



ANCIENT SKIES

"Come Search With Us!"

Official Logbook of the Ancient Astronaut Society

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THE CRYSTAL SKULL OF LUBAANTUN

BY ENRICO MERCURIO* and GENE M. PHILLIPS**

At a "brain-storm" session during one of the Ancient Astronaut Society's World Conferences, the topic for discussion by the Conference speakers and their invited guests was the hypothetical supposition that the Ancient Astronaut Society, or one of its members, found an object - a real, hard, tangible piece of evidence - which, without question, could not have been produced on Earth. What would we do with it? How would we present the object to the scientific community? To the public? How could we prove its extraterrestrial origin?

Naturally, the scientific members of the discussion group would turn the object over to a university, a museum, NASA, a geographical society, or to a leading scientist for evaluation. No, the non-scientists objected vociferously, the object would never be seen again! Or, the result of the evaluation would come out negatively. We would lose control of the object and its evaluation. Finally, a consensus was reached - the Ancient Astronaut Society or the finder of the object would have to keep control of the object and have an independent analysis made by an industrial firm or a scientific laboratory.

Once the scientific analysis is completed and documented with notarized affidavits as to the testing and analytical methods used, and the results obtained - that there is no known technology on Earth today which could have produced the object - then what do we do? Publish the findings, said the scientists. But where? What scientific journal would accept it? Call a press conference, said the laymen, and present the findings to the public. Show the object to the press along with a press kit with photos and the affidavits and describe how it was found.

Ah, but how was it found? Let us assume that the object was found during one of Erich von Daniken's expeditions to search for the underground city of Akahim, on the upper reaches of the Rio Negro in the dense jungles of northwestern Brazil. Was he alone? No, he was accompanied by his faithful secretary, Willi Dunnenberger, his friend and pilot, Ferdinand Schmid, and by Tacunca, the half-German tribal chieftain of the Mogulala tribe, who guided the party to the discovery. Were there no scientists in the expedition party? No, some were invited but they declined to participate for various and sundry reasons.

Then how can we be sure that von Daniken did not have the object made in Switzerland and carried it secretly to the jungle site and planted it where another member of the expedition party could accident-

ally stumble over it, half-buried in the ruins of the jungle growth of Akahim?

But, the laymen object, how could von Daniken have had the object made when we have proved absolutely by an independent scientific evaluation that the object could not have been produced on Earth by any technology known today? But science is one thing - scientists another.

Now the high priests of the scientific community begin their chant: We have not seen the object, but it must be a fake! We have not read the "independent" evaluation report, but it must have been rigged! Articles for scientific journals are hastily written and published declaring the object to be a fraud. Von Daniken planted it in Brazil to boost sales of his books which expound the theory of visits to Earth by extraterrestrial intelligent beings in the remote past.

A television special is prepared with leading scientists (none of them, by the way, expert in the object's field) expressing their views that the object is a fake. While all admit that they never saw the object and never read the evaluation report, they adamantly agree that there is nothing unusual about the object which could not be produced with today's technology, if we wanted to. Did the object come from outer space? Of course not, the leading scientists exclaim. How could it have come from outer space if there is no intelligent life in the Universe outside of mother Earth? Then could it have been produced on Earth in the remote past by a now-forgotten civilization possessing advanced technology unknown to us. Ridiculous! There is no technology unknown to us, and besides, stories of such civilizations are pure myth!

Finally, the weary "brain-stormers" adjourned their session acutely aware of the herculean task they faced when an extraterrestrial object is finally found on Earth. Paranoia? Not at all. Let us now examine a true account which occurred just over fifty years ago:

The time: 1927. The place: the tropical rain forest of Belize (formerly British Honduras), located in the Yucatan Peninsula south of the Mexican territory of Quintana Roo and east of the Peten district of Guatemala. The event: an expedition led by British explorer Frederick A. Mitchell-Hedges in search of Maya ruins. The object: a perfect replica of a human skull carved from a single piece of clear quartz crystal, complete in every detail and featuring a detachable lower jawbone!

In 1924, Mitchell-Hedges, along with Jane Houlson, his secretary, Dr. Thomas Gann, a medical doctor and Maya scholar, a Captain Joyce from the British Museum and Lady Richmond Brown, financier of the expedition, arrived at Punta Gorda, an Indian village 100 miles south of the capital city of Bel-

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ize. Engaging a horde of workers, they struck into the jungles in search of ruins. After several months the party came upon mounds which appeared likely to cover ruins. Work with the machetes proved to be painstakingly slow, and Mitchell-Hedges ordered the site to be burned. After the smoke cleared, an enormous city of stone appeared beneath the charred rubble and the men set to work to clear the area and to excavate the mounds. A large central plaza covering an area of eight acres was excavated to reveal pyramids, terraces, stone walls, houses, underground chambers and a huge amphitheater with seating accommodations for thousands. Mitchell-Hedges named the site Lubaantún (City of Fallen Stones).

