

ANCIENT SKIES

"Come Search With Us!"

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LANDING SITE AND VEHICLE FOR VENUS-EARTH EXPEDITION

BY DR STUART W GREENWOOD*

In *Ancient Skies* 11:3 we discussed the hypothesis that our ancestors came from the planet Venus, and we here continue our investigation into the development of humankind on Earth following the arrival of the Venusian space pioneers

Severe volcanic eruptions on Venus prompted its scientists to mount one-way expeditions to Earth, thus abandoning their home planet. The following scenario outlines the basis for the selection of a landing site on Earth and the factors which governed the design of a suitable vehicle for undertaking the mission. It is an attempt to present the problem from the viewpoint of a mission planner on Venus prior to the exodus. To facilitate comprehension, present-day terminology is adopted for identification of land areas. The treatment of South America as two islands separated by an inland sea in pre-Christian times is based on the research of Venice Priddis in *The Book and the Map* (Bookcraft 1975). See Fig 1. The landing vehicle concept is derived from a study of the cast gold artifacts which were found in Colombia, South America, that Ivan T Sanderson called "Little Gold Airplanes." See Fig 2.

The Landing Site

As we on Venus view the third planet and its moon, we are fortunate that Earth's orbit lies outside our own. As we periodically overtake the planet on the inside we can therefore observe its near face well illuminated by the Sun. Moreover, since the Earth rotates comparatively rapidly on its axis, our astronomers have been able to map the surface of the third planet in some detail in spite of the partial cloud covering that can obscure different areas of the planet at times.

The third planet is generally cooler than our own and we have resolved that a landing site and preliminary settlement zone should be close to the equator if possible, and certainly within the tropic zones. The land mass should be large enough to provide various options for possible settlement following the landing. The two main possibilities appearing to meet the equatorial requirement are Africa and South America.

A major difficulty confronting us is that the nature of the terrestrial surface is not fully understood. There are substantial bodies of water and the land areas vary widely in nature, from large open plains to extensive areas apparently covered by vegetation, and many mountainous regions. Our scientists

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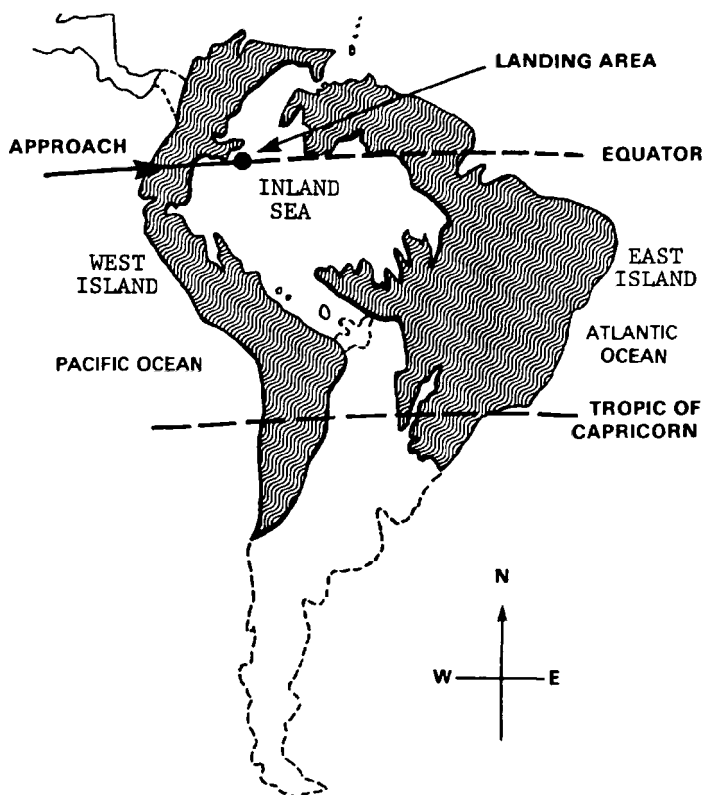


Fig 1 Landing Approach and Landing Area superimposed on the "Probable Geophysical Configuration of South America" from The Book and the Map

and engineers have deliberated the question at some length and with the usual conspicuous differences of opinion. However, the decision has been taken to defer consideration of Africa as a possible landing area until more information is available about the continent, as it appears to have a rough terrain and the abundance of vegetation may sustain an excess of life forms posing a hazard to the expedition. We do not, however, rule out the possibility that later expeditions may have Africa as their destination. Also considered for future expeditions to land within the tropics are Central America, India and Northern Australia. We therefore propose to direct our first expeditions to South America, a region which consists of two islands, East and West, with a large inland sea relatively sheltered from the effects of the large oceans on either side.

