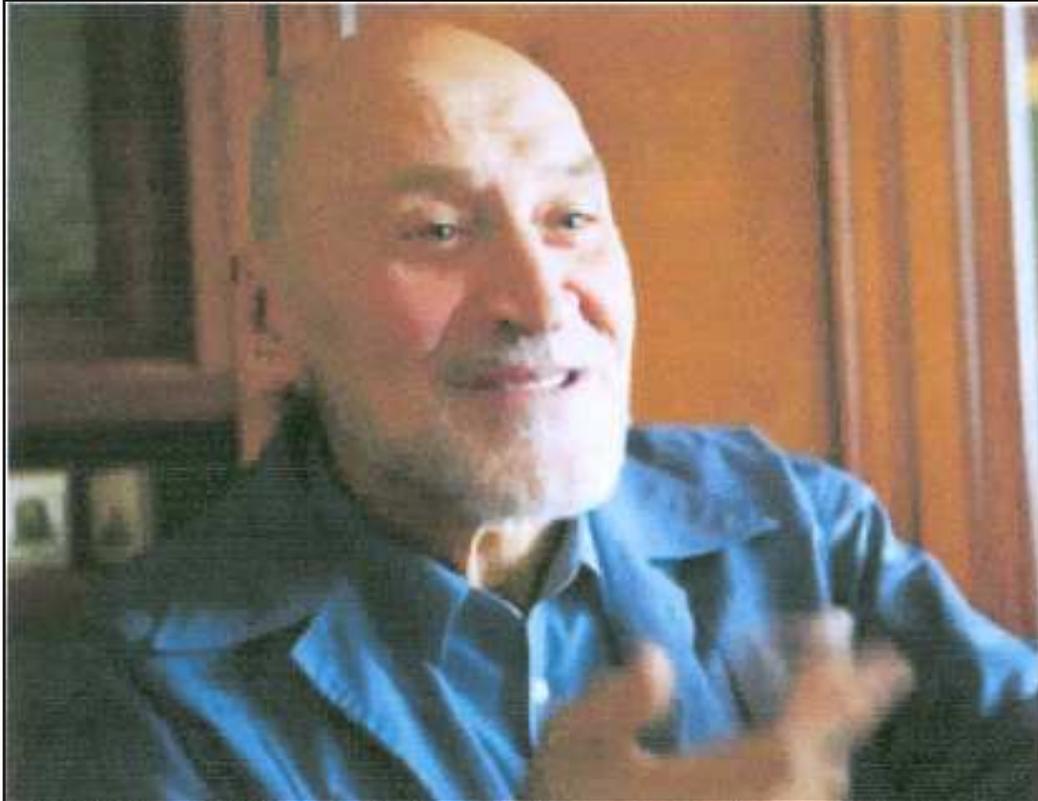


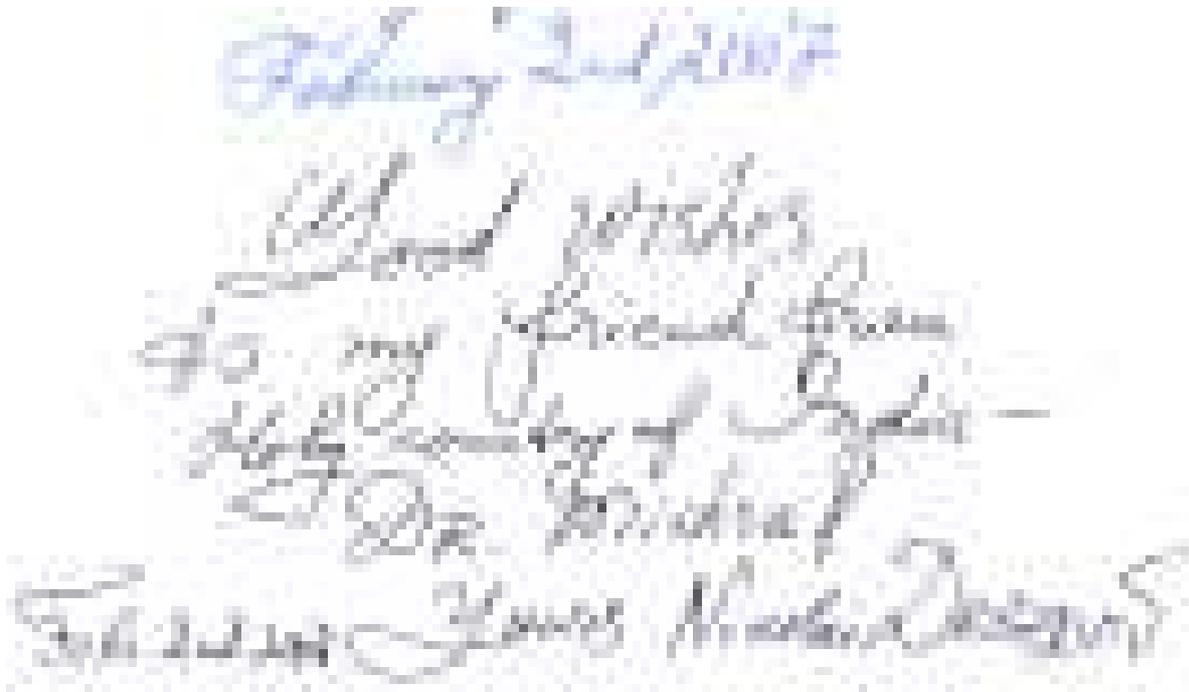
## **UNESCO Kalinga Prize Winner – 1994 Dr. Nikolay Nikolayevich Drozdov**



A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Nikolay Drozdov".

**Prolific Environmental Writer,  
World Renowned Biogeographer  
&  
Probably the Most Well Known Personality in Russia.**

**[Born : 20<sup>th</sup> June, 1937 in Moscow———]**



## Dr. Nikolai Nikolayevich Drozdov

### Recipient of the 1994 Kalinga Award for Popularisation of Science

#### Short Biography

**Nikolay Nikolayevich Drozdov** is probably the most well known person in Russia. Not only is he a cult-figure among the older generations; he is also much loved by Russian youngsters. It is not often that parent's tastes coincide with the taste of their children. Nikolay N. Drozdov is an exception to that rule. He is a TV presenter, Doctor of Biological Sciences, Professor of the Moscow State University and Academician of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences!

One can easily recognize the voice of Nikolay Drozdov, as we have known it since we were kids. His warmth and the Passionate interest that he shows to even the tiniest bug in the TV program "The World of Animals" are his trademarks. He has been the presenter of this program for over 30 years, and it continues to be very popular among the viewers. Generations have been raised on Nikolay Drozdov's animal tales, and he has gained lots of awards and recognition both in Russia and abroad, for these much loved programs and films, that he continues to make day by day.

Nikolay Nikolayevich is very active in public work. He is also a member of the commission of International Unity of Nature Protection, an author of over 20 books and one of a fifteen advisers to the General Secretary of the UN on ecology, a member of Academy of Science of New York and a member of International Research Club, an academician of Russian Academy of Television, a laureate of Golden Panda Award (also known as the Green Oscar) and the Kalinga prizewinner. He has traveled round the world on scientific vessels twice and took part in hundreds of expeditions. He is a dedicated vegetarian.

The love he feels for animals, the same love Nikolay Drozed feels for people. He gives the best he can to vulnerable people who find themselves in difficulties, especially children. Drozdov believes that if a baby feels loved, it is much more likely to become a good rounded responsible adult regardless of all the afflictions and struggles it would have come through. Therefore, Nikolay Nikolayevich does everything he can to protect them from suffering, as his life motto is **"All you need is to feel an urgent desire to help people in every way you can"**.

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### Life Motto of Nikolai Drozdov

Born in Moscow in 1937, Nikolai Drozdov graduated from Moscow University in 1963. He undertook post-graduate training in Biogeography in 1964-68 and did his doctorate in 1968 on the Ornithofauna of the deserts of the USSR.

In 1971-72 he worked as a Research Fellow at the Australian National University (Canberra) and published a book called *The Flight of the Boomerang* about his journey through Australia, about animals, nature and nature conservation. It instantly became a bestseller and over 100,000 copies of its two editions published in 1980 and 1988 were sold out within a couple of weeks of its release.