In late 1926, Mitchell-Hedges' adopted daughter, Anna, joined the expedition and in early 1927 on her seventeenth birthday, Anna and her father discovered the crystal skull in a temple while clearing some heavy stones of a wall which had fallen on an altar. Anna found the skull buried beneath the altar. The lower jawbone was missing, but after three months of careful search, it was found just 25 feet away from the site of the original find.

Mitchell-Hedges must have gone through the same mental exercise as our "brain-stormers", because he decided to keep the skull and present his findings directly to the public in newspaper articles. He did not claim that the crystal skull came from outer space, but he may as well have. He contended that the skull, as well as hundreds of other exquisitely worked artifacts that he found at Lubaantún and on the Bay Islands off the coast of Honduras were actually produced by the technologically-advanced, super civilization of Atlantis. This, of course, branded him as a "crackpot" by the archaeological establishment and his claims were quickly discredited.

The opposition's argument runs like this: the Mayas did not possess the technology to produce such an intricate object as the skull, and rock crystal of such perfection and size has never been found in the raw state in Central America; therefore, someone must have brought the skull to Belize. And, that someone must have been Mitchell-Hedges himself! In other words, he planted the skull in the ruins of Lubaantún so his daughter could find it on her birthday!

But where did Mitchell-Hedges get the skull? He must have run across it during one of his many travels in Europe, the argument continues. There have been many wealthy monarchs who could have commissioned its sculpture. Mitchell-Hedges acquired the skull and then waited for the opportune time to "discover" it as an archaeological find to prove his Atlantis theory. Incredible!

There is another crystal skull of about the same size and configuration as the Lubaantún skull, but lacking the clarity, detail and completion; further, its lower jaw is not removable. This skull, now on display in the British Museum in London, England, was found in Mexico in 1889 by one of Maximilian's soldiers. It is curious to note that no one has suggested that the soldier planted the skull there! It is possible that the two skulls were made by the same person or persons, but that the British Museum skull was never completed.

The existence of crystal objects is nothing unusual for archaeology. Precious objects of quartz have been found in tombs and ruins throughout the world. In Egypt, mummies were sometimes equipped with a so-called "third-eye" made of quartz crystal. In Mexico, thousands of small crystal objects have been found. In the Archaeological Museum in Oaxaca, Mexico there is a large display of strange objects, such as cog-wheels, spools, and other unusual shapes, all made from rock crystal, which were found in tombs at the ruins of Monte Alban. There are several miniature skulls made from quartz in museums around the world, which came from Mexico.

Quartz is a mineral and in the category of precious stones. On the Mohs' scale of hardness, quartz

reaches 7, with 10, the highest, being reserved for diamonds. Quartz cannot be split like diamonds, because it is apt to splinter due to its sedimentary character. It dissolves only in hydrofluoric acid.

Quartz crystal grows in spiral lines, and the interior is marked by certain axes with which every gem-cutter is familiar. Cutting against the axis will cause irreparable damage to the stone. With transparent rock crystal, such as the skull, the axis can be made visible only through strong lenses or with the aid of magnified polarized light.

After Mitchell-Hedges' death in 1959, his daughter, Anna, took possession of the skull, and in 1964 she turned the skull over to Frank Dorland for study. During the six years that he kept the skull, Dorland, a nationally prominent art restorer, photographed the skull in detail with special lenses and highpowered microscopes. He made models of the skull, which he then dissected for measurements and analyses not otherwise attainable. Dorland's measurements show the skull to be about 6 inches high, about 8 inches long and about 6 inches wide. It weighs 11 pounds, 7 ounces. He also determined that there are no markings on the skull which would indicate that it had been worked with metal tools.

Before returning the skull to Anna Mitchell-Hedges in 1970, Dorland took it to the industrial firm of Hewlett-Packard Company for testing. Hewlett-Packard is expert in quartz, being one of the world's largest manufacturers of quartz crystal oscillators. After many elaborate tests it was proved by use of the so-called x-y axis and the shadows produced by polarized light that the skull and the lower jawbone were originally all one piece of crystal! This is truly astonishing, because as before-mentioned, rock crystal cannot be split - it splinters; therefore, the block of crystal had to have been sawed into two parts! Since microscopic examinations reveal no tool marks, it remains a mystery as to how the separation was accomplished.

The Hewlett-Packard engineers were greatly surprised to discover that the Lubaantún crystal skull had been worked against the axis! This is amazing since a millimetrically precise identification of the course of the axis requires analytical methods which the Maya, as far as we know, were ignorant of.

