

Romistické utopie

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The Bulgarian Gypsies and the emigration of the Bulgarian ethnic Turks /1948 – 1989/

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This presentation is a result of a several year documentary study, which I carried out in various archives of Bulgaria, but mostly in the Archive of the Ministry of Interior. The topic is just a part of a larger research, concerning the overall policy towards the minority in the years of socialism.

“The Gypsies are our own, domestic problem” is a phrase attributed to the long-term former head of the communist Bulgarian state, Todor Zhivkov.

It is a little known fact that towards the end of the 40's, the Bulgarian Gypsies suddenly turned from a 'domestic problem' to something much larger and thus became a part of the great confrontation between the two world political camps divided by the Iron Curtain. This took place during the emigration of the ethnic Bulgarian Turks, which started in 1948, and during which, applications for emigration were filed by both Bulgarian Turks and Muslim Bulgarian Gypsies. It is the latter ethnic minority that became the cause for a serious conflict between 'communist Bulgaria' and 'capitalist Turkey'.

This presentation aims at following the events of the end of the 40's and the beginning of the '50s of the previous century, as well as analyzing the consequences of the confrontation between the two neighbouring Balkan countries.



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