One of the many scientific expeditions in which Dr Drozdov has taken part is UNESCO's Man and Biosphere project on the "Conservation and Rational Use of the Island Ecosystem Resources". This four-month expedition on board the scientific research ship *Callisto* was held on the Pacific Islands of Tonga and Samoa.

For the last twenty-three years Dr Drozdov has been presenting a bi-monthly television programme called

*In the World of Animals*. This highly popular one hour programme on animal life in the vast CIS territory is watched by approximately 200 million viewers. Recently, his six-part PBS television series – *Realms of the Russian Bear* – has also received wide acclaim. He has authored or co-authored a number of video and TV films on nature and animals and been on the jury of several films festivals and television programmes devoted to the same subject. In 1992 he won the Golden Panda for outstanding achievement at the Wildscreen Festival in Bristol.

In 1989 he was included in the **Global 500**, a list drawn up by the United Nations Environment Programme of the world's leading ecologists and specialists in Environmental Protection.

Presently Associate Professor of Biogeography at Moscow State University, Dr Drozdov is a prolific writer. His publications include 23 books and 183 research papers in biology, geography and nature conservation as well as text books and educational manuals for schoolchildren, students and teachers.

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## Dr. Nikolai Drozdov - A Profile Par Excellence

Narrator of Programme “Animal Planet” (V mire zhivotnikh)



**Dr. Nikolai Nikolayevich Drozdov**, Associate Professor of Biogeography at Moscow State University, has been awarded the Kalinga Prize for science popularization, for the year 1994. The Kalinga Prize was instituted by UNESCO by India’s Shri Biju Patnaik, Founder and Chairman of the Kalinga Foundation Trust. The Prize is awarded every year to a person who has, as a writer, editor, lecturer, radio/TV programme director, or film producer, made exceptional contribution in the field of science popularization, and who also has an understanding of the role of science and technology and general research in the solution of problems of humanity , enrichment of the cultural heritage of nations and improvements in the welfare of the common people.

1994 award winner, Dr. Drozdov is a prolific writer. His publications include 23 books and 183 research papers in biology, geography and nature conservation as well as text books and educational manuals for school children, students and teachers. For the last twenty three years Dr. Drozdov has been presenting a bimonthly television programme called “*In the world of animals*”.

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"Internet- a great network that has overwhelmed the soul of human race. If this force can help creating kindness, wisdom & superior soul & intellect, then this could be the best thing that one can ever perceive. I am still in the process of learning it. Would like to get into this network & find the possibility to make this a better intelligent & fertile network which will bring people more happiness & fortune. The goal of internet should not be confined only to getting information, but also to spread happiness of human interaction".

### Biography:

Nikolai Nikolaivich Drozdov was born on 20<sup>th</sup> June, 1937 in Moscow. While still studying in school, during summer vacations he used to tend horses in the horse breeding center in the Moscow suburbs. After completing school, Nikolai joined the biology department of Moscow State University named after M.V. Lomonosov. He completed the Biogeography stream under the geography department of MSU in 1963. In 1968, he presented his pre-PhD papers in Bio-geography. As of date he works in the Biogeography stream in the department of Geography at the Moscow State University. In the year 2000 he presented his research papers on "Animal planet and conservation of nature in the deserts of the world". In 2001, he was made professor of the department.

Nikalai Drozdov happens to be one of the most recognized scientists and respected teacher in the Moscow State University. He gives lectures on ecology, ornithology, conservation of nature, the biogeographic world & constantly invited to give talks in the schools & youth recreation centers sponsored by "Knowledge" (Znanie). As a researcher, far east, Kuril Islands, Pamir, Tyanshan Ranges, Karakum to name a few. During 1971-72, he underwent a ten month scientific course in the department of zoology at the Australian National University, Canberra. He travelled far and wide in Australia and published a

book on his travels called "Flight of Boomerang". The book has been published 5 times so far.

Since 1968 till date – for more than 30 years he has been taking part in the popular television programme "Animal Planet" (V Mire zhivotnikh), at first as a narrator along with Alexander Mikhailovich Zguridi and since 1977 as anchor as well as author of the programme. Nikolai Drozdov is author and co-author of many tele and video films on nature and animals. In 1995, the programme "V mire zhivotnikh" was awarded the prestigious TEFI award as best in the educational and informative category. Drozdov was elected as member of Russian Academy of Television in 1996. As part of the group of mountaineers he conquered the Elbrus peak in 1979. He took part in a four month long UNESCO expedition on "conservation and rational use of resources in island eco systems" on the USSR Academy of Science's vessel "Calisto" and travelled through islands of Fiji, Tonga & Samoa in 1980. In 1993 & 1995, he took part in the expedition to North Pole on the Russian ice-breaker "Yamal" along North Sea route and also in the ship "Discoverer" along the coast of Alaska & Canada. In 2002, he took part in the expedition to the North Pole repeating the feat of Papalin's landing. Nikolai Drozdov is the author of about 200 scientific & popular scientific works, more than 20 books, text books and guides for students as well as teachers.

In 1989, Drozdov has been included to the distinguished list of leading ecologists and specialists in the field of environmental conservation of the world-UNEP's "Global-500". In 1992, he was awarded with "Golden Panda" (also, known as "Green Oscar") for his great achievements in the Bristol (UK) Film Festival on nature. In 1994, he was elected as a member to the international researchers' club known as Explores' Club. In 1995, he was awarded the UNESCO's "Kalinga Prize" for

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## Glossary on Kalinga Prize Laureates

popularizing science and also , Albert Einstein's medal.

Nikolai Drozdov was elected member of the New York Academy of Sciences in 1995. During 1996-98 he was member of Supreme Council on sustainable growth at the UN General Secretariat. In 1998, he was awarded the honorary Diploma by the World Environment Fund for his achievements & efforts in conserving the environment in Russia and in the world.

He was elected as member to the Russian Academy of Natural Science & Russian Ecological Academy in 2001.

In his leisure time at home, Nikolai Drozdov loves to interact with animals. His pets include snakes, spiders, phalanxes & scorpions. Loves equestrian sport, skiing, bathing outdoors in ice cold water in

winter, practices Yoga & for many years he is a vegetarian. His preferences in music are: Classical, romantic & folk music. He loves to play on guitar & sing in Russian & foreign languages. His wife, Tatyana Petrovna Drozdova works as a lecturer of biology in Moscow Artistic Palace for development of children & youth.

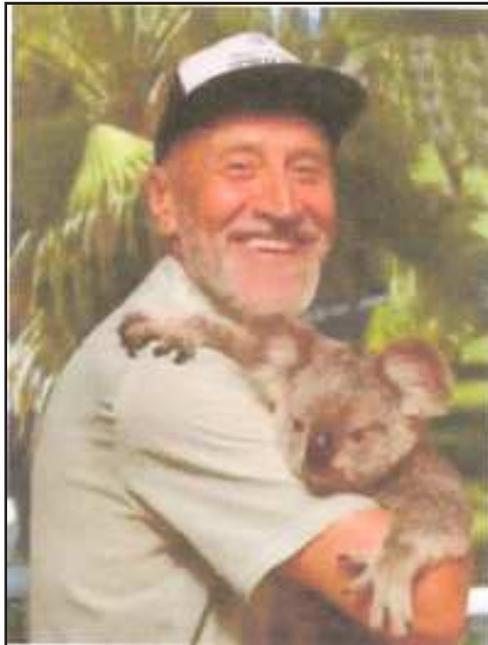
Nikolai Drozdov considers that his participation in the programme "The Last Hero" in 2003 as one of his greatest achievements." I never expected that I have to live for so long on a beach without food, without watch and telephone or without notebook. I, actually never felt discomfort without these amenities as I had gone through all these during my youth in numerous expeditions. It was only feeling of complete happiness. And my biggest achievement was that I shed 12 kilograms."



