



ANCIENT SKIES

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VENUS - EARTH'S PRECIOUS TWIN?

BY DR. STUART W. GREENWOOD*

The prehistoric past is a gigantic jigsaw puzzle with most of the pieces missing. The origin of the human species is the most perplexing portion of the puzzle (apart from the fundamental mystery of the origin of nature). It is fortunate that we live at a time when the question of our origins can be convincingly addressed. Quite simply, our ancestors came from Venus.

For generations, speculation about Venus abounded, since that planet's surface is completely obscured by cloud. Space probes sent to the planet by both the Soviet Union and the United States have now revealed atmospheric conditions that are appalling by terrestrial standards. The atmosphere is poisonous in that it consists largely of carbon dioxide; sulfuric acid vapor exists in the clouds and sometimes drops as an infernal rain; the pressure at the surface is crushing at nearly a hundred Earth atmospheres; and temperatures at the surface are high enough to melt lead. Venus has been described as "hell." The literal significance of this observation will be examined.

For the investigation pursued here to have an element of credibility we are compelled to accept the proposition that the atmosphere of Venus was not always as we find it today. We will consider the implications of that planet's atmosphere being not too different from that of Earth, with startling and devastating changes having occurred in comparatively recent times. As we shall see, evidence is being obtained of changes, but it is quite a different matter projecting backwards in time to determine whether or not the conditions were ever Earth-like. Such evidence, if it should ever materialize, may turn out to be indirect rather than direct.

In any event, Venus is a prime candidate for any consideration of our planetary origins. It is about the same size as Earth, being only slightly smaller; the gravitational pull at the surface is about 91% that at the Earth's surface; and it is the closest planet to Earth. It has often been referred to by astronomers as Earth's "twin." How could we fail to give it our close attention in any serious consideration of our extraterrestrial origins?

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An Allegory

Let us imagine that we are living on Venus many, many thousands of years ago. As inhabitants of the second planet from the Sun we have long enjoyed a temperate and pleasurable environment, but now events are forcing our hand and we must face the inevitability of a progressive decline in our living potential. These are dangerous, difficult and exciting times. A select few will survive but the majority are doomed to a terrible future. Soon, there will be no living creature on our globe.

The crust beneath our feet has always seemed to be a substantial foundation, but recently fissures have opened and poisonous gases are being discharged into our atmosphere. The scientists of Venus have established that these processes cannot be overcome by us. The changes will be accompanied by alterations in the energy balance between the heat we receive from the Sun and the energy radiated out into space, so that we may die either from the loss of oxygen or from the excess of carbon dioxide and the heat trapped by its presence.

Our planet has always seemed to us Venusians like a garden, but soon it will become a living hell. The prospect of travel through space has long exercised the imagination of many of our scientists, and now the realization of this prospect has become a major priority for our peoples. The drive to perpetuate our species is now to take form in the movement of a chosen few to Earth, the third planet from the Sun. If the expedition should prove as successful as we hope, then as many will follow as the deteriorating situation here on Venus permits.

Our scientists have speculated on the possibilities of life-sustaining conditions existing on Earth. We know that it is about the same size as Venus, and observations of the motions of Earth and its moon have demonstrated that gravity at the surface is slightly larger than that of our own planet, Venus. The atmosphere is seen by our instruments to contain both oxygen and water vapor, and there are large bodies of water observable through the partial cloud covering. That such an apparently desirable body should be the closest to us in space appears to be providential in the context of our current predicament. It is our only hope for salvation.

As seen from the third planet, the Sun will occupy only just over half the area of the sky compared with the view from our own planet. But our measurements have shown that conditions there are also temperate, due to the different surface and atmospheric constituents. The Earth spins on its axis rapidly compared with the very slow rotation of Venus, and it is unclear how this will affect our body rhythms. Our medical people are naturally concerned about our possible vulnerability to conditions yet to be fully determined. Our own climate has been largely predictable, with the slow planetary rotation, and we have

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become adapted to conditions in the several planetary zones selected as our homes. Some scientists have suggested that we may need to clothe our bodies with the skins of other animals, at least during the periods of darkness on Earth where temperatures are known to drop significantly. The polar regions there also appear to require such clothing, whereas on our Venus such regions are among the most desirable. The mobility to which we have become accustomed to maintain desirable environmental conditions during the long period of rotation of our planet will no longer be practicable, and it may be necessary to locate in a relatively fixed region and cope with the atmospheric changes by means of clothing and other protective measures such as fixed abodes.

