspects, its "principles of transformation and innovation" (Foucault 2003: 52). Foucault opposes two models of exercise of power: "the exclusion of lepers and the [...] model of the inclusion of plague victims" (Foucault 2003: 44). The exclusionary model, where "the individual is driven out in order to purify the community," according to Foucault, could be understood in terms of

repression and it “disappeared roughly at the end of seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries” (Foucault 2003: 44). The modern form of power, based on the model of treatment of the plague, functions by inclusion via *normalisation*, by approximating and continuously controlling individuals, by maximising their health and strength.

In the first volume of his *History of Sexuality* (1978) Foucault looks into the histories of the construction of sexuality as the hidden truth to be constantly controlled in order to avoid “perversions” of a “normal” development of the personality. The norm is never defined positively, but only by negating its supposed aberrations. For Foucault modern normalisation of sexuality is “an integral part of the bourgeois order (...) [I]f sex is so rigorously repressed, this is because it is incompatible with a general and intensive work imperative” (Foucault 1978: 5-6).

The notion of normalisation could be extended to the analysis of other forms of modern exercise of power, say to urban populations (Hristov 2013: 198-89). Modern scientific discourses within the juridical field function as means for *normalisation*. This can be seen in the very language experts deploy: “psychological immaturity,” “poor grasp of reality,” “display of perverted pride” (Foucault 2003: 15). Seen as representatives of their scientific fields, expert witnesses are endowed with the power-knowledge to recognise aberrations from the norm (and thus simultaneously defining a norm). They are called within the juridical field to *name* the *personal* aberrations of the persecuted, and to assist normalisation. Experts “discover” a deeper source of the crime (one’s psychic life, biography): “He played with wooden weapons.” “He cut the heads off cabbages.” (Foucault 2003: 36), hence he committed murder. This pathological “double” constituted by expertise in the courtroom transforms the convict from a subject of crime to *the object of normalisation* (Foucault 2003: 16). It is the “psychologico-ethical” double of the offense which correctional punishment (hence normalisation) needs to address. Foucault shows how psychiatric expertise is there to say “[i]f he has committed murder, in the end it is

because he has a drive to kill” (Foucault 2003: 16), and in that sense “the psychiatrist really becomes a judge” (Foucault 2003: 23).

Expert witnesses' utterances are amplified by their authorisation to speak in the name of science, “they are statements with specific effects of truth and power: a sort of supra legality of certain statements in the production of judicial truth” (Foucault 2003: 11). The trial against the Muslims accused of propagating anti-democratic ideologies (“radical Islam”) can be seen through Foucault’s optic. The deviation to be normalised and integrated into a liberal-democratic order is ‘radical Islam.’

Foucault, however, focuses on psychiatric expertise. Psychiatric expertise targets and sanctions individual deviations from a norm. Individualising correctional and disciplinary forms of normalisation are prescribed. In the case of the trial I am studying the norm is Euro-Bulgarian Islam and the deviation is a foreign Islam. The pathological “double” which expert witnesses construct as both the deeper subject of the crime, as well as the object of normalisation, is not the psychic aberration of the accused, but their beliefs and practices, rendered foreign to the liberal-democratic order and to ‘the inherent to the Bulgarian lands everyday Islam.’ The notion of a crime against “liberalism” was an invention of the prosecution and was recognised as legitimate by the court. The expert witnesses also participate in the public debate around the trial and aimed to share their knowledge with the wider public. In that sense we might be looking not at normalisation of the individual, but at discourses that aim at a normalisation of the current political regime. The figure of “political Islam” which was put on trial should not be conceived in terms of a repressed pre-existing entity, but as *practically* constituted pathological double of the convicts by the expert witnesses.

In order to comprehend why “political” Islam is cast as pathological, it is key to ponder on the current post-political conjuncture, analysed at length by the Essex discursive school.

Contemporary liberalism presents itself in technocratic, anti-political terms (Mouffe 2010: 104), as “good governance” against all kinds of totalitarian and authoritarian deviations. In that sense, liberalism needs to constantly produce an enemy - a totalitarian other. Mouffe (2010: 59-60) argues, following Schmitt, that the formation of stable political identities necessitates the ability to define an enemy. Antagonism in contemporary liberalism does not disappear. Rather, more radical enemies are constructed (“terrorism,” “totalitarianism,” “populism”) in order to sustain the liberal consensus (Mouffe 2012: 15). These are not agonal rivalries recognising each other, but are radically different aiming to annihilate each other (Mouffe 2013: 6). In Bulgaria in the 1990s the constitutive Other of liberal governance was the figure of the “Communist” past, but it is now being exhausted. New forms of enmities need to be forged, such as “political Islam.”

Chapter II: Intellectuals and Islam

In this chapter I analyse intellectuals' relation to Muslims in post-1989 Bulgaria. Such contextual reconstruction is key to unpack the conditions enabling production of symbolically effective figures of Islam. Critics of the trial *and* expert-witnesses have anti-communist, liberal and pro-Western political orientation, and Islam plays defining role in their identities. As I explained, identities are normalised by the production of their *pathological double*, or, to put it in the language of the Essex school - by constructing an enemy, *a constitutive Outside against which identities obtain internal consistency*. Furthermore, intellectuals' discourses *do not simply describe, but actively prescribe* identities, and actions. The social meanings of Islam and Muslims changed radically since 1989: *the construction of radical enemies of post-socialist liberalism can be divided in two types. In the 1990s Muslims were cast as victims of "totalitarian communism."* *With the rise of the early 21st century "War on Terror" discourses, and the exhaustion of 1990s anti-communism, Muslims started to be seen increasingly as culprits of totalitarianism.* This is not simply a temporal division but divides intellectuals of similar liberal persuasion critical of the socialist policies towards Muslims, too.

Repressions were seen as proof of the alleged Totalitarian essence of Communism. Since the 1960s Bulgarian socialism turned towards nationalism and repressive assimilationist policies towards Muslims - forced changing of Muslim names, ban on veiling and circumcision, and expulsion of about 300 000 people to Turkey in 1989. The official name of the campaign was the "Revival process" - supposedly continuation of 19th century "National Revival." The "Revival process" is key to the biographical *illusio* of many liberal intellectuals considered dissidents. By *illusio*, I mean a perception of having a stake in a social game and investing in it (Bourdieu 1997: 207); a belief that the practices attached to a name are united by a mission, that they are coherent (Bourdieu 1997: 222).

After 1989 a secular liberal party was formed (MRL) aiming to represent Bulgarian minorities, particularly Muslims, with the promise that it will counter attempts at repression on mass scale. Practically all major parties have referred to MRL as “foreign agent,” “unconstitutional,” and even “supportive” of terrorism, communism and Islamism (at the same time). However, the same parties (even far-right) have tactically cooperated with MRL in order to win elections, form ruling coalitions, pass laws in Parliament (Kalinova 2014). The culmination of the extremely negative attitudes towards MRL among liberal political groups were the 2013 #DANSwithme protests in Bulgaria which called for the resignation of the coalition government made up of BSP and MRL, supported by the far-right Ataka. Demanding “European normalcy,” protesters opposed what they saw as a coalition between the totalitarian twins “communists” and “Turks” (Tsoneva 2014: 243). This makes references to the “Revival process,” a main source of legitimacy for MRL, extremely charged. Interpretations of the socialist policies towards Muslims, and of the links between socialism and nationalism are conditioned by multiple layers of tactical considerations.

