FLY TIMES

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Welcome to the very first Supplement issue of *Fly Times*! When I was approached by Valery Korneyev about a longer-than-normal article that he was preparing along with Neal Evenhuis, my first thought was to put it into the regular *Fly Times*, and just have a very long issue. But on reflection, I thought this to be the perfect opportunity to start a Supplement series, just for such larger treatments. So this is the inaugural *Fly Times* Supplement! Please let me encourage all of you to consider contributing to both the regular *Fly Times*, and if you are so inclined, to the *Fly Times* Supplement series. The *Fly Times* comes out twice a year – April and October (although usually late it seems!), while the Supplement can come out any time. This first Supplement is historical in nature, focused on the interesting life of dipterist Sergei Paramonov. Future Supplement issues can be historical like this one, or focused on any other dipterological topic, from original research, to travelogues and collecting adventures, to larger taxon-focused themes.

The electronic version of the *Fly Times* continues to be hosted on the North American Dipterists Society website at http://www.nadsdiptera.org/News/FlyTimes/Flyhome.htm, as is the *Fly Times* Supplement series. Also note, the *Directory of North American Dipterists* is constantly being updated. Please check your current entry and send all corrections (or new entries) to Jim O'Hara – see the form for this on the last page.

Issue No. 60 of the *Fly Times* (my 20th as Editor!) will appear next April. Please send your contributions by email to the editor at stephen.gaimari@cdfa.ca.gov. All contributors for the next *Fly Times* should aim for 10 April 2018 (maybe then I'll get an issue out actually on time!), but as usual, I will send a reminder. And articles after 10 April are OK too! Articles for the *Fly Times* Supplement can be submitted at any time.

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The Real Life of Sergei Lesnoy

A biography of Sergei Yakovych Paramonov, a Ukrainian naturalist, entomologist, and writer, who was born in the Russian Empire, worked in the USSR, the Third Reich, and the British Empire, and is buried in Australia

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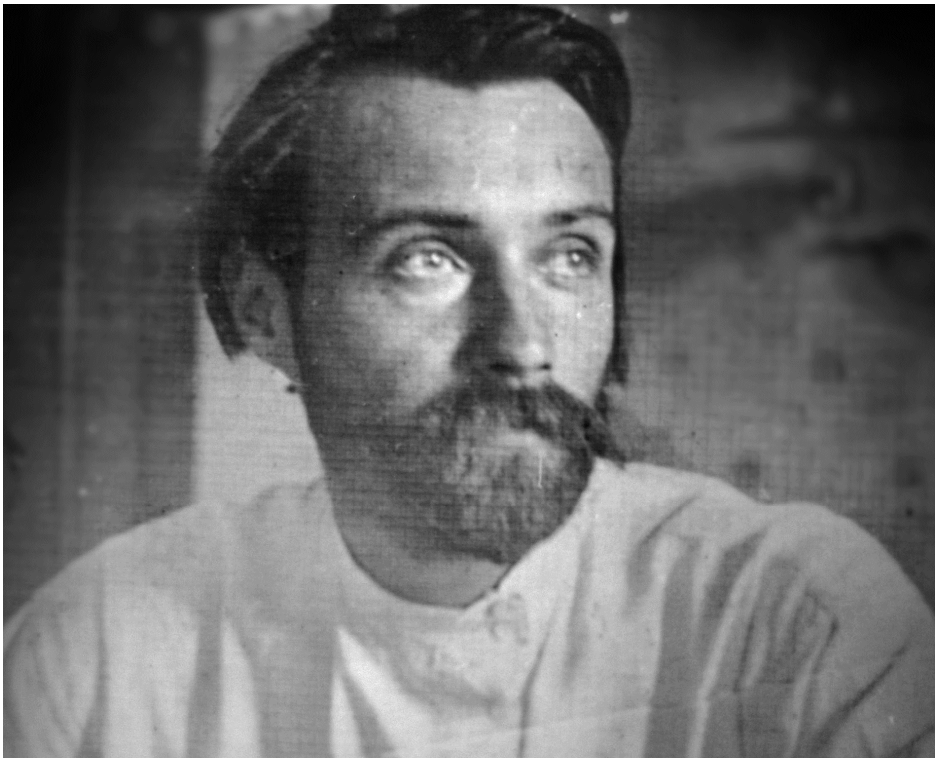
Preface

This is a free and enhanced English translation from the original Ukrainian investigation by the first author published in *Ukrainska Entomofaunistyka* 5(1) in 2014. Paramonov was an outstanding, world-renowned taxonomist specializing in bee flies (family Bombyliidae) and other parasitic Diptera. His friend and colleague Edgar F. Riek wrote in the tribute (1967): "Sergei Paramonov was one of the last "old-world" scientists — a naturalist of varied interests… with the Bombyliidae [the bee flies],



Sergei Paramonov, *ca.* 1927.

his first love — "meine Lieblinge" as he refers to them in both literature and correspondence. One might obtain an impression that Paramonov was "a museum man", but this is not so — he knew most of his species as living entities and I spent many wonderful days in the field with Paramonov and while

he collected Diptera… He was known as an historian of ancient Russia, on which he published a series of 12 volumes, and in this field built an impressive reference library. He also published travelogues and poetry in Russian [and Ukrainian — VK]… He knew that he would not see [again] his beloved Ukraine…"

Even mentioning of his name was prohibited in the Soviet Union. Only in 2014 was Paramonov's name was returned to his motherland, and his Ukrainian archives were finally opened for researchers. Very little was known about his life, and furthermore, his short biographies (including those by Riek and Igor de Ratscheviltz) were confused and mistaken in one or another way, as Paramonov did not want to have discovered some events of his life until after he died.

Paramonov considered his Ukrainian collection to be lost, at least the most important type specimens. He never knew that they had survived World War II; the largest part of his collection, almost all the specimens transferred to Posen in 1943 as war trophies, were never returned to Kyiv. They are currently incorporated to the collection of Museum für Naturkunde Berlin and actually contains no types (except a few described based on original German specimens).

Step-by-step we reconstruct his biography, based on previously unknown documents, photographs, memoirs of Paramonov himself, his colleagues and contemporaries, collection labels, trip diaries, and even poems and scientific articles written in Ukrainian, Russian, German, and English. In addition, we have used a wide historical background from the memoirs by Anatoliy Beklemishev, a relative of Prof. Dmitry Beling, a zoologist and hydrobiologist from Kyiv, whose history was "parallel" to and repeating Paramonov's. They lived in the same neighbourhood and had many common colleagues and friends (although Paramonov was never mentioned by Beling directly). Sergei Paramonov's memoirs translated from Ukrainian or Russian are widely cited (in *italics* and quotes); free translations of his poems containing descriptions of nature, are given in *italics*. His complete bibliography, most of references and sources, unless otherwise stated, have been already given either in the Festschrift of *Ukrainska Entomofaunityka* 5(1) or the Russian preface of the complete historical works by Sergei Paramonov.

This biography gives a more complete picture of the man, and honors him in the 50th anniversary year of his passing.

Instead of an Introduction

His friends in Australia called him "Para", because in that country he lived for his last twenty years, they do not call people by name-and-patronym.

However, in his home country, they did not call him at all, as his name was prohibited. If they mentioned his surname, they added whispering: "the one who escaped with Germans". Aloud, he was called only "unnamed-traitor-of-the-Motherland". However, it was impossible not to mention him, as he was the author of several monographs of Ukrainian and Palaearctic bee flies, the first Ukrainian palaeoentomologist, he described many species of insects unknown before him and had to be mentioned in the references, but all these citations were actually nothing compared to mentioning "Sergei Lesnoy", his pseudo, which contains dozens of thousands references in Google related to his historical and philological writings. However, neither printed encyclopedias, nor Wikipedia contained any reliable information about him.

In 1999, when the New Ukrainian Encyclopedia asked VAK to write an article about Sergei Paramonov, an ex-employee of the I. I. Schmalhausen Institute of Zoology in Kyiv, he gladly took this proposition. However, there were neither the personal files, nor any other information about him in the Institute archive, though colleagues, Dr Marina Zerova and Dr. Zlata Gershenson mentioned a big box arrived from Australia in 1969 after Paramonov's death, which contained some papers of Sergei Paramonov, who had died in that country a few years before. Searching this archive in other institutions, including those of the former KGB, brought nothing until 2014, when his personal files were finally described and released for use by the National Library Institute of Archival Science in Kyiv. Many documents were sent in 2012–2016 by Dr Andrey Kravtsov (Melbourne and Moscow), who studied the biography of Sergei Lesnoy (Paramonov) as an author of historical papers, who lived and died in Canberra; and by Dr Yuriy Kovaliv (Lviv), who compiled a biography of Aleksei (Oleksiy) Paramonov, Sergei's younger brother, a forest entomologist, who died in England in 1967.

While visiting Australia in 2012, VAK managed to find the drafts of Paramonov's papers deposited directly in the Diptera collection of CSIRO. In 2017 Dr M. D. Golubovskiy kindly informed that there was another of Paramonov's archive in the CSIRO library that contained his numerous letters. That treasure is still to be examined and described.

Sergei Paramonov was sure that the types of the insect species he described while in Kyiv had been destroyed while being transferred to Ufa in 1941. In actuality, they were returned to Ukraine from Russia after World War II (in the mid-1950s) and are currently deposited in the I. I. Schmalhausen Institute of Zoology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine in Kyiv. However, the vast majority of his specimens are still in Berlin.

In his non-entomological publications (poetic verses, historical studies) Paramonov often used the pseudonym S. Lesnoy, which means "[the man] of the forest", which refers to his childhood. It is thus fitting that we entitle this work using the name he used when he felt most free and at peace with an otherwise cruel and unfair world that he had endured throughout most of his life.

Apollinariy Vasnetsov's "The Skit". 1901

1. Endless Forest

> "*…there, to the wilderness of the endless forest, to glorify the heaven far from the evil and people, restraining restless ego, disdaining joy and sorrow in the rustle of moss-grown spruces, crystalness of a cold brook, in the work and prayer, with the beasts as only friends, waking up with the bird singing, reading holy pages for the hundredth time, smiling await for the death to come, in the silence, in the prayer, in the crystal meditation, with the soul quiet as a lake, forgetting ebullient life of the hive, to live, what is destined not counting days, where only powerful, majestic forest is noising, and speaking only to praise the heaven, a thousand-headed guard of meditation, the endless forest…*"

Sergei Yakovych (Serge Jacques, Sergey Yakovlevich) Paramonov (Paramonow, Paramoniv) was born on November 4 (October 21 of the Gregorian Calendar) in 1894 in Kharkiv (Russian Empire, now Ukraine) to the family of Yakiv Yukhymovych (Yakov Yefimovich) Paramonov (1871–1938) and Olga Paramonova (née Buravchuk (1889–1958). His parents were indigenous inhabitants of the village of Yaski in the Belyaevsky District of the Kherson Government (now the Odesa Region, Ukraine). Sergei's maternal grandfather, Ivan Buravchuk, an agronomist and a gardener, worked in the trust of green plantations and, as they said, he: "did not smoke or drink alcohol, and was a cultured man". He was from Raikivtsi village of the Podolsky Government. Ivan Buravchuk's wife came from a large family of serfs and had no education. Sergei's mother was illiterate, but his father, who came from a

peasant family, studied at the Kherson Agricultural College and was a classmate of A. D. Tsyurupa (1870–1928), the future Minister of Food in the government of Lenin. In 1893, Yakiv was arrested for participating in student riots. At the beginning of 1894, as he graduated from college, he married Olga, and later that year they had their first-born son, Sergei. Their second son, Aleksei (Oleksiy), was born in March 1903, when the family lived in Polotsk (now Belarus).

Sergei Paramonov with his parents, Yakiv and Olga. Polotsk, 1903 [PA]

In 1904, the family moved to the Nizhniy Novgorod Government (now Russia) in connection with the official affairs of his father, and nine-year-old Sergei was sent to go to the gymnasium in the nearest county chief town — Velikiy Ustyug of the Vologda Government, where the boy graduated from the 4th form of the gymnasium.

Sergei Paramonov at ten years Velikiy Ustyug, 1904 [PA]

Sergei Paramonov after graduating from gymnasium, 1912 [PA]

In 1908 the family moved again, this time to southern Bessarabia, to the village of Ceobruci (now Moldova) in Ackerman County, not far from Tiraspol. There, on the right bank of the Dniester was a state forest, where Yakiv Paramonov worked as a forester. After the move, Sergei, and eventually Alexei were sent to study in Ackerman.

Several family photos of those years were saved by Dora Kobeletska, the foster daughter of Yakiv and Olga Paramonov. As she recalled, Sergei and Alexei studied well at the gymnasium, exhibiting an extraordinary interest in insects since early childhood and playing with them instead of toys. When the sons returned on vacations to Ceobruci, their father often took them with him to hunt — to the steppe, into the forest or to the floodplain of the river. Sergei and Alexei shot skillfully, sorted out the birds and other game, and were excellent trackers.

In the gymnasium, Sergei showed exceptional ability and interest in learning: at the end of the high school he was fluent in French and, somewhat less, German, in addition to everyday Russian, Ukrainian and Romanian, knew Latin and Ancient

Greek, played the piano and sang, but mostly loved nature and natural sciences, at the same time inheriting from his father a pragmatic and emotional-poetic attitude towards it.

In 1912, Sergei graduated from the gymnasium, in the summer he passed exams and became a student in the Natural Department of the Physics and Mathematics Faculty of the St. Vladimir Kyiv University. Soon the talented and industrious student drew the attention of private-docent Victor Kazanovsky (Viktor Kazanowski, *ca*. 1870–1919), a member of the Agrarian Department of the Elective District Council of Kyiv. He took in Sergei as a caregiver for his younger sons, one of whom was ten years old then, the other twelve. Kazanovsky lived near the University, in the mezzanine of a new house built in the Art Nouveau style. He was in charge of the Phytopathological Department of the Kyiv Plant Pest Control Station of the South Russian Association of Sugar Producers. Victor Kazanovsky was already in his fifth decade, and at the faculty he was a very prominent person. He had very broad and thick black eyebrows, wore a goatee and an invariable outfit consisting of a waistcoat, a white shirt and bow tie, and chrome high-boots added for nature trips. On fine days, he went on excursions to the outskirts of Kyiv along with his students. They collected fungi and plants, mollusks, insects, and freshwater plankton. In the summer, Kazanovsky and his family moved to Trukhanov Island on the Dnipro, where he was in charge of the Kessler Biological Station.

Victor Kazanovsky, 1914

Sergei Paramonov went along on these trips, helping his teacher to collect insects, although by that time he was already a zealous zoologist, was fond of birds, and intended to professionally study in ornithology under the guidance of Doctor of Biology Vladimir Artobolevsky (1874–1952), who subsequently wrote a commentary on Paramonov's first scientific publication.

In February/March 1914, the centenary of the birth of Taras Shevchenko (1814–1861), the renown, prophetic, and banned Ukrainian poet, student demonstrations were held in Kyiv. The Russian Empire was actively trying to extend "Pax Rossicus" in the territory that belonged to the Austro-Hungarian crown and got the Balkan Carpathian area populated by Slavic nations to strongly support various panslavic movements. It sharply reacted to attempts of Austria-Hungary to resist against a Moscow-philic separatism, while accusing the pro-Ukrainian nationalist movements in the separatist intentions. In January 1914, Kyiv school district trustee A. Derevytsky prohibited teachers from participating in the ceremony to commemorate Shevchenko; church newspapers condemned Shevchenko as a symbol of "Ukrainian separatism", an enemy of the monarchy and the Russian Orthodox Christian faith. In a response to telegrams sent by the "Committee of Russian Nationalists" the Russian Government prohibited memorial offices at two cathedrals, breaking existing laws. Kyiv Governor General F. Trepov advocated the prohibition of any public celebration of the poet's jubilee, and not only the meeting on "Shevchenko days". The Committee of Russian Nationalists strongly encouraged the banning of any action dedicated to the centennial of the birth of Taras Shevchenko, declaring such action separatist, pro-Austrian, anti-Russian, and blasphemous.

The clashes between the people who were going to the memorial services at the St. Sophia and St. Vladimir cathedrals and the "Black-Hundreds" (pro-Russian white racist anti-Semitic groups) led to a

tense situation on the streets of the city. The next day, all the students at the universities were on strike and attacked by the "Black-Hundreds" on the streets. Many participants in the riots were detained by the police. Among the pro-Ukrainian students detained was a second-year student of Kyiv University, Sergei Paramonov. He was threatened with a three-month arrest, but was eventually released.

Victor Kazanovsky (**K**) with his family and students at excursion to Rybnoye Lake, Darnytsya near Kyiv, 1915;
Sergei Paramonov (**P**) with the insect net left of centre

The same year in the summer, Paramonov, having passed all examinations, went on vacation to Bessarabia to visit his parents. He did not know he would meet an entirely different world upon returning to Kyiv in September: World War I had begun. However, despite the war, University classes and excursions with students were as it was before, and even in March and May 1915, Paramonov, among other Kazanovsky students, his sons, and Natalia Kazanovska, his wife, often took the train to Darnytsya on the left bank of Dnipro or the tram to the Puscha Vodytsya forests to collect animals and plants for laboratory studies.

Sergei Paramonov (at right) and Victor Kazanovsky's students and son, Rybnoye Lake, Darnytsya near Kyiv, 1915

In the summer of 1915 the quiet life of the university was broken, and disturbing rumours came from the front. They talked about a possible offensive of enemy troops toward Kyiv. Pontoon bridges across the Dnipro were built. The order to evacuate the university to the left bank was received, but even as the danger of occupying Kyiv had already passed, the evacuation orders had not been abrogated. The St. Vladimir University of Kyiv was evacuated to Saratov on the right bank of the Volga. The Saratov University kindly agreed to give them a shelter. All the property of the university including the library and astronomical instruments were transported to Saratov. In Kyiv, only a medical faculty was left.

Paramonov went to Saratov with Kazanovsky's family, and took a trip to the Volga, where among other zoologists and botanists, he participated in an expedition to the salt lakes of the Southern Trans-Volga. He wrote an essay based on this trip, "A Trip to the Baskunchak and Elton".

In the summer of 1916, Russian troops made a significant breakthrough in Galicia, and the University returned to Kyiv. After the trip to his parents, Sergei wrote an note "Finding *Ascalaphus macaronius* Scop. in Bessarabia" based on data collected in the vicinity of Ackerman. Paramonov had been interested all his life in neuropteran insects, but this his second paper on them would not be published until 1941.

In 1917, in the midst of the two revolutions and a World War, and despite the appeals of his student friends to "quit studies and immerse yourself in the revolution," Sergei completed his last year at the University of Kyiv, passed exams, and defended his thesis for his university diploma. After graduating from the university, he returned to Bessarabia, where he "worked on his father's farm: ploughed, sowed, etc. ", later "participated in the organization and taught free-of-charge in schools for the illiterate, for working adults, lectured at the technical school of workers" (from Paramonov's PhD student's questionnaire of 1924).

When Paramonov returned to Kyiv, Kazanovsky took the young graduate as a trainee to the plant pest control station. The task of identifying insects was not easy because there was not enough scientific literature; most of the keys were in German, whereas the species of insects occurring in Ukraine are different from those in Germany and Austria. At that time there were very few entomologists. In particular, the former head of the Poltava Plant Protection Station, Nikolai Kurdyumov (1885–1917) was killed on the warfront; and six months before that, the only Russian specialist in Diptera taxonomy, Joseph Portschinsky (1848–1916) died in Petrograd (as St. Petersburg was named from 1914–1924). Paramonov decided to study parasitic flies, and his intention was supported by the authorities in the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences as he became its PhD student.

In October 1917, rumours were crawling in Kyiv: in Petrograd, the power was seized by Bolsheviks, the radical extremist branch of the Russian Social Democrats. Ukraine declared its independency instead. Renowned scientists, Volodymyr Vernadsky and Ivan Schmalhausen moved from Russia to Kyiv. In mid-January, Bolshevik troops took Kyiv and started a great terror. Vernadsky and colleagues found shelter at a distant biostation upstream of Chernobyl. The young man who brought them bread, milk, sugar and tobacco from time to time was none other than Theodosius Dobzhansky, later to see his fame in genetics. After graduating from Kyiv University in 1917–1921, Dobzhansky worked at the Zoological Museum together with Sergei Paramonov, who was a PhD student at that time.

