

gyz-Russian Slavic University (KRSU) where she worked for twenty years until she emigrated to Russia. She completed her archaeological fieldwork in 2001, but continued her research within the framework of lecturing at the departments of history and cultural studies of the university from 1995 to 2009, and on world cultures and religions for UNESCO from 1999 to 2015. She also taught the philosophy of science from 2009 to 2015. In 2002 she was awarded the medal for the State Prize of the Kyrgyz Republic and given the title of Laureate of the State for her work on a series of history textbooks on the Kyrgyz and Kyrgyzstan together with a team of co-authors.

After defending her doctoral dissertation in 2011 which summarized the study of the medieval urban culture of the Turkic Khaganates of the Tian Shan region over the past several decades, she continued to participate in the public life of the university and the country. As a prominent scholar and a promoter of science and culture, she was a member of a number of governmental commissions and international projects on the preservation of cultural heritage and on religious policy in Kyrgyzstan. At the same time, she was a member of academic councils in all the organizations where she worked, including her positions of a full-time scientific secretary of the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Kirghiz SSR

(1974–1978); a scientific secretary of the Dissertation Council at the Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University for the specialties of National History and Political Science; and a member of the Dissertation Council on the specialties of Archeology and Ethnology at the Balasagyn Kyrgyz State University; and at the Institute of History and Cultural Heritage of the National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Valentina Dmitriyevna Goryacheva now lives in Krasnodar, Russia, but she has not lost ties with her native Kyrgyzstan and is highly respected by her friends, colleagues, and former students. Her kindness and cordiality towards them are well known. Therefore, on their behalf, we congratulate Valentina Dmitriyevna on her birthday and wish her many years to come, good health, inexhaustible energy, and further creative success.

Bakyt Amanbayeva,

PhD, Institute of History, Archeology,
and Ethnology of the National Academy
of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic

Saida Ilyasova,

PhD, Center for Archaeological Research
of the Academy of Sciences
of the Republic of Uzbekistan

LYDIA LVOVNA RTVELADZE (BUKINICH) – ARCHAEOLOGIST, HISTORIAN, ARCHIVIST

LYDIA LVOVNA RTVELADZE was a renowned expert on archeology, archival studies, and the history of Central Asian architecture and restoration. She was born on March 8, 1942 in the Turkmen village of Darvaza, now lost to the Karakum Desert, her birthplace no longer exists. Her maiden name, Bukinich, was well known in scientific circles. Her great uncle Dmitriy Demyanovich Bukinich (1882-1939) was a famous Central Asian explorer who discovered many archaeological sites, including the ancient agricultural settlement of Namazga Depe in the foothills of the Kopet Dag. This site eventually became the symbol for stratigraphy in the region. By that time, the Bukinich family were already indigenous Turkestan residents, since their ancestors moved to the Turkestan region (first to Kazalinsk, and then to Tashkent) in the second half of the 19th century.¹

Lyalya (which is what her family called her), was born to a mother with different roots. Elizaveta Arkhipovna Shcherbakova was Ukrainian, from the city of Berdyansk by the Sea of Azov. After graduating from high school in Charkiv, she was sent to Tashkent by assignment where fate brought her together with D.D. Bukinich's nephew – Lev Bukinich. Lev was a mining engineer, or a mine surveyor, as they were then known at the time, with very high qualifications. During World War II, he was sent to work in the Turkmen SSR, where Elizaveta gave birth to his daughter, Lydia. In 1946. Following completion of his work in the salt mines, the family returned to Tashkent in modern day Uzbekistan.

