

The Bulgarian Migrations and the End of Ottoman Rule in Bulgaria (1878–1900)*

The paper presents the problem of the migrations of Bulgarians from Macedonia, Thrace, Russia, the Habsburg Monarchy, and Romania in 1878–1900. The biggest wave arrived in Bulgaria after the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878 – people were escaping from the repressions in the Ottoman Empire after its defeat. Later, many of the settlers were determined by economic motives – they hoped that the living standards would be better in the new Bulgarian state. The scale of the migrations led to introduction of two laws on that problem: in 1881 and 1890. The phenomenon had not only a crucial impact on the demographical structures of the Bulgarian state but also on its political, social and cultural shape, among others, on the transformation of the ethnic structure of the cities.

Keywords: 19th century, migrations, Ottoman Empire, Principality of Bulgaria, Eastern Rumelia, Balkan Peninsula

The creation of the modern Bulgarian state in 1878 was significant for the history of the Bulgarian nation in many aspects. The 19th-century Bulgarian geographer Anastas Ishirkov said that the “Liberation War” (as Bulgarians called the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878) had been not only the end of the “Turkish Yoke”, but also of the Bulgarian attachment to family lands and fathers’ graves – it had started their dynamic migrations¹. Indeed, the immigration to the Bulgarian state after its creation in 1878 affected the shape of the demographical structures of the Bulgarian lands, its political, social, and ideological development, and the history of the other regions of the Balkan Peninsula (mostly Macedonia and Thrace) as well. Although the historiography focused on

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1 A. Ishirkov, Grad Varna, *Periodicheskoe spisanie* 65, 1905, p. 223.

the Bulgarian migration processes mostly in the context of the 20th century, the first decades after the creation of the modern Bulgaria had a comparable meaning².

The paper focuses on the migration of Bulgarians from the territories of the Ottoman Empire (Macedonia, Thrace), Russia (Bessarabia), the Habsburg Monarchy (Banat), and Romania (Dobruja) to the Bulgarian lands (the Principality of Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia), in the period 1878–1900. By the term “Bulgarians”, I understand the population speaking in then Bulgarian language and its Macedonian dialect. In the 19th century most of the Slavs of Macedonia were culturally, politically, socially, and linguistically closest to Bulgarians (whose national identity was forming at that time as well)³.

The migrations in the Bulgarian lands before 1878 were linked mostly to the Russo-Turkish wars and the colonization carried out by the Sublime Porte. During these wars, not only the Russian and Turkish soldiers could have been met in the Balkans, but also refugees escaping to save their lives. Every conflict between the Romanov Empire and the Ottoman state from the second half of the 18th century led to the migration of the Muslim and Bulgarian population. In the time of war of 1806–1812, about 100 000 Muslims ran away from the Bulgarian lands to Anatolia. At the turn of the 18th and 19th century, the disturbance in the Balkans (the uprisings in Serbia, the revolts of ayans, the activity of *kırcalı*), resulted in an emigration of 200 000 Muslims (a big part of them returned to their homes after the crisis)⁴. During the War of 1828–1829, the movements of the Russian and Ottoman troops led to new escapes of Muslims and Christians, which emptied many cities, e.g. Stara Zagora (Eski Zağra) and its surroundings. Again, after the end of the conflict most of the escapees returned to their homes; only Bulgarians, who ran away to Bessarabia and the Southern part of Russia, decided to settle down. The same mobility of the Bulgarian population took place during the Crimea War (1853–1856). As an effect, in the 1870s the community of the Bessarabian Bulgarians numbered about 114 000 people⁵. During the Liberation

2 The most important works about the Bulgarian migrations: G. Genadiev, *Bezhanitsite vav Varnensko 1878–1908*, Sofia 1998; Y. Kolev, *Balgarite izvan Balgariya 1878–1945 g*, Sofia 2005; V. Muchinov, *Migratsionna politika na osmanskata imperiya v balgarskite zemi prez XIX vek (do 1878 g)*, Sofia 2013; A. Kalionski, *Communities, Identities and Migrations in Southeast Europe*, Sofia 2014; S. Raychevski, *Bezhanstvo i preselvaniya dobrudzhanskite i taviyskite balgari 1913–1944*, Sofia 2015; *Idem*, *Bezhanitsite ot Makedoniya i tehните bratstva v Balgariya*, Sofia 2016; *Migratsionni dvizheniya na balgarite 1878–1941*, t. I: 1878–1912, sast. V. Vasilieva, B. Gigov, G. Stoyanova, K. Georgieva, K. Nedevska, Sofia 1993.

3 The migration destination (i.e. Bulgaria) is another evidence for the closeness of Slavs of Macedonia with Bulgarians – after the Uprising in 1878–1879 or in 1903 they escaped to Bulgaria, not to Serbia or Greece.

4 J. McCarthy, Muslims in Ottoman Europe: Population from 1880 to 1912, *Nationalities Papers* 28/1, 2000, p. 33; O. Turan, *Turkish Migrations from Bulgaria*, (in:) *Forced Ethnic Migrations in the Balkans: Consequences and Rebuilding of Societies*, ed. E. Popova, M. Hajdinjak, Sofia–Tokio 2006, p. 78.

5 V. Muchinov, *Rolyata na hadzhi gospodin Slavov za poyavata na parvite balgarski statistiko-demografiski prouchvaniya*, (in:) *Izvestiya na Starozagorskiya istoricheski muzey*, t. 4: *Lichmostta v istoriyata*, sast. G. Bakalov, Stara Zagora 2011, p. 503.

War of 1877–1878 about 500 000 Muslims left the Bulgarian lands. Pogroms on the Christians, rumors, and fear led to the huge refugee wave of about 100 000 Bulgarians⁶. For example, in the summer of 1877, the foreign observers wrote about the 2 000 Bulgarian refugees in Kavarna, and 3 000 in Sliven⁷. Additionally, many Christians emigrated from different parts of the region to Balchik⁸. Since the beginning of the War, Russians organized the aid – they were distributing food and allowed Bulgarians to occupy Muslim refugees' houses and lands⁹.

