

Important anniversary of Czechoslovak parasitology—Academician Bohumil Ryšavý is sixty

In January this year Prof. Dr. Bohumil Ryšavý, D.Sc., distinguished Czechoslovak parasitologist, head of the Département of parasitology and hydrobiology, Natural Sciences Faculty, Charles University in Prague, member of the Presidium of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences and head of its department of biological, medical and agricultural sciences, has celebrated his sixtieth birthday in the prime of life.



B. Ryšavý's basic field of scientific activity is helminthology which he has chosen after completing his post-graduate studies and developed in Czechoslovakia to a scope never achieved before. His scientific publications comprise over 100 original papers and several monographs. One of these, "Parasites of sheep", issued in co-authorship with B. Erhardová-Kotrlá, is an original contribution to the diagnostics of sheep helminthoses in Central Europe, reviewing the results of long-term studies both in the field and the laboratory. The main subject of his original papers are problems of the life cycles of cestodes, host-parasite relationships and the influence of the environment and nutrition on helminth specificity. A very original contribution to theoretical problems in helminthology is his description and analysis of the called reservoir habitationism—the phenomenon of long-term survival or some

infective stages of helminths in atypical hosts outside the normal life cycle of the helminth species.

From 1959 onwards B. Ryšavý has been primarily engaged in the studies on cestodes of birds, their taxonomy, life cycles and ecology. These studies resulted in his general paper on the problem of specificity and zoogeography of helminths and served as a basis for his doctoral dissertation.

Numerous papers published by B. Ryšavý are closely connected with the requirements of the veterinary practice. They deal with the epizootology of pasture helminthoses of sheep and cattle, game animals and the epizootology of cestodes of domestic ducks etc. His professional experience has qualified him for the membership in the Scientific Board for the award for the Doctor of Science degree in the field of veterinary science, namely epizootology.

In collaboration with Soviet and Czechoslovak helminthologists he has treated the helminths of fish-eating birds in the region of non-tropical Eurasia. The first part of this important publication edited by B. Ryšavý and K. M. Ryzhikov appeared under the title "Helminths of Fish-Eating Birds of the Palearctic Region I., Nematoda in 1978, Publ. House Academia, Praha and Junk, Amsterdam.

B. Ryšavý collected his helminth material during visits and expeditions to Albania, Cuba, China, Egypt, Venezuela etc. Of paramount importance are his papers on helminth fauna of Cuba, ecological papers on schistosomes in Egypt. They are dealing with the possibility of utilizing competition of larval echinostomes and other larval trematodes in the intermediate hosts for the biological control of schistosomiasis (Folia parasitologica 20, 21, 1973 and 1974).

B. Ryšavý was born at Lásenice near Jindřichův Hradec in South Bohemia on January 23, 1921. He showed a deep interest in nature, primarily in zoology while attending the secondary school and under the influence of the beautiful landscape of South Bohemia. After the liberation of Czechoslovakia in 1945, Dr. Ryšavý started his university studies at the Natural Sciences Faculty, Charles University in Prague, first at the Zoological Institute under direction of Prof. Dr. J. Komárek and later of Prof. Dr. O. Jírovec. First his interest was directed at the effect of chemotherapeutics on parasitic protozoans and later at coccidians of vertebrates from Czechoslovakia, their host specificity and their variability in different

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hosts. The ecological and dynamic concept of these studies brought him international recognition.

He completed his post-graduate studies for the award of the Candidate of Biological Science degree under the supervision of Academician O. Jírovec and for a short period he was active as Assistant at the Department of parasitology and hydrobiology, Natural Sciences Faculty, Charles University in Prague. In 1953 he has become scientific worker of the Biological Institute, Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences (ČSAV), at the Department of parasitology where he was assigned the helminthological group. After the Institute of Parasitology, Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences was established in 1962 he was appointed head of the Department of experimental helminthology and Deputy Director of the Institute.

In 1962 B. Ryšavý received the Doctor of Biological Sciences degree and a year later he was appointed Associate Professor at the Natural Sciences Faculty of the Charles University. In 1965 he was elected Corresponding Member of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. In 1976 he became Professor in parasitology at the Natural Sciences Faculty, Charles University and terminated his scientific and organizational activities at the Institute of Parasitology, Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, where his entire professional career was passed until then. In December 1977 he was elected Academician — the Full Member of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences.

Extensive are also B. Ryšavý's teaching-activities. Over more than 15 years he has been lecturing helminthological disciplines at the Natural Sciences Faculty, Charles University where he helps train numerous young helminthologists and parasitologists. At the Institute of Parasitology he participated in the post-graduate education of helminthologists and provided many of his young collaborators with wise counsel and encouragement.

B. Ryšavý is also well known as an excellent organizer of scientific activities. Between 1962 and 1975 he served as chairman of the Scientific Board of Special Biology of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. In this post he was responsible for the advancement of many biological disciplines. In 1975 he was appointed head of the Department of biological, medical and agricultural sciences within the framework of the Academy where he has fully applied his wide erudition, experience and abilities in organizing modern biology as well as medical and agricultural sciences based on it. He has

been influential in the promotion of biological sciences as chairman in the council of fundamental project "Man and Biosphere" including main parasitological problems solved in Czechoslovakia. In 1980 he was appointed member of the Presidium of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. He is vice-chairman of the Czechoslovak Parasitological Society and member of many other scientific societies. Since the establishment of the journal *Folia parasitologica* he has been member of its editorial board and of editorial boards of other scientific and popular-scientific periodicals.

As a disciple of Academician K. I. Skryabin he has established scientific contacts and bonds of friendship in all parts of the USSR and other socialist countries, and in non-socialist states as well. As an active member he is serving on the joint bilateral committee coordinating joint research in the field of parasitology in the territories of Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union.

He was awarded a medal "For outstanding service", a silver medal of G. Mendel "For Merits in biological sciences" and received other scientific honours. He is honorary member of the Helminthological Society of the USSR.

In a brief note it is very difficult to encompass all scientific merits, scientific-organizational and public activities, also in the capacity of the Communist Party member, of our long-time colleague and friend. His long list of credits is evidence enough of the significance of his professional and organizational contributions to the advancement of Czechoslovak parasitological sciences in particular and biology in general. He has been entrusted by our socialist society with the education of future parasitologists in the key post of our greatest University and in our highest scientific institution, the Academy of Sciences, with the task of advancing parasitological problems in the fundamental research in Czechoslovakia.

B. Ryšavý is one of those warm, generous and sympathetic scholars with foresight and ability to see human aspect of research and his very human qualities, coupled with a vast knowledge, make him sought out as an advisor and friend. The growth in a field that he has pioneered must be a source of great satisfaction to him.

The Editorial Board of *Folia parasitologica*, scientific workers of the Institute of Parasitology and all associates in the fields of parasitology wish B. Ryšavý further success in his work, good health and much happiness in the coming years.

Prof. Dr. B. Rosický, D.Sc.