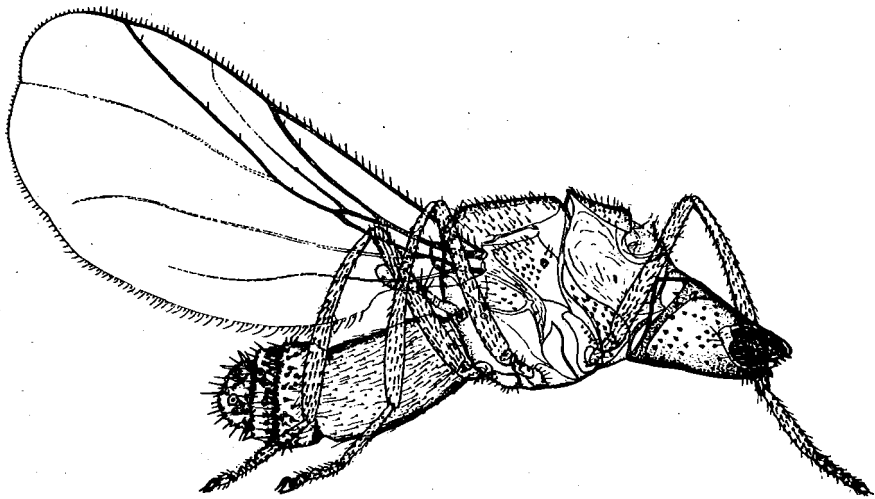


ISRAEL JOURNAL OF ENTOMOLOGY

VOLUME IX 1974



THE ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY
OF ISRAEL

The drawing depicts the freshly hatched female of the bat parasite
Ascodipteron rhinopomatos Jobling (Streblidae).

ISRAEL JOURNAL OF ENTOMOLOGY

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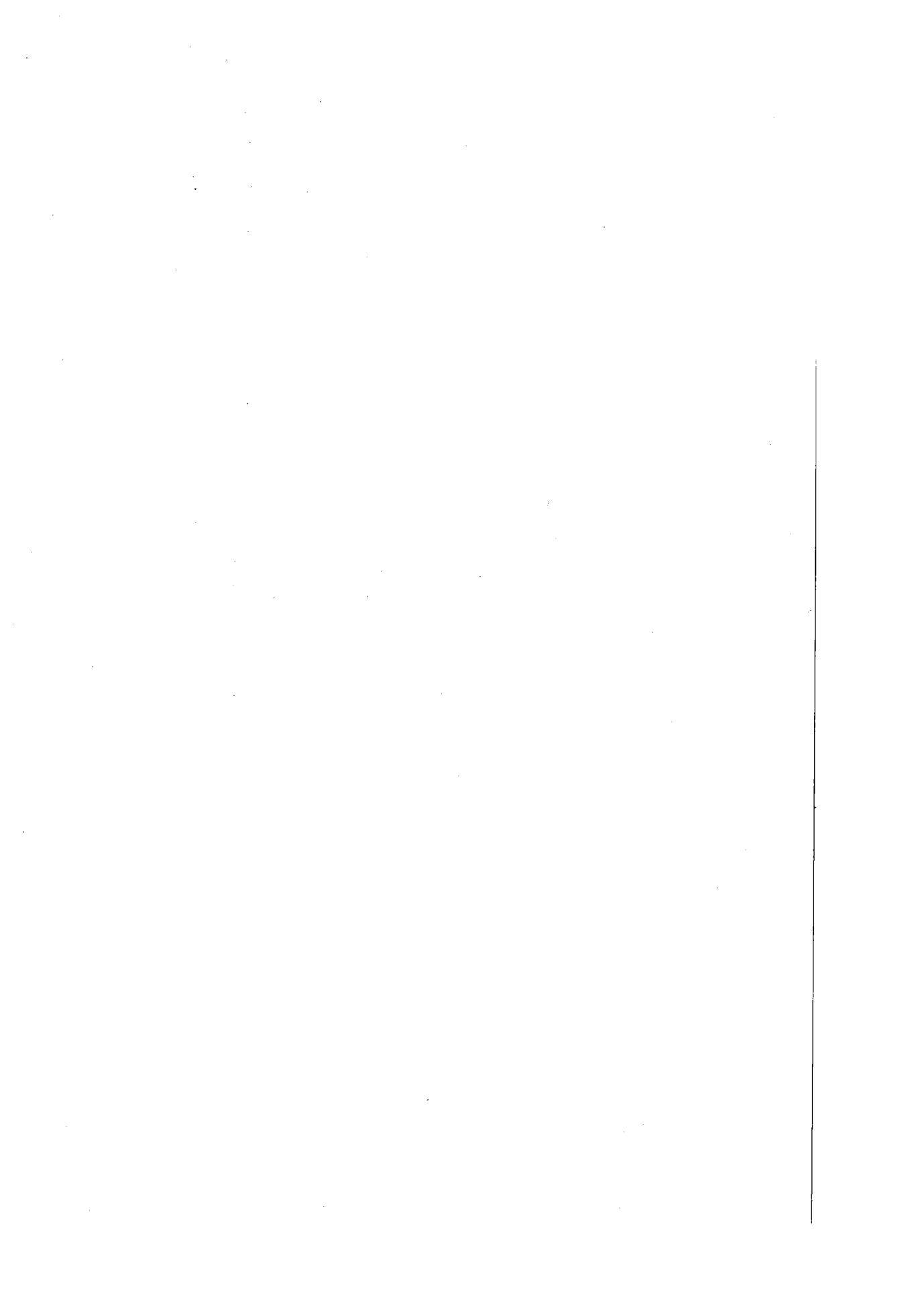
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PROF. DR. OSKAR THEODOR - 75 YEARS



