The book is an attempt to reconsider from an interpretive sociological perspective - one of the most dramatic decades in the Bulgarian history, namely the one between the establishment of the right-wing authoritarian regime (with the takeover of May 19, 1934) and the Communist regime (after the takeover of September 9, 1944). The author, a prominent Bulgarian sociologist, has based his research on both historical facts and material derived from diaries, personal memoirs and newspapers with a view to discovering the cultural and psychological reasons for the Bulgarian melancholy, that is the nation's collective sense of doom and despair and the Bulgarian intellectuals' lack of willingness to defend their individualistic and democratic values. This book is a reflection on the hidden instability of the liberal and individualistic project in nations with delayed and difficult modernisation.

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