In April 1918, Hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky, supported by Germany, conducted a coup d'état in Kyiv. Everything was looking as if the long-awaited peace had come to Ukraine. Strangely enough, life went on as normal. The Opera House gave performances. The new government even cared about science: the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences was founded on October 27, 1918, and Volodymyr Ivanovych Vernadsky was elected its first president. Sergei Paramonov spent the summer in Odessa and visited his parents in Ceobruci. However, in April 1918 Romania annexed Bessarabia and in August of that year, Romanian soldiers arrested Yakiv Paramonov as a suspected "Bolshevik"; he was rescued from the firing squad by the local priest. The family quickly escaped to Yaski, the home village of the Paramonovs and Buravchuks.

The situation in Kyiv changed near the end of the Fall of 1918. Kaiser Wilhelm abdicated his throne on November 9 and on November 14 Hetman Skoropadsky signed the "Decree of Federation with Russia",

which deprived Ukraine of its independence. The next day, Symon Petliura, a member of the Directorate of Ukraine as the Chief of Military Forces seized power again, German troops left Ukraine, and in January 1919 Soviet Russia occupied eastern Ukraine establishing several puppet "people's republics" there, thus provoking a new civil war.

In June 1919, the "Extraordinary Commission" (CheKa) staged the "Red Terror" in Odessa. "Chekists" in leather jackets, intoxicated with alcohol and cocaine and armed from head to toe, stalked Deribasovskaya Street; in the "CheKa" building, over half a hundred people were shot every night and then buried in common graves. In general, over 1500 "bourgeois elements" in Odessa were "eliminated" during this period. These deaths were compounded by epidemics of typhus and cholera, which took the lives of more than 1200 additional people in the summer of 1919.

Fortunately, Sergei Paramonov managed to reach Yaski where his parents and junior brother lived before all of that (in April 1919). Yaski lived far from the main roads, and although it was relatively close to Odessa, it was quiet. Paramonov went hunting wildfowl to feed his family and took his net and killing jar to collect flies in the steppe, near the flood or in the forest — in the vicinity of Ananiyev, in Valegotsulovo, and in Kuchurgan. In reality, this hunting was not so much a necessity to feed the family as a happy opportunity to collect parasitic bombyliid flies, to which he was was advised to pay attention by his senior colleagues. Those were his first extensive collections of bee flies, hover flies, tangle-winged flies and robber flies. He had enough pins, boxes with felt-bottoms, ink, gray label paper and time. His brother Alexei also collected and pinned flies with him. The family lived in his grandfather's house together with his aunt's family. Sergei and Alexei slept in the hayloft where they had a "laboratory" and they hunted for flies every summer day that had good weather.

Large and small, black and white, and densely haired, shaggy, black and mottled, the bee flies hover low in the air over the grass, sitting as black triangles on the footpaths or sucking nectar with their very long proboscides from just-bloomed thistles and ox-eyed daisies. The gray haired *Bombylius* and black-winged *Anthrax* are common where the solitary bees dig their holes near paths on steppe slopes. Other species feed as immatures on the underground eggs of grasshoppers or even on the larvae of ant lions. Ochreous bee-like hover flies show up as soon as the ephemeral plants fade in the steppe. Long and white-bearded robber flies able to hunt bees and crimson tiger moths sit on the leaves waiting for another victim.

There are other flies, and a lot of them, but Sergei's eye unmistakably recognizes these. The exact kick with a *rampette*[1], buzzing in a net, and a fly goes into a glass jar with hardened gypsum mixed with cyanide at its bottom. These flies did not have names yet: they would get them, as soon as the war ended, and as soon as Sergei obtained keys to identify the species. Among the specimens he collected were actually unnamed new species, whose "godfather" he would became soon: *Trochanthes beckeri* Paramonov 1926, *Conophorus rossicus* Paramonov 1926, and many others.

In March 1919, when the battles between the Russian Bolshevik troops and the Directorate Army for Kyiv was in its culmination, the Academy of Sciences went on with its work: the Committee on Study of Fauna of Ukraine was established, and on May 1, 1919, the Zoological Cabinet (later renamed the Zoological Museum) was organized. Its first Director was Professor of Zoology and Comparative Anatomy, former Rector of the Tomsk University, and Academician of All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, Nikolai Kashchenko (1855–1935).

[1] A French word used at that time for an insect net (see also V. Nabokov "The Gift").

The mobilization announced by the Bolsheviks caused rebellions in villages and county towns around Odessa. The Volunteer White Guard, supported by British ships in a landing force, came into Odessa on August 10 (21), and freed the city from the Bolshevik forces, which were almost ten times as large as the White Guard troops. After losing Odessa, the Bolshevik Red Army lost all of the Southwest. On August 18 (31), 1919 the forces of the Ukrainian Directorate troops under the leadership of Anton Kraus from the west and parts of the Russian White Guard commanded by General Nikolai Bredov from the east — simultaneously entered Kyiv, which had been abandoned by Bolsheviks. At that time Sergei Paramonov returned to Kazanovsky's house. On October 14–17, 1919 the Red Army seized Irpin and Kyiv, but later retreated. The fighting was just in the streets of Kyiv. In November 1919 Bolsheviks seized Kyiv for the second time. The city had epidemics of typhoid fever and typhus.

While Paramonov was returning to Kyiv, the scientists whom he knew there were doing the opposite: they were getting away from it as far as possible: Vernadsky went to Rostov, and from there to Simferopol in Crimea; Paramonov's University professors and colleagues, zoologists Dmitry Beling and Sergei Kuszakiewicz, together with young Theodosius Dobzhansky went to Odessa. Beling eventually managed to board a ferry from Odessa to Sevastopol. Kuszakiewicz took a ship to Turkey, but it was clogged with typhoid patients, with hundreds of crawling lice on the floor. He died of typhus in the winter of 1919/1920, not reaching Constantinople.

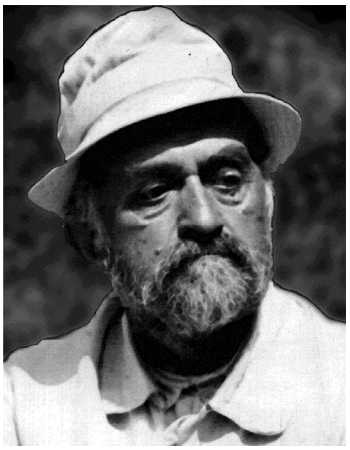
Winter in 1919 came to Kyiv along with the Bolsheviks, lice, and Spanish flu. Victor Kazanovsky died suddenly in December (it is not known whether he died of fever or was killed, as armed robbery had become commonplace). During this time, Sergei Paramonov took care of his family. Together with Kazanovsky's elder son they sought for jobs as firewood choppers, usually to buy food, so they survived the winter.

Soon Paramonov married Natalia Kazanovska, the addressee of his romantic young poems, who was 13 years older than him. Not long after their marriage, Bolsheviks had their apartment "compacted" (*i. e*., forced them to give up most of it to "proletarians"). Natalia, Sergei and two of Kazanovsky's sons lived in one room of the overcrowded, noisy, cold and stinky flat. Sergei lived here until his trip to Germany in 1928. Curiously, in 1936 he wrote on a questionnaire: "**Marital status:** *unmarried*", yet it is known that he helped Natalia with money until 1943.

As the horrible winter ended, the Polish army together with the Ukrainian Directorate forces started a counter-offensive and seized Kyiv, which had been abandoned again by the Bolsheviks. Things appeared to be calm again.

On March 15, 1920 Sergei Paramonov was invited to the staff of the Museum as a research assistant. Wages were symbolic and amounted to less than 1 ruble monthly. As the world-renowned myrmecologist Volodymyr Karavayev (aka Karawajew, Karavaev, 1864–1939; the second director of the Museum) wrote: "there was no such institution in Ukraine, which cost the Soviet Government as cheaply as the Academy of Sciences, but at the same time did so much. "

In 1921 the Ukrainian revolution ended, Bolshevik power was established in all the Eastern, Central, and Southern Ukraine, and Ukraine became a part of the Federation of Soviet Socialist Republics. The All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences was reorganized, and the Zoological Museum, renewed its work. The private and university zoological collections consisted as the core of the new museum and included Karavayev's huge ant collection from the Oriental Region, Near East, Africa, and many other parts of the world. When beginning his work at the Museum, Sergei Paramonov presented as a gift 12,000 specimens of pinned flies and 64 bird skins from Bessarabia and the Dniester flood plane.



Vladimir Karavayev, 1910s

Mykola Charlemagne, 1910s

The staff of the Museum originally included Mykola Kaschenko (head), Mykola (Eduard) Charlemagne (ornithologist, scientific conservator), senior scientist Karavayev (entomologist), zoologists of the higher salary Vladimir Artobolevsky (ornithologist), Vadim Sowinski (lepidopterist), zoologists of the middle salary Ivan Klodnitsky, Theodosius Dobzhansky, Sergei Paramonov, Leo A. Shelyuzhko (entomologists), M.L. Shcherbyna (zoologist of the lower salary), and Oleksandr B. Kistiakivsky (zoologist-trainee). Most of them had "wrong class origin": Karavayev came from a rich family of famous Kyiv physicians; in 1898–1913 as an out-of-staff zoologist at the St. Vladimir University of Kiev he took numerous collecting trips to South Eastern Asia, Sudan, Algeria, Tunis, France, Egypt, and Turkestan at own expenses.

Leo Shelyuzhko, 1910

Leo Shelyuzhko was a millionaire's son; he owned the largest fishery in the Russian Empire before 1917 and was spending a lot of money for his huge butterfly collection. Kistiakivsky was from the family of the famous professor of law and philosopher; after his father's death his family became refugees (his elder brother George Kistiakovsky (spelling is different) became a physical chemistry professor at Harvard, participated in the Manhattan Project, and later served as President Dwight D. Eisenhower's Science Advisor). Sowinski was a son of the university professor of zoology. Klodnitsky was a son of a famous architect from St. Petersburg. The others were either from the middle class and even some peasants (e.g., Sergei Paramonov), but all usually had received a proper gymnasium and university education and were eager for zoology. Among the political upheavals of the country, the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences remained an island of apolitical and even conservative national intellectual community for the first ten years of Soviet domination.

In 1922–1924 Sergei Paramonov also worked in the Kyiv Regional Agricultural Experimental Station as senior assistant at the Applied Entomology Section. In January 1924 he became a doctoral student at the All-Ukraine Institute of People's Education (former St. Vladimir University of Kyiv). At that time, he had two ornithological and two small entomological notes published, two big articles about game birds in the Dniester flood plane published, and seven manuscripts on the family Bombyliidae (the bee flies) had been submitted to journals in Ukraine, Austria, and Germany.

Sergei Paramonov was introduced to bee flies in 1917, when he first tried to identify the dipterological material he collected in Ceobruci while visiting his family in the summer graduating from the University. However, his almost entire lack of dipterological literature prevented further study, as there was nobody studying Diptera in Ukraine before him. Jaroszewski, the only scientist who worked on Diptera faunistics in the 1870s, was not a taxonomist. Apart from Jaroszewski's extensive studies,

there was very little data scattered among the publications of different authors. As there were no specialists, the literature in the libraries of Ukraine was also lacking.

Concerning the large and diverse family Bombyliidae, there were no works that covered even the European fauna to any degree at the time. Schiner's "Fauna Austriaca. Diptera" (1860–1864), the only summary with keys he could use, was out-of date, had quite big gaps in knowledge of many taxa, was extremely limited geographically, and ultimately could not satisfy his reference needs. There were hundreds of species described in numerous articles, but no handbooks or even reviews with keys to species and genera of bee flies. Based on Schiner's book, Paramonov realized he had to expand his knowledge to the whole bombyliid fauna of Europe, as he was not sure if the southern species absent from Schiner's keys did or did not occur in the South of Ukraine (as he would soon ascertain).

The other serious problem was the lack of specimens for comparative material. Some material was collected with the help of Boris Belsky and other employees at the Pest Control Station. Other specimens were found in the collection of Prof. Oleksandr Lebedev (Kyiv University). Most of the material, but still not in great numbers, was collected by Sergei Paramonov and his junior brother, Aleksei. There were no Mid- or Western-European specimens in the collection and the rare specimens were unidentified. Sergei Paramonov was essentially beginning his work on Bombyliidae in a virtual knowledge vacuum.

In his first five years of study on Diptera, from 1917 to 1921, he began efforts to fill that gap in knowledge and material. He mostly collected Diptera in Ukraine, mainly in the Kyiv and Kherson Governments, and accumulated the necessary literature he could obtain from the state and private libraries of Kyiv.

In 1921 Sergei Paramonov published his first short faunistic note on bee flies — the first record of the hitherto poorly known *Anthrax occultus* near Kyiv. It appeared in the *Ukrainian Zoological Journal* edited by Charlemagne. It was the first and only issue of the journal, which also contained the first publications of Theodosius Dobzhansky on variability of ladybeetles and Vladimir Artobolevsky Jr. on damselflies and dragonflies.

Theodor Pleske, 1890s

In December 1921 the Ukrainian delegation attended the First All-Russian Meeting of Zoologists, Anatomists, and Histologists in Petrograd (St. Petersburg). As Charlemagne wrote in his memoirs, 'We went from Kyiv [by train] for two full days and nights, often stopping and loading up firewood. As the wet wood began burning, the steam locomotive slowly creeped up. That was a jolly trip… D. Beling was a good musician, and S. Paramonov was a great music lover. They performed whole airs from [Tchaikovsky's operas] "La Dame de Pique" and "Eugene Onegin" they played on combs with filigree… In Petrograd, we lived in a cold, distant dormitory full of rats and bedbugs. "

That Winter Sergei Paramonov visited the Zoological Museum of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Petrograd working with its huge collections and library, making notes and re-writing the papers lacking in Kyiv. There he met Theodor D. Pleske (the former director of the Emperor's Museum of Zoology, working since 1917 as the curator of Diptera) and Alexander Stackelberg,

a young student just starting his studies of flies. They kindly supplied Sergei Paramonov with a lot of comparative material and extractions handwritten from the printed books and articles.

In the Spring of 1923 Sergei Paramonov took a collecting trip on foot from Theodosia to Sebastopol (Crimean Peninsula) and collected a number of new and very valuable specimens. In the Fall of 1923 he collected numerous summer and autumn species of Diptera in Yalta.

But it wasn't until after entering doctoral courses in 1924, that he took his first collecting trip beyond Ukraine. For three and a half months he participated an expedition of the Zoological Museum of Erevan University headed by its director, Alexander B. Shelkovnikov, to Transcaucasia: Erevan — Julfa — Aza — Dasti — Ordubad — Megri — Ordubad — Julfa — Erevan (25 May–9 June); and Erevan — Ashtarak — Piragan — Inaqlu — Shish-Täpä — Kara-Göl — Alikochak — Taicharukh — Gokcha — Akhty — Erevan (13 July–12 August); and also Armenia and Ordubad near the Iranian border, Sevan Lake and Alagez Mountain. The very best collecting spot was on the hills densely grown by the yellow-flowering milkweeds near Ordubad. Here he collected over half a thousand bee flies, hover flies and other dipterans, beetles and butterflies. Paramonov and Shelkovnikov stayed in Erevan, collecting from time to time in its vicinities, and only on July 13 finally took a trip to the Caucasus Minor Mountains in the north, up to Shishtapa Mountain, collecting interesting flies on its summit, *ca.* 2000 m. Near Alikochak they reached 3000 m altitude, and in two weeks reached Karny-Yarych Mount, where they found wonderful clearings in the forest zone at 2800 m. Apart from Bombyliidae, they collected many unusual horse flies (Tabanidae) and soldier flies (Stratiomyiidae). After a week of collecting in the mountains, in the beginning of August they went down to reach Sevan Lake and on to Erevan in mid-August. Thanks to Shelkovnikov's help and hospitality, Paramonov travelled for 3.5 months and brought to Kyiv a whole treasure of thousands of pinned flies, other insects, and reptiles. All this without extra expense. Since the Ukrainian Academy was able to pay only train tickets, the rest Paramonov paid for himself from what he earned and saved. This material was extremely rich, it included many extremely rare and new species, some of which he could exchange with European colleagues for other rarities.

Three of the first taxonomic papers by Paramonov with descriptions of new species were published also in 1924 in the brand new entomological journal *Konowia*, published in German. Those were two hover flies (Syrphidae), *Catabomba odessana* and *Merodon bessarabicus*, one species of the tangle-veined parasitic flies (Nemestrinidae, distantly related to bee flies), *Fallenia semenovi,* and two new Bombyliidae, *Spongostylum karavaievi* and *Villa* (*Exhyalanthrax*) *transcaspica*.

Paramonov still lived in a small room with Natalia Kazanovskaya and her sons. In August 1924, his younger brother Alexei moved to Kyiv, and Sergei cared also for him while Alexei tried to enter a college of forestry.

In June 1925 Paramonov visited the Karadagh Scientific Station in Crimea, near Theodosia, together with Karavayev and Kistiakivsky (the latter who collected bird lice and was interested, as Paramonov himself, in both birds and insects) and again collected various zoological material and Diptera species new for his collection or even hitherto unknown to science, undescribed and unnamed. There were many small and "long-nose" bee flies of the genera *Platypygus* and *Geron* on flowers. Upon returning home, Sergei recognized them to be entirely new species, which soon were described under the names *Platypygus tauricus* Paramonov 1926 and *Geron krymensis* Paramonov 1929. In July 1925 he visited parents in Ananyiv and collected near Valegotsulovo. At the same time, Kistiakivsky, now involved in fly hunting, collected many interesting nasute *Bombylius* in Pyatykhatki near Poltava.

During 1925, ten new papers by Paramonov were published in various foreign and Ukrainian journals. One of the new species described there, *Heterotropus kazanovskyi* Paramonov, Sergei named *in memoriam* to his teacher and senior friend: »Diese eigentümliche Art widme ich dem leider so früh verstorbenen Herrn Privatdozent der Kiewer Universität, Botaniker W.I. Kazanowsky, dessen vielseitiger Hilfe und Entgegenkommen während meiner ersten Schritte auf dem Gebiete der Dipterologie ich sehr viel verdanke« ["This peculiar species I dedicate to the unfortunately early deceased Associate Professor of the Kyiv University, botanist V.I. Kazanovsky, whose versatile help and cooperation during my first steps in the field of dipterology I greatly appreciate"].

In mid-April 1926 Sergei Paramonov, together with entomologist Yuriy I. Prozhyha and botanist Dmytro K. Zerov, took a two-month trip to Turkmenistan along the Transcaspian railway. They took the train to Baku, then a ferry across the grey and troubled Caspian Sea to Krasnovodsk.

The train station of Krasnovodsk with its minaret-like towers and ornamental edging of its roof were so similar to the more modern mansions of Kyiv and also similar in regards the chipping of them after the war and ruin. Then again by train through the ochreous and bare ravines of the Balkans, deeper and deeper, until the reddish foothills of the Kopet-Dagh became visible in the window on the right side, also bare and covered only by morning clouds. The first stop was the Ashhabat train station. Endless ochre streets, adobe cabins under flat roofs, aryks [irrigation aqueducts — VAK] transporting water from the mountains, and Lombardy poplars, still leafless. Getting lodging from local authorities for a night, they went to a bazaar to buy some food. Putting their long legs under their bodies, camels lie in line one near another; lanky and beardy caravanners in high and shaggy sheepskin caps and greasy, black, warm wadding robes, apparently sewn in the last century.

In the morning after a breakfast of tandyr cake and tea from a local samovar, Sergei rushed away to observe the vicinity. Adyrs, the low foothills of Karadagh, were flowering with wild tulips, and higher, near rivers, the tall poplars became replaced by old and branchy turangas. The weather slowly improved, and Sergei managed to catch a few hover and bee flies.

The next morning, the sky was entirely blue, but it was still chilly and wet, so Paramonov went to same place he visited the day before, but with a piece of bread wrapped in a rag and a bottle of cold tea, net, and killing jars. On the fixed sands, the daisy-like composite flowers had broken from the reddish soil, and the tiny, nasute and goggle-eyed bee flies sat on them. They seem to be species of the genus *Heterotropus*, but it is impossible to say, which ones, because there were only a few like this that he had seen in the Moscow and Leningrad collections. Agama toads scattered from under his feet and, as all the killing jars were by now full of flies, Sergei started to catch lizards with his net.