Understanding socialist nationalism

A popular approach understands socialism as an anti-national ‘fridge’ for the ‘inevitable’ nationalist sentiments which emerge as ethnic conflicts immediately after 1989 (cf. Eminov 1997). The BCP’s nationalist policies contradict such a claim. Katherine Verdery, studying Romanian socialism, sees convergences similar to the ones in Bulgaria between national ideologies developed prior to Socialism, and Marxism. Verdery even writes that national ideology under socialism managed to subordinate Marxist discourse. The latter is perceived as a “language of politics that was imposed by force from outside” (Verdery 1991: 139), as opposed to the imagined “native discourse on nationality” (Verdery 1991: 22).

Also as opposed to the ‘fridge’ argument, Kalionski understands the turn towards national discourse as an effect of “the growing economic and ideological crisis” of socialism (Kalionski 2014: 11). Others assert that it resulted from the isolated national character of socialist states, and of the problems arising with attempts to unify “Marxist-Leninist ideology” with nationalism (Marinov, Vezekov 2014: 479-80), but also that it is the product of “instructions from Moscow” (Marinov, Vezekov 2014: 471). The latter claim seems to undermine Marinov and Vezekov’s argument that nationalist policies are inherent to any attempt at national state building (Marinov, Vezekov 2014: 547).

Projecting assimilationist policies towards foreign forces (e.g. “Moscow”) makes it easy to dismiss anxieties related to international events such as the 1974 Turkish invasion in Cyprus, and to omit significant local specificities as “the continued Bulgarian pursuit of ethnic homogeneity even after this objective was being questioned in the Soviet Union” (Creed 1990: 18). Creed also mentions “the specter of declining population” as a factor for “the Revival process.” The 1980s assimilationist policies were to increase the number of people identifying as Bulgarians, as pro-natal policies had failed (Creed 1990: 19).

Assimilation was not simply rationalised through references to the demographic ‘balance,’ but was also related to the general logic of cultural standardisation and developmentalist vision of the state, which included restrictions on regional dialects and folklore (Creed 1990: 20). Creed claims that the attempts at homogenising Bulgarian culture reflected the perceived threats of losing territories. Cold War Bulgarian elites feared Turkey may manipulate Bulgarian Muslim minorities (Creed 1990: 24-5).

Overall, the relationship between nationalism and socialism is multilayered, imbued with multiple affinities and conflicts, compromises and appropriations, and it is not possible to reduce it to either anti-nationalist, nor nationalist essence of socialist governance. Nevertheless, it is

possible to delineate *different interpretive strategies from the perspective of the political projects they are embedded in*. The latter is particularly clear when talking about the *longue durée* of the anti-Muslims policies in Bulgaria.

The “Revival process” - rupture or continuity?

Repressive assimilationist campaigns have been implemented since the Bulgarian nation-state formation in 1878, including name changing, and bans on Muslim clothing. When communists took power after 1944, they restored the right to Muslim names and to traditional clothing as a move against pre-1944 nationalists. Soon, however, the relationship between communists and Islam became more complicated and there had been tensions and conflicts (Kalionski and Gruev 2012: 13-26). Bulgarian Socialism clearly turned towards nationalism after the 1960s and assimilationist campaigns started again (forced name changing, bans on Muslim clothing). First name changing was in 1964, but large scale campaigns started later. In 1975 the names of about 200 000 Muslims were “revived,” the largest campaign was from Christmas 1984 till February 1985 when 800 000 citizens were given “Bulgarian names” (Kalionski and Gruev 2012: 27-175).

Mentioning continuities with pre-1944 forced assimilation is not neutral. Most visible representations of the “Revival process” reduce it to the Socialist period. Even when pre-socialist repressions are mentioned, it is usually in studies of the socialist period. Assertions that anti-Muslim policies start immediately when the anti-fascist coalition led by the pro-Soviet communists took power in 1944 are present in some academic accounts (Pashova 2010).

There are similar *incommensurabilities in the interpretations of the resistances* towards assimilation. The heavy repressions led to the formation of a strong civil rights movement (mass demonstrations, petitions, strikes) by Muslims in the 1980s. Thousands were imprisoned for

resisting the assimilation. Muslims' adherence to their religious practices could also be interpreted as "sign of resistance" to various repressive assimilation campaigns (Tahir 2014).

The 1980s movement included some lethal attacks, such as bombings and arsons (Kalionski and Gruev 2012: 138). Currently in the public sphere an immense attention is paid to the attacks, but they are completely dissociated from the wider political movement, as well from the preceding repressions they were embedded in. Those attacks are often equated with current acts of political violence committed by Muslims in Western Europe as all such instances are somehow linked by the abstract notion of "Islamic terrorism".

The ambivalence of the critiques of repressions against Muslims

The "Revival process" was justified through narratives of the supposed Ottoman "forced islamisation." Furthermore, the "Revival process" was enabled through "systems of representation" of Bulgarian speaking Muslims as "traitors," "a cut off branch of society," "backward," having a "slave mentality," "fanatically religious." Sevim Tahir (2014) traces this "regime of representation" of the Muslim community in Bulgaria to the 19th century, and presents the socialist assimilation policies as part of *longue durée* symbolic associations of 'backwardness' with 'Islam'. She also shows that nationalist discourses established affinities with socialist modernisation discourses. Many other accounts of the "Revival process," however, tend to explain it away as carried out by a concrete subject (the state, party), often depicted as foreign to the otherwise harmonious social body. Tahir (2014) interprets the "Revival process" as conditioned by *longue durée regimes of representation* of Islam by Bulgarian nationalism, which are ultimately rooted in the modern tradition of European nationalism.

Petya Kabakchieva, a prominent Bulgarian sociologist subsumes the 1980s protests of Muslims not as resistance to the concrete anti-Muslim repression, but as opposition to the regime itself: part of what she calls dissident “dream” of a “desirable social order” - civil society, respect for human rights, and rule of law. Yet, according to Kabakchieva, Muslims’ resistance “cannot be qualified as an act of conscious anti-communist resistance” and was not as “serious” as discontent among “the intelligentsia” (Kabakchieva 2012: 10). Kabakchieva goes on to subsume Muslims’ protests, and initiatives of far-right dissidents under one supposedly larger “dream” of liberal anti-communism (Kabakchieva 2012: 13).

In order to further explicate the ambivalence of some of intellectuals’ most visible critiques of the repressions (before and after 1989) against Muslims I now look into the interventions of Antonina Zhelyazkova. She is influential Bulgarian scholar, specialising in ethnic minorities, as well as a vocal critic of both the “Revival process” and today’s trial.

