

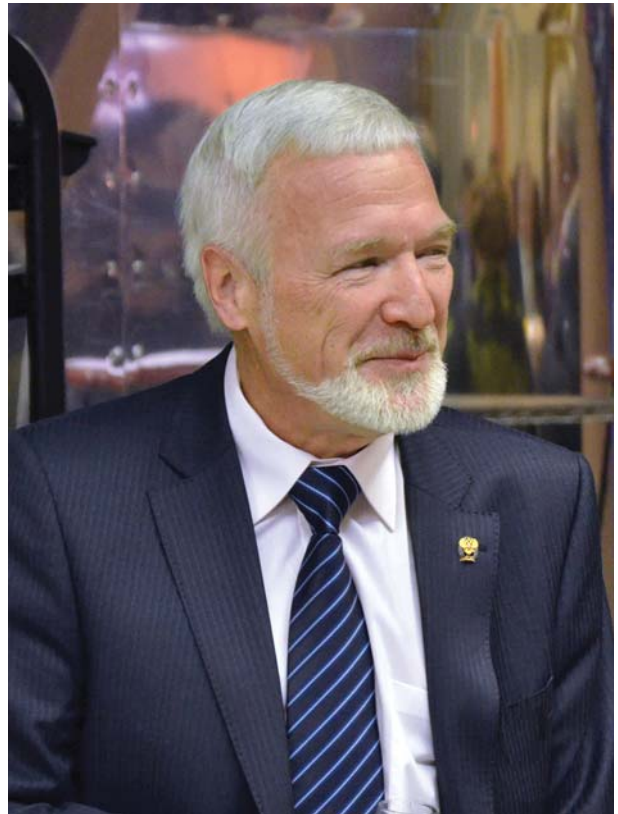
PERSONALIA

Academician Vyacheslav Ivanovich Molodin: 75 Years Since Birth and 50 Years in Science

On September 26, 2023, Vyacheslav Molodin—an outstanding Russian scholar, member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, awardee of the State Prize of the Russian Federation, A.P. Karpinskij Prize (Germany), and Demidov Prize—celebrates his 75th birthday. His contribution to science was embodied in 71 monographs and over 1500 articles. Molodin's scholarly interests focus on a wide range of topics: from the Paleolithic to the Modern Age, from cultural to ethnic genesis, from typologies to art-historical analysis and historical interpretation of archaeological sources. The studies of Vyacheslav Molodin on Russian history, staurography, history of Humanities, and problems of higher historical education are also well-known.

The career of Vyacheslav Molodin, who was awarded high ranks and state awards, including the Order of Friendship, Order of Honor, Order of Merit for the Fatherland of the Fourth Degree, evolved from a postgraduate student of extramural program to the Deputy Director of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography (IAET) of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences (SB RAS) and the First Deputy Chairman of the SB RAS (2001–2008). At present, Academician Vyacheslav Molodin is an Advisor to the Director of the IAET SB RAS, Head of the Department of the Late Bronze Age Archaeology, and member of the Presidium of the SB RAS.

Vyacheslav Molodin was born in 1948 in the village of Orekhovo, in the Brest Region (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic), in the family of a border guard officer. His formation was greatly influenced by his parents Vera and Ivan, as well as by the whole way of life on military bases. In 1963, the Molodins moved to Novosibirsk, where Vyacheslav received general education certificate and studied at the Department of History and Philology of Novosibirsk State Pedagogical Institute (1966–1971). As a student, every year he participated in archaeological expeditions and student conferences. Importantly, Vyacheslav Molodin received his first archaeological excavation permit, issued by the Field Research Department at the Institute of Archaeology of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, after completing his third year of university studies. After graduating from university, Molodin entered extramural doctoral program



at the Institute of History, Philology, and Philosophy of the Siberian Branch of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, while working as vice-principal in a secondary school in the village of Elban in the Maslyaninsky District, Novosibirsk Region. In December 1973, on the initiative of A.P. Okladnikov, the young specialist was transferred to full-time doctoral program; and in the beginning of 1974, he was hired as junior researcher in the Institute of History, Philology, and Philosophy SB SAS. A.P. Okladnikov set V.I. Molodin a difficult task: to explore the preliterate period of the understudied forest-steppe belt of the Ob-Irtysh region. The painstaking and hard work in the field and in laboratory, as well as the search for new approaches to scholarly research, resulted in the dissertation, “The Neolithic and Bronze Age of the Forest-Steppe Zone of the Ob-Irtysh Interfluve” (1975). It introduced the analysis and periodization of the Neolithic

and Early Bronze Age of Baraba and basin of the Upper Ob River—two centers of cultural genesis in the forest-steppe zone. Research work in the first half of the 1970s provided a basis for large-scale study of prehistoric sites in the forest-steppe Ob-Irtysh region.

