



Diplomacy, Intelligence, and Influence in the Balkans and Beyond,

17th–19th Centuries

Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, Bulgaria

March 24–25, 2026

Organizers:

Aneliya Stoyanova, Aleksandar Zlatanov, Lubomir Krustev

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Venue: [Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Main Building](#)

Preliminary Program

Tuesday, 24.03.2026. (“Prof. Marin Drinov” Hall)

08:30 – 09:00	Registration
09:00 – 09:30	Official Opening
09:30 – 10:15	Keynote Address Emrah Safa Gürkan Espionage Techniques in the Sixteenth-Century Mediterranean
10:15 – 10:30	Coffee Break
10:30 – 11:45	Panel 1. Chair: Aneliya Stoyanova
10:30 – 10:45	Michał Wasiucionek

- Translator as a Spy: Samuel Otwinowski and the Polish Lithuanian Intelligence Network on the Polish Ottoman Borderland in the Early Seventeenth Century
- 10:45 – 11:00** **Magdalena Jakubowska**
The Lviv Stauropegion Brotherhood as a key actor in Polish Moldavian diplomacy in the Early Seventeenth Century
- 11:00 – 11:15** **Vladimir Angelov**
Information on monuments of ancient and medieval culture in the Bulgarian lands in French, German, and Austrian travelogues from the 16th–17th centuries
- 11:15 – 11:45** **Discussion**
- 11:45 – 12:30** **Panel 2.**
Chair: **Konstantin Golev**
- 11:45 – 12:00** **Zsuzsanna Hámori Nagy**
Letters on the Table: Balkans Information Flow and Transylvanian Diplomacy in the Middle of the 1620s
- 12:00 – 12:15** **Gábor Kármán**
Resident envoys of Moldavia and Wallachia at the Sublime Porte (1630 – 1660)
- 12:15 – 12:30** **Ágnes Szalai**
A "Diplomatic Crisis" in Transylvania: The Escape of Grigore Ghica, Voivode of Wallachia (1664)
- 12:30 – 13:00** **Discussion**
- 13:00 – 14:00** **Lunch**
- 14:00 – 14:45** **Keynote Address**
Arno Strohmeyer
Topic TBC
- 14:45 – 15:45** **Panel 3.**
Chair: **Albena Simova**
- 14:45 – 15:00** **Elisabeth Lobenwein**

Eyes and Ears in Constantinople: Intelligence Practices of Imperial Diplomats in Times of Peace (17th Century)

15:00 – 15:15

Aneliya Stoyanova

Official and secret agenda of the diplomatic mission of Hans Rudolf Graf von Puchheim to Constantinople (1634)

15:15 – 15:30

Bahri Özel

Checking the Watch on the Road: Time in Ottoman Ambassadorial Reports to Vienna (1665 – 1757)

15:30 – 15:45

Yasir Yilmaz

Habsburg information empire in the Sublime Porte and asymmetrical flow of information from Constantinople to Vienna: Three case studies from 1682, 1699–1700, and 1719–1720

15:45 – 16:15

Discussion

16:15 – 16:30

Coffee Break

16:30 – 17:15

Panel 4.

Chair: TBC

16:30 – 16:45

Albena Simova

A Double-Edged Diplomat: Edward Bancroft and the Silas Deane Mission (1776–1778)

16:30 – 16:45

Ü. Serdar Serdaroglu

Broker Merchants as Intelligence Nodes: British Levantine Commercial Diplomatic Networks in the Ottoman Balkans (1760–1850)

16:45 – 17:00

Donika Tsanovska–Schneeweiss

Network of Influence of the Austrian Branch of the Dragoman Family Testa

17:00 – 17:30

Discussion

Parallel Sessions (“Acad. Ivan E. Geshov” Hall)

- 14:45 – 15:45** **Panel 5**
Chair: **Lyubomir Krustev**
- 14:45 – 15:00** **Alexander Stoyanov**
The Balkans in Napoleon's Foreign Policy Plans (1797–1812)
- 15:00 – 15:15** **Aggelis Zarokostas**
‘Dispatched by General Buonaparte ... for the express purpose of obtaining republican proselytes’: Anglo-French intelligence and competing networks of influence in western Greece during the Revolutionary Wars (1792–1802)
- 15:15 – 15:30** **Margherita Pinzani**
Diplomacy, Exile and Philhellenism: Greek Communities under Tuscan and Ottoman Oversight
- 15:30 – 15:45** **Candan Badem**
Russian military agents in Constantinople in the 19th century
- 15:45 – 16:15** **Discussion**
- 16:15 – 16:30** **Coffee Break**
- 16:30 – 17:00** **Panel 6**
Chair: TBC
- 16:15 – 16:30** **Miles Taylor**
Statistical patriotism in the Balkans: lobbying and intelligence at the Congress of Berlin (1878) and after
- 16:30 – 16:45** **Sercan Önder**
Bulgarian Question at the Congress of Berlin (1878)
- 16:45 – 17:00** **Aneta Mihaylova**
Bulgarian-Russian Relations in the First Two Decades after the Liberation through the Eyes of the Romanian Consuls in Bulgaria
- 17:00 – 17:30** **Discussion**

