

IN HONOR OF ANNA HLÔŠKOVÁ'S SIXTIETH BIRTHDAY



I would like to start by admitting that when I was offered the opportunity to write a short article in celebration of the sixtieth birthday of docent PhDr. Anna Hlôšková, CSc. (*7 July, 1955), lovingly known by all of us as “Hanka,” I was struck by the fact that it was fifteen years ago that I first met her in connection with the field of folklore research. Birthday celebrations are always a good opportunity to realise

that our lives are influenced not only by our actions and decisions, but also by the proximity and support from people around us.

Anna Hlôšková graduated with a degree in Ethnography from the Department of Ethnology and Folklore Studies at the Faculty of Arts, Comenius University, in Bratislava in 1978. She defended her doctoral thesis on folklorism in 1980 and her PhD thesis, “Historické tradície na Slovensku a ich fabulované formy ako etnokultúrny identifikačný faktor“ [*The Historic Traditions in Slovakia and Their Fictionalised Forms as an Ethno-Cultural Identification Factor*] in 1989. From 1981 to 2011, she also worked as a researcher in the Institute of Ethnography at the Slovak Academy of Sciences (later, the Institute of Ethnology SAS) and from 1994 to 2004 as an instructor at the Department of Ethnology and Ethnomusicology in Nitra at Constantine the Philosopher University with a focus on folklore studies, the bases and the history of folklorism, and oral history. Finally since 1998, she has been connected with Comenius University’s Department of Ethnology and Museology (previously called the Department of

Ethnology, then Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, and recently given its present name), becoming an associate professor there in 2010.

In her lecturing activities, Anna deals with folklore and folklore genres, folklorism and folklorization, oral history, current issues of ethnology and folklore studies, mass media and the personalities of folklore studies. In addition, she dedicates much energy to her role as editor or member of the editorial boards of several domestic and foreign journals. I should specifically mention *Slovenský národopis/Slovak Ethnology*, the journal of the Institute of Ethnology, in which she worked as executive editor for 11 years. She has also edited the ethnological yearbook, *Ethnologia Slavica et Slovaca*, published by the Comenius University Faculty of Arts, and has been the executive editor of the international bulletin *Slavistická folkloristika* since 1991. She was Chair of the Ethnographic Association of Slovakia from 2008–2014 and is still Secretary of the International Commission of Slavic Folklore at the International Committee of Slavists.

Regarding Anna's academic work, we could highlight, *inter alia*, her theoretical research on traditional legends and biographical narratives. As for her analysis of legends, she has mainly dealt with their poetics (e.g., "K problematike poetiky povesti," [On the Poetics of Legends], in *Národopisné informácie*, 1987, No. 2, pp. 67-74); the links between folklore and folklorism ("Povešťová tradícia Bratislavy vo folklóre a v literatúre," [The Tale Tradition of Bratislava in Folklore and Literature], in *Studia Academica Slovaca*, 29, 2000, pp. 97-106; "Povešťová tvorba Jozefa Horáka v kontexte literárneho folklorizmu" [Tales by Jozef Horák in the Context of Literary Folklorism], in Z. Profantová (ed.): *Folklór a folkloristika na prahu milénia na Slovensku*. Bratislava, 2000, pp. 123-132); or in connection with topics concerning space ("Povešť – jedna z naratívnych foriem osvojenia si priestoru," [The Tale – One of the Narrative Forms of Absorbing Space], in *Etnologické rozpravy*, 2000, No. 1 – 2, pp. 44-51). She has also focused her research in biographical narratives on methods of oral history (e.g., "Oral History in Creating a Historical Memory [Who, Why and How – Until Now and in the Future]," in G. Kiliánová, K. Köstlin, H. Nikitsch, R. Stoličná [eds.]: *Ethnology in Slovakia at the Beginning of the 21st Century*. Bratislava – Wien, 2005, pp. 103-116), and collective memory (e.g., her publication, *Individuálna a kolektívna historická pamäť – vybrané folkloristické aspekty* [Individual and Collective Historic Memory – Selected Folklorist Aspects] Bratislava, 2008).

For me, this present celebration of Anna Hlôšková and her work is an opportunity to express my thanks to her as a great personality for having helped me during my PhD studies to discover those aspects of folklore studies that had been unknown to me as a student, but which attracted my attention at the time of

completing my university studies. At that time, I did not know her as a teacher (with the exception of a lecture on oral history), but I was acquainted with her work from literature and thanks to close contacts between our department and the Institute of Ethnology SAS. Since Anna, working at the Institute of Ethnology SAS, was a very enthusiast researcher, open to new approaches and, at the same time, a very kind person, I did not hesitate in choosing her as a tutor for my future doctoral thesis. It was she who, thanks to her broad knowledge and language skills, undertook to write the first study on “modern legends” in a Slovak journal in 2001 („Moderné povesti – k doterajším výsledkom ich štúdia v zahraničnej folkloristike,“ [Modern Legends – on the Results of Research in Foreign Folklore Studies], in *Slovenský národopis*, 2001, Vol. 49, No. 4, pp. 314–323). She supported me not only in writing the text of my thesis, but also with her recommendations and in seeking to acquire the necessary experience during an internship stay abroad. I am particularly thankful to her for her utmost support and understanding when I was completing my thesis, which got “complicated” due to my maternal duties. When I was considering whether to continue writing my thesis and preparing its defence, her tutor’s support contributed to the success of my efforts and research work at the Institute of Ethnology. I was therefore a bit sorry when I learnt that she had changed her workplace; on the other hand, I am happy that she continues to educate young ethnologists at Comenius University’s Department of Ethnology and Museology in Bratislava, and from the bottom of my heart I wish her every success!

Zuzana Panczová

(The text was supported by Slovak Scientific Grant Agency VEGA under Grant No. VEGA 2/0126/14)