

Ђорђе STEPIĆ\*

REPORT FROM THE SUMMER SCHOOL  
PAX BYZANTINO-SLAVA  
(July 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021)

This year a special academic project was launched by the scholars of the international Pax Byzantino-Slava research network – the first summer school dealing with the topics of medieval Rhomaian and Slavic history, culture, literature etc. The aim of this endeavour is to promote an interdisciplinary and international approach to the plurality of issues concerning the very broad topic of this summer school. Therefore, renowned scholars from various fields held lectures that were meant to broaden (if not deepen) the knowledge of graduate students, primarily Ph.D. students. The lectures were held online, using the Webex meeting platform. Every day, after the lectures ended, the link for the meeting was left open until midnight, so that the students could get to know each others' field of research, form bonds and exchange literature or advice to help them in their work. On top of that, the participants (lecturers and listeners) exchanged e-mail addresses, to further the cooperation even after the school had run its course.

The first day was opened by Associate Professor Angeliki Delikari, from the School of History and Archaeology of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Greece) Faculty of Philosophy, the Chairwoman of Pax Byzantino-Slava, and Professor Dragiša Bojović, from the Department of Serbian and Comparative Literature of the University of Niš (Serbia) Faculty of Philosophy, and the Director of the Centre of Byzantine-Slavic Studies.

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The two of the „main culprits” for the research project and, indeed, the existence of this summer school in the first place, greeted the students (Professor Delikari in Greek and English and Professor Bojović in Serbian), explaining, in short, the main goal of organizing such an event – to create a forum for intellectual exchange between young researchers, motivated by the lectures of their older colleagues. Both were saddened by the fact that the school could not be held „in person” – in either Serbia, Greece or Poland, but pointed out the advantages of online work, being delighted that so many students from different countries could attend, no doubt, due to the simple „one click and you’re there” logistics. Professor Bojović pointed out the accessibility of various sources and literature on the research networks’ website, with links to various other electronic libraries.

The first official lecture was held by Associate Professor Andreas Gkoutzioukostas, from the School of History and Archaeology, of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Faculty of Philosophy, on the subject of the prefecture of Illyricum after the Slavs had settled there. Professor Gkoutzioukostas focused on the historic period between the 7<sup>th</sup> and the 9<sup>th</sup> century, and the disappearance of the prefecture of Illyricum from sources and the emergence of the prefecture of Thessaloniki, with other civil services that were associated with the same region. His thesis is that the former gave rise to the latter, and that the prefecture of Thessaloniki wasn’t confined to the nearest city surroundings and the port, but that it stretched deep inland, and dismisses claims made by other scholars that the city was maintained through supplies via the sea (*sic!*) by the government in Constantinople. The sources he produced paint a picture that is rather different: the Slavic archons in the vicinity of Thessaloniki accepted Rhomaian supreme power and effectively stayed under their sovereignty, which meant that the city wasn’t only self-sufficient, but that it was a seat of a larger administrative area. This was backed, amongst other sources, by the „Miracles of Saint Demetrius”, which mention various dignitaries with titles connected to Illyricum and Thessaloniki, such as eparchs and archons.

He was followed by Professor Monsignor Francesco Braschi, doctor of the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, director of the Class of Slavic Studies and Class of African Studies of the Accademia Ambrosiana (Italy), with a lecture titled „The Liturgical Lives of St. Cyril and Methodius in the Latin Church”.

The veneration of the Holy brothers in the Catholic Church in general, he tells the participants, begins in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, as a part of a wider incentive by Pope Leo XIII to integrate the Slavs into the Catholic world. From then on, the Sacra Congregatio Rituum, along with other li-

turgical books, came to include the prayers and biographies of Saints Cyril and Methodius, which wasn't the case in the previous centuries. Among these texts we can find different literary genres and models – from poetry (*hymni*) to biblical and ecclesiastical readings (*lectiones*); from prayers (*orationes*) to refrains to be sung together with Psalms (*antiphonae*).

