

Academician B. E. Bykhovsky is dead



The parasitological public throughout the world has suffered an irretrievable loss. Academician Boris Evseevich Bykhovsky, the outstanding Soviet parasitologist and zoologist, Director of the Zoological Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, died suddenly on January 26, 1974 at the age of nearly 66 years. He was born on August 27, 1908 in Petrograd. With his basic work "Monogenetic Trematodes. Their Systematics and Phylogeny" Academician Bykhovsky has taken a prominent place in the history of parasitology and zoology of invertebrates. This monograph marks off thirty years of his work on taxonomy, larval stages, life cycles, ecology and comparative studies with other Plathelminthes. In his previous works he already demonstrated that it was erroneous to consider Monogenea to be related to digenetic trematodes. In 1937 he concluded that Trematoda as perceived at that time formed a heterogenetic group and therefore singled out Monogenea as a distinct class. In his concept he has come very near the natural system of this class. Thanks to Bykhovsky Monogenea constitute a class the taxonomy of which, from families onwards, is arranged in such a manner that it greatly corresponds with the actual phylogenetic relationships. As a disciple of Professor V. A. Dogel, the well known scientist engaged in the studies of zoology of invertebrates and

ecological parasitology who was guiding his work during his studies at the Biological Faculty of the Leningrad University, he demonstrated in the thirties that parasites of fishes might serve as indicators of phylogenetic relationships between their hosts.

On graduating at the university in 1929 B. E. Bykhovsky worked until 1935 in the laboratory for parasitology of fishes at the Institute of Fisheries, under the guidance of V. A. Dogel. In 1935 he transferred to the parasitological department of the Zoological Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences where he conducted helminthological research. In 1962 he was made Director of this distinguished zoological research centre in the USSR. In 1960 he was elected Corresponding Member and four years later Member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. He participated in many expeditions to largest water basins of the USSR and to the world seas (eastern and southeastern seas of Asia, tropical part of the Pacific Ocean, the Black Sea, the Sea of Azov, the Adriatic Sea etc.) and collected material on which he could base his research on Monogenea of sea fishes and revise all existing knowledge on this subject. In 1961, on the initiative of the American Biological Institute his basic monograph was translated into English.

Especially important was also his coauthorship of the pioneer work "Key to Parasites of Freshwater Fishes of the USSR". During his scientific career he published more than 100 scientific papers.

The greater part of his energy and talent was also devoted to the organisational activities in science. Since 1963 until his death he was acting as Secretary of the General Biology Department of the USSR Academy of Sciences and served as a member of its presidium.

Czechoslovak zoologists and parasitologists knew him as a sincere friend of this country who promoted a successful collaboration between the Institute of Parasitology of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences and the Institute he headed, ever since the beginning of the active scientific relations between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. Czechoslovak parasitologists will always cherish the memory of Professor B. E. Bykhovsky, who also contributed to the knowledge of ichthyoparasitology in Central Europe and to whom the credit for its development is due. He will always be remembered as a great man of very wide interests and as a great personality in the history of natural science.

Prof. Dr. B. Rosický, D.Sc.