

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON «SLAVONIC CULTURES AND THE BALKANS»

Varna, 15th-20th September 1975

The International Conference on «Slavonic Cultures and the Balkans» was convened under the joint auspices of the UNESCO office for the Study of Slavonic Cultures and the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. The entire program for the Congress, which met in the headquarters of the Union of Bulgarian Writers at Zlatni Pjasăci near Varna, was organised by the Institute for Balkan Studies of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

About 120 people representing Austria, Bulgaria, France, East Germany, West Germany, Yugoslavia, Denmark, Greece, USSR, U.S.A., Italy, Hungary, Rumania, and Czechoslovakia, attended the Conference.

Proceedings began on the afternoon of 15th September. The opening speech was delivered by Mrs. Ljudmila Źivkova, President of the Bulgarian Committee of Culture and the Arts. She was followed by the Russian Prof. V. A. Tjurin representing UNESCO and Prof. E. Georgiev of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences who represented the Varna Regional Folk Committee. The final speaker was Prof. N. Todorov, the Director of the Bulgarian Institute of Balkan Studies.

On September 16, the Conference functioned in two sections:

- a) «Slavonic Cultures» and
- b) «The Formation of the National Cultures of the Southern Slavs (18th-19th centuries) in the Expansion of European Civilization».

The same procedure was followed for the next day's session (17th).

On the 18th, the delegates visited various Bulgarian historical sites: Pliska, Madara, Ťumen and Preslav. On the 19th activities resumed on the pattern of the 16th-17th but with the addition of a third field: «Linguistics». Folklore themes were discussed in this section the following day (20th).

On the 20th September, which marked the end of the Conference, Prof. V. Tapkova-Zaĭmova summed up the Conference's most important achievements. Two additional meetings were organized to discuss the following subjects: «Problems with Texts and Archives in the Publication of Old Bulgarian Manuscripts», and «The Bogomils and the Catharians».

The Greek delegation which for the most part was sent by the Institute for Balkan Studies, presented papers in various fields. In the domain of History P. Charanis' study, «The Slavs, Byzantium and the Historical Significance of the First Bulgarian Kingdom», described in great detail and with utmost objectivity the problems in the study of the earliest kingdom in that country. Also in the historical field was C. Papoulidis' paper entitled «Le Patriarche Oecuménique Serapheim II et les Russes» [The Ecumenical Patriarch Serapheim II and the Russians], which examined the political attitudes of Catherine II toward the Greeks, and A. Angelopoulos' paper «Dimitrios Tsamis Karatasos and Greek-Serbian Friendship» which examined the evidence for friendly relations between these two peoples in the 19th century.

Two papers represented the field of Philology: that of Mrs. D. Iliadou, «Sous le nom d'Ephrem se cache-t-il aussi un auteur slave du X^e-XI^e siècle?» [Does a Slavonic Writer of the 10th-11th centuries hide behind the name «Ephrem»?], a valuable exercise in textual criticism; and «Survivance des toponymes slaves chez les auteurs byzantins» [The Survival

of Slavonic Place-names in Byzantine Authors], delivered by Mrs. E. Vranousi whose scope covered the entire Balkan peninsula and, particularly, Thessaly.

Art History was covered by Prof. N. Moutsopoulos' study entitled «La morphologie des inscriptions post-byzantines de la Grèce» [The morphology of post-Byzantine inscriptions in Greece] which examined epigraphical problems of that period. The essay by S. Kissas «Icons of a Kozani Menologion», may also be placed in this field. Mr. Kissas showed unknown icons now housed in the Library of Kozani.

K. Makris after his paper on «Chalcographies grecques aux pays balkaniques pendant le XIX^e s.», showed also a number of rare Greek copper engravings from his own private collection.

On cultural matters of general interest, Prof. A.-E. Tachiaos examined in his essay «Le Mont-Athos et la formation de cultures slaves» [Mount-Athos and the Formation of the Slavonic Cultures] the role played by the Holy Mountain in Slavonic cultural development, without neglecting its present-day role in the Christian and Orthodox World. Prof. B. Papoulia, in her article «Les lieux culturels entre musulmans et non musulmans dans les Balkans» [Cultural Relations between muslims and non-muslims in the Balkans], examined christian and muslim cultural interaction and the influence of the former on the latter. In addition, Prof. Z. Tsirpanlis discussed, in his study «Georges Križanić et ses relations avec le monde grec» [George Križanić and his Relations with the Greek World], the Greek scholarship of one of the first pan-slavists, whereas Mrs. Ch. Zissi in «Ilarios, Bishop of Tirnovo, and the Movement of the Bulgarian Renaissance (beginning 19th century)» was concerned with the restoration of a Greek Bishop and his role in the 19th century Bulgarian Renaissance.

In the literary field the papers of L. Vranoussis «Les imprimeries et les livres grecques» [Printers and Greek Books], and J. Tarnanides «Étude comparé des journaux *Ephimeris* et *Srbskija Novini* éditées à Vienne par les frères Makrides Pouliou pendant les années 1791-1792» [A Comparative Study of the newspapers *Ephimeris* and *Srbskija Novini* edited by the Makrides Pouliou brothers in Vienna during 1791-1792], were concerned respectively with the cultural role and general influence of Greek books in the relevant period and, for the second, the Greek emigrant newspapers. A. Karathanassis' paper «La communauté grecque de Venise et ses relations avec les pays balkaniques» [The Greek Community in Venice and its Relations with the Balkan Countries] dealt more specifically with the study of Greek emigrants, utilizing the immense wealth of the Greek community in Venice; while «Der griechische Gelehrte Georgios Zachariadis und sein Beitrag zum slawischen Schrifttum im 19. Jahrhundert» [The Greek scholar Georgios Zachariades and his Influence on Slavonic Literature in the 19th Century] by I. Papadrianos, examined the role of a Greek emigrant in the development of Slavonic education.

Judicial History was covered by the paper of Ch. Papastathis «Harmenopoulos' Exa-biblos in the Slavic World», which was especially concerned with the influence of Byzantine civil and canon law on other peoples. Finally, in the field of music the paper of D. Conomos, «Slavonic Church Music in the Balkans», was a general discussion of the development of ecclesiastic music among the Southern Slavs; and that of G. Stathis «Ioasaph Riliotes et ses 'Exegeseis' dans certain compositions byzantines» [Ioasaph Riliotes and his 'Exegeseis' in certain Byzantine Compositions] being an examination of Byzantine musical notation and the role of the Monastery of Rila in its development.