For the feast of Cyril and Methodius, the readings „*de vita Sancti*”, as a part of the Roman Daily Prayer – more precisely, the Nighttime Service (*matutinum*) – were composed by taking some passages from an Encyclical by Pope Leo XIII, which also contained a detailed account of the life of the two Saints. After the reform of the Breviarium by Pope John XXIII, these accounts were severely truncated, although they still contained the most important details of the brothers' lives, notably their mission to Moravia, the inquiry in Rome, Cyril's death and later Methodius' missions. The next big step in their veneration, Braschi notes, happened in 1980, when their day of celebration was elevated from „memory” to „feast”. He ends his lecture by stressing the differences between the liturgical lives of the Saints in Roman and Ambrosine rite and reading several passages from the mentioned documents of both traditions.

Prof. Dr Rafał Dymczyk, from the Institute of Slavic Philology of the University of Adam Mickiewicz in Poznań (Poland), Faculty of Polish and Classical Philology, started the second day with his lecture „The Holy Mount Athos – Multicultural Heritage”. Professor Dymczyk began his presentation by stating that he would mostly be focusing on the history of Athonite monasticism and the role of women in the history of Athos despite the existence of the Avaton ban.

The monastic culture of the Holy Mount Athos stems from the earliest hermits – anachorites that abandoned all worldly pursuits in their search of spiritual purity, at first in the deserts of Upper Egypt, like Saint Pachomius the Great. Legendary roots of cenobitic life can be followed into the earliest period of the Middle Ages, or earlier. However, it is widely accepted that the founders of this way of religious life were Saint Athanasios and Saint Peter of Athos, whose short biographies the participants learnt from the lecturer. Over the years, the mountain became associated with cenobitic, rather than idiorrhythmic monasticism. The professor touched upon many aspects of life in the monasteries, from religious duties and chores, to literary and other interests/duties of the monks. To help illustrate his points, he provided many pictures from the monasteries he had the opportunity to visit, such as the Megali Lavra and Agiou Pavlou. He mentions the international character of almost all of the monasteries (most of which are Greek today, with three notable exceptions), having their benefactors and monks coming from all corners of the Orthodox world (Russia, Bulgaria, Serbia, Georgia, Romania, etc). This is why many

of them still maintain huge libraries holding their respective national literary monuments, as well as other traces of the presence of different cultures that shaped their history.

Dymczyk then introduces the listeners to the Avaton rule which prevents certain categories of people from setting foot on Athos, noting that it most often pertains to the ban of women. Although this ban comes from the harsh rules of monastic life, there have been many instances of it being broken, with the women who broke it becoming somewhat notorious – for instance, the Serbian Empress, Jelena Nemanjić, is said to have been hiding on the Holy Mount during the plague that swept through the Empire in 1347/8. Both her, and another Serbian princess, Mara Branković, have also been important benefactors of several Athonite monasteries, and were, thus, tied with their development in the Middle Ages. In the end, in order to further emphasize the multicultural nature of the history of Athos, Dymczyk mentions the story of the Amalfion ruins, which were once a Catholic convent in the middle of Byzantine territory, tied with the Fourth Crusade and Catalan raiders, although it continued to operate for many years after both.

Professor Dr Vlada Stanković, from the Department of History of the University of Belgrade Faculty of Philosophy, Director of the Centre for Cypriot Studies (Serbia) wasn't able to give his lecture titled „In the Upside-Down World: the Byzantines and the Balkans in the Thirteenth Century (Politics, Ideology, Identity)” in person, but filmed it and urged the students to seek him out if they are interested in his research.

By choosing this subject, professor Stanković aims to show how the political turmoil following the First fall of Constantinople affected the (Nicaean) Byzantine outlook on the Balkan relations, including the fluctuating power of all the players involved. After the campaigns of the Komnenoi, that pushed the Balkan borders of the Empire the farthest they have been since 1025, the Rhomaian infighting paved the way for their downfall. In less than half a century, not only were all of their conquests undone, but the Empire itself barely clung to life in the form of several rump states. This prompted many historians to refer to this division of the Rhomaian world as „The catastrophe of 1204”. In the aftermath, the Latin, Bulgarian, Trebizond and Nicaean Emperors, as well as the Despots of Epirus all considered themselves as legitimate successors to the defunct Roman throne – the former two mostly by the right of conquest and the latter three based on their relations with the last legitimate imperial family of Constantinople.