After two days, as the herbarium sheets were dried and insects were sorted out on cotton layers and pinned, the expedition moved to Qaraqum desert, to the the train station Repetek. Among the sands, there were whole woods of the white saxaul, a leafless chenopodiaceous shrub used as firewood, and the black saxaul, which grows where there is a water deep in the ground. There were whole ephedra trees, so different from Crimean "steppe raspberries" he used to know. The low red-yellow tulips had just started to blossom. Candle-like inflorescences of *Cistanche*, a holoparasitic chlorophyll-less plant, broke through the sand behind the saxauls. And — lizards, lizards, lizards; geckos, toad-headed lizards and desert lacertans; and if one is watchful, you might even see a giant grey monitor. Reptiles run on the desert by raising their bodies on their long legs above the scorching sand. Suddenly an arrow snake (*Psammophilus lanceolatus*), thin and grey as a steel wire threw itself onto a lizard entwining by rings and biting it and finally swallows it. Cellar beetles, verrucate and slow, crawl here and there, and the giant, black with two white spots Mennerheim's ground beetle is rushing up deep into old saxaul

thickets. The carpet viper, or efa, which is able to sink into sand, is the most dangerous among the local creatures; there are, however, quite many dangerous animals here: karakurts (a local variety of black widow spider), ticks, fleas (which feed on reddish long-legged and long-tailed gerbils and are vectors of the plague), and biting midges.

It is easy to lose your way in the desert: flat landscape without landmarks, barchans and shrubs, shrubs and barchans, everywhere the same, and in no time you are in the middle of nowhere. That is why it is safer to collect material near the station: at least you can hear the train once a day and follow the railway. Paramonov fills killing jars with insects. Again small *Heterotropus* bee flies, and others.

In a week the expedition moved to the large town of Merv or Mary, an ancient staging post of caravans near Murghab river, which here branches into thousand of channels and disappears in the Qaraqum [Karakum] sands. Murghab runs from Kushka, the southernmost point; what behind it, is Afghanistan, thin dusty sand, which enters everywhere...

On a hill, from which the vision of surroundings is the best, among the huge resinous ferulas, the local umbellaceous relatives of hogweeds, there are hundreds of crab carcasses. Where did they come from? — the sea is a thousand miles to the south. A shallow brook flows between the hills, still not dried, and it is full of the freshwater crabs. Paramonov sees this miracle for the first time.

There are more flowering plants near the brook, with new bee flies, small and even smaller, of the genus *Phthiria*, "tiny-crabby-lousy" flies, from ancient Greek, a feminine gender of *Phthirius.* And all are apparently new and unseen at the moment of their first discovery. Among them a species of an entirely new genus, which is to be called *Karakumia* Paramonov 1927 and new bee fly of the genus, which the father of entomology Fabricius called *Cytherea* — an epiclesis of Aphrodite; larvae of those flies infest the egg pods of locusts. The coming Autumn Paramonov will describe it as *Cytherea mervensis*.

The next week the expedition decided to observe mountains. After reaching Firyuza from Ashhabat in the south-east, they stopped here for the whole week. These rocky steeps grown by archa, a sort of tall juniper tree, are reminiscent of Crimean Mountains, but the vegetation looks entirely different: if you manage to climb up among the rocks formed by horizontal plates, on the plateau, you would see thorn cushions and just-opened grenadine flowers; there are curious mottled brown geckos able to run even on ceilings having eyelashes on their human-like eyes. In the thickets, there is something clumpy, crawling with crackling noise, finally a snake-like head shows up freezing your blood, and after all the whole creature: and old and heavy middle-Asian tortoise looking like a polished parquetted tank. Furry *Bombylius* bee flies feed on lungworts, which were entirely lacking in the desert.

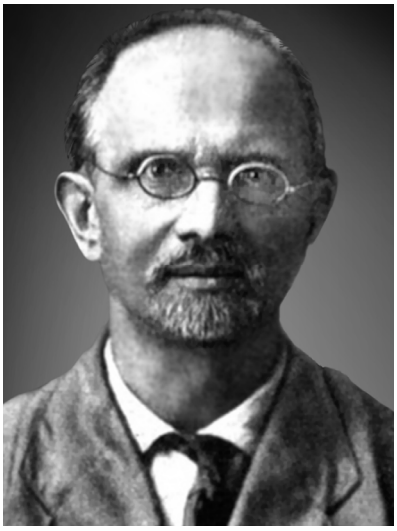
As the early Spring is to be gone soon, after Firyuza the expedition went to Repetek, Bairam-Ali, and Uch-Adji, stopping for one day at several other stations in the Qaraqum to meet the diversity of the desert fauna and flora in their richness.

This trip gave Paramonov the gift of an extremely rich treasure of numerous specimens, not only with genera and species lacking in his collection, but mainly by entirely new taxa for science. It also gave him a good opportunity to obtain new material by exchange with colleagues. And, it expanded his interest from the Bombyliidae of Europe to the whole Palaearctic Region.

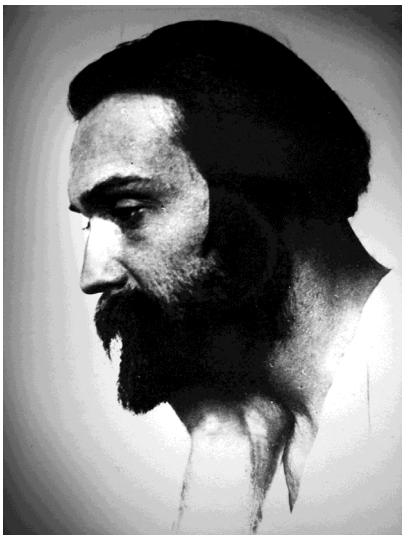
In 1926 Karavayev was appointed of Director of the Museum. As a taxonomist, he understood the great importance of fundamental systematics for both in Ukraine and worldwide. The first half of the 20th

century was a time of an incredible increase of studies in insect ecology and agricultural and forest entomology. Karavayev was convinced that taxonomy, which is responsible for accurate identification of biological species, is critical in determining the correctness of forecasts of pest development and success of control. It requires not only the necessary publications since Linné, but also field trips and observation of flies in nature, and work at foreign museums.

Sergei Paramonov wrote letters to all the experts in dipterology, Mario Bezzi in Padova (Italy), Franz Werner in Vienna, Hasan Efflatoun-bey in Cairo, Tokuichi Shiraki in Taiwan, Günter Enderlein in Berlin, Otto Engel and Erwin Lindner in Stuttgart, and Frederick Wallace Edwards in London. He received from them a huge amount of literature, primarily numerous reprints of articles, monographs; and most importantly, specimens from other countries, either as a gift, or as exchange for the "duplicates" of specimens he collected on his trips.



Agatangel Krymsky, 1920s



Sergei Paramonov, 1920s [PA]

He also collected stamps from foreign envelops and parcels, for a gift to his senior friend, an incredible linguist and polyglot, famous writer and lexicographer Agatangel Krymsky, the Indispensable Secretary of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. In the times of troubles, Krymsky had supported funding of the second expedition of Paramonov to Armenia, understanding well the necessity of wide collections for reliable scientific reconstructions and systematics. Furthermore, as Paramonov defended his doctoral degree in 1927, Krymsky tried to push a case of better lodging for Paramonov, who lived in one little room with the Kazanovsky's, but in fact slept in his lab on Tereschenkivska Street.

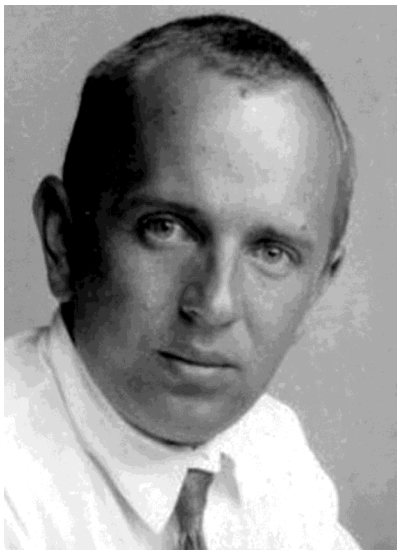
Oleksandr Kistiakivsky, 1960s

The second trip to Armenia, mainly to the Erevan environs, was shorter than the first. Due to an early Spring, it was too late and too dry, but in the Summer of 1927 Paramonov brought back another series of undescribed species.

Oleksandr Kistiakivsky had returned from Ussuri (Far East Russia) with new flies. He got a very heavy tick encephalitis there, survived, but was half the man he used to be, though as tall as he was — about 2 m high. In 1929 Paramonov described a new genus *Ussuriella* for the few specimens captured by Kistiakivsky and named it *U. gadi* Paramonov, with a playful comment: »Ich benenne diese Art zu Ehren des Sammlers, der unter den Mi-

tarbeitern unseres Museums den freundlichen scherzhaften Namen „Gad“ trägt.« [“I name this species in honour of the collector known among colleagues at the Museum under jocular friendly nickname “Gad” (“Reptile”)]. Another species named for Kistiakivsky was the robber fly *Laphria kistyakovskyi* Paramonov.

Another younger friend and colleague of Paramonov and Kistiakivsky, Theodosius Dobzhansky, had just defended his doctoral degree in Leningrad and had been invited to Morgan’s[1] laboratory at the Columbia University in New York, as a post-doctoral fellow. He never returned to the USSR. Later, he translated a number of works of his older friend, Ivan Schmal-hausen and promoted his ideas of evolution and selection.



Theodosius Dobzhansky, 1940

By that time, Paramonov had written four monographic reviews of bee flies of the Palaearctic Region, 100–200 pages each, partly including quotations of original descriptions and also many original descriptions of species discovered by himself or redescriptions based on extensive new material from the Kyiv, St. Petersburg, and Moscow collections.

The building of the Academy of Sciences (which currently houses the Natural History Museum) was finished in November 1927, and the Museum moved in there at the beginning of 1928 along with some other institutes of the Academy. The Museum originally filled only one big room on the third floor (which currently entirely belongs to the Museum).

In October 1928 Sergei Paramonov went to the Zoological Museum of Humboldt University in Berlin with the support of Krymsky and Karavayev, who found funding for this trip. His main interest was the specimens collected by Russian naturalist Aleksey Fedchenko, which had been sent to German dip-terist Hermann Loew in the 1860s. They had been mostly identified and described by Loew, but never returned as Fedchenko died in a snowstorm while climbing Mont Blanc in 1873 at the age of 29. When Loew died in 1879, his collection was transferred to the Berlin Museum. The type specimens of nu-merous species described by Loew are deposited there. Preparation of new keys for identification species requires very careful comparison of new and old species, and re-examining the specimens seen by the authors of the “old” ones is a very important part of taxonomist’s work called a “revision”: sometimes the original specimens readily differ from what the successors meant, and sometimes the original series contained two species, which the author mixed up, or there might be no surviving specimens in the collection; finally, many specimens were placed in incorrect genera and were under wrong names, as no specialists had checked or sorted them for almost hundred years. Loew usually returned his loans to owners; but could not return them to Fedchenko.

Apart from Loew’s specimens, the bee flies in the Berlin Museum were from Karsch, Wiedemann, Becker, and many other famous personal collections, the specimens bear coloured labels: blue —from the Ethiopian, yellow — from the Indo-Malayan, green — from North American, cyan — from South American, purple — from Australian, and white — from the non-tropical Eurasia.

[1] Thomas Hunt Morgan (1866–1945), American geneticist, Nobel Prize winner of 1933, who made *Drosophila melanogaster* the major model object in contemporary genetics.

Günther Enderlein, 1950s

The Humboldt University and the Museum's library was huge and possessed many old journals and books hardly available elsewhere or entirely unavailable in the Soviet Union or Kyiv. As photocopying was expensive and difficult at that time, Paramonov spent nights in rewriting the papers containing the original descriptions of species, which he intended to include in his reviews and keys. He also made notes about important characters of the type specimens omitted by his predecessors. Professor Günter Enderlein, the Custodian of the Diptera collection, presented to Paramonov many reprints of Diptera papers.

Nikolai Kardakoff, 1950s

In Berlin, Paramonov met Russian emigrant Nikolai Kardakoff, a lepidopterologist and good friend of Vladimir Nabokov, who was also living in Berlin at that time. Kardakoff introduced Paramonov to Martin Hering, another lepidopterist, who also collected leaf-mining flies, and Olga Hering, who also emigrated from Russia in 1917. They became good friends for the rest of their lives.

In January 1929, Paramonov returned home to Kyiv from the cold, smoky and poor Berlin, but had kept its Gestalt of the Capital of Empire. The Germany of the Weimar Republic was as pauperized as the Soviets, although a bit more free and democratic. The worst times were yet to come in both countries, but nobody knew the future.

In the summer of 1929, Paramonov collected flies in the Karadag Scientific Station in Crimea and collected good series of several species previously known from a few specimens found by Karavayev some years before.

In the Fall of 1929, Sergei Paramonov made a second trip to Transcaspia and Middle Asia, but soon after traveling from Tashkent to the Chatkal Mountains, the expedition he lead was attacked by local gangs, who robbed them and took some participants as hostages. Paramonov came back without any material, net, gun, or killing jars.

Erich Martin Hering, 1930s

"*Thus the bad begins, and the worse reminds behind*".

2. In the Darkness at Noon

"*while behind us, fate followed*
like a madman with a razor in his hand."
Arseny A. Tarkovsky
(translation by Philip Metres and Dimitri Psurtsev)

When Paramonov came back home from Germany, the future looked just like the past: poor, full of everyday difficulties, but still promising with many good summer days, sometimes rainy, but still sunny.

Finally, he obtained his own room in a common flat on Tarasivska St., into which he moved to now live apart from Kazanovsky's family.

In 1930 the Zoological Museum became a section of the Institute of Biology and Zoology, newly established in the Academy under the direction of I.I. Schmalhausen. The Institute was organised to incorporate the fundamental tasks of, primarily, the applied sciences, and initially included also the sections of Animal Ecology run by university professor supervisor Oleksandr G. Lebedev, and Evolution (headed by I.I. Schmalhausen); and after 1935 Invertebrate Morphology (headed by Oleksandr P. Markevych) was added.

However, it was not the time of scientific prosperity, as the Soviet Union was moving into the dark ages. By 1929 Stalin had entirely broken the opposition of Trotzky, Zinovyev and Kamenev, concentrated all the power in his hands, and become a dictator. To crash all attempts of resistance, he used every opportunity of cleaning up the management by "the old specialists", who were not engaged with communism politically. The show trials of Shakhty started with arrests in 1928 and marked the beginning of a long series of accusations against "class enemies", and was a hallmark of the Great Purge of the 1930s when it was announced that "the bourgeoisie were using sabotage as a method of class struggle". In 1929 arrests were made in the All-Ukrainian Academy of Science, this time as the part of the fabricated trial of "the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine", and included 15 scientists who worked in the Academy, who were accused of anti-state and counter-revolutionary activities. They were members of former Ukrainian political parties or ministers of the Ukrainian People's Republic. Vice-President of the Academy, Sergei Yefremov, was one of those arrested and jailed. Indispensable Secretary of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences Krymsky was removed from his position. As Paramonov wrote in his memoirs, "Krymsky was its main organizer, representative, and defender…

who ran this business brilliantly, obtaining buildings, a printing house, stations, nature and historical reserves for the Academy, gathered several thousands of scientists of all the branches of knowledge, who ran this heavy machine from the times of horrible hunger and cold through all the hurdles of the soviet power to its prosperity, when it produced hundreds of valuable scientific works, dictionaries, arts, poetry, and journals". Krymsky's foster son Mykola Levchenko was arrested and was demanded that evidence be given against Krymsky. Levchenko did not give anything against Krymsky and was imprisoned until 1934, and committed suicide soon after that. Krymsky was sent to internal exile.

As one of the masterminds of the Great Purge said, "the Ukrainian intelligentsia is to be put on its knees, those whom we would not be able to subdue, are going to be shot!" Altogether up to 30,000 people were arrested, exiled, and/or executed during this period.

In 1930, as the United States and Germany went into the Great Depression, the Soviets bought new industrial technologies and hired previously unemployed engineers and highly qualified workers instead of the old specialists, who had been executed. They were to be paid from the sales of grain abroad, and as the farmers disagreed to sell it to the state at heavily discounted prices, in three years all of them were turned into slaves of the collective farms, and all the rebels were shot. That was not yet enough: in 1932 all the harvest was "expropriated" including the inoculum; it caused the Holodomor, a famine that killed an officially estimated 10 million people (of them over 7 million in Soviet Ukraine) in 1932–1933. The grain, when sold, brought $50.8 million; equal to 5 dollars and 8 cents per capita of murdered farmers.

In 1932, Pavlo Yukhymovych Paramonov, Sergei's uncle, father of six children, was arrested in Yasky on a false charge of counter-revolutionary activity. He was an excellent, hard-working farmer, and he was forced to give all he owned to a collective farm. He was arrested just for complaining that there was no forage for his horses. He was sent into exile, from where he and his family never came back.

Confiscation of grain and beet from farmers in Odesa Region, Ukraine, 1932

In 1932 an ideological purge began in the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. One of the resolutions of the Communist Party fraction of the Academy said: "…Entire opportunism and rotten liberalism in the amnesty of the overtly bourgeois scientists in the Academy, both great-power [Russian chauvinistic] and Ukrainian national-fascistic including Kaschenko, Charlemagne, Schmalhausen, Beling and others…"

Charlemagne, a senior colleague of Paramonov, made a decision of public repent after it was recommended that he start from an admission of guilt (because in 1918 Charlemagne wrote in one of his early papers that a Bolshevik soldier destroyed a nature reserve), and then to show his achievements in nature conservation.

At that time, the attitude of the Communist Party Organization at the Ukrainian Academy was comparatively soft: all they needed was repentance in order to send a successful report to Moscow. (Later, as requirements were becoming more cannibalistic, they acted also much more rigorously.)
As Charlemagne recalled in his memoirs that his speech became a triumph and in fact a defense of his degree. Soon after that the Academy gave him a Honoris Causa degree.

Charlemagne wrote in his paper dedicated to the 15th anniversary of the "Great October Socialist Revolution" summarizing the successive work of the Museum in 1932:

> "*Our works are mostly of empirical kind. There is too much synthetic work. Faunistic work is barely connected to the tasks of socialistic building, and application of Marxist-Leninist methodology has not been worked out enough. In the next five years we must correct our mistakes. We must direct our work to the complete territorial study of the fauna, first of all, of the groups that make economical importance. Such a work has been started by the botanists together with soil scientists (the five-year plan of agro-inventory). Wide masses of workers and collective farmers must be also involved. Methodological principles of faunistic work must be elaborated under the direction of the Society of Marxist Biologists. We must enhance the work of the Zoological Museum of the Zoo-Biological Institute of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, which has proven its viability by the uninterrupted work during 13 years. The great success in research, which is the result of the October Revolution, must inspire faunistic researchers in the next Five-Years*. "

As you can see, it was a brilliant example of the just-born Newspeak. The Institute survived the first wave purge, but the atmosphere of total control and surveillance was becoming heavy and abominable. Furthermore, faked self-criticism and accusations of sabotage, which at first lead to at most jail or exile, served a sound base for Stalin's theory of strengthening the class fight, which in a few years became a direction for the massacres of the Big Terror.

In the Winter of 1932, Aleksandr Shelkovnikov, who travelled with Paramonov twice through all Armenia, was seized. At that time, he headed the Botanic Garden in Erevan, which he established and created. He was arrested as an "advocate of erroneous agrarian theories"; he was incriminated as a "saboteur". After a year in a jail in Tbilisi, he was released, but one month later died of heart attack.

After receiving the news of Shelkovnikov from Erevan, Paramonov took some vacation time and went to Armenia for a third time, this time to give a tribute to the memory of his friend and colleague. He traveled several interesting places that Shelkovnikov told him about and that they expected to visit on earlier trips, but had never reached. The Spring of 1933 was very late, cold and rainy, so the vegetation in Araxes valley was still green and flowering.

