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Funding, Date & Venue

This international workshop is organized within the ICUB Fellowship for Young Researchers, offered by the ICUB—Research Institute of the University of Bucharest, contract no. 13139/16.12.2025, and it is hosted by New Europe College—Institute for Advanced Study [NEC].

Tuesday | November 17, 2026 | 9.30—16.30

New Europe College—Institute for Advanced Study [NEC]
Plantelor 21, Bucharest, Romania

Fragment from the icon of the *Last Judgement* by Georgios Klontzas, 16th c. (edited image) | © Wikimedia Commons
The Turks. Scene from the *Last Judgement* fresco of Voroneț Monastery, Romania, 16th c. (edited image) | © Oana Iacubovschi
The Beast that Comes Out of the Sea (Rev. 13:1–10). Fresco from Philotheou Monastery, Mt Athos, 17th c. (edited image) | © Oana Iacubovschi
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INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

Beasts, Antichrists and the End of Times

Apocalypticism, Prophecy and Eschatological Imagery in South-Eastern Europe



Abstract

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This workshop explores the complex and multifaceted interactions between apocalyptic thought, prophecy, eschatological expectations, biblical exegesis, and visual culture in South-Eastern Europe from the 15th to the early 19th century. Positioned at the crossroads of empires, confessions, and intellectual traditions, the region offers particularly fertile ground for examining how scriptural interpretation, prophetic discourse, and eschatological speculation intersected with political upheaval, religious reform, artistic production, and cultural exchange.

Apocalypticism, understood broadly as a mode of interpreting history through the lens of divine revelation and ultimate transformation, played a significant role in shaping the region's religious, intellectual, and artistic life. Prophecy likewise provided a flexible language through which individuals and communities interpreted the past, made sense of contemporary crises, and imagined possible futures. In South-Eastern Europe, these traditions developed within a pluralistic environment marked by the coexistence and interaction of Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and Islamic communities. The workshop investigates how different groups engaged with biblical texts—especially prophetic and apocalyptic books—and how their interpretations were articulated through commentaries, historical narratives, prophetic traditions, and iconographic programs.

A central concern of the workshop is the relationship between exegesis, prophecy, and historical experience. Interpreters, writers, and iconographers did not approach biblical texts and motifs in isolation, but their readings and representations were deeply embedded in the political, social, and confessional dynamics of their time. Ottoman expansion, Habsburg-Ottoman conflicts, the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, dynastic change, and shifting patterns of patronage and intellectual exchange all contributed to heightened senses of historical urgency and eschatological expectation. Prophecies could be reinterpreted and adapted to explain political change, legitimize particular actors, identify enemies, or anticipate the collapse and renewal of empires and communities. The papers consider how such contexts shaped interpretations of figures and themes including beasts, Antichrists, tribulation, sacred cities, and the end of dynasties—and how these interpretations, in turn, informed perceptions of crisis, identity, history, and destiny. The workshop also foregrounds the transregional and transcultural dimensions of apocalyptic and prophetic thought. South-Eastern Europe functioned as a zone of intense intellectual and artistic circulation, in which ideas, texts, images, prophecies, and interpretive frameworks moved across linguistic, confessional, and imperial boundaries. Languages served as vehicles for the transmission and transformation of apocalyptic, prophetic, and exegetical traditions. By bringing together scholars working on diverse textual, historical, and visual corpora, the workshop seeks to foster a comparative perspective that highlights both shared patterns and distinctive local developments.

Program

9.30–9.45	*Registration and Introductory Remarks*
9.45–10.15	*archim.* Policarp Chițulescu *Anciens commentaires du Livre de l'Apocalypse conservés dans la Bibliothèque du Saint-Synode du Patriarcat Roumain*
10.15–10.45	Andrei Prohin *Andrew of Caesarea's* Commentary on the Revelation *in the Slavic Manuscripts from the Romanian Lands*
10.45–11.15	Aleksandar Z. Savić *The Seven-Hilled City: (Sacred) History and Prophecy in Constantine of Kostenets*
11.15–11.30	*Break*
11.30–12.00	Nikolas Pissis *The "Ten Days of Tribulation" (Rev 2:10): Exegetic Fortunes of an Apocalyptic Theme*
12.00–12.30	Marinos Sariyannis *End of the Dynasty and End of Times: Ottoman Views on the Future from Eschatology to Historical Sociology*
12.30–13.00	Mihai-Cristian Amăriuței | Lidia Cotovanu | Despoina Lambada | Ovidiu Olar | Yorgos Tzedopoulos *The Lion, the Convert and the Queen: A 1821 Painting and Its Prophetic Context*
13.00–14.00	*Lunch break*
14.00–14.30	Cristina Bogdan *Saint Jean dévorant le Livre: Représentations dans l'iconographie eschatologique roumaine*
14.30–15.00	Elisabeta Negrău *The Trial of History: Shaping the Brancovan Church Entrance Programs*
15.00–15.30	Vlad Bedros *Revisiting the "Interiorized Apocalyptic" Tradition: A View from Inside a Moldavian Church*
15.30–15.45	*Break*
15.45–16.30	Octavian-Adrian Negoiță *Beasts, Antichrists and the End of Times: Georgios Koressios (cca 1570–1659/60) and His Reading of the Apocalypse of John* & *Concluding Remarks*