INTRODUCTION

This book is about documenting and analyzing the living archive around the figure of Vasil Levski, arguably the major and only uncontested hero of the Bulgarian national pantheon. In the course of working on the problem, it became clear that this cannot be a finite task. The processes described, although with a chronological depth of almost two centuries, are still very much in the making, and the living archive expands not only in size but constantly adds surprising new forms. While archives continue to occupy an almost sacral place both in the public imagination (as the repositories of truth) as well as in legitimizing the historical profession (as the centerpiece and major tool of the historians' work), they have become themselves objects of sophisticated scrutiny.[1] It has been long (although not broadly) recognized that "ar-

1 I wish to acknowledge, with thanks, Bruce Grant's idea that I present my story under the overall rubric of the living archive. I am using "archive" here in a very broad sense, beyond its institutional meaning of a repository of documentation, but still within its physicality, rather than in a purely metaphorical sense, as a synonym for memory, i.e. any non-archival documentation, cultural memorization, electronic or other storage and oral communication. Archives have become a significant topic of late, especially within cultural history. On archives and their meaning, see: Carolyn Steedman, *Dust: The Archive in Cultural History*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002; Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995; Randolph Starn, "Truths in the Archives," *Common Knowledge* 8.2 (2002), 387–402; Kenneth E. Foote, "To Remember and Forget: Archives, Memory, and Culture," *American Archivist* 53 (Summer 1990), 378–92; Jo Tellebeek, "'Turn'd to Dust and Tears': Revisiting the Archive," *History and Theory* 43 (May 2004), 237–48. It is on the basis of colonial historiography, especially in the Indian context, that archival presumptions have been most fruitfully critiqued: Thomas Richards, *Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire*, London: Verso, 1993; Nicholas Dirks, "Annals of the Archive: Ethnographic Notes on the Sources of History," in Brian Keith Axel, ed., *Historical Anthropology and Its Futures: From the Margins*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002, 47–65; Antoinette Burton, ed., *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of His-*

chives do not simply arrive or emerge fully formed; nor are they innocent of struggles for power in either their creation or their interpretive applications."[2] They are loci of dynamic encounters not only between scholars and historical "traces," between the present and the past, but sites of contestation between institution builders both at the time of their genesis and in the course of their preservation. In the past several decades the notion of the archive itself has opened up to include materials that have not been conventionally covered under this rubric: oral testimony, novels, the press, material artifacts, art.[3] This study is both an attempt to create a personal archive of Levskiana (from the plethora of existing archives), to describe and analyze it and, at the same time, to unpack its meaning and transparently detail its making.

The project itself started as an investigation of nationalism, turned into one on communism and postcommunism, and remained, above all, an experiment in writing a living archive. My interest in Levski began as an offshoot of an attempt to make sense of what has been called Balkan nationalism but consists, in fact, of very different phenomena in terms of their genealogy, typology, articulation and intensity. I had been specially interested in the metaphoric glue (shorthand for cohesive processes or ideologies) that keeps nations together, in a word, in national symbology, and had been thinking of a comparative history of the national symbols of Greeks, Turks, Bulgarians, Romanians, Albanians, Serbs and the other South Slavs. All of this was building on a loose hypothesis that there exists a correlation between the cultural articulation of nationalism and its practical goals and strength. The more I looked into this metaphoric glue—analyzing the phases of nation building, the history of educational institutions and commu-

tory, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005; Ann Laura Stoler, "Colonial Archive and the Arts of Governance," *Archival Science* 2 (2002), 87–109.

2 Antoinette Burton, "Introduction: Archive Fever, Archive Stories," in *Archive Stories*, 6.

3 Marilyn Booth, "Fiction's Imaginative Archive and the Newspaper's Local Scandals: The Case of Nineteenth-Century Egypt," in *Archive Stories*, 274–95; Nicholas B. Dirks, "Annals of the Archive: Ethnographic Notes on the Sources of History," in Brian Keith Axel, ed., *From the Margins: Historical Anthropology and Its Futures*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002, 47–65; Antoinette Burton, *Dwelling in the Archive: Women Writing House, Home, and History in Late Colonial India*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2003, 21–4, 138–40.