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After much exchange of opinion, we have been able to agree that the optimum operation will be to plan for landing on the inland sea and subsequently establishing a settlement on the West Island. An outline of the reasons for this decision will now be presented.

The inland sea provides us with the only landing area whose characteristics can be reasonably well predicted. We shall approach from the West along the equator to take advantage of the Earth's spin about its axis in the West-East direction, the effect being a maximum at the equator, thus alleviating the landing problem by reducing the relative energy to be dissipated during atmospheric descent. The overflight of Colombia on the West Island immediately prior to the landing will be employed to survey possible suitable settlement sites. The landing will be effected on the inland sea close to the Eastern shore of the island, the final approach to a landing being made by turning back towards the West. If the first mission proves our assessments to be valid, more flights will follow to support the initial expedition. These are the best judgments we can make at this time.

The Vehicle

The vehicle that lands (and remains) on the third planet must survive descent through the atmosphere, maneuver in the later stages of flight, land on sheltered water and run in to the beach. It must carry cargo that can be readily unloaded, and serve as a temporary base for the landing party if required.

The requirement for maneuverability within the atmosphere dictates a winged vehicle. The cargo requirement calls for a bulky fuselage. Protection against atmospheric heating during the descent calls for a blunt nose. Landing on water necessitates a relatively smooth under surface. A large vertical fin will aid lateral stability during the descent, and moveable rear surfaces on the fin will furnish lateral control in the later stages of flight. To provide vertical stability and control during the end of the flight, small horizontal tailplanes and elevators will be projected from the fuselage.

After landing the nose will be swung aside to permit horizontal cargo removal. Alternatively, some machines could be provided with an opening in the upper surface and an extendable swinging hoist to transfer cargo to the ground.

If all goes well, and these one-way landing vehicles enable us to establish ourselves on the third planet, further missions will be undertaken in both directions with more complex vehicle systems so long as the deteriorating conditions on Venus permit.

Concluding Comments

The preceding two sections are, of course, speculative, but they offer a coherent picture that can serve as a basis for further study. The several hypotheses involved - that missions were undertaken from Venus to Earth, that an area of South America once under water was selected as a landing site, and that the Colombian cast gold artifacts bear some resemblance to one-way landing vehicles - remain to be verified (or not) as further discoveries are made and analyses conducted. The whorls and eddies evident on some of the gold objects, for example, are highly suggestive of motion on water and the prominent "teeth" region on the "faces" at the nose may represent intakes for the induction of air subsequently discharged beneath the craft to provide an air cushion while skimming over the surface of the water before settling.

It is quite fascinating to consider the question of where the landing vehicles might be today. The landing site would today lie in the sparsely populated jungles to the East of the Andes and close to the equator. (Editor's Note: This is the area which is the subject of Karl Brugger's The Chronicle of

Akakor and into which Erich von Daniken sent three unsuccessful expeditions in search of Akahim. See Ancient Skies 4:3, 5:4 and 6:4).

What might remain of the original landing vehicles is, of course, unknown, and may never be uncovered. However, it is worth considering the possibility that the Colombian craftsmen who fashioned the artifacts had at least an oral description of the vehicles from which to work.

