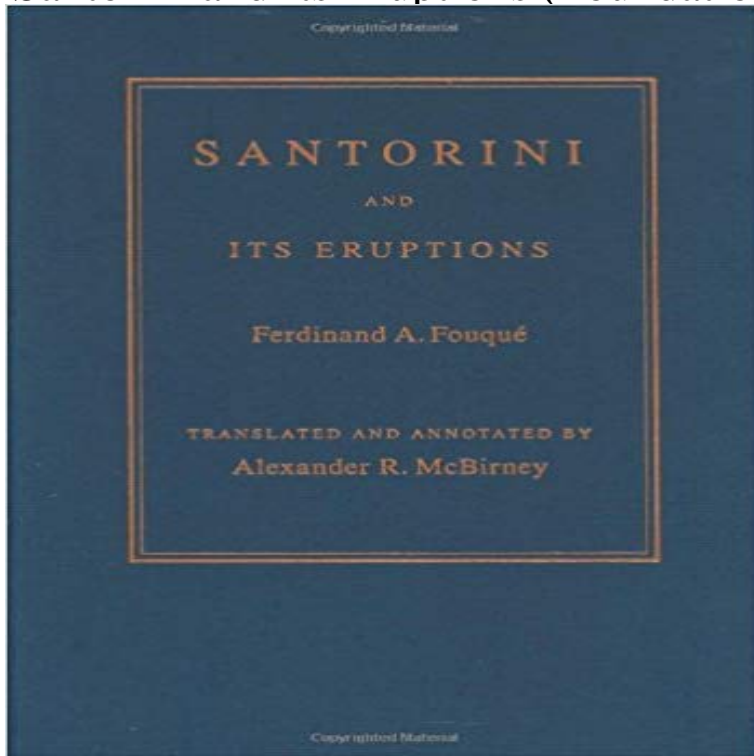


Santorini and Its Eruptions (Foundations of Natural History)



Ferdinand Fouques study of the Santorini archipelago in the Aegean Sea was first published in French in 1879. It quickly became known as a valued resource, not only on Santorini but also on volcanoes, their characteristics, and the remarkable archaeological artifacts that Fouque discovered under the volcanic rock of Santorinis most famous eruption. In short, the work proved invaluable to geologists and archaeologists alike. For geologists, Fouques detailed analysis of the volcano provided the first well-documented evidence that large volcanic depressions, such as the one forming the bay of Santorini, are the result of wholesale collapse following voluminous eruptions of ash and pumice. In the field of archaeology, Fouque discovered the buried city of Akrotiri and began the excavations that showed the first evidence of an advanced bronze-age civilization in the Aegean. (Like Pompeii, Akrotiri was buried by a major volcanic eruption which, according to one popular theory, was also responsible for the sudden demise of the Minoan civilization on Crete.) He was the first to use the petrographic microscope to study the sources of clay used in ancient ceramics and discovered the nature of Egyptian bluepigment. Fouques studies laid the foundation for much of the intense research carried out on the island today, but because the book is exceedingly rare?more often cited than read?his remarkable observations and insights have gone largely unnoticed. Now noted volcanologist Alexander R. McBirney provides the first annotated English translation of the original French text of 1879. Most of the original works illustrations are included, among them a fourteen-page color insert, and a large, full-color geological map of the Santorini islands. Also included are a brief biography of Fouque and a summary of more recent geological and archaeological studies at Santorini.

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