

CIÉPO 26

VARNA

23-27 June 2026



COMITÉ
INTERNATIONAL DES
ÉTUDES
PRÉ-OTTOMANES ET
OTTOMANES



FIRST CIRCULAR

The University of Economics – Varna, the Institute for Historical Studies – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, and Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” are pleased to announce that the 26th Symposium of the Comité International des Études Pré-Ottomanes et Ottomanes (International Committee for Pre-Ottoman and Ottoman Studies, CIÉPO) will take place in Varna, Bulgaria, on **23–27 June 2026**.

The organisers would like to offer a meeting ground for leading and emerging scholars in the fields of Pre-Ottoman and Ottoman Studies, and invite them to submit panel and paper proposals.

The Western Black Sea coast features prominently in the history of the Turkic peoples serving as a contact zone between the so-called Northern Turks (Pechenegs, Uzes, Cuman-Qipchaqs, Tatars, etc.), their southern counterparts (mainly of Oğuz origins) and the members of the Byzantine Commonwealth (Byzantines, Bulgarians, etc.). Later on, the city of Varna witnessed the climactic battle of the last crusade in these parts of Europe (10 November 1444) and still later it served as the main military base for the operations of the Western allies of the Ottomans during the Crimean War (1853–1856). Thus, both history and geography turn Varna into a fitting location for a meeting of scholars of diverse backgrounds, who will discuss the rich and at times dramatic history of the empires that used to flourish along the Black Sea.

The symposium will include four days of sessions at the University of Economics – Varna (23–26 June). An excursion is scheduled for the last day (27 June), during which participants

will have the chance to visit Ottoman sites and older historical landmarks in the surrounding area.

Submissions

The organisers strongly encourage thematic panels, but individual papers may also be submitted. In total, the symposium will feature up to 200 papers. Each paper, whether part of a panel or independent, will be of a duration of 15 minutes. Please note that a panel cannot comprise more than four papers and should include a five-minute introductory presentation. All sessions will conclude with a brief discussion.

Deadline for submissions

The deadline for the submission of proposals is **31 October 2025**.

Themes and Languages

While the symposium does not have a specific theme, the organisers encourage panels and individual papers that fall under the following topics:

- ❖ The Black Sea Region and Crimea in Pre-Ottoman and Ottoman Times
- ❖ Europe, the Mediterranean World, and the Ottomans: War, Trade, and Diplomacy
- ❖ The Nomads and the State in Pre-Ottoman and Ottoman Times
- ❖ Interreligious Contacts and Transitions: Conversion, Apostasy, Heterodoxy, and Syncretism
- ❖ Wheat, Rice, and Tobacco: Ottoman Agriculture between Tradition and Transformation
- ❖ Demography and Migrations in Pre-Ottoman and Ottoman Times
- ❖ Governance and Corruption, Public Order and Justice
- ❖ Imperial Integrity, Secession, and (De)Centralisation: The Age of Ayans and Beyond
- ❖ War, Administration, and Structures of Mobilisation
- ❖ Epidemics, Quarantines, Hygiene, and Medicine
- ❖ Superstition and Magic in a Multireligious Environment
- ❖ Transport, Communications, and (Dis)Connectivity
- ❖ Progress and Prejudices: The Ottoman Empire on the Path to Modernity
- ❖ Regional, Trans-regional, and Trans-imperial Networks

- ❖ Communities, Culture, and Identities in the Ottoman Context
- ❖ Ottoman Studies and Digital Humanities

The official languages of the symposium are English, French, German, and Turkish.

The language in which a paper or panel will be presented in the symposium must be identical with the language of the title and abstract submitted to the symposium organisers and announced in the symposium's programme.

Proposal and Review Process

Abstracts for individual papers should not exceed 400 words, while abstracts for papers that are part of a panel proposal should be up to 300 words each. Additionally, each panel proposal should include a general abstract of up to 400 words, explaining the panel's theme and how the papers interconnect. The latter will be submitted by the panel leader only, and must be anonymized.

Abstracts must clearly define the objective of the contribution (panel or paper), the argument that it makes, the sources on which it relies, the methodology it uses to achieve its goal, and its originality with regard to existing scholarship.

All panel and individual paper proposals will be examined by an international Vetting Board, appointed by CIÉPO's President. The selection process is double-blind, following established academic peer-review practices. The Local Organising Committee will announce the results by **31 December 2025**. In case of appeals, to be submitted by **10 January 2026**, CIÉPO's President will act as arbitrator.

No change is allowed to a paper or panel title after the abstract has been selected for presentation in the symposium, unless the symposium organisers have agreed to it. The title of the abstract will be taken as the title of the paper or panel to be announced in the symposium programme.

Application Forms

- ❖ [Panel Leaders & Members Application Form](#)
- ❖ [Individual Papers Application Form](#)
- ❖ [Attendees Application Form](#)

Logistics

Details about the registration fee and accommodation suggestions in Varna will be circulated in **February 2026**, upon completion of the selection process. The registration fee is estimated to be about €100–130, while symposium participants are expected to cover their

travel and accommodation expenses. The registration fee will not include the cost of the excursion, for which a separate fee will be collected from those who wish to participate in it. The organisers will offer light/buffet lunches, and coffee breaks to the symposium participants.

For further queries or assistance with the application process, please contact us at:
ciepo26varna@gmail.com

For further information, see: <https://ciepo26varna.weebly.com/>

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