¹ *Rtveladze E.V. Lydia Lvovna Rtveladze (Bukinich). Biographical Travels // Life, Science, Family. The manuscript of the book, which is being prepared for publication in Tashkent in 2020.*



Fig. 1. Archaeologist, Candidate of Historical Sciences Lazar Izrailiyevich Albaum, fourth-year student Lydia Bukinich, photographer-archaeologist Efim Naumovich Yuditskiy, and Professor Mikhail Evgeniyevich Masson during a photography session with a painted vase from the Buddhist complex in Merv. Tashkent, 1963. Archive of G.A. Pugachenkova

In 1959, after graduating from high school, Lydia Bukinich entered the history faculty of Tashkent State University where she studied in the Department of Archeology which in those years was headed by its founder, the Academician Mikhail Evgeniyevich Masson. From 1964 to 1972 she worked at the Institute of Archaeology of the Academy of Sciences of the Uzbek SSR as a laboratory assistant and a junior researcher. Then, she worked in the Special Scientific Restoration and Production Studios (SSRPS) and for almost a quarter of a century, she was in charge of the archive of the Main Scientific and Production Department for the Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments of Uzbekistan.

Lydia participated in many archaeological expeditions and architectural studies of historical locations such as Bactria, Margiana, Sogd, Fergana, Khwarazm, and Chach. She authored several works on Central Asian archaeology and architectural history as well as a number of popular science publications.

The Best Archivist

In 1978, when the topic of my thesis at the Faculty of Architecture of the Tashkent Pedagogical Institute was chosen, entitled “The Study and Restoration Project of the 15th century Kok Gumbaz Mosque in Shakhrisabz.” my diploma supervisor was the great connoisseur of the Central Asian architecture, Professor Vladimir Anatoliyevich Nielsen. He sent me to the archives of the Main Scientific and Production Department for the Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments of Uzbekistan and to its head, Lydia Rtveladze. “If you tell her the topic of the thesis, she will help you find the materials you need,” my teacher counseled.

I entered a large building with a multi-pillared portico in front of the entrance at Navoiy Street, which then housed the Ministry of Culture and its subdivision, the aforementioned Main Scientific and Production Department for the Protection of Histor-

ical and Cultural Monuments of Uzbekistan. For a long time, there was a rich archive there, occupying three rooms that was very densely packed with materials. The head of the archive, Lydia Rtveladze, sat in the first, central room filled with offices containing shelves from floor to ceiling. In the large room on the right were mainly albums and folders with measurements of architectural monuments and drawings of restoration projects, as well as all their related materials. The smaller room to the right held a library with a rich collection of books and field reports from architects, archaeologists, and ethnographers.

Lydia turned out to be a very charming young woman with a short haircut and radiant smiling eyes. I explained to her the purpose of my visit and she suddenly became very serious and focused. Soon I realized that she kept in her head almost the entire archive and sometimes knew almost precisely what and where things were. She took it upon herself which materials and in what sequence to give to the immature, future specialist which was me at that time.

Lydia, then pointed to several cabinets with bibliography cards arranged alphabetically and by topic. She herself went to a nearby storage room to gather the materials exactly on my topic.

Afterwards, I went there regularly, either before my thesis defense or later after I was hired to work at the Uzbek Scientific Research Project Institute of Restoration and for all the subsequent years until Lydia Rtveladze retired in 1997. She always kindly helped everyone to identify archival materials; she treated all the researchers with equal seriousness and with respect, whether they were a university graduate, a restorer, or a venerable scientist. The archive of the Main Scientific and Production Department for the Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments of Uzbekistan, though huddled only in three rooms, contained thousands of unique materials. In terms of the wealth and value of the documents, it was a genuine gold mine for researchers! The collection included rare documents related to the study, restoration and preservation of the architectural heritage and cultural material from the end of the 19th century until the end of the 1990s. These were the materials of the first specialized institutions from the early Soviet days that replaced each other under various names (*Sredazkomstaris* / The Central Asian Committee on Antiquity and Arts, *Uzkomstaris* / The Uzbek Committee on Antiquity and Arts, etc.). It also included pre-revolutionary, illustrated publications and other rarities, field diaries of famous Central Asian researchers of antiquity, and much more – everything that was attractive and extremely significant for each researcher. The archive also contained measurement drawings, pre-project studies, restoration projects, and much more that were created over almost a