nications systems, the history of language and language reforms, the development of the polity, in a word, at the different aspects of constructing "the imagined community,"—the more my interest shifted from the nature and functions of the glue to its "brand names." That is, it shifted to the question of why one type of glue is preferred over another, and what this can tell us about the specific characteristics of separate nationalisms. It is a question that has interested other observers, and various scholars have suggested various answers within diverse explanatory frameworks. Here is one from a very different period:

> The most suggestive antithesis between the Greek soul and the Bulgarian soul rings out in the popular poetry developed in Greece and Bulgaria during the Turkish occupation. During this dark age, the popular muse of the Greeks, as that of the Serbs also, sang of the ancient glories and the exalted deeds of heroes who frequently turned against the Turkish tyrant; by contrast, Bulgarian popular poetry cannot offer us a single historical or heroic poem: it can only take in certain Bacchic or amorous poems; or, indeed, in the absence of any other sort of hero, it exalts the *haidouts*, otherwise known as brigands, who have absolutely no connection with the Serbian *hajduks* or the Greek *klefts*. The latter are national heroes, after a historical model; the Bulgarian *haidouts* are common-law criminals, devoid of personality and lacking even the virile audacity of ordinary brigands.[4]

This merciless verdict, written almost a century ago, at the height of the Greek–Bulgarian animus at the end of the First World War is not merely an illustration of the *Zeitgeist*, obsessed as it was with the national soul and character, as well as with the collective (un)conscious, and mostly with the virtues of one's own national psyche. It points to the weight allotted by nationalists to the heroes of the nation as the tangible embodiment of its soul, next to language as its intangible quintessence. National heroes are a recognized cornerstone of the symbolic repertoire of nationalism:

4 Vassilis Colocotronis, "L'Ame bulgare et l'âme greque d'après la poésie populaire," *Revue de Grèce* 1.1 (1918), 129–43, 129, cited in Michael Herzfeld, *Ours Once More: Folklore, Ideology, and the Making of Modern Greece*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982, 66, 137.

> While definitions of grandeur and glory vary, every nationalism requires a touchstone of virtue and heroism, to guide and give meaning to the tasks of regeneration. The future of the ethnic community can only derive meaning and achieve its form from the pristine "golden age" when men were "heroes." Heroes provide models of virtuous conduct, their deeds of valor inspire faith and courage in their oppressed and decadent descendants.[5]

At the same time, they are not necessarily the central pillar of its symbolic order. In a Balkan context—the first larger comparative circle, in which Bulgarian nationalism can be understood—the national imaginary has diverse foci. In the Serbian national imagination, alongside the attention to heroes, the special focus is on an epic and a battle; in the Greek, on the classical past and the notion of direct continuity; in the Romanian, for all the controversies over "the ideal prince," it is on events and their commemoration (the 1848 revolutions or the 1919 unification).[6] In the Bulgarian case, however, *pace* Colocotronis's verdict, there is a clear orientation to national heroes. What emerges is not only the centrality of heroic figures in general but the ubiquity of one particular national hero: Vasil Levski. In this sense, one can posit a distinct particularity of Bulgarian nationalism (that itself underscores Bulgarian history in the past two centuries): an unusual concentration of competing and contesting discourses and appropriations on the same figure. If a parallel instance has to be found, it would point out

5 Anthony D. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, 65. Commenting on this, Linas Eriksonas ("The National Hero: A Scottish Contribution," *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism*, 30.1–2 (2003), 83 rightly points out that the understanding of the central role of the hero can produce complete consensus among otherwise feuding exponents of different theories of nationalism. For an extensive review of the literature on heroes and heroism, see Part II, Chapter 1, and Part III, Chapter 6.

6 Wayne Vucinich and Thomas Emmert, *Kosovo: Legacy of a Medieval Battle*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991; Keith Brown and Yannis Hamilakis, *The Usable Past: Greek Metahistories*, Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003; Stathis Gourgouris, *Dream Nation. Enlightenment, Colonization and the Institution of Modern Greece*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996; Keith Hitchins, *The Identity of Romania*, Bucharest: Encyclopaedic Publishing House, 2003; Lucian Boia, *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, Budapest: Central European University Press, 2001.

mostly in the direction of the role of Joan of Arc in French history and self-perception, or Abraham Lincoln in the American one, all chronological, factual, and structural differences notwithstanding. The other obvious parallel is Giuseppe Garibaldi who was hailed as "a popular hero, a saint, a second Christ," and among the Sicilian peasantry his red shirt was reputed to repel bullets.[7] One is told that "historians judge him to have been the only great democratic leader of truly humble origins in the nineteenth century, and that surely this fact goes a long way to explain his extraordinary fame and the cult surrounding him."[8] This book is, among other things, about another great democratic leader of humble origins who apparently has escaped the gaze of the self-appointed tribunal of historians who are gate-keepers to the assembly of nineteenth-century heroes.

