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## IN MEMORIAM

### Vida Brodar

(15 July 1925, Maribor–24 April 2014, Ljubljana)

Vida Brodar was born on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 1925 in Maribor into a middle class family as the eldest of four children of Andrej and Elizabeta Semenič. Her carefree childhood was cut short by World War II, when she was banned from further education for being a child from a notably patriotic Slovenian family. After the war, she graduated from high school and went to study in Ljubljana. She graduated from university in 1954 at the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, having majored in biology in the interdisciplinary studies of anthropology. In recognition of her final thesis, she was bestowed the prestigious Prešeren award. She found employment at the Institute of Biology at the University of Ljubljana, where she spent her entire career working as a researcher. She earned her PhD in the field of physical anthropology in 1974.

Her life would have probably been considerably different had she not met Professor Božo Škerlj and later Professor Srečko Brodar during the course of her studies of medicine and biology. Both men had a deep professional and personal effect on her, guiding and influencing her life tremendously. Because of Professor Škerlj she became an anthropologist and thanks to Professor Brodar she later became Mrs Brodar when she married his son.

Even after her retirement in 1991 she remained active, in particular acting as a court expert. A few years ago, she started suffering from Alzheimer's disease and then lived in the care of John the Baptist Home in Ljubljana, where she took her final breath on April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

Vida Brodar belonged to the first generation of physical anthropologists in Slovenia. She was a reputable and internationally recognized scientist and an active member of professional associations in Slovenia and abroad. For most of her career, she was also a court expert for the anthropological determination of disputed paternities. She also carried out numerous studies on student populations and published the results in various national and international journals.

At the beginning of her career, she performed analyses on human skeletal remains. She also carried out digs in Jasenovac (1964). In 1957, she published an analysis of the neolithic skulls from Semizovec. She studied the occurrence of *sutura metopica* on the human forehead (1961) and analysed the skeletal tomb of Dobova (1961). She was involved in the publishing of the Anthropological bibliography of Yugoslavia (1963).

She used her experience of giving expert opinions about paternity for the analysis and study of hereditary fundamental principles. She published the following works: *Contribution to the morphology of hands and feet and some aspects of inheritance* (1968), *Contribution to the study of the papillary system of twins* (1969), *PTC test in twins and their parents* (1970), *Biomorphological analysis of the alleged images of France Prešeren* (1970), *Some aspects from the biomorphology of twins*' (1971), *'Phenotypical variations of lobulus in twins and their parents* (with M. Boegel, 1971), *Dermatoglyphical vari-*

*ability of palm region in twins* (1978) and *Variability of sex differences and heritability of morphological signs on the head* (1982).

Her work in the field of biological development studies was extensive. She carried out a number of measurements of student populations and identified generational and gender differences. She studied the effects of World War II on the growth and development of individuals in the juvenile period and changes in body widths, the amount of subcutaneous fat and changes in body surface area.

Her knowledge of these populations is shown in a large volume of publications: *Physical development of students of the University of Ljubljana during their four-year study* (1960), *Physical development in students of the University of Ljubljana* (1960), *Examining the thickness of the skin and subcutaneous tissue in humans* (1960), *Analyses of somatic development and physical changes in students during university studies* (1965–66), *Correlation relations of anthropometrical variables at the end of the juvenile period* (1972), *Anthropological analyses of physical development of juvenile period in man* (Dissertation, 1974), *Estimation of influence of inadequate factors of environment into adult dimensions* (1976), *Reduction in body size of the adult as a permanent effect of war-time condition* (1978/79), *Adaptive growth tendencies of width of the trunk and joints* (1979), *Somatic dimensions in the factors space* (1981), *Physique and physical development of students according to anthropometrical investigations during the years 1954 to 1964* (1981), *Somatotypical variability in the period of growth and development* (with M. Štefančič, T. Tomazo-Ravnik, 1982), *Relative variability of some somatometric variables* (1988), *Growth changes in body surface area* (1989), *Dynamic of relative growth of somatometric parameters* (1990) and *An assessment of physical growth and development in children and youths in Ljubljana* (with M. Štefančič, U. Arko, F. Dovečar, M. Juričič, M. Macarol-Hiti, P. Leben-Seljak, T. Tomazo-Ravnik 1996)

If you were to ask Vida what she was most affected by in her youth, she would undoubtedly say that this was the APZ Tone Tomšič (Student Academic Choir) in which she sang and travelled from the beginning to the end of her student years. Not only did it influence her youth – most of her treasured memories and best friendships stem from this time. She never missed their annual concerts where various generations of singers waved to her and greeted her happily. Even a few days before her death, when she was fighting for her last breath she sang to the glory of green linden tree, the iconic song of the choir. With her last strength, she opened her lips and whispered: *Again the birdies, birdies will be happy – they will sing us songs, the songs will resonate.*

All of us that knew her will remember her by the love that was radiated by the goodness of her heart, by her compassion to all those in need, by her advice and her comforting touch. We will remember her as an expert, who through her work in the field of physical anthropology left an indelible mark.

Vesna Miletić, Ljubljana  
Tatjana Tomazo-Ravnik, Kranj