Before 1878, the migration processes were mostly linked to the immigration of Muslims (in the 19th century: mostly Tatars and Circassians) and emigration of Bulgarians. After 1878, as the German historian Wolfgang Höpken said in the context of the second half of the 19th century in the Balkans: “Without a doubt, the Turks are leaving and the Christians are coming”¹⁰. Undoubtedly, that year marked the beginning of a change.

The formation of modern Bulgaria was accompanied by the active immigration of Bulgarians who were separated from their new fatherland by the Berlin Congress' decisions: from Macedonia and Thrace (which remained parts of the Ottoman Empire) and from Dobruja (taken by Romania). Also, many migrants who left the Bulgarian lands in the Ottoman period, mostly to Bessarabia and the Southern provinces of Russia, but also to the Habsburg Monarchy, Serbia or Wallachia, decided to return to the newly re-established Bulgaria. In 1878–1879, about 70 000 Bulgarians came to the Principality of Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia from Thrace and Macedonia, until 1881 there arrived the next 35 000 – 40 000¹¹. The first groups of settlers from Macedonia, about 150 families, came to the district of Plovdiv on 7th of October (old style: 25th of September) 1878; nine days later there were 8 000 settlers from Macedonia in the districts of Plovdiv and Sliven. Until December that number increased to 30 000 in Eastern Rumelia and 20 000 in the Principality of Bulgaria. The people from Macedonia went to the areas close to the borders in the Western parts of the

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- 6 K. Jireček, *Knyazhestvo Balgariya. Negova povarhina priroda, naselenie, dubovna kultura, upravljenie i novejsza istoriya*, ch. 1: *Balgarska darzhava*, Plovdiv 1899, p. 160; R. Daskalov, *Balgarskoto obshtestvo 1878–1939*, t. 2: *Naselenie, obshtestvo, kultura*, Sofia 2005, pp. 170–171; Zh. Nazarska, *Maltsinstveno-religioznata politika v Iztochna Rumeliya (1879–1885)*, (in:) *Myusyulmanskite obshtnosti na Balkanite i Balgariya*, t. 1, red. A. Zhelyazkova, Sofia 1997, pp. 119–120.
 - 7 National Archives in Kew, London, Foreign Office Archives, Public Record Office (FO) 195/1144/47–60, Brophy to Layard, Burgas 19.08.1877.
 - 8 *Commandor Durmont to Mr. Layard, Varna 25.07.1877*, (in:) *Ethnic Minorities in the Balkan States 1860–1971*, vol. 1: 1860–1885, ed. B. Destani, Cambridge 2003, pp. 281–282.
 - 9 A. M. Mirkova, “Population Politics” at the End of Empire: Migration and Sovereignty in Ottoman Eastern Rumelia, 1877–1886, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 55(4), 2013, p. 964.
 - 10 W. Höpken, *From Religious Identity to Ethnic Mobilization: the Turks of Bulgaria before, under and since Communism*, (in:) *Muslim Identity and the Balkan States*, ed. H. Poulton, S. Taji-Farouki, London 1997, p. 54.
 - 11 K. Jireček, *Knyazhestvo Balgariya*, ch. I, pp. 61–62; N. Ovsyaniy, *Russkoe upravlenie v Bolgarii v 1877–78–79 gg.*, t. II: *Vostochnaya Rumeliya i Adriapol'skiy sandzhak*, Peterburg 1907, pp. 45–46.

country: the regions of Dupnitsa, Kyustendil, Tran, Radomir, or Lom Palanka. Most of them were peasants with families and livestock, but there were some groups of urban dwellers as well. During that time, from the autumn of 1878 to the spring of 1879, 35 200 Christians from Thrace, mostly the regions of Dimotika, Lüleburgaz, and Dedeagach, came to the Principality of Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia. They were located in the Southern and Eastern regions: mostly in the districts of Shumen, Varna, but also in Tatar Pazardzhik, Plovdiv, Nova Zagora, Yambol, Stara Zagora, and Haskovo¹².

The immigrants faced many problems in that period: hunger, diseases, cold; many of them were forced to abandon their whole property. About 75% of them were women and children¹³. The Provisional Russian Administration, i.e. the Russian occupation¹⁴, created two Commissions for Refugees: in Plovdiv (with branches in Adrianople and Sliven) and in Sofia (with branches in Kyustendil, Eski Dzhumaya, Samokov, and Radomir). The importance of these institutions can be illustrated by the fact that their members were prominent Bulgarian politicians, among others, Dragan Tsankov, one of the leaders of the Liberal Party¹⁵. The main tasks of the commissions were to help Bulgarian immigrants to settle down and to organize the distribution of food, money, and medicines¹⁶. In the first year of the activity, the commissions got 105 150 rubles for the realization of that mission¹⁷. In the following years, the situation of Bulgarian immigrants still was not easy. Beyond the economic problems, many of them had trouble with adaptation to conditions, they were often treated as outsiders by their new neighbors¹⁸.

One of the main reasons for the immigration wave from Macedonia just after the War was the Kresna-Razlog Uprising, which took place at the turn of 1878 and 1879.

