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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Bones of contention or professionals, dilettantes, and who owns history -- A "social drama" at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences -- From breach to crisis -- No redress, or where are Levski's bones? -- A socialist public sphere? -- "Professionals" and "dilettantes" -- Recognizing the schism or what is worse : bad professionals or good nationalists? -- The apostle of freedom or what makes a hero? -- What is a hero and are heroes born? -- The "making" of Vasil Levski -- A banner for all causes : appropriating the hero -- Contesting the hero -- The literary and visual hypostases of the hero -- From hero for all to dissident and back -- The national hero as secular saint : the canonization of Levski -- The split or how a bicephalous organism functions -- The canonization and its implications -- Levski and the Bulgarian Church : memory and narration -- The orchestration of a grass-roots cultus -- Commemoration, ritual and the sacred -- Heroes and saints : the dialectics of reincarnation.

This book is about documenting and analyzing the living archive around the figure of Vasil Levski (1837–1873), arguably the major and only uncontested hero of the Bulgarian national pantheon. 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 adding surprising new forms. The monograph is a historical study, taking as its narrative focus the life, death and posthumous fate of Levski. By exploring the vicissitudes of his heroicization, glorification, appropriations, reinterpretation, commemoration and, finally, canonization, it seeks to engage in several broad theoretical debates, and provide the basis for subsequent regional comparative research. 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.
