

Barbara MICHALAK-PIKULSKA

XVIIITH CONGRESS OF UNION EUROPÉENNE
DES ARABISANTS ET ISLAMISANTS
Leuven, 3-10 September 1996

XVIIIth Congress of Arabists and Islamists was held in September 1996 in Leuven, in Belgium. Congress was organized by Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants. Professor Wilferd Madelung from Oxford University was the Chairman of XVIIIth Congress. The part of the organizers were held by Professor Urbain Vermeulen and Dr. Jan Van Reeth. 110 representatives of all European Countries were debating in two sections. 84 papers were delivered during this one week. They will be published by Peeters in special volume in 1997. Poland was represented by Professor Krystyna Skarzyńska-Bocheńska from Warsaw who gave a speech: *Éléments chrétiens dans la poésie contemporaine des poètes arabes musulmans* and Dr. Barbara Michalak-Pikulska from Jagiellonian University in Cracow who presented a paper: *The Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait as reflected in the short stories of Thuraya al-Baqsamī*.

Another interested papers were presented by Prof. Dionisius Agius: *Saracen Galleys and Pirate Ships in the Mediterranean: ghurabs and qaribes*. Professor M. G. Carter in his paper *Infinity and lies in medieval Islam* examines the relationship between the notions of infinity, truth and lies in medieval Islam. Prof. Rudiger Lohlker in his speech *Riba – Past and Present* expresses the present confusion surrounding the subject of riba originates from the fact that a group modern Muslim legal thinkers present their extended theory of riba – the prohibition of every form of interest – as the only possible interpretation of the qur'anic prohibition of the transaction called riba. Prof. Wiebke Walther from Germany was talking about poetry in the fusha and in the ammiyyah in her paper *Iraqi Shi'ite Poetry as a Socio-Cultural and Literary Document*. Very interesting was the paper *Abu Nuwas the Alcoholic* presented by James E. Montgomery. This paper offers an investigation of the "Khamriyyat" and the "Akhbar Abi Nuwas" in the light of modern clinical studies of alcoholism. Prof. Hilary Kilpatrick gave a speech on *The transmission of Songs in early mediaeval Arabic Culture*.

It is difficult to summarize all papers presented during the XVIII Congress, but all of them were very interesting. Next XIX Congress of Arabists and Islamists will be organized in Halle, Germany in 1998.