BULGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Institute for Historical Studies

AND

THE EGYPTIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY

Damanhour University

In partnership with

SOFIA UNIVERSITY "ST. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI"

Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies

Center for the Study of Religions

AND

THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTENEGRO

Faculty of Philosophy

INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC CONFERENCE

The European South–East and the Middle East: At the Crossroads of Entangled Regions, Cultures, and Religions

On the Occasion of the 100th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between Bulgaria and Egypt

13–15 July 2026, Sofia

Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1 "15th November" Street

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", 15 Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd.

PROGRAMME

13 July 2026

Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1 "15th November" Street, "Professor Marin Drinov" Hall

14:30 – 15:00 **Registration** – in front of "Professor Marin Drinov" Hall

15:00 – 15:15 **OFFICIAL OPENING**

- **Assoc. Prof. Dr. NADYA FILIPOVA** (Director of the Institute for Historical Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences) and
- **Dr. habil. ABDALLAH ABDEL-ATI AL-NAGGAR** (Academy of Scientific Research and Technology, Egypt – Eötvös Loránd University)

15:15 – 15:30 **OFFICIAL ADDRESSES**

15:30 – 17:00 **OPENING PLENARY SESSION**

THE EUROPEAN SOUTH-EAST AND THE MIDDLE EAST: DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES AND PATHWAYS TO MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

- **Prof. Dr. SIMEON EVSTATIEV**, Head of the Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"
  - *Centers and Peripheries; Why Study the Connected Histories of the Middle East and the Balkans?*
- **Prof. Dr. ALI AHMED MOHAMED ELSAYED**, Emeritus Professor, Damanhour University, College of Art
  - *The Islamic Volga Bulgar Kingdom in the Travel Account of Abu Hamid al-Andalusi (d. 565/1169): An Analytical Study*
- **Prof. Dr. MARIJAN PREMOVIĆ**, University of Montenegro, Faculty of Philosophy and **Prof. Dr. MAJA VASILJEVIĆ**, University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philosophy.
  - *Entangled History of Liberation: Serbian-Bulgarian Anti-Ottoman Cooperation in the Age of Georgi Rakovski and Mihailo Obrenović*
- **Dr. habil. ABDALLAH ABDEL-ATI AL-NAGGAR** (Academy of Scientific Research & Technology, Egypt; Eötvös Loránd University) and **Assoc. Prof. Dr. NADYA FILIPOVA** (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences; Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski")
  - *Bulgaria and Egypt: Politics and Propaganda During the Cold War in the Middle East*

17:00 – 18:30 **COCKTAIL**

14 July 2026

Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1 "15th November" Street, "Professor Marin Drinov" Hall

Panels "A"

Panel IA

European and Middle Eastern Areas in Geopolitical Rivalries

Moderator: Prof. DSc. Jordan Baev

10:30 – 10:45 **Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. ALEKSANDAR STOYANOV** (Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

- *The Balkans in Napoleon's Foreign Policy Plans (1797–1812)*

10:45 – 11:00 **Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. MARIAN KARAGYOZOV** (Institute of Balkan Studies with Center of Thracology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

- *Israeli-Turkish Standoff: The Balkan Dimension*

11:00 – 11:15 **Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. OLGA STOYANOVA-ENCHEVA** (St Cyril and St Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo, Department of National Security and Political Science)

- *Bulgaria and Egypt as Arenas of Geopolitical Competition: "Soft Power" and the Economic Influence of the United States and the Russian Federation*

11:15 – 11:30 **Dr. MARIYA GEORGIEVA (**Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

- *The Positions of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Context of Russia's War Against Ukraine*

11:30 – 11:45 Panel Discussion

11:45 – 12:15 **Coffee Break**

Panel IIA

Cultural Communication and Arts Exchanges

Moderator: Dr. Kamen Velichkov

12:15 – 12:30 **Assoc. Prof. Dr. GALINA EVSTATIEVA** (Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Faculty of Classical and Modern Philology, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski")

- *Bridging Cultures: Translating Arabic Literature into Bulgarian*

12:30 – 12:45 **OSAMA GAD** (Department of Drama and Theater Criticism, Faculty of Arts, Ain Shams University) – *delivered via videoconference*

- *Cinema as a Bridge for Multidimensional Cultural Interactions: Egyptian–Bulgarian Cinematic Exchanges in the Context of Middle Eastern and Southeast European Relations*

12:45 – 13:00 **Asst. Prof. Dr. ILIYANA BOZHOVA** (Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

- *Bulgarian–Iranian Cultural Relations During the 1970s*

13:00 – 13:15 **Assoc. Prof. Dr. SIMONA SAMUILOVA** (Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences) and **Dr. habil. ABDALLAH ABDEL-ATI AL-NAGGAR** (Academy of Scientific Research & Technology, Egypt; Eötvös Lorán University)

