

Einstein Studies in Russia

Yuri Balashov, Vladimir Vizgin



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This volume offers a selection of the best contributions by Russian scholars--historians and philosophers of science--to the Einstein Studies industry, broadly construed. Most of the papers included here were first published in Russian in the 'Einshteinovskiy Sbornik' series (Einstein Studies), the first of its kind, and initiated in 1966 by Nobel Prize winner Igor Tamm. From 1966-1990, fourteen volumes of the 'Sbornik' were published by Nauka, the chief academic publisher in the former Soviet Union. The book explores such topics as the historical and foundational issues in general relativity and relativistic cosmology, Einstein's contributions to quantum theory of radiation, and the rise of Dirac's quantum electrodynamics. The volume also includes a detailed description of the physics colloquium Einstein established and coordinated in 1912-1914 in Zurich. The contributors draw extensively on documentation previously unavailable to most scholars. Thus the materials from various Russian archives shed new light on the famous exchange (regarding the first evolutionary cosmological models) between Einstein and Aleksandr Friedmann in the early 1920s and on the role of Boris Podolsky and Vladimir Fock in the emergence of quantum electrodynamics. The little- known correspondence between Einstein and a famous German pilot Paul Ehrhardt suggests that, during World War I, Einstein was involved with aero- and hydrodynamics and thought about ways of improving airfoil design. Other articles discuss new approaches to important questions in the foundations of general relativity and cosmology. Historians, philosophers, and sociologists of science should be prepared to find much new and unexpected material in this engaging volume presenting the best of the recent Russian scholarship in the field. The book will be accessible to the general reader as well.



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