In the end of June and beginning of July 1933 Paramonov visited Mount Dagná near Arazdayan station, with a moderately small sandy desert 15 km to the west from the railway station, which he named in his paper (Paramonov, 1933) "Shelkovnikov's Sands". Paramonov found numerous insects there and of them some bee flies, not only similar to those occurring in the Qaraqum sands eastern of the Caspian Sea, but also species that were believed to occur only in that Middle-Asian desert, including *Dischistus turkmenicus* Paramonov. Along with flies, Paramonov collected fabulously mottled-winged ant lions

of the genus *Palpares* and *Nemoptera*, the lace-winged insect with narrow, banded hindwings and black-and-white patterned forewings. In mid-August back in Kyiv, he published a manuscript of the trip. Now, papers had to be published only in Russian or Ukrainian, and not in the "bourgeois" languages. Luckily, one or two pages of German summaries were still allowed, as the international importance of science was recognized.

Every year Paramonov edited two or three issues of *Travaux du Musée Zoologique* and *Journal du Cycle Bio-Zoologique*. He was one of the most experienced and well-educated scientists at the Institute, especially in everything that concerned taxonomy of animals and insects in particular. However, he had to write papers of presumed importance, such as about maggots cleaning purulent wounds from dead remnants, living in petroleum pools, or in horse stomachs, or of bees dwelling in electric power insulators, thus constantly emphasizing the practical importance of insects. He did not want to jeopardise the career of Karavayev: the old man needed to show the practical output of the Museum for the national economy. Hard working gives some anesthesia, but it barely protects one from the fear that *they* will come for you tonight.

In 1933 Paramonov visited Leningrad and published notes based on a study of bee flies of the genus *Antonia* and *Toxophora* based on Portschinsky's collection, material collected in Armenia and Turkmenistan, or received from foreign collections. In addition, Paramonov studied Swedish collections, including the specimens collected by Sven Hedin, David Hummel and others during their 1927–1930 expeditions to China. The second part of this review (Paramonov 1934) was almost entirely based on material from the Far East Russia and Middle Asia compared to Chinese material.

In the Fall of 1934 Karavayev stepped down from the position of head of the Museum and Charlemagne replaced him. Paramonov worked hard on the revisions of bee flies and started to write a manuscript for the "Fauna of the USSR" volume. In that year Paramonov published two theoretical papers aiming to show the tasks of zoosystematic studies and its importance for biology as a whole — which are topical even today. His summarizing of Tonnoir's (1927) and Bezzi's (1928) data on the South Pacific island dipterofauna with a focus on speciation and zoogeography, showed his great erudition and contemporary views on evolution and taxonomy.

In December 1934 Sergei Kirov, Stalin's former challenger in the election for General Secretary of Communist Party and Head of Leningrad Communist Party Organization, was shot in his office. It was officially declared to be organized by Trotsky's adherents. In the last days of December, fourteen people accused as members of "counterrevolution terroristic group" were shot. It was the beginning of Great Terror, which lead to execution of 40–66 million people; about two million members of the Communist Party were arrested and shot just in 1935–1937. Any small bit of information against a person could be a reason to arrest. Many of the zoologists from Leningrad were sent to inner exile, among them Nikolai Tanasijtshuk, Ivan Filipjev and Nikolai Troitsky; the latter two were executed in 1938. Compared to the other institutions in the USSR, the Institute of Biology and Zoology in Kyiv survived the Big Terror relatively safely.

All of June 1935 Sergei Paramonov spent with the expedition of the Academy of Sciences in the steppe nature reserves in the South East of Ukraine near the Sea of Azov: the "Khomutivskiy Steppe", "Stone Barrows" and "Bilosarayska Spit". The Ukrainian steppes had been already almost entirely and irreversibly tilled for agriculture, and the last reminders of steppe vegetation were constantly endangered. Any resistance against plowing more was considered sabotage, but the Academy fought for its conservation.

This year collecting was poor due to the weather of preceding years, but he managed to bring many previously unknown species of bee flies and hover flies from the South-Western Ukraine and from Armenia and Middle Asia.

In 1936 Paramonov published a preliminary review of all the hitherto known Ukrainian amber inclusions, including in it descriptions of two species of fossil rhagionid flies. With this paper, he became a founder of Ukrainian palaeoentomology.

The year 1936 saw the beginning of fast career rise of Trokhym Lysenko, a populist, arrogant and ignorant, who in the next 15 years devastated Soviet genetics and biotechnology, stymieing its progress for the next half-century. Some renowned scientists from Russia were invited by Ivan Schmalhausen, the Director of the Institute of Biology and Zoology in Kyiv, to reinforce Ukrainian biology. A prominent geneticist Sergei Gershenson moved to Kyiv in 1937. In 1938, Aleksandr Lyubischev was invited to head the Section of Insect Ecology after its previous head, Prof. Aleksandr G. Lebedev, died in the late Autumn 1936 due to an accident.

As Sergei Gershenson recalled[1] in 1937, Sergei Paramonov had public debates with Lyubischev and Eugene Smirnov about the concepts of systematics. This continued an early argument begun in 1930, when Lyubischev attended the IV Meeting of Zoologists in Kyiv, when he represented his position, a strictly logical, and rationalistic one, based on orthodox typology and fixation on one key parameter, focused on the so-called "Aristotle's paradox" where the logical system contradicts natural connections; thus, he insisted that any "natural system" is not rational. Being a practical and intuitive entomologist with significant experience, Paramonov defended the position of phylogenetic systematics with its congruence of phylogenetic relationships and classification as the only existing criterion, even if it often contradicted common systems based on similarities. He predicted that increasing number of characters (anatomical, physiological, and chemical) included into a classification will lead systematists to form reliable classifications while permanently breaking old schemes and patterns (Paramonov 1937). As opposed to his adversaries, Paramonov had the experience of solutions of taxonomic and nomenclatural cases behind him, which were based on vast comparative morphological material. His papers on general problems of systematics summarized the lectures he had given at Kyiv University in those years.

Aleksandr Lyubischev, 1930s

Eugene Smirnov, 1950s

[1] Golubovskiy, M.D. (1993) Russian biologists in Australia. Part II. S. Ya. Paramonov. *Priroda,* (4): 92–98. (In Russian)

In the Summer of 1937 a paper containing Paramonov's notes made in 1928 while studying the type specimens of bee flies deposited in the Zoological Museum of Berlin University was published in the *Mitteilungen aus dem Zoologische Museum in Berlin*. It is an important paper from the point of precise identification of name-bearing specimens, which he would refer to while preparing a new monograph of the Palaearctic Bombyliidae.

Yakiv Paramonov, 1890s [PA]

His manuscript of the monograph "Bombyliidae, subfamily Bombyliinae" for the series "Fauna of the USSR" was finalized and submitted to the publisher in Leningrad the Fall of 1937. But there was an unfortunate delay. The series' editor, Paramonov's colleague and friend Alexander Stackelberg was arrested in Leningrad in July 1938 and sent to jail to await his execution. The only thing that has saved his life was a letter "to the very top", which informed the authorities that his family had given a shelter to an illegal terrorist named Joseph Stalin in 1905. Stackelberg was released in January 1940 without a trial. Paramonov's monograph was printed shortly after that.

In July 1937 Stalin gave out the order of the People's Commissariat of Domestic Affairs "On the operations for repressions of the former kulaks, criminals and other anti-soviet elements". It said "…The organs of state security have a task to crash this gang of anti-Soviet elements in the most ruthless way, to protect working Soviet people from their counter-revolutionary plotting and, finally, once and forever, finish with their sordid undermining work against the bases of the Soviet State… All these anti-Soviet elements are shown to be main initiators of various anti-Soviet and subversive acts both in collective farms, transport and industry". Quick guilty verdicts for the thousands of cases were given out by so-called "troikas", which consisted of the head of local state Body of Domestic Affairs, the prosecutor, and the local head of Communist Party. It was planned to prosecute 268,950 persons, of those 75,950 were to be shot. As excuses for arrests of many thousands of people, "anti-Soviet groups", "Trotskyists' blocks", and "terrorist organizations" were being fabricated everywhere, and just any information from an informer became the basis for arrest. After torture, the convicted person signed a "confession of being a member of a terroristic organization", and then they were either shot or imprisoned in camps for 10 or 20 years. Many of them died in those camps.

On February 5, 1938 Yakiv Yukhymovych Paramonov, father of Sergei and Oleksiy Paramonov, was arrested in Ananyiv. He was alleged to be "the organizer of a counter-revolutionary insurgent organization, which aimed the overthrow of the Soviet Government in Ukraine and tearing it away from the USSR, committing counter-revolutionary sabotage in the forestry, directed to the undermining of power of the Soviets, intentionally reducing production of the forestry, put obstacles in the way of donation of forests to collective farms, slowing down planting forest shelter belts and reducing planting stock, fulfilling the governmental plans only to 50%."

This was the sixth arrest in his life. He was arrested in 1893 by Tsarist's police for participation in students unrest; in 1918 by Romanian police for suspicion in support to Bolsheviks; in 1920 by Bolshevik's Extraordinary Commission as a counter-revolutionary; in 1927 by the Soviets for preventing a reporter from publishing false information about "sabotage"; and in 1932 for the "concealment of the currency" (the Soviet citizens had no rights to possess golden coins or foreign hard currency — it was

a crime that could be punished by the death penalty). Yakiv Paramonov used to be lucky; but this time he was condemned for the extreme penalty and shot on October 10, 1938 in Odessa.[1]

Olga Paramonova left her house and moved to Kyiv, where nobody knew that she was the wife of a "people's enemy". She lived in one room, together with Sergei, until 1943.

Olga Paramonova and Natalia Kazanovska, Kyiv, 1939 [PA]

Repression also touched Paramonov's colleagues in the Academy. In the end of 1937, professor Dmitri Beling, director of the Dnipro Biological Station was arrested in Kyiv. He was interrogated for information about ex-Minister of Education, Volodymyr Zatonsky. Beling gave evidence that he, Zatonsky, and the late Victor Kazanovsky were members of the Masonic lodge "Ukrainian Dawn". Beling was released in 1938 and was allowed to keep his position at the Academy. Sergiy Yefremov, ex-Vice-President of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, was arrested in 1929, sentenced to a 10-year imprisonment, and was shot in 1939 in accordance to the "Order of 1937".

Compared to that, "the signals" on Sergei Paramonov himself seemed to be less dangerous. An unknown informer, apparently the Staff Manager of the Institute, defined him for the People's Commissariat of Domestic Affairs as "a person, who sometimes participates in the social life of the Institute, but very often takes up retrograde and harmful moods. Often forms alliances with persons, who have hostile attitudes. Often delays work. Has formal attitude to his work. " In his memoirs, Paramonov wrote that apparently he had not been arrested at the time because of being away for long collecting trips.

In November 1938 Paramonov attended the meeting of the All-Union Entomological Society in Leningrad and gave a talk entitled "An Experience of Constructing of Lower Taxonomic Units." A paper based on this talk, was published in 1940 in *Sovetskaya Botanika*. Other papers on general taxonomy that he prepared were the Russian version of his Ukrainian paper of 1937 "Should the System be Phylogenetic" and "Modern zoological systematics, and its theoretical and practical problems", in which Paramonov gave an analysis of the ways for effective descriptions of biodiversity and of taxonomy as a methodology of systematics. The latter paper was published in the *Zoologicheskiy Zhurnal* in 1939 and represented Paramonov as a highly professional taxonomist of the highest fidelity. His papers now look freshly written, even after 80 years, as neither the tasks, nor the best approaches for their solution have been changed since.

At the very beginning of 1939, Paramonov published the first review of fossil bombyliid genera of the world, which contains a list of all fossil and extant world genera with their type species in the same format as and updating what Mario Bezzi had done in his 1924 "Bombyliidae of the Ethiopian Region", and then gives a summary of the bee fly fossils that had been described.

[1] By the Opinion Letter of August 22, 1989, Yakiv Paramonov was considered to fall within the score of the law on the restoration of rights of the 1930-1950s repression victims.

In the Fall of 1938, the ex-head of the Museum and Paramonov's senior colleague and teacher, Volodymyr Karavayev, just after finalizing two reviews of new paleoanthropological findings (jointly with S. Paramonov) fell ill with pancreatic cancer; he later died on January 7, 1939.

Volodymir Karavaev at his desk, 1930s

In the Spring of 1939 Paramonov translated from Russian into Ukrainian a book about gadflies (Gasterophilidae). It had been written in 1936 and sent to Leningrad. Aleksandr Stackelberg had edited almost all the manuscript before his arrest.

After his translation work was done, Paramonov took a vacation from mid-June to the end of July 1939 traveling to South Eastern Kazakhstan: Almaty (Alma-Ata) and Talgar, to the mountains of the Trans-Ili Alatau Ridge of Tien Shan. Green spruce forests, snow covered sharp summits, clear water of springs you can drink while kneeling, cold air, and a sunshine that burns your skin through the shirt, the smell of wild garlic and fresh thunderstorms are so different from the Crimean, Armenian or Turkmenian mountains. These mountains are dangerous, but not because of the snakes: landslides and torrents sweep away whole towns. Furthermore, you can meet bears on almost every trail.

Talgar Valley, Kazakhstan

In August 1939, the Soviets and Germany signed a treaty with a secret protocol, called the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, in which Eastern Europe was divided between the two empires. Within a week, World War II had begun. Germany began aggression against Poland, and the Soviet Union took the Baltic countries, Bessarabia, Bukovina, Western Ukraine and Belorussia. An attempt by the Soviets to seize Finland was stopped by a powerful resistance of the Finnish army. The people of Western Ukraine, which had been occupied by Poland since 1921, met the Red Army gladly, considering them liberators. But within a few months, Soviets began arrests of Polish communists and Ukrainian freedom fighters.

On January 9, 1940 Sergei Paramonov defended his Doctor of Science degree thesis "Bombyliidae of the Palaearctic Region" based on his numerous monographs and articles, including the manuscript of the book in the "Fauna of the USSR" series; on December 21, 1940, his degree had been approved in Moscow by the Highest Attestation Commission, and in the beginning of 1941 — he had his professorial title. As Professor Charlemagne retired from the position he held in 1934–1940, Paramonov was appointed to the position of the Head of the Zoological Museum of Ukrainian Academy of Sciences.

Brest, September 22, 1939. The joint parade of the Red Army and Wehrmacht

The Winter War: Soviet tanks in Finland, January 1940

In 1941 the Soviets supplied Germany with steel, coal, and grain, helping it in the war against Great Britain and preparing for seizing Europe to extend "communist revolutions" there as the war weakened them. Although being prepared for invasion and attack, better armed and more numerous than the Wehrmacht, the Soviet army made the mistake of having no defence lines in the rear and was almost completely crushed by the Germans in the Summer of 1941.

The short lived Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact had ended.

3. Scylla

"...ἅμα d' ἠλίῳ ἀνιόντι
ᾔλθον ἐπι Σκύλλης σκόπελον, δεινήν τε Χάρυβδιν."
["*…at the rising of the sun*
I came to the cliff of Scylla and to dread Charybdis." —
Homer. The Odyssey. 12: 429–430.]

As Paramonov wrote in his memoirs, at the end of May 1941 he took a vacation and went to a spa in the Northern Caucasus to treat his arthritic knee. On June 23, he received an urgent telegram: "Go back immediately". It was impossible to buy train tickets, so he made his way back by local trains, horse-drawn carts or on foot, through Adler, Poltava, and Lubny to Kyiv. His mother was at home. A cabinet with the type specimens of the species described by Paramonov had been taken with the other valuable equipment of the Academy and put onto two boats traveling south; one of the boats was bombed by Germans and sunk. To the very end of his life Paramonov was sure that this collection was entirely lost. However, 95% of the Diptera collection was left in Kyiv, as well as most of the Museum exposition, and the Lepidoptera collections at the University Museum and the collections of the Agricultural Faculty of the Polytechnic Institute. Only a few academics with their families were evacuated. The others had to leave Kyiv by their own costs, but all the bank accounts were blocked, and people could not obtain money to buy train tickets or food.

Due to the swift thrust of the Wehrmacht, in July Germans took Smolensk, and by mid-August 1941 Kyiv was surrounded on three sides.

In the beginning of September the Red Army left Chernihiv, Oster, and Cherkassy. On September 18 terrible explosions were heard in Kyiv. When retreating, the Red Army blew up the Central Train Terminal, bread factories, warehouses, and the water pumping plant. Everything was burning. People were looting goods, trains, and shops. The next day troops left Kyiv by crossing the Dnipro River to the Left Bank, and blasted all the bridges behind.

A few days before retreating, the corps of engineers had mined basement floors of buildings in and around the downtown Kyiv area with explosives and radio-activated landmines. Bottles with fuel were stored in attics; they were said to be "Molotov cocktails" against tanks, but they were actually prepared for another purpose. The cellars of the Historical Museum, Academy of Sciences (in which the

German soldiers clear mines from the cellars of the Lenin Museum in Kyiv

Zoological Museum was located) and Opera has also been mined. By the evening of September 19, Wehrmacht troops entered Kyiv. As Paramonov recalled, their columns came from the west and were heavily laden with arms while passing by his house on Tarasivska street. In the very first days after the retreat, the Academy, the Opera House and Museums were cleared of mines. Paramonov insisted that the captive Soviet mine layers inform the Germans and they showed them the places; however, Evdokia G. Reshetnik, who left many important memoirs about Paramonov, wrote that the person who informed them and showed the location of the mines was Paramonov himself, who spoke fluent German and knew the places very well as the Director of the Zoological Museum. He saved these spectacular buildings and the collections from senseless destruction. But not all of them were saved.

On September 24, 1941 at 4 p.m. horrible explosions rocked Khreschatik, the central avenue of Kyiv. Charlemagne and Paramonov observed a big mushroom cloud from the crossroad at the Academy and Opera House. New explosions one after another and a terrible fire entirely destroyed the central street of the city and the streets nearby, including the central post office, the city house, the conservatory with the big organ and two hundred pianos, a school, and over one hundred shops. The Russians had left Kyiv to the Germans in 1941 in the same way they left Moscow to Napoleon in 1812.

Khreschatyk, the main street of Kyiv before the war, 1940

First explosions on Khreschatyk, 24.09.1941

After the communist's Big Terror, many people in Ukraine were looking forward to the Germans, as they remembered the good times of the German protectorate in 1918 and considered them liberators, especially in Western Ukraine. Even the Jews, who had not yet heard about the Holocaust behind the "iron curtain", believed that they would be sent to Palestine while 33,771 of them were being led to their massacre at Babi Yar on September 30. Some 100,000–150,000 people were killed at Babi Yar


Fire on Khreschatyk, 24-25.09.1941

during the German occupation. Germans after the war would answer to those horrific acts and also for the many adult men were shot on the streets by the Schutzstaffel. All the attempts to establish at least a partly Ukrainian government were suppressed. The Reichskomissariat Ukraine was considered to be no more than an agricultural adjunct of Germany.

On streets of Kyiv, September-October1941

Babi Yar, Kyiv, Autumn 1941

By the end of 1941 the food stored in the city had been totally consumed. Famine struck whole city. Germans disallowed peasants from selling food in Kyiv, and those who tried to get in from beyond the main roads were shot. They intended to force people to go to work in Germany. Paramonov wrote that he and his family starved terribly:

> "*…My neck had gotten thin and loosely hangs in every collar and my head was dangling of starvation. Once we sat with mom at the table; she looked at my neck and cried… Once I was lucky to obtain 7 kilos of potatoes; it was frozen, small, and we ate it not peeling. I was carrying it in a backpack; I was so weak I had to stop every 50–70 m with dizziness and stars in my eyes… I came home and fell. Mom took the backpack from me while I lied on the floor.*"

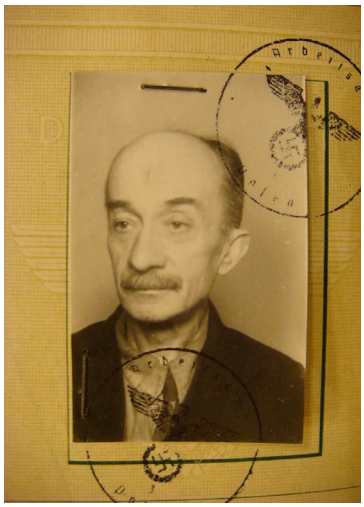
> "*Germans did not do anything for us: we were just "Untermensch" for them. Once I met a German, who found out that I was selling my "Leica" camera with all the equipment. He was an SS-man, i. e., belonged to the worst among the worst Nazis. He calculated its price in the occupation Deutschmarks and paid me two loafs of bread, 4 pounds of meat, two kilos of potatoes, some cakes and sugar. I could not reject the offer. He took from me a notice of receipt to prove then that he had not robbed me. But actually he did rob me. At least we celebrated Christmas having a little food. What could the new 1942 bring for us? — Nothing. If the Bolsheviks win, we'd have abject poverty, exploitation and suppression of our rights; if the Nazis — perhaps something even worse. We had to live here and now!*"

Most scientists were saved from the death of hunger only by the "Agricultural Research Central Service" established upon the ruins of the Institutes of Zoology and Biology, Hydrobiology (the former Dnipro Biological Station) and the Museum. Germans paid the scientists with a little food: potatoes, tiny piece of meat and by pig or beef blood brought from the slaughterhouse in barrels.

