



SOFIA UNIVERSITY ST. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI  
DEPARTMENT OF ARABIC AND SEMITIC STUDIES



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

BULGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES  
INSTITUTE FOR HISTORICAL STUDIES

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

## THE EAST – NEAR AND FAR: TEXTS, SOCIETIES AND CULTURES

28 – 30 November 2024

ON THE OCCASION OF THE 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF ARABIC STUDIES  
AT SOFIA UNIVERSITY

The opening day of the conference celebrates also the UNESCO  
World Arabic Language Day – 2024

## PROGRAM

THURSDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2024

Aula Magna of Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, 15 Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd.

15.00 – 16.00

*Registration – in front of the Aula Magna*

**16.00 – 16.40**

**OFFICIAL OPENING**

**Chair: Prof. Dr. Simeon Evstatiev**, Head of the Department  
of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

### Opening and official addresses

OPENING

- **PROF. DR. GEORGI VALCHEV**, Rector of Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski
- **PROF. DR. GALIN TSOKOV**, Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Bulgaria
- **H.E. MRS. ZAKIA EL MIDAOU**, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of Morocco, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps in Bulgaria – *address on behalf of the heads of diplomatic missions in Sofia*
- **PROF. DR. GERGANA PETKOVA**, Dean of the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology
- **PROF. DR. DANIEL VACHKOV**, Director of the Institute for Historical Studies – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
- **MS. TANYA MIHAYLOVA**, Director of the Diplomatic Institute, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria
- **PROF. DSC YORDAN PEEV**, Doyen of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Bulgaria
- **PROF. DSC TSVETAN THEOPHANOV**, President of Prof. Tsvetan Theophanov Foundation

ADDRESSES

**Working languages of the conference: *Bulgarian and English***

The papers are to be delivered either entirely in English, or in Bulgarian with a PowerPoint presentation in English.

**16.40 – 17.20****OPENING PLENARY SESSION****THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA AS SEEN FROM  
THE BALKANS AND IBERIA**

- **PROF. DR. SIMEON EVSTATIEV**, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski  
— *A View from the Edge: Ivan Dimitrov Kimryanov (1883–1913) and the Rise of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Bulgaria*
  
- **PROF. DR. MARIBEL FIERRO**, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC), Madrid  
— *Centre and Periphery in the Pre-Modern Islamic World: The Case of al-Andalus*

**17.20 – 18.00****STUDENT PROGRAM****On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Arabic Studies  
and the World Arabic Language Day – 2024**

- Artistic program by students of the Arabic Studies Program at Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski
  
- Performance by Linguaccord, Student Vocal Group at the Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, directed by Dr. Valchan Valchanov

**18.00****COCKTAIL**

*The cocktail with dishes from the Middle East and North Africa is offered by the embassies of Arab states in Bulgaria.*

**FRIDAY, 29 NOVEMBER 2024****Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 15 Noemvri St., 1  
Ivan Evstratiev Geshov Hall****10.30 – 12.15****PANEL 1 — THE EAST AND THE DYNAMICS OF  
MODERNITY****Moderator: Prof. Dr. Stoyanka Kenderova**• **10.30 – 10.45****PROF. DR. ILIYANA MARCHEVA**, Institute for Historical Studies – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences— *European Neighbourhood Policy from the Fall of the Berlin Wall to the Eastern Partnership Program* (in Bulgarian)• **10.45 – 11.00****SENIOR ASST. PROF. DR. NADEZHDA YANKOVSKA**, Institute for Historical Studies – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences— *The Eastern Bloc, Algeria and the Liberation Struggle in Angola (1962–1965)* (in Bulgarian)• **11.00 – 11.15****DOCTORAL STUDENT NIKOLAY KARAMIHOV**, Plovdiv University Paisii Hilendarski // Ministry of Innovation and Growth of Bulgaria— *Monarchy and Revolution: How Iran Views Its Areas of Interest in the XX–XXI Centuries* (in Bulgarian)• **11.15 – 11.30****DOCTORAL STUDENT MARTIN CHORBADJIYSKI**, Department of Modern and Contemporary History, Faculty of History, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski— *Muslim Migration in Contemporary Europe in the Works of Daniel Pipes*• **11.30 – 11.45****SENIOR ASST. PROF. DR. BEHRIN SHOPOVA**, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences— *Life Description of the Prophet Muhammad in the Mawlid Ritual* (in Bulgarian)**11.45 – 12.15**

