

## Yakov Grigor'evich Dorfman (obituary)

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Soviet physics has suffered a great loss: Doctor of Physico-mathematical Sciences and Professor Yakov Grigor'evich Dorfman, a prominent Soviet physicist, died on November 5, 1974 at the age of 76. Dorfman's name is linked to the discovery and prediction of many important phenomena in various divisions of magnetism and solid-state physics, and is also associated with profound research on the history of physics. Dorfman was well known by name and by his work to both Soviet and foreign scientists.

Dorfman was born on March 26 (N.S.), 1898, into a family of a physician at St. Petersburg. In 1915, after completing the classical gymnasium, he entered the Electromechanics Department of the St. Petersburg Polytechnic Institute (PPI; now the Leningrad Polytechnic Institute). At the Institute, he soon developed a lively interest in scientific research. In 1916, as a second-year student, he embarked on research work in the laboratory directed by A. F. Ioffe and participated in the celebrated seminar of this laboratory. Dorfman was one of the Ioffe's first students, among whom Ya. I. Frenkel', P. I. Lukirskii, and others were later to become prominent.<sup>1)</sup> As we know, the seminar of Ioffe's laboratory was to play an enormous role in the shaping of Soviet physics.

After the Great October Revolution of 1917, Dorfman held various positions in the Petrograd National Economic Council. In 1921, on the advice of Ioffe, Dorfman returned again to physics and continued his education in the physicommechanical department of the PPI, from which he graduated in 1925. From that time on, Dorfman took a highly active part in the work and organization of the Physicotechnical Institute headed by Academician Ioffe, first as an assistant and then as head of the Magnetic Laboratory. At the same time, he taught in the physicommechanical department of the PPI.

From his very initiation to science, Dorfman became the developer of an original trend in the physics of magnetic phenomena, to which he devoted his entire life. While still a student, he authored a very important study of the paramagnetism phenomenon in metallic solids. He was the first to advance the idea (in 1923) that conduction electrons possess paramagnetic properties in all metals and that this paramagnetism can be observed in experiment if it is not masked by the diamagnetism of the ionic cores of the metal, which is larger in absolute magnitude. Dorfman defended his conclusion by pointing out that when the experimentally observed susceptibilities of diamagnetic metals and their ions are compared, the susceptibility of the ions is always found to be larger. This was what permitted him to state that conduction electrons possess para-

magnetism. Since the susceptibilities of diamagnetic metals do not depend on temperature, Dorfman drew the very important conclusion that the paramagnetism of conduction electrons should also be temperature-independent, as is characteristic for the paramagnetism of alkali and alkaline-earth metals. Dorfman's physical ideas were subsequently confirmed theoretically in the work of W. Pauli (1927). Resolution of this "catastrophe" of the classical electron theory of metals made it possible to found a consistent quantum theory of solids; Dorfman's paper "On the Mechanism of Magnetic Phenomena" (Zs. Phys. 17, 98 (1923)) can therefore be regarded as one of the preludes to the quantum theory of metals.

In the same paper, Dorfman was first to predict theoretically the phenomenon of electron paramagnetic resonance (EPR), to which he then referred as the photomagnetic effect. At the time, the state of experimental technique did not permit experimental observation of this phenomenon, and it was discovered twenty years later in the brilliant experiments of the Soviet physicist Academician E. K. Zavoiskii (1942). EPR is now a highly important division in the study of magnetism—the EPR method has become one of the physically most profound and widest-ranging applied methods for the study of structure in various types of materials. The EPR effect predicted by Dorfman in 1923 has come to be our most powerful tool for the acquisition of extremely subtle information on the structure of matter at the electronic level; it is used by representatives of literally all divisions of natural science.

Dorfman also made a major contribution to the development of the theory of another extremely important magnetic phenomenon—ferromagnetism. His famous 1927 experiment aimed at establishing the physical nature of the Weiss molecular field in ferromagnets is well-remembered. It had been supposed ever since Weiss published his first papers (1907) that the spontaneous magnetic moment of ferromagnets arises under the action of an internal molecular field of magnetic origin, which, like the external magnetic field in the case of paramagnets, results in parallel orientation of the elementary magnetic moments. However, observing the deflection of a beam of beta-rays passing through magnetized and unmagnetized nickel foils, Dorfman showed convincingly that the internal magnetic field is of nonmagnetic nature. This *experimentum crucis* implied that the molecular field can be of only electrical nature, as Frenkel<sup>2)</sup> and W. Heisenberg became the first to demonstrate (a year later, in 1938).