century by true professionals in the field of heritage preservation. One of the most valuable objects there was the photo archive with almost a century's worth of history containing photo negatives on both film as well as large-format glass plates. That particular archive was well known to numerous Central Asian researchers and it was a center of attraction for many of them. There was no reading room in the archive and strangers were not allowed to take materials outside its walls. Yet, Lydia Rtveladze in her own work room allocated a place for each of them at a small table, creating the basic conditions for a workspace. There I met many famous scholar-architects including the Academician G.A. Pugachenkova and the art historian, Dr. L.Y. Mankovskaya who later played a significant role in my scientific development. I also met famous architectural restorers such as N.N. Kuzmina, K.S. Kryukov, and others along with colleagues who came to the archive from the neighboring republics.

It was evident that Lydia, as an intelligent, kind and sympathetic person, was the soul of the whole department's team. Her colleagues visited her often and many of them affectionately and warmly also called her Lyalya. Over the years, she began to trust me as a regular user who carefully handled all the materials and allowed me to enter into the "sanctum sanctorum" or the room with archival rarities. Quite often, rather than the cafeteria at lunchtime, we got along with sandwiches in her work room and had such pleasant conversations over tea! I was always glad to talk with her as my wise, elder friend. In her conversations, Lydia was very delicate and even when discussing or-



Fig. 2. Lydia Lvovna Rtveladze and Edward Vasiliyevich Rtveladze. Archive of E.V. Rtveladze



Fig. 3. From left to right: Doctor of Art History Valentina Vitaliyevna Luneva, Edward Vasiliyevich Rtveladze, Mavlyuda Aminzhanovna Abbasova-Yussupova, Yelena Vladimirovna Potorochina, Lydia Lvovna Rtveladze. March 8, 2020

dinary female topics she remained extremely proper, kept her distance, and never stooped to the level of gossip. I observed that aristocratic quality of hers until the final days of her life. To me, Lydia Rtveladze has been the best, most competent and highly professional archivist of all her local and foreign colleagues whom I have ever worked with.

After the renowned archaeologist M.E. Masson's death, his entire archive and the furnishings of his personal home office were transferred by his wife, G.A. Pugachenkova, to the department's archive. At that time it was the right decision transferring that precious collection into the reliable, careful and highly professional hands of his former student, Lydia Rtveladze. For Masson's personal office, which included an old desk and armchair, and most importantly, his library and archives, a special room was allocated at the department, and was called "Masson's office." Lydia took a long time and carefully entered into the official catalog the data on the contents of her mentor's archive. Sometimes, going through the folders with Masson's manuscripts and diaries, she spent much

more time than was allotted for those duties since she could not tear herself away from reading them, especially some impressive fragments.

I remember an episode when she read me one of her teacher's aphorisms. "Listen, how right words these are!" Lydia exclaimed, while reading M.E. Masson's note, "A dead sage is like a burnt-out library!" It was said so precisely given the place and circumstances of that moment. I remembered those words well and sometimes, in appropriate cases, I quote the aphorism.

Of course, Lydia Rtveladze treated Masson with great reverence. She learned from him the history of Central Asia and the basics of archaeology; under his leadership she conducted a number of her professional excavations. In particular, during the Southern Turkmen Archaeological Complex Expedition in Old Merv at the ancient settlement of Gyaur Kala, Lydia participated in the excavations of the Buddhist temple complex which included a huge head of the Buddha and a unique painted vessel of the Sasanian period with handwritten scrolls found inside! Subsequent-

ly, those findings were highlighted in many publications and information about them supplemented the picture of the ancient culture of Margiana. However, the very first article published about the findings was written by a fourth-year student of the history faculty – Lydia Bukinich – in the *Tashkent University* newspaper on February 18, 1963.

While on Masson's expeditions, she got to know her colleague and future husband, the dashing and handsome Georgian, Edik Rtveladze.

