

For the 80th birthday of Professor Gustáv Čatár



June 5, 2007 marks the 80th birthday of the outstanding scientist, university teacher and the founder of Slovak medical parasitology – Professor Gustáv Čatár.

Having completed his university education at the Medical Faculty of Comenius University in 1952, he started his remarkable pedagogical and scientific carrier. His first position was that of an assistant lecturer at the Biology Department of the Medical Faculty. Since then he has been focusing on the field of medical parasitology. Since 1955 he had been lecturing this subject for the students of medical and natural sciences of the Comenius University as well as for practitioners in postgraduate courses. In 1960 he defended his thesis under supervision of Professor Jírovec at the Medical Faculty of the Charles University in Prague and gained his doctoral degree. At this time he has started a complex research of toxoplasmosis. His first monograph entitled “The problems of toxoplasmosis in Slovakia” appeared in 1961. It dealt mainly with the laboratory diagnosis and epidemiological importance and treatment of toxoplasmosis in clinical praxis. Having spent the following year in Indonesia, Professor Čatár has extended his research also on tropical parasitology. This stay abroad deeply enriched his knowledge and strengthened his relationship with parasitology, which lasted his whole career.

In 1968, he was appointed as Professor of Parasitology at the Medical Faculty of Comenius University. In the same year he took up the position of the first director of the newly established Parasitological Institute at the Medical Faculty. In 1973 he defended his DSc theses, having been awarded the degree of Doctor of Biological Sciences.

Life-long activities of professor Čatár has largely been devoted to problems of toxoplasmosis, one of the most widespread zoonotic disease transmissible to man. In his publication “Toxoplasmosis in ecological conditions of Slovakia” he completed the results of his 10-year- research. He proved the presence of the “latent form” of toxoplasmosis; described the role of cats in spreading this protozoanthropo- zoonosis. A priority survey of occurrence of *Toxoplasma gondii* in several species of animal and their possible role in human infection was published. As the first scientist in Slovakia, Professor Čatár has isolated *Toxoplasma* from beef at slaughter-house and explained the threat of raw or insufficiently cooked meat as a source of infection.

Professor Čatár has also discovered many significant and preferential new facts about other zoonotic diseases. He described the possible role of public thermal baths in spreading *Trichomonas vaginalis* infection. He stressed the necessity to treat both sexual partners in the same time. He investigated the problems of pneumocystosis and introduced a diagnostic method for a direct proof of an agent. He studied the potential role of small mammals as an infection reservoirs. On the territory of former Czechoslovakia, he proved the first case of human bothriocephalosis.

Professor Čatár presented his scientific and practical results on numerous national and international conferences and scientific meetings. As a vice-president and later honorary president of the Slovak Parasitological Society he organized the traditional and successful “Actual problems of medical parasitology” in Bratislava. His publication and lecture activities are also remarkable. He has published more than 300 scientific articles; he is an author or co-author of 11 books and 16 university textbooks. As an internationally acknowledged parasitologist, he was a member of Editorial boards of several journals; including *Helminthologia*.

The Editorial Board of *Helminthologia*, the members of Slovak Parasitological Society and the staff of the Parasitological Institute of SAS in Košice sincerely join in wishing him a very Happy Birthday and many happy returns of the day.

*The Editorial Board
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