Since early 1980s Zhelyazkova’s work attacked the narratives legitimising “the Revival process.” Her first book - *Spread of Islam in the Western Balkan Lands Under Ottoman Rule 15th - 18th century* - was published in 1985, but was confiscated immediately by the BCP Censorship Committee as it questioned the authenticity of sources pointing at a forced conversion to Islam in the Balkans by the Ottomans - which was the main legitimization of the “Revival process” (Marginalia 2015). Zhelyazkova did not engage only academically, but was active politically, too, and as she puts it: “from 1986 to 1989 I was able to freely exercise dissidence” protesting the violence against the Turks and the revoking of her right to expression (Marginalia 2015).

Zhelyazkova’s critique of “the Revival process” is also a specific critique of Socialism. In a 1994 interview Zhelyazkova asserts: “the Revival process [...] is one of the biggest crimes of the totalitarian regime [...] which led to the instigation of an alien to the Bulgarian people

interethnic conflict” (Zapryanova, Vecheva 1994: 121). The “Balkan version of totalitarianism had the widest destructive impact on the person and on society” because of the Balkan “practicism and oriental character” (Zapryanova, Vecheva 1994: 116). She claims that Bulgarian Socialism was of the worst kind as it turned away simultaneously from “European Christian values and Western culture” (unlike other “European socialist countries”), and from the “inherent” Bulgarian popular cultural tradition. Bulgarian Socialism is cast in orientalist terms - of the “Asian-despotic” type (Zhelyazkova 1994: 116). Socialism is thus seen as foreign, anti-national and imposed by the Soviet Union. The “Revival process” and historians’ collaboration were criticised by Zhelyazkova along with BCP’s attitude towards Macedonia (being recognised by the BCP) and towards “the forgotten” Bulgarians outside the Bulgarian state (for example in former Yugoslavia). Here, the nationalist “Revival process” which resulted in the expulsion of Bulgarian citizens to Turkey is equated in its harmfulness with the missed opportunity to accommodate irredentist dreams of national unification beyond the borders of Bulgaria. In Zhelyazkova’s narrative, nationalism, Fascism and Stalinism are equally “scary” (Zhelyazkova 1994: 125), but also *foreign and imposed* on Bulgaria. If they are accepted, it is due to the “oriental” character of the country. Zhelyazkova mobilises orientalist arguments to criticise *socialist* nationalism as totalitarian, unlike its “European version”.

Zhelyazkova was a member of the Club for Support of Glasnost and Reforms, a dissident organisation established in 1988. In 1989 on the air of *Deutsche Welle* and *Radio Free Europe* she read a public statement of the Committee for National Reconciliation, an offspring of the Club, on the expulsion of Bulgarian Turks. The statement called for the uncovering of the truth about the violence of the “Revival process”. It reiterated the claim about the democratic and tolerant character of Bulgarians and the “unnatural imposition of patriotism and chauvinism”. Democracy, *glasnost* and the rule of law will be established in Bulgaria, only when the citizens

with “Turkish ethnic consciousness” are equal in their right to choose their names, language, religion (OMDA).

Zhelyazkova remained critical of Islamophobia in Bulgaria and most vocally in relation to the trial against the thirteen Muslims. She criticised the SANS for the repressive actions against the accused, as well as the prosecution for the unfounded accusations. According to her, such criticism is precisely the role of human rights activists and scholars studying Muslims (Zhelyazkova 2012). Zhelyazkova also referred to “the local cultural and religious traditions - beautiful and close” (Zhelyazkova 2012), but reflected on their inevitable change due also to the “forced” international migration of Bulgarian Muslims. She held that Muslims change “under foreign influence,” but qualified this as a “logical” development (Zhelyazkova 2012).

Also a member of the *Club for the Support of Glasnost and Reforms*, Evgeniya Ivanova, a sociologist working on Muslim communities, publicly engaged with the trial by criticising the actions of the prosecution and the SANS on many occasions. She studied the *longue durée* of assimilationist policies towards Muslims in Bulgaria between 1912 and 1989. She argues that the first forced conversion to Christianity of 200 000 Bulgarian Muslims was executed in 1912 by the Bulgarian army, the Church, and Macedonian *chetniks*. Until the end of the Second World War there are continuous assimilationist policies (such as changing of names), and after 1937 with the help of the newly founded organisation Druzhba Rodina consisting of Muslims identifying as Bulgarians. Ivanova also mentions the Soviet Union as having influenced the developments of the assimilationist policies in Bulgaria (Ivanova 2001). Unlike Zhelyazkova, Ivanova does not refer to an inherent tolerance of Bulgarians. Ivanova’s work is mostly focused on the Bulgarian speaking Muslims, or Pomaks, on their memory of conversion to Islam, and contemporary identities.

Evgeniya Ivanova's commitment to Muslim communities in Bulgaria is expressed also in her public position regarding the trial (Faktor 2014). I met her at the end of April 2016 in her office at the New Bulgarian University where she teaches Nationalism studies. She shares the office with another lecturer at the Political Science Department who was present during the interview. Ivanova, her colleague and the expert witness Antoniy Galabov were researchers in a 2011 study on "Attitudes of Muslims in Bulgaria - 2011" which was quoted in the trial by the defense lawyers. Ivanova, though publicly criticising the process, did not refer to the role of the experts. In the interview she claimed that Galabov drew "incorrect" conclusions from the study who claimed that there are "radicalised" Muslims in Bulgaria. Despite her work with Muslim communities in Bulgaria, Ivanova was never approached by any institution in relation to the trial, but even if she had been, she would have declined as she is not an "expert on Islam nor in Arabic." She claimed that the Arabic studies scholar Simeon Evstatiev has knowledge relevant to the trial "although he is also not an expert on Islam."¹³ I retorted that if it takes an expert on Islam to comment on the trial, then apparently it is a trial against Islam, not against particular Muslims committing a crime. Ivanova claimed that the lexicological expertise provided by the historian Garabedyan is a "total failure" for someone perceived as a scientist. Ivanova also found the prosecution's statement inadequate as it contained references to "principles of liberalism" which are not in any way prescribed in the legal norm.

Ivanova's interpretation of the trial resembled the one of Gorelski. She held that it has nothing to do with the "Revival process" although some Muslims she met thought that it does. According to Ivanova, the investigators are not "particularly enlightened" to relate it to socialism. She mockingly claimed that the SANS thought they are "protecting European

¹³ As I show later, Evstatiev actually refers to the literature seized from the defendants' homes as containing "radical interpretations of the Quran."

security,” and that the accusations were utilised at NATO meetings by the Bulgarian government to prove the results of prevention of “radical Islam.”

Me and Ivanova started discussing the proposed bans on veiling in Bulgaria and her colleague, who specialises in national security, joined the conversation to ‘explain’ that women in Pazardzhik are paid to wear the veil and that in Saudi Arabia it is forbidden to wear “tank tops,” so it must be fine if it is forbidden to wear the veil in Bulgaria. Ivanova claimed that the number of women wearing the niqab in Pazardzhik doubled after the defendants’ conviction, maintaining that the niqab is a response to repressions.

