

International Roma Union, the World Gypsy Congresses and the Activists of the Gypsy Movement in Shumen (1966–1981)

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(Summary)

The present article follows the relations of the Gypsy activists from Shumen with the International Roma Union, the attempts to send representatives to three of its congresses, as well as the control exercised by the authorities on these activities in the period 1966–1981. Archival documents and narratives of the witnesses of the events or of their relatives have been used. First of all, the analysis of the documents and narratives shows that the so called Gypsy nationalism (that lead to putting under observation of the Gypsy activists and to the restriction of their attempts to maintain contacts with the International Roma Union) was groundless. The article will also show that the self-study attempt of the Gypsies in Bulgaria were actually the efforts of a small group of representatives of the Roma intelligentsia, but not an all-Roma movement.

Keywords: Roma/Gypsies; ethnic policy in Bulgaria in the Socialist Period; Roma cultural organization

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