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REPORT ON THE ZAGREB MARIOLOGICAL CONGRESS

In August, 1971, at Zagreb, Yugoslavia, there took place the sixth international Mariological Congress and the thirteenth international Marian Congress. This report offers a description of the congresses and then a brief sampling of the more than one hundred papers presented in plenary and particular sessions. The congress site was noteworthy—Zagreb is the capital of ancient Christian Croatia, now part of the Communist State of Yugoslavia. The daily fresh flowers and the people praying constantly at Cardinal Stepinac's tomb behind the high altar in the Zagreb cathedral are vivid reminders of recent struggle between Church and State. To many present, especially Croatians, the sight of pilgrim-scholars come from all over the world to hold a Catholic congress in Zagreb must have seemed almost unreal—Cardinal Stepinac died as recently as 1960, still under the house arrest to which his 1946 sentence had been commuted in 1951.

It would make an interesting study to assess the political implications of the warm welcome the participants in the congresses received from the State officials. One recalls that only the previous fall, 1960, President Tito had called on the Holy Father in Rome. In recent months, especially since the August congress, the newspapers and other media have reported the internal difficulties in Yugoslavia, e.g., the stern repressive measures the federal government has taken against the Croatian independence movement. There were evidences of such stirrings during the congresses, as in the open display of the old Croatian flag, and canny Yugoslav-and Eastern-bloc-watchers no doubt noticed more than this innocent American abroad. Even religious journals published in Europe, e.g., Spain and

Italy, saw the invitation to hold the Marian congresses in Zagreb as part of the changing entente between Communist State and Church in Croatia.

On a personal note, I met at London airport waiting to board my Zagreb plane, old friend Mr. H. Martin Gillett, founder and secretary of the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary, accompanied by Dr. E. L. Mascall, Anglican, and Mr. J. Neville Ward, Methodist. On the Yugoslav end, Father Paul Melada, O.F.M., native son of Croatia, was waiting to greet us on behalf of the *Academia Mariana*, sponsor of the congresses. Customs and immigration gave us diplomatic courtesies and we were at once interviewed by reporters and translators of the country's one Catholic paper, the by-weekly *Glas Concila*, a well-edited journal that began as an information bulletin during the ecumenical council.

The theme of the Mariological congress was "the cult of Our Lady from the sixth to the eleventh century (500 A.D. to 1100 A.D.)." The fourth Mariological congress at Santo Domingo, 1965, studied the scriptural origins of Marian cult; at Lisbon in 1967 the fifth international congress considered the development of Marian devotion from the first to the sixth century. Zagreb continued the same theme. Everywhere in Zagreb, plastered on walls as in the assembly halls, was to be seen the official congress poster, reproducing against a gold background the oldest Croatian image of our Lady, a 'praying Virgin' from the eleventh century.¹ The motto of the Marian congress was everywhere to be seen too: *Maria, mundi melioris origo*—Mary, source of the better world, an inscription going back to 6th century Croatia, and a motto of special impact in post-conciliar and post-war Yugoslavia, a bridge-land looking to a better future through both Christian and Marxist spectacles.

¹ Stj. Sakac, S.J., *Le culte marial en Croatie-Dalmatie Médiévale (600-1090)*, in H. du Manoir, S.J., ed., *Maria, Etudes sur la Ste. Vierge*, 5 (Paris, 1968) 650-1.

The Mariological meeting opened Friday morning, August 6, in the main aula of the minor seminary, where all the congress sessions were held, a short distance from Cathedral Square and City Centre. In the inaugural session we were welcomed by the Archbishop of Zagreb, Francis Kuharic, and then greeted by Father Charles Balić, the Croatian-born Franciscan who is head of the International Pontifical Marian Academy, showing his 71 years, yet of powerful voice and dynamic spirit. After that, delegates expressed the good wishes of individual nations and language groups. The main work of the congress got under way at once with two major papers to the full assembly, typical of the scholarly presentations to come. The Italian Servite, H. Toniolo, led off with a study on the Akathist hymn, still used every Saturday in the East, as the supreme expression of Byzantine Marian cult; it exercised an immense influence also on the West, as Meersseman has shown. Then Fr. G. Soell, Don Bosco Father from Germany, spoke of the ethical picture of Mary in the Latin Church of the early Middle Ages and its significance for the development of Marian doctrine and devotion from Bede (d. ab. 735) to Anselm (d. 1109). Simultaneous translations were provided into Croatian and the major Western languages.