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- 12 *Ot F. R. Dzh. Kalvart do A. H. Lejard, Odrin 8 noemvri 1878 g.*, (in:) *Britanski diplomatski dokumenti po balgarskiya natsionalen vapros*, t. 1: 1878–1893, sast. V. Traykov, A. Grebenarov, R. Karaganev, R. Prahova, Sofia 1993, pp. 46–48; *Protokol na Saveta na ruski komisar v Balgariya, [Plovdiv] 9.12.1878*, (in:) *Migratsionni dvizheniya na balgarite*, pp. 44–49; *Vitosha* god. I, br. 89 (3 may) 1880, p. 2.
 - 13 FO, 881/3574/121–129, Report by Palgrave, Sofia 9.12.1878; FO, 195/1246/180–181, Palgrave to the Marquis of Salisbury, Sofia 1.11.1879.
 - 14 The Russian occupation of Bulgaria lasted from March 1878 to June 1879.
 - 15 *Balgarski istoricheski arhiv v Sofia (BIA)*, f. 11, a.e. 35, l. 5–6, Prikaz „imperatorского rossiyskogo kommissara v“ Bolgarii no. 64, Sofia 29.10.1878.
 - 16 FO, 881/3574/121–129, Report by Palgrave, Sofia 9.12.1878; BIA, f. 11, a.e. 35, l. 1–2, Zabelezhka za tselite na sazdaneto na komisiite; FO, 913/4/190, [Reade] to Layard, Varna 30.07.1878; Zh. Nazarska, *Maltsinstveno-religioznata politika*, pp. 119–122, 129.
 - 17 *Postanovlenie [zhurnalno] ot zasedanie na saveta na ruskiya imperatorski komisar v Balgariya za bezhantsite ot Odrinsko i Makedoniya (9.12.1878)*, (in:) *Istoriya na balgarite 1878–1944 v dokumenti*, t. 1: 1878–1912, ch. 1: *Vastanovyavane i razvitie na balgarskata darzhava*, sast. V. Georgiev, S. Trifonov, Sofia 1996, pp. 28–29.
 - 18 BIA, f. 290, a.e. 176, l. 21, Sleduyusheteto proshenie se podade na NEGOVO VISOCHESTVO ot strana na Besarabskite Balgare zaseleni sega v Sofia, 20.11.1880; BIA, f. 271, a.e. 10, l. 45–46, Pismo ot balgarski bezhanci do Aleksandar I, Haskovo 1.05.1886.

In the end of 1878, there were about 23 000 refugees, mostly women and children, who came to Bulgaria from the region of Razlog because of the rebellion and repressions linked to it¹⁹. The territory of Thrace was unstable at that time also because of the massive arrival of Muslim refugees from Bulgaria and the high activity of bandits. Additionally, Christians and Muslims in the region remembered mutual pogroms and acts of aggression during the April Uprising of 1876 and the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878²⁰. Some of them were war refugees, who just wanted to return to their homes, which they had abandoned during the conflict escaping from the Ottoman army and pogroms²¹. The San Stefano Treaty guaranteed them the right to return to their homes: “The Sublime Porte obligates to not punish the Turkish citizens, who cooperated with the Russian army during the War. If somebody wants to migrate with family after the recall of the Russian army, the Ottoman authorities will not create any difficulties”²². On the other hand, the Russian propaganda encouraged Bulgarians from Eastern Thrace to settle down in the Principality and promised them a free land. The British observer explained that it was in line with the Russian plan of homogenization of the Bulgarian lands²³, but it is probably an incorrect assessment because also Greeks from Thrace were invited to move to Bulgaria by Russians at that time²⁴.

In the later periods, in the 1880s and 1890s, many of the settlers were determined by the economic motives – they hoped that in the new Bulgarian state the standard of life would be better²⁵. The repression on Bulgarians and in the Ottoman Empire were other driving factors. For example, in 1885 there was an information about the mass escapes of the victims of terror in Macedonia, among others, in February about 30 000 refugees were located in the District of Kyustendil (probably the number is overrated)²⁶. The scale of migration from the Ottoman Empire to the Bulgarian lands

19 FO, 881/3574/121–129, Report by Palgrave, Sofia 9.12.1878; *Ot U. Dzh. Palgreyv do R. A. S. Solzbari, 9 dekemvri 1878 g.*, (in:) *Britanski diplomatscheski dokumenti*, p. 79; More about the The Kresna-Razlog Uprising: D. Doynov, *Kresnensko-Razlozhkoto vastanie, 1878–1879*, Sofia 1979.

20 *Ot F. R. Dzh. Kalvart do A. H. Lejard, Odrin, 8 noemvri 1878 g.*, (in:) *Britanski diplomatscheski dokumenti*, pp. 46–48; *Vitosha* god. I, br. 89 (3 may) 1880, p. 2.

21 FO, 195/1246/180–181, Palgrave to the Marquis of Salisbury, Sofia 1.11.1879; *Ot F. K. Lasels do K. D. Grenvil, Sofia, 12 februar 1881 g.*, (in:) *Britanski diplomatscheski dokumenti*, pp. 203–206.

22 *San-Stefano, 19 fevralya/3 marta 1878 g. San-Stefanskiy preliminariniy mirniy dogovor*, (in:) *Sbornik dogovorov Rossii s drugimi gosudarstvami (1856–1917)*, red. E. A. Adamov, I. V. Kozmenko, Moskva 1952, pp. 159–177.

23 *Ot F. R. Dzh. Kalvart do A. H. Lejard, Odrin, 15 oktombri 1878 g.*, (in:) *Britanski diplomatscheski dokumenti*, pp. 28; *Ot F. R. Dzh. Kalvart do A. H. Lejard, Odrin, 17 oktombri 1878 g.*, (in:) *Britanski diplomatscheski dokumenti*, pp. 35; *Ot F. R. Dzh. Kalvart do Ed. B. Malet, Odrin, 10 mart 1879 g.*, (in:) *Britanski diplomatscheski dokumenti*, pp. 120–122; *Ot F. R. Dzh. Kalvart do Ed. B. Malet, Odrin, 13 mart 1879 g.*, (in:) *Britanski diplomatscheski dokumenti*, pp. 124–125.

24 *Ot F. R. Dzh. Kalvart do A. H. Lejard, Odrin, 2 noemvri 1878 g.*, (in:) *Britanski diplomatscheski dokumenti*, pp. 40–42.