It is my belief that the choice of Levski as the pinnacle of the Bulgarian national pantheon explains much about the specific characteristics of Bulgarian nationalism. In a larger framework, the Levski problem is intimately involved with the question of historical heroes and the nature of hero worship in general, the relation between chronometric and mythopoetized time, as well as the link between masculinity and gender, and heroism. I am particularly interested in how the hero-creating process depends on the historical context, what its specificities are within differing socio-political frameworks, and specifically the link between sainthood and heroism.[9]

This is a historical study of the posthumous fate of the major figure of the Bulgarian national pantheon in the course of over a hundred and fifty years. By concentrating on the symbology of nationalism and the mechanisms of hero worship, I am trying to understand the particular role of cultural processes and artifacts in the formation of national identity. The study takes as its narrative focus the life, death and, especially, the posthumous fate of what has arguably become the sole truly uncontested Bulgarian hero: Vasil Levski (1837–1873). The saga of Levski's posthumous fate not only parallels the development of modern Bulgaria, it is its embodiment. The tribulations of the hero are an allegory of the evolution of Bulgarian nationalism. In the Bulgarian

7 Martin Thom, "How I made Italy," *The Times Literary Supplement*, June 17, 2005, 8.
8 Ibid., 9.
9 For an extensive survey, see Part III, Chapter 6.

pantheon of national heroes, Levski, an early and arguably the greatest martyr of the nineteenth-century national revolution, became the only unifying and uncontested figure, accepted by a whole range of mutually incompatible parties, institutions, movements and ideologies. He has been evoked as the ultimate authority and has been on every banner: believer and atheist, republican and monarchist, conservative and radical. His hero worship does not necessarily unite the nation, but precisely these efforts at appropriation for opposing causes underlie the claim for his unique and truly national status. The analysis of Levski's consecutive and simultaneous appropriations by different social platforms, political parties, secular and religious institutions, ideologies, professional groups and individuals demonstrates how boundaries within the framework of the nation are negotiated around accepted national symbols.

By exploring the vicissitudes of his heroicization, glorification, consecutive appropriations by different, often opposing political forces, reinterpretation, commemoration and, finally, canonization, the book seeks to engage in several broad theoretical debates, and provide the basis for subsequent regional comparative research. I hope that such analysis would allow us to arrive at more nuanced conclusions about the lately much-debated character of Balkan nationalism as well as about the manifestations of nationalism in general, apart from the historical specificity of a particular case. The impressive literature on nationalism has emphasized its extraordinary intensity, passion and conviction in general. It is only natural that most research has chosen to concentrate on the cases of particularly forceful and persistent nationalisms, looking for correlations with religious myth, or belief in the mission of "chosen peoples." In contrast, instances of nationalism not characterized by a virulent form (to differentiate it from simply national identity), have not attracted enough scholarly attention. By concentrating on a relatively "weak" case, I hope to provide a historical explanation for its causes and manifestations.

On a further level, the Levski story engages organically with a variety of other general theoretical questions. Most broadly, it offers insights into the problem of history and memory, with its concomitant aspects: the question of public, social or collective memory as treated by historians; the nature of national memory in comparison to other types of memory; the variability of memory over time and social space;

alternative memories; memory's techniques like commemorations, the mechanism of creating and transmitting memory. The reevaluation of the role played by memory in recent works has followed two main directions as far as the historical discipline is concerned. The bulk of the scholarly production is concentrated on commemoration. The other direction, which encompasses the whole genre of "invention of tradition," interprets the ways in which history is remembered and transmitted as an important indicator of power relationships. With very few exceptions, historians do not squarely deal with the relationship between memory and history, or the exact mechanisms of constructing and transmitting memory.[10] It is one of the goals of the present study to address these problems by using the Levski case.

