

ABSTRACTS

Ginzburg V. L. About Some Unscrupulous Historians of Physics. The article criticizes a paper by A. F. Aleksandrov and A. A. Rukhadze, "On the history of fundamental works on kinetic theory of plasma" (1997), which is shown to have presented an inaccurate and misleading picture of the development of this branch of physics in the USSR, including an entirely false account of the article "On the failure of A. A. Vlasov's papers on generalized theory of plasma and theory of solid state," published by V. Ginzburg, L. Landau, M. Leontovich and V. Fock in 1946.

Surdin V. G. Sunspot Observation with Pinhole-Camera. The possibility of sunspot observations using pinhole-camera was hypothesized and tested by the author and his colleagues in 1998. The experiments conducted in the churches of Toledo and Seville demonstrated that occasional holes in stained-glass windows of Gothic cathedrals create obscure-effects, resulting in sun images with clearly distinguishable spots projected on the dark floor. Ironically, the possibility of using the pinhole-camera effects occurring in cathedrals for studying the surface of the Sun must have been overlooked in the history of science: Galileo, while literally having sunspot images under his feet, discovered them with the help of telescope.

Semenov N. M. Museums of City Transportation. The article describes a number of city transportation museums in various countries, showing the role of these exhibitions in the local economic and cultural life.

Sobolev D. A. Persecutions in the Soviet Aviation Industry. The article documents the three "repression waves" that struck the cadre of engineers and the leaders of aviation industry in the years of Stalin's dictatorship, dating to the late 1920s — early 1930s, the late 1930s, and the late 1940s.

Doel R. Oral History, Archival Interviews, and the Historiography of Modern Science. The article addresses archival oral history projects, that is, interviews designed to be collected in repositories and made available to researchers, usually after a certain period of time has passed. Such interviews have typically been done with members of research schools, disciplinary communities, or major research facilities. The first part of the article surveys major oral history interview programs and their evolution (in terms of methodology and scope) since the late 1950s. In part two, the author discusses several promising styles of analysis applicable to archival interviews that can be helpful in exploring important social, professional and intellectual issues that historians have found difficult to approach using traditional written documents. The third part addresses the role that oral history interviews can play in interpreting the complex history of recent scientific developments and their intersection with society and the state. The article also contains special tables, "Major Oral History Projects and Repositories for the History of Modern Science" and "Sample Oral History Questions in Archival Oral History Programs," which can be helpful as a guide for researchers interested in developing new oral history projects or participating in the existing ones.

Balandina N. A. The Summer of 1956 in Miassovo. Dedicated to the centennial of an outstanding Russian biologist, Nikolai Timofeeff-Ressovsky, the article presents the author's recollections of her stay at the Miassovo field station in the Urals. Established by Timofeeff-Ressovsky in 1956 for research in radiation biology and genetics,

the station soon became a kind of mecca for the country's intelligentsia, gathering dozens of scientists who thrived in its atmosphere of free discussion. Echoing the warning of its host, who used to say that "the most fatal thing for the serious development of serious scientists is brutish seriousness," the article describes the daily life at the station in a jocular manner, telling the stories that bring back the human traits of Timofeeff-Ressovsky, rather than his "ideas."

Vorontsov N. N. The Voyage with Greenpeace to Moruroa. This publication, based on the diary of an eminent Russian biologist and onetime Soviet Minister of Environment, Nikolai Vorontsov (1934—2000), is a story of his long concern about the biological consequences of nuclear tests, which eventually led him to take part in a protest action conducted by Greenpeace in French Polynesia in the spring of 1992. Joining an international team of 26 people, he sailed on board Greenpeace's flagship "Rainbow Warrior" from Tahiti to the French nuclear test site at Moruroa atoll, where the protesters intended to establish a peace camp and investigate the impact of explosions on the fragile insular environment. A colorful account of the action, documenting their seizure by the French marines and expulsion from Tahiti, is followed by the notes on its impact on the moratorium on nuclear tests, announced by France a few weeks thereafter and joined by the USA later in 1992. The publication concludes with a review of Andrei Sakharov's earlier estimates of the number of casualties as a result of nuclear tests. In accordance with these estimates, holds Vorontsov, a total of 489 ground and atmospheric nuclear tests conducted worldwide by 1991 resulted in the death of 5 to 6 million people.

Kaliaeva E. S. Remembering Our Teacher. The article presents the author's memoirs of N. N. Vorontsov, dating back to early 1950s, when he was her teacher at the circle of young biologists under the aegis of Moscow State University.