The Nicaeans ended up being the most successful contenders for the Byzantine political and cultural legacy, their efforts culminating in the liberation of Constantinople in 1261, and the Palaiologian renaissance. This

was mostly due to their approach to foreign policy, as they understood the necessity of proving their legitimacy to their allies and foes alike. For example, granting autocephality to the Serbian Orthodox Church served both sides (a fact rarely acknowledged), because it showed that the Serbian state recognized the Nicaeans as „true” Byzantines. On that note, the Emperors became more open to creating marriage, economic and even religious alliances, which gave rise to, as Stanković puts it, „the decade of hectic diplomacy” of Michael VIII, culminating in the attempted reconciliation of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches and resulting with greater three-way bonds between Byzantium, Serbia and Bulgaria. This was welcomed by other parties: king Uroš I of Serbia and Konstantin Tih Asen, who were themselves related through the founder of the Serbian Nemanjić dynasty. This „alliance” that ostensibly lasted for several decades, did not bring constant peace between the Balkan nations. Rather, it only pushed the two emerging Slavic powers firmly into the Rhomaian Orthodox cultural realm, ensuring the need for religious and cultural, if not political cooperation.

The next speaker, Dr Agathoniki Tsilipakou, Director of the Museum of Byzantine Culture, Thessaloniki (Greece) presented on the topic „Byzantium and the Slavic World through the Museum of Byzantine Culture”. In her opening, she walked the listeners through the short history of the museum, from its founding in 1997, to the present day, detailing the most prominent parts of the permanent exhibition, as well as the venues they are housed in – for example, room four, which contains artefacts (coins, seals, pottery, architecture), and an abundance of photographic material and maps related to the period between the Iconoclastic crisis and the Macedonian and Komnenian restorations, and room eleven, which is dedicated to the twilight years of the empire, from the times of the Fourth Crusade until the Empire’s fall to the Ottomans. Various thematic units contain mostly objects found in the city of Thessaloniki and the region of Macedonia. These finds paint a vivid picture of the city life, from the poorest to the wealthiest classes of society. Despite its tumultuous history, especially in the later centuries, Thessaloniki experienced great artistic and spiritual creativity, as well as economic progress.

The Museum also hosts a plethora of academic activities such as lectures, theatre productions, workshops on conservation, seminars, student internships, publishing activity, temporary exhibitions, scientific conferences... The lecture was concluded with the screening of a film detailing the daily life in medieval Thessaloniki, as lived by one of its citizens: a kind of walk through the city and centuries, with various stops at churches, the port, the marketplace and the fortified walls, showing us how history comes full circle, even if it takes a long time.

Professor Vasya Velinova, Director of the Centre for Slavo-Byzantine Studies „Professor Ivan Dujčev” of the Sofia University „Saint Kliment Ohridski” (Bulgaria) opened the third day of the summer school with her presentation on „Some Aspects of the Bulgarian-Byzantine Literary Relations in the Middle Ages: Reception, Adaptation or Transformation of the Models”.

Professor Velinova first spoke of the general importance of the (written) word, citing the biblical parable of the Sower, from the Gospel of Matthew. The participants then learnt of the context of the relations between the Slavic states (notably Bulgaria and Great Moravia) and the Byzantine Empire, with the former serving as a territorial connection between the latter two, becoming a „middle man” for cultural exchange. In fact, the mission of the Thessaloniki Brothers, Saints Cyril (referred to as Constantine the Philosopher) and Methodius, to Great Moravia served as a bridgehead to all the Slavic states and peoples, in affirming their religious, cultural and, later, literary identity within the Rhomaian circle. Obviously, the most important part in this was played by the formulation of a new Slavic alphabet – the Glagolitic script, replacing the Greek writing system that dominated the region, but was not close to the Slavic peoples. Professor Velinova follows this with reading passages from the *Vita Constantini* and *Vita Methodii*, detailing their mission to Moravia and the return of Methodius to Constantinople.