A question of continuing interest to our scientists is the detected magnetic field on Earth. The relatively weak field on our home planet of Venus apparently exerts little influence on our lives and health, and it remains an open question as to whether we can adjust to the stronger field at our planet of destination. Moreover, the variations in racial characteristics of our peoples, who have adapted to the various options of living in the comparative heat of the daytime areas, the nighttime areas, or the polar regions favored by the intellectual peoples, will require skillful matching to the variations in surface conditions on Earth. Even the slightly higher surface gravity may present problems since our spines and muscles are developed for rather more gentle exercises.

The severity of our problem requires that we stake all on a single long-shot effort to land on and establish ourselves on the third planet, Earth. To this end we are constructing one-way landing vehicles to travel there. Results will be communicated back to Venus by electromagnetic radiation, and if time permits some vehicles may be built here to permit return flights to help our scientists provide more direct support for the venture. It is impossible at this stage to predict whether such flights will command any priority compared with those permitting escape. We are heartened by the realization that the third planet spins on its axis to a noticeable degree, and that this can be used to alleviate the energy requirements for third planet departure back to Venus.

When we have time, we think about the future, not only of our species, but also of our cultures. When our scientists used to dream about space flight it was in the context of exploring space. Venus was to be a springboard, with missions sustained from here and with manned missions returning with new knowledge. Our cultures would be reinforced by discovery. Now everything is different. We know that the time for support of our ventures is limited. Our main concerns on arrival will be for survival and adaptation. What small fraction of our traditions and knowledge can we hope to preserve? Shall we, indeed, survive? In our darkest moments we feel despair. In the meantime, we plan and work and hope, though for those ultimately left behind there is no hope.

And for those who will go, there is an emerging anxiety about the life forms to be encountered and with whom some accommodation must be made. Some of our scientists have conjectured that the conditions to be encountered will have led to the development of creatures largely covered with fur or feathers to preserve body heat, as is evident in some of our own highly specialized species. We have limited body hair to protect critical organs on our own bodies, but what consequences will this have for our future on Earth? Our flights will carry specialists in survival, medicine and agriculture as priority crew. Perhaps later we can consider including one or two dedicated to our arts and cultures. It is growing hot and hazy and there remains much to be done.



Venus Image in Ultraviolet Light. NASA Photo

View from the Third Planet

Let us now attempt to interpret our past in the light of the knowledge currently available to us here on Earth in the twentieth century of the Christian era. We shall be selective, compiling data that appears to support the assertion that our ancestors came from Venus. Others may prefer to seek support for the hypothesis that we are uniquely terrestrial, or that we came from another world than Venus. May good fortune attend us all, and may the best concept endure.

Implications from Human Studies

While evolutionary processes are known to operate, the human species has proved remarkably unyielding in being fitted into the evolutionary picture on Earth. Whether this is simply evidence of a vanity that demands treatment as a special creation, whether this is itself evidence of a special creation, or whether it indicates initial evolution in an extraterrestrial environment, remain open questions. Some writers have postulated extraterrestrial intervention in human evolution, resulting in differences that have yet to be explained. The only certain thing that can be said about the human species is that it has not been integrated into the evolutionary pattern of terrestrial life. Those who choose to substitute "not yet" for "not" in the preceding sentence are expressing a faith that they will succeed in their task, and we wish them well in their venture. We choose the option that our ancestors came from Venus as one of several possibilities, and see where it leads us.

