



Date : 29/03/2018

Pages : 362

Format cm : 16 x 24

Prix : 24.8

EAN : 9782713227264

Erudite Nebulas

The Origin of the World between Marginality and Scientific Authority (1860-1920)

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Publisher : Éditions EHESS

Category : Humanities and Non-Fiction

Genres : Science Culture - Philosophy - History

Keywords : Origin - Knowledge - Essential oil - Diversity

Where do we come from? How were the stars and planets formed? Can science question the cosmic origins? Who is legitimate to approach these questions scientifically?

Often debated at the margins of a science then in the process of professionalization, the cosmic origins are a delicate subject, at the crossroads of astronomy and religion, of proof and speculation, of work and leisure. Through the study of these cosmogonists, most of whom have been forgotten, this book allows us to observe the way in which scientists and their institutions endeavored to regulate the desire to participate in the production of knowledge that pervaded society during the last decades of a bubbling cosmology, doomed to disappear with the radical epistemological break due to Albert Einstein, one of whose effects was to be properly sociological, namely a drastic reduction in the number of people likely to contribute.
