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Finding Zero (Paperback)

By Amir D. Aczel

Palgrave MacMillan, United States, 2016. Paperback. Condition: New. Reprint. Language: English . Brand New Book. The invention of numerals is perhaps the greatest abstraction the human mind has ever created. Virtually everything in our lives is digital, numerical, or quantified. The story of how and where we got these numerals has for thousands of years been shrouded in mystery. Finding Zero is an adventure-filled saga of Amir Aczel's lifelong obsession: to find the original sources of our numerals. Aczel has doggedly crisscrossed the ancient world, scouring dusty, moldy texts, cross examining so-called scholars who offered wildly differing sets of facts, and ultimately penetrating deep into a Cambodian jungle to find a definitive proof. Here, he takes the reader along for the ride. The history begins with the early Babylonian cuneiform numbers, followed by the later Greek and Roman letter numerals. Then Aczel asks the key question: where do the numbers we use today, the so-called Hindu-Arabic numerals, come from? This leads him to explore uncharted territory, to go on a grand quest into India, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, and ultimately into the wilds of Cambodia. There he finds the earliest zero on a crumbling, vine-covered wall of a seventh-century temple...



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