## **A Brief Profile on Grate Rusian Extraordinaire Personality Nikolai Nikolayevich Drozdov**

**by  
Anatoloy Bukin**

**Site : Alphabet (Newspaper)**



**Nikolai Drozdov (Russia) : Environmental writer and Biologist. Associate Professor of Faculty of Geography Miscow State University; Presenter & Producer of well known Russian TV Programme “In the world of Animals” & other nature Programmes. Took Part in the UNESCO Man & Biosphere expedition to the Pacific Islands of Tonga & Samoa . Author of 20 Books & numerous research papers on Biology, geography & nature conservation. Recipient of several International Awards. Received Professional education in the Russian Federation & Australia. Member of Explorers Club & Newyork Academy of Sciences.**

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He was the first among the anchors to receive the highest Russian Television prize, the “Golden Lyre” & afterwards became a tele academician. But long before the Moscow TEFI award, Drozdov was conferred the International Kalinga Prize. This award is being given for last 45 years for popularization of science and only five of our countrymen have been awarded this prize so far. And, even before that Nikolai was awarded with the famous “Golden Panda” prize also known as the “Green Oscar” at the Bristol (UK) Film Festival for the film “Kingdom of Russian bear’ made along with British biologist David Attenborough. Nikolai is the author of 20 books & more than 200 scientific works. He is one of the fifteen consultants at the UN Secretariat on ecology.

To his credit, he has couple of round the world expeditions on scientific research vessels and more than hundred other expeditions.

### **Secrets of Destiny :**

His mother was a doctor & his father was a professor in biochemistry, used to work in spheres like palaeontology, zoology & botany. He was good at Latin and Greek. Even at the age of 7 Nikolai used to maintain diary and was writing essays in Latin. As a small boy he dreamt of becoming the Centaur and requested his father seriously to do necessary operations on him. His father asked him to first learn horse riding. When only five, Nikolai was riding on horses and since 12 years of age during vacations he tended horses. Even today, Nikolai rides horse like a professional. In standard IX, when the family was living in Moscow, he was a member of workshop in Darwin museum.

With such a life style, it was obvious choice for young Nikolai to join biology department in a university. But, very soon Nikolai left university and went for tailoring profession. Deaf and dumb Freedman was a rare master talent and was a very good instructor. In his final exams, Nikolai made an excellent piece of over coat that got him a seven point mark instead of a general 3 points. It seemed at that point that

Drozdov is planning the career as a tailor. But, at this moment, he came to know that his idol, Professor Bannikov was teaching in the institute of pedagogy. Nikolai joined the biology department of that institute and later got himself transferred again to the university, this time along in the geology department. Then, he was studying under the supervision of Prof. Cheltsov, defending dissertation and then joined television.

### **Secrets of Bravery :**

If the famous joke within the scientific fraternity is justified which says “Science is the way to satisfy one’s curiosity at the expense of the Government”, then similarly Drozdov satisfies his passion towards travel and adventure at the expense of the television. But when asked about his adventures, one will just draw a blank. Drozdov does not have the habit of flaunting, still a few things that draws one’s attention. Like how once a bear cub bit his finger & he had no time to tend to his injury and so he had to wipe the bloodied finger with hair of the bear & carry on. Or, how in Tadjikstan, they caught a huge lebetina viper, the viper was struggling to get out, wriggling & slipping out of hand & you just can’t let it go as the camera was rolling and it was all very impressive to watch on television. And, of course he is not going to tell you that all these time you have to look at camera lens, narrate the text and at the same time you have to have that smile on your face for the benefit of the viewers. By the way, the poison of the viper can cause serosity and could be fatal & no such reliable remedy was at hand. Once, while shooting in Africa, it was required that the rhino should turn, so that the cameraman can take a better shot of the animal from inside his vehicle. Drozdov took the challenge, went quite near to the rhino, barely a safe distant to get back to the protection of the vehicle. He knew that when felt threatened, the rhino will charge in like a tank towards the source of its annoyance. Drozdov took his chance not sure whether he will be able to take cover in time. He succeeded in his attempt and a very good close be

managed. Drozdov had close encounters with the crocodiles, too. Once, he had to hit a crocodile on the face with a stick and break one of its teeth before the croc shied away from the cameraman who was in an imminent danger from the crocodile. His bravery can not be considered as thoughtless misadventures, but done with high standard of professionalism. He is a scientific consultant and it is required of him to know all about everything where he treads which includes the knowledge pertaining to behaviours of snakes, crocodiles, spiders, bears, cranes and so on. He has to know everything about them, their way of life, likings and disliking.

At present, specialization, reigns in all fields & so in biology. Whereas, some do their research only on fishes, others do it on birds. Herpetologists do their research exclusively on snakes. Drozdov's bravery as a tele-anchor lies in his in depth encyclopedic knowledge. He knows everything about anything.

### Secrets of Admiration:

Sound studio is the place where the voice of the narrator is mixed with the already shot video material. The process is known as voice-over. A programme consists of numerous short takes, for example, one part could be from an English film on pandas, next scene could be of some national park, then somebody's interview & all these are combined to make one programme. Though the script writer write\s the text, the job of narrator Drozdov is to choose the style of narration so as to smoothly switch over from scene to scene making it lively and without any feeling of breaks due to change of these scenes.

Even people working with him do not perceive how he does it so nicely. It seems so simple with the "recording in process" light is on, Drozdov sitting behind the glassed partition narrates & only at times someone hears Drozdov saying "Well, couldn't make

it this time, roll back the film & let me try do it little differently". And this time around, the text perfectly fits with the picture. The whole studio is full of admiration. "Genius", they say applauding "Kolya is a miracle". At this point, voice behind the glass wall" Sorry, guys! Let's do it once again. It does not sound very lively. Roll the film back to this point..." Then you hear "oh" s & "ah" s & sighs, but Drozdov will have his ways. His inclination to get everything flawless gets the better of everybody & the scene is retaken. Drozdov dubs from English straight with the help of headphones. He does not just translates the text, but also adds his own remarks wherever required. For example, when he sees a bird on the screen, he defines to which family or category the bird belongs to & its behaviour. In true sense, Drozdov is a miracle.

### Secret of Love:

With all his extremely popularity, Drozdov was never affected by "star disease". He travels in metro from his house in Ostankino, thanks to the "direct line". The reaction of the crowd is different; some look at him with sheer admiration and some do just look away, some take the courage to greet him. He sweetly acknowledges to their greeting, sometime bowing to someone, sometime smiling at somebody. Drozdov does not try to show off his modesty, but a normal, natural persona that he was half an hour back at home. He wholeheartedly gives interview, poses for photographs not to glorify himself, but to help those engaged by press to do their job properly.

In April, for the first time in his life sledged on bobsleigh in Latvia, happy and jumping like a child. Just out of corset casted for a fractured backbone, his action astonished me & I asked him "Why do you need to do all these?" his curt reply was "You see, it is such an intoxicating experience, to hold back is just impossible." **Whatever you say, real man is always a child.**

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## WORLD OF ANIMALS IN RUSSIA

**Nikolai DROZDOV** (Russia). Environmental Writer and Biologist. Associate Professor, Faculty of Geography, Moscow State University; presenter and producer of well-known Russian TV programme “In the world of animals” and other nature programmes. Took part in the UNESCO Man and Biosphere expedition to the Pacific islands of Tonga and Samoa. Author of 20 books and numerous research papers on biology, geography and nature conservation. Recipient of several international awards. Received professional education in the Russian Federation and Australia. Member of Explorers Club and New York Academy of Sciences.

### World of Animals :

**Dr. Nikolai Drozdov** gets a furry, firm hug from Timu, the world’s first test-tube gorilla, at he Henry Doorly Zoo. Drozdov was in Nebraska to film shows for his widely seen Russian nature show.

For ten years **Trust for Wildlife** has been co-producing a Nature Ambassadors serial for the Russian TV show, **World of Animals**. This regular show reaches 150 million viewers and is one of the most viewed nature shows on earth!

Developed in partnership with **Dr. Nikolai Drozdov**, chief scientist and presenter of **World of Animals**, the serial compares natural history in Russia and North America. Shows have included a comparison of the Tetons of Wyoming to the Caucasus of Russia; much of the footage is about wildlife and wildlife habitat.

Dr. Drozdov, a world renowned biogeographer, and **Marshal Case**, president of **Trust for Wildlife**, are both members of the Explorers Club.



## Dr. Nikolai Nikolaevich Drozdov

### *An Extra Ordinary Profile of an Ordinary People*

Born in Moscow in 1937, Nikolai Drozdov graduated at Moscow University in 1963. He undertook post-graduate training in Biogeography (1964-68) and in 1968 earned a doctorate on the Ornithofauna of the deserts of the USSR.

In 1971-72, he worked as a Research Fellow at the Australian National University (Canberra) and in 1980 took part in the UNESCO 'Man and Biosphere' expedition on the vessel Callisto to the Pacific Islands of Tonga and Samoa.