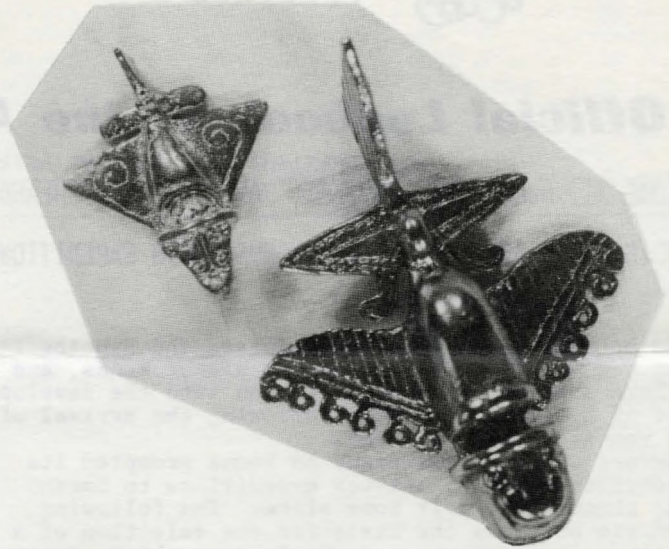


Fig 2 Two of the several varieties of cast gold artifacts found in Colombia, South America. The original of the small one is in the Bank of the Republic, in Bogota, Colombia and the original of the large one is in the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D C. Photo by the author.

YEARS AGO, I lived in Nashville, Tennessee. One day a friend of mine asked me to visit an excavation site beside a bank. Twenty-five feet down there was an opening into a cavern. At one side Officials investigated the cavern and found the remains of a sabre-tooth tiger alongside the remains of an Indian, who apparently had been dragged into the cave to be eaten.

In Orlando, Florida, there is a gravel pit in which was found a giant sloth with a spinal cord 18 feet long, and estimated to weigh six tons.

Poverty Point in Northern Louisiana contains gigantic mounds covering many miles which were erected several thousand years before Christ. Kenneth Parshall, Rt 2 Cruikshank Rd, Valencia, PA 16059 USA.

IN ANCIENT SKIES 11:3, Helmut Zettl wrote that a Peruvian discovered in 1967 the secret of softening stone. However, one of the Spanish conquistadors, Francisco de Orellana, wrote that in 1541 he came to an area in Peru that was covered with cactus into which he threw his spear. The next day the metal point had already begun to disintegrate. He asked an old native about it and was told the juice of the cactus Opuntia ficus (prickly pear) will soften stone. He described seeing birds take a piece of the cactus and rub it on stone. After a little while the bird could peck away at the stone which had become soft. By repeating this process, the bird could peck a hole in the stone large enough in which to nest. Oddvar Eriksen, Stokkeveien 6, 3310 Steinberg, NORWAY.

OPEN LETTER TO ANCIENT ASTRONAUT THEORY PROPONENTS

BY DR. VLADIMIR V RUBTSOV*

After reading Erich von Daniken's Open Letter to Editors and Publishers in Ancient Skies 10:6, I will try to analyze here a broader view of the problem of paleovisits (extraterrestrial visitations to Earth) both within and without the scientific community

First, we should consider the structure of the cognitive system of our terrestrial civilization. From a certain point of view it may be divided into two parts: science (in its broadest sense, including the natural sciences, the social sciences and the Humanities) and non-science (including any other subsystem that claims to produce its own image of reality). Within non-science we may further single out a component such as extra-science, a subsystem that ideologically conflicts with science. Of course, such a division is "soft", or dynamic, rather than "hard", or static.

At the present stage of development of the terrestrial civilization, its main cognitive subsystem is science. One may like or dislike this, but it is a fact. Science is considered at present as the cognitive system par excellence. The central component of science is the scientific community, which consists of specialists. This community is ideologically formed by components based upon the scientific method. Each branch of research, whether natural, social, or human, has its own method for posing and solving scientific problems within that branch.

In social and cultural respect the scientific community is formed externally by a system of financing scientific research, and internally by a system of special training. The community has at its disposal the means of presenting its research activity by the all-important system of scientific publications. We may believe, somewhat abstractly, that a publication is the main result of a scientific investigation, at least as regards pure science.

If information is issued in a scientific publication, then it has passed through "filters" that ascertained its concordance with the ideals and standards of science. Filtering is realized by editors and reviewers who are based not so much on "ideals" as on "other scientific texts" and sometimes on personal prejudices. Nonetheless, a paper is regarded as "scientific" only if it has been published in a scientific collection or periodical.

