EXPLAINING HUMAN ORIGINS
MYTH, IMAGINATION AND CONJECTURE

In this revised version of the French original, Wiktor Stoczkowski, an anthropologist, argues that the theories of human origins developed by naturalists, archaeologists and physical anthropologists from the early nineteenth century to the present day are structurally similar to modern popular theories, and to the speculations of earlier philosophers. Reviewing a remarkable range of thinkers writing in a variety of European languages, he makes a convincing argument for this case. Even though the book highlights the paucity of development in scientific explanations of human origins, it ends with an optimistic conclusion about the power of the scientific approach to deliver more reliable theories – but only if it is conscious of the baggage it carries over from popular discourse.

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Translated by Mary Turton
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