From 1978, Nikolai has been a member of the Commission on National Parks of the IUCN. For 23 years he has presented a bi-monthly television program "**In the World of Animals**" on Soviet T.V. with approximately 200 million viewers. The show covers animal life throughout the vast CIS territory. America knows his recently released and highly acclaimed 6 part PBS television series "**Realms of the Russian Bear**" produced in conjunction with NATURE and WNET Boston.

Nikolai is presently Associate Professor of Biogeography, Faculty of Geography, Moscow State University. Publications include 23 books and 183 research papers on Biology, Geography and Nature Conservation. His "**Flight of the Boomerang**"

(Moscow, Mysl Publishing, 1980 (1st ed.), 1988 (2nd ed.), was one of his most successful books about a journey across Australia. Both editions of 100,000 copies sold out in a couple of weeks.

Research and film expeditions include Tanzania, Zambia, Mauritius, Seychelles, South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Lesoto, Zaire (XII General Assembly of IUCN 1976), India, Australia, Tonga, Fiji, Samoa, Canada and USA.

In 1989, Nikolai was awarded the prestigious **Global 500** nomination by UNEP, a list of leading environmentalists worldwide. He won the **Golden Panda ("Green Oscar")** for outstanding achievement at the Wildscreen Festival in Bristol (U.K.) 1992.

Nikolai is well-acquainted with other filmmakers such as Jacques Cousteau, producer Frederic Rossif, and John Sparks (producer of "Realms of the Russian Bear"). He also has enjoyed spending time with explorers such as Norwegian adventurer Thor Hierdahl and Russia's famed Yuri Senkevich. Next summer, Nikolai plans to join the world's most powerful icebreaker, Russia's Yamal, for an unparalleled expedition to the North Pole.

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## Dr. Drozdov Presented Kalinga Award



***HRD Minister Madhavrao Scindia presenting the 1994 Kalinga Award for Popularisation of Science to Dr Nikolai Nikolaevich Drozdov in New Delhi on Friday. UNESCO Director J.V. Kingston is in centre. [Hindustan Times Photo]***

New Delhi, June 2 (HTC) Union Minister for Human Resource Development Madhavrao Scindia today presented the 1994 Kalinga Award to noted scientist Dr Nikolai Nikolaevich Drozdov. He was honoured for his efforts to popularise science.

Speaking on the occasion Mr Scindia said it was time the generation gap between the not so ignorant and the knowledgeable was bridged. He urged the scientists to take science to the masses especially the poor and propel the rate of progress.

Mr Scindia lauded the role of senior Janata Dal leader and former Orissa Chief Minister Biju Patnaik for instituting Kalinga award for excellence 40 years back. The Kalinga award is presented to an eminent scientist, author, poet or a performer in his or her chosen field of endeavour.

Dr Drozdov is an associate professor of Biogeography at Moscow State University. A graduate of Moscow University in 1963, Dr Drozdov has studied the flora fauna and delicate balance of nature in the deserts and bush land of Africa, England United States, India and many other countries. He was included in the Global 500 of United Nations environment programme of the world's leading geologists and specialists in environmental protection.

He has taken part in UNESCO 'Man and Biosphere' project on the conservation and rational use of the inland ecosystem resources. This four-month expedition on board the scientific researchship Callisto was held on the Pacific islands of Tonga and Samoa. He was awarded the Golden Panda in 1992.

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## Synopsis of Some of the Lectures Delivered by Dr. Nikolai N. Drozdov

Born in Moscow in 1937, Nikolai Drozdov graduated from Moscow University in 1963. He undertook post-graduate training in Biogeography, 1964-68, and in 1968 earned a doctorate on the Ornithofauna of the deserts of the USSR. In 1971-72 he worked as a Research Fellow at the Australian National University, Canberra, and in 1980 took part in UNESCO's Man and Biosphere expedition on the vessel <<Callisto>> to the Pacific islands of Tonga and Samoa. From 1978, Nikolai Drozdov has been a Member of the Commission on National Parks of the IUCN. For 30 years he took part in a weekly TV program <<World of Animals>>, and from 1977 became its author and presenter. The show covers animal life and conservation problems throughout the vast CIS territory. A number of leading scientists and conservationists took part in this show as welcomed guest: Sir Peter Scott, Thor Heyerdahl, Jacques Yves Cousteau, Frederic Rossif, Bergnard Grzimek, Gerald Durrell, Ivan Hattingh, John Sparks a.oth.

Nikolai was a scientific consultant, presenter and narrator of six-part BBC Natural History Unit series <<Realm of the Russian Bear>>, broadcasted successfully throughout Europe, America and Australia. He won the <<Golden Panda>> for outstanding achievement at Wildscreen Festival in Bristol, UK in 1992. Nikolai was awarded a Global 500 nomination by UNEP, and UNESCO's <<Kalinga>> Prize and Albert Einstein medal for popularization of science. He is a Fellow of the Explorers Club from 1994.

Nikolai Drozdov is presently Associate Professor of Biogeography, Moscow University. His publications include 25 books and about 200 research papers in biology, geography and nature conservation.

### **1. Animals and nature conservation in the Russian Arctic.**

Geographical distribution of tundra and arctic deserts. Southern border of tundra, its definition and fluctuation. Ecological conditions: long severe winter, short mild summer, long-lasting snow-cover, permafrost, permanent summer solar radiation. Drastic seasonal changes in animal communities. Resident fauna: polar bear, seals, walrus, polar fox, musk-oxen, lemmings. Synchronic fluctuation of populations of predators and its prey. Winter life under snow cover.

Migrating animals: reindeer, polar wolf, snowy owl, rough-legged buzzard, siberian crane, swans, geese, ducks, plovers, gulls, auklets. Life history (biology and behavior) of the most important species. Nature conservation : Wrangel Island, Taimyr, Laplandsky Nature Reserves (NR).

### **2. Animals and nature conservation in the Russian Forest.**

Geographical distribution of the coniferous forest (taiga), mixed forest and broad-leaved forest. Ecological conditions: snowy winter, mild or warm summer, cyclic abundance of cones (fir, pine, larch),

needles, leaves, branches and bark as a food for many animals. Resident animals: brown bear, black bear, wolf, fox, tiger, lynx, sable, marder, beaver, moose, red deer, row deer, musk deer, squirrel, flying squirrel, chipmunk, capercaillie, black grouse, hazel grouse, tits and woodpeckers. Migrating animals: wood duck, goldeneye, cranes, hawks, falcons, woodcock, swifts, swallows, thrushes, warblers. Life history of the most important species. Predators and prey. Nests, hides, tree holes, burrows and dens. Winter hibernation. Storage of food for winter. Nature conservation: Sikhote-Alinsky (tiger), Bargusinsky (sable), Oksky (european bison), Voronezksy (beaver) NR.

### **3. Animals and nature conservation in the Steppes and Deserts.**

Geographical distribution of steppes and deserts. Ecological conditions: frosty or mild winter, warm or hot summer, deficiency of precipitation, high insolation, winds, importance of burrows, life in herds (ungulates) or colonies (rodents), winter and summer hibernation. Resident animals: marmots, ground squirrels, gerbils, hamsters, mole-voles, jerboas, steppe and desert cats, wolf, steppe fox (corsac). Migrating animals: saiga antelope, goitred gazelle, wild ass, greater and lesser bustards, demoiselle crane, steppe eagle. Life history of the most important animals. Lizards, snakes and insects. Storage of food. Role of substrate (sand, clay, stone) in animals' adaptive behavior and coloration. Nature conservation: Badkhyz, Repetek, Cherney Zemli, Askania Nova NR.

### **4. Animals and nature conservation in the Mountains of Caucasus and Central Asia.**

Geographical position of the mountains in Caucasus and Central Asia. Ecological conditions: vertical diversity in the distribution of insolation, precipitation and vegetation (vertical belts of mountain forest, subalpine and alpine meadows, nival zone). Importance of exposition to solar radiation, adaptations to the types of rock formations,

seasonal vertical migrations of mammals and birds. Insular disrupted distribution of animal populations. Ungulates: chamois, Caucasian turs, Siberian ibex, markhor, argali, mountain bison, wild yak; predators: snow leopard, brown bear, wolf, lynx; birds: snowcocks, rock partridge, Caucasian blackcock, bar-headed goose, bearded, black and griffon vultures, alpine chough, wallcreeper. Mountain lizards and snakes. Life history of the most important animals. Nature conservation: Caucasian, Tberda, Badkhyz, Kopetdag, Ramit NR.