The next four mornings, through Tuesday, August 10, were all given to major papers in plenary session—a cross-section of world scholarship. One in English was by the Anglican Dr. E. L. Mascall of King's College, London: *The Place of Mariology in Christian Theology*. Afternoons the delegates broke up into six language sections: Croatian, English, German, French, Spanish and Italian. English language representatives who read papers were as follows: from Ireland, Donal Flanagan of Maynooth; from Canada, the Jesuits T. Horvath and F. Buck; from the U.S.A., T. Cranny, S.A., W. Cole, S.M.; from England three members of the Ecumenical Society of the B.V.M.—Mr. H. M. Gillett, Dr. E. L. Mascall, and Mr. J. Neville Ward. Mr. Ward is a Methodist pastor; during

the Marian congress he read a paper, *Mary and the Prayer of Christians*, and, since the congress, has published in England the book, *Five for Sorrow, Ten for Joy*, a series of reflections on the rosary.² French-born T. Koehler, S.M., director of the Dayton Marian Library, was active also in the French division. There were in addition a few more English speakers in attendance.³

The pattern of intensive study-sessions was pleasantly broken by a series of religious and civic receptions—August 7 by the archbishop, August 9 by the mayor, while on the evening of the 11th the famous Croatian Lado troupe presented a dinner concert of traditional songs and dances of Yugoslavia.

The Mariological Congress ended Thursday morning, August 12, with an address by Cardinal Suenens, president of the permanent committee for these congresses, and then a brief report of the preceding days by Fr. Balić. Finally, Cardinal Seper, legate of the Holy Father, and former archbishop of Zagreb, gave a closing message. A Spanish writer noted that in Cardinal Suenens and Seper, who had arrived in Zagreb on the same plane, two current views of the Church were represented: Cardinal Seper, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, standing for the centrality of Rome, Cardinal Suenens, spokesman for collegiality, yet both united under the sign of Mary. Cardinal Seper's addresses in Yugoslavia were strong expressions of his position; the mien of

² Published by Epworth Press, London, 1971.

³ English papers not otherwise mentioned in this report were as follows: R. Maloy: *Sermo in die natali Sanctae Mariae saec. VIII novissime repertus* (actually given in English, plenary session); F. Jelly, O.P.: *Mary's Mediation in the Homilies of St. John Damascene*; T. Horvath, S.J.: *Germanus of Constantinople and the Cult of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, Mediatrix of All Men*; F. Buck, S.J.: *Devotio et cultus marialis apud Ambrosium Autpertum* (given in English); T. Cranny, S.A.: *The Marian Cult in Saint Bede*; W. Cole, S.M.: *Theology in Paschasius Radbertus' Liturgy-Oriented Marian Works*; E. R. Carroll, O.Carm.: *Devotion to Our Lady in the U.S.A.: Lights and Shadows—Reflections on a Lecture Tour*; M. Mikulic, O.F.M.: *Mary's and Woman's Role in the Family of God*.

Cardinal Suenens was mild, with nothing controversial in his conferences. The Spanish author comments: "I have no wish to pass judgment in terms of good and bad, as they do in Western movies, especially in referring to these two Cardinals, both so well deserving in their loyalty to the Church and to the Pope and to the Virgin."⁴

Cardinal Seper himself showed the all-pervasive influence of American cowboy movies in his address of August 12, when he said, "There are to be found Western—I am tempted almost to say 'Wild-Western'—so-called theologians who apparently wish to show that Mary did not conceive Jesus virginally. . . ." Then, with respect to the Marian congress, he offered this realistic advice: "Our veneration of Mary must be deepened, our devotion must be authentic. What do we expect of this Congress? No wonders, no magical events, but the deepening of faith in genuine trust in Mary the Mother of God."

The Marian (popular) congress opened the same morning the Mariological ended, August 12, with a lengthy ceremony and concelebrated Mass at the Cathedral, jammed with people. Most of the Mariological delegates attended, and a great many of them stayed on the next few days for the entire Marian congress, lending a hand with the ceremonies and with the plenary sessions. The local sessions were all Croatian. The theme of the Marian congress was "Mary and the modern world," and Yugoslavia, land of socialist experimentation since World War II, proved a challenging place for these considerations. Again there was a round of receptions by Church and State, with the Peoples Republic of Croatia hosting the members, and government representatives, like Zlatko Frid ('president of the commission for religious affairs,' hence 'minister of cult'), coming before the congress to explain official policy relative to religious freedom.⁵

⁴ In *Miriam*, September-October, 1971.