There exists, however, besides science and non-science, a peculiar intermediate cognitive subsystem, parascience, which on the one hand claims to be based on research methods which are rather similar to the scientific ones (and thus supposes its conclusions as equally convincing), but on the other hand is strictly separated from science in the sociocultural sense. These include, for example, atlantology,

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ufology, parapsychology and last but not least, pre-astronautics, or the ancient astronaut theory, which is the ideological basis for our Ancient Astronaut Society.

The structure of parascience resembles that of science, but its methodological criteria are much "weakened" compared with scientific ones. Parascience does not possess any common principle in its basis. The parascientific community not so much investigates a problem, as it tries to prove a solution already presented as a hypothesis, which is not scientifically recognized and often is not a scientific one at all. Thus, a scientific method corresponds to the way a problem is raised, while a parascientific one to its supposed solution.

The content of other components of parascience is not identical to that of scientific ones either. For instance, a "diploma" plays in parascience quite a different role as it does in science. The system of training of "parascientists" is a system of borrowing them from other branches of human activity. Any person that shares the parascientific solution and express an opinion through the press on an intelligent level thereby becomes a "specialist". It is still more desirable that the person have weight outside parascience, that is, in science, and supported by and expressed through a diploma, a scientific degree, an academic rank, etc. Parascience, as it were, adopts the hierarchy of science, supplementing it with its own hierarchy, based on the number of parascientific publications and their circulation.

A member of the parascientific community is not a specialist, not only because he has no appropriate diploma, but also, and more important, because he is not financially supported as are scientific researchers. Some money source (although not big) is provided by selling to the public of parascientific publications. The system of publications in parascience is almost more important than in science, because it is addressed both inward, to the parascientific community, and outward to the public, thereby gaining more adherents and money.

The objective value of parascience is that it may be a natural depository of ideas which have been expelled from science, or have not entered it as yet. At the same time, a parascientific investigation of a problem may actually prevent its scientific investigation because there has appeared in the scientific community a "reflected" structure, or "intra-scientific parascience", which has a common basis, namely the denial of a parascientific solution to the problem.

Since parascience is not limited by the scientific method of research, it may, generally speaking, generate original ideas and hypotheses more readily than science, although a natural result of this is a great number of ideas which may be original but are simply absurd. Therefore, even if a problem is being investigated by science, serious parascience may still be of use and value.

Let us briefly examine in this context the main features of the history of the paleovisits idea. We may note that at the first stage of its development (the entire 19th Century through the first half of the 20th Century) the idea existed and evolved for the most part within extrascience: occultism, science fiction and fantasy. It was mentioned, in particular, by the well-known "occult" author of the 19th Century, H. P. Blavatsky, as well by the famous science fiction writer Jules Verne; and later by H. I. Kryzhanovskiy, Ya. Larri, K. Lasswitz, H. P. Lovecraft, S. A. Semyonov, A. Yaroslowsky and many others. Moreover, interest in this problem was displayed by some scientists and engineers (K. E. Tsiolkovskiy and N. A. Rynin) and by Charles Fort, the founder of such an unspecialized parascience as anomalistics.

After World War II the idea of paleovisits revived as "historical ufology" (owing to the rise of the

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UFO problem which was at first only a parascientific branch of research) This was due first to the books of D Leslie, M K Jessup and G H Williamson (at the same time all the authors were much indebted to Fort and to the "occult" trend of the paleovisit idea) Many facts mentioned in those books have been reproduced up till now in numerous ancient astronaut works However, the "historical ufology" remained a branch of the UFO problem, rather than an independent field of research

In the late 1950s the Soviet scientist Dr M M Agrest attempted to introduce the paleovisit idea into science, but failed for a number of reasons, one of which was the formation within science of the study of the search for extraterrestrial intelligence (SETI or CETI), which expelled from science all the competitive approaches to the paleovisit problem But active parascientific investigations began under the direct or indirect influence of the scientific community's attempt to contain research in the field Dozens of articles were published in the USSR on the paleovisit subject and many books appeared in Western countries At first, those of B LePoer Trench and P Misraki which preserved their connection with the "historical ufology" and somewhat later, more specialized works by W R Drake, E Von Daniken, R Charroux and others An especially powerful stimulus for building up a new parascience (the ancient astronaut theory) was the well-known public success of the books by von Daniken, which, alas, contributed to a "back-lash" within the scientific community itself by the formation of an "intrascientific parascience" whose sole purpose is to deny the ancient astronaut theory In 1973 the ancient astronaut movement became organized into the Ancient Astronaut Society, and created its own specialized publication, Ancient Skies And so the new parascientific branch of research was at last born

