

## DOC. DR. JÁN SENEŠ, DRSC. – THE FATHER OF PARATETHYS – 65 YEARS OLD

*If you walk through the corridors of the Geological Institute of the Centre of Geoscience Research of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, you shall find one door almost always open. There is a man sitting behind a desk in a cloud of cigarette smoke, working hard. Already the first sight reveals that this is a man engrossed in his work. It is Doc. Dr. Ján Seneš, DrSc., who has left deep marks in the minds of geologists not only in Czechoslovakia but in all world.*

*The name of Doc. Dr. Ján Seneš, DrSc., is connected with modern stratigraphy of the Neogene, paleogeography, the study of mineral raw materials as well as with paleoecology, biofacial analysis and actuopaleontologic study of marine communities. The scope of his work and its appreciation have been mentioned in Geologický Zborník Geologica Carpathica, 35, 4, 1984.*

*It seems that we know a lot and at the same time little about our colleague who celebrates his 65th birthday. He has always been an original personality. Even though he had a few examples at the beginning of his career, he always sought his own way in science (he was inspired by the work of Prof. F. Horusitzky from Budapest, Prof. J. Roger from Paris and above all by Acad. D. Andrusov with whom he worked). Perhaps his most typical trait is an enormous natural authority which he gained not only by the results of his work but also by the power of his personality. His broadmindedness and constructive thinking predestined him for leadership in teamwork. He is the one who gave a number of our specialists the opportunity for international cooperation; he always could give advice and help, he could find a way for the realization of his colleagues' projects.*

*Within the scope of the IGCP/UNESCO Project No. 25 he managed a gigantic team of experts in stratigraphy. One of the results of several years of efforts was the monumental work "Chronostratigraphie und Neostatotypen" defining biostratigraphically regional Miocene stages of Paratethys and containing at the same time their calibration on the basis of radiometric ages and paleomagnetism. It was the definition of regional stages in the area of Paratethys and their international acknowledgement which allowed their stratigraphic correlation with other time scales in the world and gave thus new fundamentals to the stratigraphy of the circummediterranean region from West Europe and North Africa to West Asia and India. If we call Laskarev the "Father of Paratethys", then J. Seneš can be justly called its second father.*

*He always strived to penetrate the boundaries of knowledge. An evidence of this trait of him was his interest for speleology in the beginning of his career, an interest for the world beneath the surface where no man put his foot before him. He was the first one to report on many cave systems in Slovakia from the viewpoint of geology. Later on he became a pioneer of marine actuoecology, applying the knowledge of recent sedimentary environments to the Tertiary. He worked on the coasts of the Baltic, Black Sea, Carribean Sea, the Pacific and he devoted many years to biofacial studies of the Adriatic Shelf.*

*After his 60th birthday he did not stop his activities, as some would have thought, but quite to the contrary, he started to reveal further secrets of Paratethys. He began to analyse in detail the results accumulated during the IGCP/UNESCO Project No. 25. He studies the causes and rates of subsidence in basins on a large area in Europe and West Asia, he searches for connections between Neogene volcanism and the intensity of orogenic movements in time and space, his attention is attracted by the conditions of the formation of coal and evaporite deposits. He synthesizes his analyses on a higher level and reports on them in scientific press. Doc. Seneš, as we know him, had and still has a great sense of detail as well as of large syntheses. The results of*

his long-lasting observations are applied in the conclusion of a work on the possibilities of application of marine biotops in the determination of the conditions of origin of fossil, especially Tertiary ones on the principles of actualism. The results of his paleoecologic studies are published in our journal.

Who does not know Doc. Dr. J. Seneš, DrSc., would think that he lives only for his work. However, this is not true. He can fully enjoy life. He is fond of nature, mountains, caves, the world of silence under the sea. You can hear him discussing the problems of geology with the same passion as the casting of the latest opera production. He loves history, the customs and traditions of different nations which he learned to know on his numerous trips abroad. He likes photography and is a great narrator. Many of us are familiar with his experience through educational works he has written.

Doc. Dr. Ján Seneš, DrSc., is an outstanding personality of Czechoslovak, European as well as world geology. All his colleagues and pupils are grateful for his contribution to the research of Late Tertiary, for his excellent managing abilities, the leadership of RCMNS (Regional Committee on Mediterranean Neogene Stratigraphy) during two terms of office and another two terms of presidency of SNS (Subcommission on Neogene Stratigraphy). In their name, as well as in the name of the geologic public we wish him good health which would allow him to work with his typical enthusiasm to the benefit of our and foreign geology.

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