⁵ Z. Frid edited the book which was given to the congress members with the compliments of the government: *Religions in Yugoslavia* (Zagreb

Among speakers of note the mornings of August 12, 13 and 14 were the German Lutheran pastor W. Borowski on Luke 1, 38 as a help for our day; E. Piacentini, O.F.M.Conv., on the deep Marian piety of his confrere Maximilian Kolbe of Poland who had died a martyr of charity at Auschwitz exactly 30 years before, August 14, 1941, and was beatified by Pope Paul during the Synod, October 17, 1971;⁶ and two American Cardinals: John Carberry of St. Louis on *Mary, the Mother of Faith*,⁷ and John Wright of the Curia on *Cardinal Newman and Mary as 'new Eve.'*

On a hot sunny Sunday the Marian Congress closed with a concelebrated Mass out-of-doors at the Croatian national shrine of Marija Bistrica, in rolling country about fifteen miles north of Zagreb. The venerated statue, from the early 16th century, shows Mary with the Christ Child in her arms; she wears the characteristic dress of a noblewoman of that district and period. Hidden in 1545 during a threatened Turkish incursion, the statue was found again only in 1588. It underwent another eclipse of devotion, but since 1684 has been constantly venerated. Like many ancient Madonnas, Marija Bistrica is a 'dark Virgin,' though the phrase means "Mary of the clear streams." Some estimates of final attendance on August 15 ran as high as 200,000. From the pavilion where the altar stood the scores of concelebrants could see people spread across a whole vast hillside of the natural amphitheatre.

1971), with contributions by members of different faiths, Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, Islamic, as well as a Marxist consideration; T. Sagi-Bunic, O.F.M.Cap., wrote *Catholic Church and Ecumenism*.

⁶ Pope Paul in his homily at the beatification also spoke of the Marian piety of the new *beatus*; cf. *PSP* 16 (1971) 238-243, esp. 240-241. See likewise E. Piacentini's article *Maternità divina e spirituale nel pensiero mariologico del P. Kolbe. Rapporto con l'Immacolata Concezione e altre verità mariane*, in *MLS* 2 (1970) 33-74.

⁷ Cardinal Wright's address has been published in *Our Lady's Digest* 26 (November-December, 1971) 117-26. In the Congress Program Cardinal Wright's conference was titled: *If We Wish to be Christian, We Must Perforce be Marian*.

To this reporter, coming from a land that has not known recent religious discrimination but is now in the throes of post-conciliar renewal and considerable confusion about Our Blessed Lady, Marija Bistrica seemed 'old Church' in many good ways, and one hopes that the winds of change will not sweep away the precious heritage that has survived so well. The building and restoration of churches, additions to seminaries, continuing vocations to the priesthood and religious life were other facets of Catholic life that impressed visitors. Paradoxical that there should be so open a testimony to basic Christian values in an 'iron curtain' land! During the congress, two churches were dedicated in Zagreb: one in the care of the Franciscans, Our Lady of Lourdes, another of the Dominicans, Queen of the Rosary. Bishop Stepinac had blessed the crypt church of Our Lady of Lourdes before the war; Bishop Donze of Lourdes consecrated the altar in the new church. Our Lady of Rosary, in strikingly modern style, is the first new church built in Zagreb since World War II. A short color sound film (32 minutes) had its premiere during the congress—on the Catholic Church in Croatia, past and present.

Summary of Selected Papers:

Among the scores of subjects, some struck me with special interest; another reporter might make quite a different choice. I open with two of the English language papers. Father Donal Flanagan of Maynooth spoke in the English section, Aug. 7, on *Mary in the Poems of Blathmac* (c. 750-770). After recalling St. Patrick's description of the Irish as 'the people beyond whom there are no others,' Fr. Flanagan reached back into the distant Christian past of Ireland for a fascinating introduction to the poems of the 8th century Blathmac. They were discovered in 1960 by James Carney and translated and published by him in 1964.⁸ Each poem is addressed to Mary, though fo-

⁸ The Blathmac poems have been published as vol. 47 of the Irish Texts Society; see the essay, *Poems of Blathmac, Son of Cú Brettan*, by James

cussing on events in Our Lord's life, the poet recalling each of them to Mary in great detail in a first part that is a lamentation, and in a second part that is a victory song. Here is a sample: "Come to me, loving Mary, that I may keen with you—that I may beat my two hands for the captivity of your beautiful Son." Fr. Flanagan suggested the Blathmac poems give us the voice of the people of that day rewriting the gospels in their own day.

