

Ancient Astronauts Modern Mysteries

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RECORDS OF THE PAST

A few years ago, news of a sensational archaeological discovery in China filtered out to the West and excited European and American ufologists. Somewhere along the border between China and Tibet a group of scientists had reportedly stumbled upon a cave filled with large stone discs. These discs were similar to modern phonograph records, having a hole in their center and spiraling grooves. When the find was taken back to Peking the discs were tested and it was learned that they contained a mysterious electrical charge stored in metallic constituents such as cobalt. After months of study, the scientists were able to translate the electrical charges into sound, somewhat in the same manner as a modern tape recording. The discs held an ancient record of the visitation of extraterrestrials from a distant planet! These beings crashed to Earth about 12,000 years ago and the survivors had adjusted to our planet and became the ancestors of the Dropa tribe...a diminutive race which still exists in the isolated mountains of China.

The story of the stone discs and the Dropa tribe has since been repeated in many books and magazine articles. But when researchers like Gordon Creighton, the British linguist, attempted to trace the report and locate the discs, they drew a blank. The entire incident was nothing more than a charming invention of V. Zaitsev, a Soviet science fiction writer. There were no stone discs and no Dropa tribe.

However, the notion of ancient audio recordings is not as farfetched as it may sound. Thomas Edison's first phonograph in 1877 was a very simple device. So simple that it could easily have been invented thousands of years ago. Anyone who could build a wheeled chariot could also build a revolving cylinder and a needle vibrated by sound waves. But there is no evidence that anyone did. Perhaps the concept was too simple. If there was a sound recording device in, say, 3500 B.C., it may have utilized an entirely different principle and if we stumbled across an ancient recording we might not recognize it for what it is.

The modern wire recorder was

invented by Valdemar Poulsen in 1898 but it was impractical because the vacuum tube, so necessary for signal amplification, had not yet been invented. Wire recorders were widely used during WW II, and even into the 1950s. Today wire recorders have been replaced by tape machines and are a quaint antique. If you came across a box of wire recordings in an attic you would probably think they were just ordinary spools of steel wire, never realizing they contained speeches by Churchill, Hitler, and other notables of not-too-long ago.

By the same token, a reel of modern recording tape might seem equally useless 20 years from now. Already the tiny tape cassette has almost replaced the old mylar reels, just as old 78 rpm phonograph records have all but disappeared from the market.

Soon after he invented the cylinder phonograph, Edison sent a man around the world to record the voices of all the great personages of that period. Recordings of Disraeli, Oscar Wilde, Clara Barton, Edwin Booth, and many others still exist in rare collections but in order to play them you need a cylinder phonograph and one hasn't been manufactured for years.

The magnetized stone discs of China may be a myth but it is entirely possible that some other kind of recording exists right under our noses, and, like the man in the attic with the box of wire recordings, we cannot recognize it for what it is.

THE PERFECT TECHNOLOGY

In the 1920s, a radio capable of picking up stations 50 miles away filled a huge cabinet. Today vastly superior receivers are no larger than a pack of cigarettes. A mere 30 years ago, the first computer filled an entire building and was made up of thousands of vacuum tubes. Today for less than \$100 you can buy a pocket computer that is actually superior to that first electronic monster. Circuits that once required miles of wiring and a vast array of bulky condensers, coils, and gadgets can now be reduced to a tiny chip smaller than your fingernail. It is a rule that as technology advances and becomes more complicated the products of that technology become more

efficient and, paradoxically, more simple.

The ultimate product of the 20th Century will probably be a tiny computer or some other device which will look like nothing more than a small piece of metal covered with tiny lines. If someone finds it in the 25th Century, they might not realize what it is.

Could the ancients have developed their own kind of technology using devices and principles now lost and unknown to us? It is almost certain that they did.

Archaeologists have been puzzled to find gold plated and silver plated artifacts in several different parts of the world. Perfect plating is done with an electrical process so, obviously, the ancient artisans had access to electricity and knew how to use it. A crude electric battery thousands of years old was actually found in an old tomb and is now on display in a museum in Baghdad. And very old manuscripts describe medical treatments which sound like electric shock therapy. Some modern scientists have even speculated that the famous Ark carried by the children of Israel across the desert was an electrical device of some kind.

The Biblical description of the Ark does sound like a classic electrical condenser. Plates of gold, a highly conductive metal, were laid over a wooden framework and antennae-like "cherubim" were mounted on top of it. It was carried with insulated poles and priests were warned to wear special protective clothes in its presence. Two men, Nadab and Abihu, are said to have been killed—possibly by electrocution—when they broke the rules for handling the object. In the 1920s, a forerunner of the modern transistor consisted of two strips of gold attached to a piece of glass in a design very similar to the Ark's.