My interview with Hayri Emin, an expert at the International Relations department at the Bulgarian Grand Mufti’s Office, pointed back at Ivanova’s claim that some Muslims indeed associate the trial with the “Revival process.” Emin sees the trial as part of an European trend towards “securitisation of Islam.” Islam as security issue looms large in media and academia which leads to the proliferation of Islamophobic attitudes and to the marginalisation of Grand Mufti’s Office’s statements in the public sphere, Emin told me. He thought that the Bulgarian secret services are just trying to please their “European partners.” Such repressive methods, Emin held, are reminiscent of the “Revival process” but aiming at different results. He claimed the bans on veiling contribute to the securitisation of Islam.

Emin thought that the trial was fundamentally flawed as it included too many people in different capacity accused of different crimes. He claimed that being convicted for reading books is “absurd.” “Absurd” was the fact that religious matters were discussed in court, instead of in the mosques, alongside notion such as ‘radicalism.’ None of the convicted employees of the Grand Mufti’s Office were fired in spite of the court’s decision.

I also conducted an interview with Alexei Kalionski, a historian and lecturer at Sofia University, who works on Muslim communities in the Ottoman Empire and in Bulgaria, also

does ethnographic work with Muslims in Bulgaria. He argued that there is no direct relationship between the nationalist discourse of socialism and contemporary Islamophobia (Interview April 26, 2016). Nevertheless, he claimed that the changing Muslim practices in Pazardzhik (for example, women wearing the niqab) could be seen as partly provoked by racist attitudes against Roma people, even on the part of Bulgarian Turks. According to him, a “traditional Bulgarian syncretic Islam” is invented within the juridical field. Nevertheless, he claimed that this is a legitimate way of preventing “radicalisation.” According to Kalionski, such a trial is the “better” choice when it comes to picking between two “bad” possibilities - convicting someone unfairly, sanctioning formally legal practices but preventing radicalisation, and “radicalisation” itself. He also insisted that the mention of “principles of liberalism” makes any accusation very “vulnerable,” but it is a problem to all cases aiming at segregation as the trial does.

From Muslims as “victims of totalitarianism” to Muslims as “totalitarian danger”

In this section, I will deal with expert witnesses’ trajectory from defenders of Muslim “victims of Communism” in the 1990s to discovering totalitarian tendencies in Islam by studying public statements referring to Islam of two of the expert witnesses.

The expert witness in the trial Antoniy Galabov, also perceived the beginning of his intellectual engagement as related to his anti-communist politics. For example, his illusive of socialism revolves around, as he describes it, his revolt expressed in having long hair, going to the theatre, not getting along with workers, being individualistic (Galabov 2005: 41). Big part of Galabov’s biographical narrative and political commitment is conditioned by the “Revival process.” At the end of the 1980s Galabov became part of the Institute of Youth Studies under the Central Committee of the BCP.

As a researcher at the Institute Galabov ended up at the border with Turkey during the expulsion of Turks from Bulgaria and studied people returning to Bulgaria. That experience, Galabov holds, “turned [my] professional practice around” because of the “repulsiveness” and “monstrosity” of the expulsion. Galabov recalls the process of the returning of the names at the beginning of 1990 and the impact it had on his dissertation in the 1990s (Galabov 2005: 43-4). He perceives the 1990s “revival” of ethno-cultural identification of the Bulgarian Turks as a result of the “Revival process” (Galabov 1996: 47).

Galabov is a lecturer at the Department of Political Science at the New Bulgarian University, where Evgeniya Ivanova also teaches. Curiously enough, he is also an associate expert at the Bulgarian chapter of Transparency International with which he prepared a policy report (Galabov 2006) on regulations of expert witnesses’ work in Bulgaria (mostly with regards to prevention of ‘corruption’).

Simeon Evstatiev, an arabic studies scholar and an expert witness in the trial, has written extensively on Islam, secularism, public space, the Middle East, and interreligious relations. He also considers the importance of the “Revival process” when discussing for example religious education in Bulgaria. Evstatiev, too, is critical of the assimilationist policies during socialism seeing them as “reflecting a deep crisis of state socialism” from the 1960s onwards and particularly ineffective in their ‘hidden’ aim at “sever[ing] relations between [the Pomak] minority community and Turkey” (Evstatiev and Makariev 2010: 644).

In the 1990s liberal anti-communism tended to side with the repressed Muslims. Today, however, the symbol of the totalitarian past is not so effective any more and thus has to be reinvented. To this end, some intellectuals critical of the “Revival process” have transitioned to a position that considers Islam as totalitarian, and not totalitarianism’s nemesis.

Even though Evstatiev refused interview by claiming that he does not speak about the trial publicly, he actually does. In an interview for the web portal *Kultura*, Evstatiev held that the Grand Mufti should denounce ISIS because of the “changing profile of parts of Bulgarian Muslims” by referring explicitly to the trial and asserting some of the defendants are “Salafi” (Portal Kultura 2014). What is more, at a public debate Evstatiev spoke at length about the dangers of ‘radical Islamism’ equated with Salafism and argued that according to Salafis and Islamists “Islam is the solution,” which contradicts “liberal democracy.” Evstatiev even finds “anthropological resemblance” of Islamism with Stalinism as another case of convergence between “ideology” and “radicalism.” He then goes on to say that just like Stalin’s rule would not have been maintained without “Marxism-Leninism,” one should not ignore the “religious motivation” and “legitimation” of “ISIS, Al-Qaeda, the Taliban or Boko Haram” through references to Islam (Chervenata kashta 2016). Despite not mentioning the trial, warning about the dangers of Salafism, while identifying some of the defendants in the trial as “Salafi,” means exerting symbolic violence and attaching even more forcefully the stigma of “radicalism” and “totalitarianism” to Muslims in Bulgaria.

Antoni Galabov also spoke publicly about the trial (BNT 2014), reiterating the conclusions of his expert statement in the trial, which I analyse later. He has often denounced “Islamic fundamentalism” and has conflated it with “the Putin doctrine” (which he sees as part of the “re-Sovietisation of the public sphere”) as the two biggest security risks the EU is facing today (MoveBG 2015). However, according to Galabov, the EU seems incapable of dealing with these “threats” as its “misunderstood multiculturalism” leans more and more to the left. Again, Galabov conflates leftist politics, multiculturalism, Putin, and “the international organised crime abusing Islam” (BNR 2016). Leftism, according to him, wears a mask: “radicalised lumpens [are] susceptible to all anti-humane ideologies - from national socialism and fascism to

communism”, “radical Islam” being just next in line, and it is “pseudo-liberalism[...], the last refuge of failed communist and leftist ideologies,” to blame (Galabov 2016).

In this chapter I pointed to the relevance of the “Revival process” to all debates on Islam in Bulgaria and crucial to intellectuals who were either expert witnesses, or critics of the trial. I showed that even though they condemn the assimilation, they do it in very different ways. Their positions diverge dramatically when it comes to studying contemporary Muslim practices in Bulgaria and especially the trial. It is precisely the people who see some Muslim practices as totalitarian, who became expert witnesses in the trial. It is in court where, with the help of the complex expertise, provided by Evstatiev and Galabov among others, a ‘totalitarian, political’ Islam is forged by being attached to particular Muslims and through which a ‘traditional, normal, apolitical’ Islam is prescribed, too.

