

## Obituary



### Vadim Evgenievich Garutt (1917–2002)

The famous Russian theriologist, remarkable specialist on extinct and modern elephants, Vadim Evgenievich Garutt passed away in St. Petersburg on March 28, 2002, after a serious illness. Since his childhood he loved these huge mammals and devoted himself to studying their systematics and phylogeny.

Vadim Garutt was born on October 12, 1917 in the Crimea just before the October Revolution. His father was a czarist army officer belonging to a noble family. For young Vadim such parentage could have been extremely dangerous and disadvantageous in the Soviet Union, but we never heard any complaints from him.

In 1929 as a school boy Vadim Garutt became acquainted with the circle of young zoologists in the Leningrad Zoo and for the rest of his life he never lost touch with this Zoo. In 1938 he entered the Biological Faculty of Leningrad University, but completed his study only after the war in 1946. He served in the Great Patriotic War during its beginning, but in November 1941 he was decommissioned due to illness, and left the front for Tashkent, where he worked in the Institute of Botany and Zoology of the Uzbekistan Academy of Sciences. While there he continued his education at Tashkent University.

After returning to Leningrad in 1946, Vadim became a postgraduate student of the Department of Paleontol-

ogy at the Geological Faculty of the University. In 1950 he was invited to the Zoological Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences (ZIN), joining the institute as a guide in the Zoological Museum. Since his first scientific encounters in the Leningrad Zoo, elephants were his passion. Nearly all Vadim's publications were devoted to extinct and recent proboscideans. During his work in the Zoological Museum he became experienced in mounting mammoth skeletons and many museums throughout the Soviet Union (Stavropol, Rostov, Vilnius, Tbilisi, and others) asked his help in this activity.

In 1952 Vadim Garutt successfully defended his Ph.D. thesis "A Comparative Anatomical Investigation of the Manus in the Proboscidea Related to Problems of their Evolution." In 1960 Vadim was appointed as a Senior Scientist in the Zoological Museum, which he also served as director from 1959 until 1961. In 1974 he moved from the Museum to the Laboratory of Mammals in the Zoological Institute, where he retired in 1981 still filled with ideas and energy. Nothing changed in his later scientific life as he continued active research on the fossil Elephantidae. Throughout his life he published more than 70 scientific papers.

A special focus of his investigations was the woolly mammoth, *Mammuthus primigenius*. He studied its evolution, morphology, distribution, and habitat. Examina-

tion of the richest collections from different regions of the Soviet Union and summarizing these diverse data enabled Vadim Garutt to become an outstanding specialist on this extinct species and for this he was recognized by specialists in various countries. His book "Das Mammut," published in Germany in 1964, was a comprehensive work, uniting all the knowledge about the mammoth from its study in antiquity to modern analysis and its extinction. Among his later collaborations were those describing a neotype of woolly mammoth (with Gentry and Lister in 1992) as well as the now well known Holocene mammoths from Wrangel Island (with Vartanyan and Sher in 1993).

Vadim Evgenievich was one of the rare truly intelligent persons. He was very fond of ballet and often visited the theatre where he had good friends. It was a pleasure for guests to listen to his life stories that he told with humor and compassion. Vadim was an avocational photographer and photographic portraits of his friends and colleagues were actually artistic works.

Dr. Garutt had warm, friendly relations with his foreign colleagues. He visited Czechoslovakia (the Prague Zoo of course), Romania, and Germany. Colleagues from Europe, the U.S.A., and Japan enjoyed visiting Vadim in his cozy and hospitable apartment. Each visitor wrote some phrases in his guest book and, if staying for dinner, on the table cloth, and was asked to send a photograph when convenient. During the crisis situation in Russia in the middle of 1990s many retired scientists, including Vadim, received important financial support from Mr. George Soros to whom Dr. Garutt was very grateful. In recognition of this Vadim's apartment prominently displayed a photograph of the philanthropist. This was not lost in the midst of other displays, including cabinets of ballet memorabilia and, in one corner, the skull of Betty, the Leningrad Zoo elephant that inspired his career, killed during the siege.

Until the last days of his life, during which he was home-bound, he had plans to finish his second dissertation on the origin of elephants. He continued actively to study and report and published several papers in 2000 and 2001.

Vadim Evgenievich Garutt is survived by his daughter Nina. Following in his footsteps, Nina defended her Ph.D. dissertational study of the woolly rhinoceros and has become a well-known specialist in the study of the mammoth fauna. In honor of her father she has decided to develop his ideas and continue on in the research of mammoths.

### Several basic publications of Dr. Vadim Garutt in foreign languages include:

- Garutt V.E. 1964. Das Mammut. *Mammuthus primigenius* (Blümenbach). Wittenberg-Lutherstadt: A. Ziemsen Verlag. 140 S. (Die neue Brehm-Bücherei. No.331).
- Garutt V.E. 1998. Is there a genus *Archidiskodon* Pohlig, 1885, of the family Elephantidae Gray, 1821? // *Cranium*. Jrg.15. No.1. P.15–20.
- Garutt V.E., Alexeeva L.I. & Baigusheva V.S. 1977. On the oldest *Archidiskodon* elephant from the Anthropogene of the USSR // *Journal of the Paleontological Society of India*. Vol.20. P.4–9.
- Garutt V.E. & Baigusheva V.S. 1981. *Archidiskodon gro-movi* Garutt et Alexeeva — der älteste Elefant der Mammutlinie in Eurasien // *Qartärpaläontologie*. Bd.4. S.7–18.
- Garutt V.E., Gentry A. & Lister A.M. 1990. *Mammuthus* Brookes, 1828 (Mammalia, Proboscidea): proposed conservation, and *Elephas primigenius* Blümenbach, 1799 (currently *Mammuthus primigenius*): proposed designation as the type species of *Mammuthus*, and designation of a neotype // *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*. Vol.47. Pt.1. P.38–44.
- Garutt V.E. & Nikol'skaya V.N. 1988. Über das Skelett vom Steppenelefanten aus Edersleben // *Beiträge zur Heimatforschung*. Sangerhausen, Spengles Museum. Hf.9. S.3–13.
- Vartanyan S.L., Garutt V.E. & Sher A.V. 1993. Holocene dwarf mammoths from Wrangel Island in the Siberian Arctic // *Nature*. Vol.362. No.6418. P.337–340.

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