My sources often conflate the terms “communist” and “socialist” to describe different aspects of the political order in Bulgaria in the 1970s. I generally refer to the political system and the time period as “socialist”; often, I speak about “developed socialism” and “real socialism,” two terms used at the time. I tend to use the phrases “communist regime” and “communist elites,” because the vast majority of those in positions of power were Communist Party members. When I need to differentiate the political system in Eastern Europe from democratic socialist practices elsewhere, I speak about “state socialism.” I use “late socialism” to refer to the post-1968 period.

I often use the phraseology of the 1970s to describe policies and their outcomes; I usually put those phrases in quotation marks on first use and provide the Bulgarian original. The use of this vocabulary is meant to capture the rhetorical reality of the times and does not reflect my views of the political system or its aspirations.

I am using a modified version of the Library of Congress transliteration system for Bulgarian; namely, I use “â” instead of “û,” which is closer to the common Bulgarian rendition of the hard sign.