Chapter III: The trial

The trial against the thirteen Muslims was held at two instances – the PDC (2012-14) and the PCA (in 2015). The instances included different expert witnesses. The Plovdiv Court of Appeals' decision relied on the expertise provided at the first instance, too, but not solely. Here I will only study the expertise provided in the first trial, but will not consider the expert translation of texts from Arabic as it falls out of my sphere of competence. It is important to mention, nevertheless, that the translations were contested on numerous occasions. As Youliana Metodieva, the journalist who followed the trial very closely, told me, the court took extremely long in futile attempts to provide proper translations to the documents and books considered as evidence.

The expert statements

The expertise provided at the trial at PDC which conditioned the court's decision was a "complex expertise on theology, sociology and Arabic studies" prepared by scholars specialising in these fields, and a lexicological expertise on notions such as "democracy" and "ideology." The complex expertise consisted of statements of the Arabic studies scholars Simeon Evstatiev and Ivan Dyulgerov, the Christian theologian Klara Stamatova-Toneva, the political scientist and sociologist Antoniy Galabov. The expertise was expected to answer questions concerning "the topic of the seized literature found in the homes of Said Moutlou and Abdullah Salih, the denomination or religion they can be related to; the content of the seized notes – are they lectures, letters, sermons, or scientific articles, the connection between the books and the notes and the element connecting them". The lexicological expertise was prepared by the historian Agop Garabedian. A third expertise was provided by the Muslim theologian Sefer Hassanov,

but as I show, the court dismisses it in favour of the complex expertise. I will analyse closely these three expert statements.

The defense lawyers unsuccessfully attempted to challenge the statements of Galabov and Stamatova-Toneva. They claimed that Stamatova-Toneva is a Christian theologian and is thus prejudiced. Galabov's statement was contested because he used information from the trial in a research project he was part of in 2011 on the "Attitudes of Muslims in Bulgaria" and because "he has a negative attitude towards the MRL". The statements were challenged also because the defense lawyers claimed the expert witnesses are not appointed according to regulation №1 of the Supreme Judicial Council of 2008.

According to this regulation, which was still in force at the time of the trial in Pazardzhik, expert witnesses are certified beforehand and their names appear on lists of specialists in various spheres. The lists differ in each judicial region of a district or administrative court. One can become an expert witness if she applies for the position herself, or is suggested by ministries, municipalities, professional organisations or academic institutions. The lists are approved by the Chairman of the Court of Appeal, the appellate prosecutor, the Chairman of the District Court, and the Director of the District Investigation Service. In special cases separate lists of specialists are sanctioned by the Chairmans of the Supreme Court of Cassation and the Supreme Administrative Court, the Attorney General and the Director of the National investigation service (SJC 2008: 1). In the case of the Pazardzhik trial, the expert witnesses were selected particularly for this trial.

The court dismissed the challenge of the defense lawyers to the Stamatova-Toneva and Galabov's participation on the grounds of Regulation №1 of the Supreme Judicial Council of 2008 by referring to the possibility of appointing expert witnesses for a particular trial if there

are no specialists in relevant areas in the lists of already approved specialists (SCCRB 2007: Art. 398). The Christian theologian Stamatova-Toneva defended a PhD dissertation on “The situation of the Muslim woman as a contemporary challenge faced by Islam” and is one of the authors of the school textbook “Christianity and Islam: foundations of religious tolerance,” as she herself stated when she justified the relevance of her expertise to the trial in court. Antoniy Galabov claimed to have prepared his statement before participating in the 2011 study.

The rule of law and the “misuse” of Islam

Klara Stamatova-Toneva, an assistant professor at the Faculty of Theology at the Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski,” was commissioned to inquire into a book by the Yemeni academic Abdul Majeed al-Zindani that was found in Said Moutlou’s home. According to the expert, al-Zindani is proclaimed “persona non grata in democratic countries, which is a telling and worrying fact”. Stamatova-Toneva also held that the latter is a proof that al-Zindani’s “followers have accepted propagating radical Islam in its most extreme form.” A marker for “radical islamism” here would be if an ideal state is the one that makes “the principles of God’s will and monotheism reality and in which an all-embracing order based on the Sharia is established”.

According to Stamatova-Toneva, the texts found in Said Moutlou’s home were blasphemous towards “the official religion in Bulgaria as they deny the Orthodox spirituality.” The expert also quotes calls for violence towards infidels and women, and for the discrimination of female children. The materials are written, Stamatova-Toneva holds, with the aim to “substitute the values of the rule of law with the establishment of Sharia,” and have an “anti-state character.” Stamatova-Toneva concludes that this is only a particular interpretation of Islam and it is not religious or moral norms to blame. According to her, the materials

purposefully misuse “the idea of jihad.” What is more, the ideas in the texts “contradict the Muslim religion, too”.

Villians or victims

Antony Galabov was commissioned as an expert witness in his capacity of “a sociologist and professor at the Department of Political science at the New Bulgarian University.” He studied texts seized from the homes of Said Moutlou and Abdullah Salih. According to Galabov, the literature has “propagandistic character” and “embraces instructions [...] which target believers with different levels of religious training”.

The fact that one of the books presented to Galabov as evidence was photocopied leads him to conclude that it is because it was “provided to a large number of people,” and is thus propaganda. The interpretation of the notion of “shahid,”¹⁴ present in the materials, is “not supposed to be included in religious education designed for everyone” and it “corresponds directly to ideas and instructions, characteristic of radical interpretations of the Quran.” Relying only on the books seized from the homes of the accused, Galabov claimed that there is “an organised activity, aimed at the construction of a common standard of religious propaganda, which is based on a non-traditional interpretation of the Quran.” The religious activity had been taking place for “a relatively long period of time”. Galabov held that “[t]his purposeful selection of religious literature [...] corresponds to Islamic fundamentalism.” It is unclear whether the “purposeful selection” was done by the defendants or by the SANS agents who seized the books. Galabov concluded that the strict following of these religious instructions practically excludes “any civic engagement on part of the Muslim, as [...] his everyday efforts should be aimed only at his salvation through firm and consistent belief”.

¹⁴ Referring to martyrdom.

Galabov also provided an analysis of “the social risk which the actions of the defendants may represent.” As a result of the “organised activity” of the defendants and “the relative isolation of the compact Muslim community in the Rhodopes mountain,” “a conflict with severe consequences to the civic peace” may arise. Here the Muslims are cast simultaneously as villains and victims, as empowered enough to challenge the regime, and as marginalised enough to be easily manipulated.

‘Traditional’ Islam and its deviant double

The third part of the complex expertise was prepared by the expert witnesses Simeon Evstatiev and Ivan Dyulgerov, who studied texts in Arabic belonging to Said Moutlou and Abdullah Salih, and concluded that they directly relate to what they term “wahhabi salafism.” Simeon Evstatiev was invited to provide his expertise at the Pazardzhik trial as an Arabic studies scholar, holding a PhD in History and in his capacity as an instructor of History of the Arab world and Islam at the department of “Arabic and Semitic Studies” at the Sofia University, where he also heads the University Center for the Study of Religions. The expertise provided by Evstatiev was prepared together with the assistant professor Ivan Dyulgerov at the same department.