The new script slowly started to spread, together with the liturgical and worldly use of the Slavonic language. The former caused the rift between the Catholic missionaries and the Brothers and opened a field of conflict between the East and West, in general. The emerging Cyrillic alphabet, devised by the disciples of Cyril and Methodius, which more closely resembled the Greek one than its predecessor, came to dominate the eastern Slavic lands – notably Bulgaria, which sees a boom in literary activity in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century, with the cities of Pliska and Ohrid serving as cultural centers for the region, from which literary influences spread. This didn’t mean that the Glagolitic script was forgotten – it was still in sporadic use until the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Many notable books from this and the later era (of the Second Bulgarian kingdom/empire) survived, such as the Tarnovo and London Gospels, the pictures of which the speaker includes at the end of her lecture.

Associate Professor Alexandra-Kyriaki Wassiliou-Seibt, from the School of History and Archaeology of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Faculty of Philosophy, and the Institute for Medieval Research/Division of Byzantine Research of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, spoke on the „Evolution of the Byzantine Defense System on the Balkans (late 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> Century)”

The professor spoke of the military structures on the Balkan borders, noting that the arrival of the Slavic tribes weakened the already struggling Empire, which lacked the capacity to push the invaders back. This called for urgent reforms, which lead to the creation of smaller and more manageable military districts (*thema*) whose task was to halt incursions. To that effect, we are given the outline of the military districts in the year 800 – Makedonia, Strymon, Thessaloniki and Mesopotamia tes Dyseos. The latter is thought to have been short-lived, since it is not mentioned in the literary sources, but appears on the seals from the year 810. The lecture continued with the presentation of other seals, with their importance as historical sources underlined (for instance, the seal of Grigorios, strategos of Thessaloniki, is older than the first written mention of the respective *thema*).

The military reform also highlights the greater significance of *klei-souras* – strategic strongholds – in maintaining the grip on the Empire's Balkan territories. The success of the reorganization was rather evident, with new *thema* being founded as more lands were reconquered. Farther districts were shaped during the campaigns against the Cometopouli (Samuel and Nikola), with Iericho (in Epirus) captured in 997, and Dyrrachion in 998 – both were quickly turned into *strategiai*. The Battle of Kleidion (Belasica) in 1014 and the subsequent Rhomaian capture of Bitola in 1018, gave rise to the administrative unit of Boulgaria, commanded by a dux/katepano. *Thema* Serbia, with Sirmion as its centre was established in 1019, following the conquest of Konstantinos Diogenes, the name of this district attesting to a dominant Serbian population in the region. This period of conquest started faltering due to the uprisings of Slavic nobles, such as Deljan and Vojislav, with the latter establishing his hegemony over Diokleia and Zachumlia, styling himself as the ruler of Serbia. The Empire ultimately settled on accepting him into the ranks of nobility – he became *protospatharios* in 1052.

Another kind of district was the *katepanates*, which proved their worth in the years following the settlement of Pechenegs, with the greatest push being against the *katepanate* of Paradounabon in 1036. Another significant *katepanate* was the one centered in Rascia, headed by the *katepano* of Ras – Ioannes Radenos in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century. This and much more we learned from examples of relevant sigillography, with which the professor concluded her lecture.

Associate Professor Melina Paisidou, from the School of History and Archaeology of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Faculty of Philosophy, gave her lecture on the hermitage of „Panagia Eleousa” (the Merciful Virgin) in the Great Prespa Lake and the evolution of monumental painting in the area during the 15th century. This one is, as the professor points

out, only one of several hermitages built from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> century in this region. Most of them are dedicated to the Holy Virgin Mary (such as the ones at Mali grad, Globoko and Blastojne). Their purpose is simple – continuing the cultural thread during the post-Byzantine era.

