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Bulgarian Traces in Syria. The Beginning

(Abstract)

For a decade and a half starting from the mid-1950s, a large number of Bulgarians resided in Syria engaged in building business facilities, working in state and municipal institutions, as members of business, cultural, military and sports delegations and formations. The Bulgarian socialist state exerted special effort to strengthen the Bulgarian presence there by training Syrians and using them as an instrument of Bulgarian foreign policy in its various directions. The article systematizes the material and immaterial traces left by the activity of Bulgarians in Syria in the specified period and examines, in a comparative perspective, the motivation of both the Bulgarian state and the Bulgarians, as well as the price paid for what had been achieved. The analysis is based on archival materials from the fonds of the Bulgarian Communist Party, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, Culture and Education.

Keywords: Bulgaria, Syria, Bulgarian specialists, military, artists, students, dams, irrigation systems

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