Mr. H. M. Gillett read a fascinating report: *The Earliest Representation of Our Lady in Anglo-Saxon Art: The Madonna on the Coffin of St. Cuthbert.*" The image of Mother and Child is found on a wooden coffin of 698 A.D., now in the Cathedral library, Durham, and is a sort of Anglo-Saxon carved counterpart to the Celtic poem, from almost the same time, some fifty years earlier. The carving has similarities as well to decoration in the 8th century Book of Kells. St. Bede, who had been only fourteen when Cuthbert died in 687, tells us of the re-interment of 698 A.D. We know of a translation of the relics in 1104, carefully chronicled, and that in 1542 the body of the apostle of Northern England was again buried, this time behind the great screen in Durham Cathedral. In 1827, nettled by rumors that the bones of St. Cuthbert were no longer there, the dean and canons exhumed them. The bones were re-coffined and buried on the same site, though the possibility still remains that the actual relics of the saint had been removed centuries before. There came to light in the 19th century a portion of the coffin of 698 with a remarkable figure of Our Lady, showing a Byzantine style mediated by Rome, and the ancient chronicles record that in Cuthbert's lifetime an image of Our Lady had been brought to his monastery from Rome. Mr. Gillett noted the publication in 1956 by Oxford University Press of an official report from Durham Cathedral about St. Cuthbert and his relics.

Carney in the book edited by him, *Early Irish Poetry* (Cork, 1965).

In the German section J. Hasenfuss spoke of *The Influence of the Fathers of the Congress Period (6th to 11th century) on Herman Schell (d. 1906)*, whose Mariology Hasenfuss has been exploring now for a good many years.⁹ Hasenfuss regards Schell as a forerunner in discovering the patristic Mary-Church analogy.

Saturday, August 7, Belgian Dominican G. Geenen spoke of the famous Theophilus legend, known in Greek from the 7th century, and in Latin from the 9th, and its diffusion up to the 12th century. It is a mirror of the Marian doctrine and cult of the high Middle Ages. Copyists kept embellishing the story of Mary's intercession for the sinner who had promised his soul to Satan, the better to bring out her mediatorial role. Great value was put on Mary's power as Mother of the Savior. Coptic expert, Italian-born Franciscan G. Giamberardini, reported on the month of May in the Coptic liturgy, where it falls within the Christmas cycle. He showed the great antiquity of this Marian month and the development of the custom between the 5th and 9th centuries, a millenium before the Marian month of May in the West. For the French section, A. Hamman, O.F.M., noted for his studies of early prayers, examined collections of homilies from the 7th to the 9th centuries.¹⁰ These helps for preachers made heavy use of the Latin Fathers (Greek was unknown); their devotion to Our Lady was basically liturgical, hence linked to Christmas, though there are three valuable Assumption sermons from the Homiliarium of Farfa.

J. Laurenceau, O.P., traced the earliest use of the first part of the *Hail Mary* in Western liturgy—from the end of the 7th century, as an offertory antiphon for the Annunciation and for the Advent Wednesday. In the 10th and 11th centuries it

⁹ Hasenfuss wrote the article on Schell in *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* 9: 385.

¹⁰ A. Hamman, O.F.M., *Early Christian Prayers* (Regnery, Chicago, 1961).

passed into the monastic votive office of Our Lady, and by the end of the 11th there is evidence of its use in private devotion. T. Gallus, S.J., of Hungary, spoke in the Slavic language section of the Marian cult of Paul the Deacon (d. aft. 785), whose masterwork is a homiliary dedicated to Charlemagne; 16 of its 144 homilies are Marian. In the Italian section Albert Rum, S.M.M., gave a study on Greek-born Pope John VII (705-7), *Johannes servus sanctae Mariae*, as the mosaic in the basilica of Santa Maria Antiqua titles him. D. Dimitrijević, professor from the Orthodox theology faculty of Belgrade, spoke before the whole assembly on developments of the cult of the Mother of God from Ephesus to the 12th century. Tomislav Saki-Bunić, O.F.M.Cap., dean of the faculty of Catholic theology in Zagreb, spoke in the Croatian section on *Mary in the History of Salvation according to St. Gregory the Great (590-604)*. Gregory was strictly Chalcedonian in outlook; he concentrated on Christ and the Church, wrote of Mary only in passing. For him she was 'mother of God,' and 'ever Virgin.'