Professor Oskar Theodor was born in Königsberg, Germany on October 3rd, 1898. In his youth, he joined the Zionist movement and was active in the Blau-Weiss youth and in the Zionist Student organization in Germany. In 1919 he interrupted his studies at the University and immigrated to Palestine where he worked as a halutz (pioneer) in various agricultural settlements (Rehovot, Bat Shelomo and Har Tuv). In Rehovot, he began his work in Zoology as assistant to the late Prof. I. Aharoni.

In 1921, after his wife had contracted malaria, he moved to Jerusalem and worked as assistant to the distinguished entomologist Dr.P.A. Buxton who was at that time Medical Entomologist of the Department of Health. In 1923, Theodor was appointed entomologist at the Malaria Research Unit in Haifa.

He returned to Jerusalem in 1925 as assistant to Professor S. Adler, head of the Department of Parasitology at the newly founded Hebrew University. Adler and Theodor began research on cutaneous leishmaniasis and made numerous journeys (to Iraq, Iran, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan) to study the epidemiology of the disease. They found that the disease was transmitted by the sandfly *Phlebotomus papatasi*. During work on the morphology of *Phlebotomus*, they established that the structure of the buccal cavity, pharynx and spermathecae of *Phlebotomus* could form the basis for a new classification of the subfamily. These species are difficult to determine by external characters. The number of species has since increased from 20 to 500 with the use of the new classification. Theodor continued to work on the systematics and biology of *Phlebotomus* and published a number of papers on the subject, e.g. a classification of the Old World species in 1948 and of the American species in 1965.

In 1927 he and Prof. F. Bodenheimer made an expedition by foot and camel to Sinai for the study of the Biblical manna. They found that it is apparently the excretion ("honey-dew") of scale insects (*Trabutina mannipara* and *Najacoccus serpentinus*) which live on *Tamarix* trees and which even today is collected by the bedouins. They also collected numerous insects, including many new species. The results of the journey have been published in an interesting book by Bodenheimer and Theodor (*Ergebnisse der Sinai Expedition 1927 der Hebräischen Universität, Jerusalem*).

In 1928, Theodor received his Ph.D. at the University in Königsberg on a thesis done in Jerusalem.

Between 1930 and 1935, Theodor was a member of the Kala-Azar Commission of the Royal Society, London, under the direction of Prof. Adler. They studied visceral leishmaniasis (Kala-Azar) in Sicily, Italy, Malta, Greece and Crete and proved that it is transmitted by *Phlebotomus perniciosus* and that the dog is the main reservoir of the disease.

During the second world war, Theodor served in the British army as entomologist of a Malaria Field Laboratory, with the rank of major in the R.A.M.C., in Egypt, Syria and Greece. During the invasion of *Anopheles gambiae* in Egypt in 1943, Theodor identified the species, its breeding places and established the cause of the invasion: transport of larvae in the Nile with plant masses from the Sudan.

