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Supervisor' review of dissertation thesis by Eva Zemanova-Chocholova

Eva came to our lab from the Masaryk University in Brno, where she learned basic molecular biology methods. Almost exactly at the time of her arrival, we have been awarded an EU grant to study European leishmaniasis in frame of a consortium called Euroleish. This was a new subject for the lab and Eva and also Milan picked it. It was not an easy task, because we had no idea where to start from. All other members of the consortium were experienced leishmaniacs and quickly defined their domain in the collaboration, while we have first had to search for ours. Anyway, being unbiased and to certain level ignorant may sometimes be an advantage and Eva started with RAPD analysis that yielded a surprising result, namely strong correlation between genetics and geography.

Eva likes traveling and was always keen to work abroad. She stayed with Michael Miles and Isabel Mauricio for 2 months at the London School of Tropical Hygiene and Medicine, a mecca of the field and learned a lot concerning high throughput sequencing and searching for markers. The joint efforts lead to sequencing of hundreds of kb of protein-coding genes used in MLEE for representative strains, which provided wealth of information and Eva became a first author on one of the two papers that may switch the field from laborious and outdated MLEE to DNA-based typing of leishmanias. Another ambition of Eva was to come up with new diagnostic tests. Again, this was not easy because of our lack of experience. So she went to Gabi Schonian at Humboldt University in Berlin, learned quite a bit and brought clinical samples. Only part of this work has been published and Eva has initiated the tricky multiplex PCR with some promising results. This activity is being co-ordinated with a Belgian biotech company and only future will show how successful this approach will be.

To learn something outside of her field, Eva went for another 2-months stay to the lab of Prof. Paul Michels in Brussels, where she worked on the knock-downs for GAPDH. In my opinion Eva became a highly experienced molecular biologist with a solid background in strain typing and molecular diagnosis. She is very efficient and well-organized at her bench work, with some

limits in critical thinking, which I am pretty sure her post-doc stay abroad will eliminate.

I would like to state that the presented dissertation thesis fulfils according to my opinion all postulations and I recommend it to be accepted as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the Faculty of Biology of the University of South Bohemia.

December 12 , 2006 in České Budějovice


Julius Lukeš