In the past several decades Levski's figure was embroiled in a number of disputes in Bulgarian social life, of which two assumed the characteristics of what Victor Turner defines as social drama, and became a metaphor for professional and political rivalry, an illustration of the great fight over "who owns history."[11] One was the dispute over the unknown remains of Levski that involved archaeologists, historians, architects and one of the most popular writers, Nikolai Khaitov. In the 1950s, during archeological excavations accompanying the building of socialist high rises, graves were discovered in the sanctuary of an early modern church, and this resonated with rumors since at least the

10 Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, New York: Harper & Row, 1980; Jacques Le Goff, *History and Memory*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992; David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985; Pierre Nora, *Realms of Memory. Rethinking the French Past*, ed. Lawrence B. Kritzman, trans. Arthur Goldhammer, 3 vols., New York: Columbia University Press, 1996–1998; Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989; John Gillis, ed., *Commemorations. The Politics of National Identity*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994; Gerald Sider and Gavin Smith, eds., *Between History and Histories. The Making of Silences and Commemorations*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997; Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983; Patrick H. Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory*, Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1993. On the Balkans, see Maria Todorova, ed., *Balkan Identities: Nation and Memory*, London: Hurst, New York: New York University Press, 2004.

11 Victor Turner, "Social Dramas and Stories about Them," in W. J. T. Mitchell, ed., *On Narrative,* University of Chicago Press, 1981, 137–64.

1930s about the reburial of Levski's remains in this particular place. The reburial controversy and the search for Levski's bones, whence the title of my book—*Bones of Contention*—had a meaning different from the reburial mania which swept over the post-communist space.[12] The narrative of the dispute between the archaeologists and the writer offers a privileged glimpse into the world of Bulgarian intellectual life, and specifically Bulgarian academia under communism. It also allows one to question some of the established theoretical premises with which Eastern European communism was axiomatically approached, more concretely the application of the categories of civil society and the public sphere.

By choosing to describe an episode of late communism in Eastern Europe and thus recreating some of the atmosphere in a particular setting, I am not trying to whitewash all the shortcomings, failures or crimes of the communist regimes. I am acutely aware that any "historicization" confronts the past at the same time as it complicates it, and a very fine line runs between complication, understanding and apologia. I don't believe that *tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner*. Nevertheless, up until now the literature criminalizing the whole socialist period has been so preponderant that it needs a counterbalance, of course one that is aware of the pitfalls of its own approach. If Bulgaria in the late communist period emerges in this account as an almost completely normal socialist state with its own completely normal intellectual and public debates, so much the better. It will show a country with its own reflections and longstanding traditions, instead of the usual standard, generic and boring narratives of triumphant collapse of communism, rebirth of civil society, and democracy galore.

It is my sense that the reburial controversy had serious consequences for the understanding of social processes as well as for historiography. The reburial debate is one of these rare instances when the material offers the historian a unique opportunity to experiment with it and approximate the role of the judge. Carlo Ginzburg, Natalie Zemon

12 See Katherine Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Postsocialist Change*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1999; István Rév, "Parallel Autopsies," *Representations* 49, 15–39; Andrei Pippidi, *About Graves as Landmarks of National Identity*, Discussion Paper No.13, Budapest: Collegium Budapest/Institute for Advanced Study, 1995. For an analysis of this issue, see Part III, Chapters 5, 6.

Davis and Partha Chatarjee are among the historians who have fortuitously concentrated on trial cases in order to raise questions about the nature of historical truth.[13] While the reburial controversy did not assume formal legal dimensions, the attempts at resolution acquired the underpinnings of a formal investigation, and this gives the historian the luxury not only of reconstituting the factual and intellectual environment of the event but also of trying to adjudicate the case itself.

The other scandal was the quarrel between the two patriarchates of the newly split Bulgarian Orthodox Church, in which the secessionist church resorted to a legitimizing tool very different from its usual political argumentation: the canonization of Levski in 1996. This story opens a window on the climate during the ongoing post-communist decades, and specifically the reactions over the phenomena some call by the generic name of globalization. It also offers an opportunity to approach politics as a form of cultural interaction, to enchant it with a richer sense of what it might consist of or, as Clifford Geertz would define it, "to elaborate a poetics of power, not a mechanics."[14] This work is thus an effort to think through problematic issues of the uses of history, its relations to memory, nation-building, ritual and the quest for a dignified individual identity over the *longue durée* of several and opposing political regimes.

