



Stylios Pelekanides

1909-1980

It is with deep sorrow that the Institute for Balkan Studies announces the death of its vice-president, Professor Stylios Pelekanides.

Stylios Pelekanides was an old friend with whom we had collaborated very often but more so during 1980 when we met regularly at the Institute. Our collaboration was fruitful as he was understanding and had a clear judgment. The morning of the 28th of May 1980 he was at the Institute discussing with me various matters; an hour later, upon arriving at his home, he fell dead by a sudden heart attack.

His family's origin was from the island of Chios. He was born in Constantinople in 1909 and pursued his first studies in that city. After his theological studies at the Patriarchal School in the island of Chalki, he continued further studies on Byzantine art in Berlin where he earned his doctorate degree in 1939. In 1943 he was appointed ephor of the Byzantine Archaeological Service in Thessaloniki having under his jurisdiction all of Northern Greece. In 1962 he was elected Professor of Byzantine Archaeology and Art at the University of Thessaloniki where he taught until his retirement in 1974.

He was a successful teacher. A number of his students prepared their doctorate thesis under his guidance, and became later assistants at the University of Thessaloniki, or joined the archaeological service.

His work at the Archaeological Service was also successful. The excavations he conducted, especially in Western and Eastern Macedonia, brought to light early christian churches, the most important being the early christian complex of the Octagon in Philippi. Very important are also the restorations he supervised of Byzantine churches in Kastoria, Veroia, Thessaloniki and elsewhere. It was a very useful work as these Byzantine churches had suffered damages during the centuries and badly needed repair.

An impressive number of publications, books and articles, covering many topics of Byzantine art, was the fruit of his scholarly endeavors: Παλαιοχριστιανικά μνημεῖα Θεσσαλονίκης. Ἀχειροποίητος. Μονὴ Λατόμου (Early Christian monuments of Thessaloniki. Acheiropoietos. Monastery of Latomou), Thessaloniki 1949 ~ Καστοριά I. Βυζαντινὰ τοιχογραφία (Kastoria vol. I. Byzantine Frescoes), Thessaloniki 1953 ~ Βυζαντινὰ καὶ μεταβυζαντινὰ μνημεῖα τῆς Πρέσπας (Byzantine and Post-byzantine Monuments of Prespa), Thessaloniki 1960 ~ Καλλιέργης, δλης Θετταλίας ἄριστος ζωγράφος (Kalliergis, The

Best Painter of All Thessaly), Athens 1973. ~ Three volumes on the illuminated manuscripts from 15 monasteries of Mount Athos which appeared respectively in 1973, 1975, 1979, in collaboration with P. K. Christou, Chr. Mavropoulou-Tsioumi, S. Kadas, A. Katsarou ~ Σύνταγμα τῶν παλαιοχριστιανικῶν ψηφιδωτῶν δαπέδων τῆς Ἑλλάδος. I. Νησιωτικὴ Ἑλλάς (Corpus of Early Christian Floor Mosaics of Greece, vol. I. Greek Islands) in collaboration with A. Atzaka, Thessaloniki 1974 ~ Μελέτες παλαιοχριστιανικῆς καὶ Βυζαντινῆς Ἀρχαιολογίας (Studies on Early Christian and Byzantine Archaeology), Thessaloniki 1977. This is a collection of Pelekanides' articles which had appeared in various journals. Also mention should be made of other articles not included in the above volume.

His scholarly work was appreciated in Greece and abroad. The Golden Cross of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople, the decoration of the order of Phoenix (Greece), the international Gottfried-von-Herder prize, were awarded to him; also he was declared honorary citizen of Kastoria.

Stylianos Pelekanidis was a member of many scholarly Institutions in Greece and elsewhere: member of the German Archaeological Institute of the Archaeological Society in Berlin, of the Byzantine Institute of Palermo, of the Archaeological Society at Athens, of the Christian Archaeological Society at Athens, of the Society for Macedonian Studies in Thessaloniki.

With the above institutions he kept in touch, participating in their efforts in various ways. As professor emeritus he continued to be very active. Thus, as member of the Byzantine Research Center of the University of Thessaloniki he participated and supervised some of its publications concerning his field of studies; continued the excavations in Philippi; since 1978 he was appointed supervisor of the group for the restauration works on the Byzantine churches in Thessaloniki, damaged from the earthquakes of that year; last but not least he was president of the committee for the organization of the Xth Congress on Christian Archaeology to be held in Thessaloniki on Sept. 28-Oct. 4, 1980. Unfortunately, he was not able to attend this congress for which he had worked so hard.

Stylianos Pelekanidis was a real gentleman. Kind and courteous, imposing and dignified, it could be said that he was one of the last in the line of the Phanariots who were active far from their native city, Constantinople.

His gentle manners were appreciated by all who knew him, especially so by his former students, who honoring his memory escorted him to the grave, some of them serving as coffin-bearers.

By his death the field of Christian Archaeology loses one of his most experienced members. The Xth Congress of Christian Archaeology, which convened recently in Thessaloniki, paid high tribute to his memory.

As president of the organizing committee of the above congress, succeeding Pelekanidis to the above post; as president of the Council of the Institute for Balkan Studies where he served as Vice President; and, as president of the Society for Macedonian Studies in which he was a member, I express my deep sorrow for the loss of the scholar, the man, and the friend he has been.

C. VAVOUSKOS

Professor at the University of Thessaloniki
President of the Institute