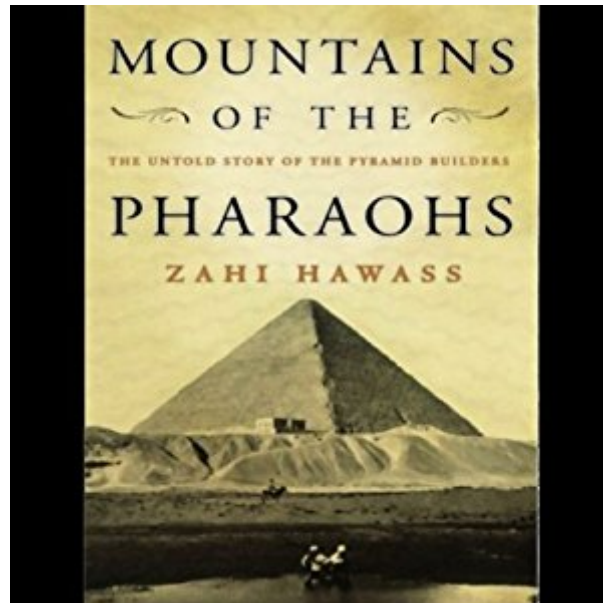


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Mountains Of The Pharaohs: The Untold Story Of The Pyramid Builders



Synopsis

An unprecedented account of one of civilization's greatest achievements. The great pyramids of Giza have intrigued humanity for thousands of years. Questions about the construction and the purpose of these majestic monuments have existed since the middle period of ancient Egyptian civilization; in the sixth century B.C., Herodotus was the first of generations of explorers to travel to Egypt in an attempt to unlock their secrets. Recent cutting-edge research has uncovered information, unimaginable to previous generations, about how and why they were built. In *Mountains of the Pharaohs*, Zahi Hawass, a world-renowned archaeologist and the official guardian of Egypt's timeless treasures, weaves the latest archaeological data and an enthralling family history into a spellbinding narrative. Nearly 5,000 years ago, the fourth dynasty of Egypt's Old Kingdom reigned over a highly advanced civilization. Believed to be gods, the royal family lived amidst colossal palaces and temples built to honor them and their deified ancestors. Hawass brings these extraordinary historical figures to life, spinning a soap opera-like saga complete with murder, incest, and the triumphant ascension to the throne of one of only four queens ever to rule Egypt. The magnificent pyramids attest not only to the dynasty's supreme power, but also to the engineering expertise and architectural sophistication that flourished under their rule. Hawass argues that the pyramids, including the Great Pyramid of Khufu, the only one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World still standing, were built by skilled craftsman who took great pride in their work.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a great book if you want to learn about the history of the Pharaohs and the pyramid builders.

The author, Zahi Hawass, is secretary general of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities and one of Time magazine's 100 most influential people. Hawass writes that the pharaohs, initially worshippers of the sun and eventually made sun gods themselves, began constructing these pyramids (which were giant tombs) as soon as they ascended to the throne. There are some really nice facts in the book that I did not know: (a) The Sphinx originally had a beard, and fragments of it are in a museum. It was feared that the head of the Sphinx might fall off, and that the beard had to be restored in order to offer support to the head. But later scientific investigations showed that in fact the head and neck of the Sphinx were the sturdiest parts of the Sphinx. A decision was then taken not to restore the Sphinx's beard! (b) Contrary to popular belief, the pyramids were not built by slaves. The burial ground of the pyramid builders was found in the 80's, and it showed that they were common people who ate meat and fish (it was once thought that only the elite ate meat), and took a day off every ten days. (c) Not all Pharaohs were cruel and unjust. Some showed caring to their people, and treated males and females equally. (d) The pyramids were built about 4,000 years ago (the erroneous and popular belief is that they were built over 10,000 years ago). They were not built by extraterrestrials or by the mythical inhabitants of Atlantis. (e) Hawass imagines Khufu, the builder of the Great Pyramid, finding comfort in thinking that "[h]is pyramid was rising rapidly, reaching to the sky and ensuring his eternal life as a god....

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