25 FO, 195/1246/180–181, Palgrave to the Marquis of Salisbury, Sofia 1.11.1879.

26 *Ot F. K. Lasels do K. D. Grenvil, Sofia, 10. februar 1885 g.*, (in:) *Britanski diplomatscheski dokumenti*, pp. 211–214.

in the 1880s can be illustrated by the data collected by the director of the Statistical Department of the Ministry of Finance Mihail Sarafov:

Table 1: The migration from the Ottoman Empire to the Principality of Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia in the 1880s

District	From Thrace and Macedonia	People Born in the other parts of the Ottoman Empire		Ottoman Citizens		
	1881	1885	1888	1881	1885	1888
Vidin	583	–	684	164	–	547
Balchik	2222	–	1659	13	–	333
Varna	5184	–	5341	1483	–	1212
Dobrich	1594	–	784	10	–	178
Kyustendil	2394	–	4025	–	–	131
Sofia	2818	–	4214	99	–	1806
Lom-Palanka	273	–	438	37	–	231
Pleven	2103	–	700	5	–	268
Russe	867	–	905	71	–	649
Plovdiv	–	2658	2069	–	1515	1791
Konush	–	599	735	–	102	277
Tatar-Paz-ardzhik	–	718	772	–	261	593
Haskovo	–	619	1179	–	309	864

Source: M. Sarafov, *Naselenieto v Knyazhestvo Balgariya po trite parvi preobrayavaniya*, *Periodicheskoto spisanie* kn. 41–42, 1893, p. 802.

Until 1880 there were no specific regulations about the Bulgarian immigrants' status. There was only an article from the Tarnovo Constitution of 1878, which said that "All those born in Bulgaria who have not acquired any other citizenship, and those born abroad, whose parents are Bulgarian become citizens of the Principality of Bulgaria"²⁷. The authorities in Sofia decided to regulate the settlement by the Colonization of the Empty Lands in Bulgaria Act of 1880. The Bulgarian state offered uncultivated and empty lands for Bulgarians that arrived from abroad, whose profession was linked to farming or cattle breeding. Every family got 30–60 *dülüm*²⁸ of land for cultivation and the same acreage of grassland, materials for building a house, and agricultural tools. The state also organized low-interest loans for settlers and granted them an exemption from basic taxes for 1–3 years (among others, customs duty during the travel to Bulgaria). The land would pass into ownership after 10 years of living and cultivating, until that moment they could not sell the property. The settlers automatically became

27 *Konstitutsiya na Balgarskoto Knyazhestvo*, (in:) *Istoriya na balgarite*, t. 1, ch. 1, p. 43.

28 1 *dülüm* = 1 000 m²

Bulgarian citizens. In 1891, the Act was amended to regulate the settlers' situation in the former Eastern Rumelia; it gave a new impulse for Bulgarians abroad who wanted to immigrate to the state²⁹.

As it was mentioned, many immigrants were settled in the houses and lands abandoned by Muslim refugees or chifliks' owners. During the occupation, Russians sold them these properties for symbolic prices³⁰. For example, when in December of 1884 the group of Bulgarians from Adrianople came to Bulgaria, they were settled in Kuzluca, near Varna. At the time, many buildings were abandoned by Muslims, due to emigration during the War of 1877–1878 and in the following years. The Bulgarian settlers moved into 25 houses (Turks lived in the other 75). The relations between the neighbors in Kuzluca were problematic: Muslims had a sense of being hurt because of the tragic fate of their community in Bulgarian lands during the war, whereas Bulgarians remembered the difficult times linked with the abandonment of their lands in Thrace, where their fathers had lived for centuries³¹. A different example was described by the British vice-consul in Varna Charles Brophy in April 1880. In the district of Varna, there were many cases of the compulsory expulsion of Muslim villagers by settlers arriving from Macedonia. The local authorities and police did nothing to protect local Muslims. According to Brophy, 17 000 Muslims were forced to abandon their homes in the district of Varna at that time³². In the districts of Russe, Rahovo, Hadzhioglu Pazardzhik, Berkovitsa, and Varna, the settlers were allocated to the lands abandoned by the Circassians³³ and Tatars, for example, in the District of Russe there were farms for 1 200 families, and each of them could get 40 dülüms of Circassians' lands³⁴.

29 *Zakon za naselyavane na nenasenite zemi v Balgariya (31 may 1880)*, (in:) *Istoriya na balgarite*, t. 1, ch. 1, p. 418; A. Kalionski, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

30 BIA, f. 11, a.e. 35, l. 1–2, Zabezhka za tselite na sazdavaneto na komisiite; FO, 913/4/190 [Reade] to Layard, Varna 30.07.1878; Zh. Nazarska, *Maltsinstveno-religioznata politika*, pp. 119–122, 129.

31 O. Köse, The Policies of the Bulgarian State towards the Minorities (1878–1914), *Sosyal Bilimler Araştırmaları Dergisi* 3(6), 2012, p. 234.

32 FO, 195/1311 (no pages), Brophy to Ashburgham, no. 7, Varna 20.04.1880; FO, 195/1312 (no pages), Brophy to Lascalles, no. 31, Varna 9.10.1880.

33 Circassians and Tatars, escaping from Russia in 1850s–1860s, had moved to the Ottoman Empire. They got lands from the state property, but also taken from the Christian population. The settlers from Caucasus was burdensome for the local population because of their dispassion of farming and a sedentary lifestyle. After the Liberation, it was obvious that Circassians had to leave Bulgaria. Most of them emigrated during the war of 1877–1878; after it, there were about 100 000 Circassians in that territory. (K. Jireček, *Knyazhestvo Balgariya*, ch. I, pp. 60–61, 172–173; M. Dymarski, *Konflikty na Balkanach w okresie kształtowania się państw narodowych w XIX i na początku XX wieku*, Wrocław 2010, pp. 78–79); More about the Muslim emigration from Bulgaria: K. Poppek, *Muhadžirowie. Uwagi na temat emigracji muzułmanów z ziem bułgarskich na przełomie XIX i XX wieku*, *Balcanica Posnaniensia. Acta et studia* 23, 2016, pp. 47–69.

