IN MEMORY OF YAKOV ABRAMOVICH SMORODINSKY

Remembering Yakov Abramovich*

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Shortly after its foundation in 1956 the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research in Dubna became an important training place for young physicists of East-European countries. In those years I, too, was much younger than now, and from the late fifties until the mid-eighties I visited the Laboratory of Theoretical Physics many times for a few weeks. Discussions with Yakov Abramovich about particle physics and field theory were always interesting and instructive. When flavor $SU(3)$ symmetry was discovered, his Dubna reprint review on the subject was for me—and I think not only for me—a very helpful handbook during many years. Let me also tell you about an episode which I remember with gratitude. In the late seventies I produced a preprint on the reformulation of the theory of the relativistic Dirac magnetic monopole. I mentioned this to Yakov Abramovich. He asked a few questions and then said he would like to have a copy. I did not expect he will read it, because this was a long paper and I knew that he was not working on the subject. But he did read it, made helpful critical comments, and encouraged me to publish the paper.

Among the many young physicists from Eastern Europe who spent a few years in the Laboratory of Theoretical Physics there were at least five from Hungary, and they all benefitted from their contact with Yakov Abramovich. The first two were Gabor Domokos and Peter Suranyi. They spent four years here in the early sixties. They live now in the United States and I know from them that they learned a lot from Yakov Abramovich on various subjects, the most important being the systematization of the Regge poles based on the representations of the Lorentz group.

The first Hungarian physicist who not only had

discussions with Yakov Abramovich but also worked with him was Julia Nyiri. They published eight papers together over a period of more than ten years, the last one in 1979. Julia is present here, and she will write about her reminiscences for the Proceedings of the Conference.

In the late sixties—early seventies Miklos Huszar and Kalman Toth spent three years in this Laboratory. Huszar has two group-theoretical papers published together with Yakov Abramovich, and Toth told me that discussions with Yakov Abramovich on the transformation functions between the bases of scattering amplitudes in the s , u , t , channels led to one of his best papers.

Yakov Abramovich was not only an outstanding physicist, he was also a man of exceptionally wide culture. His Moscow flat, where he used to invite many of us although this was not allowed in those years, was full with books of high literature of various languages and with splendid art books containing magnificent reproductions. We had no idea how he obtained them, since he was not allowed to travel to the West. When in the late eighties he visited our institute in Budapest, to the question what would he like to see, he answered that he would like to go to the Christian Museum of Fine Arts in Esztergom. I think there are not many people abroad who know that there is a town in Hungary called Esztergom harboring a first-rate museum of fine arts, but Yakov Abramovich knew.

We all felt deep sorrow when we learned in 1992 that Yakov Abramovich passed away, and I feel honored that I can remember him here, where he was one of the leading scientists and helped many generations of young colleagues to find their way.

* The text was submitted by the author in English.

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