A series of studies of the heat capacity and thermo-

<sup>2)</sup>As its author states, Frenkel's paper (Zs. Phys. 49, 31 (1928)) was based to a considerable degree on Dorfman's ideas and discussions with him.

<sup>1)</sup>They also include P. L. Kapitza, N. N. Semenov, and I. K. Kikoin.—Ed.

electric properties of ferromagnetic nickel near the Curie point was highly important for the development of the electronic (quantum) theory of ferromagnetism; Dorfman undertook this project jointly with his closest co-workers (I. K. Kikoin, R. I. Yanus, and others) in 1929-1933. The basic purpose of these high-precision experimental studies was to clarify the question as to whether the current and magnetic-moment carriers in ferromagnetic metals are the same conduction electrons or two different groups of electrons of the metal. In his fundamental review of magnetism theory, the noted American physicist Herring attaches great importance to these studies by Dorfman and his colleagues. In 1930, Dorfman and Kikoin predicted and made qualitative observations of a new effect—the change in the contact potential in a magnetic field. Dorfman read this paper at the 1930 Solvay Congress, and it was also fully confirmed experimentally by the American Physicist Wolmsley in 1962.

The theory of partitioning of the ferromagnetic sample into magnetic domains (regions of spontaneous magnetization) was of very great fundamental importance for the theory of paramagnetism. Although the idea that a domain structure exists in ferromagnets was first advanced by Weiss (in 1907, simultaneously with the appearance of the hypothesis of the existence of spontaneous magnetization irrespective of the presence of an external magnetic field), the physical cause of formation of the domains remained a mystery. Dorfman (jointly with Frenkel') was responsible for the creation of the first theory of domain structure (1930). According to this theory, the appearance of domain structure results from the demagnetizing action of the surface of the ferromagnetic specimen, and the size of the domains is determined by competition between volume forces and the demagnetizing fields. Magnetic domains were eventually observed in experiment, and the theoretical calculation of domain size as a function of specimen size was confirmed.

In 1933, Dorfman made the first attempt to establish the electronic structure of ferromagnetic alloys from data on the atomic magnetic moments. Despite the later development of this problem by numerous authors, this work has retained its "pioneering" importance.

All of these studies by Dorfman in the physics of ferromagnetism played important roles in the inception of the basic quantum-mechanical models of present-day ferromagnetism theory.

A number of Dorfman's studies in magnetism and solid-state physics were reflected in the familiar book "The Physics of Metals," which he wrote jointly with I. K. Kikoin; the book was the first monograph on this problem in the Russian language and one of the first in the world's literature. He published a number of papers on the same problems in the monograph "Magnetic Properties and Structure of Matter" (1955), which also won recognition from a broad range of readers. Dorfman participated actively in the organization and expansion of the Urals Physico-technical Institute (UralFTI; now the USSR Academy of Sciences Urals Scientific Center Institute of Metal Physics), which was founded in the early 1930's at the suggestion of Academician Ioffe on the basis of several laboratories of the Leningrad Physico-technical Institute. Dorfman was the First Deputy Director for Science of the UralFTI

(until 1938). In that year, he transferred to Baku, where he took responsibility for the Physics Sector of the Azerbaïdzhan Branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences and headed the Physics Department of Azerbaïdzhan University. Here, with his co-workers, he developed new methods for electrical modeling of oil-bearing strata for calculation of optimum well siting and a new apparatus for determination of the hydraulic permeability of rocks. During the Second World War, Dorfman was engaged in defense work.

In 1944, he moved first to Moscow and then Leningrad, where, from 1945 through 1958, he headed the Physics Department of the Leningrad Hydrometeorological Institute.

Dorfman's series of studies of the magnetic properties of atomic nuclei is highly interesting. Here we should take note of his studies of nuclear paramagnetism (1930 and 1935), which indicated a method for direct observation of this phenomenon in experiment (as was done by B. G. Lazarev and L. V. Shubnikov in 1937). In 1947, Dorfman proposed an original method for experimental determination of nuclear magnetic moments and spins. This method was applied by British and Dutch physicists in 1950's and 1960's. This series culminated in Dorfman's monograph "The Magnetic Properties of the Atomic Nucleus," which was published in 1948.