The ktetorial inscription names the founders of this hermitage – kyr Savvas, Iakovos, and Varlaam – the donors of the church, as well as the „master Vlukasinos”. This mention of the Serbian king Vukašin is a deliberate callback, remembering the last Christian king of the area, extending his worldly authority years after his death, even after this region came under Turkish rule. Other famous religious sites from the time of the Serbian Empire and its successor states are also mentioned, such as Psača and Marko’s monastery, and the Mali Grad hermitage.

After the defeat of the Ottomans at Ancora in 1402, many churches were built, invoking the names of Christian kings, as a sign of hope for freedom. Indeed, we also learn that Emperor Manuel wanted a Christian alliance for the liberation of the Balkans, which, sadly, never materialized. This new hope had even found its way into iconography, the next segment the professor brings attention to, by the means of flourishing crosses with apotropaic symbolism. Inscriptions on the western facade depict praying and have a prophylactic context, guarding the hermitage against misfortunes. Influences on the frescography are various, with clear parallels with churches in Kastoria/Kostur. To that effect the participants are shown the images of the following frescoes: the Transfiguration, Baptism of Christ, Panagia, Resurrection of Lazarus, Crucifixion, Lamentation, Descent to Hell, and a depiction of the donors.

The fourth day began with the presentation of Professor Slavia Barlieva, from the Cyrillo-Methodian Research Center of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, with her topic being „Cyrillo-Methodian Motifs in Latin and Greek Literature”. The lecture covers only the motif of the Holy brothers’ national identity, since the broader topic is far too ambitious for a single lecture. The professor starts by stressing the importance of the Brothers’ cult in Central and Eastern Europe, so much so that Pope John Paul II proclaimed them patron Saints of Europe in 1980, hoping to „promote tolerance and religious connections”, especially with the Slavic Catholics. This is understandable, since they serve as symbols of Slavic intellectuality and various Slavic nations claim them as their own, as an instrument of national ideology.

She continues by mentioning and analyzing several hagiographies that speak of their origins, such as the Chronicle of San Clemente di Casauria (12<sup>th</sup> century) and the *Chronicon pontificum et imperatorum*. The latter rather famously identifies them as „*pene omnium Slavorum apostolus*”. The Dormition of Saint Cyril (Lviv 16<sup>th</sup> c.) sees a Bulgarian appo-



priation of their nationality. This assumption can also be found in some Greek sources of the time. For instance, „The Long Life of St Clement of Ohrid”, written by S. Theophylactos, who defends the autocephality of his archbishopric from the Patriarchate of Constantinople by calling on the Bulgarian tradition and the origins of Saint Clement. He doesn't even mention the Moravian mission, focusing instead on the brothers' mission to Bulgaria and the translation of holy books into the Slavonic language. For the antagonistic attitude of the Catholic Church towards the brothers, Theophylactos blames the Frankish clergy and not the Pope, who, later, confirms the validity of their translations.

Other notable works that detail the missionary activity of „the Slavic apostles” include the Long Life of Saint Naum (most likely authored by Saint Konstantinos Kabasilas), *Granum catalogi praesulum Moraviae*, which is a list of Moravian bishops from 886–1416, written in Latin. Especially valuable is the Czech *Quemadmodum ex histories* (from the 14<sup>th</sup> century), which brings the details of the missions into Moravia, Hungary and Poland.

Professor Dr Tatjana Subotin Golubović, from the Department of History of the University of Belgrade Faculty of Philosophy, spoke on the hymnography in the Serbia of the Nemanjić (12<sup>th</sup> –14<sup>th</sup> century). The professor notes that Serbian literacy can be traced roughly to the same period as their conversion into Christianity – since the 9<sup>th</sup> century. Indeed, *De Administrando Imperio* mentions the region of „Baptized Serbia”. The literature of the era presents continuity from the early Slavic and Bulgarian literacy. The audience is then introduced to some of the most significant monuments of Nemanjić Serbia: Miroslav's and Vukan's Gospels, as well as the works of Saint Sava and Stefan the First-Crowned. The lecturer shows interest in Sava's and later translations of the typikons – Studit, Evergetis, Jerusalem ones, as well as other liturgical books, like the Triodia and Minea.