Panel discussion

**12.15 – 13.30****LUNCH BREAK**

**13.30 – 15.00****PANEL 2 — RELIGION AND HISTORICAL CONTEXTS****Moderator: Prof. Dr. Iliyana Marcheva**

- 13.30 – 13.45

**AMBASSADOR DR. DIMITAR MIHAYLOV**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria

— *Abraham and Ibrahim: Harmony or Divergence?* (in Bulgarian)

- 13.45 – 14.00

**PRIEST DR. STELIYAN KUNEV**, Lecturer at the Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov University – Burgas

— *The Attitude of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in the 9th – 12th Centuries Towards the Islamic Doctrine and the Prophet Muhammad According to Anathema One of the Act on the Admission of Saracens into the Church and the Tomos of the Council of Constantinople of 1180 against Muhammad* (in Bulgarian)

- 14.00 – 14.15

**DR. NIKOLA LAMBEV**, National Museum of History, Boyana Church Branch

— *Boyana Church between East and West: Eastern Imagery and Western Trends in Its Mid-Thirteenth-Century Murals*

- 14.15 – 14.30

**DR. IRMA MAKHARADZE**, Tbilisi Institute of Asia and Africa

— *Intercultural Perspectives on the “Ashab Al-Kahf”: A Cross-Cultural Journey through Faith, Mythology, and Historical Contexts*

14.30 – 15.00

Panel discussion

**15.00 – 15.30****COFFEE BREAK****15.30 – 17.00****PANEL 3 — THE ARABS, ISLAM, AND OTTOMAN HERITAGE****Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Irina Sotirova**

- 15.30 – 15.45

**DR. THEODORA ZAMPAKI**, Adjunct Professor, Hellenic Open University, Greece

— *Charitable Institutions in ‘Abbāsid Society (AD 750–1258)*

- 15.45 – 16.00

**PROF. DR. STOYANKA KENDEROVA**, St. St. Cyril and Methodius National Library, Bulgaria

— *Documents about the History of Yemen During the Ottoman period* (in Bulgarian)

- 16.00 – 16.15

PROF. DR. ABDULHAMIT KIRMIZI, Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey

— *Tongues of Empire: Language Skills of Christian Officials in the Ottoman Bureaucracy*

- 16.15 – 16.30

ASSOC. PROF. DR. ROSSITSA GRADEVA, American University in Bulgaria

— *The Conquest of Sofia as Presented in Ottoman Chronicles*

16.30 – 17.00

Panel discussion

**17.00 – 17.30**

**COFFEE BREAK**

**17.30 – 19.00**

**PANEL 4 — ISLAM AND THE BALKANS**

**Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nadya Filipova**

- 17.30 – 17.45

PROF. DSC PAVEL PAVLOVITCH, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Nikola K. Litsa – the First Bulgarian Translator of the Qur'ān*

- 17.45 – 18.00

ASSOC. PROF. DR. GALINA EVSTATIEVA, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Muslim Veiling in the Balkans: Modern Perceptions of Center and Periphery*

- 18.00 – 18.15

DOCTORAL STUDENT MANSUR BAKIR, Florida State University, History Department

— *The Dethronement of Sultans in the Modern Age: The Role of Islamic Law and Hal' Fatwas in the Late Ottoman Politics, 1876–1908*

- 18.15 – 18.30

NIHAL ÖZERGAN, First Stage Researcher (R1), Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *The Hadith of the "Ship" as a Conceptual Metaphor of Society and Civilization in the Turkish Theolinguistic Leadership Discourse* (in Bulgarian)

18:30 – 19:00

Panel discussion

**SATURDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 2024**

**Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski,  
Rectorate, 15 Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd.**

**Hall 1****PANELS “A”****10.00 – 11.30****PANEL 5A — EUROPE, THE MIDDLE EAST,  
AND THE FAR EAST****Moderator: Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. Simona Samuilova**

- 10.00 – 10.15

**DR. ZORNITSA GREKOVA**, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski— *Maritime Southeast Asia in the Search of Contemporaneity in the 1960s*

- 10.15 – 10.30

**ASSOC. PROF. DR. EVGENIY KANDILAROV**, Department of Japanese Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski // Institute for Historical Studies – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences— *The Balkan Region in the Relations between Japan and Central and Eastern Europe after the End of the Cold War*

- 10.30 – 10.45

**AMBASSADOR DR. KAMEN VELICHKOV**— *The Beginnings of Bulgarian Diplomacy in the Middle East: Intentions and Results*

- 10.45 – 11.00

**AMBASSADOR PETKO DOYKOV**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria— *The EU and the Middle East, the EU and South, East, and Southeast Asia, the EU and the Western Balkans: A Comparative Analysis* (in Bulgarian)