Wednesday, 25.03.2026. (“Prof. Marin Drinov” Hall)

- 09:00 – 09:45** **Keynote Address**
Aleka Strezova
Topic TBC
- 09:45 – 10:00** **Coffee Break**
- 10:00 – 11:00** **Panel 7.**
Chair: **Aleksandar Zlatanov**
- 10:00 – 10:15** **Gabor Demeter**
Russian and Austro-Hungarian agents in István Burián’s diary (1886–1895) – the knowledge of consular diplomacy on informal activities
- 10:15 – 10:30** **Katalin Schrek**
The “Conférence à Quatre”: Austria-Hungary and the Negotiations on the Balkan Railways
- 10:30 – 10:45** **Boriana Antonova–Goleva**
A Journey of Maps: Machinations, Thefts and Speculations in Ottoman Railway Development
- 10:45 – 11:00** **Vladimir Zlatarski**
Consul and Agent: German Diplomats in the Balkans in the Second Half of the 19th Century
- 11:00 – 11:30** **Discussion**
- 11:30 – 12:30** **Panel 8.**
Chair: **Boriana Antonova–Goleva**
- 11:30 – 11:45** **Daniel Cain, Adrian Bogdan Ceobanu**
Some Balkan destinies at the end of the 19th century: Apostol Margarit and Lazar Duma
- 11:45 – 12:00** **Nikola ZEČEVIĆ**
Writing Strategy in Secret: The Intelligence Backstory of Načertanije (1843–1848)
- 12:00 – 12:15** **Shelby Jones**

Letters from Herzegovina: William J. Stillman's Special Correspondence for The London Times (1875–1877)

12:15 – 12:30

Christo Kostov

Folklore, Espionage, and Nation Building: Stefan Verković's Mission in Ottoman Macedonia

12:30 – 13:00

Discussion

13:00 – 14:00

Lunch

14:00 – 14:45

Panel 9.

Chair: **Aleka Strezova**

14:00 – 14:15

Aleksandar Zlatanov

Topic TBC

14:15 – 14:30

Lyubomir Krustev

British Diplomacy and the Crimean War (1853–1856)

14:30 – 14:45

Nadezhda Vasileva

Agents of Empire: Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, British Diplomacy, and Intelligence in the Ottoman Balkans (1878–1885)

14:45 – 15:15

Discussion and Final Remarks

Parallel Sessions (“Acad. Ivan E. Geshov” Hall)

10:00 – 11:00

Panel 10.

Chair: **Teodoritschka Gotovska-Henze**

10:00 – 10:15

Volodymyr Poltorak

The Czajkowski Brothers in Diplomatic, Intelligence, and Ideological Confrontation in the Balkans

10:15 – 10:30

Cengiz Yolcu

Extraordinary Life of a “Double Agent”: Teofan Raynov as a Spy, Revolutionary, and Agent

10:30 – 10:45

Anna Chankova

	Apostol Konkovich ‘No second agent as loyal and sincere as myself’
10:45 – 11:00	Silvana Rachieru “I Still Want to Be Useful for the Ottoman Nation – It Is My Only Desire”: the Intelligence Activity of Ernest Efendi in Romania
11:00 – 11:30	Discussion
11:30 – 12:30	Panel 11. Chair: Nadezhda Vasileva
11:30 – 11:45	Ediz Hazir The Bulgarian Uniate Movement as Vatican Strategy: Pius IX, Religious Diplomacy, and the Reorientation of Catholic Policy in the Balkans (1860–1861)
11:45 – 12:00	Elmira Vassileva Religious missions and political influence: American Protestant missionaries in the 19th century Ottoman Balkans
12:00 – 12:15	Mustafa Can Güripek Bulgarian-Ottoman Commercial and Diplomatic Relations After the Berlin Treaty: The Transformation of Trade Volume and Commodity Composition (1885–1907)
12:15 – 12:30	Ergün Hasanoğlu The Institutionalization of Ottoman Intelligence and the Position of the Ottoman Commissariat in Sofia in Intelligence Activities (1878–1909)
12:30 – 13:00	Discussion
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch