

Prof. PhDr. Bohuslav BENEŠ, DrSc.
***20. 10. 1927 – †23. 7. 2014**

Last summer our editorial board said the last good-bye to Professor Bohuslav Beneš, our esteemed long-time colleague, a folklorist and a university lecturer, who stood at the inception of the international journal in Slavic studies *Ethnologia Slovaca et Slavica* (1968). Professor Ján Podolák, the founder and long-standing editor-in-chief of the journal, invited several colleagues from Slovakia and the Czech Republic, as well as from abroad, especially from the Slavic regions of Europe, to cooperate on this project. His aim was not only to involve them in the formation and development of this journal, which was to provide a platform for presenting the results of research in Slavic studies in different national contexts, but also to establish a close cooperation with researchers in Slavic studies in several European (also non-Slavic) countries.

The same aim was pursued when the editorial board of the journal was being constituted. Its members were selected from among researchers in Slavic studies, mainly from the field of ethnology, folklore studies, linguistics, history and archaeology. One of them was Professor Beneš, a renowned representative of the Czech school of Slavic studies, a graduate of Czech and Russian Studies from Masaryk University in Brno. This field of specialization influenced his teaching and research activities at the Department of Ethnography and Bohemian Studies at Masaryk University. A great number of his publications, particularly at the beginning of his research career, were dedicated to folk storytelling and folk ballads. His knowledge of Russian studies came in useful in his studies on Soviet debates in the field of folklore studies, the theory of contemporary folklore and the Czech materials about Ukrainian folklore studies. Noteworthy is also his active participation in international congresses of Slavic studies. Although he later changed his focus to semi-folk literature and fair songs, he never abandoned comparative methods. His interest lay especially in the West Slavic and South Slavic regions. A significant part of his legacy is his collection of papers on P. G. Bogatyrev, which attest to his intense interest in the work of this representative of Structuralism. Beneš wrote analyses and commentaries to Bogatyrev's texts and compiled a complete bibliography of his works. Another phase in Professor Beneš's research career was characterized by an interest in semiotics

and morphological text analysis inspired by the renowned folklore researcher Vladimir Yakovlevich Propp.

In the 1970s he started publishing papers dedicated to contemporary folklore genres, urban legends in modern society, customs of children and youth in the countryside, festivals in urban and rural environments and civil ceremonies. Worthy of note are also his studies on the relationship between folklore and folklorism. The changed political climate in Czechoslovakia after 1989 inspired Professor Beneš to write a few thought-provoking papers about the folklore of political revolution embodied in slogans and posters. At the conclusion of his research career he wrote papers about oral history in relation to South Moravia and Lower Austria and about the theoretical issues of Central European folklorism (agrifolklorism and agritourism).

On behalf of the editorial board of our journal I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our long-time colleague Professor Beneš for supporting us, publishing with us and providing us with valuable advice as one of the journal's reviewers.

Magdaléna Paríková