

The Twelfth International Congress of Slavists was held in Kraków from August 27 to September 2, 1998, with the participation of over 1000 Slavists from around the world. The greatest number of works in folklore and related disciplines, about 70, were presented in the section "Slavic Mythology, Archeology and Folk Culture," while several other works were presented in linguistics sections (S. Tolstaia, J. Bartmiński, A. Plotnikova, T. Lukinova and others). The Polish organizers printed a book of abstracts "Streszczenia referatów i komunikatów," and the full texts will be published in the national collections. Sections devoted to language and to literary history noted relatively low participation of Slavic folklorists from non-Slavic countries (one each from Belgium, the USA, Greece and Japan).

The Slavic mythological pantheon appeared in the research of Ph. Malingoudis (on the basis of Greek toponyms), A. Matiukhin (on the Great Goddess), A. Olteanu (comparative Romanian and Slavic mythology), E. Zaikovskii (Veles and the Belarusians), Z. Karanović (Perun and Mokosh in mythological songs). Very valuable works were devoted to reconstruction of ancient layers of Slavic folk cultures: V. Petrukhin spoke about the Old Russian burial, J. Bartminjskii about the fatherland in Polish and Russian linguistic concepts of the world, S. Tolstaia about the name and principles of naming people in folk culture, Nevskaia and Sedakova about the symbolism of the road, A. Gura on the symbolism of animals, P. Plas about the wolf, A. Plotnikov on the areal aspects of Balkan Slavic ritual terminology. Demonology entered the work of L. Vinogradova (problems of comparative study), L. Radenković (on the devil among the Balkan Slavs), I. Ito (the poludnica and rusalka), T. Vrazhinovski (in contemporary Macedonian folklore), E. Miceva (on good and evil powers). Religious and Christian concepts in poetry concerned several authors (V. Bakhtin, A. Brzozowska, E. Krekovichová, D. Simonides), while the relationship of pagan and Christian strata was examined by H. Czajka. Two Russian papers were printed about the miracles of Christian relics in the contemporary era (A. Tarabukin and E. Kuleshov). More general examinations of folk culture were presented by A. Anikin and S. Azbelev.

A generic approach was dominant in the papers of several scholars, some of whom were not present: T. Lukinova and N. Kononenko (the bajan'), K. Wroclavski (ballads), K. Chistov (laments), V. Juzvenko and a group of authors (epics), G. Kilianova, A. Bricina, J. Doschek, N. Miloshevic (prose), T. Agapkina (oral competitions at the spring holidays), S. Botić (the Croatian frula today), R. Ivanova (journalists' folklore today), L. Feldman-Chale (the Croatian lay theater), and M. Elchinova (discourse analysis). E. Clowes's comparison of Disney and Soviet film cartoon versions of Winnie the Pooh was most interesting. Slavic folklore in a non-Slavic environment drew the attention of L. Fialkova, O. Mikitenko and a group of authors. The topic of interethnic aspects of folklore was represented in the studies of L. Malash (Belarusian-Polish), V. Penchev (Bulgarian-Czech), and D. Noy (Polish-Yiddish). Our understanding of the history of Slavic folkloristics was deepened in work by V. Gašparikova (Sreznevski among the Slovaks), A. Toporkov (the role of the Slavic philologist in theories of myth in the 19th century), S. Gric (Kolesa and Mosiński on the Poles'e). The relationship of folklore and literary attracted the attention of L. Marks (in Croatian prose), D. Ajdačić (in East and South Slavic literatures), Z. Bojović (in works of the Renaissance and Baroque), J. Szocki (popular Polish literature at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries).

For the first time, twenty roundtables were held at the conference, one of them devoted to folklore. Z. Profantová from Bratislava spoke about the grammar of folk myth and folklore, along with H. Janašek-Ivaničková, Z. Vanovičova and K. Mikhailova.

