

FIRST SYMPOSIUM ON THE HISTORY OF MINE-WORKINGS IN SOUTH-EAST EUROPE

Varna, 3-6 November 1975

From 3rd to 6th November, 1975, there was held at Varna, Bulgaria, the «First International Symposium on the History of Mine-Workings in South-East Europe».

This conference was organized with the co-operation of the most important scientific and technical Institutes in Bulgaria: The Scientific and Technical Society of Mineralogists, the Institute of Geology and Metallurgy, the Bulgarian Society of Scientists, the Archaeological Institute and Museum of the Bulgarian Academy, the Institute for Thracian Studies, the National Museum, and the Society for Science, Technical Progress and Higher Education.

The conference was held to allow specialists in the fields of mineralogy and archaeology, as well as historians concerned with the past condition and future exploitation of the old mines in the Balkans, to communicate their scientific findings. The conference sessions were held in Varna's spacious hotel, the «Frédéric Joliot-Curie», which possesses special halls for conventions of this kind. The organizers even managed to publish a volume of the conference papers which was distributed to the participants shortly before the opening of the symposium; together with this volume, the participants were given other pamphlets which contained abstracts of the addresses (in English and French) and a special booklet containing a list of the subjects. The participants also received a commemorative medallion, the facsimile of an Ancient Greek coin which is in Philippoupolis Museum (Olympias-Pautalias). It is worthy of mention that one part of the hotel was turned into a museum with interesting exhibits concerning the mines of the Balkans from Roman times to the present day: coins, miners' tools, and photographs were some of the exhibits.

Greece was represented by Athanasios Karathanassis, scientific consultant of the Institute for Balkan Studies, who spoke on the history of the mine-workings of Thasos. After discussing the mine-workings of Thasos in ancient times, he referred to the various problems connected with the operation of the mines, or the lack of it, in the period of Ottoman rule in the island (1460-1912), and to the prospects for their future operation.

After the symposium, the participants were able to go on a day excursion to visit the ancient capitals of Bulgaria: Pliska, Madara and Preslava.

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