

## O B I T U A R I E S

## FELIX BRYK (1882-1957)

FELIX BRYK died a few days before his 75th birthday and was buried just on this day, 13 January 1957. I lost in him a faithful friend whom it was always a pleasure to meet, due to his great intelligence and general culture. I won't however, describe this personal relationship, nor his importance as a Linné investigator, as publicist in the domain of other scientific subjects, nor about his activities of a general entomological nature. As his pupil and co-operator, I feel especially prompted to underline BRYK's importance as a parnassiologist. It is the parnassiology—the total domain of the Parnassiidae—in which he was enthusiastically interested. In this field BRYK did fundamental work by which he has been given an eternal monument. It would take too much space to enumerate all his publications. I therefore restrict myself to mentioning the principal ones:

*Lepidoptera Catalogus: Baroniidae, Teinopalpidae, Parnassiidae, Papilionidae.*

*Parnassius apollo L. und sein Formenkreis.*

*Das Tierreich: Baroniidae, Teinopalpidae, Parnassiidae pars I; Parnassiidae pars II (subfam. Parnassiinae).*

*Parnassiana*, the periodical under his own management.

Though the views expressed by BRYK in these works may change on the strength of results of new studies, the investigator in this field will always have to base himself on these documents. The decease of FELIX BRYK means a great loss to entomological science.

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## ALEKSANDR MIKHAILOVICH DJAKONOV (1888-1956)

On the 1st of April, 1956, died in Leningrad ALEKSANDR MIKHAILOVICH DJAKONOV (D'AKONOV), an eminent Russian naturalist. He was born on the 4th of January, 1886, the oldest son of MIKHAIL ALEKSANDROVICH DJAKONOV, Professor of the History of the Russian Law, and of NADEZHDA ALEKSANDROVNA PORETSKAJA, a scholar of Russian literature. The deceased had many talents. He was an excellent draftsman; in his youth he drew so well that he was advised to become a professional engraver. He developed more than one speciality: he was interested in Odonata, but more so in Lepidoptera, chiefly Geometridae and Microlepidoptera. Besides he was an eminent specialist of the Echinodermata of the U.S.S.R. Furthermore he worked on general biology, zoogeography, and geography.

The earliest record of his enthusiasm for entomology I learned from his mother. She recalled an excursion of the very young entomologist, and his first encounter of a *Papilio machaon*. So great was his childish enthusiasm that he did not trust his own hands that shook, but asked his mother to catch the butterfly.

Official records of his scientific activity begin with the year 1906 — an expedition to the White Sea, together with K. SAINT-ISERE. In 1910 followed a stay at the Murmansk Biological Station, and in 1913 a European trip: to Copenhagen, where he attended classes of MONTERSON, to Strassburg (DÖDERLEIN), to Stockholm (TILL), to Berlin and Stuttgart.

The following is an impressive list of collecting trips and expeditions of the later years, which are evidence of his never-ceasing activity: 1907 Switzerland, 1908 Saxony, 1909 Ural, 1911 Crimea, 1913 France, 1915 Barents Sea, 1920-1921, 1923 Olonets Expedition, 1926-1927 Ussuri Region, 1924, 1925, 1927, 1930, 1931, 1935, 1937-1939 Crimea

and Caucasus, 1927 Armenia, 1931 Akhalkalak Plateau, 1935 Northern Caucasus, 1941-1945 are the years of the evacuation of the Zoological Institute of the Academy of Sciences to Alma-Ata, 1934 Japan Sea, 1947, 1949 Kurilo-Sakhalin Expedition.

From the alternation of marine and land excursions we may deduce how regularly he divided his attention and interest between the Echinodermata and Insects. However great his interest was for the Lepidoptera, eye trouble, which seems to have been remedied by surgery only partially, forced him to concentrate on larger objects — the Echinodermata. His publications on this phylum amount to some 80 titles, while some 35 papers concern taxonomy, biology, and distribution of Lepidoptera. The number of his papers on other subjects is not known to me.

The deceased was a member of the Russian Entomological Society since 1912, and its Honorary Secretary from 1922 till 1932. He was on the staff of the Zoological Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the U. S. S. R., of Leningrad. His collections will probably go to that Institute.

He was married, but had no children.

However short my personal contact with my uncle was, hardly half a year in the winter of 1922-1923, he influenced the choice of my specialisation, and herewith affected my whole subsequent life. Never shall I forget my first visit to his Leningrad home, where in neat cabinets small size glass-top boxes stood in many rows in book-fashion — and my gasp of admiration at the sight of the contents of such a box! Hundreds of minute Microlepidoptera, masterfully set — for my uncle was a virtuoso at mounting and setting — all arranged in meticulous order. This was an important moment of my life; the choice of my entomological specialisation was then made. I was 15 then. Never did I regret the choice.

I recall a very tall, fair man in his middle thirties, always extremely kind, attentive, and nice to me. Unforgettable evenings of entomological chats, instruction, and planning of joint excursions followed upon my first visit, but, alas, ended too soon by my departure from Russia. In subsequent years we had very little contact. In 1946 I heard that ALEKSANDR MIKHAILOVICH was awarded an order, at his 60th birthday, for his merits for the science of the U. S. S. R.

His death made an end to a rich life, such a life as any naturalist might wish for himself. The indefatigable traveler and collector may rest now. Our sympathy goes to his wife.

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