11.00 – 11.30

Panel discussion

**11.30 – 11.45****COFFEE BREAK****11.45 – 13.30****PANEL 6A — ARAB CHRISTIANS AND THE  
RELIGIONS OF THE EAST****Moderator: Prof. Dr. Milena Bratoeva**

- 11.45– 12.00

**ASSOC. PROF. DR. TEODOR LEKOV**, Classical East Studies Department, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski— *The Myth of the Egyptian Ruler’s “Divine Birth”* (in Bulgarian)

- **12.00– 12.15**

**ASSOC. PROF. DR. MARIAM NANOBASHVILI**, Department of Arabic Studies, Faculty of Humanities, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

— *Impact of Christian Arabic Tradition on Georgian Literature*

- **12.15 – 12.30**

**PROF. DR. GERGANA RUSEVA**, Classical East Studies Department, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Daksha's Sacrifice and the Incident in the Forest Dārūka near Chidambaram: Paradoxes in Śiva Myths*

- **12.30 – 12.45**

**ASSOC. PROF. DR. ANTONIA TSANKOVA**, Department of African and Indo-Pacific Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Basic Semantic Aspects of the Concept of Harmony in Classical Chinese Spiritual Thought* (in Bulgarian)

- **12.45 – 13.00**

**DR. ANTONIYA NACHEVA**. Postdoc

— *Mystical Paths of Ecstasy in Hindu and Sufi Traditions*

13.00 – 13.30

Panel discussion

**13.30 – 14.30**

**LUNCH BREAK**

**14.30 – 16.15**

**PANEL 7A — TEXTS, IMAGES, AND  
HISTORICAL IMAGINATION**  
Moderator: *Prof. DSc Pavel Pavlovitch*

- **14.30 – 14.45**

**ASSOC. PROF. DR. IRINA SOTIROVA**, Department of Korean Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *The Mural Composition from Afrasiyab. Meeting of the Asian peoples* (in Bulgarian)

- **14.45 – 15.00**

**DR. SAMAH SAFFURI KHOURY**, Oranim College, Israel

— *The Grotesque Technique in Very Short Stories Written by Palestinian Female Writers*

- **15.00 – 15.15**

**PROF. DSC IRENA KRISTEVA**, Department of Romance Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Imaginary, Symbolic, and Real in Nizami's Haft Paykar*

- 15.15 – 15.30

ASSOC. PROF. DR. JERIES KHOURY, Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Tel Aviv University

— *Place as a Time's Signifier in Palestinian Resistant Poetry – The Case of Salim Jubran*

- 15.30 – 15.45

SENIOR ASST. PROF. DR. DESISLAVA VLADIMIROVA, Faculty of History, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Tariq ibn Ziyad and the Beginning of Arab Conquests in Europe – Multidimensional Memory in Medieval Arabic Historiography* (in Bulgarian)

15.45 – 16.15

Panel discussion

16.45 – 17.30

COFFEE BREAK (at Yaytseto Center)

**Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski  
Rectorate, 15 Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd.**

**Yaytseto Conference and Research Center**

**PANELS "B"**

**10.00 – 11.30**

**PANEL 5B – EDUCATION, RELIGIOUS  
PROJECTIONS, AND ARTISTIC ENDEAVOURS  
Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galina Evstatieva**

- 10.00 – 10.15

DR. AZIZ NAZMI SHAKIR, Recognized Researcher (R2), Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Graduate Theses Defended in the Arabic Studies Programs of Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, 1974–2024 (Statistics and Thematic Fields)* (in Bulgarian)

- 10.15 – 10.30

SENIOR ASST. PROF. DR. SIRMA KOSTADINOVA, Classical East Studies Department, Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *The Night Journey in Islam and Zoroastrianism – Dream, Reality, Prophetic Illumination* (in Bulgarian)



- **10.30 – 10.45**

**ASST. PROF. DR. EKATERINA KRASIMIROVA**, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Migrating Intellectuals during the Arab Renaissance of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (in Bulgarian)

- **10.45 – 11.00**

**DOCTORAL STUDENT KONSTANTIN POBORNIKOV**, Institute for Balkan Studies with Professor Alexander Fol Center of Thracian Studies – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

— *The Arabian Desert as a Source of Life in Turkish Symbolism* (in Bulgarian)

11.00 – 11.30

Panel discussion

**11.30 – 11.45**

**COFFEE BREAK**

**11.45 – 13.30**

**PANEL 6B — TEXT, RELIGION AND POLITICS**

**Moderator: Prof. DSc Tsvetan Theophanov**

- **11.45 – 12.00**

**ASSOC. PROF. DR. MARIANA MALINOVA**, New Bulgarian University, Department of Mediterranean and Eastern Studies

— *Ibn Taymiyya's Understanding of Translation* (in Bulgarian)

