

ANCIENT SKIES

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THE PHAISTOS DISC

BY FRANK BRUNS*

In 1908, Sir Arthur Evans, the famous English archaeologist, discovered a small, clay disc while digging in the ruins of Phaistos, a Minoan civilization site on the Mediterranean Island of Crete.

The only one of its kind ever found, the clay object is 16.5 centimeters (6.5 inches) in diameter and is unique in that both of its sides are printed - not carved - with a total of 241 inscriptions. Using movable type thousands of years before printing was invented, forty-five different symbols were used - some repeatedly - by impressing them individually into the wet clay! Forming a spiral on each side of the disc, the symbols seem to relate a complete text.

From the moment it was discovered, the "Phaistos Disc", as it is now called, has evoked speculation and controversy among scientists of many disciplines. Now displayed in the Heraclion Museum, the 3,700 year old object has been variously described as an alphabetical system, a hieroglyphic writing and it has been suggested that it uses zodiacal signs for phonetic symbols.

Philologists have tried to decipher the printed symbols as a language text. One Minoan authority describes the disc as an "allusive system of allegorical symbols which are to be 'interpreted' not translated, which make an invocation or hymn to the sun." (!)

One scientist concludes that "the meaning is still unintelligible", while another suggests that it is "probably Asian hieroglyphic script." One archaeologist ventures that "it is possible that the signs are not a script at all, but some form of gaming-board". (!)

Speculation among scientists runs rampant!

Finally, in the early 1970's the English astronomer, Gerald S. Hawkins, who "decoded" Stonehenge, took his turn at trying to decipher the Phaistos Disc using mathematics and computer technology, but he soon consigned the project to his "unsolved file".

Now, after nearly four years of research, I add my own solution to the riddle of the Phaistos Disc. I have concluded that the disc reports a landing of extraterrestrials on Earth!

Many researchers consider the symbols as Cretan hieroglyphs; however, I have visited Greece and Crete, and the ruins of Naxos, but nowhere have I found any glyphs even similar to those on the disc. The symbols and figures are of very accurate craftsmanship, compared to the lines which delineate the



Figure 1. Side "A".



Figure 2. Side "B".

spirals. This distinction suggests that the glyphs and the lines were done by different persons, perhaps the lines were added later as an aid to interpret the meaning of the symbols. Because the "type" was probably made of some hard substance, such as metal, the conclusion is inescapable that it was produced by the intelligent beings who landed here in order to record the event.

The question of whether the "writing" begins at the rim of the disc and spirals inward to the center, or begins at the center and flows outward, has been debated by scholars. As in deciphering all

(Continued on next page)

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forms of writing, it is essential to determine the "flow" of the characters. I have concluded that the message begins at the center of the disc, because it began at the rim and continued inward, there might not be sufficient room for the entire message.

The writing consists of repeated figures and groups of symbols. Quadrivariations are predominant. For the vocabulary of the writing, there are only a limited number of symbols. The symbols depict at least two unrelated types of human beings, negroes and indians, which is unusual, because the Minoan society was not integrated.

One symbol of particular interest was been called a Japanese "gazebo" (See Fig.3), but this, seems to be at variance with the fact that there appears to have been no connection between Crete and Japan. Also, the design of the symbol is of a style unknown in Greece. In my view, the symbol represents a flying object of a type which has been reported by credible witnesses today. A close examination of the symbol reveals that there are dots at the ends of the uprights at the bottom of the object, which could indicate landing wheels or pads. The connection between the center upright and the one on the right side seems to be an imperfection in the die.

We have no way of determining which side of the disc is the front and which is the back; therefore, I have designated one side as "A" and the other as "B", simply for the purposes of discussion.

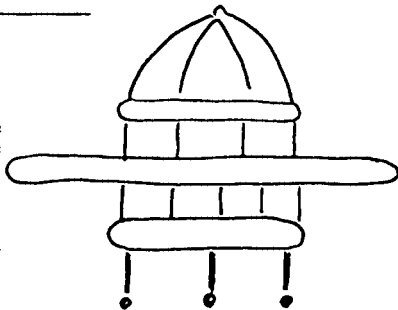
Observing the symbols on side "A" in the order shown (from the center outwards), the main event depicts the splashdown of a space capsule. Then a boat appears to take the astronauts to an island inhabited by male and female natives. The strangers from the space capsule make a peace offering represented by a twig. Then in Group 6, a giant space craft (the "gazebo") comes into the picture and makes contact (arrow) with the space capsule.

Group 7 depicts a second splashdown, with a somewhat different type of capsule. Following the spiral outward, we can imagine the landing of intelligent beings from outer space and coming into contact with natives on Earth. Again, the twig indicates their peaceful intentions.

One symbol, the circle with a center point, surrounded by six dots, could represent an atom, which could be translated into a representation of some sort of catastrophe, such as an atomic bomb explosion. Could the disc be describing a prehistoric nuclear conflict?

Mere speculation? Of course, but just as valid as any of the "scientific theories" presented to date.

Figure 3. Japanese Gazebo, or a space craft?