The diachronic span of the narrative brings it to the present, and this forcefully poses the problems of personal memory, lived experience and participant observation. How can one write a scholarly account, if one is, in some cases, an observer and even a participant with or without a stake? While I am addressing the issue in the relevant places, suffice it to state here that I strongly oppose the stereotype that only outsiders (ethnic, social, kin, or ones not belonging to the same time period) can be "objective" or at least non-partial. This may seem superfluous were this a purely anthropological study meant to be con-

13 Carlo Ginzburg, *The Judge and the Historian: Marginal Notes on a Late-Twentieth-Century Miscarriage of Justice*, London: Verso, 1999; Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983; Partha Chatterjee, *A Princely Impostor? The Strange and Universal History of the Kumar of Bhawal*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002.

14 Clifford Geertz, *Negara. The Theatre State in Nineteenth-Century Bali*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980, 123. For more on this, see Part III.

sumed within the confines of a discipline that has failed to be bothered by such issues quite some time ago.[15] It is, however, still an argument within the historical profession.

I feel like the narrator in Nabokov's *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* who explains his conception of investigating his half-brother's life:

> As I planned my book it became evident that I would have to undertake an immense amount of research, bringing up his life bit by bit and soldering the fragments with my inner knowledge of his character. Inner knowledge? Yes, this was a thing I possessed, I felt it in every nerve. And the more I pondered on it, the more I perceived that I had yet another tool in my hand: when I imagined actions of his which I had heard of only after his death, I knew for certain that in such or such a case I should have acted as he had.[16]

"Personal memory," "inner knowledge," "lived experience": these are all categories that have somehow been delegitimized in scholarly research (except if they are the object of this research) as mired by affect, and affect by some pedantic definition is being opposed to thought and cognition.

Yet, it is precisely the organic link between affect and cognition that I am striving for in this book. I would like to endow my analysis with what some authors have called affective specificity.[17] "Inner knowledge," I would claim, offers access to facets which are unreachable through other means. It allows the elevation of particular aspects

15 For a penetrating survey of the posited dichotomy between insiders' and outsiders' approaches, based on a critique of Malinovskian and Boasian anthropology, see Matti Bunzl, "Boas, Foucault, and the 'Native Anthropologist': Notes toward a Neo-Boasian Anthropology," *American Anthropologist* 106.3 (2004), 435–42. See also James Buzard, "On Auto-Ethnographic Authority," *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 16.1 (2003), 61–91.

16 Vladimir Nabokov, *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight*, New York: New Directions, 1959, 33.

17 The notion of "affective specificity" is borrowed from Ruth Katz and Ruth HaCohen, *Tuning the Mind. Connecting Aesthetics to Cognitive Science*, New Brunswick, London: Transaction Publishers, 2003, IX who explain that when during the late Renaissance, a concerted attempt was made to render musical art more expressive, it resulted in the systematic marriage of music and words, which "branded music with meaning, while music endowed words with affective specificity."

of the story so as to tune them to the basic "key" of a period or conjuncture.

The tonality is something that is heard as a totality, and it is my aim to make it heard as a melody, rather than to decompose it to its particulars. I am in no ways rejecting the rigors of the profession, and preaching what has become lately fashionable in some historical circles, namely that there is no difference between history and art, particularly fiction, and that both depend solely on comparable rhetoric, history merely making an utopian claim to truth. I will address some of these issues further in the book but suffice it to say that "inner knowledge" and "personal experience" in no way challenge the formal claim of history to knowledge. What they do afford, however, is a more honest, hence more visible, approach to the strategies employed. After all, if the historian is a professional remembrancer,[18] (and if the historian's central role is in preserving and presenting social alternatives) it would be a loss not to follow these unusual but privileged pathways guided by insight.

All of this also explains my choice of genre, which is a collection of, at times, fractured narratives rather than a totality of structured explanation. These fractured narratives are not mere facets of an existing whole, but frames that systematize the seeming chaos of life. Too often the existing sources impose limits on the elaboration of these frames and it is the "personal memory," "inner knowledge," and "lived experience" of the narrator that creates the coherent whole.