The Hewlett-Packard report concluded that the skull was of exquisite workmanship, having been sand and water polished to wear down the almost diamond-hard crystal, and that its completion would have required over 300 man-years of labor!

Because the skull was found in Mayan territory, we assume that it was produced by the Mayas. But either the Mayas possessed technology and skills which we have not yet discovered, or the skull was manufactured by someone else who possessed the requisite skills. Maybe Mitchell-Hedges was right, that the skull was made by the Atlanteans, or by some other technologically-advanced civilization long-since forgotten. Or, maybe the skull came from outer space, or was produced on Earth by intelligent beings who came from outer space.

Both the Lubaantún skull and the British Museum skull have been largely ignored by universities and the archaeologists. Since they cannot explain the skulls, they pretend that they do not exist. Having initially cast aspersions upon Mitchell-Hedges and the finding of the skull, the scientists could sit back and let others argue over the authenticity of the skull, without having to explain it.

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PALOMA - OLDEST SETTLEMENT IN THE AMERICAS

A team of international archaeologists headed by Dr. Joseph Benfer of the United States has determined that the site of Paloma in the central coastal zone of Peru is the oldest permanent village in North and South America.

Paloma was discovered over ten years ago by the French archaeologist Dr. Frederick A. Engel of Hunter University in conjunction with the Universidad Agraria of Peru. Only recently, Dr. Benfer and his group fixed the antiquity of the site, which is located 28 miles (45 km) south of Lima.

According to Dr. Benfer, the oldest human skeletons found at Paloma are 7,700 years old. His team found more than 220 human remains and 56 abodes. The human remains include bones of babies and fetuses. Paloma was populated by humans during at least three periods - 4,500 years ago, 5,500 years ago and 7,700 years ago.

Due to the extreme dryness of the area, the artifacts, food and human remains found at Paloma are in an excellent state of preservation. Some of the human bodies have their hair, their skin and the contents of their stomachs are intact. Artifacts and other items such as fish hooks, nets, coarse textiles, and food were found, but no ceramic artifacts have been discovered at Paloma.

Before the discovery of Paloma, the oldest known human settlements in South America were at Huaca Prieta, in the northern coastal zone of Peru, believed to be 5,000 years old, at El Paraiso on the outskirts of Lima and Las Aldeas, farther north in the Casma Valley - these are dated at 3,000 years.

Dr. Benfer stated that the team found hundreds of wells or pits for the storage of provisions which still have the remains of fish and other foods. Also, there are a large number of abodes and the accumulation of refuse indicates a permanent settlement, as opposed to nomadic peoples. Dr. Benfer estimates that at least 6 or 7 families lived at Paloma 7,700 years ago and as many as 20 families 5,000 years ago. He also noted that according to the contents of the stomachs of the people, their diet changed between the first and last settlement (2,700 years ago) from grain and vegetables in the beginning to fish and animals in the last period.

Peruvian archaeology goes back much farther than 7,700 years, however. The Lauricocha man, discovered by Cardich, lived 10,000 years ago and the inhabitants of Paracas used fishing nets 9,000 years ago. Some archaeologists have assigned an antiquity of 20,000 years to certain groups in Ayacucho and 14,000 years to the paleolithic works of the Chivateros on the river Chillón. But the importance of Paloma is its character as a permanent settlement of long duration.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

March, 1982 - Member Expedition to Lake Miramar, in southern Mexico.

November, 1982 - World Conference - Vienna, Austria.

November, 1982 - Member Expedition to Petra, Jordan, Jerusalem and Kenya, Africa.

1983 - Tenth Anniversary World Conference - Chicago.

1983 - Member Expedition to Peru, Bolivia, Chile and Easter Island.

ERICH VON DANIKEN's latest book in English, Signs of the Gods?, is now available in paperback from Berkley Books, New York.



THE CRYSTAL SKULL OF LUBAANTUN WITH LOWER JAWBONE IN PLACE



THE CRYSTAL SKULL OF LUBAANTUN WITH LOWER JAWBONE REMOVED



THE BRITISH MUSEUM CRYSTAL SKULL

DEFINING THE PROBLEM

BY TINKO A. EFTIMOV*

The hypothesis of paleocontacts and paleovisits (the ancient astronaut hypothesis) immediately found its adherents and opponents. Both sides have their arguments and convictions, but as with any problem, in order for it to be solved, one must determine whether it makes sense, whether it can be solved, and the character of its solution. Since our problem is quite non-standard, we must use and elaborate an analytical method, first by the use of general considerations and secondly, by developing a methodology (including criteria for verification) and a conceptual basis. Here I will consider only the physical, biological and technological general considerations.

