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Received 29 January 1979.

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FOLIA PARASITOLOGICA (PRAHA) 27: 87—88, 1980.

50th birthday of RNDr. Lubor Červa, D.Sc.

Dr. Červa is well known abroad as one of the leading experts in the research of limax-type amoebae and in our country he enjoys the reputation of one of the eminent Czech parasitologists—protozoologists. He earned this standing through devoted, hard and year long work in which he



succeeded in combining his natural gift for science and a keen sense for newly emerging problems.

Born in Prague, he finished the high school in 1949—and because of his inclination to zoology he enrolled for the Faculty of Science of the Charles University in Prague. His interest in parasitology was aroused—as in so many others—by the late Prof. Jírovec, at that time

the leading personality of Czechoslovak parasitology and protozoology, in whose department he started to work. His master's thesis on leptospiras already reflected his understanding for experimental work and medically oriented problems.

His first position after graduation was, starting with 1953, with the Regional Hygienic Laboratory in Prague, where he later headed the parasitology section. Thus, instead of joining directly a research institute he could get in touch with most various practical parasitological problems in the field and learned how to prevent or solve them. Later he could benefit from this experience. Being active as a medical parasitologist, he published numerous papers on parasitological techniques, on intestinal helminths and protozoans of man with particular reference to *Hymenolepis nana*, on problems of hygiene in children's homes, on trombiculosis, post-climacteric trichomoniasis and on leptospirosis of free-living and laboratory animals. In his PhD. thesis he investigated the occurrence, diagnostics, prevention and control of intestinal parasites of man in the Central Bohemian region.

Since 1962 till 1975 he worked as a senior research worker in the Parasitological Department of the Army Institute of Hygiene, Epidemiology and Microbiology in Prague. There he continued his studies on leptospires, publishing papers on the pathogenesis, chemotherapy and

chemoprophylaxis of *Leptospira icterohaemorrhagiae*, and on immunofluorescence diagnosis of *Coxiella burnetii* and *Bedsonia*. However, at that time he became deeply involved in the research of limax amoebae.

His interest in these organisms was aroused by the news on the occurrence of *Acanthamoeba culbertsoni* in monkey kidney tissue culture serving for the control of polio vaccine. Having obtained a strain of this pathogen, he studied, in a series of innovative papers, pathogenesis and serodiagnostics of experimental infections in mice. In 1965, attending the IInd International Conference on Protozoology, he learned about the human cases the reports on which were still in print at that moment. And as it happens, good luck favours the prepared. Short time thereafter, he noticed a newspaper article on lethal cases of microbial encephalitis contracted after a bath in a public swimming pool in the North Bohemian town of Ústí. A total of 16 people were struck by the short, lethal disease. He spent a great effort to obtain the autopsy material of the diseased persons. In 1967, while a commission of experts established by the state health authorities concluded that the cause of death was diplococcal microbe *Mima polymorpha* in people stressed by a demanding physical training, Dr. Červa studying histological sections could find the real reason: a primary amoebic meningoencephalitis caused by *Naegleria fowleri*. Some time later, he could isolate a viable strain from another dying patient. He widely publicized his findings and also measures for an effective prevention consisting in due sanitation of the water and filter systems of the public swimming pools. This has had its impact—no further outbreaks were recorded in the Czechoslovak republic. His studies on

diagnostics, pathogenesis, morphology and attempts at chemotherapy earned him in 1973 the title of D.Sc. Now his attention is focussed on the unravelling of rules that control the occurrence of *Naegleria* in natural and industrially warmed water habitats, on their growth and temperature requirements, on their immunology and possible occurrence in farm animals.

Since 1976, Dr. Červa works as an upper-rank senior scientist at the Institute of Parasitology of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, where he continues the above mentioned studies. He is also very active as a consultant to numerous public health services and committees as an experienced parasitologist, helping to clear especially problems of intestinal parasites of man. He is being invited to international meetings as speaker and chairman (1971 Brussels, 1974 Munich, 1977 Berlin in the G. D. R., 1978 Warsaw) and maintains scientific contacts with many colleagues abroad: He belongs to the in-circle of the Czechoslovak protozoologists having served several terms on the committee of the Group of Czechoslovak protozoologists.

He has published over 80 papers. An excellent scientist, he is also an easy going, amiable person, always willing to help his colleagues with whom he knows how to establish good contacts being able at the same time to express a knowledgeable unoffending criticism. He is a devoted father of two and has numerous extra professional interests, including photography and out-door living. He was fifty on January 23rd, 1980; we all wish him most cordially a good health and continuing success in his research to the benefit of Czechoslovak parasitology and last but not least for his personal satisfaction.

Dr. J. Lom, D.Sc.