The 85th Birthday of Guy Berthault

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On February 27, 2011, Guy Berthault, French sedimentologist, bearer of the order of Legion of Honor, a friend and admirer of Russian science, the author of a series of papers published in this journal, was eighty five years old.

Berthault graduated from L'école Polytechnique (Faculty of Engineering), one of the best known and elite educational institution. He visited Soviet Union for the first time in 1956 as a member of the governmental delegation of France. It was at that time that extensive relations were established between this researcher-experimenter and Russian lithologists.

Berthault's experiments in France were focused on solving the problem of rock bed formation in terrige-

nous (clastogene) sediments. The formation of beds in the stratisphere is usually considered a complicated phenomenon. According to the data obtained by Y. Walter, M.B. Draper, U.H. Twenhofel, G. De Geer, Yu.A. Zhemchuzhnikov, L.V. Pustovalov, M.S. Shvetsov, N.B. Vassoevich, T.G. Payne, E.D. McKee, C.V. Campbell, Y.P. Walzebruck, and many other researchers, the formation of rock bed is related to weather changes, seasonal climatic variations, sealevel rise or fall, changes in the direction of currents, deposition of salts or colloids, growth or death of organisms, thawing of glaciers, volcanic activity, and many other geological factors that are not always properly understood.

Among this diversity of phenomena, Berthault chose the terrigenous—clastogene processes and tried to experimentally reproduce the formation of bedding in stable and dynamically active environments. He succeeded in proving the following point: under steady conditions with a continuous supply of terrigenous material, thickness of beds shows negative correlation with the drop height of clastic particles and positive correlation with the size of falling terrigenous particles.

Moreover, he established that terrigenous beds grow along both vertical and lateral directions under conditions of a pulsating flow: in other words, adjacent terrigenous “facies” are not always synchronous, and coarser sediments are replaced along the strike by the finer but relatively younger sediments under a constant input of mixed granular material.

Professor H. Curien, former president of the French Academy of Sciences, favored Berthault's works. In a private letter to Berthault, he wrote: “Your experiments have demonstrated in detail how the so-called beds are ultimately formed as the result of sediment drift. It is interesting to note that the lateral build-up of beds is the most important point in terms of chronology.”

The Editorial Board of the Journal and Russian colleagues-lithologists heartedly congratulate Guy Berthault on his jubilee. We wish him good health and much success in his creative work.

***Editorial Board of the Journal
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