The earliest example of a hymnographic monument from the Nemanjić era is the Service to Saint Simeon, composed and written in the first years of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Its earliest copy shows characteristics of a simple Studite manuscript. The first stage of developed hymnography comes with the rise of the cult of Saint Sava and the service of Theodosius, which consists of six canons in six notes.

Another writer of note is Danilo II, a courtier and a noble, abbot of Hilandar, later the bishop of Banjska / Hum and the archbishop of Serbia (1324–37). He authored the „Lives of Serbian Kings and Archbishops”, and has two services attributed to him, both of which are dedicated to his predecessors, Arsenije and Jevstatije. Both of them follow the tradition of the Jerusalem typikon. The professor then shows the troparion to Jevstatije, as a prime example of development and distinction from earlier servic-

es. Looking broadly, many influences came from Byzantine hymnography, as early as from the times of John Chryzostomos and from the contacts of Serbian hymnographers with the large reading centers of Jerusalem, Athos, and Constantinople. The last stage was represented by the works of Serbian patriarch Jefrem, although his opus consists of a series of prayers, rather than full hymns and services.

Professor Jelena Erdeljan, from the Art History Department of the University of Belgrade Faculty of Philosophy, started her lecture titled „Translatio Constantinopoleos and the Capital Cities of Slavia Orthodoxa” by detailing her study of the examples of the Translatio in the Slavic world in chronological order, from Veliko Tarnovo and Belgrade to Moscow. Professor Erdeljan notes that the roots of the translation can be connected with the Translatio Hierosolyimi, which is the translation of Jerusalem into various Christian cities in the sphere of ideology, cults, and relics. The „Jerusalem liturgy” is the metaphorical, allegorical sphere of this phenomenon. However, more often than not, it was followed by a visual and spatial translation, as well. The visual aspect can best be seen in the emulation of icons. And while some relics were even materially transferred, others were transposed as a kind of imitation, such as in church processions, with various central city churches following the Constantinopolitan model.

After 1204, various Byzantine and Latin rump states, as well as the surrounding Slavic states, appropriated the hallmarks of Constantinople. Paris and Venice utilized the tradition of Constantinople to legitimize themselves as the successors of the Romans. On the eschatological level, the fall of Constantinople seemed to be a precursor of the „Second Coming” for the Orthodox people of the time. In those circumstances, the Emperor of Bulgaria perceived himself as the last Christian Emperor. The professor analyzes the effects of this reasoning in the written word, visual and spatial elements of Tarnovo, its churches and fortifications, with various reconstructions of the previously mentioned monuments.

In the case of Serbia, for the longest of times, there wasn't a single city that tried to emulate the Byzantine capital – rather, the translation happened on a broader level, with the best examples of it being the monasteries (such as Studenica and Žiča). An interesting geographical feature of Belgrade – being located on seven small hills, made it an ideal candidate for a city-wide application of the Constantinopolitan model. Aside from its architecture, many holy relics were gathered in the city: the relics of Saint Theophano, the right hand of Constantine, as well as the most venerated – the relics of Saint Paraskeva. On a broader scale, the city itself was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, making it one of the great capitals of Christianity.

The city of Moscow serves as the last standing capital of Slavia Orthodoxa following the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans. More than in any previous case, its rulers worked to earn it the moniker of „Third Rome”. Grand prince Ivan the Third even traced his descent both to the Nemanjić and the Palaiologos family, making him the „heir” of two previous Christian empires. Some of the most notable building projects emulating earlier Orthodox traditions were Uspenski sabor, Pokrovski sabor, and the famous Saint Basil’s Cathedral.