Several papers were given on Our Lady in Islam, a factor of more than passing interest in that 12% of the inhabitants of Yugoslavia (one in eight in Zagreb) are Muslim, and the Islamic religion began during the period under study in this congress. Nilus Geagea, O.C.D. (now stationed in Lebanon), spoke on Mary's place in the Koran—a place of exceptional importance, at the service of the rigid monotheism of Islam. Mary's virginal conception of Jesus is held, and she is extolled as model to Muslim women of silence, faith, religiousness and chastity.

J. Alonso, C.M.F., editor of *Ephemerides Mariologicae*, spoke in the Spanish section on the early medieval theme, *concupere per aurem*, relating this way of speaking of the conception of Jesus with the biblical *ex auditu* for faith. *Concupere per aurem* owes nothing to mythological sources, and medieval authors here simply followed the lead of the Fathers. Leander of

Seville's *Regula de institutione virginum* was the subject of P. I. Calabuig, O.S.M.: the cult of the imitation of the Virgin Mary is the principal theme of Leander's book, directed to his sister Marcellina, a consecrated virgin. Colombian Robert Caro, S.J., already known for his work on early Greek homilies, gave in summary a book soon to be published on the cult of Mary in some pseudo-epigraphical Greek homilies. The principal feasts concerned were the Annunciation and Presentation. Fr. G. Gironés of Spain reported in plenary session on the cult of the Virgin Mary in the Visigothic-Mozarabic liturgy. This national liturgy began in the 6th century. Highlights in its development were the contributions of such Fathers as Leander, Isidore and Ildefonsus; and also the political and ecclesiastical unification of Spain at the third council of Toledo, 589 A.D. Mohammedan invasion in 711 and the subjugation of Christian communities led to divisions but also to the Mozarabic liturgy at Córdoba in the 9th century, finally suppressed by Gregory VII. Father Gironés studied Mary's place: the feast of the virginal maternity was extended to all Spain in 656; the Assumption forms part of the visigothic feast of St. John the Apostle, and by the 9th century is its own feast on August 15th. In the visigothic Advent the second Sunday (with a proper preface) and December 18th as well were Marian celebrations; on Christmas the preface (*inlatio*) saw Mary as the exemplar and beginning of Mother Church.

Swiss Calvinist Pastor Henri Chavannes spoke in the French section on the light St. Anselm's prayers to the Virgin throw on his line of thought in the *Proslogion*, continuing an investigation K. Barth made in 1931. With Barth, Pastor Chavannes holds that Anselm was not offering a proof in the *Proslogion* but a sermon on the existence of God, for his *Orationes* from the same period show he moved in the intellectual climate of Christian antiquity, "where likeness and participation played a great role." It is analogously that Anselm wrote that Jesus is "the Son common to God and to Mary." "Hence it is time

to look again at Barth's interpretation from the standpoint of principles which seem to have been forgotten from the end of the Middle Ages." There were at least a half-dozen further studies on St. Anselm: by Andrew Krupa, O.F.M., of Poland; by P. Meinhold, Lutheran for Germany; by H. du Manoir, S.J., who within the year has given us the 8th and final volume (with the index, *inter alia*) of his monumental *Maria. Etudes sur la Sainte Vierge*, begun in 1949; by M. Schmaus, of Germany. Frequent references were made, understandably, to Anselm's *Orationes*—the few, admittedly, that are authentic (three out of forty!)—admirable examples of monastic theology. It is good to be able to report that E. Fairweather's *A Scholastic Miscellany* in the Library of Christian Classics series recently came out in a Macmillan paperback; it contains Anselm's most famous prayer to Our Lady, prayer no. 52.¹¹

Other distinguished speakers were H. Crouzel, S.J. (France), on *Origenism and Theotokos*; M. Köster, S.A.C. (Germany) on Ildefonsus of Toledo; O. Perler of Switzerland, on Swiss veneration of Mary in late antiquity; Leo Scheffszyk (German expert on the Carolingian period), on Notker the Stammerer (d. ab. 900) hymn writer of S. Gall; J. de Aldama, S.J. (Spain) on *servitium Mariae* from the beginnings to Anselm. T. Koehler, S.M., member of our American Society as well, spoke in French in plenary session on the spiritual motherhood of Mary in Western piety between 750 and 1100. G. Besutti, O.S.M., of the *Marianum* staff, researched the origins of Italian Marian sanctuaries: of 1147 examples, 136 are earlier than 1100, and trace their origin not to appearances of Our Lady but to such causes as the finding of her image. G. Philips of

¹¹ Eugene R. Fairweather, editor, *A Scholastic Miscellany. Anselm to Ockham* (Macmillan paperback, New York, 1971). Current interest in Anselm still runs high; his *De conceptu virginali et de peccato originali* has appeared in two recent English translations: *Why God Became Man*, trans. by Joseph M. Colleran (Magi Books, Albany, 1969, paperback) and *Trinity, Incarnation and Redemption*, ed. by H. W. Richardson and J. Hopkins (Harper Torchbook, New York, 1970, paperback).

