

Prof. Boris V. Gromov (1933–2001)

On August 28, 2001, Boris Vasilievich Gromov passed away. We lost our dear colleague, the St. Petersburg University lost a notable professor, microbiology one of its leading scientists, and “Protistology” a devoted editor.

Boris Vasilyevich Gromov was born on March 18, 1933 in Leningrad (now St. Petersburg). In 1955 he graduated from the Leningrad University and then defended two theses in Microbiology. From 1969 to 2000 Boris V. Gromov was the head of the Department of Microbiology of the St. Petersburg State University. In 1965 he set up a Laboratory of Microbiology in the Biological Institute and literally remained the leader of this lab till the last days of his life. During that period he and his laboratory gained national and international renown for their investigations of many aspects of microbiology, protistology and algology.

Professor Gromov was well known for his courses of lectures in “General Microbiology”, “Virology” and “Systematics of Bacteria”. He was the author of the excellent textbooks “Structure of Bacteria” and “Ecology of Bacteria” (co-authored with G. Pavlenko). Boris V. Gromov was not only a brilliant teacher, but also a member of the editorial boards of “Microbiologiya”, “Current Microbiology”, and “Protistology”.

Professor Gromov played a leading role in the creation of the unique collection of microalgae and cyanobacteria. He had a keen eye for the possibilities of using this collection for solving different problems of ecology and systematics of microorganisms, which resulted in extensive collaboration with partners all over the world. B.V. Gromov took an active part in the investigations of algal parasites. His monograph “Microorganisms – parasites of algae” has no analogues in the world. Professor Gromov initiated and developed algopathology – a new scientific field. He succeeded in characterization of amoeboid endobiotic phagotrophic algal parasites and attributed them to the



new class Aphelidea. Although algal parasites remained the primary object of his research, professor Gromov branched into several other fields when he felt that the expertise of his laboratory could make meaningful contributions there. It was the case, for example, in the studies of genetic control of behavioural responses in unicellular algae and on characterization of key components in chemosensory signalling pathway.

Boris Vasilyevich and his charming wife were great hosts, and their friends and colleagues more than once had a chance to visit their St. Petersburg apartment. Boris V. Gromov loved life and lived a full life. His passing certainly leaves a large void. Our science and our lives will never be the same without Boris Vasilyevich. However, he will live on in the memory of his many students, colleagues and friends, and in his publications.

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