Professor Symeon Paschalidis, from the School of Social Theology and Christian Culture of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Faculty of Theology, Director of the Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies, presents the work of his Institute, its scientific mission and its Microfilm Archive of the Athonite Manuscripts. Paschalidis tells us that the Institute was organized by the Patriarchate of Constantinople, with its main aim being to cultivate the wisdom of the fathers of the Church. It was founded by the Siggilion of the Patriarchal Council in 1965, started operating in 1968, and is located in the Vlatadon monastery. It promotes research and scientific programmes in the field of Christian theology and humanities. Other than that, its most significant project is the micro-photographing of manuscripts of the Mount Athos libraries. Its most famous publication is the *Analecta Vlatadon*.

The Institute takes pride in its archive of slides and the archive of microfilm, which were formed between 1970 and 1992. The microfilmed manuscripts came from 19 monasteries and 3 sketes of Mount Athos. Some of the samples of manuscripts in this archive are as old as 15 centuries. Professor Paschalidis invited the participants to use the many facets of knowledge provided by the Institute to further their scientific careers, showing them how to use the Institutes’ web page, and the forms needed in order to access the archives.

At the start of the last day, Dr Maria Totomanova-Paneva, from the Centre for Slavo-Byzantine Studies „Professor Ivan Dujčev” of the Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski”, introduced the participants to her research on the subject of the Old Bulgarian language as a Slavic liturgical language, the formation of its literary norms and stages of development.

The professor highlights the importance of Old Bulgarian as the first written stage of the Bulgarian language and the use of the Glagolitic script to translate Greek liturgical texts. The oldest written texts of this form can be traced back to the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> century. The reason the language is referenced as Old Bulgarian is, she explains, because it first appeared on Bulgarian territory. It is better known as Old Church Slavonic or even Pan Slavonic. Totomanova-Paneva then explains its links to modern Bulgarian

and other Slavic languages, such as Serbian, based on various linguistic and syntactic criteria. It seems that the language developed from several close dialects, but its stabilized structure is owed to it being the literary language of the first Bulgarian empire, with its literary norm built around the spoken Bulgarian and Greek influences. She presents some of the most famous writings of the time: the works of Chernorizac Hrabar, the Tetraevangelion from the 10<sup>th</sup> century, as well as Codex Marianus, and explains the symbolism of the letters and their shapes, those being the circle, triangle, cross...

The later Cyrillic script was created, most probably, by the disciples of Clement within the Preslav literary school, as hypothesized by Vatroslav Jagić. It was an easier replacement for the translation of Greek liturgy since it looked more like Greek when written. The later development of Old Church Slavonic can be followed regionally, but remained in part connected to the Bulgarian mainland – for example, through the work of Jeftimios of Tarnovo in Bulgaria and Constantine of Kostenec in Serbia, the later spearheading the Resava orthography.

Ph.D. Paweł Dziadul, from the Institute of Slavic Philology of the University of Adam Mickiewicz in Poznań, Faculty of Polish and Classical Philology, gave his lecture on the topic „Apocalyptic Fears and Moods among the Orthodox Slavs in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century”.

The participants learnt that various dates were connected with apocalyptic moods in Europe, such as the years 1000, 1666, and 2000 AD. The world era (*etos cosmou*) was used primarily in the East, and counts years from the Biblical creation of the world, with the Byzantines and Slavs setting it in 5508 and the Alexandrians in 5492 BCE. Dziadul then discusses writings known for their apocalyptic messages. The first of them is the Fount of Knowledge, where John of Damascus states that the world will last for seven ages (millennia). Andreas of Caesarea builds upon this in his Commentary on the Book of Revelation, noting that the 8<sup>th</sup> age symbolizes eternity.

