

TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR VICTOR ZAIKA

Don't leave a stone unturned.
It's always something,
to know you have done the most you could.

Charles Dickens



Victor Evghenievich Zaika turned 85 this year. He's been gone for seven years. V. Zaika lived a long and very intensive life in science. His mind had no peace in studying the various manifestations of life that he loved and could feel its pulse. Victor Zaika enriched science with his ideas and works, striving for possible perfection in everything he did. Generously gifted by nature, creatively charming, and inspiring colleagues by his own example, he was constantly in a state of scientific inquiry. And those, who were fortunate enough to work with him, are infinitely grateful to fate for that.

The analytical mind of the researcher manifested itself from an early age. Victor Evghenievich accompanied his mother on veterinary expeditions, listened to the lectures she gave to the students, and assisted her in the work, which later determined his interest in studying various biological processes. He graduated from school in Ulan-Ude with the medal and entered the Leningrad State University (now – Saint Petersburg State University), becoming a bright representative of the classical generation of Professor V. A. Dogiel zoological school.

In 1962, he began research activities at the Institute of Biology of the Southern Seas, and for over 50 years his life was associated with the Black Sea. In this significant period of his life, the theory of *Productivity of Aquatic Invertebrates* was developed. Subsequently, Professor V. Zaika proposed a theory describing *the Basic Processes of Energy Balance*, further developing the study of *the Animals Growth* equations, initiated in science by Ludwig von Bertalanffy. For the first time in the country, he initiated research on marine microzooplankton and phototrophic picoplankton. Further, these studies were developed extensively.

He created his own scientific school. Among his students, there are 24 Doctors of Science. They are currently continuing their research on the structure and biodiversity of communities: E. A. Kolesnikova, N. A. Boltachova, N. N. Shalovenkov, S. A. Mazlumian, A. N. Petrov, E. L. Nevrova, I. P. Bondarev, as well as students of his students, M. V. Makarov and V. G. Kopyi. Grateful memory carefully preserves the invaluable experience gained during the years of our scientific formation. Victor Evghenievich was alien to mentorship, working in expeditions alongside colleagues, he brought up by his personal example of hard work and hesitation in scientific research.

Over the years of work at IBSS have been carried out: long-term field studies of zoobenthos; experimental work on the rate of different nature single-celled organisms division; on the growth of hydrobionts. The results obtained have significantly enriched our knowledge of the Black Sea ecosystem in the second half of the XX century.

For a long time Professor Zaika headed A. O. Kovalevsky Institute of Biology of the Southern Seas (IBSS) of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and determined the research strategy in the study of marine and oceanic ecosystems. Much of his creative energy he devoted to organizational activities, reorganizing the academic departments of IBSS and the expansion international scientific cooperation.

As part of the research groups, Professor Zaika has headed complex International Projects on the Black Sea Ecosystem. His creative efforts have always found understanding and appreciation by the long-term international initiative: “Black Sea Commission”. Research carried out on the RV “Mikhail Lomonosov”, “Akademik A. Kovalevsky”, “Vityaz”, and “Professor Vodyanitsky” covered areas from the NW part of the Black Sea to the Bosphorus outlet, including the Mediterranean Sea, the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean. The materials obtained during the complex of expeditions conducted under the leadership of Victor Evghenievich subsequently served as a basis for further research.



V. E. Zaika and the permanent captain of the RV “Professor Vodyanitsky”, Captain of Long-Distance Navigation V. G. Tyninika



Benthos department (1986)



Shelf ecosystems department (2006)

His research interests overlapped with those of such renowned oceanographers as Academician Jean-Marie Perez (director of the Andum biological station), and Prof. G.S. Tregubov (director of Villefranche-sur-Mer Marine Station), Jacques-Yves Cousteau (explorer) and many others. He worked fruitfully in the Commission on “Scientific Research of the Black Sea and Mediterranean Sea”. A special milestone was the joint work with the Turkish scientists of the Institute of Marine Sciences in Erdemli (1975) and his creative friendship with the prof. Umit Unluata (head of section at Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO).



Victor Zaika and Jean-Marie Perez



Academic activity of Professor Zaika is reflected in more than 300 articles and 18 monographs. He was a member of the editorial boards of a number of international journals and chairman of the specialized Scientific Councils on Hydrobiology and Ichthyology. V. E. Zaika was known as an encyclopedic scholar and an outstanding naturalist, author of fascinating scientific essays. His rich life experience he realized in scientific works and essays, including popular books about inhabitants of the Black Sea, and the Sevastopol Biological Station and “our closest overseas neighbors” (V. E. Z.). Here he expressed all the strength of his love of life. Fellow zoologists noted the contribution of V. E. Zaika into taxonomy, and named after three new species.

If everyone who is “devoted to science” (V. E. Z.)* is compared with a star, V. Zaika was the most organic in this hypothetical constellation. Unfortunately, no consciousness can fully restore human life, with its details, which are always hidden from the outside eye. Life is a wave-like mystery; when it crashes on the shore of memory, it can reproduce only the captured splashes, and the whole boundless wave of life will remain a mystery forever.

ПАМЯТИ ПРОФЕССОРА ВИКТОРА ЕВГЕНЬЕВИЧА ЗАЙКИ

В 2021 г. исполнилось 85 лет Виктору Евгеньевичу Заике, члену-корреспонденту НАН Украины и лауреату Государственной премии Украины в области науки и техники. Уже семь лет его нет с нами. Виктор Евгеньевич прожил долгую и очень интенсивную жизнь в науке. Его ум не знал покоя в изучении различных проявлений жизни, которую он любил и пульс которой чутко чувствовал. Во всём добиваясь возможного совершенства, В. Е. Заика обогатил науку своими идеями и трудами. Щедро одарённый от природы, обаятельный, собственным примером воодушевляющий коллег, он непрерывно находился в состоянии поиска. И те, кому посчастливилось с ним работать, бесконечно благодарны за это судьбе.

*By definition of V. Zaika. Very rare and the only praise he allowed himself.