IN MEMORIAM

Raisa Pavlovna Mikhailova (1936–2008)

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A senior researcher of the Dokuchaev Soil Science Institute Raisa Pavlovna Mikhailova—the leading soil cartographer and the editor of many pages of the State Soil Map of Russia—passed away on May 20, 2008.

Mikhailova was born on July 10, 1936, in the town of Kozel'sk in Kaluga oblast. In 1953, she finished high school in the town of Sukhinichi with a medal and entered the Geographical Faculty of Moscow State University. In 1958, she graduated from the university with excellent scores.

Her field experience was very vast. She worked in Poltava and Sumy oblasts of Ukraine, in the Krasnoyarsk and Transbaikalian regions, in the Urals, and in Yaroslavl oblast in central Russia. These soil survey works shaped her as a researcher with broad geographic horizons. In 1959–1965, Mikhailova worked at the Geographical Faculty of Moscow State University. She participated in large-scale soil-landscape and geochemical studies in the Central Urals under the supervision of Prof. M.A. Glazovskaya. Mikhailova was a coauthor of the landscape-geochemical map of this region on a scale of 1 : 500000; she also contributed to the development of innovative landscape-geochemical methods of mineral ore prospecting.

In 1965, Mikhailova was invited to the Dokuchaev Soil Science Institute. She continued her studies in the Urals and organized several expeditions to remote and difficultly accessible parts of this region. In 1975, she successfully defended her candidate dissertation devoted to raw-humus brown forest soils of the middle taiga zone in the Urals. This work was supervised by Prof. E.N. Ivanova. The diagnostics of these soils and the classification decisions suggested by Mikhailova were included in the *Classification and Diagnostic System of Soils of the USSR* (1977).

In 1973–1974, Mikhailova was an active member of the organizing committee of the X International Soil Science Congress in Moscow. She participated in editing and preparation of the congress abstracts for publication (this group was headed by F.R. Zaidel'man). Mikhailova participated in a large project on medium-scale soil mapping with representation of the soil cover patterns in Yaroslavl oblast. She was an editor of the monograph *Pochvennyi pokrov Nechernozem'ya i ego ratsional'noe ispol'zovanie* (The Soil Cover of Nonch-

ernozemic Regions and Its Rational Management), in which the major results of this long-term work were summarized (1986).

In the recent decades, Mikhailova was engaged in small-scale soil cartography. She worked on the compilation of the State Soil Map (1 : 1 M scale). She was a coauthor of the map sheets “Krasnovishersk” and “Ivdel” and the explanatory notes to them; she also prepared an explanatory note to the map sheet “Yerevan–Tbilisi.” The larger part of her work on this project remained unpublished. Mikhailova edited many sheets of the map on the territory of the Urals and Western and Eastern Siberia. As an editor of the map, she realized her talent as a soil geographer in full measure. This scrupulous work required inner discipline, perfect self-organization, and a careful attitude to the initial cartographic and other materials sent to her by the authors from different parts of Russia. Mikhailova had to generalize and harmonize different cartographic sources and to show the soil cover patterns on the final map in the most comprehensible way. The contribution of Mikhailova to the State Soil Map of Russia can hardly be overestimated. Unfortunately, many of the map sheets have remained unpublished due to the economic difficulties of the recent decades. At present, hand-made copies of these sheets are stored in the cartographic archive of the Dokuchaev Soil Science Institute. Regular communications and discussions of the map contents with the authors of the initial cartographic materials from different research institutes of Russia and the coordination of efforts on the map compilation and editing were of particular importance. Mikhailova enjoyed the well-deserved reputation of an expert in soil geography among all her colleagues.

Mikhailova worked on the map until her last days. In spite of her progressing cancer, she remained an affable, attentive, and highly responsive person.

Raisa Pavlovna Mikhailova is one of the best representatives of a generation of Russian pedologists with profound field experience, great responsibility, and dedication to our science. We miss you dear Raisa.

V.V. Dokuchaev Soil Science Institute

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