

Professor Bruno SCHIER

*1902 – †1984



Professor Bruno Schier belonged to the influential personages who participated in promoting the study of ethnography at Comenius University.

During his university studies he concentrated on gaining good knowledge of East-European realia. He continued his studies in München with the emphasis on linguistics, study of German language and history. In the years 1927 – 1934 he worked as an assistant in the Seminar of German dialectology in Prague. Later he got a PhDr. degree in national history and geography. In Leipzig he extended his studies by specializing in the morphology of culture and geography, which led to his interest in the culture of habitation and husbandry. His linguistic orientation in research resulted in the study of the Czech multiethnic space. He concentrated on the issue of material culture in the area – as he called it – of “ethnic contacts”. As a professor of cultural history, inaugurated in Leipzig, he comes to Bratislava in 1940 as a visiting professor, later becomes a regular professor of German linguistic and ethnography at the University of Comenius. During his stay in Bratislava he was a chairman of the Commission for Ethnography in Sudetenanstalt für Landes- und Volksforschung in Liberec. In his field research he focused on material culture, where he did research on the continuity in culture of central Europe. In his study of habitations and forms of settlements he pointed to the mutual German-Slavic influences. He also focused on traditional clothing and jewelry and popular tales, pre-concepts and customs (*Die Hirtenspiele des Karpatenraumes*, Berlin 1943). During his stay in Slovakia he started working on his monograph on beehives (*Úl ako zdroj národopisného výskumu, Národopisný sborník*, 2, 1941), which he published later. Even after his departure from Slovakia he maintained his interest in the Slavic studies (1947 Halle/Saale – the linguistics of western Slavs, 1949 – Marburg/Lahn, 1950 – a co-founder of the Herder Institute. The scientific orientation of Professor Schier to East-European space with the emphasis on the territories settled by the German ethnic found its reflection in his later scientific activities (since 1961 he was a member of the scientific team of Collegium Carolinum in München and also of Johann-Künzig Institut für Ostdeutsche Volkskunde in Freiburg, an important centre of the research of the Germans).

Some views and results of Professor Schier's research exaggerating ethnic specifics in creation of folk culture were close to the national socialism in Germany and were exposed to criticism.

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