Working on this story opened episodes deeply buried in my own memory. I vividly remembered the little gestures on Levski's behalf during the 1980s when laying flowers at his monument was interpreted in our circle as a kind of semi-dissident symbol. Looking back those twenty years ago brings forth a self-critical chuckle. It reminds me of the anecdote of a well-known Bulgarian Social-Democrat in the interwar period who celebrated Labor Day, May 1, by creeping under his bed, covering himself with a blanket and singing the *International* in his mind. Nonetheless, the self-congratulatory feeling of justified and fulfilled opposition is still recognizable. Following the reburial contro-

18 The phrase belongs to Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes. A History of the World, 1914–1991*, New York: Vintage Books, 1994, 103, who defines historians as "professional remembrancers of what their fellow-citizens wish to forget."

versy and then rereading it, I also remembered how, as a child, I myself once found a human skull in the vicinity of the National Library, where workers were digging in order to install the new water-supply system. I triumphantly carried what I was convinced was Levski's skull to my school, and presented it to the director. To her credit, she was quite sanguine and never tried to disabuse me of my patriotic discovery, although I am sure she immediately but tactfully disposed of it.

I was clearly carried away by the narrative of Levski's case and, for the first time in my professional life, I genuinely understood what has been affirmed as the historian's deepest motive: to tell a story because, when all is said and done, it is a very good yarn. Besides, I was aching to get again to an archive, talk to people, spin a narrative, embroider side-stories. I also wanted to do something purely Bulgarian for a change. When Georges Bizet wrote *Carmen* in 1875, his father told him he would never write anything better. Bizet died the same year at age 36. My father didn't tell me this after I had written *Imagining the Balkans*, although a few years ago, when he heard I had been awarded a John Simon Guggenheim and a NHC fellowship for this project, he exclaimed bemused: "Someone is giving you money for *that*?" My mother tactfully never did but would have told me, I think, that I should write something better. I didn't die the same year, so here is the result. It may not be better but it is completely different.

Despite my love for it, this could not become an opera, although at times I was playing with the idea of an oratorio. In the end, the structure most closely resembles the sonata form. The introduction—an *allegretto (molto moderato)*—with an emphasis on personal memory is followed by three main sections. Part I, the *exposition*, is about the sites of production of historical knowledge, their claims and competition. It has two themes in different keys: a dominant one, in a major key, what the politically incorrect nineteenth century used to call the "male theme" (the narrative of the archeological excavations and the social scandal over the different interpretations), and a subordinate one, the "female theme" in a minor key (the analysis of motives, the questioning of categories and similar destabilizing topics). Part II, the *development*, is, very broadly, about the uses and abuses of history. It is a diachronic survey of the different appropriations of the hero over roughly a century and a half. It is one of considerable tonal instability, as it moves through a number of keys and pitches: poetry and

literature, historiography, journalism, memoirs, textbooks, archival documentation, the press, paintings, monuments. It also prepares the "double return" to Part III, the *recapitulation*, about the meaning of ritual and heroes in contemporary society. Here, the main theme of the exposition—the social scandal—is recapitulated but restated in a different narrative: the formal canonization of the hero. Its orchestration involves instruments from anthropology, history, journalism, political science, and sociology. A brief *coda* brings the long piece to a close by suggesting the usefulness of the category "weak nationalism." This adds a new melody and potentially threatens to become a fourth part, but handling a symphony was not part of the original design.

Research on this study took a number of years as it was always somehow a side-effect of other, seemingly more important issues. Analysis of the material and an early writing stage began during my stint as fellow of the National Humanities Center (2000–2001) and the Vienna-based *Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen* (2001), both of which provided a wonderful creative atmosphere. After a personal interval, I resumed work on the manuscript in the paradisiacal environment of the *Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin* where I was a fellow in 2004–2005. It is there that this work took on its present shape and was almost completed. My heartfelt gratitude goes to my fellow friends and colleagues, as well as to the scientific and administrative staff of WIKO, who have influenced this work in more ways than they suspect. The numerous debts to a host of individual friends and colleagues that I have incurred in the course of writing for ideas, suggestions, stories, and other help are acknowledged, with gratitude, in the appropriate places in the text. Last, but not least, I am deeply appreciative and indebted to the Central European University Press which, at a moment of dominant corporate and market thinking, took the risk with a sizeable manuscript and didn't even fuss about the footnotes. With their decision, they also allowed me to finally let go. Lastly, I am dedicating this book to my last memories of my father. Age and illness slowed him down until he quietly passed away in 2003, but they made his humanity all the more apparent.

July 18, 2007 (on Levski's 170th birthday)
Champaign, Illinois