

**SOUTH-WEST UNIVERSITY "NEOFIT RILSKI"
UNIVERSITY RESEARCH CENTER FOR
ANCIENT EUROPEAN AND EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN
CULTURES**

PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

of the Fourth International Symposium

Megalithic Monuments and Cult Practices

10th-14th October 2024

South-West University, Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria

The Symposium is dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the Faculty of Arts,
South-West University “Neofit Rilski”

The Symposium is supported by the South-West University project Fourt International Scientific Symposium
Megalithic Monuments and Cult Practices



10th October 2024

Note: Eastern European Summer Time (EEST), UTC +3

Opening session

Chair Prof. Vasil Markov, DSc

9.30-10.00 Opening remarks, official greetings, speeches and music performance

Live and online

Session 1. HISTORY OF CULTURE. ANCIENT CULTURES

Chair Prof. Vanya Lozanova-Stancheva, DSc

10.00-10.15 Propheying from the Chasm in the Earth: Between Lesbos and Thrace

Live and online participation

Prof. Vanya Lozanova-Stancheva, DSc. - *Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"*

10.15-10.30 Structure, Symbolism, Cult Practices and Functions of the Thracian Rock Sanctuary "Mitrovitsa" from the Western Rhodope Mountains

Live and online participation

Prof. Vasil Markov, DSc. - *South-West University "Neofit Rilski", Bulgaria*

10.30-10.45 Sacred Rivers in the Ancient Eastern Mediterranean

Live and online participation

Assist. Prof. Irina Shopova, PhD - *Institute for Balkan Studies with Centre of Thracology "Prof. Alexander Fol", Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria*

10.45-11.00 History and Culture of Ancient Thrace. Ritual Landscapes of the Rhodope Regional Unit (Klisetjik, Karmi Kaya)

Live and online participation

Stavros Kiotsekoglou, PhD – *Democritus University of Thrace, Greece*

11.00-11.30 Discussion and coffee break

Session 2. ARCHAEOLOGY

Chair Assoc. Prof. Alexey Gotsev, PhD

11.30-11.45 Megalithic Rock Complexes - Some Problems of Research and Interpretation

Live and online participation

Assoc. Prof. Alexey Gotsev, PhD - *National Institute of Archaeology and Museum at Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria*

11.45-12.00 Rock Art in Southern Levant Dolmens

Live and online participation

Prof. Gonen Sharon, PhD - *Tel-Hai Academic College, Israel*

Uri Berger - *Israel Antiquities Authority, Israel*

12.00-12.15 **An Enigmatic Dacian Site in the Curvature Carpathians: The Cătina Valley-Piatra Rotării**
Live and online participation

Prof. Valeriu Sîrbu, PhD, Sebastian Matei - *Institute of Archaeology "Vasile Pârvan" Bucharest, Romania*

12.15-12.30 **Belantash - Legends and Reality**
Live and online participation

Chief Assist. Prof. Borislav Borislavov, PhD - *National Institute of Archaeology and Museum at Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Department of Thracian Archaeology, Bulgaria*

12.30-13.30 **Discussion and break for lunch**

Session 3. ARCHAEOASTRONOMY

Chair Prof. Penka Stoeva, PhD

13.30-13.45 **The Seven-Eight Year Calendar Adjustment in the Context of Parallel Astronomical Events**
Live and online participation

Assoc. Prof. Alexey Stoev, PhD - *Space Research and Technology Institute at Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria*

13.45-14.00 **Rock-cut Monuments and Megaliths as Calendar Sanctuaries in Prehistory**
Live and online participation

Assist. Prof. Mina Spasova, PhD - *Institute for the Study of Societies and Knowledge at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria*

14.00-14.15 **Star Formations on a Rock Located in the Land of the Village of Osikovo, Devin Municipality**
Live and online participation

Prof. Penka Stoeva, PhD - *Space Research and Technology Institute at Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria*

14.15-14.30 **Construction of a Rock-Cut and Megalithic Museum Structure of National Importance on the Territory of Bulgaria**
Live and online participation

Angel Manev, PhD - *Space Research and Technology Institute at Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria*