The entomological service was headed by Karl Schedl (1898–1979), a renowned specialist in the ecology and systematics of the scolytid beetles, former professor at the Forestry College in Eberswalde. Charlemagne, who had been determined to be a "Volksdeutsche" (ethnic German). He became the head of Zoological Museum, as a part of the Plant Protection Service.

Karl Schedl, 1956

During the German occupation many entomologists worked at the Plant Protection Station: Eugene Savchenko, Mykola Telenga, Vladimir Dirsch, Oleksandr Kryshtal, Natalia Globova, and Lidia Puchkova; Sergei's brother Oleksiy Paramonov worked as a forest entomologist with Schedl. German officers who worked in the administration of this scientific centre were interested in their existence: it was a good excuse for most of them to stay far away from the battle front.



Mykola Charlemagne, 1942

Oleksandr Ogloblin, 1940s

In August and September 1941, more than 650,000 Soviet soldiers and officers were captured near Kyiv. They were kept under terrible conditions in the Darnytsya and Syrets concentration camps in Kyiv, and in the yard of the ruined St Michael Monastery. As the Soviet Union had not signed the international agreement about prisoners of war, Germans acted on them with extremely brutality: they did not feed them, and shot the wounded

Evdokia Reshetnik, 1940s

and typhus patients. Many of them were shot directly in the streets where Germans were transporting recently captured soldiers. In the Darnytsya camp alone, 130,000 prisoners of war died.

Citizens of Kyiv worried about the soldiers, trying to save them or at least to help them. On October 5, 1941, the head of Kyiv Town Council, Oleksandr Oglobin (1899–1992), signed a decree about establishing a "Red Cross" organization to collect food, clothes, shoes, and medicine, and also for liberation at least those of prisoners who lived or had relatives in Kyiv. The Red Cross organization of the Museum was headed by Evdokia G. Reshetnik (1903–1996), the custodian of vertebrates.

Later, Reshetnik and some other employees of the museum, who were also informers for the partisans, supplied them with medicine, gauze and cotton wool, which had coincidentally disappeared from the museum storeroom.

Sergei Paramonov, who was a brilliant lecturer, accompanied German officers at the Museum exposition and gave Russian language lessons and translated scientific papers on the biology of reptiles for two Wehrmacht officers. As Paramonov wrote, once he had received a proposition to make a lecture on philosophy before Alfred Rosenberg's[1] officers to explain the ideology of Marxist "dialectic materialism"; despite the fact that the lecture was based solely on the only available source, Stalin's "Short Course of the History of Communist Party", the lecture was a success! Paramonov was thereafter invited to have a dinner with the generals. "*They were fat, pink, freshly trimmed; and I was exhausted, ragged, thin as a rail, downtrodden, morally oppressed. The dinner was luxurious, a snow-white table and silver knives, but I could not eat: I was afraid that my hungry stomach would send all the fats back up in front of all these generals*. "

During this time of occupation, Paramonov, who was fluent in German, easily communicated with German visitors of the Museum and tried to show the importance of its collection. He recalled:

> "*… I have seen all these Brauchitsches, Keitels [generals of the Wehrmacht], except perhaps Hitler himself. From the very first days of occupation there was the desire of moving the collections to Germany… I had to explain to them all that the insect collections would be destroyed by such a moving... One of them told to another: "We need some 18 baggage cars to move it". I said to the senior: "Excuse me, it is impossible. Please have a look, what has happened to a private collection we tried to move just inside the city, " — and I opened a cabinet, which contained some junk stuff, in specimens badly destroyed by the falling of a cabinet down the stairs. Wings, legs, heads, pins, labels in a total disorder. 'Schrecklich [terrible], ' — said the senior of the generals. 'Unmöglich [impossible], ' — added another. — 'Unmöglich, — said I forgetting of subordination. — Let us keep it here: we have plenty of special dry and safe rooms here, proper care, and, in addition, many military men visit the exposition, including you, gentlemen, so the Museum works!' They laughed, but the next day I was informed that they decided not to move the Museum. […] Germans deprived the Museum of maps, gold, platinum and other valuables but left most of the collection. Once […] I met our German [administrator] at the foyer on the first floor, with a tall*

[1] Alfred Ernst Rosenberg (1893–1946) — a German theorist and an influential ideologue of the Nazi Party; held several important posts in the Nazi government. Following the invasion of the USSR, Rosenberg was appointed head of the Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories. During the war, Rosenberg was in favour of collaboration with the East Slavs against Bolshevism and offered them national independence unlike other Nazis such as Hitler and Himmler who dismissed such ideas. He was one of the few in the Nazi hierarchy who advocated a policy designed to encourage anti-Communist opinion among the population of the occupied territories. His interest here was mainly in the non-Russian areas such as Ukraine and the Baltic States; however, supporters of the Russian Liberation Army were somewhat able to win him over. He was captured by Allied troops at the end of the war, tried at Nuremberg, sentenced to death and executed with other condemned co-defendants at Nuremberg. (WIKIPEDIA)

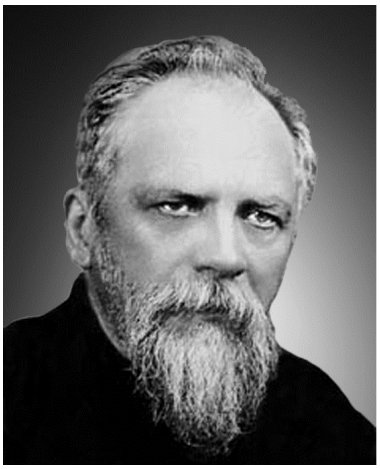
German officer, whose name was Martin Schellenberg. I was asked to show him the Museum. We were talking a lot. Schellenberg was a very cultured person. We found out that he knows many of my German colleagues, and one of them even very closely. I told him that I worked at the Berlin Museum for several months and am a member of German Entomological Society, etc. We were talking for two hours or so… He said: '— What a pity that I must go to the train station and back to Berlin. See me on the train, please. '

I had to go home, but for the first time I could freely talk with a man from the other world and from my circle. We were walking. He asked me about life under the Soviets, asked about attitude of Ukrainians to the Germans. I told him about the terrible attitude to the captives, about the Jewish tragedy…

He takes my hand and tells me: 'Please, do not remind me of this, I am still shocked when recall it!' I also wanted to ask him the most important question. I began telling him about the boundless violation of human rights in the Soviets, about death penalties of absolutely guiltless people, who were not the enemies of the Soviets at all. I was telling him about that constant fear at night, when every knocking at the door could mean that they came for you, who worked hard for the Soviet science. I was telling him that we were sick of this blood, blood, blood, hate, reports to police, distrust, fawning, that we were full of this. We were expecting that Germans will bring at least an elementary justice. He took my button with two fingers and said: 'Just between us, two intellectuals: Germany is not better!' I understood him. Truth, aspiration for truth connects people by the strongest power in the world!"[1]

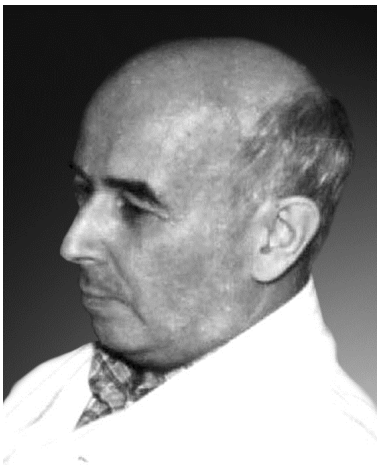
Paramonov had some friends among German officers: of them, Hubertus Schneider, was a zoologist, who always brought him some bread and meat, stolen from the officer's mess. As Paramonov wrote, Schneider passed along all the news and rumours he knew about the situation and problems on the battlefront, in the Nazi party and army, very different from the official news.

When Evdokia Reshsetnik was arrested by the Gestapo as suspected of being a member of communist party in the Winter of 1941/42 she recalled that Paramonov and Charlemagne managed to liberate her and some other members of the "Red Cross" using their contacts among German officers. In the Fall and Winter of 1942 Karl Schedl sent Reshsetnik to Kaharlyk (80 km south of Kyiv) to hunt ground squirrels, officially as field monitoring of pest rodents, but actually as fur for Schedl's wife winter coat. This way, Schedl saved her and Reshetnik's son, Emil, who was nearly the same age as Schedl's four children.



Volodymyr Artobolevsky, 1930s

Later, as Evgeny Savchenko recalled, Germans (apparently by the direction of Schedl) organized field inspections for pest insects



Evgeny Savchenko, 1971

[1] Paramoniv, S. 1958. What Nazis have done to science and scientists in Ukraine (scientist's memoires). *Vira i Kultura [Religion and Culture (Toronto)]* 7(67) 8−11. (in Ukrainian).

and rodents. Entomologists had collected the results of two-years of monitoring, which were used after 1946 for long-term forecasts by the Institute for Plant Protection of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences.

In July 1943 the German administration transferred the Museum of the Academy from the Plant Protection Institute to within the jurisdiction of the Zoological Museum of Kyiv University, with Prof. Volodymyr M. Artobolevsky (1878–1952) as its head.

A member of the Rosenberg's group wrote in his report[1]: "The Zoological Institute of the Academy of Sciences in Kyiv has existed for ca. 20 years and has accumulated important collections during this time. After the Russians retreated, this museum was transferred to the Institute of Plant Protection and Pest Control. It is clear that such an institute also must have own collection, which corresponds to its tasks and purposes at its disposal. Everything outside of these scopes is an unnecessary burden."

In a short time after that, the Zoo and collections of the Museum were declared to be war trophies according to Rosenberg's order. After the battle at Kursk, the Germans retreated almost to the Dnipro and began preparations for evacuation.

At first, people followed the offensive of the Soviet army in the newspapers, then at night the fires became visible on the horizon, and finally they heard the cannonade.
On September 22, 1943 the German administration gave the order to the staff of the Plant Protection Institute to pack up everything and evacuate to Vinnytsya. The Zoo and Museum collections were sent by trains directly to Germany. The museum pieces, collections, microscopes, microtomes, glass, typewriters, etc., were mostly transferred to the Institut für Pflanzenkrankheiten und tierische Schädlinge, Posen (5,000 mammal skins, 10,000 bird skins, 100,000 insects) and to the Berlin Museum für Zoologie — uncounted and unpinned insects on cotton layers.

The central part of Kyiv was declared a zone of combat operations. The people who lived there had to leave their houses and move to the outskirts. Others were evacuated as "Auslanders" [foreign refugees]. Many people, especially engineers, who worked at plants, scientists and specialists, who worked in the institutes and administrations, preferred not to wait for the Red Army to come: all they could expect were 10–12 years of camps in Siberia. Custodians had to go with the Museum collections; they had only 24 hours to make preparations. On September 23, 1943, L. Shelyuzhko, N. Pavlitskaya, N. Obraztsov, S. Paramonov, and M. Charlemagne with his wife boarded a train and left Kyiv heading to the west.

Most of the collections were accommodated in Benttschen-Branddorf near Posen, and the curators worked there until December 1944. Unfortunately, Paramonov left no memoirs about this part of his Odyssey. The only thing we know from the memoirs of Charlemagne is that the Institut für Pflanzenkrankheiten und tierische Schädlinge in Posen was partly ruined by American bombing; most of the equipment, zoological and, partly, entomological collections were destroyed, but luckily, not the Diptera collection, which was later moved to Berlin and incorporated into the Syrphidae, Asilidae, and Bombyliidae collections at the Museum für Naturkunde Berlin (formerly Zoologische Museum der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin), where it still exists today. It has not been returned to Kyiv after World War II.

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[1] Історія Національної академії наук України. 1941–1945. Частина 1. Документи і матеріали. НАН України, Київ [History of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. 1941–1945. Part 1. Documents and materials. NAS of Ukraine Publishers. Kyiv], 2007: 564–566.

By 1945, the Soviet Army had driven the Germans out and launched the Vistula-Oder Offensive on 12 January 1945, rapidly advancing toward Posen, which was declared a Festung (stronghold), where the garrison was ordered to mount last-ditch stands.

The former staff of the Museum had a so-called "Freudenpass" for foreigners, so they could leave Posen and move to the west, and most of them, including Paramonov, agreed to the proposition. Charlemagne and his wife were perhaps the only ones who did not move very far at all, only to Kloster-Zinna, 50 km south of Berlin. They stayed in this village until 1946, when it became part of the Soviet Occupation Zone. Then Charlemagne gave himself up to the Soviet administration declaring that he was forced to move to Germany. In addition, he brought with him a file with records of all his colleagues he stayed together with during the occupation...

Paramonov finally reached Münden in the outskirts of Hannover, where there was the forestry faculty (Forstlichen Fakultät), where Karl Schedl was a professor at that time. As Paramonov told to his Australian friend Igor de Ratschewiltz, he was arrested on his way there and could have been shot, but was saved by a professor, who knew him very well. It is not clear if that was Schedl or another colleague. Paramonov mentioned Münden several times in his conversation with friends, CVs, and the comments to his elegiac poem written there in the Spring 1945. An indication that he was imprisoned at a concentration camp near Münden appeared in some previous biographical essays of Paramonov. However, according to the reply from the German Red Cross in 2014, Sergei Paramonov is not recorded anywhere on the lists of the prisoners of concentration camps.

This apparently means that Sergei Paramonov lived there as a free person in a camp for the eastern refugees ("Auslanders") with a "Freudenpass" in Brakenberg near Münden, Hannover, and Göttingen. He also mentioned in another CV that he worked as a collection curator in Hannover. This could explain the fact that he easily reached Paris by June 1945, which would be hardly possible for a former prisoner without a pass.

During the occupation time, Paramonov prepared several manuscripts for publication. Of them, two papers published in the *Zoologisches Anzeiger* in 1943, on the bee flies of the *Exoprosopa iris* group and the tangle-winged fly *Symmictoides gussakovskiji*, were obviously based on his unpublished notes made before 1941. In 1944, while in Posen, Paramonov submitted seven articles to German journals, of which three were short notes based on unpublished data and four — translations of his previously published papers — from Ukrainian and Russian into German. In 1945, when he stayed in Paris, a paper with the key to species of the tangle-winged fly genus *Nemestrinus* was submitted to the Spanish journal *Eos* and published by the end of that year; later, comments on the bombyliid volume of "Die Fliegen der palaearktischen Region" were published in Paris, in the *Encyclopédie entomologique. Serie B. II. Diptera*.

The papers published in 1947 in Spain and Brasil were based either on the analysis of literature or on the material examined during his short stay in London. A few descriptions of new species published that year were based on the specimens examined by Paramonov before 1941 and now deposited in the Kyiv collection. This means that he has brought quite many notes with him from Kyiv, was able to bring them from Posen to Hannover and then to Paris, and that he certainly was a free man in Germany rather than a prisoner.

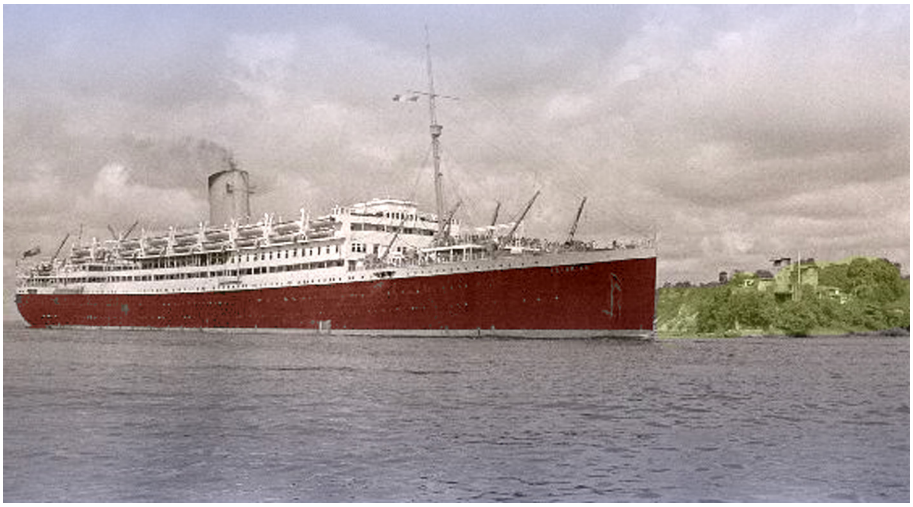
Sergei Paramonov had created the legend that he was a Russian emigrant of "the first wave" (1917–1921) and a "prisoner of concentration camp" and immediately applied for immigration permit to the governments of the United Kingdom and the United States of America. This information given

in his CV was then reproduced by M. Upton (in his book about CSIRO) and by E.F. Riek in Paramonov's obituary. According to the conditions of the Yalta Conference, the former allies were obliged to return all displaced persons to the countries of their citizenship. For Paramonov it could mean death in Stalin's camps or shooting. The occupation armies also could qualify him as a "Nazi's collaborator". Altogether, almost none of the colleagues who left Kyiv in 1943 together with Paramonov, had come "back in the USSR". Dmitry Beling worked in Göttingen and died there in 1949, V. Dirsch and Oleksiy Paramonov worked in London, N. Obraztsov in New York, L. Sheljuzhko in Munich. Charlemagne, who stayed in the Soviet Occupation Zone, was deported to the USSR and released after trial by the KGB, apparently for the valuable information he gave.

Most of the ordinary staff of the Institute of Plant Protection were not imprisoned and continued working in the Institute of Plant Protection of the Ukrainian Academy of Science, Kyiv University or the Institute of Zoology. However, some of them (*e. g.*, Evgeny Savchenko) were not allowed to have students.

Evdokia Reshetnik was arrested as a German collaborator in Kyiv in 1948 and imprisoned until 1953; the fact that she was released by the Gestapo looked too suspicious. In addition, her son Emil, 17 years old, was also arrested and imprisoned as a member of the fabricated "Organization for Liberation of Ukrainian People".

Soon after the war, in 1947, a new series of witch-hunts pervaded Soviet biological institutions. The political campaign against genetics and agricultural science conducted by Lysenko, the president of the Academy of Agricultural Sciences, to suppress his scientific opponents, resulted in 3,000 biologists fired, imprisoned, and executed. The most prominent evolutionary geneticists and morphologists, Sergei Gershenson and Ivan Schmalhausen were among them. Every mention of Theodosius Dobzhansky and his works was prohibited until 1964.



HMT "Asturias", Singapore, 1952

4. Across the Ocean

"*I'm free, I'm sailing in the endless blue.* "
Sergei Lesnoy. In the Indian Ocean
(translation by Valery Korneyev)

There are no documents on the Paris period of Paramonov's life. We still do not know where he lived and whom he met there. At most, we know that he was in touch with Russian immigrants who were living there since the 1920s. Paramonov was looking for the possibility to earn some money from publications in newspapers (which helped him during the German occupation in Kyiv, when he published a few articles about nature and the "Mystery of Atlantis") and went to a newspaper *Russkie novosti* ("Russian News"; 1945–1970) edited by Arsen F. Stupnitsky with an article entitled "'The Song of Igor's Campaign[1]' from a naturalist's point of view". Here, Paramonov retold a paper by Charlemagne[2] referring to the original paper and adding his own comments.