In 1951, he predicted yet another resonance effect: resonance in electronic conductors, or cyclotron resonance. He also indicated the possibility of using this effect to determine carrier effective masses in semiconductors. The British physicist Dingle arrived at a similar conclusion a few months later. Cyclotron resonance in semiconductors was observed experimentally by American investigators (Dresselhaus, Kip, and Kittel) in 1955.

In 1958, Dorfman became head of the Solid State Physics and Molecular Physics Sector of the All-Union Institute of Scientific and Technical Information in Moscow.

As a noted scientist in the field of the magnetic properties of matter, Dorfman was a prominent specialist in magnetochemistry, where he did pioneering work. In the years from 1957 through 1960, Dorfman developed a new method for study of chemical shifts in diamagnetic molecules and crystals on the basis of experimental study of magnetic susceptibility and molecular refraction. He published a series of papers on this problem, and his widely known monograph "Diamagnetism and the Chemical Bond" appeared in 1961; it was republished in 1962 in East Germany and in 1964 in England. A 1962 theoretical paper by Dorfman first drew attention to the fact that because of the wide variation of the energies of diamagnetic macromolecules in a magnetic field, it could be expected that this field would have a strong influence on the kinetics of biochemical reactions. In 1965, the German physical chemist Haberdietzel confirmed this experimentally. In 1963-1965, experimental magnetochemical research was instituted under Dorfman's supervision at the USSR Academy of Sciences Institute of Petrochemical Synthesis, and several papers on the chemical bound in organic compounds of silicon were published.

From early in 1965 to the end of his life, Dorfman was chief of the History of Physics and Chemistry Sec-

tor at the USSR Institute of the History of Natural Science and Technology, in which he did a great deal of scientific and scientific-organizational work. He headed a scientific seminar on the history of physics in which physics historians working in Moscow and other cities of the country took part.

Dorfman devoted much work and interest to problems of physics history throughout his scientific career, and especially in his later years. He made a notable contribution to this important field of science. Here he was aided by his broad erudition in the natural sciences and humanities, his literary talent, and his profound general intelligence, together with complete mastery of the classical ancient and basic European languages.

Dorfman began intensive creative work in the history of physics and chemistry at the Leningrad Division of the USSR Institute of the History of Natural Science and Technology (1945-1958). His familiar monograph "Lavoisier" appeared during this period (1948); following publication of its second edition in the USSR (1962), translations appeared in Rumania (1967) and Bulgaria (1968). Dorfman had begun work on this monograph (familiarizing himself with the documentary sources and Lavoisier's works in the original) back in 1933. In the opinion of prominent specialists in the history of the natural sciences,<sup>3)</sup> "Dorfman's monograph displays a number of characteristic features that distinguish it favorably from other works of similar nature."

While in Leningrad, Dorfman wrote several papers on the history of physics: "Aepinus and his Treatise on the Theory of Electricity and Magnetism" (1950), "The Role of M. V. Lomonosov in the Development of the Molecular-Kinetic Theory of Heat" (1951), "The Prominent Russian Physicist Rikhman and his Role in the History of the Science of Electricity" (1953), "The Appearance of Ampere's Electrodynamics and Its Place in the History of Physics" (1955), and a number of others. All of these papers bear the imprint of profound scientific analysis and are brilliantly written.

Dorfman also continued his intensive creative activity in the history of physics while in Moscow. He published the paper "The Physical Views of Leonhard Euler (1959), a second revised and expanded edition of the monograph "Lavoisier" (1962), articles on "The Evolution of the Structure of Physics" (1968-1969), and various other works. During the later years of his life, Dorfman began to work with tremendous enthusiasm on what was to be his most significant work on the history of physics from ancient times to the present. Like a Mozart "Requiem," the first part of this monograph, "A Universal History of Physics from Ancient Times to the End of the Eighteenth Century," was published by Nauka in 1974. Shortly before his death, the author completed the manuscript of the second part, "A Universal History of Physics from the Beginning of the Nineteenth to the Middle of the Twentieth Century."

Death took from us a man full of new inspirations that he did not have time to set down and transmit to us.

A patriot of his Motherland, Soviet Science, Dorfman

earned the deep respect and appreciation of his colleagues and the entire Soviet nation by a lifetime of tireless effort and genuine enthusiasm for science, which will forever preserve his memory.

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