14.30-15.00 **Discussion and coffee break**

Session 4. ETHNOLOGY

Chair Assoc. Prof. Katja Hrobat Virloget, PhD

15.00-15.15 **Village Boundaries and the Mythical Symbolism**

Live and online participation

Assoc. Prof. Katja Hrobat Virloget, PhD - *University of Primorska, Slovenia*

- 15.15-15.30 **Sacred space. Visual aspects**
Live and online participation Assoc. prof. Dimitriya Spasova, PhD - *South-West University "Neofit Rilski", Bulgaria*
- 15.30-15.45 **Founding Megaliths**
Online participation Bernie Taylor – *Independent Researcher, USA*
- 15.45-16.00 **Stones and Megaliths in Estonia**
Live and online participation Research Prof. Mare Kõiva, Andres Kuperjanov - *Estonian Literary Museum, Department of Folkloristics, Estonia*
- 16.00-16.15 **People and Ethnicity: Dimensions of Bulgarian (P. Mutafchiev's and V. Mutafchieva's Concepts)**
Live and online participation Prof. Nonka Bogomilova, DSc - *Institute for the Study of Societies and Knowledge at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria*
- 16.15-16.45 **Discussion and coffee break**

Session 5. GEOARCHAEOLOGY

Chair Prof. Ruslan I. Kostov, DSc.

- 16.45-17.00 **Investigations and Scientific Impact of the "Arch" Rock-Cut Geoarchaeological Site, Eastern Rhodopes, Bulgaria**
Live and online participation Prof. Ruslan I. Kostov, DSc - *Bulgarian Geological Society, Bulgaria*
- 17.00-17.15 **First interpretative Photo Survey with Drone in the Coastal Megalith Site of Pietra Tara, (Monte Gallo Palermo). Zone VI - Tara II**
Online participation Francesca Mercadnte, geoarchaeologist – *Geoarchpa, Italy*
- 17.15-17.30 **Discussion**

19.00 Cocktail

11th October 2024

Note: Eastern European Summer Time (EEST), UTC +3

Section 1. HISTORY OF CULTURE. ANCIENT CULTURES

Chair Eberhard Zangger, PhD

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| 9.30-9.45 | Phrygian Rock-Cut Monuments: Their Function in Phrygian Society |
| Online participation | Prof. Lynn Roller, PhD - <i>University of California, Davis, USA</i> |
| 9.45-10.00 | Evolving Cosmological Concepts: From Ur (2200 BC), over Hattusa (1200 BC) to Athens (400 BCE) |
| Live and online participation | Eberhard Zangger, PhD - <i>Luwian Studies, Switzerland</i> |
| 10.00-10.15 | The Cults in the South Eastern Thrace: The Case Study of Perinthos Ancient City |
| Online participation | Prof. Zeynep Koçel Erdem, PhD - <i>Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Turkey</i> |
| 10.15-10.30 | The Eternal Chasing of the Sun |
| Live and online participation | Assist. Prof. Adriana Sarbova, PhD – <i>Institute for Balkan Studies with Centre of Thracology "Prof. Alexander Fol", Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria</i> |
| 10.30-11.00 | Discussion and coffee break |

Session 2. ARCHAEOLOGY

Chair Prof. José Nicolás Balbi, PhD

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| 11.00-11.15 | Cromlech of Mezora (2nd. Part) Investigation 2024 and Heritage Preservation |
| Live and online participation | Prof. José Nicolás Balbi, PhD - <i>Colchester Archaeological Group (UK), Argentina</i> |
| 11.15-11.30 | Ritual and Secular Uses of Carved Structures? Parallel Activities on Kastro Rocks (Lemnos Island) |
| Online participation | Christina Marangou, PhD - <i>Independent Researcher, Greece</i> |
| 11.30-11.45 | Thrones in Megalithic Sanctuaries in Thrace – Symbols of the Cult of the Ruler |
| Live and online participation | Assoc. prof. Metodi Manov, PhD - <i>National Institute of Archaeology & Museum, Bulgaria</i> |
| 11.45-12.00 | The Megalithic Temple of Cefalù (Sicily) |
| Online presentation | Nadia Gugliuzza, Independent Researcher, <i>Italy</i> |

- 12.00-13.30 **Discussion and break for lunch**
- 13.30-15.00 **Visit to Blagoevgrad Regional Historical Museum for the present participants and Poster Session for the online participants**

