

BETWEEN TWO HOME COUNTRY - THE MIGRATION OF BULGARIAN TURKS (THE END OF THE 80S AND THE BEGINNING OF THE 1990S) - Nadezhda Zhechkova

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This report is based on the initial stage of work on youth projects funded by the "Scientific Researches" Fund of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Bulgaria. Field surveys are concentrated in Kardzhali and the region is located really close to the border with Turkey, but not directly at it- very close to the border with Turkey, but not directly at it. This is the area where the Turkish population in Bulgaria is a majority. The analysis also uses personal empirical materials from other parts of the country where is also a concentration of Bulgarian Turks. The question of the Turkish population in Bulgaria occupies an important place in the period of the new and the latest Bulgarian history. In the period until 1944, this population retained relatively its cultural rights, but its demographic appearance changed not only through wartime migrations during the Balkan Wars and the signing of an agreement for exchange of population between Sofia and Ankara in 1926. The merger of the communist regime after the Second World War with the policy of the Bulgarian state towards the Turkish ethnic, religious and linguistic group was characterized as inconsistent. The periods of respect for the rights of the Turkish community and the relative tolerance change with periods of discrimination (Petkova 2002, 42-47). This is due to the lack of a comprehensive strategy of the government. The giving of broad cultural rights is repeated with deportations; the highest point of politics towards the Bulgarian Turks is the attempt for violent assimilation - the so-called "Revival process" and the emigration wave followed in 1989, cynically called "The Big Excursion".

The emigration wave from the summer of 1989 is one of the largest migrations of people in peacetime in Europe since the end of the Second World War. Assuming that the main factors of emigration in the absence of military conflict are economic, ideological and social, during "The Big Excursion" the ideological factor is definitely the strongest. The nationalist factor should not be underestimated - the Bulgarian Turks do not just leave, they return to their motherland. At the same time, according to the empirical material, the economic factor also affects. The turkish propaganda, on the one hand, and the informational vacuum in the socialist period on the other, build in the community and even in the whole Bulgarian society, the tempting image of our southeast neighbor as a well-developed economic country. In the end, returning back in time, respondents do not underestimate Turkey's image as an ethnic homeland (Yeliz Erolova's definition (2017)) or "symbolic homeland" - a definition of Aeshe Parla (2006).

Taking the decision to emigrate most of the emigrants is not a result of much reflection and preparation, it is quick and often emotional. Despite the policy pursued by the state, I would allow myself to determine the migration as a stimulated. The main purpose of the "tourists" is to permanently settle in the Republic of Turkey and start their lives from the beginning. As a proof of that can be the sale of property before departure by a not a small number of emigrants. The alternative of returning at the moment of migration is more likely to not exist. I also consider the fact that the migration is not individual in the sense that "tourists" cross the frontier in most of the cases, together with their families,

which proves once again that the departures are seeking permanent settlement in the Republic of Turkey.

The process of adapting the Bulgarian Turks - emigrants to the Republic of Turkey in 1989 includes several stages. The initial stage of adaptation requires assimilation of the new area and the finding of place to live. It is essential for the successful adaptation to find jobs that provide livelihood to the emigrants. When settling in the Republic of Turkey, "excursionists" have to apart with the local population. In this process, there are a number of cultural differences between "true Turks" and emigrants. The difference is explained by the diversity of the two communities: "We, from Bulgaria are one, they are different than us."⁴¹ The emigrants fall into a different political and economic point of view, which also creates a need to be accustomed to these peculiarities. Turkish community is a capitalist society, with very clear social and economic differentiation of the population. Those living in the conditions of public regimentation in totalitarian regime of Bulgaria have to become accustomed to the new competitive and clearly stratified environment. The unknown to the emigrants since 1989, has a different level of religiosity. In view of the common religion, the adaptation of the newcomers in this respect is expected to be seamless. It turns out, however, that there are no differences. Should be noted that emigrants come from a Christian country where the role of religion has been reduced in the last 45 years, and society has been methodically educated in atheism (Dimitrova 1998, 117).

The marked adaptation conditions are not within the reach of any emigrant. In the process of adaptation of the Bulgarian Turks emigrants to the Republic of Turkey in 1989 groups were formed, whose characteristics are valid to one degree or another and for migrants from previous emigration waves from Bulgaria towards Turkey. Mila Maeva identifies three groups, shaped by the degree of adaptation - the "naturalized" - successfully adapted, "migrants" - adapted to the economic and political reality, but unappreciated with the social environment. The third group according to this classification is the "re-emigrants". It represents these emigrants who fail to adapt to the new Turkish society and return to Bulgaria within a short period of time. Reviewing our latest field research should be a fourth group- migrants who never fully adapt to the economic and political realities of Turkey or the social environment, but for various reasons remain living there.

Even in its list of migration laws, Ravenstein defines the principle of reverse migration: "Every major migration flow produces a backflow" (as cited Gmelch 1980, 135). Later, "return migration" will also mean the return of second-generation migrants, but also the first-generation migrants after emigration (. The "backward flow" relative to the case of "the Big Excursion" is not only a compensating migration of people but a return of the same migrants who participated in the "mainstream migration" after a very short period of time - weeks, months or years. In this sense, the "wave" of return has its specificities, which are also conditioned by the nature of the initial migration. Expulsion euphoria and mass emigration during "the Big Excursion" are followed by difficulties in adapting and returning a great deal of migrants. The process of return migration of the exiled Bulgarian Turks began before the fall of the socialist regime. Researchers point out different data about returns before the start of democratic changes in Bulgaria, but they are about 40,000 people (Gruev and Kalyonski 2008, 193). The massive "reverse flow" takes place after the beginning of the democratic changes in Bulgaria since the end of 1989 and continues until the end of 1990. For the whole year and a half of the beginning of "the Big Excursion in Bulgaria", some

⁴¹ Interview with a re-migrant woman, 51 years old.

