

## LJUDMILA ŽIVKOVA AND OLD BULGARIAN STUDIES

*Dedicated to Her Fortieth Birth-Anniversary*

The versatile political, cultural, scientific, organizational, and public activities of Ljudmila Živkova brought her in close contact with the problems of Old Bulgarian studies. Her lively interest in this area manifested itself in her all-round work as a public figure, a scholar, and a strategist of our cultural development. She was able to see matters in perspective, to tell the fruit by the root, and devoted all her spiritual energy and intelligence to the advancement of this subject.

Ljudmila Živkova's services to the development of Bulgarian studies were not confined to her merits as a public figure and organizer. She was an outstanding scholar with distinctive contributions to this branch of knowledge. Thus, for example, after her monograph *The Anglo-Turkish Relations 1933—1939* (1971), in 1974 she published her fundamental study *The Kazanlik Tomb*; this book discusses a number of scientific problems (the discovery of the tomb, the objects found in it, its architectural design and decoration), and contains 37 illustrations, 23 in colour.

Ljudmila Živkova's research was intimately connected with the problems of Old Bulgarian studies as well. Her fundamental work in this area was the superb edition of the famous *Gospel of Tzar Ivan Alexander*, published first in German (1977), and then in Bulgarian (1980) and in Russian (1982). This monumental work contains a detailed introduction to the historical situation in Bulgaria during the 14th Century, an inquiry into the political and cultural history of Bulgaria at the end of the 13th Century and under Tzar Ivan Alexander, a discussion of the personality of Ivan Alexander as reflected in various historical and literary sources, an aesthetic description of the miniatures, etc. On the other hand, it includes all facsimiles in black-and-white reproductions as well as 64 colour reproductions. This monument of Old Bulgarian art (1356) is one of the most beautifully illuminated Bulgarian manuscripts in general. Side by side with the *Psalter of Tomic* (ab. 1360) and the Vatican copy of the *Manasses' Chronicle*, the *Gospel of Ivan Alexander* stands witness to the progress of Bulgarian art in the 14th Century and to Ivan Alexander's enlightened attitude toward art and literature. Ljudmila Živkova's edition constitutes an extraordinary contribution to the popularization of Bulgarian letters and medieval art abroad. Thanks to her efforts, this monument became easily accessible to subsequent scholars. Few books could match the interest aroused by Ljudmila Živkova's edition of the manuscript (property of the British Museum since 1876) both in Bulgaria and abroad.

In the second place, it was Ljudmila Živkova who officially restored the Bulgarian Archaeographic Commission that had ceased to exist long ago. This Commission has the task to promote the studies and the publications of Old Bulgarian literary monuments which are scattered all over Europe.

*Ljudmila Živkova was aware that philological studies, especially the study of Old Bulgarian literary monuments, demand a highly specialized cadre, therefore she took to heart the establishment of a Classic Languages School in Sofia, where Old Bulgarian has an important place in the curriculum, naturally, alongside with Latin and Greek. Furtheron, in connection with the demand for better specialists in the area of Old Bulgarian studies, Ljudmila Živkova supported the idea that Old Bulgarian should be reintroduced into the high-school curriculum. She considered this idea an important precondition for the improvement of philological education in this country, especially with regard to Old Bulgarian studies.*

*Finally, Ljudmila Živkova upheld all initiatives and ideas related to the study and publication of our old literary monuments.*

*Unfortunately, her untimely death did not allow her to carry out all her ideas in the area of Old Bulgarian studies.*