POSTER SESSION

Moderator Assist Prof. Anastas Ifandiev, PhD

- 13.00-13.45 **The Megalithic Complex of Rego da Murta (Alvaiázere, Portugal)**
Online presentation
Alexandra Figueiredo, PhD - *Instituto Politécnico de Tomar, Portugal*
- 13.45.-14.00 **The Dolmen of Azurrague (Ourém, Portugal)**
Online presentation
Alexandra Figueiredo, PhD - *Instituto Politécnico de Tomar, Portugal*
- 14.00-14.15 **On the Specific Orientation of the Medieval Church Ravna near Provadia**
Online presentation
Assoc. prof. Lyubomir Tsonev, PhD - *Institute of Solid State Physics, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria*
- 14.15-14.30 **Megalithic Monuments from the Area of the Zherbitsko Village, Bulgaria**
Online presentation
Assoc. prof. Angel Yankov, PhD – *Regional Ethnographic Museum of Plovdiv, Bulgaria*
- 14.30-14.45 **Phrygian Region Rock Monuments and Their Use in Touristic Ceramic Souvenir Design**
Online presentation
Research Assist. Kamuran Ak, PhD - *Afyon Kocatepe University, Turkey*

Session 3. ARCHAEOASTRONOMY

Chair Prof. Stanislaw Iwaniszewski, PhD

- 15.00-15.15 **From Barrows Cape to Skyscape: the FBC long Barrows from the Kujawy Upland, Poland**
Online participation
Prof. Stanislaw Iwaniszewski, PhD - *National School of Anthropology and History, Mexico*
- 15.15-15.30 **Archaeoastronomy and Pareidolias: Study of Rock Art in the Semi-Arid North of Chile**
Live and online participation
Ricardo Moyano, PhD - *University of La Serena, Chile*
Patricio Bustamante - *Alura Heritage Foundation, Chilean historical and geographical society, Chile*
- 15.30-15.45 **The Inhabitant of k'atunscape: A Megalithic Monument of the Classic Mayan Renewal of Time**
Online participation
Hans Martz de la Vega, PhD Student - *National School of Anthropology and History, Mexico*
Miguel Pérez Negrete - *INAH Guerrero Regional Center, Mexico*

15.45-16.00	Discussion
16.00-16.15	Orientation of pre-Islamic temples in Arabia Felix
Online participation	Themis Dallas, PhD - <i>University of Thessaly, Greece</i>
16.15-16.30	Archaeoastronomy of a Few Megalithic Complexes of Jharkhand in East India
Online participation	Subhashis Das - <i>Independent Researcher, India</i>
16.30-16.45	Astronomical Bases of Symbols of Power: Eagle, Scepter and Orb
Online participation	Assoc. Prof. Alina Paranina, PhD - <i>Herzen State Pedagogical University, Russia</i>
16.45-17.00	Discussion

12th October 2024

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Session 1. HISTORY OF CULTURE. ANCIENT CULTURES

Chair Prof. Valeria Fol, DSc

- 9.00-9.15 **Megaliths in Brezovo Municipality. Modern Web Technologies in the Service of Promotion and Representation**
Online participation
Prof. Valeria Fol, DSc - University of Library Studies and Information Technologies, *Institute for Balkan Studies with Centre of Thracology "Prof. Alexander Fol", Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria*
Assist. Prof. Oleg Konstantinov, PhD - *Sofia University, Bulgaria*
- 9.15-9.30 **Should we do anything? (Bulgarian Megalithic Monuments and What We Can Do about Them).**
Live and online participation
Milena Lozanova, Independent Researcher, *Bulgaria*
- 9.30-9.45 **Virtual Tour for Presentation of Rock-Cut Sanctuary Kara Tash in Southwestern Bulgaria**
Live and online participation
Assist. Prof. Anastas Ifandiev, PhD - *South-West University "Neofit Rilski", Bulgaria*
- 9.45-10.00 **Exhibitions of Prehistoric Finds in Turkish Museums – A Case Study**
Online participation
Prof. Ergün Lafli, PhD - *Dokuz Eylül University, Izmir, Turkey*
- 10.00-10.15 **Discussion and coffee break**

