

## Foreword

At the International Congress of Slavists held in Prague in 1968 a group of Slovak, Russian, Bulgarian, and Croatian ethnologists considered the question of rising the theoretical, methodical and organizational level of ethnology within the framework of Slavonic studies, in which comparative studies of Slavic folk cultures had been falling rather behind - especially in comparison with linguistics and history of literature. At that occasion the author of these lines suggested, among others, the creation of an international organization of Slavic ethnologists under the name "The Association of Slavic Ethnologists", with its secretariat established in Bratislava, that would organize ethnological research of Slavic nations and issue a common ethnological journal or periodical reports. Since the situation in the East European countries was not favourable for the establishment of such an association, at that time, it did not come into existence. Yet, there was success at last in founding the annual "Ethnologia Slavica" (what is "Ethnologia Slovaca et Slavica" today), which has been being issued as a common body of Slavic ethnologists since 1969 up to the present day..

In 1968 none of the co-founders of our annual supposed it would see more than ten years out. All the more satisfactory then is the fact that it has been being published for more than a quarter of a century.

We do not intend to evaluate the contribution of our annual to the development of the comparative research of Slavic folk culture as a part of the European cultural heritage. Let it be the task of the historians of science to evaluate this contribution from the point of

view of ethnological Slavonic studies as a part of European studies. What I suppose to be important to do on entering of our annual on another 25 years of its existence is to thank to all of our associates, who whether as contributors or as editors have deserved well of this success of Slovak and Slavic ethnology. First, it is to warmly commemorate and thank to the co-founders of ESS who were the initiators of the foundation of our periodical in Prague in 1968. Among these it is to name Russian scientists P.G. Bogatyriov and J.V. Bromlej, Bulgarian ethnologists C. Romanska and Chr. Vakarelski, and the head of ethnological Slavonic studies of that time the Croatian scientist M. Gavazzi. All of them passed away meanwhile. Further we would like to address a word of thanks to all friends and colleagues who cooperated as members of the International Editorial Board - many of them are not alive either nowadays. Finally the greatest depth of gratitude we owe those closest colleagues at the University Institute of Ethnology who worked as "editorial secretary" or "managing editor" and who lent the most helping hand with editing and publishing of particular volumes of the annual. During the first years the outstanding Slovak Slavist J. Komorovský was in charge of this part of the editorial work (until his enforced leaving the University in 1975). He was succeeded by L. Chorváthová and M. Sigmundová respectively and since the edition of the 14. volume (1982) up to the present day by indefatigable M. Paríková. Without these devoted collaborators editing and publishing of the annual would not be possible.

Much understanding with publishing of the ESS annual has been shown by the board of Comenius University in Bratislava that covers all the costs of its editing, publishing and distribution to foreign countries. Let us express our hope that it will be able to continue providing this help even under such complicated economic conditions.

So as to pay homage to and show our gratitude for their merited help several volumes were devoted to the jubilee of some of the distinguished representatives of ethnological Slavonic studies. Up to the present day the Croatian scientist Milovan Gavazzi, the Bulgarian ethnologist Christo Vakarelski, the main representative of Slovak ethnology in the 20th century Ján Mjartan, the prominent Polish ethnologist Jozef Burszka and finally, the leading representative of Slovenian ethnology in the second half of the 20th century Viko Novak have been honoured in this way. This double volume of ESS has been devoted to the prominent representative of present-day Russian folklore studies K.V. Čistov. The intention of the editorial board was to issue this

volume in 1984 when K.V. Čistov arrived at the age of 75. But because of serious obstacles the issue has been delayed for what we tender our apologies to our friends and collaborators as well as to our readers.

At the conclusion I would like to announce that with respect to my advanced age (born in 1926) I asked the board of Comenius University to relieve me from the post of the chief editor of the annual *Ethnologica Slovaca et Slavica*. But my cooperation with the annual will not end with it. I truly wish to my successor that each next issue would bring forth such a pleasure, as I felt, of the work in the editorial board during the last 27 years. My experience with this work convinced me that the most precious reward that one can meet with is an internal pleasure of the useful work for the benefit of science and society.

*Ján Podolák, Bratislava*