

Abstracts

- Kopelevich, Iu. Kh. The First Academic Students.** The 18th-century Academic University is a subject of polar opinions ranging from high appraisals to the statements denying its very existence. The article analyzes the first decade of its history, elucidating the confusions and contradictions inherent in its status right from Peter the Great's «Project», and showing how they influenced the composition of its students.
- Smagina, G. I. Public Lectures of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences in the Second Half of the 18th Century.** This article examines one of the most interesting and lively forms of spreading scientific knowledge in the late 18th-century Russia, namely public lectures of the Academy of Sciences.
- Iurkin, I. N. Traits of the Portrait of an 18th-century Russian Entrepreneur (From the History of the Demidov Dynasty).** The article is devoted to representatives of the famous dynasty of metallurgists and plant owners, the Demidovs, who made an outstanding contribution to the development of metallurgic industry in Russia.
- Vizgin, VI. P. Atomic Project in the USSR: Preliminary Results of Studies and New Materials.** This article introduces the publications devoted to the history of the Soviet Atomic Project included in this issue, providing a general overview of this history and pointing out each of these publications' place in it.
- Trifonov, D. N. Towards the History of the Commission on the Uranium Problem.** The article is devoted to the history of the Commission on the Uranium Problem at the Presidium of the USSR Academy of Sciences and the role of V. I. Vernadsky in its establishment. The supplement (prepared by V. P. Melnikov) includes fragments of the Minutes of the Academy Presidium Meetings of July 16 and 30, 1940, at which the decision concerning the establishment of the Commission was discussed and passed.
- Smirnov, Iu. N. G. N. Flerov and the Development of the Soviet Atomic Project.** G. N. Flerov occupies a special place in the history of the Soviet Atomic Project: it was he who made an outstanding contribution not only to the making of and testing the first Soviet nuclear charge, but also to the very development of the Soviet Atomic Project in the years of World War II. Widely known is his initiative concerning the resumption in the USSR of the work on the uranium problem. The article includes Flerov's letters on this matter, written in 1941—2 to Kurchatov, Kaftanov, and Stalin, as well as certain details told by Flerov to the author in personal conversations.
- Kalinin, V. F. From the First Reactors to Atominform.** In 1945—9 V. F. Kalinin had been the scientific secretary of the Section on nuclear reactors at Minsredmash, as well as translator of G. Smith's famous book on the US Atomic Project (published in Russian in 1946). His memoirs contain valuable materials concerning the first Soviet industrial reactor, the general atmosphere and style of work in Minsredmash, as well as such leading figures of the project as M. G. Pervukhin, E. P. Slavskii, A. P. Zaveniagin, B. L. Vannikov, N. A. Dollezhal', A. S. Elian, and others.
- Zamiatnin, Iu. S. Memoirs of Participation in the Atomic Project.** These memoirs are focused on the description of the unique set of experiments conducted by the Flerov group to determine the critical mass of metallic plutonium-239 in Cheliabinsk-40, which proved to be one of the most important final stages in the making of the first Soviet atomic bomb. The author also writes about the participation of this group in the first Soviet tests of hydrogen bomb, as well as his impressions of meetings with I. V. Kurchatov, Iu. B. Khariton, Ia. B. Zel'dovich, and G. N. Flerov.
- Eliashevich, M. A. Optical Observations of the First Soviet Nuclear Explosion.** An outstanding Soviet specialist in optics and spectroscopy, the author was in charge of preparing and making optical observations of nuclear explosion during the testing of the first Soviet atomic bomb. His memoirs focus on this event, featuring the participation of the State Optical Institute and the Institute of Chemical Physics of the USSR Academy of Sciences in preparing the setting for the tests and testing this bomb in close contact with the Ministry of Defence specialists. In these memoirs we meet such participants of the Soviet Atomic Project as N. N. Semenov, M. A. Sadovskii, G. L. Shnirman, O. I. Leipunskii, P. V. Kevlishivili, and others.