### **5. Animals and nature conservation in East Africa.**

Travels to the world-known national parks of East Africa: Serengeti, Maniara, Ngorongoro and Kafue. Personal encounters and field observations. Savanna and woodlands, mountains, craters, gorges, lakes and rivers. Dry and rainy seasons, massive migrations of ungulates, hibernation of insects, amphibians and rodents. Storage of food (ants, rodents). Predator-prey relations. Life history of the most important animals. African elephant, white and black rhinos, hippo, african buffalo, giraffe, zebra, wildbeast and other antelopes, lion, leopard, cheetah, jackals, hyenas. Family life in lions' prides, elephants' herds, hyenas' clans. Termite hills, their internal life and role in savanna community. Birds of prey, secretary bird, vultures, ostrich, weavers and widow-birds, sunbirds. Snakes-puff adder, boomslang, pythons, eggeater. Research methods-radio-tracking, marking, voice-mimicking, photo-checking. Park regulations and territory structure.

### **6. Animals and nature conservation in Australia.**

Australian continent as an ancient biogeographic region. Isolation and independent convergent evolution. Tropical and temperate forest, woodland, savanna, stony and sand deserts, mountains, Great Barrier reef. Unique egg-laying mammals-platypus, echidna, proechidna. Marsupials-kangaroos, flying squirrels, gliders, numbat, wombat, koala,

tasmanian devil a.oth. Birds-emu, cassowary, megapods, parrots, lyre-bird, astrilds, bowerbirds a.oth. Reptiles - crocodiles, moloh, fringed lizard, carpet python, taipan, death adder a.oth. Personal observations and encounters with animals throughout Australia. Influence of the introduced animals (dingo, rabbit, fox, cat, camel, buffalo) on the indigenous fauna. Nature conservation in Australia: national parks and wildlife reserves, reproduction centers, general regulations.

### **7. Snakes of the World (classification, biology, behaviour, venoms, facts and legends).**

Taxonomy of snakes: blind snakes, boas and pythons, racers, rear-fanged snakes, cobras, kraits and coral snakes, sea snakes, vipers and adders,

pit-vipers and rattle snakes. Morphology of snakes: movable jaws, teeth, poison fangs, elastic scaled skin, abdominal scales as moving device. Locomotion of snakes: subterranean, ground, tree, flying snakes. Coloration of snakes-protective, warning and mimicking. Methods of obtaining prey in poisonous and non-poisonous snakes. Snake venom, its evolution, types of venom, action of venom and blood and nervous system. Anti-venom serum, its production and implementation. Snake venoms in medicine. Snakes and human society. Snake charmers. Legends and superstitions about snakes, their origin and explanation. Personal encounters with snakes in the field and at home.

All lectures are supported by slides (diapositives) and by videofilms.



## Dr. N. N Drozdov-An interview

# From Russia with love

The Winner of the 1994 Kalinga Award  
on his Love for Nature and Views on Science Popularisation.

*DR Nikolai Nikolaevich Drozdov, is a leading ecologist and presently associate professor of Biogeography at the Moscow State University. A sprightly man for his 58 years, his love for nature is apparent. So also his penchant to travel the world to observe and conserve the flora and fauna of different regions. India, he finds, compares well to the natural and climatic conditions of the deserts of former Soviet Union. This Moscow born biogeographer completed his doctorate in 1968 on the ornithofauna of the deserts of the USSR. He is a prolific writer, having authored 183 research articles and 23 books including a bestseller about his journey through Australia, The flight of the Boomerang.*

*For the last 23 years Dr Drozdov hosts a fortnightly television programme called in the world of animals, which has been compiled into a book. His six part television series Realms of the Russian Bear has also received wide acclaim. In 1992, he won the Golden Panda for outstanding achievement at the Wildscreen festival in Bristol.*

*He was recently in the capital to receive the 1994 Kalinga award for popularisation of science, instituted by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). Presented below are excerpts from an interview with Dr Drozdov in conversation with **R Ramachandran and Radhika Singh.***

### On his initiation as a nature lover

My parents raised me with an education that taught me to appreciate nature. My father was a professor of chemistry and he gave me and my brothers home education that included Latin, botany, zoology, paleontology and a host of other interesting subjects. As kids encouraged by our father, me and my brother penned down articles in Latin in a home magazine we called Man and Nature. In my younger days I read about David Livingstone who crossed Central Africa, Rudyard Kipling's stories about the jungle, Jim Corbett's adventures; and developed a

fascination for the exotic things in nature. It is also why I chose to do my dissertation on deserts.

### On being in India

In the Karakoum desert of Kazakhstan, day temperatures reach 47°C. It is quite similar to Indian summers. In fact, south Turkmenia almost touches the north of India, so I am used to hot weather. But our camera team was not equipped to face the heat, so I have come alone. I shall return in October-November with the crew for some filming at Corbett and other places for our television programme.

**On wildlife in Turkmenia**

I was interested in the snakes, in particular, and spent a long time observing and learning about cobras. The cobras there are different from those found in India. They have no spectacles on their back nor is the hood marked, but their defence positions are the same. I taught myself to handle wild cobras by studying their behavioural limits. I'll tell you a secret—anything a cobra sits on, it won't bite, so your arm and hand is always safe. You just have to keep it away from your face to protect yourself, because the base of the teeth can cut your skin.

It is cruel to take out the poison glands as most snake charmers in India and elsewhere do, because the glands are located at the base of the jaw in a sensitive area, so that you almost kill the snake.

**On his encounters with Romulus Whitekar and the Maharaja of Mysore**

I visited him about 20 years ago, in 1975, when we filmed the snake park in Madras. He is a committed nature conservationist. Besides snakes, he also protects sea turtles. I recall accompanying him to the beach at night when the turtles come to the sea-shore in large numbers to lay eggs. The locals in the villages around hurriedly gathered there to pick up the eggs. Whitekar would patiently go to each villager explaining to them why they should leave at least, say 10, out of 50 eggs buried in the ground. That way they would be able to find more eggs the next season, else the turtles would no longer visit the same beach next season.

In Mysore, I met the Maharaja in 1974, his father had just died. There I visited the Yoga Institute and soon after turned vegetarian.

**On birds of the desert**

They have some intriguing adaptations to weather the heat. Some birds nest in the burrows of rodents as it is so hot outside. Others make nests. Like the desert eagle that spreads its wings and sits, under which small birds like finches and sparrows make

their nests to protect themselves from the sun. The desert eagles do not seem to mind as these birds are not their prey.

Birds like the sand grouse fly as far as 20 km to a pond they know for a drink of water and then fly back home. They have specially designed feathers which absorb three times more water than those of other birds. This is a surface adaptation that helps them attract water. The water in the wings is used to feed the chicks or wet the nest to cool it.

There are as many as 150 species of fauna in the desert, mostly birds and reptiles. The desert fauna has diverse environmental adaptations. The Turkmenian desert, for instance, is arid, drier and hotter as compared to Thar which has softer conditions.

**On the Siberian crane and why it no longer migrates to India**

The Siberian crane is seen at Baikal Lake and many islands in Siberia. It is listed as an endangered species and there is an on-going project in Russia to protect these cranes. I have high regard for Dr George Archibach, who is president of the International Crane Foundation and has been devoted to the study and conservation of cranes since childhood.

This year the Siberian crane has moved its wintering ground and I'm told huge flocks were spotted in China. It could be due to the shortage of water in Bharatpur. You must conserve their habitat and as soon as it's wet enough they'll come back—don't worry about it.

Indira Gandhi was keen on conserving these cranes. I like this about India—enough people want to conserve and save the environment. I won't criticize other countries, but recall an incident which I found disturbing. In recent years, there has been a strong criticism of Richard Leaky, who has spent a lifetime committed to studying the remnants of early man, by the President of Kenya. Instead of supporting such a project, they are putting a spoke in it, simply

because he is not a local. Similarly, my friends all over the world tell me of campaigns like the one in China to kill all the sparrows and flies.

**On the role of low-cost Russian books in the popularization of science, and the non-availability of such books in India after the breakdown of the former USSR**

Books in our part of the world have always influenced public opinion much more than in the west. In the former Soviet Union, a lot of publishing houses had government support and so were greatly encouraged. In Russia, we have a society for book lovers and a society for nature lovers, the latter is headed by a former Kalinga award winner.