Louvain sent a paper to be read, suggesting deeper study of two subjects: a) the bond between the virgin birth and Christ's birth in the members of His Church; b) the apostolate as an imitation of the divine maternity.

R. Laurentin's paper was *Mary in Cult and What the West Owes the East in the Period 6th to 11th Century*, which he treated in three sections: a) 6th to 8th century; -b) Carolingian times; c) 11th to 12th century. Influences to note in the first period were the infancy apocrypha, as the Protogospel of James and later the Dormition apocrypha; the miracle stories, as by St. Gregory of Tours (d. 584); and most of all, Eastern liturgical prayer—the Virgin's name in the Canon of the Mass (as early as the 4th century), the preparation for Christmas, the mid-January feast of St. Mary. In the 7th century Rome adopted four Marian feasts: Hypapante ('meeting' of Jesus with Simeon at the Presentation, Our Lady's purification) between 640 and 649, for January 14 or February 2; about 650 the Dormition; later the Annunciation; by 700 the Nativity. Pope Sergius (687-701) decreed the processions. In every case there was an extensive borrowing by the West from Eastern liturgy. Prayers directed to Our Lady do not occur in the West before the 6th century, two hundred years later than the East. Original to the West are the collections of homilies of the 6th and 7th centuries.

Next came the Carolingian period: about 800 the Akathist hymn inspired the *salutatio s. Mariae* (*Ave sponsa in sponsata*, transmitted under Anselm's name). The Litany of Saints supplied: *Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis*, a germ for the later Marian litanies. Miracle stories spread also in the West, supporting the theme of the Virgin of mercy and mediatrix, e.g., the accounts of Theophilus and Mary of Egypt, translated into Latin for Charlemagne by Paul the Deacon. There was a moving prayer to Our Lady by Mary of Egypt in the acts of II Nicea (787 A.D.).

At the end of this period (11th and 12th centuries) the

West continued to borrow from the East. At Reichenau a group of Greek Assumption homilies by Andrew of Crete, John Damascene, and others, were translated, advancing the cause of this belief in a West that had been very suspicious of the *Transitus* apocrypha (recall the ps-Jerome 9th century *Cogitis me*, cautioning 'go slow' in re the Assumption). The feast of Mary's conception, kept in the East from the 7th century, appears in random mentions in the West in the 8th and 9th centuries, and for various dates. Three calendars attest to its celebration in England on December 8 from about 1060; suppressed by the Normans, it took up again towards 1120-30 and spread rapidly.

Laurentin concluded with observations on the separate road the West took after the break with the East in 1054, and the unfortunate results of that gap. The Immaculate Conception is an excellent example: the East celebrates in the conception of holy Mary the origin of the new creation, whereas the Latins turned their attention analytically to the 'biological mechanism designated by the word *conception*.' "Deprived of the mystical and contemplative influence of the East, Latin theologians got mired in contradictory theories, some of them strange indeed, as the *vena pura* or particle of Adam's body that somehow escaped the original stain and was transmitted generation after generation to become the source of Mary." With an allusion to the Congress site, borderland between East and West, Laurentin expressed the hope of a common return to the sources by both sides, to our mutual enrichment. Indeed he suggested this be a three-cornered dialogue, include Protestants as well, concluding: "Perhaps the contribution of the East will help us see that the conflicts between Catholics and Protestants have often developed from our common deficiencies, for which the Eastern tradition holds the remedy."

An ecumenical group, eight Roman Catholics, eight from other Christian Churches, met two afternoons to ponder some of the difficulties for Christian unity posed by the Marian mys-

tery, especially the Congress theme of the development of Marian cult. Present at the gathering were the British members of the Ecumenical Society of the B.V.M., Mr. Gillett, Dr. Mascall and Mr. Ward; a number of German Lutherans, as P. Meinhold, F. Künneth and W. Delius; T. Koehler, S.M., J. Alonso, C.M.F., F. Buck, S.J., Eamon R. Carroll, O.Carm., and others. Marian cult is a sharp point of difference for the Reformed Churches, but the group came up with a positive resolution, continuing a similar action taken four years earlier at Lisbon. A statement bearing Protestant, Orthodox and Catholic signatures read in part: "The veneration of the Mother of God is ultimately based on her unique place in salvation history and within the Church in the communion of saints. In judging such developments, significant differences are manifest, yet it can be commonly granted that when the Christ-centered character is prominent in venerating Mary, and when the place of the Mother of God in saving history is well-anchored in the biblical data, there is positive value to such veneration of Mary, which should be recognized as valuable today and ecumenically profitable."

