

Official opening of the Congress

(*House of Artists, 7. 9. 1967*)

INAUGURAL ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK ACADEMY OF SCIENCES ACADEMICIAN FRANTIŠEK ŠORM

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great privilege and honour for me to greet you cordially on behalf of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences and my own behalf at the VIth International Congress of Phonetic Sciences. The decision of the International Committee of Phonetic Sciences to hold the VIth Congress in Prague this year was welcomed with pleasure by the Czechoslovak scientific circles and I welcome here in you, who came to participate in the Congress, the outstanding representatives of phonetic sciences from all over the world.

A great number of international scientific meetings, important congresses and symposia has been held in Prague during the recent years under the auspices of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. I should like to draw your attention to the fact that the XIIIth General Assembly of the International Astronomical Union ended here a short time ago and the XXIth Congress of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry is being held here now. Your Congress is marked by one special feature. Scientists—specialists in a number of various scientific fields which, at the first glance, may appear to have very little in common, have gathered in Czechoslovakia to discuss the results of their research on spoken language and its perception research carried out from various points of departure with the application of different methods and sometimes directed towards various practical aims. And it is the very difference of approach which offers the possibility to compare and check the reliability of results in the particular field without the necessity to apply methods which are alien to such a field. It concerns a certain variation of the team work which is so widely advocated today, but on a large scale. It is the merit of the phonetic sciences that the inter-scientific exchange of experiences and co-operation has not started only today but that this path has been followed already since the First Congress held in Amsterdam 35 years ago.

The agenda of your Congress comprises lectures not only from the sphere of linguistics, phonetics and phonology, but, likewise, from a number of biological and medical sciences, otolaryngology, phoniatry, physiology, roentgenology, psychology and pedagogical sciences—namely logopedics, technical sciences and among them primarily acoustics, not to mention those fields of sciences which present to the Congress

their results of application of phonetic sciences. Permit me, as the representative of the highest scientific institution in Czechoslovakia, which embodies all those branches of science, to express my satisfaction over the fact that the Czechoslovak science is likewise strongly represented in your deliberations. The fact that Prague and Czechoslovakia have been chosen to act as hosts to the Congress is, in my opinion, not a mere chance but I think that both tradition and current achievements of Czechoslovak phonetics and related scientific disciplines have also played their part in that decision. This concerns not only phonology which, as a part of structural linguistics, has developed and has been further theoretically enriched by Czechoslovak phoniatriy and logopedics, through the activities of the well-known Prague Linguistic Circle (Cercle linguistique de Prague), but it concerns also acoustics and scientific branches as well. If at present the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in its Commission of Acoustics and Sub-Commission of Language and Physiology Acoustics coordinates the work and applies the results of scientific research of all those branches of science it is certainly in accord with the trend stipulated by your Congresses.

The Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences and the Organizational Committee headed by prof. Hála, who was elected Chairman of the Prague Congress at the last Congress, have tried to create the best conditions for your sessions. Permit me, in conclusion, to wish you all great success in your deliberations and a pleasant sojourn in old Prague.