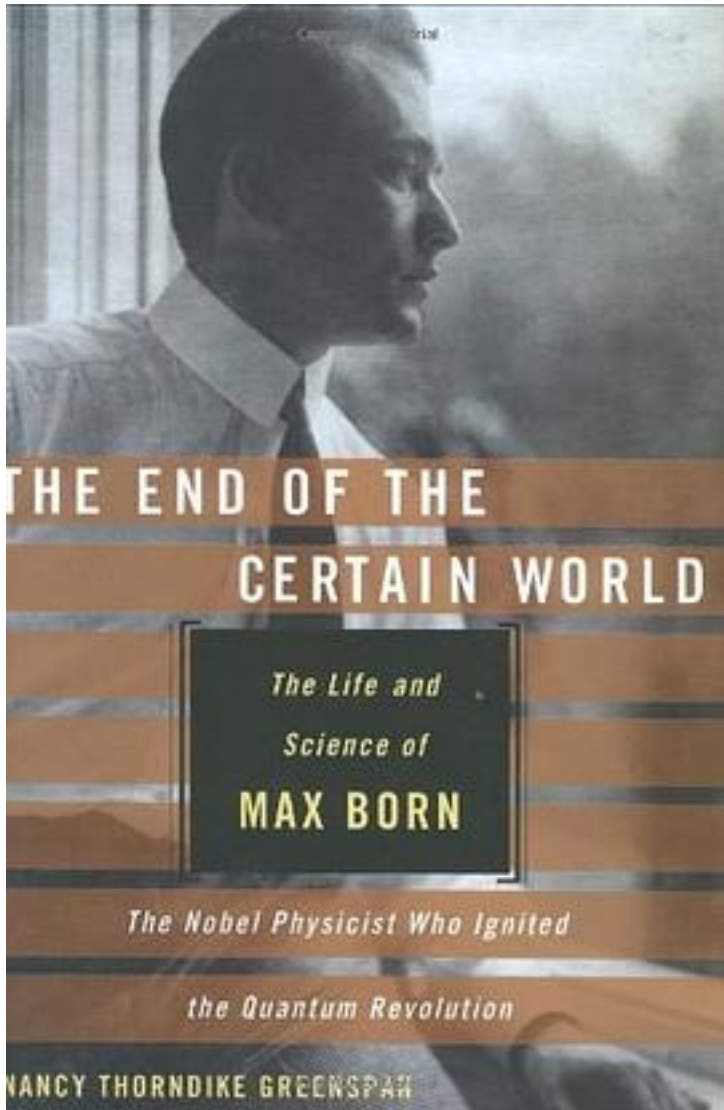


The End of the Certain World



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出版者:Wiley

出版时间:2005-3

装帧:

isbn:9780470856635

Max Born (1882--1970), physicist, Nobel prize winner and close friend to Albert Einstein, was one of the brilliant minds of the twentieth century. An advocate of the new theories of Einstein and a researcher into the science that was to become quantum mechanics, he soon attracted a stream of brilliant young students around him at Frankfurt and Goettingen. This was a golden age of physics and a formative period for modern science, when many of the foundations of modern science were being sketched out in German cafes. Nine of Born's students went on to win Nobel prizes for their work, although four (two working for the Germans and two for the US) saddened him by working on the development of the atomic bomb. In 1924 he published a paper entitled *Quantum Mechanics* the first to label the research with this name. He played a crucial role in the development of the theory of quantum mechanics and of wave function. In the 1930s he was forced to flee from Germany to escape the anti-Semitic policies of the nazis and continued his work first in Cambridge and then in Edinburgh, returning to Germany only on his retirement in the 1950s. He always resisted pressure to become involved in the use of science for destructive purposes, something that put him out of favour with the establishment. He spent much of his final years campaigning against the atomic bomb and against the unethical use of science. He wrote to Einstein of his sorrow that our science which is such a beautiful thing in itself and could be such a benefactor for human society, has been degraded to nothing but a means of destruction and death.

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