Conclusion:

The reader will be able to pass his own judgment on the papers read at Zagreb once they are in print, and the Academia Mariana hopes this time to get them out soon. For various reasons, among them unforeseen printing troubles, the six volumes from the previous congresses, Lisbon-Fatima, 1967, only appeared shortly before the 1971 congresses. Short of an assessment based on careful study of the full proceedings, some observer's remarks, both favorable and critical, might be made here. In effect, the survey offered in the previous pages is a favorable reaction. The Zagreb studies showed the continuity of the cult of Mary during the six centuries of the Congress' concern, bridge period between the earlier biblical and patristic times and the coming twelfth century flowering. There is ecu-

menical significance in this consistent growth, both in West and East, prior to the break between them, and long before the Protestant Reformation. Similarly, the evidence of Our Lady's place in art as in the liturgical calendars and homily collections is more than an historical enrichment; the Christological and ecclesial notes of these ancient Marian celebrations are examples of inventiveness the modern Church might emulate.

On the negative side it must be observed that—no fault of our generous Yugoslav hosts, be it noted!—the overall plan fell short of a synthesis. There was only a bare year's announcement of the congress, which left too little time to enlist the services of many well qualified to make a contribution in the neglected area of the 6th to the 11th centuries. This was surely true of the United States: we were able to send only a small group; in part it was the difficulty of distance and air-fare, in part lack of interest and of trained people, but in some part it was too short a notice. The same seems to have been true even of many European scholars; one thinks of such conspicuous absentees as Dom Leclercq, Henri Cazelles, S.S., and J. Galot, to mention only three.

Even though many authors and trends were treated in the vast period under consideration, certain areas were strangely neglected. Apart from the Coptic, Visigothic-Mozarabic, and monastic liturgy, other historic liturgies went unstudied: Ambrosian and Gallican, to say nothing of the Eastern forms, Byzantine, Armenian and others. While some authors received almost excessive consideration (Anselm had 8 papers, but many had 2, some had 3), others had no papers devoted to them, as Maximus the Confessor, John the Geometer, Ratramn. There was Orthodox participation in the Congress—a few papers, a delegate to the ecumenical sessions, a representative at the public ceremonies of the Marian Congress. But this was little enough, considering the Orthodox preponderance in Serbia, neighbor to Croatia in modern Yugoslavia. Perhaps the old animosities are still too strong.

Papers were read during the Marian congress on the theme, *Mary and the World of Today*, with the slogan, 'Mary, source of the better world.' Mostly, however, the Marian congress was a great popular celebration, climaxing on Assumption Day, Sunday, August 15th, at the national Croatian shrine of Marija Bistrica. As D. Flanagan already reported in *The Furrow*, the English Methodist minister, Dr. Ward, commented to us at the dinner following the great outdoor Mass: "I begin to understand a little what you Catholics mean by *celebrating* the Feast of the Assumption."¹² Wrestling with its own problems of survival in a socialist State and with a strong sense of Catholic solidarity, the Church in Yugoslavia does not seem to have suffered yet the post-conciliar storms of the rest of the West. Questions of waning veneration of the Mother of the Lord, the current confusion about her intercession, the problem of teaching Marian devotion to the young—these don't seem to have the same urgency in Yugoslavia as elsewhere. The very aloofness of Zagreb would have provided a tranquil ground for such discussions, but the chance was missed. Nonetheless, the French section offered some good suggestions along the lines of practical and popular Marian cult. Why is it, they asked, that Our Lady's place according to the 2nd Vatican Council (n. 103 of the liturgy constitution and ch. 8 of *Lumen Gentium*) is not in fact reflected in the liturgy today? The renewal requires joining *Dominus tecum* (Christ-centered) to *Communicantes* (in the communion of the whole Church). It was noted that Lourdes had already had more pilgrims than normal for 1971, and that pilgrimages and sanctuaries must now more than ever "play the role of open-air retreats for the Christian people."

