

Dmytro (Dmitry) Ya. Telegin

(*26 October 1919-†1 January 2011)

On January 1, 2011 the patriarch of Ukrainian archaeology, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor, Laureate of the State Award of the Ukraine, Dmytro Telegin passed away. His whole life was given to archaeology. During the last years he was a symbolic figure of a generation of the post-WWII archaeologists, who were teachers of the majority of leading archaeologists in the modern Ukraine. His devotion to science, extraordinary capacity for work, many-sided personality, interest in a wide range of problems of archaeology, enormous scientific inheritance, numerous students and followers assigns Dmytro Telegin to the number of the most prominent archaeologists. The life and activity of this extraordinary researcher signifies a whole epoch in the development of Ukrainian archaeology.

Dmytro Telegin was born on October 26, 1919 in a peasant family in Plisove village, Kharkiv region, Ukraine. Dmytro was one of nine children. During the years of collectivization and famine (1932-1933) in the Ukraine, following confiscation of all the family property and cattle by the Bolsheviks the Telegin family moved to the eastern Ukraine, to the Donbas area. Here at the age of 17 Dmytro graduated from teaching courses and started working as a teacher in the village school, simultaneously studying at the historical department of the pedagogical college in Slavyansk. After graduation in 1940 he was appointed to the position of school director in the village of Krasne.

Dmytro's professional development was interrupted by the Second World War. Soon after the beginning of the war Telegin was called into the army and participated in the taking of Königsberg, achieving the rank of senior sergeant. For his military services he was awarded the Order of WWII and several medals.

In 1946 after the end of the war, Dmytro Telegin

joined the History Department of Chernovtsy University in the western Ukraine. After graduation from the university he moved to Kiev where he became a PhD student in the Institute of Archaeology of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukraine. His scientific supervisor was academician Petro Efimenko (1884 – 1969), the founder of Paleolithic research in the territory of the former USSR. The focus of his PhD dissertation was the Neolithic sites of his native territory of the Seversky Donets River basin. He defended his PhD thesis in 1953. The research interests of the young specialist as well as their geography (Donetsk area, Dnieper basin, Byelorussia, Azov Sea region, Carpathian region) were wide enough. However the main object of his scientific interests, during all his life, was the Neolithic of the Ukraine.

During the 1950-60s, besides the continuous research into sites in the Dnieper Basin, D. Telegin carried out an interesting study on the evolution of the Neolithic cultures of Western Ukraine, Russia, Central and North Europe. The result of this work was highlighted in his second (doctoral habilitation) dissertation “The Dnieper-Donets Culture” (1967) which placed him among the leading archaeologists of the Soviet Union and Europe and which still remains an exceptional example of methodologically consistent and integrative archaeological research.

During 20 years he was the head of the department of Stone Age archaeology in the Institute of Archaeology NAS Ukraine, and for many years taught in the leading universities of the Ukraine.

He published about 500 scientific works (including 14 monographs) on the various problems of archaeology. Among these are his two major surveys of the Ukrainian Mesolithic: *Mezolitichni Pam'yatky Ukraïny* (1982) and *Pamyatniki Epokhi Mezolita na Territorii Ukraïns'koy SSR* (1985), a period for which he expressed a special fondness. He was also a major contributor to the first volume of the *Arkheologiya Ukraïns'koy SSR* (1985) that provided synthetic descriptions of the major prehistoric cultural groups of the Ukraine.

In terms of Indo-European Studies, his most

influential book was his *Seredn' o-Stohivs'ka Kul'tura Epokhy Midi* (1973) that had a major impact on the formulation of Marija Gimbutas' model of Indo-European origins. This work was updated in 2001 in his *Srednestogovskaya i Novodanilovskaya Kul'tury Eneolita Azovo-Chernomorskogo Regiona* (reviewed in *JIES* 32, 363-367). He insured that his research reached far beyond the Ukraine and published three monographs in English. These comprised *Neolithic Cemeteries and Populations in the Dnieper Basin* (1987, Oxford, BAR International Series 383) and *Dereivka: A Settlement and Cemetery of Copper Age Horse Keepers on the Middle Dnieper* (1986, Oxford, BAR International Series 287) which became one of the archetypal sites of Gimbutas' "Kurgan culture". He also published *The Anthropomorphic Stelae of the Ukraine: The Early Iconography of the Indo-Europeans* (1994) in the *JIES* monograph series. In addition, he contributed two articles to the *Journal of Indo-European Studies*: "Iranian hydronyms and archaeological cultures in the Eastern Ukraine" (1990) and "The Yamna Culture and the Indo-European homeland problem" (2005).

An outstanding scholar and most generous man, he also played a very significant part in guiding the research interests of the current editor of this journal.

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