Session 2. HISTORY OF CULTURE. ANCIENT CULTURES

Chair Martin Sweatman PhD

- 10.15-10.30 **Meteor Strikes Recorded in Prehistoric Art: from Göbekli Tepe to Lascaux**
Online participation
Martin Sweatman, PhD - *University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom*
- 10.30-10.45 **Stone Terraces of Gunung Padang Site as Modification of Highland Resources for Past Ancestor Worship**
Online participation
Lutfi Yondri, PhD - *National Research and Innovation Agency of Indonesia*

- 10.45-11.00 **Megalithic Culture of Central India: Location, Typology, Customs and Relationship**
Online participation
Assist. Prof. Virag Sontakke PhD - *Banaras Hindu University, India*
- 11.00-11.15 **Astral Symbols and Sacred Spaces: Mithraic Influences on Early Christian Symbolism and Architecture**
Online participation
Reza Assasi, PhD - *Toronto Metropolitan University/Centennial College, Canada*
- 11.15-11.30 **Discussion and coffee break**

Session 3. ARCHAEOLOGY

Chair Prof. Engin Beksaç PhD

- 11.30-11.45 **The Others: The Pits, Disks and Oven Rocks on the Eastern Thrace**
Online participation
Prof. Engin Beksaç, PhD - *Independent researcher, Turkey*
- 11.45-12.00 **Some Rock-Cut Monuments in the Ancient Region of Lydia**
Online participation
Umut M. Doğan, PhD - *Edirne Museum of Archaeology, Turkey*
- 12.00-12.15 **Megalithic Structures and their Role in Ritual Practice in Ancient Japan**
Online participation
Elena Solovyeva, PhD - *Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, Siberian Branch of Russian Academy of Science, Russia*
- 12.15-12.30 **The Megalithism in Central Portugal**
Online participation
Alexandra Figueiredo, PhD - *Instituto Politécnico de Tomar, Portugal*
- 12.30-13.30 **Discussion and break for lunch**

Session 4. ARCHAEOLOGY

Chair Assoc. Prof. Anton Genov, PhD

- 13.30-13.45 **The Mounds of the Necropolis in Salve (Lecce) and the Beginning of Megalithism in South-Eastern Italy**
Online participation
Ida Tiberi, PhD - *Biblio-Museum Hub of Lecce, Italy*
- 13.45-14.00 **Prehistoric Rituals on Hellenistic site. Archetypes of Faith through History**
Online participation
Dejan Gorgievski, archaeologist - *Museum of Kumanovo, Republic of North Macedonia*

- 14.00-14.15 **Thracian-Greek Relations in the Region of the Aegean Coast Between Hebros and Nestos (6 - 4 CBC) in the Light of Archaeological Reserch**
Online participation
Chrysoula Plioka, PhD student – *South-West University “Neofit Rilski”, Bulgaria*
- 14.15-14.30 **Rock Sanctuaries from the Central Rhodopes, Smolyan Region**
Online participation
Hristina Valchanova, PhD student – *South-West University “Neofit Rilski”, Bulgaria*
- 14.30-15.00 **Discussion and coffee break**

Session 5. ARCHAEOLOGY

Chair Chief Assist. Prof. Alexander Portalsky, PhD

- 15.00-15.15 **Distribution of Megalithic sites and Burial Practice in Adwa River Valley of North-Eastern Vindhya, India**
Online participation
Dheeraj Sharma, Research Scholar - *Banaras Hindu University, India*
Assist. Prof. Virag Sontakke, PhD - *Banaras Hindu University, India*
- 15.15-15.30 **Megalithic Burial Customs in North-Eastern Vindhyan Region, India**
Online participation
Deepesh Singh, PhD Student - *Banaras Hindu University, India*
- 15.30-15.45 **Geographical Location and Natural Environment of the Thracian-Greek Topoi of Faith**
Live and online participation
Chief Assist. Prof. Alexander Portalsky, PhD - *South-West University “Neofit Rilski”, Bulgaria*
- 15.45-16.00 **Visual Connections between some of the Mountain Sanctuaries of Thracians in the Dabrash Ridge, Western Rhodopes Area**
Live and online participation
Assoc. Prof. Anton Genov, PhD - *South-West University “Neofit Rilski”, Bulgaria*
- 16.00-16.15 **Discussion**

16.30 Closure of the Symposium

13th October 2024

8.30 – 17.30 Excursion to the Megalithic Sanctuary "Provirkata" near the village of Lilyach, Ancient Pautalia and Regional History Museum - Kyustendil.

14th October 2024

Departure