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FINAL CALL FOR MEMBER EXPEDITION TO MEXICO February 28 - March 15, 1981

The itinerary is now complete for our member expedition to Mexico for 1981. The group will depart Chicago on February 28 for Mexico City, then continue to Villahermosa on March 1. After a visit to the unique outdoor museum of La Venta, site of the colossal stone heads attributed to the Olmec culture, the ruins of nearby Comalcalco will be visited before proceeding to Palenque. The next day will be devoted to exploring the restored ruins of this mysterious ancient city, with its fantastic art forms carved in stucco and the now-famous Palenque Slab, deep inside the Temple of Inscriptions.

On March 3 we will board small planes at the Palenque airport for an all day visit to the ruins of Yaxchilan, a large site beside the Usumacinta River. The next day will be spent exploring the unrestored ruins in the jungle surrounding Palenque. The group will return to Villahermosa on March 5 and overnight at the delightful Maya Tabasco Hotel, with its unusual swimming pool. An early morning flight the next day will take us to Oaxaca, where we can visit the excellent museums of Mayan culture. On March 7, all day will be spent at the ruins of Monte Alban and the next day will take us to the ruins of Mitla and Zaachila.

On March 9 we will proceed overland to the Pacific Coast for two and one-half days of rest and relaxation at Puerto Escondido, the delightfully secluded Spanish colonial seacoast village. March 12 will take us back to Oaxaca for overnight and then the next day we will return to Mexico City, for one and one-half days of free time to visit the world famous Museum of Anthropology, or take a side trip to the pyramids of Teotihuacan, or to Tula for a look at the giant stone statues, or just shopping and relaxing.

The group will return to Chicago on Sunday, March 15.

Members on the U.S. West Coast can arrange to meet the group in Mexico City on February 28.

Space is limited for this exciting adventure so anyone who is interested should contact the Society headquarters immediately for further details and cost information.

MORE ON ZIMBABWE

It was a stroke of genius that led Erich von Daniken to compare the Zimbabwe ruins to the Sirius star system. His reporting on present day Zimbabwe is probably the best ever written.

One important item is now missing, however. There once was another tower, a bit smaller than the one von Daniken describes, and not so tall. It appeared to serve no useful purpose, either. When I saw a picture of the smaller tower years ago, a few feet of the top were missing - now it is gone completely. I believe it fits perfectly into the Sirius system.

Zimbabwe's great ellipse probably was astronomical and was laid out to conform to the Sirius star system. I believe that a Dogon or Varozwi headman would recognize it as such, because Sirius played a very important part in their religious beliefs.

Von Daniken is also correct about the Acropolis at Zimbabwe. It was a lookout for a garrison of warriors.

In my opinion, Erich von Daniken has brought to light more evidence of early man and man's activities on Earth than all the scholars and scientists who ever lived. Orville L. Hope, 425 E. Davidson Ave., Gastonia, North Carolina 28052 USA.

THE PETROGLYPHS OF TORO MUERTO

BY DORIS L. PHILLIPS*

The recent discovery of Nazca-type ground drawings on the pampas of Majes and Sihuas in southern Peru, South America (see Ancient Skies 7:1) will undoubtedly attract many visitors to the area. However, the little-known zone of Toro Muerto, also located in the Valley of Majes, is considered to be one of the richest archaeological areas for pre-Colombian art.

Discovered many years ago, Toro Muerto is seldom visited because of its difficult to reach location about 175 kilometers northwest of the city of Arequipa, Peru. The first stage of the journey takes about two hours over a good, asphalt road. The next eight kilometers are dirt road until you reach the village of Corire, then the last three kilometers are over rough, desert terrain.

Toro Muerto's desolate, arid, sandswept valley looks more like a Moonscape than a site on Earth. Situated 600 meters above sea level, it is inconceivable that people could at one time have lived and flourished here, and more importantly, could have taken the time to fashion all the carvings on the more than 3,000 stones. Varying in size from about 2 square meters to about 4 square meters, the stones contain a vast array of carvings. Birds, animals, reptiles, fish, as well as human-like forms and geometrical figures adorn the rocks.

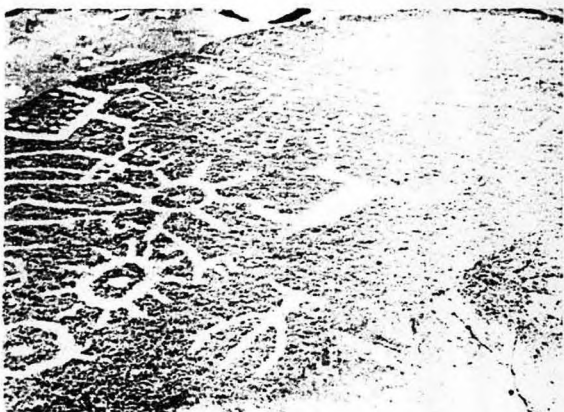
The rock is volcanic, of silicon crystal composition, which is surprising because the nearest volcano is eighty kilometers distant. Also, the rock is not indigenous to the Majes area. Someone or something brought the rocks to this wasteland. Whether the rocks were carved elsewhere and then brought here, or whether they were carved in situ is unknown.

