

# Balkan Rhapsody

Maria Kassimova-Moisset

*Translated from Bulgarian by Iliyana  
Nedkova-Byrne*

9781913836252 - £11.99 – 240pp

[mail@tippermuirbooks.co.uk](mailto:mail@tippermuirbooks.co.uk) - [tippermuirbooks.co.uk](http://tippermuirbooks.co.uk)

*Balkan Rhapsody* is a historical novel based on the internal and external exile of the author's Bulgarian fictionalised grandmother Miriam and her young family during the 1920s and 1930s. A tale of two coastal cities connected through the tumultuous waterways of the Black Sea, Miriam's story begins in her native Burgas and follows her journey to Istanbul, where Eastern Orthodox and Muslim traditions and beliefs both unite and tear families apart.

Maria Kassimova-Moisset is a writer, storyteller, theatre-maker, broadcaster, educator and human rights activist. Critically acclaimed, *Close Encounters with Mixed Feelings* (2017) was Maria's first collection of short stories and essays, followed by her debut novel *Balkan Rhapsody* (2018) – both published by Colibri, Sofia. The novel was serialised as an audiobook in the author's own voice and released by Storytel.bg. In 2023, *Balkan Rhapsody* was published in French by Geneva's Éditions des Syrtes in the translation of Marie Vrinat. A feature-length film adaptation is underway.

Iliyana Nedkova-Byrne is a curator of contemporary visual and performing arts with over 30 years of professional practice. In 2024, she was selected as one of the 100 most influential creatives in Scotland by *List Magazine*. Her curatorial interests include literature in translation, women artists works, arts and activism, artist's moving image culture and intangible cultural heritage. Through her literary activism she endeavours to champion contemporary Bulgarian women authors to Anglophone publishers and audiences. She holds an MPhil in Curating Contemporary Art from Liverpool John Moores University and an MLitt in English and American Studies with History and Theory of Culture from the University of Sofia. As a writer, speaker and literary translator, Iliyana has contributed to a wide range of conferences, publications and books.

The 'beautiful story of an impossible emancipation'  
*Le Monde*

'Women's writing at its best' Professor Dina Iordanova

'The freshness of lemonade sipped on a Black Sea beach on a summer evening' *Le Temps*

'Fragile, yet bearing an enormous literary weight'  
[ploshtadslaveikov.com](http://ploshtadslaveikov.com)

*Balkan Rhapsody* is women's writing at its best, chronicling a family's meandering story, a quintessential Balkan litany where people of different backgrounds knew how to live together until they didn't. A riveting story of everyday life affected by ethnonationalism and religious intolerance, of voluntary and forced migrations, of merciless losses and marvellous new beginnings. Dina Iordanova, Professor of Film Studies, University of St Andrews, author of *Cinema of Flames: Balkan Film, Culture and the Media*

'Love emerges as the main character in *Balkan Rhapsody*. Yet this is not this love that consumes the heart and exhausts the soul. This is the love which shapes characters and shakes the foundations of the world as we know it.' Bulgarian National Radio