34 Tsentralen darzhaven arhiv v Sofia (TsDA), f. 159k, op. 1, a.e. 31, l. 9, Raport ot Rahovski okrazhen nachalnik do Ministerstvo na finansite, Rahovo 11.02.1880; TsDA, f. 159k, op. 1, a.e. 31, l. 10, Raport ot Okrazhen nachalnik na Hadzhioglu Pazardzhik do Ministerstvo na finansite, Hadzhioglu Pazardzhik 8.02.1880; TsDA, f. 159k, op. 1, a.e. 31, l. 18, Raport ot Berkovski okrazhen nachalnik

The policy of Eastern Rumelia in the field of the settlement of immigrants in the former Turkish lands had different characteristics. It was the province of the Ottoman Empire under the control of the Sublime Porte and the Great Powers. Due to that, the authorities in Plovdiv could not freely give lands of the Muslim refugees to the Bulgarian settlers. For example, in 1880, in the District of Stara Zagora (in Eastern Rumelia) there were 17 970 Bulgarian refugees (also 203 Greeks). Most of them settled down in the former Turkish villages, started to cultivate their lands, repaired their houses³⁵. When Muslim war refugees (*muhajirs*) started to come back to their houses, in many cases they met new lodgers in their homes. The authorities in Plovdiv ordered to evict Bulgarian immigrants from muhajirs' households and to relocate them to different areas of the province, for example to the Districts of Sliven and Burgas³⁶.

The state authorities ordered that Bulgarian settlers be directed to the areas, where there was the biggest population of Muslims in the country, who at the end of the 19th century were still a numerous minority³⁷. Especially in the first years after the war, the policy of Bulgarianization of the Eastern territories and the Rhodopes was conducted. For example, the group of Bulgarians, who arrived in Bulgaria in March of 1880 from Chenpendzhe, near Constantinople, settled in the villages in the District of Novi Pazar, where about 90% of the inhabitants were Muslims³⁸. The immigrants from Chenpendzhe sent a petition to the authorities asking for lands; they wanted the compensation for their property left in Thrace, which was taken by the Muslim refugees, who arrived there from Bulgaria³⁹. Bulgarians also settled in the Northern Rhodopes, where the numerous population of Pomaks, i.e. Bulgarian Muslims, lived. The local newspaper published in Chepelare, "Rodopski napredak" ("Rhodope's Progress") mentioned that in 1899–1905 about 500 Bulgarian families settled down in that region. They mostly replaced Pomaks, who massively emigrated to Turkey in that time. The Rhodopes were not an attractive destination for immigrants – people were complaining about the

do Ministerstvo na finansite, Berkovitsa 2.02.1880; TsDA, f. 159k, op. 1, a.e. 31, l. 19–20, Raport ot Varnenski okrazhen nachalnik do Ministerstvo na finansite, Varna 12.02.1880; *Nezavisimost* god. V, br. 14 (15 oktombri) 1880, pp. 2–3.

35 But there were a big number of settlers without new place to live – in 1881 there were 3 747.

36 K. Jireček, *Knyazhestvo Balgariya. Negova povarhina priroda, naselenie, duhovna kultura, upravljenie i noveysya istoriya*, ch. 2: *Patuvaniya po Balgariya*, Plovdiv 1899, p. 152; *Preselevaniya i izselvaniya v Starozagorski okrag prez 1881–1883 g.* (in:) *Istoriya na balgarite*, t. 1, ch. 1, p. 83.

37 *Ot F. R. Dzh. Kalvart do A. H. Lejard, Odrin 8 noemvri 1878 g.* (in:) *Britanski diplomaticheski dokumenti*, pp. 46–48; *Vitosha* god. I, br. 89 (3 may), 1880, p. 2; In the first half of 1880s, there were 527 000 Muslims in the Principality (26% of the population) and 200 000 in Eastern Rumelia (21%). After the Unification, in 1887, 676 000 Muslims lived in the territory of Bulgaria. In the following years their percentage decreased systematically, mainly because of emigration, but they remained a numerous minority: in 1892 – 643 000 (19% of the whole population), in 1900 – 643 000 (17%), in 1905 – 603 000 (15%) and in 1910 – 602 000 (14%). (*Statisticheski godishnik na Balgarskoto Tsarstvo*, god. 1: 1909, Sofia 1910, p. 38; *Statisticheski godishnik na Balgarskoto Tsarstvo*, god. 3: 1911, Sofia 1914, pp. 46–47; J. McCarthy, *Muslim in Ottoman Europe*, p. 39).

38 N. Ilieva, *Turskata etnicheska grupa v Balgariya (1878–2001)*, Sofia 2010, pp. 37–39.

39 TsDA, f. 20, op. 1, a.e. 178, l. 55–56, Belezhka, 31.02.1880.

insufficient number of schools, poor infrastructure, and lack of the support from the authorities⁴⁰. That policy can be illustrated by another example. During the preparation of the Colonization of the Empty Lands of Bulgaria Act of 1880, there was a project to award settlers benefits, if they decided to move to the Eastern part of the country, mainly in the region of Tuzluk and Deli-Orman, so the territories, where the Muslim population dominated. In that case, Bulgarians would get an exemption from all taxes for 6 years and from military service for 4 years. If settlers arrived to another territory, these exemptions would be limited to a 3-year period⁴¹.