Cardinal Suenens' address was on Mary and the world of today. What has Mary to say and to bring to modern men? First,

¹² D. Flanagan, *Three Congresses on Our Lady*, in *The Furrow* (Ireland) 22 (October, 1971) 649-53, esp. 651; the 'third congress' was a conference on the Immaculate Heart of Mary held at Fatima just after the Zagreb congresses, under the sponsorship of the Blue Army, and attended by many of the participants in the Zagreb meetings.

she is a model to a world that searches. Jeeps ride on the moon, yet men still ask: What is the meaning of life, and if life can be prolonged, what then? The Cardinal said he had asked K. Rahner recently his explanation for the decline of devotion to Mary, and the answer was: "Too many Christians, whatever their confessional allegiance, tend to transform Christianity into an ideology, into an abstraction, and abstractions do not need a mother." Second, Cardinal Suenens said, to a suffering world Mary offers joy. Divided Christians can find unifying love in Mary's name. God asked even more of her than of Abraham. "The world today is still in night and the Church knows sorrowful defections. We live in a short of Good Friday." Yet Easter lies ahead—and the first victory of Christ was His Mother's faith. Finally, Mary is a 'sign of sure hope' (Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, n. 68) to the world—the Congress motif: *Maria, origo mundi melioris*. Our Lady anticipates and prepares for the coming of peace. She is Our Lady of Advent for all men—the baptized, the non-baptized, all men of good will. And "she seeks to become, with our faithful and active collaboration, the Madonna of the Epiphany for a world that is rising up".¹³

The Holy Father addressed the crowds at Marija Bistrica by radio after Mass on August 15th. He put the question: "Can we honor Our Lady with the same traditional candid and fervent devotion, with the same conviction to express therein the true religion of the genuine Christian faith?" He answered: "The reply is in the affirmative . . . Due devotion to Our Lady is a sign of the correct interpretation of the Christian religion and of our Catholic religion in particular. . . . Mary is the source, Mary is the Mother who brings Christ into the world. . . . It is she who, by the power of the Holy Spirit, makes Christ our brother."¹⁴

¹³ Cardinal Suenens' address, August 13, 1971, was printed in *DC* (October 30, 1971).

¹⁴ *OssR* (Egl. ed., Aug. 26, 1971) ran the Holy Father's message under the title *Mary's Place in Plan of Salvation*, and the same issue contains his

During the first semester last academic year, from late 1970 into 1971, I taught a course on Our Lady at Milltown Institute in Dublin. A Yugoslav Jesuit student put this at the end of a paper he did for the course: "Mary's Assumption is our consolation and longing. Her heavenly life does not prevent her from living in our hearts. We feel her presence especially in her Churches, at Lourdes and at Fatima. Her presence will be felt much more this summer in Croatia in Zagreb during the 6th scientific and 13th international Marian Congress, because everything about Mary hasn't yet been made explicit, and even still many people don't know who Mary is."

Postscript

The information in this report was assembled from personal observation and also from the following publications, some of which were sent me on loan from the Academia Mariana office in Rome, thanks to Fr. P. Melada, O.F.M.

(1) the AKSA bulletins issued daily during the congresses by the Zagreb central office. These most useful reports appeared in a number of languages and sometimes included full texts of important addresses.

(2) *Miriam*, the September-October, 1971, number, entirely devoted to the Zagreb meetings: Discalced Carmelite magazine put out in Seville, and edited by Ismael Bengoechea Izaguirre, O.C.D., who took a very active part at Zagreb.

(3) *Famiglia Cristiana*, Oct., 1971, a slick popular magazine (*Famiglia Mese*) with R. Laurentin's article, *Pregano ancora nonostante Marx (A Zagabria il primo convegno religioso in un paese socialista)*.

(4) *Madre di Dio*, Nov. 11, 1971, a combined Marian magazine published in Rome; coverage of both the Mariological and

letter to Cardinal Seper of July 16, 1971, designating him the papal representative to Zagreb.

Marian congresses in signed pieces by J. Alonso, C.M.F., and S. DeFiores.

(5) *Cahiers Marials*, n. 80, Nov. 15, 1971, with B. Billet's report: *Demain comme hier, Marie sera-t-elle la source d'un monde meilleur? Les deux Congrès de Zagreb (6-15 août 71)*.

(6) *Recherches sur Lourdes hier et aujourd'hui*, n. 36: Oct., 1971: *Marie, source d'un monde meilleur*, containing Dom Bernard Billet, O.S.B., *Notes doctrinales. Les VI^e et XIII^e Congrès Mariologique et Marial de Zagreb*.

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