In 1983, Vyacheslav Molodin defended his doctoral dissertation. His doctoral research was based on his own concept of historical and cultural development of the population inhabiting the Baraba forest-steppe from the Final Upper Pleistocene to the Modern Age (over 13–14 thousand years). This concept incorporated ideas about cultural, ethnic, and political genesis, many of which have not lost their scholarly relevance until now and have been confirmed by new archaeological sources and research carried out by modern methods. During the work on his dissertation, Vyacheslav Molodin participated in field research in the Gobi Desert and Transbaikalia, excavated the Shestakovo Paleolithic site, Aidashinskaya Cave, as well as Forts Ilmsk and Kazym. As a Deputy Head of the Middle Yenisei Archaeological Expedition of the Leningrad Division of the Institute of Archaeology of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, which was headed by M.P. Gryaznov, Vyacheslav Molodin excavated Tagar burial mounds in Southern Khakassia. As a member of a team of specialists, the young scholar participated in archaeological research in Cuba.

During that period, V.I. Molodin published five monographs. His successful archaeological works in the 1970s, tremendous in their scope, were fostered by his effectiveness and dedication to science, excellent organization skills and high responsibility for results and schedule of research, integrity, high intelligence, and honesty—all the qualities typical of Vyacheslav Molodin.

In 1987, V.I. Molodin was elected a corresponding member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. Changes in his scholarly status and position (since 1983, he acted as the Head of the Bronze Age and Iron Age Archaeology Department) did not affect the pace and results of his research.

The crisis that gripped Russia in the 1990s, only affected the vector of Molodin's research. Without stopping the excavations in Baraba, he spent the major part of field seasons at the sites of the Altai Mountains, which came to his attention back in the 1980s. Vyacheslav Molodin supervised the first excavations of Holocene deposits in Denisova Cave, which resulted in establishing the cultural and chronological sequence from the Afanasyevo to the Modern Age, presented in the joint monograph with A.P. Derevianko. Simultaneously with the work at Denisova Cave, Vyacheslav Molodin excavated Pazyryk burial mounds and studied the unique Kuliyu complex on the Kucherla River.

Vyacheslav Molodin has made an invaluable contribution to the Russian-Japanese project "Pazyryk" as its co-leader. Today, scholarly community and general

public in Russia and abroad know about the discovery of burials with mummies in the Altai, in particular, the "Princess of Ukok". The inaccessible Ukok plateau was fully explored in the most difficult conditions of highlands, and its archaeological map, with over four hundred designated sites, was created. Particularly noteworthy is the discovery and research of the earliest rock art of the Final Pleistocene. This find was of fundamental importance for the study of ancient art and cultural genesis of Central Asia and adjacent territories. In the early 2000s, Vyacheslav Molodin, already as the Head of the Joint Specialized Russian-French Laboratory at Novosibirsk State University, returned to the study of the earliest layers of rock art in the Altai Mountains, and later in the Mongolian Altai. The Altai cycle of research by Vyacheslav Molodin was incorporated into the monograph "The Phenomenon of the Altai Mummies". The research at Ukok is unparalleled in the history of Russian archaeology in terms of scale and volume of applying the natural scientific methods, level of technical and instrumental equipment, and variety of experts participating in the study of the evidence from the "frozen" burial mounds. In 2005, for his great contribution to scholarship, including the study of the ancient history of the Altai Mountains, Vyacheslav Molodin and Natalia Polosmak were awarded the State Prize of the Russian Federation.

Vyacheslav Molodin is a proponent of a multidisciplinary approach, and was one of the first Russian scholars who began to introduce geophysical methods into archaeological studies. Excavations at the fortified settlement of Chicha-1 in Baraba, carried out by the joint expedition of the IAET SB RAS and Eurasian Department of the German Archaeological Institute (headed by H. Parzinger), are a good example of the effectiveness of such work. The excavation findings were published in three volumes. The experience of research with participation of geophysicists, geneticists, geologists, etc. was supported by the study of Scythian burials with permafrost in northwestern Mongolia, discovered by the Russian-German-Mongolian expedition (headed by Academician V.I. Molodin, Professor H. Parzinger, and Professor D. Tseveendorj).

