
Lyubomira Valcheva-Nundloll***THE DEPORTATION OF ETHNIC GERMANS FROM EASTERN
EUROPE TO THE USSR AT THE END OF WORLD WAR II.
BETWEEN HISTORY AND POLITICAL USE OF THE PAST**

(Summary)

The Soviet military presence in Bulgaria after 9 September 1944 and the establishment of the new government are the subject of contradictory historical interpretations. The anti-German measures introduced at the end of World War II including the internment of citizens of Germany and its satellites, and the labor mobilization of ethnic Germans in the USSR represent a fragment of the Bulgarian past that was only brought to the public attention after the fall of socialism. While the political use of this past has led to the indirect inclusion of the anti-German measures in the list of crimes of communism condemned by Europe, scholarly analysis reveals a complex process transcending the context of the local political regime. The study of this little-known fragment of Bulgarian history brings forth the question of the distinction between the principle of nationality and that of citizenship in a Balkan country confronted with the Soviet suspicion of the German population in securing territorial control. The growing importance of national memory for the emerging European (historical) consciousness provokes reflection on the role of a historian in defining this ambiguous past influencing the present. The European construction of supranational historical memory presupposes the supranationalization of related

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national historiographies. The article places the history of the German population in Eastern Europe at the end of the Second World War and the political use of this past in an expanded context, drawing on primary Bulgarian and Soviet sources, on historical scholarly works, and on research studying the construction of historical memory.

Keywords: World War II, degermanization, use of the past, European (historical) consciousness.