

# In Memoriam

Vesevolod Pavlovich Zenkovich

On August 15, 1994, Professor Vesevolod Pavlovich Zenkovich, famous coastal geographer and pioneer of the "Russian school" of coastal geomorphology, died at the age of 84.

His career in coastal studies began in Murmansk in the late 1920's when he participated in a field project under the leadership of Prof. Mariya Klenova, a prominent figure in Russian marine geology, and wrote his first papers on problems along the coast of the White Sea and the Kola Peninsula. During those years an acquaintance with the book "Shore Processes and Shoreline Development" by Douglas Johnson directed the course of Zenkovich's interests for the rest of his life.

Beginning in 1937 Prof. Zenkovich worked in Moscow at the Hydrometeorological Institute, the Institute of Geography, Moscow State University, and the Institute of Oceanology of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. During the pre-war years he developed new concepts and methods in the study of coastal evolution and morphology as he carried out field studies on the coasts of the Barents, Black and Caspian seas. In the first months of World War II he built engineering defense structures west of Moscow, and later carried out geological investigations aimed at the defense of the Urals region and Iran. After the war Zenkovich organized the laboratory of coastal morphology and dynamics at the Institute of Oceanology, the first such facility in this field in the former Soviet Union, and also established the still operational Commission on Sea Coasts at the Soviet Academy of Sciences to bring together coastal specialists from Kaliningrad to Vladivostok.

Subsequently Prof. Zenkovich conducted field studies on the coasts of northern and eastern Russia, Poland, the Netherlands, Yugoslavia, Vietnam, Egypt, Mexico, Cuba, and China; and had numerous students from around the world. He established, in the Republic of Georgia, the first Soviet organization to combine research and experimental studies with the design and construction of coastal defense structures. Later, organizations of this type were established by his former students in Baku, Odessa, Krasnodar, the Russian Far East and the Baltic states.

His pioneering methodological approach to sea coasts as complex natural phenomena influenced by interaction with the lithosphere, hydrosphere, and atmosphere was clearly expressed in his many books, among them "Dynamics and Morphology of Sea Coasts" (1946), "Coasts of the Black Sea" (1954), and "Foundations of the Theory of Coastal Evolution" (1962). For the latter Zenkovich was awarded the Lenin's Premium, the highest degree in the former Soviet Union, and a revised English version of the book was published in 1967 as the highly acclaimed "Processes of Coastal Development." At about the same time he initiated translation of books by Francis Shepard and Cuchlaine King into Russian. In the 1980s, he became interested in the role of submarine canyons in the dynamics of the coastal zone, repeatedly diving into canyons along the Black Sea coast in research submersibles.

Aside from his scientific endeavors Prof. Zenkovich was an accomplished singer, water-color painter and swimmer.

The passing of Prof. V. P. Zenkovich marks the end of an era in the former Soviet Union and a great loss to the world-wide coastal community. He will be sorely missed by all those who learned so much about coastal processes from his writings, and especially by those who were fortunate enough to share his gracious friendship and warm smile.

Pavel Kaplin  
Andrew Selivanov  
Geography Faculty  
Moscow University  
Moscow 119899, Russia

Maurice Schwartz  
Department of Geology  
Western Washington University  
Bellingham, WA 98225, USA