When violence broke out in 1947, after the U.N. decision of partition of Palestine, Theodor served in a unit of the Haganah in Jerusalem and was later advisor in medical entomology to the Medical Service of the Israel army.

He continued to work in the Department of Parasitology and taught medical entomology to students of the newly founded Medical School and of the Faculty of Sciences. His research centered on the Pupipara (Diptera), mainly Nycteribiidae and Streblidae, and he published numerous papers on this subject. He wrote, in 1954, the sections on these two families in Linder's "Die Fliegen der Palaearktischen Region", and in 1964, together with H. Oldroyd of the British Museum, the section on the Hippoboscidae. He also wrote the part on the Phlebotominae in 1958. His most comprehensive work on the Nycteribiidae is "An Illustrated Catalogue of the Rothschild Collection of Nycteribiidae in the British Museum (Nat. Hist.)" which contains a world-wide revision of the family (506 pages and 898 figures).

Theodor's interest in the Tropics took him in recent years on study trips to Africa, Thailand, Australia and Brazil. However, the fauna of Israel has always remained one of his main interests. In 1967, he published, together with M. Costa, "A survey of the parasites of wild mammals and birds in Israel. Part I. Ectoparasites". His volume on the Pupipara will appear as the first volume of the *Fauna Palaestina*.

Since his retirement in 1969, Theodor has been working on Asilidae and a study of the structure of the genitalia of the Asilidae is now being published by the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities. He has now finished the manuscript of the volume on the Asilidae for the *Fauna Palaestina* and has begun to work on the Bombyliidae, a family he has also been collecting for 50 years.

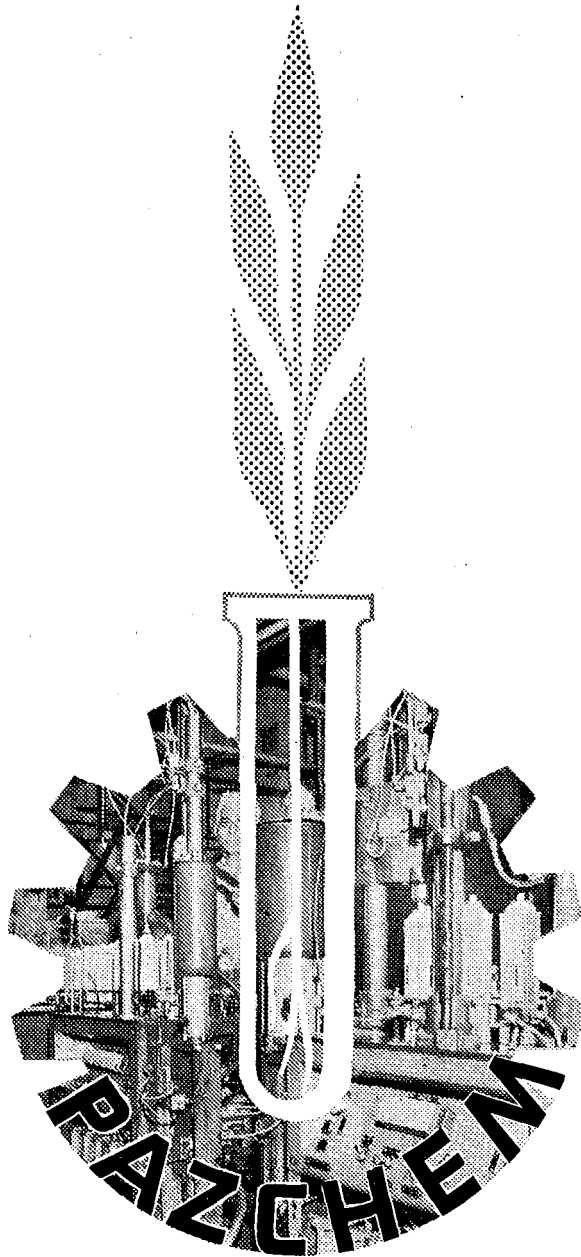
Professor Theodor has written more than 100 scientific papers and books.

As one of his Ph.D. students, I am greatly indebted to Prof. Theodor for directing my interest to the study of Diptera. He has shown me and his other students a fine example of scientific honesty and thoroughness and I wish him success and many further years of fruitful work.

Jehoshua Kugler
Guest Editor

The Editors and Board of the Entomological Society of Israel express their sincere gratitude to the many friends and colleagues of Professor Theodor who sent their contributions to this special issue.

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