There were several repeated attempts to introduce the problem of paleovisits into science (C Sagan in 1963, V I Avinsky and I S Lissevich in 1974, etc), but it was the scientific discussion of the "Fermi paradox" that really cleared the way. This argument, which has been reconsidered in detail since 1975, is the "if-they-existed-they-would-be-here" thesis, has led some scientists, and others, to the assumption of a real presence of extraterrestrials in the Solar System This situation opened, to a certain extent, access to the system of scientific publications for those researchers who, on the one hand, are professional scientists, and on the other hand, are inclined to admit the possibility of paleovisits Although becoming more "permissive" in this area, science is still trying to overcome its internal anti-ancient astronaut bias Scientific paleovisitology is still in its infancy

Thus, at present the problem of paleovisits exists in its extrascientific, parascientific and scientific forms Parascience may solve only the parascientific problem of paleovisits, that is, confirm the solution not only subjectively (for the ancient astronaut community itself), but also objectively by discovering the long-awaited indubitable extraterrestrial artifact The scientific problem of paleovisits would be solved by such a discovery only partially A paleovisit may be a "local" truth of the ancient astronaut community, but to become a "global" truth of the terrestrial civilization, the problem of paleovisits must be passed through the filtering system of science

Moreover, reconstruction of a case of a paleovisit requires application of special scientific methods, both existing historical ones and paleovisitological ones not yet existing (see Ancient Skies 8:6) A parascience may raise a question that is not raised by science, propose an answer to it and select some historical sources that are, perhaps, traces of a paleovisit, but it cannot prove it seriously, that is, scientifically It is difficult for science to raise

a question contradicting a current paradigm and/or an "intrascientific parascience", but once raised, the question is solved on the basis of serious, verified, consistent methods

The objective value of "serious parascience" to science has been discussed above, theoretically the same should be valid for our field of research as well However, the fact is that ideological development of the ancient astronaut movement and the ancient astronaut theory has recently become slower if not stopped The present-day troubles with publishing ancient astronaut works stem, apparently, from the satiation of the reading public with old ancient astronaut facts and ideas Even slightly renewed combinations of them no longer give rise to serious "external" interest (though they may be of interest "internally", that is among readers of Ancient Skies) Remembering the importance of the publication system for parascience, it appears quite a serious warning to the ancient astronaut community It is possible to know the full ideological (if not factological) content of the theory after having read only a few books in the ancient astronaut field Here are some conclusions and a resulting question for the proponents of the ancient astronaut theory

1 The scientific and parascientific approaches to the problem of paleovisits are both mutually complementary and conflicting

2 Many editors and publishers refrain from publishing ancient astronaut works because most of their authors are constantly repeating their own and others' old ideas, only occasionally supplementing them with new facts This situation may prevent even more original works from being published This is alarming, because the main advantage of parascience over science is the relatively broader possibilities of generating and disseminating new ideas The loss of this advantage can result in stagnation of the ancient astronaut movement and its ultimate disintegration

Thus, the crucial question: Where are the really new ideas?

COMING EVENTS:

12th ANNIVERSARY WORLD CONFERENCE of the Ancient Astronaut Society, Hotel Nova-Park, Zurich, Switzerland September 2-21, 1985

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

MEMBER EXPEDITION to Tibet, 1986

PETER KOLOSIMO, one of the leading authors in the ancient astronaut field, has died at the age of 61 Born in Modena, Italy, Mr Kolosimo received a PhD Degree and became one of the world's leading authors in our field His books were translated into German, English and many other languages The English titles of his books include Not of this World, Timeless Earth, and Spaceships in Prehistory

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