After the formation of the CIS, the science budget is less than it was before. This is a dangerous trend. In fact, the budget is full of deficits. War in Chechnya, for instance has affected the budget, but the problem could be solved by economists if they work towards making the economy more market friendly.

The measures taken for science popularization have declined in the CIS, and there probably is more spread of superstition, astrology, belief in the supernatural etc, though I personally believe astrology is scientific to some extent too. But if you have read the original texts of Nostradamus, one cannot totally avoid the validity of predictions that have scientific explanations.

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*Ref:* SCI- TECH Page  
The Economic Times, New Delhi  
Saturday 24 June 1995

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## Dolphins in Moscow

(The Following is an Extract from a Chapter in Dr Drozdov's Book  
in Russian titled : In The World of Animals.)

They rang us up from the fisheries pavilion at the USSR Exhibition of Economic Achievements (UEEA) with some sensational news-they'd got dolphins! A new aquarium would soon be thrown open to visitors. If we wanted to avoid the crowds and film the dolphins at leisure we would have to go there within the next few days. We, of course, were very eager to know where the dolphins had come from. Were they ours or had they come from the tropics? Well, they had come all the way to Moscow from far, far away, from South America-the Amazon river basin, to be precise. And nowhere in the Soviet Union had we even had such dolphins before, let alone in Moscow.

At the pavilion we met the person who had been involved in catching the dolphins and transporting them to the UEEA, Dr Vladimir Vladimirovich Popov, PhD in biology, senior research associate at the Institute of Evolutionary Morphology and Animal Ecology at the USSR Academy of Sciences.

"Vladimir Vladimirovich, a lot of people who have been to the Black Sea have seen dolphins near the coast or from their ships on the high seas. What they saw were mostly 'aphalins' (a species of dolphin). There are very few 'aphalins' left now. Then there are 'asoukas' and 'belobochkas'. But here you have something very unusual for us..."

"Let me tell you a little about dolphins. There are 50 species of dolphin in the world and only five of them are freshwater species. The others are inhabitants of the sea. These dolphins here are from the Amazon river basin..."

"And how did you bring them to Moscow? In fact, how did you come to be in South America at all?"

"You see the Soviet Union and Peru have an inter-governmental agreement on joint research into the flora and fauna of Peru. We have Peruvian and Soviet scientists working on board a ship stationed there. With the consent of the Peruvian scientists we caught two dolphins...We bought them to Lima, the capital of Peru, and from there we flew them in an IL-86 to Moscow."

"How many hours did they travel?"

"More than 30 hours. We kept them in special baths. We tended them very carefully all through the journey. We kept pouring water on them and rubbing them with a special cream so that their skin would not get chapped. And we kept a watch on how they were feeling.

We move up close to the aquarium. It is quite spacious and the dolphins are swimming about energetically in the fairly large enclosed space. Is amazing how flexible their bodies are.

"At the first glance itself one can see that these river dolphins differ very much from their sea-bred cousins. They seem to be made of rubber."

"Their skin is very soft which is why they can bend themselves in the most incredible fashion even in confined spaces. 'Iniyas' can change direction in a flash – this is one of their characteristics. In their natural environment they inhabit fairly limited spaces – in rivers and lakes. They need to be able to react instantly to changes in their surroundings. Whereas

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## Glossary on Kalinga Prize Laureates

sea dolphins are denizens of large, open spaces. Even their structure is different.”

“Sea dolphins have large eyes – their vision, obviously plays a very important role in their lives. ‘Iniyas’ on the other hand, have tiny eyes, merely buttons. What could be the role of vision in their lives?”

“‘Iniyas’ live in clouded waters and over the years their eyes have evolved into tiny, button-like features. They get their bearings in clouded waters with the help of their hearing and sonar.”

Vladimir Vladimirovich says that they will be feeding the dolphins shortly. It’s very interesting to watch – an aqualung diver climbs into the tank and feeds the dolphins with his hand.

“Can you tell those dolphins from one another?”

“Well, when you spend as much time as I have with them you get to know every fold in their skins, every wart.”

“And who was it who swam by first now?”

“That was Chika. He was named after the place where he was caught. And the second one was Mishi... They’re cubs, but we don’t know their exact age...”

“‘Iniyas’ are tropical creatures so they must be needing special conditions and a special diet.”

“The conditions they need, of course, differ from those which the sea dolphins need. The water needs to be at a minimum temperature of 25<sup>o</sup>... Of course, the composition too differs from that in the Amazon basin, but the mammals have already got used to the freshwater here in Moscow. We haven’t noticed any deviations in their behaviour or physiology.”

The aqualung diver appears. He lets himself down carefully into the aquarium, carrying a rubber sack clipped to his belt. The sack has fish in it. The dolphins react as if with joy at the appearance of the diver.

The diver begins taking out one fish at a time and leaves it in the water. The ‘Iniyas’ swim up one after the other and quickly snap up the fish in their long jaws lined with sharp teeth.

“Vladimir Vladimirovich, haven’t you had trouble with the feed? After all, these are fresh water animals and they’re probably used to a particular diet.” “No, we haven’t had any trouble. They got used to the sea fish very quickly... We give them cod, mackerel and ‘ice’ fish... They prefer ‘ice’ fish. They are not so large and have fewer bones.

■ *Translated by Sipra Ghosh*

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**ADDRESS FOR COMMUNICATION WITH  
Prof. Nikolay Nikolaevich Drozdov**

INTERREGIONAL FUND OF ACTUAL MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY AND THERAPEUTICS'S SYSTEMS



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МЕЖРЕГИОНАЛЬНЫЙ ФОНД «АКТУАЛЬНЫЕ МЕДИЦИНСКИЕ ТЕХНОЛОГИИ И СИСТЕМЫ ТЕРАПИИ»