The most curious book the experts studied and deemed “written from strictly Salafi standpoint” is called “How to Protect Ourselves from Jinns and Satan” and contains instructions for protective rituals against evil spirits. Some of the books described as “Salafi” pointed to the incommensurability between “man’s law” and Islam’s instructions, and the need to go to war with anyone obstructing a summon. Other texts held out right that an inter-religious dialogue is impossible. In the books women are instructed not to show their bodies, but to be pious. Violent jihad is also thematised in the seized evidence, in a book by Abdullah Azzam and is seen as being compulsory for every Muslim. The experts held that Azzam is one of the most famous

ideologues of “radical Islam” and follow his trajectory and links to the Muslim Brotherhood and Al-Qaeda. By ‘radical’ the two experts understand using Salafi-Wahhabi interpretations for achieving “certain political goals,” a “political strategy calling for the global imposition of Islam in its Wahhabi interpretation.” Evstatiev and Dyulgerov concluded that the materials they analysed are “united in their relevance to Sunni Islam and more specifically to the version, supported and popularised by the ruling dynasty of Saudi Arabia. This Salafi interpretation of Islam is known as “Wahhabism among Western scholars, as well as among its Muslim adversaries.”

Evstatiev and Dyulgerov understood Wahhabism as “puritanical type of Islam which renounces Modern influence, while Salafism aims to reconcile Islam with Modernity” relying on “fundamentalist re-interpretation of religious sources.” They held the name Wahhabism comes from Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1792) and his calls for abiding by monotheism (Tawhid). Salafism, on the other hand, was seen by the experts as connected to a “9th century conservative Islamic Scholar” Ahmad ibn Hanbal (780-855) who asserted the need to avoid the allegorical reading of the Quran, the comparisons between Allah and man, and the “evaluation” of the religious texts. In the experts’ narrative it is King Faisal’s efforts in the 1960s and 1970s to which a convergence between “Wahhabism” and “Salafism” is owed. This is now “the official interpretation of Islam” in the Kingdom.

Despite these strict definitions, the expert witnesses Evstatiev and Dyulgerov pointed to the “contradictory character of Salafism and its practical manifestations,” thus being sometimes an apolitical form of piety, even though in its “foundation” it actually calls for “a cultural rupture with Europe.” The books found in the defendants’ homes, however, were not relegated to “apolitical Islam” but to the “warring” version which is the cause of the appearance of “small extremist-minded groups in Europe”. Here Modernity is associated with Europe, and the two are

understood as contradicted by the “warring” type of Salafism crystallising in the activities of extremist groups. Hence, the apolitical, everyday and European Islam is the norm which becomes the model to which all other ‘foreign’ and politicised Islam should conform. The production of such a normalised Islam is present in many sections of the complex expertise. After discovering a ‘foreign power’ (Saudi Arabia) navigating the practices of the defendants who own “Salafi-Wahhabi” literature, the expertise goes on to counterpose these practices to practices perceived as ‘autochthonous’ to Bulgaria.

Evstatiev and Dyulgerov’s statement held that the seized materials also condemn other Muslim practices. The prescription of ritual practices “totally different from the traditional to the Bulgarian lands” is a symptom of “the practical imposition of Wahhabi Salafism.” According to the experts, the content of the found literature suggests “undertaking concrete practical steps and actions towards the deployment of religious-agitational activity and the spread of this type of Salafism in Bulgaria.” Thus, the Arabic studies scholars *ascribe intention* based on literature owned by two of the defendants, on written reports addressed to the Muslim World League, and protocols related to the establishment of a chapter of the *Al-Waqf Al Islami* foundation in Bulgaria which the other defendants are convicted for allegedly being members of. This is a way to “discover” a pathological double behind the the literature, similarly to Foucault’s examples of retroactive “discovering” a pathological doubles in the deviant’s childhood.

The complex expertise, prepared by Stamatova-Toneva, Antoniy Galabov, Simeon Evstatiev and Ivan Dyulgerov, had a crucial conclusion – the studied evidence contain “religious ideologies which clearly oppose the contemporary liberal democracy of a Western type”. The court found the complex expertise legitimate and the protocols state that the expert witnesses answered questions in a competent way.

The court disregarded the statement by the only Muslim theologian expert witness Sefer Hassanov in favour of the conclusions based on the complex expertise, comprised by Christian scholars. In his expertise, Hassanov claimed that the seized literature refers only to intra-religious matters and to citizens of Muslim-majority countries, thus being irrelevant to Muslims in Bulgaria. However, the complex expertise forcefully insisted on the texts' renouncement of "one of the most crucial characteristics of democracy – the elective legislative and governing bodies." The court held that Hassanov's claim is disproved by the evidence in the trial which shows that Ahmed Moussa Ahmed preached the ideas in the mentioned texts. The court holds this is how the Roma population in the Iztok neighbourhood in Pazardzhik was "radicalised," only because it is "illiterate, has no theological training in Islam and is unable to make judgements". Here, as with Pomaks, there is a suspicion of 'radicalism' due to their subordinate and marginalised status.

Political propaganda or a sermon?

A "lexicological expertise" was provided by the historian at the Bulgarian Academy of Science Agop Garabedian. He was commissioned to provide the court with definitions of notions crucial to the prosecution's charge of the 13 defendants, namely "anti-democratic ideology", "sermon" and "preaching", and to state if "maintaining certain appearance" can be considered preaching. The defense lawyers challenged Garabedian's capacity to provide lexicological expertise, as he is a historian, but the court decided that his education allows him to define the mentioned notions.

As a result of the expert's statement, the court understood ideology as "symbolically loaded beliefs and expressions, which present, interpret and assess the world in a way, which aims at forming, mobilising, directing, organising and justifying some ways of impact and renouncing others." According to Garabedian, "anti-democratic" ideologies are "variation of the

fascist ideology which preaches and achieves destruction of democratic freedoms through violence and the use of the most sinister and refined methods for suppression of those who think otherwise, and which establishes an openly terrorist dictatorship, combined with warring nationalism, chauvinism and racism.” These ideologies, according to Garabedian, are destructive to “the existing parliamentary pluralist order and aim at imposing totalitarian or other derivative system”. Garabedian understood liberalism as “political tradition [...] engaged with freedom, social progress, free exchange of ideas, transparency of governance, limiting the power of the Church.” Most importantly, liberalism here “further develops the principles of democracy and democratism” which are mentioned in the BCC. This is how a move from democracy to liberalism is enabled and legitimised.

Garabedian also eases the conflation of “preaching” and “propaganda” which, he holds, are both realised through the use of “specialised literature, written materials, speech and [...] appearance and clothing”. The latter is not only a symbol of adherence to a group with specific outlook, but it also always contains the act of preaching, as ideas are created in order to be propagated and to win followers. Even though contested by the defense, and media, Garabedian’s expertise was considered legitimate and the court took it into account.