- *Bulgarian–Egyptian Cultural and Educational Exchanges from the Mid-1950s to the Late 1980s*

13:15 – 13:30 Panel Discussion

13:30 – 14:30 **LUNCH BREAK**

Panel IIIA

Politics, Identities and Security Considerations

Moderator: Dr. habil. Abdallah Abdel-Ati Al-Naggar

14:30 – 14:45 **Dr. DIMITAR M. MIHAYLOV** (Ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria to the State of Qatar) – *delivered via videoconference*

- *From Tribal Order and Islamic Norms to Contemporary GCC Realities*

14:45 – 15:00 **Prof. DSc. JORDAN BAEV (**Visiting Professor at the Faculty of History, Sofia University)

- *The Egypt's Policy Viewed Through the Reports of a Bulgarian Ambassador in Cairo (1961–1965)*

15:00 – 15:15 **KALOYAN VASEV, PhD Student** (Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

- *What Is the Difference in the Formation of Collective Identity Undertaken by the IMRO and the IRA?*

15:15 – 15:30 **Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. KRASTYO YORDANOV** (Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

- *The State of the Parish Network and Monasteries in the Plovdiv Region in the 1690s as an Indicator of Demographic and Economic Development in the Villages on the Eve of the Bulgarian National Revival*

15:30 – 15:45 Panel Discussion

15:45 – 16:15 **Coffee Break**

Panel IVA

The Middle Eastern States and Nations as Viewed from the Southeastern Europe

Moderator: Asst. Prof. Dr. Martina Marinova

16:15 – 16:30 **Recognized Researcher Dr. KAMEN VELICHKOV (**Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies)

- *Official Relations between Bulgaria and Egypt in the 1920s*

16:30 – 16:45 **Assoc. Prof. Dr. DENITSA PETROVA (**Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences) – *delivered via videoconference*

- *The Egyptians as a Subject in World History according to the First Chronicle Works in Medieval Bulgaria*

16:45 – 17:00 **Prof. Dr. AYMAN WAHBY** (Mansoura University)

- *Aspects of Bulgarian – Egyptian Relations in Egyptology, Present and Future*

17:00 – 17:15 **Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. IRINA GRIGOROVA (**Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Science)

- *The Image of Algeria in the Documents of the Bulgarian Intelligence Services (1963–1989)*

17:15 – 17:30 **Senior Asst. Prof. DR. NADEZHDA YANKOVSKA** (Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Science)

- *Eastern Bloc Solidarity with the Algerian Struggle for Independence: The Bulgarian Case*

17:30 – 17:45 Panel Discussion

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Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", 15 Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd., Hall II

Panels "B"

Panel IB

Migration of Ideas and People

Moderator: Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. Aneliya Stoyanova

10:30 – 10:45 **Prof. Dr. TEODOR LEKOV** (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski")

- *Towards the Concept of the Divine Kingship During the Time of Ramesses II*

10:45 – 11:00 **Prof. Dr. MOHAMED EL MOUDEN EL MOUDEN** (Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Cádiz)

- *The Rhetorical Maqām and the Sufi Maqām in al-Humaydī: Towards Establishing a Spiritual Sufi Dimension of Rhetoric in Andalusian Thought*

11:00 – 11:15 **MUXHAHID ISMAILI, PhD Student (**Department of Social Applied Sciences, European University of Tirana) – *delivered via videoconference*

- *Socio-Political and Religious impact of the Turkey's AK Party towards the Middle East and the Balkans*

11:15 – 11:30 **Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. EKATERINA DOKLEVA (**Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski")

- *The Imprint of the French Experience: Rifāʿa Rāfiʿ al-Ṭahṭāwī on Patriotism*

11:30 – 11:45 Panel Discussion

11:45 – 12:15 **Coffee Break**

Panel IIB

Religion, Societies, and Community Interactions

Moderator: Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. Irina Grigorova

12:15 – 12:30 **Asst. Prof. Dr. MARTINA MARINOVA (**Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

- *Between Europe and Its Internal Other: Orientalism, Balkanism and the Discursive Roots of Balkan Euroscepticism*

12:30 – 12:45 **Prof. Dr. ADNAN ISMAILI** (Faculty of Philosophy, Study Program in Oriental Philology, University of Tetovo) and **Prof. Dr.**

METIN IZETI (Faculty of Arts. Study Program in Arts, University of Tetova)

- ***The Word of the Qur'an and the Challenge of Terminological Transformation in Sacred Hermeneutics***

12:45 – 13:00 **Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. STOYAN DOKLEV** (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies) – *delivered via videoconference*

- ***Between Heritage and Renewal (turāth wa tajdīd): Egyptian Philosopher Hassan Hanafi on Islam and Modernity***

13:00 – 13:15 **Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. IVAN DYULGEROV** (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies)

- ***On the Qur'anic Concept of Kitāb as Humanized God's Knowledge***

13:15 – 13:30 Panel Discussion

13:30 – 14:30 **LUNCH BREAK**

Panel IIIB

Building the Bridges of Knowledge and Responsiveness

Moderator: Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. Ekaterina Dokleva