150,000 people or about 40% of the Bulgarians who were exiled (Maeva 2006, 169; Gruev and Kalyonski 2008, 193; Dimitrova, 79).

A huge part of those who returned in the early 1990s point out the impossible adaptation as a general reason for the return migration: "You can not get used to another country. Not everyone can do it."⁴² Justified according to the different criteria of the individual, this inability, according to the data of the field material, can be provoked by economic, domestic or social disadvantages. Analyzing information from interviews with those who returned immediately after departure within a relatively short timeframe, the first thing I would say as a reason is the discrepancy between the expectations and the reality they face in Turkey. Within the framework of the socialist system and the lack of information and free communication, the Bulgarian Turks recall the perception they had of the Turkish state and society. Turkey is a capitalist country and the most emblematic quote of a respondent is: "We thought there were chewing gums, chewing gums and a good life." The economic prosperity of capitalist Turkey at a time when in the socialist Bulgaria the crisis is overwhelming, and the USSR is no longer able to support its most faithful satellite despite the information eclipse the prosperity is known or expected by emigrants. And while Turkey's economic prosperity was a fact in the late 1980s, it is difficult for the less educated part of the Bulgarian Turks to realize themselves on the labor market at once. Often only one of the spouses is working in a family, which undoubtedly is difficult for the family life. Other characteristic factors favoring the impossible adaptation of the immediate migrants are the lack of home, the different socio-cultural environment, differences in spoken language and the level of religiosity.

Those who lived in the age of Socialism, where Turkey's information flow is either scarce or strictly controlled, have a different idea of the country and the social relationships there, from what they face in reality. Understanding Turkey as capitalist, even "western" undoubtedly rises the expectations of emigrants, often leads to the construction of an imagined idealistic picture and is inconsistent with the reality they are experiencing on the other side of the border. Here, perhaps, it is worth mentioning that some of the socio-cultural shock that emigrants had may also reflect the fact that in Bulgaria they live in villages or small towns, while in Turkey they most often settle down in big cities like Istanbul , Izmir, Bursa.

The notion of a capitalist country, as perceived in the narratives, seems to include not just economic principles and prosperity, but the expectation of a certain type of everyday social relations. The reality, according to unsuccessfully adapted and those who returned immediately, offered them a society whose level of religiosity is higher. In the context of religious and patriarchal perceptions, the position of the woman in the Turkish society differs greatly from the position of the Bulgarian Turkish woman. Coming from a socialist country and in the context of secularization, the Bulgarian Turkish woman works, in some cases even smokes. In interviews with women retired, this difference is always highlighted. Of course, nostalgia to the birthplace is often mentioned as a motive for the impossible adaptation. Most often it is not articulated as nostalgia to Bulgaria, but to a particular settlement or region. These arguments are both of a nature-geographic nature and a social one, which seems to me, is a key factor in deciding to return. Last but not least, friendly and neighborly relationships built up for years would undoubtedly be a cause for nostalgic feelings.

⁴² Interview with a re-migrant woman, 50 years old.

There are various reasons that led to the return migration decision. They can be generally summarized as impossibility of adaptation, lack or insufficiency of personal motivation and impossibility of daily survival as an economic factor. Nostalgia as a motive is rather subjective, because it is mainly caused by the difficulties experienced in Turkey. The leaving of the state and society in the general case of those who returned of "the Big Excursion", somehow motivated by the regime, is voluntary, because despite the human rights violations, there is no direct threat to the life of this group of people. This distinguishes them from the refugees. The period of absence is short, and the "returnees" are the first generation of migrants, or in other words, this is the same population that participates in the emigration wave. Regarding the conditions in the re-adopting society, they are also not completely changed. On the one hand, the political and economic system in the country is actually developing in the course of democratic changes, on the other hand, however, the community has not undergone major changes at local level, which is expected because the time between the departure and the return is very short. For returnees, Turkey does not find a solution for a better life, and in a relatively short span of time they cross the border line again to return to Bulgaria.

Last, but not least, I will talk about the problem of the homeland. In the perceptions of the Turks in Bulgaria, as Slavka Karakusheva claims to the emigrants, the homeland "has two dimensions and in different situations one of them prevails in the construction and transformation of identities. On the one hand stands the image of the "historic homeland", which is related to the place of birth and origin, on the other hand stands the category of the "symbolic homeland" that constructs the ethnic identity" (Karakusheva 2011, 46). In this context, the migration between Bulgaria and Turkey, implemented by the Bulgarian Turks, is a crossing of the border between homeland and homeland. It is precisely this idea that, in my opinion, provokes during "the Big Excursion" the expectations of emigrants for an easier adaptation process in Turkey. As it turns out, this does not seem to be true for a significant number of migrants. For most of them, their participation in migration processes does not stop until their reintegration into Bulgaria after their return, but continues to this day with a "movement" between the two countries and Western Europe. The motives and the intensity of these ongoing migratory flows are different, but undoubtedly the experience gained from emigration in 1989 reflects on the ongoing processes today.

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