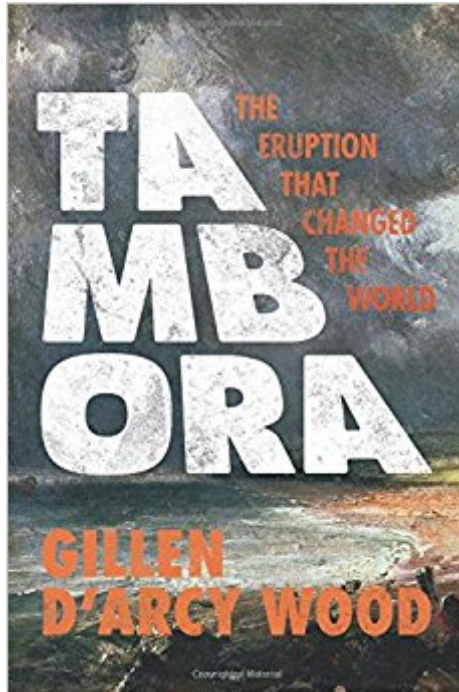


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Tambora: The Eruption That Changed The World



Synopsis

When Indonesia's Mount Tambora erupted in 1815, it unleashed the most destructive wave of extreme weather the world has witnessed in thousands of years. The volcano's massive sulfate dust cloud enveloped the Earth, cooling temperatures and disrupting major weather systems for more than three years. Communities worldwide endured famine, disease, and civil unrest on a catastrophic scale. Here, Gillen D'Arcy Wood traces Tambora's global and historical reach: how the volcano's three-year climate change regime initiated the first worldwide cholera pandemic, expanded opium markets in China, and plunged the United States into its first economic depression. Bringing the history of this planetary emergency to life, Tambora sheds light on the fragile interdependence of climate and human societies to offer a cautionary tale about the potential tragic impacts of drastic climate change in our own century.

Book Information

Paperback: 312 pages

Publisher: Princeton University Press (September 15, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0691168628

ISBN-13: 978-0691168623

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 0.9 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.5 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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Customer Reviews

A small irony occurred the day Gillen D'Arcy Wood's new definitive history of the Tamboran period arrived by post. On that day I had expected to be standing on the summit of Gunung Tambora. Tambora is a fertile area for his Wood's research into the relationships between societies and the environment. During the five year journey of the writing of his book he was able to uncover historical information from across the world and connect them, in a way no one had done before, to the calamitous events on Sumbawa in 1815. I had contacted Wood when I first heard about his new book and he was enthusiastic and encouraging to hear of another writer interested in the mountain, saying that he hoped large numbers of articles, books and papers would soon be

forthcoming as the world woke up to the importance of the eruption. Professor Wood has become a champion of Tambora and he enters the battle with her favour tied firmly to his lance of research. He feels the eruptions of Vesuvius, Krakatau and others are unfairly more famous. Tambora's eruption, he claims, was a world-historical event • more akin to that of Thera on the Greek island of Santorini in 1628 BC, which is easily linked to the decline of the Minoan civilisation and to events retold in the Bible, such as the Israelites' exodus from Egypt. You get the impression that Tambora's relative exclusion to modern history is affronting to him, and his new book is an attempt to make things right. On this he didn't need to convince me • I had already come to the same conclusion. Gillen is the first to have translated some Chinese poetry of the time which acts as a record of the famines and privations that people faced there.

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