The court’s holding

The court accepted the claim of the complex expertise that the defendants have “preached and imposed religious interpretations and rituals, not familiar to the so-called traditional Islam in the Bulgarian lands.” The latter plays a “positive, socialising role and affirming fundamental moral values.” “Traditional Islam” is to be understood as Islam expressed only through the practice of holidays and in “regulating everyday behaviour.” It is “a result of the development of the modern Bulgarian state, which rests on the Western European principles of separation of the

state from the church and the freedom of conscience”. The court held that this Islam “does not purport political positions, it does not attempt to impose Islamic legislation, does not serve as a basis for political behaviour or political ideologies”.

While condemning the line that the studied texts draw between the supposedly “authentic” and “correct” Salafi rituals, and the rituals “found” in the local traditions, the expert witnesses simply confirm the coordinates of this binary opposition. Not only that, the expert witnesses, and subsequently the court, do not withhold from making judgements - they praise the “local” tradition of tolerance while drawing it in a network of relations with imagined Western European practices. Sanctioning “political Islam,” which opposes a favoured “everyday Islam” supposedly inherent to “the Bulgarian lands,” the court equated the latter and opposed the former to “liberalism”. The separation was also played out in geographic imaginaries - European liberal, secular and ‘apolitical’ Islam, on the one hand, and Saudi Arabian and Middle Eastern values and abnormal political-religious practice. Due to the symbolic power a court’s holding exerts, it performatively creates ‘traditional’ Muslims, prescribes adherence to a (liberal) political ideology, and forecloses the space for different political imaginaries.

Informed by the complex expertise, the court came to conclude that the so-called “political Islam [...] moderate or radical,” disregards the separation of “the state and religion,” and the “secular character of the Bulgarian state.” Secularism in the trial was defined as the state acting independently of religious beliefs, and retaining “religious neutrality” by not imposing “some religious dogma on society.” Thus, similar to discussions on ‘traditional’ Islam in Kosovo, Muslim communities are supposed to prove “their Europeanness,” to be “‘tolerant’ and ‘European’” Muslims (Rexhepi 2016).

The court's statement is conditioned by the provided complex expertise which relies on evidence, selected by the prosecution. The prosecution is also the institution which commissioned the expert witnesses. The remuneration of each expert witness varies – it depends on the complexity of the tasks, the competence and level of qualification of the specialist, the time needed for preparing the expertise, etc. What is more, remuneration (which is quite low) is not paid if the instance that commissioned the expertise does not accept its conclusions (SJC 2008: 1). This entails that there are financial incentives (which are quite low) for experts to conform to what they perceive is the conclusion expected by the institution that appointed them. The expert witnesses are not allowed to share information obtained in conducting the expertise, even after a trial is over.

This holding draws a line within the *Ummah*, prescribing that Muslims practicing what is perceived as 'traditional' Islam should condemn the defendants. As Piro Rexhepi shows in reference to a similar process, "Muslims in Eastern Europe were isolated from the rest of the *Ummah* and attached to European geotemporalities" (Rexhepi 2015b). A 'normal' Muslim practice would be the everyday one, which supposedly does not have any political dimension or impact.

The social magic of the expertise on expertise

As I explained in my theoretical chapter, in order for expert witnesses' utterances to effectively prescribe a norm, while seemingly describing, they need to conform to certain expectations. For example, the distinctions between "foreign" and "traditional" Islam, as I have shown, are not limited to the courtroom. Even scholars studying Bulgarian Islam have resorted to them. Similar distinctions between a 'traditional' and 'foreign,' 'political' and 'apolitical' Islam are present in some ethnographic accounts of Muslims in Bulgaria. For instance, Kristen Ghodsee in her book *Muslim Lives in Eastern Europe* counterposes "traditional Islam" to "imported orthodoxies"

(Ghodsee 2010: 20-27). She does not point to a ‘correct’ practice, but still maintains the separation of the two and the “foreignness” of the second. Such distinctions are mobilised to legitimise the prosecution of Muslims like in the case of the trial that I am studying, despite scholars’ intention. More generally, as Rexhepi argues, the distinction “reduces (...) Muslims to being merely observers of larger changes in the Muslim world and not a constitutive part of them” (Rexhepi 2015b).

This abstract distinction between domestic (safe) and foreign (dangerous) is dubious, as Kalionski shared in his interview with me. The dubiousness of such radical distinction is clear in my fieldwork, too. Nayme and Youssuf Gorelski, whom I interviewed, speak Bulgarian at home, send their daughter to study in Turkey, and are pronouncedly supportive of EU integration. Concrete social lives are riddled with such complexities, and it is unclear where one stops being a “traditional” and becomes a “foreign” Muslim.

The selection criteria of experts in such politicised and extraordinary trial, nevertheless, cannot be reduced to the fact that they both produce (in the media field) and reproduce (in the juridical field) expectations. It is important to also explain how some intellectuals easily traverse boundaries between fields and are able to convert symbolic capital drawn from academic knowledge of Arabic language or Christian theology into expertise on “radical Islam” in the juridical field. This conversion may be explained with Bourdieu's notion of the “field of power” where the exchange rates of capitals inherent to fields are negotiated. In order for experts to participate in the setting of exchange rates, they must be in a dominant position within their own field. Their position within the field of power then allows them to negotiate the conditions for transforming, for example, academic capital into capital securing authority within the juridical field. Thus, Arabic studies scholars can discuss Muslim practices in Bulgaria as experts within the juridical field.

Studying specialists on Islam in Germany and France, Valerie Amiraux describes a similar trend in the transformation of expertise. She holds that since the 1980s in Germany, and even earlier in France, there is a noticeable trend towards the conversion of academic expertise on the Middle East into an expertise on European Muslim practices and communities without “an appreciation of daily life” (Amiraux 2002 123-25). The question is, however, why some experts do not reproduce expectancies (e.g. “foreign versus traditional”) and hence remain outside of the court specialists.

Some intellectuals, sharing similar political engagement in relation to socialist repressive policies, but also participating in common networks with the expert witnesses, did not conform to the new uses of Islam and have been critical of the trial. They do not get as much access to mainstream media or public debates as those who perceive Islam as a new totalitarian threat, nor apparently were they commissioned as expert witnesses.

Critics of the trial have similar trajectories, even though most tend to be more specific intellectuals, focusing on a smaller number of issues. Despite these differences, it is impossible to reduce the conflictual strategies regarding contemporary Islamophobia solely to intellectuals’ trajectories. Both critics and supporters of the trial tend to operate in-between fields and have proven capable of converting symbolic capital from one field to another. Furthermore, as I have explained, some of those critical of Islamophobia (from both before and after 1989) tend to share certain (orientalist) suppositions with some of the expert witnesses.

As Bourdieu points out when discussing the field of power, a subordination within that field can be mediated either through the market, or through personal connections based on values and lifestyles. *Appearances in media or participation in public debates can reinforce one’s position within the field of power, but also means readjusting so that one responds to public expectations.* By readjusting I do not mean that there is a conscious calculation of

possible profits and losses, but refer to what Bourdieu calls habitus - "systems of durable, transposable dispositions [...] objectively adapted to their goals without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends [...] collectively orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating action of a conductor" (Bourdieu 2013: 72).

