

Professor Ján PODOLÁK, DrSc., Dr.h.c.

*1926



Despite the fact that he spent almost thirty years with Comenius University his entry into the active professional life was connected with his activities in the Ethnographic Institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava, where he worked immediately after his graduation (1951) From the very beginning he participated as a scientist and organizer in the development and professional orientation of the Institute in the research activities with the emphasis on rural culture (traditional agriculture, shepherd culture in the Carpathians and the Balkan peninsula) and the research of Slovaks abroad and the history of ethnography and in organization and publication of first collective monographs and works of synthesis: *Banícka dedina Žakarovce, Horehronie, Československá vlastivěda. Lidová kultura, Slovensko – ľud, Slowakische Volkskultur, etc.*

He also initiated the work on ethno-carthographic synthesis of folk culture (*Etnografický atlas Slovenska*) to which he contributed as an author as well as to a collective work *Encyklopédia ľudovej kultúry Slovenska*.

He manifested his scholarly and organizational abilities in founding and editing the journal *Slovenský národopis* (from 1953). His interest in international collaboration in the ethnography field found a positive response with his Slovak and foreign colleagues with whom he co-founded *The International Committee for the Research of Folk Culture in the Carpathians and the Balkan Peninsula* and until 1971 he was its general secretary. Before he started work for the university he had become Associate Professor with his work *Traditional Ways of Working the Soil in Horehronie*.

Shortly after he had joined the Department of archeology, art history and ethnography and folklore of Comenius University he founded a department of research The Cabinet of Ethnology and an international student seminar Seminarium Ethnologicum (1968). His efforts to build ethnography at the university resulted in establishing an independent Department of Ethnography and Folklore (1969). In the same year he founded an international journal of Slavic ethnologists *Ethnologica Slavica* published in foreign languages. He edited the journal until 1996 and until today he has been its editor-in-chief. In 1986 by his work *Traditional Sheepbreeding in Slovakia* he gained the degree of the doctor of sciences. In 1991 he was inaugurated the professor ethnology at the Masaryk University.

In his pedagogical activities at Comenius University he was implementing the results of his research of many years in farming culture, history of ethnography, Slavic ethnography, the culture of non-Slavic minorities living in Slovakia, ethno-cultural processes in Slovakia and Central Europe. He supervised doctoral students and was a member of habilitation and inaugural committees. Besides pedagogical activities he also focused on publication activities, not only his own research

results but also those of his colleagues from the Department of Ethnography and Folklore of Comenius University (monographs of *Vajnory*, *Záhorská Bratislava*, *Rača*, *Zamagurie*, *Horná Cirocha*) and from other institutions where he had worked (the Slovak Academy of Sciences, The University of Cyril and Methodius in Trnava).

For a long period he worked for Matica slovenská. He became the first chairman of a renewed Ethnography Section of Matica slovenská (1992 – 2004). He was a member of editorial boards and scholarly societies in Slovakia, in former Czechoslovakia and abroad (e.g. *Ethnologia Europaea* – Kopenhagen. *Ethnology* – University of Pittsburgh).

After he had left Comenius University he worked as an advisor for specific problems in the Slovak Republic President's Office (1993 – 1994). Since 1997 he had worked as a teacher and research worker at the University of Cyril and Methodius in Trnava. In 1999 – 2002 he was the rector of this university. Professor Podolák belongs to the nestors of Slovak ethnology. With his name are connected wide scientific, research and organizational activities oriented to the collaboration with abroad as well as extensive pedagogical and publication activities.

His activities were recognized by numerous awards in Slovakia – The Silver medal of Comenius University 1996, The Gold Medal the University of Cyril and Methodius 2006, Great Medal of St. Gorazd of the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic 2002, The Prize of Ľudovít Novák of Matica slovenská 2006, The Order of Ľudovít Štúr from the President of Slovakia, 2006. The most significant foreign awards: The Herder Prize – Vienna, 1974, G. Pitré Prize – Palermo, 1969, 1995. In 1989 he was elected the member of Swedish Royal Academy of Gustav Adolf in Uppsala.

Magdaléna Paríková

Assoc. Professor Ľubica DROPOVÁ, neé MARKOVIČOVÁ, CSc.

*1935



Ľubica Droppová, neé Markovičová started to study ethnography and history at the Faculty of Philosophy of Comenius University in 1953. She graduated in 1958 with a diploma thesis *Jarmočná pieseň na západnom Slovensku / Fair-market Songs in Western Slovakia*. With this work and other studies she started and developed the theme of fair-market songs in Slovakia. In 1958 – 1967 she worked as a research assistant in the Ethnography Institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. In 1967 she started to work as an assistant-lecturer at the Department of Ethnography and Folklore at the Faculty of Philosophy of