Ancient priests also wore special breastplates and headgear inlaid with certain kinds of crystal and patterned strips of gold connecting them. Modern engineers have speculated that those breastplates were technological devices like the printed circuits of the modern miniature "chips." And the ancient records claim that people "consulted" the breastplates in some

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ANCIENT ASTROS

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manner and received answers to their questions, just as the Israelites talked with the gold plated Ark. Were these devices radio receivers tuned to some transmitter hidden on a mountaintop? Tradition tells us that Moses received explicit instructions for building the Ark when he spent 40 days on Mount Sinai conversing with the "fiery cloud" that had settled on the summit.

Our first primitive radio receivers were so-called crystal sets which used a small piece of crystal—usually germanium—to rectify radio signals. Perhaps we have only rediscovered what the ancients already knew . . . that certain kinds of crystal have unusual electrical properties. We might even develop a system for recording electrical impulses in fragments of crystal just as we now record on wire and strips of magnetic tape. The phonograph of the future might consist of nothing more than a small box which will produce sound waves when we place a tiny crystal in it.

MYSTERIOUS CRYSTALS

Occultists have known for thousands of years that crystals contain unusual properties. Clairvoyants use polished crystal balls in their ceremonies to view the future. Talismen made of crystals in gold settings have long been credited with possessing magical properties. The residue of some ancient knowledge is handed down to us in our acceptance of various kinds of precious stones as birth stones, linking jewels and crystals with the movements of the stars. But religious, occult, and flying saucer lore contain more puzzling references to crystals. There are enigmatic hints of some super crystal

which somehow records all of human history and even controls human events in some mysterious manner.

The abundant (but poorly documented) literature of lost Atlantis suggests that a crystalline recording device sits on the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean awaiting discovery. Some of the more eccentric religions of the Orient teach that the human record is imperishably preserved in a crystal hidden somewhere in the Himalaya Mountains. And, as we have noted in previous columns, some religious artifacts such as the sacred Black Stone of Mecca, allegedly contain supernatural properties.

In modern times several UFO contactees have claimed to have visited hidden caverns lighted by glowing crystals where crystal-like instruments are used to monitor the world. Some, such as Ralph Lael of North Carolina, have returned from their adventures bearing pieces of quartz crystal which they said had been given to them by the "space people" as physical proof.

Underlying all the myths and nonsense there may be a serious thread of truth, a remnant of some ancient bit of knowledge. Perhaps many thousands of years ago some priesthood or secret magical cult stumbled onto the secret of recording electrical impulses in a crystal. Or maybe an ancient astronaut from some far-off world left a magical crystal on this planet to monitor its changes and the progress of the ape-like population. Perhaps the early priests and magicians found ways to communicate with that crystal with primitive radio receivers tuned to some special frequency of the electromagnetic spectrum. At one time they may have had crystals mounted in gold which actually produced TV-like pictures of the future and the past. The oracles of Delphi in Greece and the

wizards of Egypt and India may have once been in direct radio contact with a crystal which transcended the earthly boundaries of space and time.

In the 1950s we rediscovered the magical properties of crystals. We sealed bits of germanium into tiny units called transistors. The demands of our space program led us to invent printed circuits and ways of miniaturizing electronic devices. We also found ways to improve the quality of our recordings even as we simplified their design. Today in a dozen laboratories around the world scientists are quietly laboring to perfect new techniques for recording sound in nonmechanical, totally electronic devices built around crystals. Other scientists are hunched over massive radio receivers, listening with awe and bewilderment to the strange, organized, intelligent radio signals being broadcast in extreme frequencies by an unknown transmitter. Signals that seem to be coming from the Earth itself, not from outer space!

Before the end of this century we may open a magical door into the past. We may find that the voices from the past are still alive, in some fantastic crystal on this planet. We may soon be listening to the Sermon on the Mount, the Gettysburg Address, and all of the other great voices and great speeches of our past. We may even be able to hear those other, more mysterious, voices which have spoken to the great prophets and seers and accurately forecast future events. The energy used by the super crystal may be of a kind that exists beyond the reaches of the normal electromagnetic spectrum, beyond the narrow confines of our space-time continuum. It may view our future as easily as Thomas Edison's revolving cylinder recorded the present. Then we can actually try to alter events and control the future, and bring about a true New Age on this planet. ★