Conclusion

This thesis dealt with the symbolic power intellectuals exert when constructing various figures of Islam in Bulgaria, and its effects. More particularly, I studied the controversy surrounding the so-called “trial against the thirteen Imams” who were accused of propagating a “foreign” and “political” Islam contradicting the democratic-liberal order.

I understand the trial as the crystallisation of the process of constituting an external Other of contemporary liberalism through the normalisation of Muslim practices. Normalisation entails forging a norm and prescribing adherence to it. In the case of the trial, the norm is a “traditional, local, European, apolitical Islam.” Practices not conforming to the norm, such as those deemed “political” and not simply “religious,” are sanctioned. Thus, a group - Muslims in Bulgaria - is performatively broken into two opposing camps: those practicing “everyday” Islam, and those practicing “foreign” Islam, mobilised for “political” purposes.

Liberal governance, as I argued relying on Mouffe, is in constant need of a constitutive Outside, a radically different enemy, in order to sustain itself. While in Bulgaria in the 1990s this enemy was the figure of “Communism,” nowadays new forms of enmities appear, one of them - “political” Islam.

These questions are important in considering the social conditions for the efficacy of symbolic violence that need to be found outside the courtroom. I traced intellectuals’ biographical trajectories and their opposition to the repressive socialist policies against Muslims. While sharing a critical stance on the socialist “Revival process,” the intellectuals’ positions on contemporary Muslim practices do not coincide. I showed that for the intellectuals who took part in the trial as expert witnesses, Islam comes to replace “Communism” as the ‘totalitarian

threat' hanging over Europe. To that aim, I analysed intellectuals' public statements, their academic work, and interviews I conducted with some of them.

I provided a detailed analysis of the court protocols from the trial at the PDC. I demonstrated how the prosecution's accusation, the expert statements (all of them but Sefer Hassanov's) and the court's holding share common presuppositions and conclusions on the nature of the practices of the accused. They are deemed "foreign" and "Salafi," their books are seen as presenting a "social risk," designed for "propaganda purposes" and "contradicting principles of democracy and liberalism." The Muslims in the trial are set against a norm - Islam "inherent to the Bulgarian lands" which only "regulates everyday behaviour," but not political attitudes. Thus, I claim, there is a structural condition that presupposes such a conjuncture in the trial. In order for descriptions to effectively transform into prescriptions, and in this case into verdicts, they should reach someone sharing the same presuppositions. And "hailings [...] hardly ever miss their man" (Althusser 1970). I argue that in this case, after a series of hailings addressed at the prosecution, or the expert witnesses, or the court, a sentence is reached which has immediate effect on the accused. A verdict is not simply repressive, but is productive in the sense that it forges a normal practice which would not contradict the current political regime.

I see the introduction of bans on veiling in several Bulgarian cities and proposals for similar measures in many other regional cities as only possible because of the outcome of the trial itself. In most places the ban was proposed by coalitions of far-right political parties, but the one introduced in Stara Zagora was proposed by a member of the ruling center-right party GERB.

The first to introduce the ban was the relatively small regional town of Pazardzhik (70 000 residents) where the 2012 trial against the thirteen Muslims accused of propagating anti-democratic ideologies started. On the day of a court sitting in April for a new trial against other fourteen Bulgarian Muslims accused of propagating war through "the ideas of the Islamic state,"

the Bulgarian Chief Prosecutor Sotir Tsatsarov visited Pazardzhik to oversee the work of the district prosecutor's office. Even though the trial does not refer to veiling, that day Tsatsarov claimed that veiling should be banned not *only* because a religious 'adherence' is demonstrated, but also because it obstructs identification (News.bg 2016). Many of the Roma women who support the defendants in the 2016 trial and meet in front of the Pazardzhik court house at every court sitting wear niqabs. Without providing any proof Tsatsarov went as far as saying that the niqabs are not a symbol of "traditional Islam" and that veiling is prompted by "economic incentives" (News.bg 2016).

Youliana Metodieva, in the interview I conducted with her, claimed that the long-lasting repressions against the Muslims in the Roma neighbourhood in Pazardzhik are due to local politicians' strong anti-Roma racism, who tactically conflate it with anti-Muslim attitudes now. But the Chief Prosecutor is not the only high official to openly embrace the restrictions on veiling. He was followed by the Minister of Education (Dnes.bg 2016) and the Minister of the Interior. The latter saw veiling as a "sign of radicalisation" (BNT 2016).

What is more, in April 2016 the far-right Patriotic Front, which is now in the governing coalition, proposed a draft of a national law banning "complete and partial veiling of the face," affecting all public spaces (NSRB 654-01-58). The law was motivated by a concern for "the principles of democratism, gender equality and humanism which are the basis of the value system of Bulgaria, the EU and developed democratic countries" (NSRB 654-01-58: 4). The draft passed its first reviews in parliamentary committees and was supported by MPs of all political parties in the governing coalition (GERB, RB, PF), together with the BSP, but without MRL.

All this is to show that any visibility of Islam is considered “radicalism” and thus a risk to be addressed by punitive measures in order to provide security. Images of veiled women accompany any coverage of issues related to “radical Islam” in Bulgarian media. As Nilüfer Göle shows, in Europe any belief ‘conspicuously’ expressed in the veil is at the centre of debates around sexuality and the religious/secular (Göle 2014: 5). The restrictions had already been problematised by Grand Mufti’s Office, human rights organisations and media in Bulgaria and are seen as an attack against all Muslim citizens.

Earlier in 2016, two draft bills on the Religious Denominations Act were proposed in Bulgarian Parliament – one by MPs of the BSP (NSRB 654-01-32), and another (NSRB 654-01-26) by the MP Georgi Kadiev, formerly of the BSP. Both bills restrict foreign citizens from working in official religious institutions, the foreign funding of these institutions, as well as their activities due to the need of “financial transparency and security in the country.” Only registered legal entities would be allowed to organise religious activities. What is more, the draft bills suggest a registry of only Bulgarian schools and universities which one has to be a graduate of in order to preach legitimately.

Kadiev’s draft bill explicitly mentions that “religious freedom...cannot include political agitation or propaganda.” While very similar to Kadiev’s bill in relation to the restrictions of foreign clerics, the law drafted by BSP MPs does not mention “a social-economic order” to be protected. Kadiev’s bill suggests a prohibition of the contestation of “the socio-economic order,” in addition to the existing ban on endangering “the national security, public order, public health and morals.” The foreignness of funding, of clerics and of ideas is the sole referent that justifies the proposed restrictions on religious institutions’ activities. The solution – financial transparency and strict accounting.

The reasoning behind the bill proposing ban on veiling, and the other proposing ban on foreign funding of religious institutions and on contesting the “social-economic order” strongly resembles the motivation of the verdict of the thirteen Muslims in the trial I studied. I consider future research on the long term effects of securitisation policies such as the proposed legislation to be crucial.

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