



McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research

Founder: Dr D.M. McDonald

Professor Lord Renfrew of Kaimsthorn, FBA
Emeritus Disney Professor of Archaeology
Downing Street Cambridge CB2 3ER England

Telephone 01223 333521 Fax 01223 333536
Email: acr10@cam.ac.uk www.mcdonald.cam.ac.uk

EMET Prize
A.M.N.Foundation
Jerusalem

11th April 2012

Professor Aharon Dolgopolsky

It is a pleasure to write in support of the nomination of Professor Aharon Dolgopolsky for the EMET Prize for Science, Art and Culture in the field of Linguistics.

Professor Dolgopolsky is of course a comparative and historical linguist with a worldwide reputation. Together with the late Vladislav Ilich-Svitych he is the founder of the field of Nostratic linguistics. His *Nostratic Dictionary*, first published by the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, University of Cambridge in 2008, with the 3rd edition to be published later this year, is a monumental, four-volume compendium which sets out in detail for the first time the evidence from a wide range of languages in the Nostratic macrofamily which can be adduced to support the Nostratic hypothesis. The Nostratic hypothesis asserts the relatedness of this family of languages and their descent from the reconstructed Proto-Nostratic ancestral language.

This work has attracted widespread attention from linguists and archaeologists, and harmonises in many respects with the work of the distinguished American linguist the late Joseph Greenberg (*Indo-European and its Closest Relatives: the Eurasiatic Language Family*, Stanford University Press, 2000). The possibility of such linguistic macrofamilies has excited widespread interest (and some controversy) and is the focus of much research at the present time in the field of quantitative phylogenetics.

As a prehistoric archaeologist I have been greatly interested by the hypothesis and by the work of Dolgopolsky. In 1998, following his visit to Cambridge, the McDonald Institute published his short book *The Nostratic Macrofamily and Linguistic Palaeontology*, and the following year the symposium volume *Nostratic: Examining a Linguistic Macrofamily*, for which he wrote the crucial Introduction.

His erudition is legendary, and deeply respected by linguists, including many who are not themselves working in the field of Nostratic studies. His impact has been worldwide, and has influenced developments in prehistoric archaeology as well as his own field of comparative and historical linguistics.

It is therefore my great pleasure to support his nomination for the EMET Prize

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which reads "Coli Renfrew". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Professor Lord Renfrew of Kaimsthorn FBA