The professor later analyses some Old Bulgarian, Serbian and Russian works on similar topics. For instance, Isaija, a Serbian monk, leaves in his short Account of the Battle of Maritsa that it happened „at the end of the seventh age”. A new surge of popularity of apocalyptic literature in Serbia came at the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, with some of the translations attributed to despot Stefan Lazarević. Konstantin of Kostenec, his biographer, mentions „*skrbliji leta*” – „years of sorrow” that precede the end of the world, which should happen around the year 7000. They refer to Turkish conquests, wars, epidemics, famines, all of which must’ve seemed as clear signs that the time of the Second coming is near.

Nestor Iskander, a Russian chronicler, writes in „The Tale of the Taking of Carigrad” that the Fall of Constantinople is an event that opens the Apocalypse, despite its direct consequences being of varying severity and felt differently in the East and West. Of some importance are certain marginal notes on Slavonic manuscripts, as the lecturer states, such as those on the Časoslov (Chil. 357), which, again, mention that the world is nearing its destruction.

Epiphanius the Wise in the Life of Stefan of Perm pinpoints the month of the Apocalypse to the March of the year 7000, noting that it is a month tied to many of the most important events in the Bible, such as the Annunciation, Exodus, Crucifixion, and the Creation of Adam. A similar chronological reference can be found in „The Life of Sergius of Radonezh” („he appeared in the last of times...”). Dziadul summarizes that various catastrophic events helped shape the general *Zeitgeist* of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century. The economic, military, and political downfall of the East served to rekindle the spark of inspiration in Apocalyptic writers, who assert that the suffering of the people is only so great, because the Lord plans to end the world altogether.

Associate Professor Angeliki Delikari closed the summer school with the lecture on „The Letter of Patriarch Photios of Constantinople to Khan Boris of Bulgaria. Advice on the Duties of a Ruler”. At the start of the lecture, the participants are given the historical context and significance of the letter, with reference to the Encyclica of patriarch Photios to the Eastern Churches.

At the time, the Rhomaian Empire had been in grave danger from the Franks in the west, who challenged their dominance, and proclaimed the Holy Roman Empire. In the meantime, Bulgarians swept through Thrace, threatening Constantinople and Thessaloniki and conquering great parts of the Balkan’s inlands. The Bulgarian Khan was thus recognized as an important political player in the region, and his decision to convert his state into Christianity was warmly welcomed, as it opened a field for Byzantine influence through religious leadership.

The letter to Boris, Delikari stresses, is not only about the advice for good ruling. Its beginning speaks about the presentation of the truth of the Christian faith, its beauty and usefulness. Therefore, it serves to strengthen the resolve of the newly converted Bulgarian Khan to stay on the path of Christianity and behave in a manner worthy of a Christian ruler. It also outlines the Nicaean Creed, with special attention to the rulings of the latest ecumenical Synod.

The letter had a huge impact in the coming centuries. It was translated into Latin by the bishop of Norwich and, later, paraphrased in French,

as well as in Russian (in 1779), becoming a go-to guide in the art of ruling, one to rival Machiavelli's „The Prince”. The lecture ended with the participants reading fragments of the letter in Greek and English, vividly discussing its content.

Professor Delikari followed by congratulating the students on their participation in the summer school, expressing hope that it would become an annual tradition and a successful platform for young scholars from various branches to share their knowledge on a number of topics pertaining to Byzantine and Slavic history, philology, etc. in order to build a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to their own research and to cooperate with their foreign colleagues.

All in all, the aims of the summer school to create connections on various planes of research were realized, despite (or, indeed, because) of the circumstances in which it was held. Professors and experts from different fields of research gave the participants a much needed new outlook on subjects covering the many centuries and regions that the Eastern-Roman cultural sphere encompassed, and beyond. The students were also acquainted with a number of scientific institutions, resources and methods of research that will undoubtedly help them in their pursuits. But, most importantly, they were given a chance to approach scholars, their colleagues and their collective work much more openly, with freedom to question and build upon everything that was said, allowing them to gain valuable knowledge that exceeds their own field of work. So it is that, centuries after its fall, the Rhomaian (and the Slavic) world remains a great source of inspiration, and a bridge between different cultures, maintained by the many researchers that deal with it.

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