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*Contd...*



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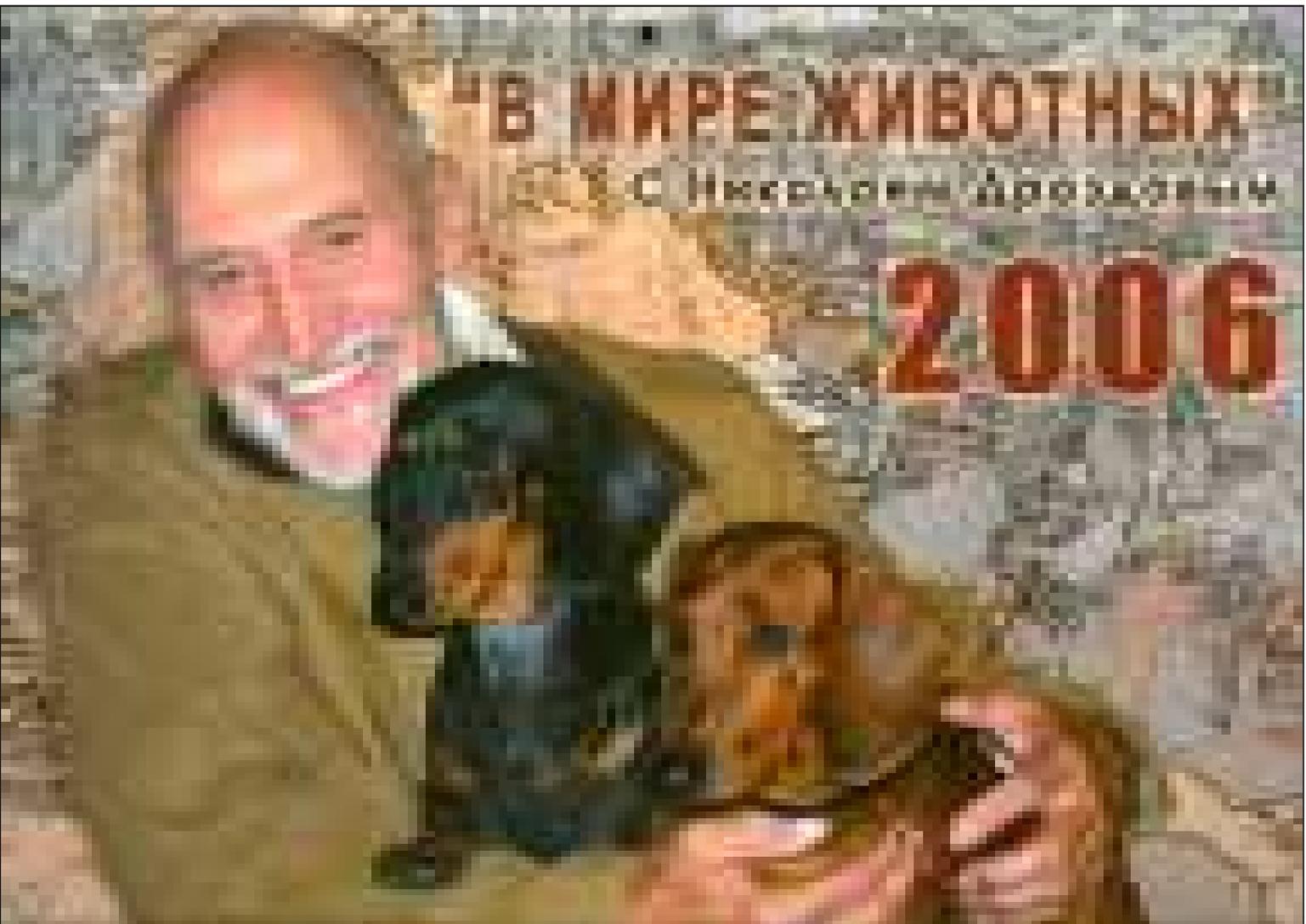
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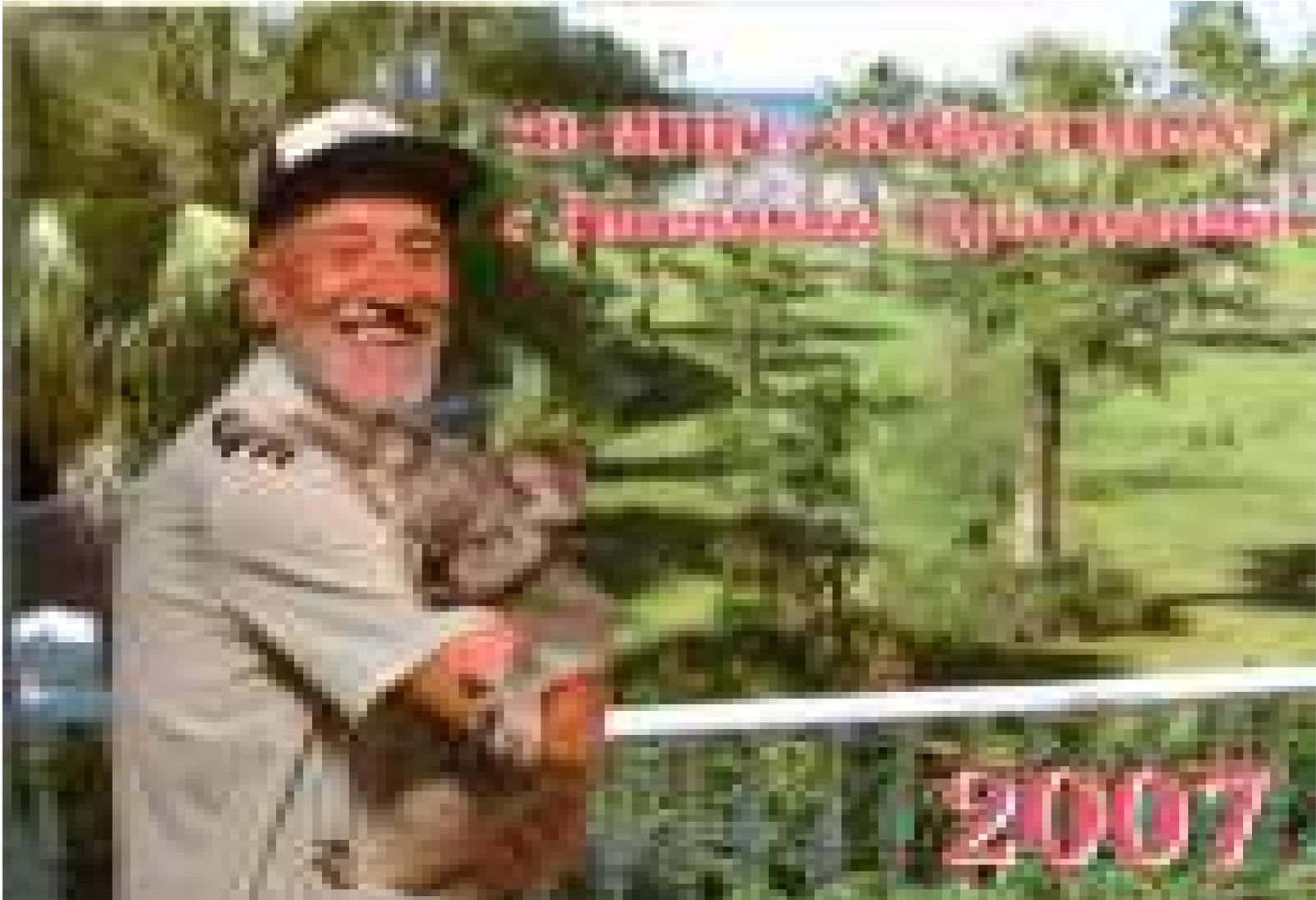
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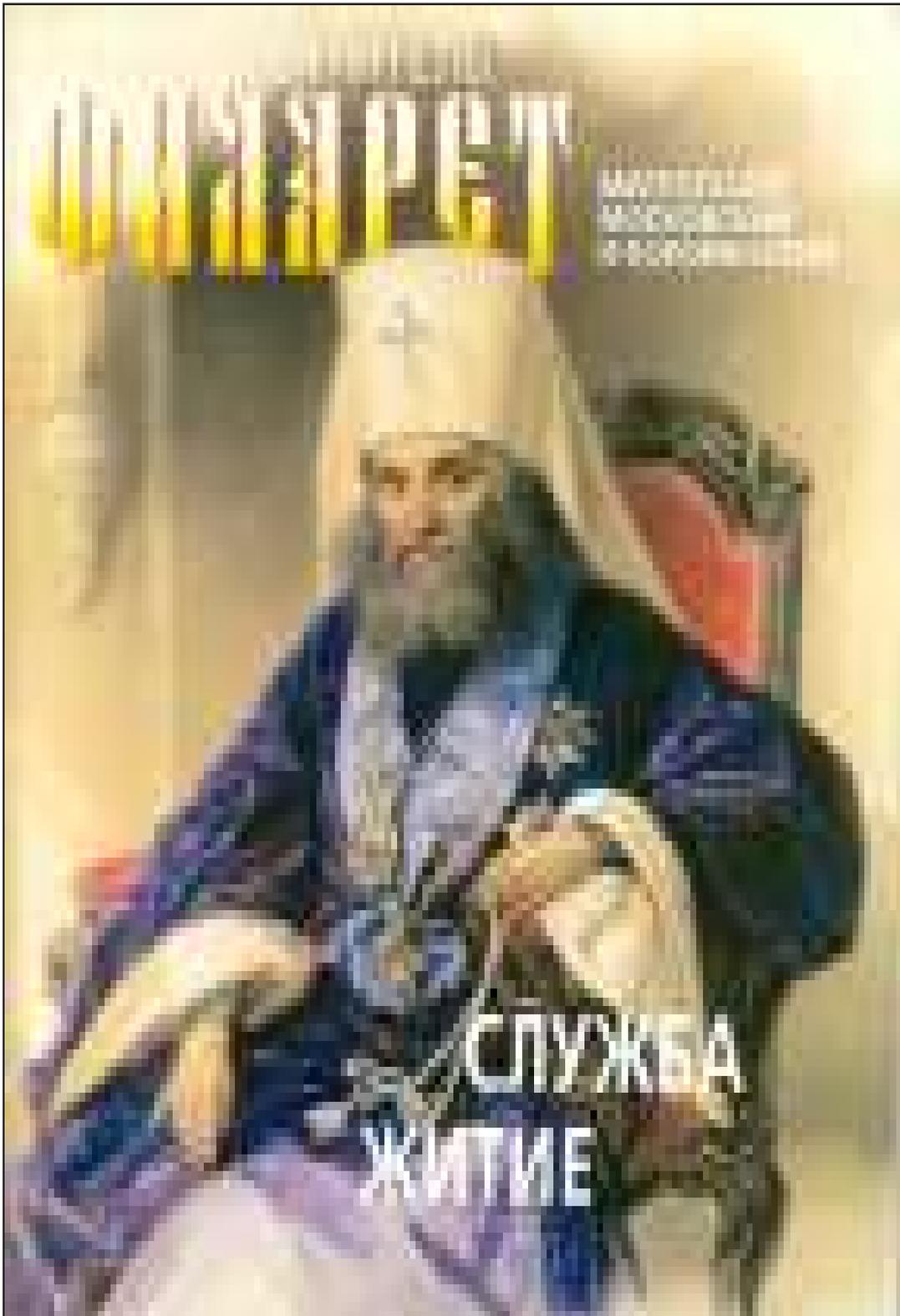
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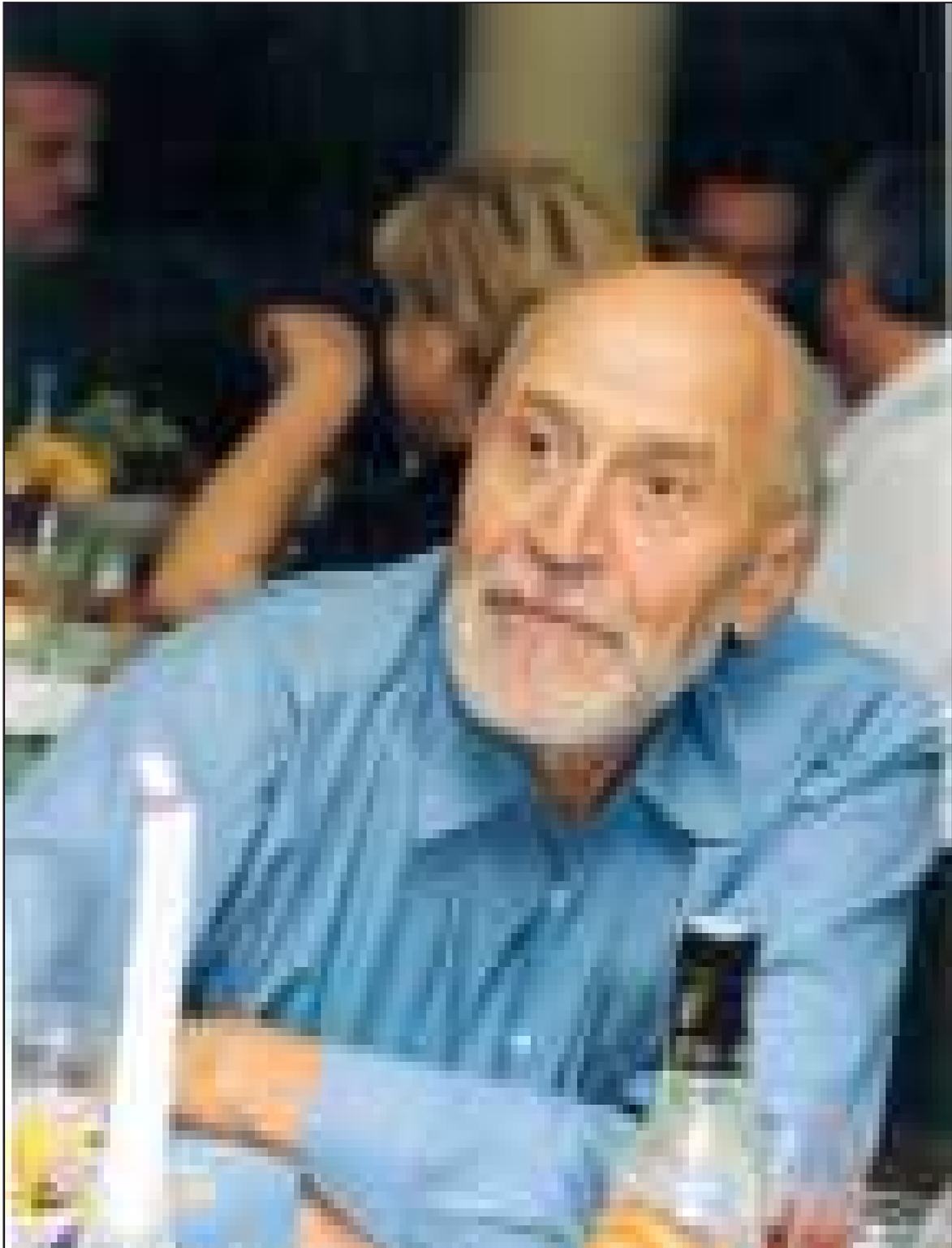
Father of Professor Nikolai Drozdov who was made an ICON in Russian



