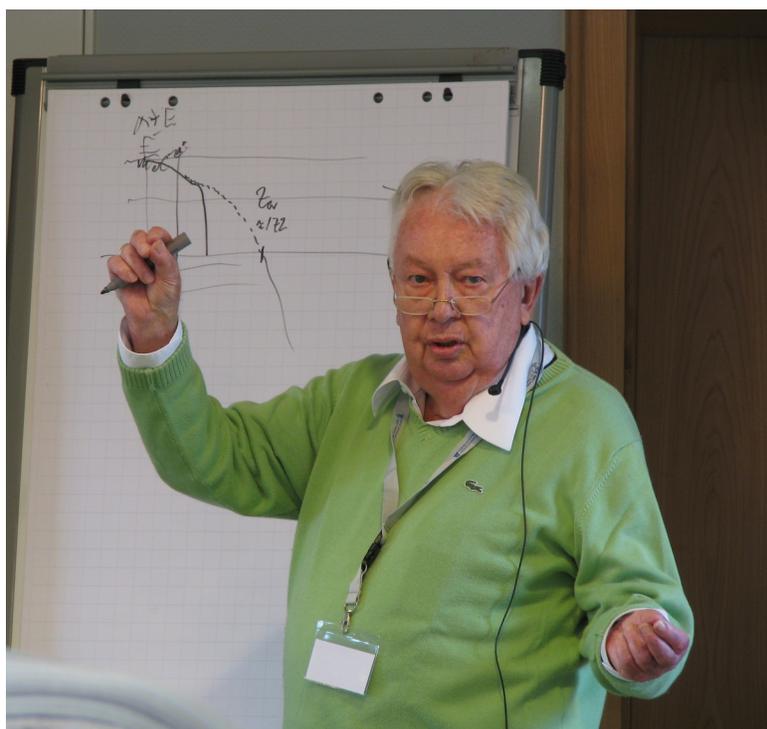


Obituary : Walter Greiner

Walter Greiner, one of the leading theoretical physicists of after-war Germany, who taught and conducted research at Johann-Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt am Main for five decades, died October 5, 2016, at his home in Kelkheim, near Frankfurt.



He was born on 29 October 1935 in Neuenbau, Land of Thüringen. He studied Physics in Frankfurt and Darmstadt, and earned the doctoral degree in 1961 from the University of Freiburg, with a thesis entitled “The nuclear polarization in μ -mesoatoms”, under the supervision of Hans Marschall, a theoretical physicist, former assistant of Siegfried Flügge in Göttingen and co-author of the famous book on Quantum Mechanics “Rechenmethoden der Quantentheorie”. In 1983 Walter Greiner recalled that the well-known Rotation-Vibration model of nuclei, proposed by him and A. Faessler, appeared under the influence of H. Marschall. Between 1962-1964 W.G. was Assistant Professor at the University of Maryland. In 1965 he obtained the position of *Ordinarius* at the Institute of Theoretical Physics (J.W. Goethe University) where he held the directorship for three decades. Before him this institute was directed by brilliant physicists such as Max von Laue, Max Born, Friedrich Hund and Erwin Madelung.

In the '60, Walter Greiner played an instrumental role in the development of Heavy Ion research in the Federal Republic of Germany, an effort that led to one of the largest facilities of this type in the world: *Gesellschaft für Schwerionenforschung* (GSI-Darmstadt). In 2003 he retired from the faculty and founded the *Frankfurt Institute for Advanced Studies* (FIAS), where he was director for several years.

The eleven volumes of Walter Greiner's "*Teoretische Physik*" became in the last decades a classical series that can be compared with the legendary Sommerfeld's "*Vorlesungen über Teoretische Physik*" and the Landau & Lifschits "*Teoreticheskaya Fizika*".

He was also an outstanding teacher: more than 50 of his former students received teaching positions at universities around the globe (U.S.A., Germany, India, China, etc.). Other 100 students graduated with W.G. as *Doktorvater*. Among his best students I would mention : W. Scheid (1967), U. Mosel (1968), P.-G. Reinhard (1970), J. Rafelski (1973), B. Müller (1973), J. Maruhn (1974), G. Soff (1977), H. Stöcker (1979), P.O. Hess (1980). In the same time, he hosted more than 100 Alexander von Humboldt fellows and awardees.

His name will be lastingly related to the synthesis of superheavies, electrodynamics of strong fields, nuclear fragmentation theory, relativistic heavy-ion collisions and the collective model of the atomic nucleus.

Walter Greiner was a friend and a long-term collaborator of several colleagues from our institute, the most prominent result of the Frankfurt-Bucharest cooperation being the prediction of Cluster Radioactivity with Aurel Sandulescu and Dorin Poenaru.

His vast contribution to nuclear physics will not be forgotten, as well his profoundly human character, always ready to help with advices and ideas as well his sense of humour.