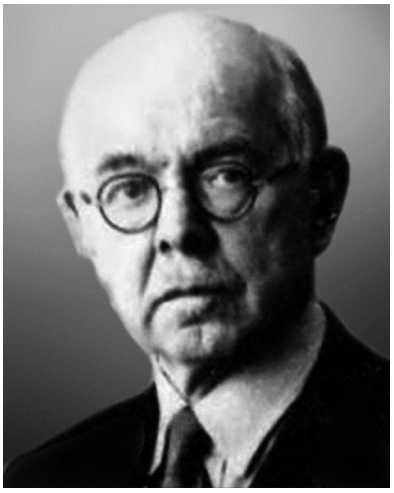
Sergei Paramonov, 1945, Paris [PA]

Paramonov had applied for the "Nansen passport" in Paris, and was looking for a job abroad. Paris was unsafe: many Russian immigrants were collaborating with the Soviets and knew that Paramonov was actually a former citizen of the USSR who must be deported.

In September or October 1945 Paramonov sent two letters to Boris Uvarov[3] and Theodosius Dobzhansky[4], where he described his position in Paris and asked to help him with finding a job. Meanwhile, he was

[1] "The Tale of Igor's Campaign", an anonymous epic poem written in XII ct. in the Old East Slavic language.
[2] Шарлемань, М.В. 1940. Слово о полку Ігореві з погляду природознавства. Вісті Академії наук УРСР [Charlemagne, M. V. 1940. "The Song of Igor's Campaign" from the naturalist's point of view. News of the Academy of Sciences of Ukrainian SSR, N2] (in Ukrainian).
[3] Sir Boris Petrovitch Uvarov (1886–1970) a Russian-British entomologist, head of the Anti-Locust Research Centre, London.
[4] Theodosius Grygorovych Dobzhansky (1900–1975) a prominent Ukrainian-American geneticist and evolutionary biologist, and a central figure in the field of evolutionary biology for his work in shaping the modern synthesis.

writing and submitting several manuscripts on nemestrinid and bombyliid flies, from material of his own collecting and specimens collected by L. Zimin and V. Gussakovsky in Middle Asia, based on records he managed to bring from Kyiv. They were submitted to entomological journals in Madrid and Rio-de-Janeiro, and published in 1945–1949.



Boris P. Uvarov, 1960s

Alexander J. Nicholson, 1950s

On April 30, 1946 Paramonov finally obtained the Nansen Passport in Paris. Boris Uvarov sent a letter to Alexander J. Nicholson (1895–1969), the head of the Entomological Division of CSIRO asking whether they had a vacancy for Paramonov and recommended him. He described Paramonov as a person "…deported to Germany, eventually liberated by the allies and now in Paris, without any means, or prospects…, 52, no family, willing to take suitable post anywhere in the world, actually preferring, after his recent experiences, as far away from Europe as possible. " Nicholson wrote to A.E.V. Richardson, CSIRO's Chief Executive Officer: "…we're desperately in need of some good taxonomic workers… and Professor Paramonov would help considerably in this direction", and Richardson was not convinced. Finally, after an interview with G.B. Gresford of CSIRO Head Office in March 1946, a position of research officer to make taxonomic studies of parasitic Diptera and Hymenoptera was advertised and, since there were no Australian applicants, Paramonov applied in October, and in December 1946, he was approved. The detailed history of correspondence of Uvarov and Nicholson with the authorities in Australia and CSIRO, full of tension but happily ended, has been already described by Murray S. Upton in the chapter entitled "The Paramonov Affair[1]".

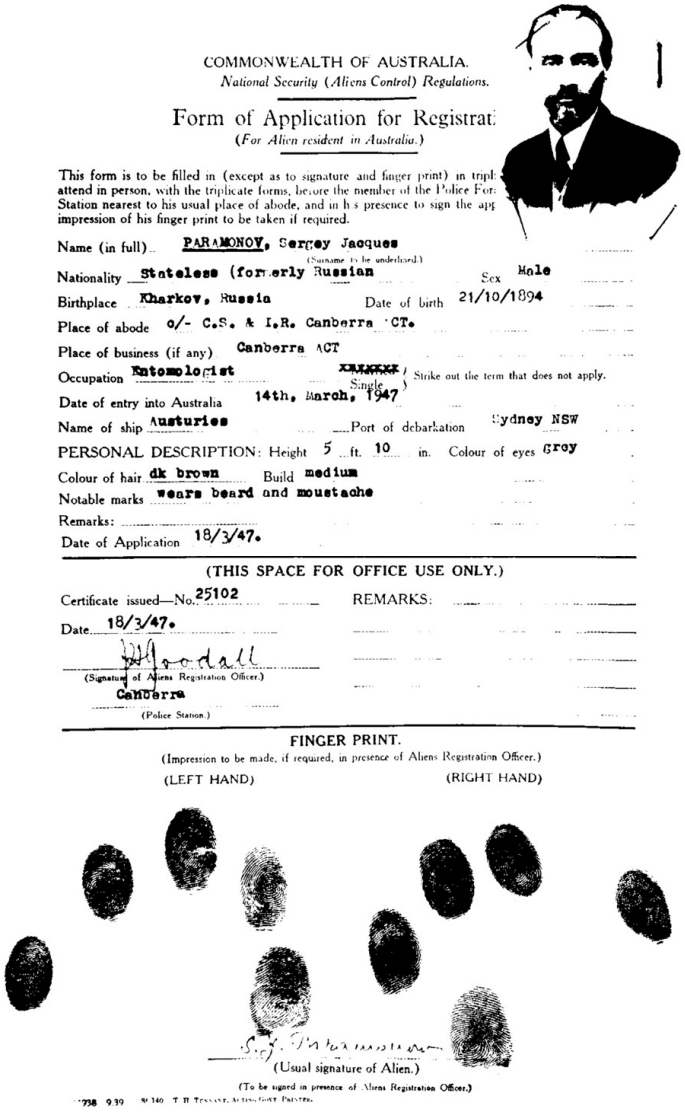
Finally, in the beginning of January 1947, Paramonov officially commenced work for the CSIRO Entomological Division. He worked under its auspices for one month at the British Museum and studied Australian parasitic Diptera until the date of Departure in February 1947. He was sailing on a huge ship called 'Asturias', the biggest motor ship in the world in its heyday, torpedoed in 1943, saved, and refit in Belfast. It would end up a movie star playing the role of 'Titanic' in the 1958 film "A Night to Remember", but was currently serving as a Government Emigrant ship for the for the Australian Migrant Service.

Paramonov lived in a first-class cabin with a plush bed and oak table, and his day consisted of breakfasts, lunches, and dinners, never knowing if it is today or tomorrow, walking along the deck (which was almost as long as the whole building of the Academy) taking in the smoke of rich cigars and the sweet smell of peeled oranges of this first-class atmosphere. With 640£ in his pocket, his manuscripts in his case, with the blue of the sky and the blue of the ocean, the blinding glare of white rollers and billows, looking at the flying fishes skipping above the sea, and seeing steep cliffs of Sokotra on the

[1] Upton, M.S. 1997. "The Paramonov Affair". *In*: A Rich and Diverse Fauna. The history of the Australian National Insect Collection. 1926-1991. CSIRO Publishing, Melbourne: xx + 386 pp.

horizon. It was as though the world had stopped, wishing nothing else, feeling free, perhaps for the first time in his life, feeling completely free from his past.

After all he had endured up to now, it did not matter that there was a storm upcoming in the Australian newspapers, ready for a witch-hunt of the worst kind, full of titles such as "Russian scientist to study flies", "Russian expert to join CSIR", suspecting him to be a Russian spy or possible communist agent. Luckily for him, Paramonov did not read the Australian newspapers: his English was too poor for this. And he was even not allowed to attend a language course to improve it. His scientific papers were to be translated from German into English by a translator paid by CSIRO. It did not matter that he had not gotten the position that Nicholson expected for him. In any case, Paramonov would become an informal leader among his junior colleagues. He taught them Diptera taxonomy, was a brilliant specialist, and an ardent field collector, despite the ban to visit Northern Territories where American missiles were located. He loved his new motherland despite the fact he was a person without citizenship. His naturalization would be delayed until 1961. It did not matter anymore. He was free from his past life.



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.
National Security (Aliens Control) Regulations.

Form of Application for Registrat
(*For Alien resident in Australia.*)

This form is to be filled in (except as to signature and finger print) in triplicate, attend in person, with the triplicate forms, before the member of the Police For Station nearest to his usual place of abode, and in his presence to sign the application impression of his finger print to be taken if required.

Name (in full) PARAMONOV, Sergey Jacques
(Surname to be underlined.)
Nationality Stateless (formerly Russian Sex Male
Birthplace Kharkov, Russia Date of birth 21/10/1894
Place of abode c/- C.S. & I.R. Canberra ACT
Place of business (if any) Canberra ACT
Occupation Entomologist (Single / ~~Married~~) Strike out the term that does not apply.
Date of entry into Australia 14th. March, 1947
Name of ship Austuries Port of debarkation Sydney NSW
PERSONAL DESCRIPTION: Height 5 ft. 10 in. Colour of eyes Grey
Colour of hair dk brown Build medium
Notable marks wears beard and moustache
Remarks:
Date of Application 18/3/47.

(THIS SPACE FOR OFFICE USE ONLY.)

Certificate issued—No. 25102 REMARKS:
Date 18/3/47.
(Signature of Aliens Registration Officer.)
Canberra
(Police Station.)

FINGER PRINT.
(Impression to be made, if required, in presence of Aliens Registration Officer.)
(LEFT HAND) (RIGHT HAND)

(Usual signature of Alien.)
(To be signed in presence of Aliens Registration Officer.)

Alien registration form of S. Paramonov, 1947 [NLA]

Paramonov arrived in Sydney on March 14, 1947. It was early Fall, "limpid crystal", as he wrote later. A Victorian city on the hills, carved balconies of two-storeyed houses, pink mallows in the gardens, unknown shrubs with strange cones, rocky cliffs at sea shores, thin soil, and the seaboard southwards of the city with an amusing name 'Botany Bay', because the first botanists, who collected their plants here, had exclusively new families, new genera, and species. Everything here is earthly and at the same time different from what exists on the Earth.

He noticed the differences in his poems: *white, yellow-crested cockatoos instead of crows, magpies with wonderful vocals, ibises on the streets instead of pigeons, tall termite galleries, inverted crescent moon, cold winds from the South, left-sided driving, black swans, parrots, eating seeds of introduced birches and rabbits destroying lawns, rivers with duckbills instead of fish, coins with His Majesty and kangaroo or merino sheep on obverse and reverse, six-o'clock rule for selling alcohol and a lot of heavily drunk people on Friday evenings, unsalted dishes, and meat with ice-cream or pineapple*.

The evening's white clouds are thin and not too high, and are so similar to the Bessarabian clouds, when the sun illuminates them from below. And these hills, and these pellucid woods, so birchy from a distance, with their creamy white trunks and lace-like shade, but with long lanceolate leaves as in the willow, smelling neither of birch or poplar resin, but of lozenge, salty, like a tear… And every evening, instead of rook flocks, there were fruit bats flying for sweet figs.

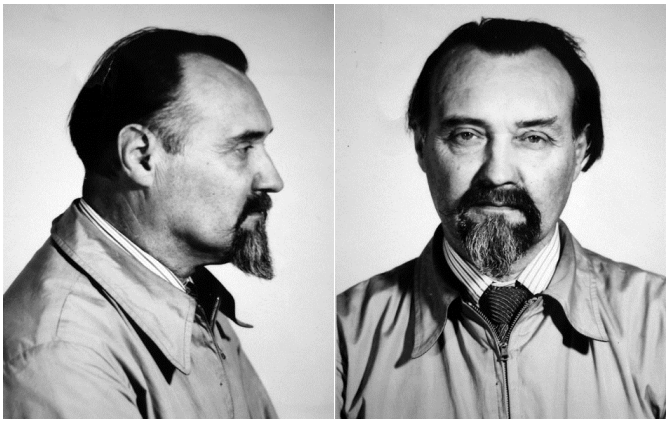
At the time Canberra was a little administrative and university town populated by 15 thousand people. Paramonov settled first in Havelock House on Northbourne Ave. Being an open and friendly person, Paramonov easily found friends in CSIRO, and the very first ones were Edgar Frederick Riek (1920–2016), a hymenopterist, palaeoentomologist, passionate gardener and vintner, and his wife Mary. They had a lot of joint collecting trips in New South Wales, travelling in Riek's car. As Mary Riek recalled, "…the very first thing Para [as friends called him] bought was piano. He often accompanied himself singing romances and songs in unknown languages [obviously Russian and Ukrainian] to his guests. Apparently, some of them he had written himself. He had a nice baritone, and we listened him with pleasure."

From time to time Paramonov and his colleagues and friends who had cars went on collecting trips with net and killing jars. At the insistence of Paramonov, his colleagues at CSIRO, Murray Upton and Ian Common, started careful collecting of Diptera by ultraviolet mercury vapor lamps along with moths, and in particular, the nocturnal flies of the family Pyrgotidae (parasites of adult scarab beetles). As a result of these collecting efforts, the pyrgotids deposited in the ANIC at CSIRO are the world largest collection of that family, several times as large as all the other world collections put together; not only in the number of specimens, but also in the number of species, more than half of which were recognized by Paramonov as new. He was only able to describe less than a half of them, the remainder still await their description and publication.

CSIRO Entomology Section staff, 1959, left to right
(standing): E.F. Riek, S.J. Paramonov, I.F.B. Common, D.R. Ragge, unknown;
(sitting): unknown (Isoptera curator), Z.R. Liepa, and two unknown [PA].

Over the years, as his arthritis aggravated, and walking was painful, he put on weight so, when he moved to the University House in 1954, he tried to compensate for the deficit of physical exertion by swimming, but attending the laboratory every day too would become a problem for him.

As he had a microscope at his home and brought drawers containing his flies there, he worked at home the last decade of his life. There was a dining room for the tenants of the University House, so his life was perfectly organized. Finally, for the first time in his life he had a home, his own living room, and just everything he needed, things that he never had in Kyiv.

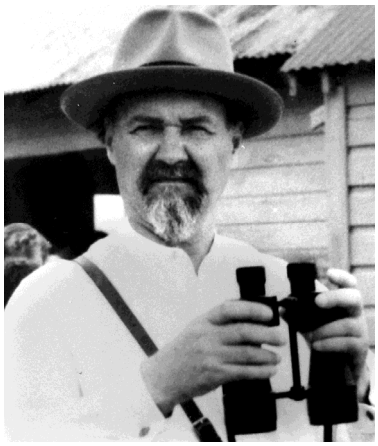


S. Paramonov, 1953 [PA]

In Australia, Paramonov dedicated himself to the study of various parasitic flies, in particular, bee flies, gadflies, tachinids, streblids, etc. There were many poorly known or entirely new species accumulated in Australian collections. The first result achieved in his taxonomic studies was a little book with a review of the *Mydas* flies (Mydidae) of Australia, giant semi-desert dwellers related to the robber flies (Asilidae). Then there were monographic reviews of the Streblidae (1951), Nemestrinidae, Apioceridae (1953), Cyrtidae, Scenopinidae (1955), Acroceridae (1957), Pyrgotidae (1958), Leptidae (1962); the genera *Microtropeza* (Tachinidae) (1951), *Tapeigaster* (Neottiophilidae) (1955), *Hirmoneura* (Nemestrinidae), *Cylindromyia*, *Saralba* (Tachinidae) (1956), a review of *Ligyra* (Bombyliidae) (1967) (his last paper to be published while he was alive), and his favourite, the large and attractive *Rutilia* (1968) of the Tachinidae, which was published after his death. From 1950 to 1966 Paramonov published 42 smaller papers (one to 20 pages) in the series "Notes on Australian Diptera". Additionally he wrote papers on zoogeography of Australian Diptera (1959) and established a new family Mindidae (1957), later synonymized with Chloropidae.

Paramonov's assistant, Zenta Rosalia Liepa (1927–1987), who spoke fluent German and a little Russian, was an immigrant from Latvia, a country annexed by the Soviets in 1939. Like Paramonov, she did not want to go back to the USSR and escaped from Europe to Australia. She began her work in CSIRO in the Division of Entomology under Paramonov's supervision. He taught her all the fine and sophisticated techniques of insect collecting, pinning, mounting, dissection, labelling, and most important of all, the diverse Australian flies, which she learned with Paramonov almost every day. The study of biodiversity in Australia, and especially of parasitic Diptera, was still in its embryonic stages. Zenta collected many new species, and the genera *Lieparella* and *Zentula* as well as numerous species are named in honour of her.

Zenta Liepa, 1970s



S. Paramonov on a trip to Lord Howe Is., 1956 [PA]

Zenta was a true confidant and friend of Paramonov, collaborating with him to the end of his life and assisting in the preparation of new papers on the taxonomy of Diptera. They travelled together to Lord Howe Island and collected insects there. Don Colless (1922–2012), successor of Paramonov in Australian dipterology, recalled that he learned from Zenta to recognize Australian flies and all the skills she had learned from Paramonov. Later, Zenta compiled the first bibliography and catalogue of type specimens of species described by Paramonov.

In the 1960s Paramonov managed to published two parts of "A Naturalist in Australia" in the Soviet magazine *Priroda*. It looked like he was not considered an enemy anymore, but it took thirty years for his name was mentioned freely in his country. He wrote:

S. Paramonov in Australia, 1949
[PA]

*"March in Canberra is the beginning of the Fall, "Indian Summer". It smells of eucalypts. The air is clear and cold, and the rays of the rising sun gently touch your skin. The air is full of exultant singing of a great number of birds. Their songs are incredibly diverse, this is a non-stop sounding choir, this is — an Australian Symphony. Of them, the Australian Magpie, the flutebird (*Gymnorrhina tibicen*) sets the tone. It is of the jackdaw size, and even similar in its body, but having an original pattern of clear white and deep black spots. Its song is something intermediate between clang of cranes and flute modulations of oriole, but it is long, diverse, and sonorous. These birds sing almost without stops, and should one start, the second, the third and the next ones took up the melody, repeating its song with a delay. The singers lower their wings, raise their heads and really sing, not just make sounds.*

Magpie is a half-domestic bird it lives even in the cities, needing only the trees for nesting and lawns for hunting its food: the grubs of scarab beetles. It makes no harm to fruits or seeds, as the beetle larvae consist its almost only food.

It has very friendly relationship with humans, occurring almost everywhere, being a typical part of Australian landscape ant taking certain part in the life of every Australian. It is a kind of family member.

It sits musically mumbling something or mounting on a pole or tree, raising its head up and singing of loud and fervent, paying no attention to cars and giant buses shooting past and hissing by.

Usually it grandly walks on the lawns before houses, in parks, gardens, along roads, everywhere the grass grows; then it stops as if it is hearing something, then hits the ground with its beak and picks the grub, and it longs the whole day. It is hard to say how it feels the larva presence, but it makes no misses.

It is natural, that everybody loves this bird. When in the morning you walk in Australian capital, Canberra, down the street, you hear a desperate bird's screaming: you turn around and see a schoolboy with a tarpaulin military bag haunted by a young magpie heartrendingly yelling, flapping its wings, and demanding a food. Nothing to do: the boy stops, puts its bag on the ground and goes to feed and calm a bird. Australian cats are so well-mannered that do not eat these live loudspeakers.

S. Paramonov and Australian Magpie. 1949

Walking to the office, I crossed a field and met some magpies, whom I fed with bread. One of them was finally tamed: once I showed up, it came flying with noise, sat two or three steps in front of me, rose up its head and started singing, as if she said 'good morning'. Finally, it took bread from my hands. Then I moved to another hostel and changed my way. In a year it happened to me to take the old road: my friend magpie recognized me and came to me, sat in front of me and started singing.

The full-sized youngsters follow their parents flapping wings and demanding food. Sometimes they play with each other like kitties or puppies, rolling and falling on their backs, lying on sides like people, and of course making noise. Parents often meddle to stop this outrage by a beak stab.

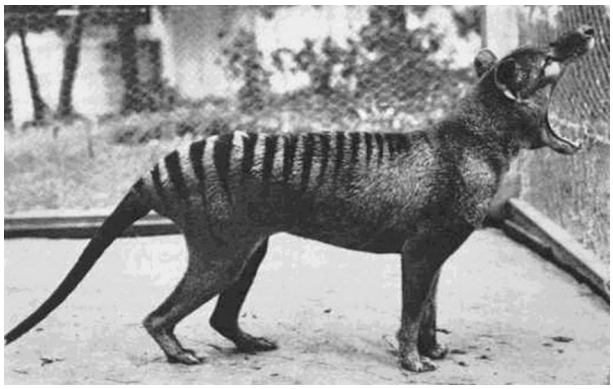
Nevertheless, magpies have an unpleasant manner to attack those who come closely to its place during nesting. Usually it comes by flight and stubs the crown (I must say, very painfully, from my experience). Once I took my hat off, and was pecked. If one takes a hat on, it is safe: for the bird, it makes no sense to peck a hat.