Wife, colleague, friend and ally

With Edward Vasiliyevich Rtveladze, who is now an Academician of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Lydia lived in love and harmony for over 55 years. Together they raised three wonderful and talented children who gave them wonderful grandchildren with whom they all celebrated their golden wedding anniversary.

Although a very successful field archaeologist, Lydia Rtveladze, following the birth of her children, decided to leave her main profession and went to work initially at the Special Scientific Restoration and Production Studios, and then in the studio's archive. This latter job was very close to her specialty. She had to support her family, raise the children and, of course, help her spouse who was himself a successful scientist. Despite her busy schedule, Lydia continued to do research on various topics and to publish interesting works. Those works included her articles in collections such as "Ancient Tashkent" (1972) and "Antiquities of Tashkent" (1974), which were dedicated to the studies of Binkent and the settlement of Khanabad. She also published, together with her husband, the book *Muslim Shrines of Uzbekistan* (1995, the second revised edition in 2020). While still working in the archive of the department, she gave me her "List of Restoration Works carried out on a Number of Monuments in Bukhara," which she compiled chronologically. It was similar to an ordinary working memo for department, but if that document and other lists of restoration work that Lydia Lvovna compiled included with other historical cities, it would undoubtedly be in demand by researchers were it published.

Since the late 1980s, I was fortunate enough to work for a quarter of a century in the department of art history which was and is still headed by the outstanding scholar and a remarkable person –

Edward Vasiliyevich Rtveladze. Over the years, it became clearer why Lydia gave way to her husband and began to support him in all his endeavors. Edward Rtveladze is a scientist from God, and he had to create a reliable foundation in all respects. As a fellow archaeologist, Lydia understood him well. She endured both the hardships and inconveniences of his profes-

sion with her husband's long absences (sometimes lasting for months) due to various expeditions and sometimes publishing the results of his research with funds from the family budget, just to name two examples. However, being a faithful friend and ally, she supported him in everything. After Lydia retired, we saw her less often, but invisibly she was always present in our team through her husband's stories or when he mentioned her briefly in our conversations. He created very trusting and friendly relationships within the department, along with an atmosphere of complete mutual understanding and a serious attitude to science. Cooperation as opposed to the spirit of rivalry reigned there. We always perceived him, together with his wife, as a single unit, and when we visited our boss at home on business or on his or Lydia's birthdays, we always had lively and interesting discussions. At the same time, Lydia Rtveladze constantly and deliberately stayed in her famous husband's shadow remaining refined and attentive to him and his visitors.

Her birthday coincided with International Women's Day (March 8th), and the female employees of our department who were friends with her, despite being busy on the holiday with their own families, tried to find time in order to visit and congratulate her. Fortunately, we managed to do the same on March 8, 2020. We talked very heartwarmingly and, when saying goodbye, did not at all think that we would see her for the last time. I was planning to visit Lydia especially to talk about the problems of the current restoration of architectural monuments, ask about some of the old restorers whom she remembered, reminisce about the former structure of the Main Scientific and Production Department for the Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments of Uzbekistan, and discuss many other professional topics that vividly interested both of us. I kept postponing my next visit, as I did not want to bother her. I kept waiting for her to feel better, and allowed my own daily routine to interfere as well. Unluckily, on March 15, Uzbekistan announced the introduction of a strict quarantine associated with the COVID-19 virus pandemic, and movement around the city was strictly prohibited. Exactly one-month later Lydia Lvovna Rtveladze was gone.

In my memory, she will always be the friendly, bright and pretty hostess of the archive and a gentle, caring, and hospitable mistress of the Rtveladze household, both from our first meeting, and after more than forty years.

Mavlyuda Abbasova-Yusupova,
Doctor of Architecture, Professor, Head of the
Department of Architecture,
Institute of Art Studies of the Academy of Sciences
of the Republic of Uzbekistan