The lack of hair on humans is only one puzzling characteristic that appears to make us ill-suited to survival and development on this planet Earth. Our susceptibility to disease and the relative vulnerability of our spinal column to the loads we contend with on Earth suggest a rather more benign environment in the early stages of our development. The racial variations evinced by our species seem unlikely to be accounted for by the climatic variations that have occurred on Earth during our presence here. Roger Wescott has drawn attention to the absence of negroid fossils in the early stone age - it would seem that Blacks were suddenly created, or arrived on Earth as a distinct group in the context of the present hypothesis. (Continued on next page)

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We have become so accustomed to attempting to interpret the human record in uniquely terrestrial terms that it seems to some that introducing the extraterrestrial element merely compounds the difficulty. We need to recognize that the latter approach may offer the most promising avenue for resolving questions that at present appear mystifying.

Implications from Mythology

Venus figures prominently in mythology, influenced partly perhaps by the prominence of the sometimes brilliantly illuminated planet in the night sky, or at dawn or dusk. Nevertheless, the planet also commands almost mystical respect in many cultures. L. Taylor Hansen has recorded many American legends of culture bearers intimately associated with Venus, the "Dawn Star." She reports that American Indians will not make war while the star is shining. The Central American god, Quetzalcoatl, is associated with Venus, and is effectively the cultural symbol of present-day Mexico.

The name Quetzalcoatl may be interpreted as "Plumed Serpent," or alternatively as "Precious Twin." The plumed serpent may be observed as the outline of the State of Florida and the South-Eastern United States when overflying Mexico in space and travelling toward the East, the direction for flight utilizing the Earth's West-East rotation to minimize launch energy requirements. The "precious twin" is a reverential term for "the planet Venus" as planet of origin. We have here a complete physical explanation of the significance of this persistent belief.

The dragons of Asian cultures feature round heads and wide open jaws. These creatures are widely revered in Asia, and the symbolism is evident in the outline of Asia when viewed from space toward the East. China is the round head, India the lower jaw, the Malay Peninsula the tongue, and Sumatra and Java the flames issuing from the dragon's mouth. The symbolism is reinforced by the large number of active volcanoes on these islands.

We have here two separate mythologies in areas where the symbolism can be interpreted physically in terms of terrestrial land areas observed from overflying spacecraft. The implications are obvious. A more impartial investigator may claim that plumed serpents and dragons may be observed elsewhere on Earth by selecting suitable areas to define them. We await the results of such studies. While we await the outcome, will someone please explain the origin of the term "Horn of Africa" applied to the Somali Peninsula? Agreed Africa looks like a rhino's head when one is overflying the continent and facing East, so that the Somali Peninsula becomes the rhino's horn. But where did the idea come from - it gives one pause.

The concept of hell as a place of eternal fire to which doomed spirits are condemned features prominently in some Christian teachings. Several Christian sects teach that Jesus the Christ descended into hell following his crucifixion and prior to his resurrection. - Belief in a "descent" into hell is suggestive of a dim memory of the falling motion under the gravitational attraction of the Sun in transit from Earth to Venus, with Venus as the physical reality underlying the spiritual interpretation of hell.

Implications from Archaeology

The Great Sphinx at Giza in Egypt, located close to latitude 30 degrees North, faces toward the East. The major pyramids at the site are oriented to the cardinal points of the compass, and so combine a North-South orientation with one that is West-East. Space flights to Venus (or to other planets of the Solar System) are commenced with a launch close to the West-East direction to take advantage of the

"sling-shot" contribution to velocity provided by the rotation of the Earth about its axis in the West-East direction. Atmospheric entry during the concluding phases of an arriving space flight are also effected in a West-East direction to reduce the severity of atmospheric heating, though the final stages of a winged vehicle landing could be varied to suit an approach into a prevailing wind near the surface.

In his book The Stairway to Heaven, Zecharia Sitchin quotes from ancient Egyptian texts dealing with the Journey to the Afterlife of King Pepi I. Following an analysis of the texts that indicate orbital flight, the king then soars away towards the Eastern horizon on the way to his destination.