Archaeologists have estimated the carvings to be from 1,000 to 2,000 years old, but because the Carbon 14 method cannot be used on stone, the age is simply an educated guess.

The stones were discovered in modern times by the well-known Peruvian archaeologist, Dr. Eloy Linares Malaga, who also made the recent discovery of the ground drawings in the same area.

Who carved these thousands of boulders, and for what purpose? We may never know.

*Mrs. Phillips was born in Arequipa, Peru. She is the Secretary of the Ancient Astronaut Society. All photos used in this article were taken by Jose A. Rivera of Arequipa.



EXTRATERRESTRIAL VISITATIONS IN RUSSIAN FOLKLORE

BY VALERII I. SANAROV*

The Orthodox Church of Our Lady in Aleppo (Haleb) is in possession of a large icon depicting a man on the top of a high pillar. It is believed to be the image of Saint Simeon Stylite (390-420) and the icon is attributed to the miniaturist and calligrapher of the first half of the 17th Century, Yusuf al-Halabi. I think any Ancient Astronaut Society member who sees the picture of the icon will immediately think of a rocket launcher or a space vehicle. Is such a comparison legitimate?

Pillar asceticism, as in the case of Saint Simeon, has its analogies in the so-called "King isolation," and confinement of girls in folklore. But they are confined, not in a normal way, but in high towers - in a pillar - often without windows. In his "Golden Bough", Frazer points out that the king must not expose his face to the sun, and always lives in the dark. Then, he must not touch the Earth; therefore, his abode is lifted above the ground - he lives in a tower. No human can see his face; therefore he sits in complete solitude. If we take into account that kings were considered as a progeny of the gods and assume that this was not an idle deification by their subjects, then Frazer's points can be interpreted as follows: The King was in the dark; hence he ought not (=could not) expose his face to the sun. The King was in the tower (=space vehicle); hence he ought not (=could not) touch the Earth. The King was in solitude; hence he ought not (=could not) be seen by humans. This suggests that folktales, or imitative reality, reflect a recollection of the arrival of extraterrestrials from space, and more precisely, from outside of our solar system.

In Georgian and Megrel folktales, the king's daughter is called "mzelunaqav", which means "not seen by the sun" or "not having seen the sun". The folktale retains a memory of a long interplanetary flight which required a stock of provisions for a long time: "Had he (the king) a high pillar built, put on it Ivan the King's son and Helen the Beautiful, and put there provisions for them for five years." (Russian folktale "The Milk of a Wild Beast"). At the same time an evidence of effects from the space vehicle is retained. Well known in ufology are light effects and motor paralysis during encounters. The folktale reflects this as petrification on encountering a representative not of this world.

An Abkhazian folktale bears good evidence of this phenomenon: An elder brother of the hero strayed into a thick forest and is found near a tree in a clearing. Suddenly, "a sort of aircraft descended from heaven, and a man sat on it. The elder brother tried to understand what it was, and as he stared with bulging eyes, the man flew over him and killed him." Another brother of the hero came to the same spot, and the aircraft hovered over him and he, too, was killed. When the hero came to the spot, he found his dead brothers, but their bodies were still completely intact, as though they had just died. Then the aircraft appeared in the sky and flew down to kill him, but the hero "braced himself" and caught the craft. A beautiful girl emerged from the ship and she resuscitated the brothers with her kerchief.

Tradition relates this story of one of Genghis Khan's ancestors: Alan-qoua, a granddaughter of Yolduz Khan, declined to remarry after her husband died. "Thus some years have elapsed. Once in the morning at daybreak, she was dozing when a light ray penetrated her tent thought a hole in the top and awakened her. She distinctly saw a fair-skinned man with deep-blue eyes come out of the ray and descend to her. Wanting to cry out, her voice failed her and she tried to get up from the bed, but her arms and legs were as if paralyzed. The man approached her in complete silence and lay down next to her. After seizing the opportunity of husbandly rights, he departed through the hole in the top of the tent.

Alan-qoua said nothing of the incident. A few days later, the man came to her again, and thus visited her from time to time." When in her fifth or sixth month, she had to tell her relatives what had happened, and they began keeping watch near her tent. "Once at dawn the man who was keeping watch saw a light ray shining into Alan-qoua's tent through the hole in the top. He awakened his friends and all saw the ray coming out of the tent some time later; however they did not see a human shape in the ray of light." This is why many of Alan-qoua's descendants have fair skin and deep-blue eyes.

We have here a classic description of an encounter with extraterrestrials, which cause a fear of light and electro-magnetic effects; even pregnancy. These misgivings are transformed by the folktale into the prohibition of sun light and the confinement of young maidens. The fact that the precautions fail and a marriage is consummated reflects an actual encounter described in the folktale. The fairy-tale theme of confinement of girls has been widely used in novels. Confined women are perceived as saint-martyrs, and the theme has passed into the hagiographic literature.

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Icon of Saint Simeon Stylite in the Church of Our Lady in Aleppo.