

Einstein's Unification

By Jeroen van van Dongen

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Why did Einstein tirelessly study unified field theory for more than 30 years? In this book, the author argues that Einstein believed he could find a unified theory of all of nature's forces by repeating the methods he thought he had used when he formulated general relativity. The book discusses Einstein's route to the general theory of relativity, focusing on the philosophical lessons that he learnt. It then addresses his quest for a unified theory for electromagnetism and gravity, discussing in detail his efforts with Kaluza-Klein and, surprisingly, the theory of spinors. From these perspectives, Einstein's critical stance towards the quantum theory comes to stand in a new light. This book will be of interest to physicists, historians and philosophers of science.

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Einstein's Unification By Jeroen van van Dongen Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #2508384 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Cambridge University Press
- Published on: 2010-07-26
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.72" h x .59" w x 6.85" l, 1.27 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 224 pages

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"... the reader who perseveres will be well rewarded with an excellent understanding of Einstein's journey and a sophisticated appreciation for the challenge of unification. This is an excellent historical technical review; the book should be on the shelves of all colleges with physics departments."
A. Spero, Choice

"Jeroen van Dongen has written a superb account of Einstein's strategy in discovering the general theory of relativity, his attempts at unification of physical forces, and his resistance to the quantum theory."
Howard E. Brandt, Mathematical Reviews

"Jeroen van Dongen's Einstein's Unification is an impressive and important book. Einstein's Unification is a unified, detailed, coherent, and convincing narrative about the path Einstein took after coming to general relativity and the reason for his all-consuming search for a unified theory of the forces of nature. Van Dongen's book will deeply influence how we understand Einstein and how future biographies that try to relate all aspects of Einstein's life will be written."
S. S. Schweber, Isis

"Jeroen van Dongen's remarkable book - an updated and revised version of his Ph.D. thesis of 2002, meanwhile matured through the author's research in the Berlin group and subsequently at the Einstein Papers Project based at CalTech - offers a delightful tour through Einstein's efforts ... constantly analyzed from the dialectics of Einstein's use of (pure) mathematics versus actual physics. The author thereby establishes - and this may be said to be the main point of the book - a gradual shift from the latter (which formed the strength of Einstein's youth) to the former."
N. P. Landsman, The Mathematical Intelligencer

About the Author
Jeroen van Dongen is Assistant Professor at the Institute for History and Foundations of Science at Utrecht University, The Netherlands, and has served as Associate Editor of the Collected Papers of Albert Einstein at the California Institute of Technology.

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