

BARBARA MICHALAK-PIKULSKA

**XX CONGRESS OF THE UNION EUROPÉENNE
DES ARABISANTS ET ISLAMISANTS,
BUDAPEST, 10-17 SEPTEMBER 2000**

XX Congress of the Arabists and Islamists which was held in Budapest was organized by the Department of Arabic and Semitic Studies of the Eötvös Lorand University and the Csoma de Koros Society. The part of the organizers were held by Professor Alexander Fodor, Dean of the Eötvös Lorand University and Head of the Oriental Institute. Opening ceremony was inaugurated by Mr Zsolt Nemeth - the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At present, professor Urbain Vermeulen from Belgium is the President of UEAI and he gave welcome speech too.

Representatives of all European countries were debating in six sections: History, Islam, Islamic Art and Architecture, Literature, Linguistics and Popular Culture in Islam. Out of seventy five papers delivered during the Congress twenty three were dealing with literary subjects. The papers will be published in special volume of "Arabist" in 2001.

Polish arabists were represented by three scholars: Krystyna Skarżyńska-Bocheńska from the Warsaw University who presented the paper "Les éléments chrétiens et leur fonctions dans la poésie de Mahmud Darwish", Marek M. Dziekan from Warsaw who delivered the lecture: "Arten der altarabischen Wahrsagerei" and Barbara Michalak-Pikulska representing the Jagiellonian University of Cracow who gave the speech untitled: "Tradition and novelty in the contemporary prose of the United Arab Emirates".

An interesting paper entitled "Ġunayd Al-Baġdādī and the sings of the path to Allah", about Ġunayd Al-Baġdādī - who lived in the beginning of the third century after Hijra and is one of the greatest mystics of Islam - was presented by Muhammet Aruci from Istanbul (Islamic Section).

The main goal of paper "Mystical approach to God in the Iḥwān aṣ-Ṣafā'" by Carmela Baffioni from Naples was to compare the passages in the encyclopaedia, which deal with various kinds of mystical approaches to God (especially those in Ep. 9 "On morals"), with the Brethren's views about the "vision of God" which can be attained by the awliyā' Allāh.

The lecture delivered by Sylvaine Camelin from Paris was entitled "Ramaḍān rituals on coastal Haḍramawt (Yemen)". This presentation aimed at showing the ḥitamiyāt rituals in the town of Ṣihr within the general context of political and social transformation due to the unification of North and South Yemen (1990), the Gulf war (1990) and the civil war (1994).

Michael G. Carter from Oslo gave a speech "Sībawayhi's analysis of the ḥāl". The purpose of his paper was not primarily to give a detailed account of how Sībawayhi analyses the circumstantial qualifier (ḥāl), but to use his analysis as means to explore his method of reasoning in the Kitāb as a whole.

The paper "Islamic of Bagratid Armenia; Armenian Forms in Fatimid Egypt" by Seta B. Dadoyan from Beirut was a contribution to the study of Islamic-Armenian cultural relations.

The paper by Simeon Evstatiew from Sofia "In the periphery of two worlds: some aspects of the perception of Arabic-Islamic tradition among the Muslims in the Balkans" discussed the place of Muslims among a Christian majority which during the Ottoman period saved its Orthodox identity searching external support from the Christendom.

Another interesting paper entitled "Magic and Superstition in the Ocana (Toledo) manuscripts (14-15th centuries)" was presented by Celia Del Moral from Grenada. This paper consists of a global study about some aspects related to magic, included in a number of manuscripts found in Ocana (Toledo) in 1969, written in Arabic, Medieval-Castilian and Aljamiado, and in particular the one called Miscelaneo de Salomon, based on the works by the researchers Joaquina Albarracin and Juan Martinez Ruiz.

Jaakko Hameen-Anttila from Helsinki delivered a lecture dealing with magic "Ibn Waḥṣiyya and magic". This paper discussed the attitude of the author(s) of Al-Filāḥa an-nabaṭiyya (Ibn Waḥṣiyya) towards magic.

Geza Fehervari from London and Alexander Fodor from Budapest were talking about some interesting artifacts from Tareq Rajab Museum in Kuwait. The first paper by Geza Fehervari was entitled "Bronze lions in the Tareq Rajab Museum", and the second one by Alexander Fodor "Magical bowls in the Tareq Rajab Museum in Kuwait".

The paper "Mālik b. Anas and ḥadīṭ" by Gautire H. A. Juynboll from Leiden was concerned with the role of the Medinan jurispudent and eponym of the Mālikite legal school, Mālik's b. Anas (d.179/795) in the proliferation of Prophetic ḥadīṭs.

"Treating death: when and how the end of life may be represented in adab" by Hilary Kilpatrick from Lausanne examines the treatment of the deaths of some personalities who figure in the Kitāb al-aḡānī of Abū Al-Faraḡ Al-Iṣfahānī.

Brief presentation by Avihai Shviti from Leeds entitled: "On some distinctive characteristics of Yusuf Idrees' writing" was aimed at selecting some of the most striking characteristic features of Idrees' style. Yusuf Idrees has been one of the leading Arab writers of the twentieth century, who gained the reputation of being non-conformist, rebellious and even the enfant terrible of modern Arabic literature. This is because he dealt with issues such as politics, religion and sex in a unique way, which often caused his books to be betterly attacked by critics and even banned by authorities. Idrees' analysis of people, events and situations seems credible for the reader thanks to his unique style, which is often bewildering and challenging. His language in general consists of a mixture of fuṣḥā and 'āmmiyya, which often seems to challenge the rigid rules of classical Arabic, yet his figures of speech and in particular his metaphores are vivid and picturesque, often giving the impression that Idrees is putting the intelligence of the reader to the test.

The paper "Modality in Egyptian Arabic" by Hristina Tchobanova from Sofia proposed to review the means of expressing modal meanings within the scale "reality-irreality" in Egyptian Arabic.

The study by Helga Walter from Sommerach "Satire in modern Algerian literature" focused on prose works of Arabic writing authors, such as Tahir Wattar and Boulaid Doudou and French writing authors, like Rachid Boudjedra and Rachid Mimouni as well as Kateb Yacine's theatre plays performed in Berber, yet in French abroad; and trace the figure of Ḡuḥā, appearing in various characters throughout the cited literature.

It is difficult to summarize all papers presented during the Congress. Among other scholars who delivered lectures were: Wiebke Walther from Tübingen, Pieter Smoor from Amsterdam, Cornelis Nijland from Leiden, James E. Montgomery from Cambridge, Wilferd Madelung from Oxford, Kerstin Eksell from Stockholm. Meetings and lectures continued for one week, thus all scientists involved in oriental studies were able to exchange opinions and views on many interesting subjects.

Next Congress of UEAI will be organized in Palermo in 2002.