Sitchin offers a quote stating that the king crosses the sky like Surt, which crosses the sky nine times in one night. The meaning of Surt, and thus the comparison, are as yet undeciphered. However, since it takes about one and a half hours to circle the Earth just above the atmosphere, it appears the reference here is to motion in a "parking orbit" around the Earth prior to departure on a journey to another planet in the Solar System. The severest critic is obliged to consider the possibility that the ancient Egyptians were at least familiar with the basic mechanics of space flight.

In his earlier book The 12th Planet, Sitchin includes a reproduction of a wall painting from an Egyptian tomb that bears a remarkable resemblance to a conventional rocket vehicle, complete with a space capsule reminiscent of the Gemini system. Of course, the painting may symbolize something quite different, but it is hard to visualize an acceptable alternative interpretation. This picture deserves critical professional study for the insights it might provide into early rocket technology.

Further provocative material evidence calling for investigation is provided by the cast gold artifacts from graves in Colombia, South America, suggestive of flying machines and dubbed by Ivan T. Sanderson as "Little Gold Airplanes." About twenty of these little gems, only an inch or two in length, may be viewed today in museums and private collections around the world. A major deficiency in Sanderson's interpretation is that there appears to be no evidence of a recognizable propulsion system. However, the blunt noses on several of the artifacts, and the absence of any means of propulsion, would seem to support the concept that they represent one-way winged supply vehicles, intended to land on Earth and remain. The space mission, if that is what it was, intended to make a go of it here.

At midwinter noon, the Southern faces of the Giza pyramids reflect sunlight back toward the Sun. At other times during the winter months, once each day the Southern faces reflect sunlight back in the direction of the inner regions of the Solar System, toward Venus and Mercury. The two largest, and most finely constructed, pyramids - Cheops and Chephren - could have been designed as perpetual monuments of symbols representing the volcanoes whose activity initiated the emigration to Earth from Venus thousands of years ago. We shall consider the question of volcanoes on Venus subsequently, but simply note here that Beta Regio, with its two large active volcanoes on Venus, is located around latitude 30 degrees North on that planet.

The possibility that pyramids may symbolize volcanoes was first suggested by R.F. Heizer and P. Drucker in interpreting the fluted pyramid of La Venta in Mexico. The subject is discussed in Karl W. Luckert's Olmec Religion. We need to look at prehistoric sites such as Avebury in England with its volcano symbol (Silbury Hill) and its serpent symbolism with a completely fresh perspective.

The Soviet Emphasis

So much attention has been given to manned space
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flight in recent years that little notice appears to have been taken by the general public of the substantial effort made by the Soviet Union to explore Venus with unmanned space probes. The Soviets have launched 16 missions to Venus, and the United States has sent only 6. It may be argued that the American probe systems are better conceived, but the fact remains that the Soviet effort is substantial by comparison. Moreover, the first interplanetary probe was launched by the Soviet Union toward Venus, confirming the importance of this target, rather than Mars, to the Soviets. Since the Soviet Union gears its scientific efforts to national rather than scientific goals, how is the particular emphasis on Venus to be interpreted?

While literature on Soviet interest in the ancient astronaut hypothesis is received only irregularly in the West, it is evident that the subject is treated with more professional attention than it is here. It therefore seems reasonable to infer that the concentration on Venus in the Soviet space program is at least partially influenced by studies related to past extraterrestrial contact. One of the benefits of the material outlined in this survey may be that it can help us analyze and interpret Soviet motivation for the Venus probe program. They may be striving for another "first" rivalling the launch of the first Earth satellite, Sputnik I, for impact on international affairs.

Evidence from Space Flights

One of the most unexpected results from the first Soviet Venus lander that successfully transmitted views of Venus' surface to Earth was that the surface was strewn with sharp-edged rocks, suggesting that the lack of abrasion in the presence of winds pointed to newly-formed rocks. Evidently changes had occurred to the surface material rather recently.