- **12.00 – 12.15 ч.**

**NIHAL ÖZERGAN**, First Stage Researcher (R1), Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

**DR. ILIYANA BOZHOVA**, Postdoctoral Fellow, Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

**ASST. PROF. DR. EKATERINA KRASIMIROVA**, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Civilizational Discourses on Pre-Islamic Roots of the Turkish, Iranian, and Egyptian National Identities of the Early 20th Century* (in Bulgarian)

- **12.15 – 12.30**

**ASSOC. PROF. DR. NADYA FILIPOVA**, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski // Institute for Historical Studies – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

— *Between Peace and War: The Soviet Bloc and the Arab-Israeli Conflict (1967–1973)*

- **12.30 – 12.45**

**SENIOR ASST. PROF. DR. STOYAN DOKLEV**, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Tariq Ramadan and the Idea of European Islam*

- 12.45 – 13.00

SENIOR ASST. PROF. DR. SIMONA SAMUILOVA, Institute for Historical Studies – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

— *The Bulgarian Diaspora in Israel: Social Integration and Cultural Heritage* (in Bulgarian)

13.00 – 13.30

Panel discussion

13.30 – 14.30

LUNCH BREAK

14.30 – 16.45

**PANEL 7B — LANGUAGE, RELIGION AND SYMBOLS**

Moderator: *Prof. Dr. Gergana Ruseva*

- 14.30 – 14.45

ROMAN BUSHUIEV, Translator, Mechnikov National University in Odesa, Ukraine

— *Grammar Transformation Example Using Present Tense Verbs in Modern Standard Arabic and Lebanese Dialect*

- 14.45 – 15.00

SENIOR ASST. PROF. DR. IVAN DYULGEROV, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *On the Semantic Structure of the Qur'anic Term Fitnah*

- 15.00 – 15.15

DR. HRISTINA CHOBANOVA-ANGELOVA, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *The Changing Spoken Form of Modern Standard Arabic in TAFL – a Basis for Developing Communicative Skills* (in Bulgarian)

- 15.15 – 15.30

DOCTORAL STUDENT ANA MINCHEVA, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Modern Views on the Prohibition of Alcohol in Islam* (in Bulgarian)

- 15.30 – 15.45

MAYA TZENOVA, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Gibran Khalil Gibran – between the Arabic Mother Tongue and the Universal English* (in Bulgarian)

- 15.45 – 16.00

KRISTINA TOSHKINA, MA in Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski and Hebrew University of Jerusalem

— *The Use of Arabic in Ugaritic Lexicography*

16.00 – 16.30

Panel discussion

**16:45 – 17.30****COFFEE BREAK*****Yaytseto* Conference and Research Center****17.30– 19.00****CONCLUDING PLENARY SESSION****RELIGION AND CULTURE****Moderator: *Prof. Dr. Simeon Evstatiev***

- **17.30 – 17.50**

**PROF. DSC TSVETAN THEOPHANOV**, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Al-Akhtal: “The Poet of the Umayyads”* (in Bulgarian)

- **17.50 – 18.10**

**PROF. DR. MILENA BRATOEVA**, Classical East Studies Department, Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

— *Shah Bano Case: A Turning Point in the Battle for Fundamental Rights of Muslim Women in India*

18.10 – 18.30          Discussion

**18.30 – 19.00 ч.**          **Concluding remarks re the publication possibilities and closing of the conference**

---

## **ORGANIZING COMMITTEE**

### SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

#### *President*

- Prof. Dr. Simeon Evstatiev (Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski)

#### *Members*

- Prof. Dr. Gergana Petkova (Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski)
- Prof. Dr. Daniel Vachkov (Institute for Historical Studies – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)
- Prof. Dr. Milena Bratoeva (Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski)
- Prof. Dr. Iliyana Marcheva (Institute for Historical Studies – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

## ORGANIZATIONAL COUNCIL

### *Chair*

- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nadya Filipova (Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski and Institute for Historical Studies – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

### *Members*

- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galina Evstatieva (Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski)
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Irina Sotirova (Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski)
- Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. Stoyan Doklev (Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski)
- Asst. Prof. Dr. Ekaterina Krasimirova (Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski)
- Doctoral Student Ana Mincheva (Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski)

---

*The conference is held within the framework of the project "The Far Middle East, the Near Far East: Religion and Culture" supported by Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski (contract No. 80-10-139 / 17.04.2024).*