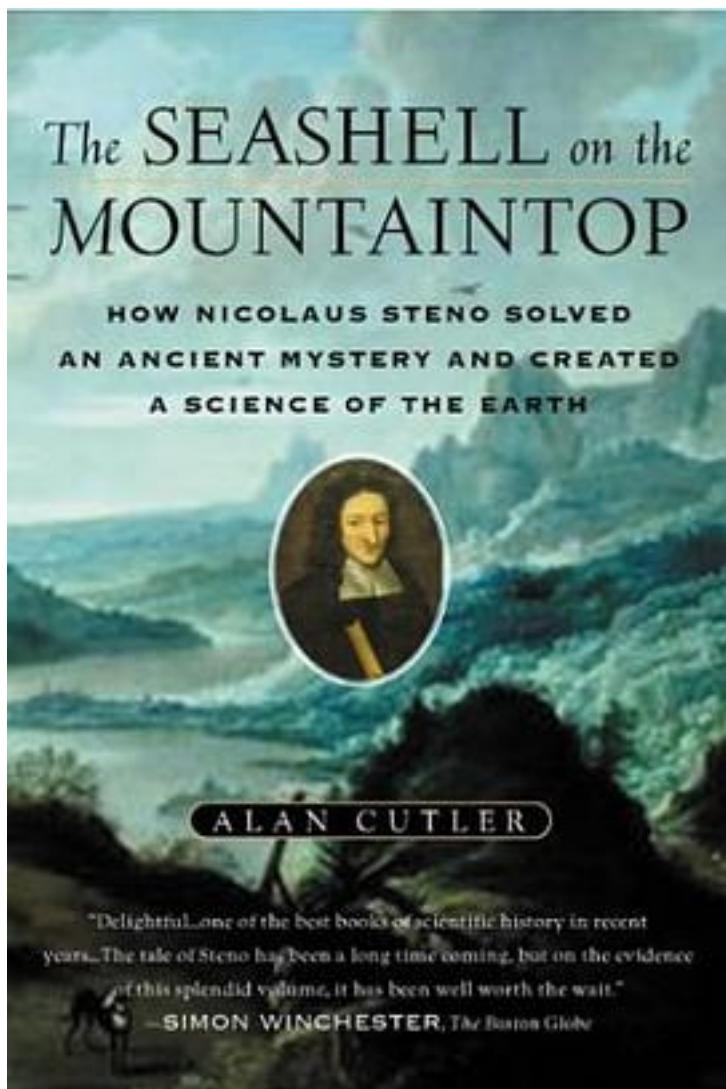


The Seashell on the Mountaintop



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出版者:RANDOM CENTURY

出版时间:2004-8

装帧:

isbn:9780099421498

Dubbed 'the founder of modern geology' by Stephen Jay Gould, the 17th century Danish scientist Nicolaus Steno was the first man to suggest that the existence of fossils demanded a much longer history for the earth than the roughly six thousand years suggested by the Bible. Steno's work was ignored for over a century; he himself dropped his geological studies; he converted to Catholicism and later became a bishop; in 1988 he was beatified by the Pope. Alan Cutler tells the story of this passionate and fascinating man, exploring his remarkable ideas on science and religion and the way his work was eventually to transform Western ideas of time. Steno's influence was enormous; Cutler's book is the first to give him his due, and to set him alongside Copernicus, Galileo and Darwin.

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