Analysis of findings by the American Pioneer orbiter strongly suggests a major volcanic eruption on Venus just prior to the arrival of the probe. A substantial quantity of sulfur dioxide initially measured in the Venus atmosphere has been observed to decline steadily since. By comparison with the emission of sulfur dioxide during volcanic eruptions on Earth, it is deduced that these effects indicated corresponding eruptions on Venus.

Ronald G. Prinn of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, notes that Soviet scientists have reported free calcium on the surface of Venus to be considerably more common than calcium sulfate. Since free calcium reacts readily with sulfur dioxide in the atmosphere, the joint presence of free calcium on the surface and sulfur dioxide in the atmosphere suggests that the atmospheric sulfur dioxide must have been a recent addition. He is reported in the October 1, 1983 issue of Science News as suggesting that this addition could have been as recent as 10 to 1,000 years ago.

Earth-based radar images indicate that the highest point on Venus, Maxwell Montes, is a huge ancient volcano, while Pioneer findings suggest that other areas, including Beta Regio, are formed from new rock, recently extruded from the interior of Venus.

The history of volcanic development on Venus continues to be one of the major questions to be resolved by future space probes. The crust of Venus is now known to be more rigid than that of the Earth. On our own planet, the movement of the crustal plates permits reasonably continuous relief of internal pressures by the release of material through volcanic and other action. On Venus the process has apparently been more recent - and more violent.

The Bottom Line

Us. Can we survive on Earth, or must we seek our own "third planet?"

MORE REFLECTIONS ON ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

BY HELMUT ZETTL*

I read with interest Gerardo Levet's article in Ancient Skies 10:3 about ancient rock-molding techniques. In the Museum in Cochabamba, Bolivia, South America, one can see so-called "plastic (kneaded) stones." They are granite rocks into which the ancients have left their footprints and handprints, similar to what famous actors do nowadays in Hollywood's pavement. Similar prints can be found in Peru and on Tahiti. Further, the gigantic stone blocks of the walls of Sacsayhuaman at Cuzco, Peru appear to have been treated chemically to make them plastic.

The Peruvian Pater Jorge Lira made headlines in 1967 when he claimed to have found the secret for making stones soft like butter. He supposedly melted some tiny stones with the essence of a special plant, which he has not disclosed. If stones can be softened in such a way, then perhaps mineralogists will have to change their views on the origin of granite. It is known that if marl and clay are mixed with magma under high pressure and temperature, the result is slate. Also, in the same manner, limestone becomes marble. With sufficient pressure and heat, granite becomes crystallized. If in fact the ancient Peruvians did find a way to soften granite, then we must admire their empiric knowledge.

Concerning Vaughn Greene's reflections on ancient civilizations in Ancient Skies 10:3, I believe it is not true that the Sun God Empires arose from out of nowhere. The classic archaeological methodology distinguishes a formative, a pre-classic, a classic and a post-classic period. The technology of ancient cultures is underestimated by orthodox archaeologists and conventional historians. While Sumer is considered to be the beginning of our civilization, current research proves that the Sumerians had predecessors, the Subareans, whose capital was Djarmo, a city when Babylon was a village of mudhuts. Also, the cultures of Jericho (Israel), Catal Huyik (Turkey), Kirokythia (Cyprus), Lepensky Vir (Romania) and Bulgaria) and Paloma (Peru) are all twice the acknowledged age of Sumer.

Concerning possible catastrophes that have led to devastation on Earth, the world-wide deluge is described in more than one hundred flood-myths. Global doomsdays are evident in the Hopi Indian legends, the Yugas of India, the Finnish Kalevala Epic, the Mayan Chilam Balam and Popol Vuh and in the Aztec Calendar, the last of which predicts that our present civilization will be destroyed by Habuatl Olin, or "earth movement," that is, our devastation will be caused by earthquake.

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COMING EVENTS:

12th ANNIVERSARY WORLD CONFERENCE of the Ancient Astronaut Society. Hotel Nova-Park, Zurich, Switzerland. September 20-21, 1985.

MEMBER EXPEDITION to Switzerland, Greece and Turkey. September 17 - October 12, 1985.

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