The physical considerations are defined by our knowledge of the Universe. Thus we can estimate how often the Earth might have been visited throughout the history of mankind. At the 1971 Symposium at Byurakan in Armenian SSR on the problem of Communication with Extraterrestrial Intelligences (CETI) the following data were presented on the possible number of stars (planets) within a given radius of the Earth which could sustain life as we know it:

<u>Radius of the Sphere</u>	<u>Number of Stars</u>
30 Light Years	200
100 Light Years	1000
160 Light Years	30000
1000 Light Years	1000000

Thus we can conclude that within a sphere with a radius of 20 light years there are approximately 30 stars suitable for life conditions. It can be estimated that the average distance between any two stars is about 18 light years.

Let us now consider the technological considerations of attaining maximum velocities for a space-ship. At the Byurakan Symposium, two main types of engines were discussed. One with a velocity equal to one tenth the speed of light, and the other with a velocity equal to or just a little below the speed of light. The physical principles involved will not be discussed here.

First, the space-ship with a velocity one tenth the speed of light. Here we have a non-relativistic rocket, with no time delay for the crew. At this speed the time to cross the distance of 18 light years is 180 terrestrial years. Thus, if the lifespan of the inhabitants of the imaginary civilization is similar to ours, say 70 years, then the crew would not be alive when the craft arrived on Earth. It is thinkable that the civilization could have perfected some cryogenic equipment to freeze the crew during flight, so that they could arrive on Earth still alive. Or, they may prefer to send an intelligence space-ship such as a Viking, or a Venera or a Lunokhod, to establish whether life exists on Earth before sending a manned craft.

The time necessary for such a contact with the "slow" craft is about 600 terrestrial years, and this for only the nearest stars. Thus we can estimate that it is possible that once every 600 years Earth has been visited by intelligent beings from at least one of the nearest planets with life conditions similar to ours.

Second, we will consider the space-ship whose velocity is just below the speed of light. In this case we have a relativistic craft, that is, the crew will be subjected to time dilation. Thus, it now makes sense to consider longer journeys, say of 3000 to 10000 light years. If we assume that half way the rocket is accelerated at 1G and retards the other half again at 1G, the time for the crew on board will be 30 to 35 terrestrial years while on their home planet 3000 to 10000 terrestrial years will have passed. On returning home, the

crew might not even find their mother civilization to be still in existence.

At the Byurakan Symposium, Von Horner presented statistical data for three types of civilizations: Those developed to the same stage as we on Earth, those with technology more advanced than ours, and those much more advanced and actively trying to contact other civilizations. It is assumed that the density in the Cosmos decreases as the stage of technological development increases. The distance from our sun to a civilization more advanced than ours is on the average of approximately 800 light years, and to an active civilization approximately 1000 light years. If these civilizations are fairly uniformly dispersed in the Cosmos, then within a sphere with a radius of 1000 light years, we can assume about 8 active civilizations and about 10 civilizations more advanced than ours. Assuming the active civilizations have developed rockets which can travel at just under the speed of light so the time dilation effect is operative for the crew, then they could travel 1000 light years with only about 25 terrestrial years having passed for the occupants of the space-ship. With a round trip of 2000 light years, the crew could make the journey in 50 terrestrial years. We could expect a visit from such an active civilization every 2000 years. If only 3 of the possible 8 active civilizations pay us a visit during the 2000 years, this would average one visit every 700 years. During the last 6000 years, Earth could, therefore, have been visited 9 to 10 times.

Of course, this data is statistically valid, but it is more probable that the visits would have come within a shorter period, say over 500 years, with nothing for the previous 2000 years. These considerations must also be analyzed taking into account the biological considerations involved, as well as the anthropological ones.

Currently there are two basic trends in the research in the field of CETI; Radioresearch and paleocontact. Let us compare the two trends:

Radioresearch: There exists comparatively good technical methods for analyzing radiosignals from space, and such a method could permit contact with a non-anthropoid civilization, provided that it too utilizes radiocommunication. However, it is not known for certain at what frequencies the radio signals should be transmitted and received; we do not know from which direction to expect signals; we do not have firm criteria for discerning the difference between natural and artificial signals; we do not know if the civilization we are trying to contact is still utilizing radiosignals; and the cost is very high. The "Ozma" project cost only one million dollars whereas the "Cyclops" project was estimated to cost one billion dollars. Finally, it takes too much time for a signal to go out and come back, about 1000 to 2000 years.

Paleocontact: Statistically it is possible for a contact to be made by space travel if the civilization is sufficiently advanced technologically. There is sufficient evidence to conclude that Earth has been visited in the past. The results of an actual contact are much more important than the reception of a radio signal. With contact, we know the visitors are from outer space; with a radio signal, we must interpret it.

If we assume that at least one civilization in outer space has reached the stage of technological development to overcome the problems of propulsion and distance to travel in space, then it is only a matter of time for we on Earth to achieve that level. We should exert our energies towards this goal for the betterment of mankind.

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