14:30 – 14:45 **HRISTIN PAVLOVA, Bachelor Student** (Arabic Studies Program, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski")

- ***Bulgarian–Egyptian Cultural and Educational Cooperation during the 1960s***

14:45 – 15:00 **Dr. AZIZ SHAKIR** (Researcher R2, Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski")

- ***The Influence of Digital Spaces on the Development of Contemporary Arabic Literature (based on the example of the international online platform "Kotobna")***

15:00 – 15:15 **Prof. Dr. ACHOUAK CHALKHA** (Mohammed V University in Rabat)

- ***Border Epistemologies and Knowledges in Transit: Linguistic Contact in Morisco Aljamiado Manuscripts***

15:15 – 15:30 **Dr. HRISTINA CHOBANOVA (**Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski") – *delivered via videoconference*

- ***Integration of Artificial Intelligence in Teaching Arabic Dialects: The Case of Egyptian***

15:30 – 15:45 Panel Discussion

15:45 – 16:15 **Coffee Break**

Panel IVB

Perceptions of the Other

Moderator: Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. Aleksandar Stoyanov

16:15 – 16:30 **SHERIF ABOUSHANAB, PhD student** (Eger University) – *delivered via videoconference*

- ***Political and Economic Relations Between Hungary and Bulgaria***

16:30 – 16:45 **AGNES IJJAS, PhD Student** (Eötvös Lóránd University)

- ***International Relations and Geopolitics: Entangled Security Spaces Between Southeastern Europe and the Middle East***

16:45 – 17:00 **Dr. LOLA BAÑON CASTELLÓN** (Faculty Philology, Translation and Communication, Valencia University, Spain) – *delivered via videoconference*

- ***Communication and Media as Infrastructure of Cohesion in the Mediterranean and the Middle East: Toward a Political Alternative Zone for a Culture of Peace***

17:00 – 17:15 **VIKTOR VARBANOV, PhD Student** (Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

- ***Iran's Foreign Policy in Early Cold War Indian Diplomatic Assessments***

17:15 – 17:30 Panel Discussion

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Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1 "15th November" Street, "Professor Marin Drinov" Hall

Politics and Its Actors

Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nadya Filipova

10:30 – 10:45 **Prof. Dr. ANGELINA MARKOVSKA** (Veliko Turnovo University St. Cyril and St. Methodius; Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences) – *delivered via videoconference*

- ***Gateways of Stability: The Geopolitical Roles of Bulgaria and Egypt in the Black Sea and Mediterranean Security Architecture***

10:45 – 11:00 **Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. ANELIYA STOYANOVA** (Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

- ***Habsburg – Ottoman Diplomacy and the Fate of Christian Captives after the Battle of Djerba (1560)***

11:00 – 11:15 **Dr. KALOYAN KONSTANTINOV** (Institute of Balkan Studies with Center of Thracology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

- ***Iran and Hezbollah: A joint Balkan Venture***

11:15 – 11:30 **NAZEK MOHSEN, Bachelor Student** (Arabic Studies Program, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski")

- ***Beyond Politics: How Trade Shaped Bulgarian–Egyptian Relations from Socialism to Globalization***

11:30 – 11:45 **Assoc. Prof. Dr. DIMITER CHRISTOV (**Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences) – *delivered via videoconference*

- ***Forces Shaping Bulgarian – Egyptian Relations in the 19th century***

11:45 – 11:30 Panel Discussion

11:30 – 12:00 **Concluding remarks**

12:00 – 14:00 **SOFIA SIGHTSEEING WALKING TOUR**

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nadya Filipova (Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences), Co-Chair
- Prof. Dr. Simeon Evstatiev (Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Center for the Study of Religions, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"), Co-Chair
- Prof. Dr. Ali Ahmed El-Sayed (Damanhour University), Co-Chair
- Prof. Dr. Marijan Premović (Faculty of Philosophy, University of Montenegro), Co-Chair
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Simona Samuilova (Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)
- Dr. habil. Abdallah Abdel-Ati Al-Naggar (Academy of Scientific Research and Technology, Egypt – Eötvös Loránd University)
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Galina Evstatieva (Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski")
- Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. Krustyo Yordanov (Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)
- Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. Stoyan Doklev (Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski")
- Victor Varbanov, PhD Student (Institute for Historical Studies, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)
- Senior Asst. Prof. Dr. Ekaterina Dokleva (Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski")

Working Language: English

The conference is held within the framework of the joint research project "Beyond the Boundaries of Time and Space: Bulgaria and Egypt in the Dynamics of Transformations in the Middle East". The project is being implemented during the period 2025–2027 by the Institute for Historical Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and Damanhour University under a bilateral agreement between the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and the Egyptian Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (*Project No. IC-EG/10/2025–2027*).