Many of Bulgarian immigrants decided to settle down in the cities, which after 1878 became more and more homogeneous. In 1866, according to official census, in the Danubian Vilayet (more or less the territory of the latter Principality of Bulgaria) the towns were dominated by the Muslim population, for example, Sofia, Silistria, Vidin, Russe, Shumen, Kyustendil, or Balchik. In several small cities only Bulgarians lived, among others, in Gabrovo, Panagiurishte, Koprivshitsa, Kotel, Elena, Tryavna. Whereas Varna, Tarnovo, Svishtov, or Pleven were towns with mixed populations⁴². Because of the migration processes after the re-establishment of the Bulgarian state, the ethnic structures of cities deeply changed, which can be illustrated by the table:

Table 2: The change of percentage of ethnic groups in Bulgarian cities in 1881\1885⁴³–1888

Nationality	Plovdiv	Sofia	Russe	Varna	Shumen	Sliven
Bulgarians	+5,1%	+6%	+3,2%	+3,2%	+1,7%	+2,6%
Turks	-8%	-6%	-3,2%	-2,3%	-2%	-6,6%
Greeks	-11,1%	+4%	+2,1%	+0,1%	-	+9,3%
Sephardic Jews	+0,3%	+3%	+0,2%	+1,1%	+6,2%	-
Roma	+34%	+6,3%	-	+8,3%	-	-0,7%
Germans	+2%	+10,6%	-	-1,6%	-	+33%
Russians	-12,3%	-5,6%	-11,8%	-5,8%	-7,1%	+16,6%

Source: M. Sarafov, *Naselenieto v Knyazhestvo Balgariya po trite parvi preobrayavaniya*, *Periodichesko spisanie* kn. 41–42, 1893, p. 795.

The arrival of settlers from the Ottoman Empire was significant in the process of Bulgarization of towns in the Principality of Bulgaria in the 1880s, which is shown in the table below:

40 *Rodopski napredak* god. III, kn. 4, 1905, p. 254; *Slavievi gori* god. I, kn. 4, 1894, p. 35.

41 Nauchen arhiv na Balgarskata akademiya na naukite (BAN), f. 3, op. 1, a.e. 1115, l. 4, Proekt na zakon za naselyavane na nenaselenite (prazdni) darzhavni zemi v Balgariya.

42 A. Eminov, The Status of Islam and Muslims in Bulgaria, *Journal Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs* vol. 8:2, 1987, pp. 284; M. Benovska-Sabkova, Urban Culture, Religious Conversion, and Crossing Ethnic Fluidity among the Bulgarian Muslims (“Pomaks”), *Glasnik Etnografskog instituta SANU* 63(1), 2015, pp. 56–57.

43 In 1881 in the case of the cities of the Principality and 1885 – the towns of Eastern Rumelia.

Table 3: Inflowing population in the biggest cities of the Principality of Bulgaria in 1883

Born in:	Russe	Varna	Shumen	Sofia
That city	68,3%	56,5%	78,2%	55,6%
Different part of Principality	19,2%	21,1%	18,2%	20,6%
Thrace and Macedonia	3,2%	6,3%	1,5%	13,2%
Different parts of Turkey	1,8%	7,2%	0,8%	2%
Russia	1,3%	5%	0,5%	1,4%
Serbia	0,4%	0,1%	0%	1,7%
Romania	2,6%	1,5%	0,4%	1,1%
Austro-Hungary	2%	0,4%	0,2%	2,4%
Other territory	1,2%	1,9%	0,2%	2%

Source: M. Sarafov, Naselenieto v gradovete: Ruse, Varna i Shumen, *Periodichesko spisanie* kn. 4, 1883, p. 40.

The table shows that, among the biggest cities of the Principality, Sofia became the main destination of the immigrants. They preferred to settle down in the state capital because of the career opportunities and concentration of socio-political life. Due to its geographic location (Sofia was close to the border), Bulgarians from Macedonia and Western Thrace preferred to settle down there. The second choice of the immigrants was Varna, where the settlers from Russia (Bessarabian Bulgarians) and Anatolia (among others Armenians escaping from pogroms in the 1890s and 1900s) arrived. Because of its geographical location, Russe was the destination of the Bulgarians coming from Austria-Hungary and Romania. It is worth to point out that in some cases the immigration from abroad to towns was less numerous than the peoples' movements from the countryside to cities, for example, Shumen (3.6% from abroad, 18.2% from different parts of the Principality) and Russe (12.5% from abroad, 19.2% from different parts of the Principality). These migration processes were numerously similar in the cases of Varna (21.4% from abroad, 22.4% from different parts of the Principality) and Sofia (23.8% from abroad, 20.6% from different parts of the Principality)⁴⁴. The scale of that phenomenon increased – in 1901 Anastas Ishirkov estimated that only 53% of Varna's inhabitants were born in that city⁴⁵.

44 The internal migrations were mostly linked to arrival of Bulgarians from the mountains to plains, abandoned by Turks in that time. That process started in the 18th century, the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878 gave it a new impulse. In 1905 the district authorities of Tarnovo worried about the emigration of Bulgarian farmers to the Districts of Shumen and Russe, where they could buy cheap ex-Turkish lands. That phenomenon was widespread – in the beginning of the 20th century it was estimated that 75% of the population of mountain regions wanted to emigrate to plains. (*Izlozhenie za sastoyanie na Sevlievskoto okrazhie prez 1890–1891*, Sevlievo 1891, pp. 7–8; *Izlozhenie za sastoyanie na Tarnovskoto okrazhie prez 1904–1905*, Tarnovo 1905, pp. 3–4; *Programa na Liberalnata partiya (Sofia, oktovri 1907)*, (in: *Programi, programni dokumenti i ustavi na burzhoaznite partii v Balgariya 1879–1918*, sast. V. Nikolova, D. Sazdov, Sofia 1992, p. 160; B. Lory, *Sadbata na osmanskoto nasledstvo. Balgarskata gradaska kultura 1878–1900*, prev. L. Yankieva, Sofia 2002, pp. 43–44).

45 A. Ishirkov, *op. cit.*, p. 227.

That tendency was also visible in the cities of Eastern Rumelia at that time, which is illustrated by the table:

Table 4: Inflowing population in Plovdiv and Sliven in 1885

Born in:	Plovdiv		Sliven	
	Number	%	Number	%
That city	23396	69,96%	19119	94,42%
That district	4019	12,02%	455	2,25%
Different part of Principality	2791	8,35%	354	1,75%
Ottoman Empire	2469	7,38%	255	1,26%
Other territories	767	2,29%	65	0,32%
Total	33442	100%	20248	100%

Source: M. Sarafov, *Naselenieto v Knyazhestvo Balgariya po trite parvi preobrayvaniya*, *Periodichesko spisanie* kn. 41–42, 1893, p. 783.

