
These proceedings of the ‘Canary Winter School on Astrophysics’ contains six extensive lectures on the cosmology of the (early) universe. About half of the book is dedicated to the physics of the early universe, covering such issues as inflation and primordial cosmological perturbations (V. N. Lukash and I. D. Novikov), nucleosynthesis of the light elements (lectures by H. Reeves and B. E. J. Pagel), and the microwave background (J. L. Sanz).

The second half of the book concentrates mainly on the large-scale structure of the Universe and the theory of galaxy formation (lectures by B. Jones and J. Einasto).

As is common with proceedings of this kind, the technical level of presentation varies considerably. Nevertheless, all contributing authors take great care to place their subject into perspective. This makes this book a good basis for further reading and as an introduction to recent theoretical and observational results following an introductory course in cosmology. In particular this is true for the lectures by Pagels, Sanz, and Jones.

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After setting the stage with observational ingredients that raise a number of questions on structure and evolution of the stars, the author builds up the theoretical framework starting from the hydrostatic and thermal equilibrium conditions. Then all other building stones are introduced, with an extensive treatment of convection and its various influences on stellar structure and evolution. The last part is devoted to important applications of stellar evolution models, such as the study of color-magnitude diagrams, the analysis of pulsations in stars, the Cepheid mass problem and a discussion of star formation.

The book is written in a clear and easy readable style, with illustrations and lay-out specially appealing to students. Many well-developed comparisons between theoretical and observational results enlarge the insight in the complex interplay of processes in a star. It is an excellent textbook for undergraduate students, but it can also serve as a sound back-up for graduate students in stellar astrophysics.

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