A source of particular pride for Vyacheslav Molodin is the Laboratory of Paleogenetics, established jointly with the Institute of Cytology and Genetics SB RAS. Its creation was due to the commitment and perseverance of Academicians V.I. Molodin and A.P. Derevianko. At present, the Laboratory of Paleogenetics has achieved great results in solving the problems related to the emergence of ancient populations and contemporary indigenous peoples of Siberia.

Today, it is difficult to imagine any archaeological works under the leadership of Vyacheslav Molodin without participation of natural scientists. This integration

is inextricably linked to international nature of research. Partnership with the Eurasian Department of the German Archaeological Institute resulted in joint field research, exhibitions and international symposiums, as well as publication of monographs and articles. Vyacheslav Molodin was elected a corresponding member of the German Archaeological Institute (1996). The long-term cooperation with French specialists, thematically related to rock art studies, has made it possible to identify the “Kalgutin” style in the rock art of Central Asia. The Vyacheslav Molodin’s election as a corresponding member of the Shanghai Archaeology Forum is another recognition of his contribution to international scholarly collaboration. Vyacheslav Molodin’s doctoral students, who have defended their dissertations, are the representatives of the younger generation of archaeologists from Russia, Republic of Korea, China, Germany, France, and Kazakhstan.

Science, and the field stage of research in particular, is the meaning of Vyacheslav Molodin’s life. His election as a full member of the Russian Academy of Sciences in 1997 did not affect the rhythm of his scholarly activities. Many years of studies have led to the discovery of unique sites in Baraba. This year marks twenty years of research into the Tartas-1 complex. This complex is in many ways superior to the nearby Sopka-2 site, which has gained worldwide fame. It is difficult to list all scholarly achievements of the hero of the day in a short congratulatory essay. In the last five years alone, the Barabinskaya culture of the Early Neolithic in the Baraba region and the Barabinskaya variant of the Pakhomovo culture of the Late Bronze Age have been identified; six monographs have been prepared and published, including two volumes on the Sopka-2 site. Vyacheslav Molodin is also the author of many sections in the first two volumes of the “History of Siberia”.

The contribution of Vyacheslav Molodin to organization of science is particularly noteworthy. In 1997, he was elected Deputy and in 2001 First Deputy Chairman of the SB RAS. Since 2007, Academician V.I. Molodin has been the head of the Scientific and Publishing Council of the SB RAS. In 2015, by the decision of the Presidium of the RAS, he was included in the Scientific and Publishing Council of the RAS. Vyacheslav Molodin participated in the work of the Council on Science, Technology, and Education under the President of the Russian Federation (2008–2011), and Council on Grants of the President of the Russian

Federation for state support of young Russian scientists and leading scientific schools of the Russian Federation (2014–2018). Vyacheslav Molodin is a member of the Council on the Problems of Social Sciences and Humanities under the Governor of the Novosibirsk Region.

The pedagogical activities of Vyacheslav Molodin should not be overlooked. He is a member of the Board of Trustees of Novosibirsk State University (NSU), Professor and Honorary Professor of Novosibirsk State Pedagogical University (2012). Vyacheslav Molodin headed the Department of Archaeology and Ethnography of NSU, where he is currently a professor, giving specialized courses on the archaeology of Siberia. Vyacheslav Molodin is an Honorary Doctor of Tomsk State University (2017) and a member of its Board of Trustees. Under the leadership of Vyacheslav Molodin, 41 doctoral dissertations were prepared and successfully defended, and 14 post-doctoral works were completed with his academic advisement.

In 2023, the brainchild of Vyacheslav Molodin—Western Siberian Archaeological Unit—celebrated its 50th anniversary. The backbone of the Unit consists of his students, who are proud of and committed to the achievements of the team and its leader.

Science takes the main place in the life of Vyacheslav Molodin, but there is also love, family, and friends. Many colleagues note his civility in communication, complete absence of arrogance, kindness, sincerity, openness, ability to listen to everyone and, more importantly, to hear everyone, and desire to assist in everything. These qualities of Vyacheslav Molodin endear people and attract them to him. The destinies of many people would have turned out completely differently if not for his support and his fatherly warm and at the same time rigorous attitude.

The hero of the day has new field research, scientific quests, hypotheses, discoveries, new books and articles, reports and discussions, and new students ahead. We congratulate Vyacheslav Molodin on his 75th birthday and wish him unquenchable thirst for knowledge and new scholarly achievements, inspirations, and happy moments.

*A.P. Derevianko, A.I. Krivoshepa, N.V. Polosmak,
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