*In the neighboring garden, the noisy miner (*Manorina melanocephala*) makes its piv-piv-piv. Now one can hear the metallic but very pleasant "coombring-coombring-coombring". Something began stuttering, cackling, and then laughing, — this is a kookaburra, the commonmost and funniest, hen-likely brown and grey bird of a large pigeon size. Then the whistling of a local oriole, then a clay-filomele sound of the tiny bird called whistler… and many other completely unknown to me sounds and singings of birds. "*

Among the everyday miracles and treasures found by Paramonov in Australia, there was one, which lay beyond the limits of credibility. This his non-dipterological naturalist's observation was published after his death and is perhaps more cited than his taxonomic works. It was a short note entitled "Is the Tasmanian Tiger (*Thylacinus*) Extinct on the Australian Mainland?", which we reproduce with a small abridgment.

Paramonov wrote:

"*An account of the recent discovery of a remarkably well-preserved carcase of the Tasmanian Tiger (*Thylacinus*) in a cave near Eucla, Western Australia, has been published by the finders, D. C. Lowry and J. W. J. Lowry... The discovery of these comparatively recent remains prompts me to place on record my sight observation in 1949 in New South Wales.*



Thylacine at the zoo, 1930s

At the time I prepared short notes about this observation and forwarded them to Mr. Charles Barrett, but as far as I know, they were never published. In 1965, upon request, I gave this information to Dr. E. H. M. Ealey, of Monash University. During the C.S.I.R.O. Entomological Expedition, November 1949, I had the fortune of seeing the animal on the route from Bourke to Wanaaring, in an uninhabited area a few miles past Warrego River, where I was collecting on the right hand side of the road, only a few yards from the road. It was 11 a. m., and I observed the animal for 1–2 minutes from a distance of about 15–20 metres; it ran along the sand which was covered with some very small bushes, the rest of the area being sandy. I saw the animal from a somewhat oblique angle, and the head was not clearly visible, but the hind quarters and its left side were extremely well visible. Its size was that of a medium-sized dog, and the body proportions were also dog-like; it was uniformly grey-brown, with short hair; the strange tail, extremely wide at the base, seemed to be a continuation of the hind quarters; the hind leg was strongly marked with almost black horizontal stripes.

Generally, although dog-like, it was not a Canid, because of the structure o f the hind part of the body. The most remarkable feature was the strange manner of running: although the animal was swinging regularly sideways, the hind part of the body made a kind of bobbing, up and down movement; the impression was as if the animal was drunk, as I had never seen anything like it. I hoped to find some specific characteristics from the footprints, but the sandy soil did not show them up; they were of the size of a medium-sized dog's imprint.

I made all the observations with great care, hoping to discuss the animal with my colleagues, but they unfortunately had been collecting on the opposite side of the road, and had not seen it. Later, back in Canberra, I came across an illustration of the Tasmanian Tiger, and immediately recognised it as the animal I had observed on my trip.

The discovery of the carcass in the area of Eucla, and my observation of the live specimen, convinces me that the animal still exists on the mainland of Australia.

Ecological conditions of the areas west of the Warrego River and of Eucla are somewhat similar — arid, stony, uninhabited areas; the Aborigines probably have knowledge of the animal, but few white men venture into that environment. Now, however, I feel that in the near future this old problem should be solved. "

Was it true? Or was it just he wanted to see: a miracle in the wonderland?
And what were his historical writings?

5. In the Mists of Centuries

"*what dins unto me*
what rings unto me
early today, before the effulgences?"
The Song of Igor's Campaign.
Translation by Vladimir Nabokov

Sergei Lesnoy was born in 1945.

Originally, it was merely a pseudonym, which Sergei Paramonov used for a popular article in 1945: his retelling of his colleague Charlemagne's observations on the distribution, behaviour, and identity of the birds and mammals mentioned in the "Song of Igor's Campaign", the only reliable Ruthenian literature monument of the 12th century.

Later in 1948, after he picked up his first paychecks from CSIRO, he sent manuscripts of his two poetry books, "The Songs of Nature" and "Poems of All Sorts of Stuff", to Paris, where they were published by his own costs and under the name "Sergei Lesnoy".

The first book was mostly a travelogue of his numerous collecting trips to Middle Asia, Armenia, the steppes of Southern Ukraine and the Trans-Volga, the mountains of Crimea and Caucasus, the fields of Poland and Germany, the Black Sea, and the Indian Ocean. The impressions of his childhood in the wild and deep forests of Northern Russia led to the use of his pseudonym, which literally means "[a man] from the forest". Later, in 1949 and 1952, he published two thin books of his short stories, similar to those most of us publish nowadays in LiveJournal or Facebook: "Travelling Stories" and "Devilry under Bald Mountain" (the second mostly retelling various fantastic stories heard from his travelling companions during the long trips on the train).

Sergei Lesnoy had begun his new life. But the lost motherland and the whole continent of his early trips still called him. And he replied.

Non-entomological writings had become a bridge, or better, an umbilical cord reconnecting him with the roots of his history, to his childhood readings and dreams and, finally, to his own identity, which he had lost in the wars, revolutions, and emigrations — internally and externally.

He worked hard in the laboratory, publishing more papers than he did at home, yet still he had free time. There was no more of sleeping in the lab, waiting in long lines for bread, waiting hours for neighbours to free up the restroom or common kitchen, earning hardly little thing, and listening to every little noise on the stairs at night.

His ideas first seemed silly and dilettantish, but he had what the other specialists had not: a fresh eye, good access to the libraries all over the world, incredible memory, a fast perspicacious mind, and a precisely organized schedule.

The very first historical study (published from 1950–1953) was an extensive (almost 400 pages) critical review of all the sources concerning "The Song of Igor's Campaign", known in West Europe and the world mainly from the Borodin's 'Polovtsian Dances' musical theme (from the opera 'Prince Igor' based on "The Song…").

Paramonov's approach was quite similar to what he did when revising dipteran genera: a collection of all the available literature on the subject, a comparative analysis, and then a synthesis of his own point of view. He showed the reasons of an inexhaustible interest for it, appraising it as poetry or political appeal, analyzing if its author was a pagan or a Christian, and finally, if this could be a false antiquity fabricated in the 18th century.

Paramonov was in touch with dozens of correspondents in Paris, San Francisco, New York, and London, who supplied him with books and copies of documents from archives and libraries, so he had accumulated a huge historical library by 1953, and soon he obtained new captivating puzzles to guess, prove, and assemble.

The next series of historical essays published under the name Sergei Lesnoy, "The History of 'Rusy' [=Ruthens[1]] in an unfalsified State" («История «руссов» в неизвращенном виде») was published in Paris and Munich in 10 volumes, from 1953 to 1961.

Paramonov began his work with an explanation of his methodology: premising possible accusations of criticism to existing historical schools as "based on belonging to the 'enemy camp' ". He believed he was an unknown in historical science, a new man having never been in touch with warring schools, and trying to be impartial and unbiased. However, that was hardly possible. After being under German occupation and the Nazi's credo of race and national superiority, he simply did not buy into to the "second best-ness" of Slavs and therefore could not be impartial. Paramonov stayed a consistent anti-Normanist in all his works. As Paramonov had understood, the early written documents were either (1) re-written at the time of Catherine II ("the Great") to conform the official Normanist ideology that insisted that the kings' dynasties in Russia were of German origin, or (2) they were destroyed if they did not conform to it. Many other antiquarian literature sources were lost in the 1812 fire in Moscow, or in the monastery libraries in 1918–1921, or in 1939, as the result of wars against religions.

[1] Hereinafter, we use the term "Rusy" as synonym of "Ruthens" and a transliteration of Paramonov's term «*Русы*» in the sense of Slavic tribes, which inhabited the territory of modern Ukraine and neighbouring regions to the North (Rus' or Kievan Rus') in XIX-XII ct., to avoid misinterpreting them with modern Russians. (VAK)

Paramonov certainly did not manage to be impartial and both his books on the "Song of Igor's Campaign" and the "History of Rusy" were begun from philippics against very different specialists, whom he considered to be "too much Normanistic": Dmitry Likhachev, a palaeologist, who survived Stalin's camps in the 1930s, and Boris Rybakov, a historian who made a name for himself at the end of Stalin's epoch by advocating the groundless hypotheses that cultures that had existed in Ukraine in the middle of the First Millennium were Slavic. As a result, both became personal enemies of 'Lesnoy'.

He started his book "History of Rusy" from the essay entitled "The first page in the history of Rusy", which concerns the mentioning of the term "Rus'".

Patriarch Photius washes clothes of Holy Mother of God to protect Constantinople from Askold. Miniature from the Radziwiłł's Chronicles (15c.)

"*All the historians depict the campaign of Rusy to Constantinople as a robbery raid of the Scandinavians from Kiev under the direction of Askold and Dir* (*we do not consider the deviating opinions of the minorities*). *It came into all the schoolbooks, from primary to high schools. And this is what (and this is important) we find to be repeated in all the foreign sources.*

If we open, for instance, 'Encyclopaedia Britannica', we see that the 'first pillage expedition' of Rusy to Byzantium was in 865. None of the [Russian] historians objected or protested against that, and in that way, they all were in solidarity with it…

The point is that this talks about the basement of Rus' statehood, which can be interpreted freely in one way or another. It was not the gang of Norman robbers, who came to pillage the walling of Constantinople. It was an organized state power of Rusy who came to force them to respect their downtrodden international laws.

They came to avenge the death of their congeners, robbed and murdered for a petty money deal, and for their demands of punishment for the guilty that were unsatisfied.

That is why they came to the walls of the capital, for they wanted revenge for those who were guilty in this crime. If it were just a robbery, it was much safer and easier to rob the shore settlements, but not the capital.

Rusy came as avengers and showed incredible cruelty and violence, killing all the living and ruining and burning everything they could…

They caused a great damage to the population and goods, they brought Constantinople into a deep panic, when the citizens only prayed and did not think of defence, filling them with fear and forcing them to consider Rusy as a new power…

We know this from the Greek sources, which would have a tendency to depict themselves in a favourable light, but if they testify for the Rusy's sake, it must be truth.

> *This is an especially valuable testimony, as soon as it was corroborated by the Patriarch Photius, the second person in the state after the Emperor, who was an eyewitness of this entire event*. "

This piece clearly shows the style of Paramonov's narration, and the manner of proof and the taxonomist's keen eye to the details.

The "History of Rusy" contained five short essays, including 'On the Liudprand's[1] testimony'. Here, Lesnoy defends his opinion that Liudprand's "Normannos" ethnonym covers *all the northern neighbors of Italy*, with no difference between Slavic, German or Finnish tribes, and that it is strictly identical to the Slavic tribe mentioned by Greeks as "Rousios", but certainly not an unknown Scandinavian tribe of that name. Italian sources insist that "Normans" had 360 ships rather than 200 and that they won and came home with their triumph. This cannot then be a mere robbers' gang; it was a bloody, devastating attack of a state, with a name of Greek origin — Rusios.

The main idea of Paramonov was to prove that the native state of Rusy had existed in the 9th century, being ruled by their own kings (often called Chacans or Kagans/Khagans, since in 869 it was a part of Khazarian Khaganate), and it certainly was not related to a later invasion of Scandinavian kings.

Fluent in Latin and ancient Greek, Paramonov gave detailed analyses of the medieval texts, which were unavailable to those who worked in the USSR behind the 'iron curtain', and showed the skills of a careful textologic analysis that was inherent to him as an experienced taxonomist.

The articles included in two other volumes (1954: 215 pp.) considered many particular questions on the origin of official name Rus', the origin (Slavic vs. Germanic) of the Dnipro Rapids (now covered by a reservoir near Zaporizhzha), the embassies of Rusy to Byzantine in the 10th century, on the origin of kings Rürik, Sviatoslav and Vladimir, the Christianity of Rus' and its baptizing, and many other issues.

Literature on the history of his country was extremely scarce and based on perverted or falsified documents, and Paramonov was looking for new material that could enrich what little was known or fill the gap (or better said "abyss") in the history of Rus' before the 9th century.

The only valuable documents of that ancient time (but only of the first quarter of 11th century) were just being found, when Paramonov wrote his essays. In the 1950s, archaeological excavations in Novgorod unearthed the first writings on silver birch bark. Although they were half-destroyed certificates of indebtedness or other notes scratched on the bark, containing neither stories nor chronicles — and only one of them contained a Christian prayer—their scientific importance was that they were lexicographic documents containing original spellings that could be used in a comparative analysis of other documents. The results of the excavations have been published mostly by the 1960s but remained unknown to Paramonov. However, they later played an important role in appraising of authenticity of the two documents, upon which Paramonov had based his writings.

Stalin died in March 1953, and the Soviet Union seemed to be slowly changing, but it was still a long way to the real thaw. Looking for new and old contacts in the Soviet Union, Paramonov in 1954 sent his books on the 'Song of Igor's Campaign' and 'History of Rusy' to Charlemagne in Kyiv. There was nothing dangerous in his books, except the fact that they arrived from beyond of the 'Iron Curtain'. Still, they came first to the KGB, and only then to Charlemagne himself, who was under their per-

[1] Liutprand (also Liudprand, Liuprand, Lioutio, Liucius, Liuzo, Lioutsios) (c. 920–972) — a historian, diplomat, and Bishop of Cremona.

manent control. Charlemagne informed Likhachev about the books, and in particular, the 'Song of Igor's Campaign'. He gave Dmitriy Likhachev a short negative summary of the books and promised to send the books later. Likhachev immediately replied and recommended that Charlemagne write a ten-page review "to show two things: 1) its depravity, tendentiousness of its concept (nationalism), 'bias'… and 2) ignorance of the author. It must be done briefly, but irrefutably (choosing the most characteristic manifestations of ignorance. "

On June 20, 1955 Likhachev had received and read Paramonov's books and wrote to Charlemagne:

> "*The size of your review is quite good and suits us. No need to supply the contents. The books are nasty! He is a pompous twaddler, but not a scientist! God knows what it is*!" And on October 25, 1955: "*Your review of Lesnoy will not be published. Reviewers decided that non-scientific views of Lesnoy shall not be popularized, and from the other side, they shall not be identified with the bourgeois works from the West. We must review serious and good works of the western scientists in a well-disposed manner*."

Dmitriy Likhachev, 1950s

Although Charlemagne had written his review, he replied to Paramonov's previous letter mentioning only minor comments and mistakes he found, saying nothing of the bludgeon he had prepared. Charlemagne was very kind, sending Paramonov a press-clipping with the information about amnesty to all the people left abroad, inviting him for repatriation and asking about the current address of Boris Balinsky, a world-renowned embryologist, who also left Kyiv with the Germans. Paramonov read the letter, but it seemed to him like there was somebody standing behind Charlemagne's left shoulder when he wrote it, perhaps a KGB curator.

Paramonov replied to him that he could not repatriate because the new decree did not guarantee that the goods and money earned abroad would not be confiscated in the USSR.

> "*I have now 25,000 [rubles] in a bank, two rooms full of furniture, three cabinets of books, books stocked in Paris, — what shall I do with this all?... There other sorts of problems: a very good friend of mine, an emigrant, went with all his family — son-in-law, grandson, grand-grand-son and other relatives to Alma-Ata — and hasn't sent a line to his old mother to Paris for four months! This gives me something to think about — as you know, everything has two sides…*
>
> *It is a pity that you haven't found anything more to say than you found a typo and a few commas in the wrong places. Well, thank you for this, anyway, — I shall correct this in the next issue.*
>
> *There is an exceptionally interesting document published recently in the USA — the so-called 'Isenbeck's planks', which apparently are older than the oldest of known chronicles. I am waiting for a photo of this ancient text and deciphering of the continuous script. This document mentions 'the seventh century of Troyan'. The text is remarkable: the letter "Ч" is replaced with "Щ"… It mentions Askold and Dir, 'Surenzhska Rus', 'Gotia', contains ancient pagan invocations, etc. It is a document of exceptional historical interest, something like the 'Song [of Igor's Campaign]'…*

I'd appreciate any news about relatives and friends — some, of course, are gone. That's the life … By the way, Oleksiy sends his regards… Please don't be angry at me — we are writing to each other once in five years.

Shaking your hand,
Yours cordially, S. Paramonov. "

There were no more letters from Charlemagne.

Instead of a reply, Charlemagne wrote to Likhachev asking if he could still "make some changes in the text of review; should Paramonov return, he cannot be qualified as a 'traitor of Motherland', so if you do not mind, I'd prefer small changes anticipating a possible return of the lampoon author". The review was postponed.

Likhachev replied quickly: "*The text, mentioned by Lesnoy, reminds one of the fake of Sulakadzev (oddities of its language, "Troyan's century", pagan invocations and, the ending of the name Diros, all of which were common in the documents fabricated by Sulakadzev).* "

In 1958 Charlemagne wrote again to Leningrad, asking if his review of Lesnoy's works could be published. "*It had been accepted before, but rejected in the last moment, as they* [the previous editors, including Likhachev] *considered that it could favor popularizing Lesnoy. I believe that it was a wrong move, as Paramonov took measures to expand his popularity. By now, his books were mentioned by Golovenchenko, N.K. Hudziy, Beletsky, Bulakhovsky, D.S. Likhachev, and apparently many others. Strange as it may seem, they found "something interesting" in them. I only touched the most essential things in my review. "* Finally, in 1960 Charlemagne's review was published.

"*We know this as the past Soviet doctor of sciences, a narrow, particular specialist in the systematics of the Diptera. Escaped from Kyiv with its occupants, he ended up in Australia in the position of a governmental entomologist. The pages of his book show another interesting feature in the biography of the new 'critic' of the 'Song [of Igor's Campaign]': he's not only a scientist, he's a poet and fiction writer… One book is dedicated to such a 'highly scientific' thing as 'Devilry on the Bald Mountain'. The list ends with the 'History of Rusy in an unfalsified State'. As we can see, Lesnoy is not just a specialist in devilry, but also in Russian history!*

As we can see, he is extremely fruitful and versatile. There is a question, if there is a need to waste the time and space for the publication of a review of his 'investigation' of the 'Song…' A reading of the first book, despite some loathing it causes, makes me sure that it must be analyzed and unmasked. The 'Song…' has its enemies and skeptics abroad, and appearance of Lesnoy's 'works' will give strength to them… Lesnoy's investigations are an abominable pasquinade on the work of our central institutions studying ancient Russian literature, on persons, studying the 'Song…', dead and living academics, and Academy workers studying the 'Song…' for their great monument, and on the Soviet writers. No doubt, this pasquinade will be gladly accepted by the enemies of our Motherland.

In his 'scriptures' Lesnoy in a rudely familiar way discusses problems of Russian history, philology, nature sciences, etc., etc… Even in his native branch of sciences — natural history — he shows insignificant erudition.

> *We shall not analyze in detail the work of this vain man. No need to waste time and printing facilities. In general, his 'studies' are a vicious, shameful occurrence in the history of studying of the 'Song of Igor's Campaign'...*

Six month before his death, Paramonov sent a letter with his best regards to his colleagues in Kyiv "Except Charlemagne".

6. Planks of Pandora

In the Winter of 1954, Paramonov received an envelope with a magazine (if typed and rota-printed grey paper sheets can be called as such). The September 1953 issue of the *Zhar-Ptitsa* ("Firebird"), with which Lesnoy also collaborated, contained a letter from Brussels received by its publisher Yuriy P. Mirolyubov, who discussed some strange artifacts: wooden planks with carved or scratched texts, which were said to be found by a colonel of the White Army, Theodor-Ali Izenbek. They were found in southern Russia in the library of a plundered estate during the civil war in 1919, taken to Belgium, and then lost during World War II.

The planks (from which Mirolyubov managed to make tracing paper copies only) contained scripts with 'line-hanged' letters (as in Sanskrit) that were similar to Greek or Gothic, some of which could be read as whole words or phrases, certainly in a language belonging to the Slavic group.

