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## **Vojvodovo – a Forgotten Chapter of the Czech Presence in Bulgaria**

[Vojvodovo – ein vergessenes Kapitel der tschechischen Gegenwart in Bulgarien]

(Abstract)

The contribution is devoted to the history of Vojvodovo, a Czech village in North-western Bulgaria, sixteen kilometres from the Danube port town of Oryahovo. It was founded in 1900 mostly by migrants from another Czech village, Svata Helena, located in today's Romanian part of the Banat region. The history of Czech Vojvodovo was a short one: it lasted only for fifty years until 1950. At the end of the period, following post-war inter-state agreements on 'returns of co-nationals to their fatherland', Czech Vojvodovans left the village and settled in the region of south Moravia in Czechoslovakia. A local legend says that it was Tsar Ferdinand I of Bulgaria who invited Czechs to come to Bulgaria to show local villagers how to work their land. True or not, the fact is Vojvodovans were living as if they sought to fulfil Ferdinand's wish – during the Czech period, Vojvodovo became an exemplary village (not only) in the regional context. It had become well-known for tidiness and orderliness of the communal space as well

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as of the inhabitants. Vojvodovans were renowned for their diligence and ascetic ethic of Protestantism, for being outstanding farmers, horse breeders and stallholders.

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