As in the cases of the biggest cities of the Principality of Bulgaria, the main destination for immigrants was the capital of the province – Plovdiv, where the career opportunities were most prominent. In the other cities of Eastern Rumelia, like Sliven, the immigration wave was insignificant. The processes of the transformation of the cities on the demographical and infrastructural level started in that territory later, after the Unification in 1885.

The important problem of the new immigrants was linked to the unregulated status of their citizenship. In 1881, that problem concerned 10,3% inhabitants of Varna, 8,1% of Sofia, 7,5% of Russe, and 1,3% of Shumen⁴⁶. In 1888, 90% of the population of Plovdiv had a citizenship of Eastern Rumelia, in Sofia – 85% were Bulgarian citizens, in Russe – 90%⁴⁷. It created many problems linked to the enjoyment of rights, electoral turnout in the cities, and the credibility of the statistical data collected by the state. The immigrant, who wanted to become a Bulgarian citizen, needed to register at village's or town's authorities and resign from their foreign citizenship⁴⁸.

The migration of non-Orthodox Bulgarians at that time is another aspect worth attention. Pomaks in the end of the 19th century emigrated from the Bulgarian state with

⁴⁶ M. Sarafov, *Naselenieto v gradovete: Ruse, Varna i Shumen*, *Periodichesko spisanie* kn. 4, 1883, pp. 47–48.

⁴⁷ *Idem*, *Naselenieto v Knyazhestvo Balgariya po trite parvi preobrayvaniya*, *Periodichesko spisanie* kn. 41–42, 1893, pp. 787–788.

⁴⁸ B. Lory, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

other groups of Muslims⁴⁹. On the other hand, the third religious group of Bulgarian Catholics immigrated to Bulgaria. In 1880, 18 000 Bulgarian Catholics lived in Banat, in Austria-Hungary. That community was a result of migrations after the Chiprovtsi Uprising in 1688 and during the wars in 18th century between Austria and Turkey. The centers of that minority were in Stari Bešenov⁵⁰ (where the Diaspora was concentrated after the 18th century wars) and in Vinga (where the descendants of refugees after the Chiprovtsi Uprising lived). The Colonization of the Empty Lands of Bulgaria Acts of 1880 and 1891 created the conditions to remigration of Bulgarian Catholics from the Habsburg Monarchy and Romania. The first migration wave (142 families) took place in 1881–1883. Paulicians settled down mostly in Deli Syule (the Svishtov District), which in 1884 was renamed to Dragomirovo. During the unstable situation at the time of the authoritarian regime of 1881–1883 and the unification with Eastern Rumelia (1885), there was a break in the arrival of Banat Bulgarians for several years. The second, more numerous migration wave took place in 1887–1892, Paulicians were directed to Balgarski Geran (185 families), Gostlya (133), Bregare (83 families), and Assenovo (204). The smaller groups settled down also in Mahmudiya⁵¹ (40 families), Dzhurilovo⁵² (40 families), and Saseka (3 families). The descendants of refugees, who moved to Ciopli (Romania) at the beginning of the 19th century, the so-called Bucharest Paulicians or Romanian Paulicians, emigrated to Bulgaria with the first wave from Banat. They settled down with the other Bulgarian Catholics from Austria-Hungary in Dragomirovo. At the end of the 19th century, 7 000 Bulgarian Catholic immigrants lived in Bulgaria, which means that the Bulgarian Catholic community doubled in the country⁵³.

The immigration of Bulgarians had an important impact on the development of the newly re-established Bulgarian state. Kiril Popov estimated that 143 000 – 171 000 immigrants arrived in Bulgaria in 1878–1911: 50 000 – 60 000 Bulgarians came from Western Thrace, 60 000 – 70 000 from Macedonia, 20 000 – 25 000 from Romania, 10 000 – 12 000 from Bessarabia, and 3 000 – 4 000 from Banat⁵⁴. That process had

49 Look: V. Ardenski, *Zagasnali ognishta. Izelnicheskite protsesi sred balgarite mohamedani v perioda 1878–1944 g.*, Sofia 2005.

50 Nowadays: Dudeștii Vechi in Romania.

51 Nowadays: Radoykovo.

52 Nowadays: Nivinyan.

53 *Migratsionni dvizheniya na balgarite*, pp. 107–110, 119; B. Nyagulov, *Banatskite balgari. Istoriyata na edna maltsinstvena obshtnost vav vremeto na natsionalnite darzhavi*, Sofia 1999, pp. 14–19; K. Popek, *Uwagi na temat procesów migracyjnych wśród bułgarskich katolików w XIX wieku*, (in:) *Europa Środkowa, Balkany i Polacy. Studia ofiarowane Profesorowi Antoniemu Cetnarowiczowi*, red. J. Pezda, S. Pijaj, Kraków 2017, pp. 314.

54 K. Popov, *Stopanskata Balgariya (Sofia 1916)*, (in:) *Istoriya na balgarite*, t. 1, ch. 1, 143–144.

a crucial impact on the transformation of the ethnoreligious structure of Bulgaria, which is illustrated by the table:

Table 5: The Nationalities of Bulgaria in 1880–1910

Nationality	Number		Increase\Decrease	
	1880	1910	Absolute	Percentage
Orthodox Bulgarians	1 920 000	3 497 974	+1 577 974	+82,2%
Pomaks	20 000	21 143	+1143	+5,6%
Turks	650 000	465 988	-184 012	-28,3%
Tatars	18 000	18 170	+170	+0,9%
Gagauz	12 000	9 329	-2 671	-22,2%
Greeks	62 000	43 245	-18 755	-30,2%
Jews	20 000	40 118	+20 118	+100,1%
Armenians	5 500	12 919	+ 7 419	+134,9%
Romanians	49 000	79 748	+30 748	+62,8%
Roma	62 000	121 573	+59 573	+96%
Total	2 818 500	4 310 208	+ 1 491 708	+53,7%

Source: K. Popov, *Stopanskata Balgariya (Sofia 1916)*, (in: *Istoriya na balgarite 1878–1944 v dokumenti*, t. 1: 1878–1912, ch. 1: Vastanovyavane i razvitiye na balgarskata darzhava, sast. V. Georgiev, S. Trifonov, Sofia 1996, pp. 141.

