

REPLY TO THE LETTER OF J. W. MCCOY

By Wilhelm FOISSNER and Peter SIMONSBERGER

From the Institute of Zoology, University of Salzburg
(Head: Univ.-Prof. Dr. Hans Adam)

In a letter to the Editor (J. Protozool. 23, p. 526; 1976) Dr. J. W. MC COY criticized our paper "Elektronenmikroskopischer Nachweis der subpelliculären Lage des Silberliniensystems bei *Colpidium colpoda* (Ciliata, Tetrahymenidae)" (Protoplasma 86, 65—82; 1975). It is apparent from his remarks that he did not read this paper carefully, and that he misinterpreted the results. One can not otherwise explain his comments: "In fact, the bibliography omits even DIPPELL'S report, thereby giving this paper an undeserved air of originality. That these errors are purposeful is the only interpretation I can entertain" We would like to note that:

1. DIPPELL'S paper is quoted (p. 80, next to the last quotation).
2. Discussion of DIPPELL'S paper is to be found on page 66 (last paragraph, lines 6—9).
3. Reference is made to an earlier paper by us (Mikroskopie 31, 193—205; 1975) in which DIPPELL'S paper was thoroughly discussed.

Dr. MC COY comes to the following conclusion about the location of the silverline system described in our paper and by DIPPELL and PITELKA: "Instead, silver was deposited apparently between adjacent alveoli" In the English summary, however, we state: "The subpellicular location of the silverline system is electronmicroscopically demonstrated for the first time by means of ultrathin sectioning of wet silvered *Colpidium colpoda*" On page 70 of our paper under the heading "3.2.1. Terminologie", "subpellicular", in agreement with PITELKA (1961, 1969), ROTH (1957), ALLEN (1967), is defined as those areas underneath the adjacent alveoli. We found that the silverlines lie in the strongly developed epiplasm of *C. colpoda*, and clearly underneath the rims of the pellicular alveoli. These findings are consistent with those from *Colpidium campylum* (Acta biol. Acad. Sci. hung. 28, 59—72, 1977), where "The silverline meridians 1 and 2 are located in the epiplasm, beneath the adjacent alveolar membranes of the pellicle", as well as in *Paramecium* (Mikroskopie 33, 260—276, 1977), in which "the silver aggregates are localized strictly underneath the adjacent alveolar membranes ." In marked contrast to our own studies neither DIPPELL nor PITELKA was able to identify precisely the location of the silver-

line system. As far as we know, PITELKA did not examine sections of silvered animals which would yield this information. On these various grounds we find MC COY'S comment "In fact, the data simply validate the statements of PITELKA and DIPPELL" particularly inappropriate. As concerns "originality", our paper was the first to demonstrate (by many photos!) the subpellicular position of the silverline system using electron micrographs of silvered animals.

In conclusion, it is our hope that future criticism will continue to be "entertaining", but more important, scientifically enlightening.

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Artikel/Article: [REPLY TO THE LETTER OF J. W. MCCOY. 121-122](#)