At the meeting of the Commission for folklore of the International Committee of Slavics, a letter was read from the absent president of the Commission, Viktor Gusev, who suggested a more active collaboration on several general themes in the period ahead. Folklorists had the opportunity at the Congress of Slavists in Kraków to acquaint themselves with new folklore publications, and to exchange information and experiences in numerous fertile discussions and contacts. At the final plenary session, it was announced that the next congress will be held five years hence in Slovenia.

A conference entitled "Problems in Oral History Research in Eastern European Villages, 1920s-1940s" took place at the Cherkasy Regional Ethnographic Museum, Cherkasy, Ukraine, August 4-7, 1998. The conference was sponsored by the Center for the Study of Oral History and Culture (Kyiv), the Cherkasy Oblast Ethnographic Museum, the journal *Rodovid*, and the Institute of Art, Folkloristics, and Ethnology of the National Academy of Sciences.

The 20's, 30's and 40's were the period of extensive social engineering in Ukraine and elsewhere in Eastern Europe. Collectivization was forcibly introduced and the great famine decimated the Ukrainian countryside. In choosing this time period, the organizers of the conference did have political intent. Among their motives, as this conference participant can discern them, were: 1) to draw attention to collectivization and the famine. Both of these topics receive a great deal of attention among the Ukrainian Diaspora in the United States and Europe, but far less in Ukraine, where the main focus is on the devastation of the Second World War. 2) to encourage the collection of what we call oral history, especially recollections of the time period covered by the conference. Ukrainian understanding of what is included in the field of folklore is different from that in the West and oral history is not a traditional folklore topic. 3) to involve oral materials in the data base used for historical writing.

Some of the papers delivered at the conference, especially those by the conference organizers, did take a more political, oral history approach. William Noll's paper was entitled, "Who will write the cultural and social history of the Ukrainian village." Oleksandr Fedoruk talked about national cultural treasures and politics. Also, politicians were present at the plenary session and the audience did make political statements, calling for attention to and financial help directed at their particular interest group. Most of the conference, however, was a traditional folklore meeting and speakers reported on recent field work. Thus Mykola Kornienko and Viktor Huhlia talked about local pottery, Halyna Kornienko described the clothing used in funerals, and Maryna Iur talked about the designs on bridal chests. Hanna Koropnychenko described her work on lyric songs, Mykhailo Khai talked about folk instruments, and Nadiia Kuksa reported on the craftsmen who made instruments. Oleksandr Solodar talked about a folk musician of the past who performed an interesting mix of traditional and non-traditional songs and Laurie Simmes described a Ukrainian-American who also has some native American background and discussed how he has combined the two aspects of his heritage in both his songs and the musical instrument he plays. Nataliia Havryliuk talked about folk life cycle ritual. Mykhailo Koval' and Ol'ha Xymych discussed traditional woven belts. Zoia Hudchenko, Olena Murzyna, and Raiisa Svyryda talked about folk architecture. There were a number of other interesting papers and those who wish to obtain a copy of the conference program, including abstracts of papers, can probably do so by faxing William Noll at 011-380-44-295-4064.

In addition to the papers, conference participants were taken on tours of the ethnographic and other museums. They were treated to a musical program featuring various local artists and groups. The various meals provided opportunities to chat and to listen to the attending folklorists sing the songs they had collected.

After the conference, the Ethnographic Museum in Cherkasy and the Folklore Institute in Kyiv sponsored a field work expedition to the Chornobai district of the Cherkasy region. Our host was the director of the local elementary school, Serhii Liubyvyi. We also had an opportunity to do some collecting in the adjacent Zolotonosha district.

The Ethnographic Museum in Cherkasy, Mr. Liubyvyi, and other people interested in folklore and ethnography in the Cherkaska oblast are happy to host other American folklorists, either alone or as a group. I found the field work experience to be excellent and the price quite reasonable. I would recommend cooperative work with the people that helped me and will be happy to put any individual or group in contact with them.