**Professor Nikolai Drozdov handshaking with the then President of Russia  
Mr. Mikhail Gorbachov**



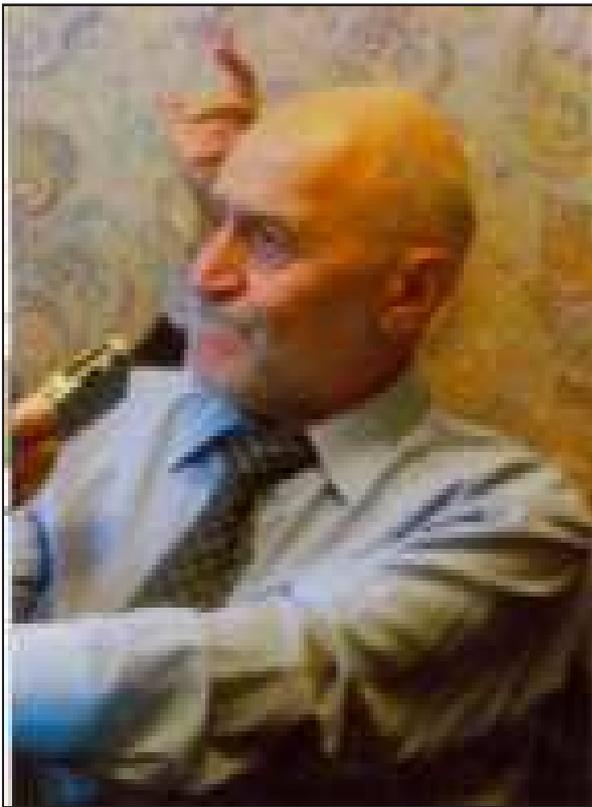
**Professor Nikolai Drozdov making love with a Giant Lizard**

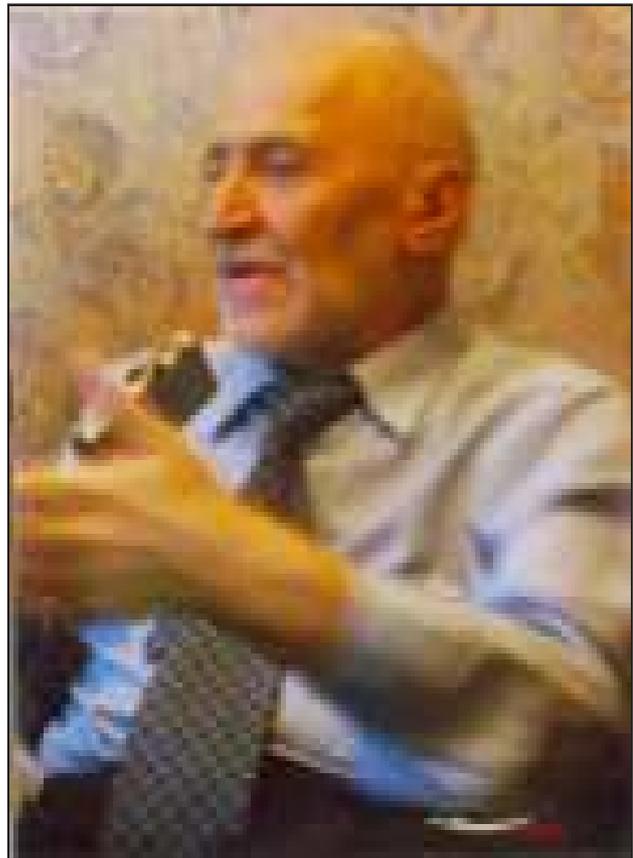


**Professor Nikolai Drozdov, a Dreamer Par Excellence,  
Enjoying the Candel Light Dinner**



















## Some of the Books Written by Professor Nikolai Drozdov







