

In memoriam

PROFESSOR MUDr. et RNDr. J. A. VALŠÍK, DrSc.

Professor MUDr. et RNDr. J. A. Valšík, DrSc. one of the most outstanding representatives of the Czechoslovak anthropology, for many years Professor of the Faculty of Natural Sciences of the Komenský University (FNS KU), founder of the Chair of Anthropology of the FNS KU and of the Anthropological Society of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, former Dean and Vice-dean of the FNS KU. Head of the Chair of Anthropology and Director of the Institute for Experimental Biology of the FNS KU, Chairman and Honorary Member of the Anthropological Society of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Deputy Chairman of the Committee of the Slovak Society for Medical Genetics of the Slovak Medical Society, Honorary Member of the Czechoslovak Anthropological Society of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, of the Czechoslovak Biological Society, of the J. E. Purkyně Society of the Czechoslovak Physicians, honorary member of various scientific societies abroad, member of the editorial boards of several international scientific periodicals, awarded the Czechoslovak Military Medal of Merit of 2nd Degree and several memorial medals and the Order of Work, died on February 10, 1977, at the age of 73 years.

Professor Valšík graduated from the Medical Faculty of the Charles' University and received his M.D. (MUDr. degree in 1927). After completing his medical studies he asked for enrolment in the Prague Faculty of Natural Sciences. In 1932 he graduated from this faculty and took his D.Sc. (RNDr.) degree.

In the thirties he was active as a pediatrician in Prague and later in Brno. His scientific and research activities started in this period. In 1953 he was invited as a lecturer to the Faculty of Natural Sciences of the Komenský University in Bratislava. Here he reached the summit of his scientific, research and teaching career. It took him hard work and great perseverance to found the Chair of Anthropology and Genetics at the Bratislava Faculty of Natural Sciences and he became head of the newly founded chair. Thanks to the excellent scientific achievements of its staff the Chair won credit at home and also abroad. Professor Valšík's scientific and research activities were focused on various aspects of healthy development of the young generation, mainly on the aspects of maturing. In this field he made a series of discoveries concerning the factors influencing the beginning of sexual maturity in girls and the eruption of permanent dentition. He tackled the problems of sexual maturity also in his thesis for which he obtained the degree of the Doctor of Biological Sciences (DrSc.) in 1967. Professor Valšík, however, did not limit his work on this problem, the sphere of his interest was much wider. His first studies dealing with dermatoglyphy are quoted in all the basic works and textbooks on dermatoglyphics — take e.g. Valšík's papillary number for the evaluation of the palmar lines. He made also a series of other methodological and factual discoveries in dermatoglyphics. He studied also human racial problems and in 1964 he was delegated to the Human Races Committee of the U.N.E.S.C.O. dealing with biological aspects of human race.

Professor Valšík was not only an excellent scholar, he was also a brilliant organizer

and he used this talent to the benefit of the entire anthropological community. Together with Professor Suk he founded the Brno Anthropological Society, the forerunner of the present Czechoslovak Anthropological Society. He did his best to create the necessary publishing basis for the anthropologists. He founded, and at the beginning also edited, the "Zprávy antropologické společnosti" (Reports of the Anthropological Society) in Brno. In Bratislava he founded the "Acta Facultatis Rerum Naturalium Universitatis Comenianae", whose anthropological series was the most successful one.

Professor Valšík deserved well of the development of anthropology. He has educated a large number of scientists and lecturers active in our research institutes and universities and continuing in his efforts. His huge scientific legacy comprises some 380 publications.

His art of teaching and his extensive scientific work will not vanish after his departure — they will continue living in the present and future generations.

J. BREZÁNYOVÁ