Yuriy Mirolyubov, 1940s

The text, in Mirolyubov's opinion, contained 'chronicles, records of tribal deals, and prayers to Perun, Dazhbog and Veles[1]'. The text was fragmentized, and there were no photographs or detailed descriptions of the planks themselves, only the 'tracing copies' made by Mirolyubov, decoded by the *Firebird* publisher A. Kur. By the end of 1959 all the material (24 'planks and fragments') had been published.

As Paramonov (who knew Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, ancient Bulgarian, and a bit of Czech and other Slavic languages) studied the writings, he had an impression that they were written, with high likelihood, in a proto-Slavic language. What he saw conformed to his idea of an ancient Slavic language. He was especially interested in the fragments of the text regarding Kyi, Schek and Khoryv[2]. He discussed these texts often in the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 10th books of his 'History of Rus'.

Lesnoy analyzed the pros and cons of authenticity of the planks he named the 'V[e]les Book', in the end proving with such a passion they were indeed authentic. In fact, Lesnoy became the main advertiser and promoter of the 'Vles Book' among Russian and Ukrainian diasporas, as he felt no doubts that the planks really existed, and he considered it immoral to express doubts about Mirolyubov's honesty.

[1] Perun, Dazh[d]bog, V[e]les — divinities of the Slavic pantheon.
[2] Kyi [Kiy], Schek [Shchek] and Khoryv — the legendary kings, founders of Kyiv

Later, Paramonov had described his correspondence with Mirolyubov and Kur in an article[1], and we need not to repeat it here. The only thing that Paramonov insisted is that the original material of Mirolyubov, whether they are the tracings only, or if should the planks be found, either or both must be deposited in a Russian museum, and photocopies must be deposited in several other museums.

However, because of Lesnoy, the 'Vles Book' — and the name it bears today given by Paramonov — became a sort of 'bible' for pagan sects, and the basis for ideologies of Russian and Ukrainian ultra-nationalistic groups. It appeared in schoolbooks and rooted itself in the mass consciousness, subcultures, literature, and art of the post-Soviet era.

In the 1970–2000s, the comparative linguistic and textology studies by L. Zhukovskaya and A. Zalizniak in comparison with the accurately dated and verified Novgorod birch-bark scratchings have unambiguously proven that the 'Song of Igor's Campaign' could not be fabricated, and at the same time, stated that the 'Vles Book' is, in contrast, a linguistic chimera, similar to the basilisks and dragons of medieval apothecaries constructed as a puzzle, from incomparable and incredibly modified fragments of Ukrainian, Polish, Czech, and Bulgarian words, modified in a way that they never were modified in their natural dialects.

It is very likely that the 'Vles Book' was fabricated by Mirolyubov himself based on the style of Sulukadzev, the notorious fabricator of antiquities, with addition of some elements of sacred Sanskrit texts as the Veda. The 'folkloric' records made by Mirolyubov (as he wrote, based on his Ukrainian grand-grand-mother's tales) show a striking coincidence with the 'Vles book' anthems.

It is interesting, that since both Paramonov's and Mirolyubov's childhood and youth were in Ukraine, and that they had the same range of languages they understood, including Polish, Czech and ancient Bulgarian (a canonical language for translations of the Holy Bible), it is not so strange that the 'language' of the 'Vles book' seemed so familiar and natural for Lesnoy.

The scientist Sergei Paramonov gave birth to the historian, writer and linguist Sergei Lesnoy. Paramonov let his shadow escape out into the world, and by his mistake opened the door for delusion.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that Sergei Paramonov had two good names. However, in spite of being a good, decent, honest, and moral person, and an intellectual and a gentlemen, due to various unfortunate circumstances, he had lost his good names three times: the first when he had to lose his country to enemies, the second when he touched the 'Song…' having no specialized training to do such an analysis, and the third when he revealed to the world the 'Vles Book'.

But in no case was he a traitor, thief, or swindler. Hopefully, we have convinced you of that.

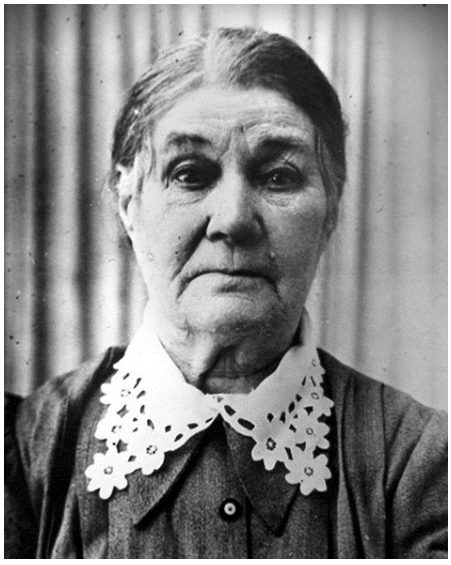
[1] For more details, see: Корнєєв, В. О. 2014. «Справжнє життя Сергія Лесного». *Ukrainska Entomofaunistyka*, 14(1): 7-42. (in Ukrainian)

7. Mom

We only can guess that Sergei Paramonov was always missing his mother. His brother Oleksiy was born when Sergei was seven, and he had to become grown-up very quickly. Sergei was nine when he had to leave his parents and go to the gymnasium of Velikiy Ustyug — far away in the deep-deep forest, and later again — beyond the wide lagoon, to Akkerman, where he had full board and lodging, Latin and Greek, and even piano classes, only seeing his parents four times a year, on his vacations. Then they were separated by the revolution in 1917, and finally by the war.

Olga Paramonova was a common, semiliterate peasant's daughter, who tenderly loved her sons. When they were kids, she brought them their favorite toys — live chafers — and boys dropped off to sleep with the buzz in a fist, and as their grips relaxed, the toys escaped.

She sang Sergei lullabies, she knew a lot of Ukrainian folk music, joyful songs and sad ballads, which Sergei learned from her. She stayed in Ananyiv from 1918 (after she and her husband escaped from Ceobruci, which was occupied by Romanian troops) with her husband, visited by their sons every summer who gladly came for bird and insect hunting and for their mother's country food. This was every year until the fall of 1938, when Yakiv Paramonov, her husband, was arrested and shot. As their house belonged to the state forestry, Olga was immediately thrown into the street.



Olga Paramonova, 1958 [PA]

Sergei brought his mother to his tiny room in Kyiv where they two lived until the Winter of 1942 when the German troops occupied the area. The Germans allowed them to move into one of the empty apartments on Karavayevska St., and they both finally got own place to live. However, it was not to be for long. In October 1943, as the Soviet Army approached Kyiv, the Germans decided to evacuate the Institute. Sergei and Oleksiy received a directive to leave Kyiv together with the collection. Sergei tried to take his mother with him, but was said that only spouses can accompany the curators and that his mother can arrive later. But that reunion never happened.

She stayed in Kyiv and, as soon as the Soviets took Kyiv and southern Ukraine, she went back to Ananyiv, into the old reed-roofed hut of her sister, Agatha Ivanivna Buravchuk, at 29 Tylihulska St. Their niece Lidiya Dogayeva (daughter of their brother Georgiy I. Buravchuk) looked after the two women in the last years of their lives.

From Australia, Sergei often sent parcels with cloth and sweets (which they also could sell in the market to earn a little money, as they lived in deepest poverty). Evdokia Reshetnik arranged several collecting trips from the Museum to Ananyiv in 1950s and visited Olga there. Later, she kept a few photographs and letters in their archive. Here is the last letter from Sergei to his mother:

"*3. XI. 1958 Dear Mom!*
Today I received a letter that everything is all right with you, and you took it fine: it was my birthday gift.

Today I am sixty-four years of age. As the Summer comes, my health looks to be getting better, and I believe that as it will be fully warm I shall walk completely freely. Even now I can walk quite far, but not fast. On the 1st [of November] they opened a basin, and I went to see little urchins bathe: all the kids are totally blue of cold, but do not come out from the water. They give a lot of freedom to the kids here, perhaps even more than enough.

I am living as usual, i.e.*, very well enough, may God give such a life to everyone: it is calm and quiet; I have good and interesting work and a rather big salary. Today I summed up my activities. I printed my works in Russian, in Ukrainian, in German, and in English. I have published about 150 papers in Russia, Ukraine, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, Hungary, England, France, Spain, North America, South America (Brasil), South Africa, Australia, and even in Honolulu (Hawaii). Could you think when nursing me [in your father's house] in Raykivtsi that your son will see Berlin, Paris, London and live for twelve years in Australia?*

The old house in Ananyiv,
where Olga Paramonova lived until 1958 [PA]

Besides scientific papers on zoology (popular scientific and newspaper does not count) at this time I have printed two books of poetry, two of stories, four books of studies on literature and eight books on ancient history, altogether 16 books (the 17th is in print). Summing up my work I am proud to say that have done quite a lot. As things turned out, your son has become a scientist, zoologist, poet, writer, student of literature, and historian. Regrettably, I had no possibility to publish my music, but I shall try to do it in the future. As you see I have some things to boast. And to whom can I boast of them but my mom! I have quite good news, as you know, I am studying ancient history of Rus'[…] By far I did not know their attitude to my works in Russia. You know my character: I have said a lot of bitter truth. Two months ago a scientist from the next-door university attended a meeting of Slavicists in Moscow: they were talking there about my works. too. They appraise my works highly, and some scientists spoke of me very warmly. I was asked to write

something for Russia. I have written a review of one university textbook and two little articles. They will be sent officially for publication in the USSR. Three sets of my works have been already sent to the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. As you can see, you still may read something written by me.

It has warmed up here, though not much. However, a lot of flowers. They love flowers very much here and care for them. All the gardens in front and behind the houses necessarily have hoses for watering. That is why even in very dry weather, there is green grass and flowers at houses here. People often make exhibitions of flowers and vegetables. They give prizes for excellent examples. Everyone has free time and gladly work in their gardens just for pleasure. It is arranged that once one sort of flowers is over, the others start blossoming, and there is no single day in the year, when there are no flowers, even despite slight frosts. There are no fences at all, sometimes only low, half-yard tall palisades or green hedges. Fruits lie under the trees for weeks, and nobody picks them. They show in this way that they have no need in fruits, and their neighbors show that they have their own. To prevent breeding of the garden pests, they even inflict a fine for non-collecting of fruits.

Dogs are not given to biting here (not schooled to). People love them here and care for them, as it seems, more than for other people. In any case, drivers go carefully around dogs resting on the road (Russian drivers would run them over it intentionally). My black ibises apparently have flown away, but the day before I saw a couple of the white ones.

I have received your photo. I don't know if you have received two big cards: the first, where I am on excursion with a friend in the forest, and the second, where I am in the person of an astronomer in the movie about the history of local observatory. Please write, if you have them.

I am going to take a vacation soon, but will not go anywhere: I am waiting for the proofs of my book from Germany. After the proofs I shall be free, but have not decided if to go elsewhere: it is good here too.

Well, that seems to be all about the life I live. Kiss hard you and Lida. Be prudent and wise; take care of your health.

Yours S. Paramonov. "

Unfortunately, when Sergei wrote this letter, his mother was not among the living anymore. Olga Paramonova passed away in the Summer 1958, a few months following her sister Agatha. She died after a short-term illness and was fully conscious throughout.

Oleksiy and Olga Paramonova, *ca*. 1916 [PA]

8. Oleksiy

Oleksiy (Alexey, Oles') Paramonov started to work together with his elder brother at the Zoological Museum in Kyiv in 1921. Later, he graduated from the university and worked in forest entomology. In the 1930s he published several papers about the natural history of forest pests in Ukrainian journals, with his assistance as editor and advisor. Some of his papers had been erroneously included by Z. Liepa into Sergei's bibliography.

Oleksiy Paramonov, 1940s [PA]

Lidia Puchkova recalled in a conversation with one of us (VAK): "At that time, in 1942, there was another Paramonov, who worked at the Institute; people said they are brothers, but they looked entirely different: Sergei always wore a suit, white shirt and tie, as befits to a real professor, whereas his brother had a very "proletarian" appearance wearing dirty high-boots and a greasy cap; before that he [Oleksiy] worked at the Darnytsya forestry near Kyiv." Oleksiy and his wife Tamara left Kyiv for Germany together with the other Institute workers in 1943. In 1945 he stayed for a short time in Munich and later worked at the Forest Research Station in Farnham, Surrey (United Kingdom) until 1965, when he accepted a position to head the Chair of Forest Entomology at the University of the Andes in Mérida (Venezuela). However, soon after moving to Venezuela he contracted a grave illness and came back to England, where died one week before Sergei in September 1967. He was survived by his wife Tamara for 18 years.

The two brothers were different, indeed. Sergei got most of his good manners from the people in whose houses he lived, his gymnasia teachers, and his university professors, who mostly were noblemen. The people who knew Sergei Paramonov described him as a gentlemen and were pretty sure he was a nobleman too. His brother was contrastingly down-to-earth in his attire and attitude and clearly a product of the "new époque" of the "proletarian revolution". However, despite their differences. the two brothers were like typical peasant boys, charmed by the creatures flying in the hot sun and at dusk.

Sergei Paramonov collecting flies, Australia, 1950s
[PA]

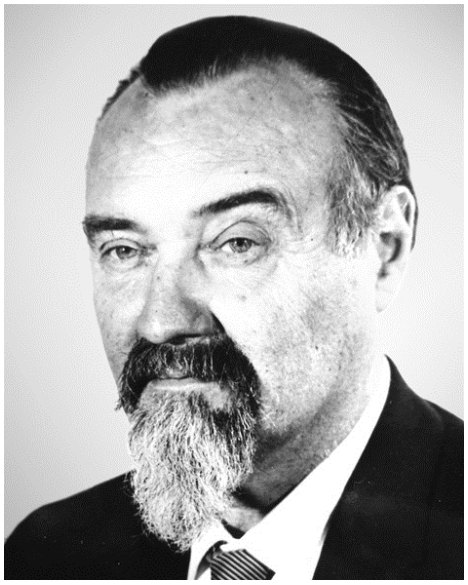
9. "And my shoe and my stocking do me no hurt"

In the last years of his life, after retirement from the CSIRO in 1959, Sergei Paramonov constantly had health problems: arthritis, angina pectoris, and many other unpleasant things, but the rate of his work never slowed. He wrote articles and books for the Ukrainian and Russian émigré press and publishers, and continued descriptions of new tachinids, pyrgotids, and bee flies, having the microscope and collection drawers on the desk at his apartment.

He was visited by many guests, who willingly discussed with him both entomological topics and the problems associated with the "Song of Igor's Campaign", "Vles Book" and ancient Slavic history.

Boris G. Unbenhaun, a renowned slavicist, was one of the last persons who visited Sergei Paramonov at his house. He recalled to one of us (VAK):

> *"…V. M. Krylatov asked about my opinion on the Izenbek's plank published by Sergei Lesnoy. Judging from that publication, the Izenbek's planks must be considered a falsification, and furthermore, a very crude one. With the current condition of philology it is not difficult to reconstruct the pre-Slavic language existed in the first millennium, and a better educated falsifier would try to do that.*
>
> *Instead of that, the Izenbek's planks (again, based only on the "Vles Book") appear to be an unskilled mishmash of old and new forms and absolutely fantastic constructions, which could not exist either in the pre-Slavic, or in any languages descended from it. Concerning this, my opinion is peremptory, indeed.*



Sergei Paramonov, 1960s [PA]

S. Lesnoy undertook what is not his business, and I do entirely agree with you in this. He was an excellent entomologist and the very best specialist in Australian flies, but he had no philological training, and this is why he has swallowed the bait of such a crude fake. I must defend him in one thing: he was working in the Russian history not for own glory, but from a poorly understood patriotism, which is even much worse. I spent the Summer 1967 in Canberra and met him almost every day; he was a pleasant and modest person."

Galina Zaitzeva, a scientist of the Institute of Hydrobiology of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences in Kyiv visited the University of Canberra on September 8, 1967. Paramonov, who was infirm at the time, invited her and two other scientists from the USSR to visit him at his home.

Sergei Paramonov, last known photo, 1966 [PA]

"Professor's apartment was in the University house for teachers and included two little rooms. Professor Paramonov was lying in one of them on the bed…

Despite the weakness, Sergei Yakovlevich showed a big interest in the destinies of his colleagues he had worked with in Kyiv. He asked me about Kryshtal, Kirpichenko, Pidoplichko, Radzimovsky and others: where are they and what do they study.

He told a lot about himself, or better said, about his work but nothing about his life. He told us that he works with passion on the translations of ancient Russian books, and among of them, "The Song of Igor's Campaign", in which he eliminated a lot of errors made by other translations. He told that Australia has heaps of work for zoologists, and especially for entomologists. The insect fauna of the numerous oceanic islands is very rich and almost entirely unexplored.

He expressed regrets that the Soviet Union has lost many scientists, who have not come back after the war and work in other countries. He asked if there are still Ukrainians in the Ukrainian Academy and if it is still possible to hear Ukrainian speech in Kyiv. He vividly examined an illustrated guide book of Ukraine, which I brought him as a souvenir.
His speech was very vivid, distinct, and connected, so it was impossible to think that this was the speech of an old and ill person near death. Perhaps it was because of a buoyancy he felt due to meeting with a compatriot, and a Kyivan. We talked more than an hour and then he said that my visit to him was a great gift of fate. He expressed hope that he would attend the International Meeting of Entomologists in Moscow in August, 1968.

His last words to me were regards he sent to his colleagues in Kyiv, in particular, to Kryshtal, Nosal, Pidoplichko, Radzimovsky, Lyashenko, and especially to Zerov, with whom he had travelled in Turkmenistan. He asked not to give his regards to Charlemagne, though he asked about him…"

Soon after that, his condition dramatically worsened. His friends from the Ukrainian diaspora appointed an old Ukrainian woman to look after him. While in consciousness, he bequeathed his savings toward the building of the temple of Ukrainian Autocephalic Church in Turner, A.C.T.

Sergei Paramonov did not want to die in a hospital, but the administration of the house did not want him to die at home. On the 19th of September he fell into coma and was moved to a clinic where died on September, 22, 1967. Four days before his junior brother Oleksiy died in Bordon (England).

Sergei Paramonov grave, Woden, A.C.T.

Paramonov's official obituary was written by his junior colleague and friend, Edgar F. Riek. Zenta-Rosalia Liepa prepared the bibliography and the list of taxa described by Sergei Paramonov. She prepared a parcel with his publications, a few manuscripts, and photographs. This archive was sent to Kyiv, but was described in 2014 and then published[1] in 2017 by Dr. Andriy I. Shapoval.

Ukrainian friends buried Sergei Yakovych Paramonov in the Woden cemetery in the A.C.T. His tomb has two inscriptions: one in English, and another in Ukrainian:

"*Here rests in God Dr Serhiy Yakowich Paramoniv. Born 4.11.1894 died 22.9. 1967. Rest in peace dear friend as Australian soil is to be a bed for your body. Your friends G. Horilchenko & S. Mandryk. Laid to rest by the very reverend A. Tedorowych*"

«*Тут з Богом спочиває доктор Сергій Якович Парамонів нар. 4.11.1894 помер 22.9. 1967. Спи дорогий друже, нехай тобі австралійська земля буде легкою. Друзі Г. Горільченко, М. Мандрик, похоронив отець протопресвітер А. Теодорович*».

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Photographs used in this paper are deposited in Paramonov Archive of the Vernadsky Library of the NAS of Ukraine, Kyiv [PA] and National Library of Australia [NLA]; otherwise, they are in public domain or taken by Valery Korneyev.

1 Shapoval, A.I. (2017). *Documents of S. Ya. Paramonov in the funds of the V.I .Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine : a source study : scientific catalogue*. Institute of Archive Studies of the V.I. Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine, Kyiv (2016): 352 pp.

Post Scriptum to the English version of Paramonov's biography

Valery A. Korneyev

I began looking and studying documents trying to find out Paramonov's identity ten years ago. After all these years I am convinced that I must put it to a full stop. It sounds strange, but I finally got a feeling precisely described in the Grand Finale of Nabokov's *"The Real Life of Sebastian Knight"*:

"The end, the end. They all go back to their everyday life…
but the hero remains, for, try as I may, I cannot get out of my part:
Sebastian's mask clings to my face, the likeness will not be washed off.
I am Sebastian, or Sebastian is I, or perhaps we both are
someone whom neither of us knows."

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