



Alexei Starobinsky (1948–2023)

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It is our sad duty to report that Prof. Alexei Starobinsky, a distinguished member of the Editorial Board of EPJC, passed away after a short illness on December 21, 2023 at the age of 75.

After graduating from Moscow State University, Alexei Starobinsky received his PhD from the Landau Institute for Theoretical Physics under the supervision of Yakov Zel'dovich in 1975. He then continued working as a researcher at the Institute, where he headed the department of gravitation and cosmology and, from 1999 to 2003, served as the deputy director. He was a visiting professor at many universities and institutes, including the École Normale Supérieure, University of Tokyo, Institut Henri Poincaré, Yukawa Institute for Theoretical Physics (Kyoto University), and Utrecht University. From 2017, he was also a part-time professor at the Higher School of Economics University in Moscow, where he remained an active educator until the end. Starobinsky was elected as a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina.

Alexei Starobinsky was a universally respected theoretical physicist in the areas of classical and quantum gravity and relativistic cosmology. His influence on the modern state of these fields cannot be overstated. In the early 1970s his works on particle creation by rotating black holes paved the way for the theory of Hawking radiation. He was one of the pioneers of the cosmic inflation theory, which dramatically changed our understanding of the physics of the early Universe and actually anticipated modern precision cosmology by more than a decade. In his works on the Higgs model of inflation, he sought to reconcile the large-scale structure of our Universe with the standard model of particle physics. Until

recently, he actively engaged in the latest scientific debates. As a recipient of the most prestigious international awards (Friedmann, Tomalla, Gruber, Kavli and Pomeranchuk prizes for cosmology; Klein, Amaldi and Dirac medals for physics), he would undoubtedly have been a leading candidate for a Nobel Prize on inflation theory.

Alexei Starobinsky was a great inspiration to his younger colleagues, for whom he always found time, and he was glad to share his insights and advice with the younger generation. He remained a humble and honest researcher, dedicated to the scientific method through difficult times.

His tragic death is a great loss for the international physics community and a great blow for the Editorial Board of EPJC. His profound expertise and active editorial work yielded more than a decade of excellent editorship and greatly enhanced the quality of our journal. We shall all miss Alexei and cherish our memories of his remarkable personality.

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