

## PROFESSOR FISCHER-GALATI REPLIES:

Professor Fisher is entirely correct in assuming that it was not my intention to "discourage students from undertaking Ottoman language study." Nor was it my intention to criticize Professor Kortepeter's study because of his being "primarily a linguist." I am fully aware of the facts stated by Professor Fisher with respect to both teaching and research in Ottoman history and am also in full sympathy with his views on these subjects. The thrust of my statements was directed at the inevitable methodological problems arising from the study of Ottoman sources, which, as a rule, preclude the writing of interpretative history in the even less than grand manner to which we are accustomed in other areas of historical scholarship.

## TO THE EDITOR:

In his review of Stephen E. Palmer, Jr.'s and Robert R. King's book *Yugoslav Communism and the Macedonian Question* (September 1973, pp. 652–53) Professor Ivan Avakumović rejects certain of the authors' claims about the attitudes of the CPY's leadership on the question of the Macedonian ethnic identity. In his words, "The Yugoslav Communist leaders in 1919–20 did not take the position that Macedonians 'were Serbs' (p. 21)."

Professor Avakumović is absolutely correct in rejecting this undocumented claim. But on what basis does he reject it? He continues, "They [i.e., the CPY leaders] argued that no single nationality had an absolute majority in Macedonia." This formulation, however, is to be found in "The Resolution About the Macedonian and the Thracian Question," adopted by the CPY's Third National Conference in December 1923—that is, *more than three years after* the period under discussion! In fact, the CPY had no Macedonian policy in 1919–20.

Nevertheless, although Palmer and King are wrong when they state that at this time the CPY leadership defined the population of Macedonia as Serbian, it is true that a certain residue of precisely such thinking, with its roots in the ideas of the Serbian Social Democracy, continued to exert steady influence in sections of the CPY's Serbian organization. For example, in an internal CPY document reporting on the meeting of the Regional Secretariat for Macedonia, which convened on March 16, 1924 (approximately three months *after* the Third National Conference and a little more than three months before the publication of Kosta Novaković's pamphlet "Macedonia to the Macedonians! . . ."), the language spoken in Macedonia is called *popularni srpski jezik*! [Source: Arhiv Instituta za historiju radničkog pokreta Hrvatske (Zagreb)—Arhiv Kominterne II/52].

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## PROFESSOR AVAKUMOVIC REPLIES:

Mr. Banac is not on strong ground when he attributes my statement to a party document adopted in December 1923. Is he unaware that: (1) On August 10, 1915, two future members of the central committee of the CPY in 1919, Triša Kaclerović

and Dragiša Lapčević, expressed the same view in a declaration on behalf of the Serb Social Democratic Party in the Serb Parliament. (2) In a brief to the Dutch-Scandinavian Committee of socialist parties in Stockholm (1917) Kacero-vić used the same argument in support of his party's demand for an autonomous Macedonia in a Balkan federation. (3) The Serb Social Democratic Party re-affirmed its stand in favor of an autonomous Macedonia at its last congress in April 1919. (4) A few days later the spokesmen of the SSDP began to play a leading role in the CPY they helped to launch.

**TO THE EDITOR:**

The International Commission on Slavic Studies, a subsidiary of the International Committee of Historical Sciences functioning under UNESCO auspices, which brings together historians from about twenty countries who are interested in Russia and Eastern Europe, held a conference on August 29–31, 1973, on the Slavs and their neighbors since the Renaissance, with the Jagellonian University of Kraków acting as the host institution.

Early in the summer, the General Secretary of the Commission, Professor Bernard Michel of the University of Poitiers, France, learned that an eminent German scholar had been denied a visa to attend this conference. Through his efforts and those of the scholar involved, UNESCO was able to persuade the Polish government to issue the visa. On August 20, Professor Michel learned that the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs had denied a visa to Professor Yeshayahu Jelinek of Haifa University, Israel, even though he too had been invited by the university and had been asked by the chairman of the conference to present a paper. In fact, his paper had been accepted, printed, and distributed to the participants. Professor Michel's strenuous efforts by Friday, August 24, produced a decision by Mr. Koziński, head of the Western Department of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, that Professor Jelinek, who had arrived in Bonn on August 20 to obtain his visa, would receive the visa. However, Professor Jelinek learned on Tuesday, August 28, the day before the conference began, that his visa had again been denied.

The American vice president of the Commission, Professor Robert F. Byrnes, therefore made it plain at the opening session of the conference, held on the morning of August 29, that the visa denial by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs impeded the exchange of views and interpretations, which is the purpose of the Commission and of UNESCO, and urged that the conference adjourn if the visa were not issued to Professor Jelinek before the second session of the conference, scheduled for five P.M. that day. Late in the afternoon of August 29, when the last minute efforts of Secretary General Michel and of the host institution to secure the visa had failed, all the American participants withdrew from further participation in the conference.

We took the step of withdrawing with regret, but in the conviction that the principle of free and unfettered contact and exchange among scholars which the UN and its agencies of international cultural cooperation have espoused since their creation was at stake.

We hope that this will be the last of such incidents. However, we urge our colleagues to remain alert to prevent their recurrence. We also believe that before

any American organization of scholars agrees to participate in international conferences such as this, it should indicate that the host country must provide assurance that it will grant visas in good time to any qualified and responsible scholar invited to participate in the conference.

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PROFESSOR JELINEK WRITES:

I would like to express my deep appreciation to Professor Robert F. Byrnes of Indiana University, to Professor Bernard Michel of the University of Poitiers, France, and to the numerous American and Western colleagues who protested vigorously the discrimination performed against me during the Colloquium of the International Commission on Slavic Studies at Kraków during August 29–31, 1973. It is a beautiful feeling to be a part of a generous and noble community.

Perhaps this unfortunate incident will result in the creation of a new understanding for the need of free and unfettered contacts among scholars, and exchange of ideas and views.

TO THE EDITOR:

Recent years have seen the development in Russian studies of a number of study groups in which specialists meet for the discussion of papers and the exchange of information and ideas. One thinks of the successful launching of the Eighteenth Century, Dostoevsky, and Neo-Formalist study groups.

It is time that a similar study group was formed by specialists in the study of the Russian Revolution. The Russian Revolution is now taught in a large number of universities and colleges of higher education in the United Kingdom and abroad, an increasing amount of research is being undertaken, and publications on the subject proliferate; yet existing associations and conferences provide only an occasional opportunity for specialists to meet and exchange views. A study group on the Russian Revolution would be concerned with political radicalism and related social change during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and with the populist, anarchist, social-democratic, and communist movements in particular. On occasion the group's interests would extend into other periods of history, but its concern would be with *revolution* in Russia, and not with the whole of Russian history. Membership of the group would be open to scholars from any country and from any discipline.