The immigrants played an important role in the creation of the structures of the Bulgarian state in the many fields. In 1879, Bulgarians were 97% of the state officials, despite the fact that in the moment of the Liberation there were only 400 Bulgarians in that territory with secondary education⁵⁵. That gap was filled by the settlers from abroad, many of whom were better educated (with diplomas of foreign universities and schools), more politically and socially active as well (because of the importance of the Diaspora in Romania and Russia in the development of the national movement). In 1897, there were 20 509 officials in the state, among them 2 424 were immigrants (so about 10%)⁵⁶. As a result, the immigration had not only an influence on the administrative structures of the state, but also on its political, social and cultural shape. For example, prime ministers Aleksandar Malinov and Dimitar Grekov, the first rector of the Sofia University Aleksandar Teodorov-Balan, the hero of the Serbo-Bulgarian War in 1885 Olimpi Panov, or writer Georgi Stamatov were Bessarabian Bulgarians, who emigrated to Bulgaria. The immigration had a beneficial influence on the economic recovery of the territory, especially after the destruction left by the war of 1877–1878. For example, Hristo Popkonstaninov, the important social activist in the Rhodopes, wrote down that in 1880 in the region of Chepino there were many abandoned villages and lands, which revived after the Unification in 1885. Because of the settlement of

⁵⁵ B. Lory, *op. cit.*, pp. 65–66.

⁵⁶ *Zname god.* III, br. 1 (1 may), 1897, pp. 1–3.

Bulgarians, the situation of that area improved: public buildings were renovated, many farms started to function again, new villages were created⁵⁷.

The late 19th century immigration to Bulgaria was just a beginning of that process. The biggest wave of Bulgarians in the first decade of the 20th century took place after the Ilinden Uprising in 1903. For example, in December 1905, in the territory of Bulgaria, there were about 200 000 refugees from Macedonia⁵⁸. The next waves were a result of Bulgarian defeats in the Second Balkan War in 1913 and First World War in 1918, in the interwar period were linked to the Soviet repression against Bulgarians in Bessarabia and Ukraine⁵⁹.

The historiography has not appreciated the role of migrations. It is too rarely admitted that the human mobility had pivotal influence on the epoch-making changes, and the formation of the modern world in its demographical, social, cultural, ideological, and political aspects. The multiethnic Balkans under the Ottoman rule, where the representatives of many nationalities and religions lived side by side, after the mass migrations of the 19th century deeply changed the characteristic of the region. Nowadays most of the Balkan countries are nationally homogenous, and the minorities are mostly separated from the rest of the society. It can be said that the Balkan nations, as the Turkish one, are “immigrants’ nations”, formed largely by the 19th and 20th century migrations. The “unrooted” people: Muslims from almost every part of the Balkans forced to move to Anatolia, Bulgarians from Macedonia and Trace, Greeks from Asia Minor, Serbs from Kosovo, became open for the new ideas: nationalism, liberalism, communism. These ideologies during the 20th century started to replace the old form of the social organization in the Balkan Peninsula, which was based on the confession (connected with the partition of the Ottoman subjects in *millets*), local community and patriarchy.

SAŽETAK

Bugarske migracije i kraj osmanske vladavine u Bugarskoj

U članku se opisuju problematika useljavanja Bugara u obnovljenu bugarsku državu tijekom prva dva desetljeća njezina postojanja (1878-1900). Imigranti su stizali prije svega s područja koja su nadalje ostala pod osmanskom vladavinom (Makedonija i Trakija), potom iz Rusije (Besarabija, ukrajinski teritorij), Rumunjske (Dobrudža) i Austro-Ugarske (Banat). Najveći

57 H. Popkonstantinov, *Spomeni, pitepisi, pisma*, sast. A. Primovski, N. Primovski, Plovdiv, pp. 438–439.

58 FO, 78/5359/53–54, Draft by Buchanan, 14.12.1905; FO, 78/5425/42–44, Marling to Marquis of Landsdowne, Sofia 9.01.1905.

59 L. Miletich, *Razorenieto na trakiyskite balgari prez 1913 godina*, Sofia 1989; S. Raichevsky, *The Genocide Against Bulgarians in the 20th Century*, Sofia 2005.

imigrantski val dogodio se za rusko-turskog rata 1877-1878. kada su Bugari bježali iz Osman-skog Carstva. Bili su na to prisiljeni zbog represija koje su ih stigle nakon gušenja kresnensko-razloškog ustanka u jesen 1878. godine. Kasnije su iseljavanja bile uvjetovane ekonomskim razlozima – imigranti su računali da će u novoj bugarskoj državi imati viši životni standard. Važnu je ulogu imalo i širenje bugarske nacionalne svijesti – dolazak u Bugarsku često je označavao i deklariranje bugarstva. U tom se smislu to povezivalo i s mogućnostima karijere u različitim sferama bugarske države (administracija, političke strukture, vojska, obrazovni sustav).

Vlasti u Sofiji donijele su dva zakona koja su trebala regulirati imigraciju – prvi 1881, drugi 1890. godine. Useljenicima je nuđena zemlja, kao i oslobođenje od poreza i vojne službe. Uselja-vanje bugarskog stanovništva u bugarsku državu u nastanku imalo je ključni utjecaj na demo-grafsku strukturu obnovljene Bugarske, ali je utjecalo i na njezin politički, društveni i kulturni ustroj. Imigranti su odigrali ključnu ulogu u etničkoj transformaciji bugarskih gradova, što je u članku pokazano na primjeru Varne.

Ključne riječi: 19. stoljeće, migracije, Osmansko Carstvo, Kneževina Bugarska, Istočna Ru-melija, Balkanski poluotok