



## ЦЕНТЪР ЗА ОБУЧЕНИЕ – БАИ

1000 София  
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### Basic Information:

Course Title: Post-Byzantine Greek Epigraphy

Lecturer: Assoc. Prof. Tsvetan Vasilev, PhD

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Total Teaching Hours: 30 hours

### Annotation:

This course is suitable for doctoral students conducting historical, philological, and art historical research on the Balkans during the Ottoman period. The main subject and focus of the course are mural epigraphic repertoires and inscriptions on icons written in Greek, as attested in landmark monuments of Christian art from Bulgaria, North Macedonia, Greece, and Serbia. Examples include the Rotunda of St. George, the Boyana Church, the churches of the so-called Sofia Holy Mountain, the Church of Sts. Peter and Paul in Veliko Tarnovo, the icon collection of the National Church Historical and Archaeological Museum, and others.

The issues are examined within the context of mural inscription production from the preceding Byzantine period, as well as the connections between workshops and artistic centers active during the 15th–17th centuries.

Emphasis is placed on identifying inscriptions with the help of texts from various genres of Byzantine literature, Christian liturgy, and the so-called *hermeneiai* (painter's manuals).

### Course content:

- Module 1 – *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Epigraphy*: Introduction to Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Epigraphy. Christian art in the Balkans. Iconography and epigraphy. *Hermeneiai*. – 10 hours.
- Module 2 – *Typology and Language of Inscriptions*: Typology of inscriptions. Orthodox liturgy and inscriptions. Liturgical inscriptions. Monastic and ascetic inscriptions. Poetic inscriptions. Linguistic features of inscriptions. – 10 hours.
- Module 3 – *Methods and Fieldwork*: Methods of research and editing of inscriptions. Practical sessions – visit to an icon collection or a monument of Christian art in the vicinity of Sofia (e.g., the Seslavci Monastery of St. Nicholas or the crypt of the St. Alexander Nevsky Memorial Church in Sofia). – 10 hours.

### Teaching and assessment methods:

Assessment consists of:

- Written paper (70%) – including transcription, translation, and commentary of an inscription.
- Oral discussion (30%) – defense of the paper and questions on course topics.

If more than one participant is enrolled, a joint seminar session will be organized on pre-specified topics.



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### Competencies acquired as a result of training:

- Ability to read mural and icon inscriptions in Greek and identify their content;
- Recognition of the linguistic and textological features of the inscriptions;
- Ability to apply appropriate methods of publication depending on the specific research objectives.

### Literature:

1. Василев, Ц. Гръцкият език в църквите със смесени надписи от XVII век в България. София, 2017.
2. Куюмджиев, А. И. Ванев (ред.). Икони от Националния църковен историко-археологически музей. София, 2024.
3. Куюмджиева, М. Late medieval painters: professional status and methods of work. – In: Roads of Balkan Icon-Painters. Sofia, 2020, 21-29.
4. Мутафов, Е. Европеизация на хартия. Съчинения за живописца на гръцки език през първата половина на XVIII в. София, 2001.
5. Пенкова, Б. Ц. Кунева (ред.). Корпус на стенописите от XVII век в България. София, 2012.
6. Смядовски, С. Светци, свитъци, книги. София, 2003.
7. Demus, O. Byzantine Mosaic Decoration. Aspects of Monumental Art in Byzantium. Boston, Massachusetts, 1955.
8. Krautheimer, R. Early Christian and Byzantine architecture. Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1965.
9. Vasilev, T. A Byzantine Epigram in the Pictorial Cycle of Akathistos Hymn for the Virgin from the Narthex of Kremikovtsi Monastery St George (1493). – In: Scripta & e-Scripta, 16-17, 313-324.

### Additional requirements:

Prior knowledge of Ancient Greek is required.