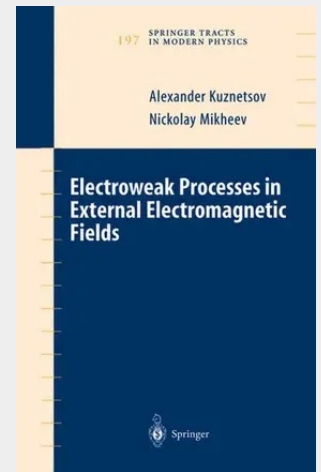


Electroweak Processes in External Electromagnetic Fields

Usually, it is not easy to define the main dates of creation of a new science – the birth date, when the first distinct idea was generated, and the maturity date, when the science manifested itself as a separate and consistent discipline. For particle astrophysics, the science that has developed very intensively over the last two decades, the birth is most likely to be dated to the beginning of the 1930s. Just then, after the discovery of a neutron by J. Chadwick in 1932, the concept of a neutron star was proposed by L.D. Landau, and independently by W. Baade and F. Zwicky. The maturation of this science can be more or less confidently be dated to 1987 when extragalactic neutrinos were registered for the first time from the supernova SN1987A explosion in the Large Magellanic Cloud, a satellite galaxy of our Milky Way. There are at least two excellent books on the topic written by G.G. Ruffert: Stars as Laboratories for Fundamental Physics (Univ. Chicago Press, Chicago 1996) and by H.V. Klapdor-Kleingrothaus and K. Zuber: Particle Astrophysics. 2nd ed. (Inst. of Phys., Bristol 2000), where the basics of this new science can be studied. However, new facts and ideas appear so fast that it is necessary for specialists to follow not only journal papers but also electronic preprints, in order to keep abreast of the latest developments.

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