

# Mystery essay example

[Experience](#), [Belief](#)



There have been many theories regarding how the pyramids at Giza were constructed. Most experts agree that they were constructed as burial monuments for pharaohs, but how these ancient people constructed monuments of such great size without modern machinery is a mystery which is still being debated.

The Great Pyramid of Giza outside the modern city of Cairo in Egypt was in antiquity one of the Seven Wonders of the World and is today the only monument from the list that survives (Brier, 2007). The Great Pyramid is the largest of a group of three pyramids situated one next to the other, fascinating everyone who saw them since antiquity. These were monuments intended for the burial of three pharaohs, Khufu, Khafre and Menkaure and were built from c. 2550 to c. 2475 BC (Tansey and Kleiner, 1996, 72-73). The question that still puzzles the historians however is how a civilization without modern machinery and knowledge managed to create such huge and impressive monuments.

There have been many theories regarding the construction of the pyramids, ranging from scholarly researched proposals to outrageous beliefs that they were created by aliens. The Classical Greek historian, Herodotus was one of the first to discuss the construction of the pyramids. He suggested that they were created by slaves -something that today we know it is not true- and involved the use of machines made of wood which would lift the stones. After the base of the pyramid was created, Herodotus suggests that the construction proceeded from top to bottom (Tyldesley, 2003, 134).

Another -this time recent- theory suggests that ramps were used. At first an external ramp of limestone would help in the building of the lower part of the

pyramid (Brier, 2007). Then, when the ramp would have to be extended beyond the available space of the area, an internal ramp would be used to build the monument from the inside (Brier, 2007). This ramp would follow the shape and construction of the pyramid and according to the French architect, Jean- Pierre Houdin, it still exists inside the buildings (Brier, 2007).

The latter theory seems to be closer to the truth for two reasons. First of all it seems to be supported by recent evidence from the Great Pyramid examined by Houdin and other scholars. A particular survey by a French team using a technique which measures the density of the interior parts of the Great Pyramid provided traces of a spiral construction all along the interior of the monument (Brier, 2007). Second, Houdin's theory is not only logical but also the most recent. The architect was able to take into account earlier theories, like the external ramp theory, and the criticisms against them, as well as the limitations of space in the Giza plateau: it would be impossible in terms of space to create just one gigantic external ramp that would allow the construction of the whole pyramid. Instead, an internal one progressing along with the work would be a rational answer to this problem.

We may never know for certain how the pyramids -monuments created thousands of years before our time- were built. The fact however that a civilization devoted so much time and resources to create them is indicative of their importance and their belief that they actually provided a fitting resting place for their rulers. In this respect, equally important are the role of kingship in Ancient Egypt and the religious beliefs of the Ancient Egyptians, issues that should always be studied along the architecture and techniques of great monuments.

## **REFERENCES**

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