



## Lud'a Klusáková

\* 21.9.1950 † 8.4.2020

**PROFESSOR LUD'A KLUSÁKOVÁ** was invited to become an external member of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters in the spring meeting on 12th April 2019. Having fallen ill, Lud'a Klusáková was unfortunately unable to receive her letter of appointment in person in autumn 2019. Nevertheless, she was delighted when she received the documents sent by the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters by mail. The appointment gained publicity when the Faculty of Arts at the Charles University in Prague wrote on 16th March 2020 about Klusáková's invitation to become an external member of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters.

Lud'a Klusáková was Professor of the Institute of World History at the Charles University in Prague. She was an exemplary advocate of comparative international research. She had a wide-ranging knowledge of the European history of ideologies and culture and urban history.

Klusáková's key publication is her habilitation thesis *The Road to Constantinople. The Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Towns through Christian Eyes* (2003), in which she analysed how Christian travellers saw Islamic cities. She used both written materials and drawings and sketches of buildings

as sources. She also edited several works, such as *"We" and "the Others": European Societies in Search of Identity, Studies in Comparative History* (2004) and *Criteria and Indicators of Backwardness. Essays on Uneven Development in European History* with Miroslav Hroch (1996). In these publications, Klusáková analysed the connections between nationalism, modernism, and identity. She focused especially on small towns in Central Europe, as shown by the following publications: *Small Towns in Europe in the 20th and 21st century: Heritage and Development Strategies* (2018) and "The Spread of Cultural Innovations. Towns in East Central Europe" (2003).

In her most recent research projects, Lud'a Klusáková was interested in the concepts of "periphery" and "resilience", as well as innovativeness in small towns.

Lud'a Klusáková led several EU-funded projects involving researchers not only from universities in the Czech Republic, but everywhere across Europe. Due to her excellent language skills, she was able to form networks with researchers from various countries. She had studied in France and the United States and had researcher networks and bilateral collaboration with the following universities: Newcastle and

Northumbria in the UK; Graz, Wien and Linz in Austria; Chemnitz in Germany; Amsterdam in The Netherlands; Gent and Antwerp in Belgium; Montpellier, Toulouse, Tours, Amiens, Paris I and Paris IV in France; the Universities of Madrid and Santiago de Compostela in Spain; Pisa, Bologna and Florence in Italy and Sofia in Bulgaria. She was part of the Clio.net network and led the team "Frontiers and Identities in the CLIOHRES.net research network of excellence of the 6th FP of EU".

Lud'a Klusáková's most notable international positions of trust were her membership in the board of the European Association for Urban History (EAUH) and chairmanship of the Association (2010–2012). During her chairmanship, Klusáková organized the widely popular EAUH Congress in Prague in 2012.

Lud'a Klusáková is an excellent example of the long-term collaboration between researchers from Finland and the Czech Republic. She was a student and follower of Miroslav Hroch, a researcher of nationalism known by many Finnish researchers. Hroch was appointed a member of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters in 1996. Klusáková sent doctoral researchers to Finland and welcomed Finnish researchers to her projects. Thanks to Klusáková, there has long been an active student and teacher exchange programme between the Universities of Tampere and Prague. Theses on the history of the Czech Republic have been written at the University of Tampere. An excellent doctoral dissertation, entitled *Science with a Human Face: the Activity of the Czechoslovak Scientists František Šorm and Otto Wichterle*

*during the Cold War*, was written by Riikka Palonkorpi (formerly Nisonen-Trnka) at the University of Tampere in 2012. The book was published in Czech in 2017 *Věda s lidskou tváří Činnost československých vědců Františka Šorma a Otty Wichterleho během studené války*.

Lud'a Klusáková died of pancreatic cancer on 8th April 2020. She was managing three major EU-funded projects (KREAS, REACH and TEMA+), some of which are still ongoing. The KREAS project focuses on innovativeness. The REACH project examines cultural heritage, participation and urban resilience. The project also involves Finnish researchers, such as Tanja Vahtikari (Tampere University), and post doc researcher Thomas Mašar who defended his dissertation on the nationalism of Finland and the Czech Republic at the Charles University. The third project initiated and led by Lud'a Klusáková is TEMA+ Erasmus Mundus, an international master course with students from several universities across Europe. She also had an international doctoral education programme between the University of Technology Eindhoven and the Bulgarian University of Plovdiv.

With the death of Lud'a Klusáková, the Charles University and the international group of researchers lost an outstanding international scholar and an excellent organizer and teacher. The 31 obituaries written by Klusáková's friends and colleagues are testament of her wide network of contacts, quality research and support for students. Lud'a Klusáková was buried in her family tomb in Kroměříž, next to the former Czechoslovak president and her maternal grandfather Ludvík Svoboda.

*Obituary by Marjatta Hietala*

*Photo: Karolina Sobel*