

PREFACE

An International Congress of Slavic Studies always means an important event in the history of the science on Slavic peoples. It is an occasion to establish relationships and to strengthen the contacts among the scholars dealing with Slavic studies from all over the world, to exchange the research findings as well as to suggest new areas of research and perhaps initiate their solution.

As the Slavic studies consist of several special philologically or historically oriented disciplines, the programmes of the congress discussions include not only general Slavic problems the solution of which necessitates in an interdisciplinary approach but also some narrowly delimited ones the solution of which belongs only into the domain of one discipline of Slavic studies.

Since the time of P. J. Šafárik ethnology has been one of the special disciplines of Slavic studies. Within the framework of interdisciplinary cooperation ethnology is concentrated upon the study of ethno-cultural processes and inter-ethnic relations. Slavic aspects have been applied in Slovak ethnology since the first half of the 19th century. As that time scholars started to scientifically justify the place of Slovaks in the big family of Slavic peoples. One of the most important representatives of this orientations of ethnological research was the Slovak born P. J. Šafárik (1795–1861), founder of Slavic ethnology. The explanation of the development of Slovak culture within the Slavic context has remained one of the orientations of Slovak ethnology up till nowadays. The 11th International Congress of Slavic Studies, which takes place for the first time in Slovakia, in Bratislava, of course means a great opportunity for the Slovak ethnologists to introduce the results of their work to this international audience. Ethnological institutions in Slovakia – at the Slovak Academy of Sciences, at Comenius University and at the Slovak National Museum – aimed their research at being able to present their results to the congress as a joint contribution to the ethnological Slavic studies.

The Ethnological Institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences succeeded in editing the Ethnological Atlas of Slovakia (*Etnografický atlas Slovenska*, Bratislava 1988) which is composed of includes contributions of a wide range of colleagues from all Slovak ethnological institutions. Another important work of the Slovak and Slavic studies is the Ethnological Encyclopaedia of Slovakia (*Etnografická encyklopédia Slovenska*) which is a result of the whole Slovak ethnological community. The present issue of the ethnological almanac devoted to the 11th International Congress of Slavic Studies has been prepared by the Department of Ethnology of Comenius University. The authors of the articles

are not only Slovak ethnologists but also representatives of the discipline from Bohemia and from abroad.

From the point of view of the history of Slavic ethnological research it is noteworthy, that our periodical *Ethnologia Slavica* was founded on the International Congress of Slavic Studies which took place in Prague, Czecho-Slovakia, in 1968. The author of the present article suggested there the founding a common journal or periodical which would provide in non-Slavic languages, the results of ethnological research on Slavic peoples to scholars all over the world. The proposal was welcome by several of those participants of the congress who rank among important personalities in Slavic ethnology. They were M. Gavazii, the Croatian specialists in Slavic studies, P. G. Bogatyryov and Ju. V. Bromlej, outstanding Russian scholars, and Ch. Vakarelski and C. Romanska, Bulgarian ethnologists who became the co-founders of the periodical. Since the first volume, published in 1969, they were also the closest foreign fellow-workers of the Editor-in-Chief. After the foundation of the periodical its Editorial Board was extended by other important representatives of Slavic ethnology who have been cooperating with the editorial board as authors and as well as editors.

In their number were J. Burszta and M. Gladysz from Poland, P. Nedo and P. Nowotny who represented Lusatian-Serbian ethnology. Russian scholars K. V. Čistov and S. A. Tokarev offered their cooperation. From among the other ones we can mention J. V. Prilipko and V. T. Zinyč from Ukraine, V. K. Bondarcyk from Byelorussia, V. Novak from Slovenia, B. Bratanić from Croatia, M. Barjaktarović from Serbia, B. Ristovski from Macedonia and Ch. Gandev from Bulgaria. The cooperation with the Czech colleagues started soon after founding the periodical – above all with J. Kramařík, O. Sirovátka and V. Frolec. In the editorial board the Slovak folklorists were represented by J. Michálek. The closest fellow-worker of the Editor-in-Chief became J. Komorovský, a well known researcher in Slavic studies who worked as a secretary of the editorial board and a managing editor until his forced departure from the university in 1975.

Thanks to the wide circle of fellow-workers and also to the permanent help rendered by Comenius University we succeeded in editing 25 volumes of the periodical *Ethnologia Slavica* – the international journal for Slavic ethnology (published in non-Slavic languages) in the period between two congresses of Slavic studies in Czecho-Slovakia.

The original intention of the founder was to give an opportunity for publishing the articles dealing with comparative Slavic ethnology. However, regard to the contemporary state of the discipline it became evident that this aim could not be carried out. Instead of papers on Slavic peoples as a specific ethnic group studies on single Slavic nations started to prevail. Hence, it was no more Slavic

ethnology in the strict meaning of the word, but perhaps ethnologically oriented Polonistic, Russian, Bohemistic, Bulgaristic, etc., studies.

The authors from abroad were interested in having their articles published in the periodical and the editors endeavoured to comply with this request. The result was that more articles from abroad were included to the detriment of the Slovak ones.

Comenius University which edits the periodical thanks to the financial support offered by the Government of the Slovak Republic has expressed the wish that in the complicated financial situation it would give priority above all to the interests of the development of Slovak science and culture. The editorial board decided to offer a larger space to articles devoted to the problems of Slovak ethnology. This change is reflected in the extended title *ETHNOLOGIA SLOVACA ET SLAVICA*. We would like to assure our contributors that the possibilities of publishing ethnological articles with Slavic orientation remain unchanged.

Ján Podolák