



# ANCIENT SKIES

*"Come Search With Us!"*

## Official Logbook of the Ancient Astronaut Society

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### PROOF, SCIENCE AND THE ANCIENT ASTRONAUT HYPOTHESIS

BY DR. PASQUAL S. SCHIEVELLA\*

Much of the negative criticism of Erich von Daniken and the Ancient Astronaut Hypothesis comes from a relatively small number of scientists. They claim that they prove their theories while he does not. However, they deliberately gloss over the fact (known to few people other than scientists and philosophers) that there are many kinds of proof. To make matters worse, they conflate their technical achievements with scientific certainty, misleading the layman into believing that the wondrous products of technology are ample proof that the claims of scientists are ipso facto true. However, all scientific truth is at best probable truth, based on available evidence. It is not (as some scientists would like us to believe) based on absolute evidence.

It is a pity that scientists, despite their great achievements, belittle themselves by ignoring this fact. Claiming instead that they and only they deal in truth and knowledge, they proclaim that all truth and knowledge not derived by the scientific method is wrong.

When Carl Sagan, one of von Daniken's critics, pronounces that there is not a "smidgen of proof" for the Ancient Astronaut Hypothesis, he is guilty of deliberately misleading the general public. Being a philosophically astute scientist, he knows that most people are unaware of the many kinds of proof. He knows as well as does any philosopher that proof can be not only empirical, observational, experimental, or inductive (as he seems to imply are its only meanings), but also theoretical, logical, mathematical, hypothetical, deductive, statistical, probable, and documentary. As we shall see, the Ancient Astronaut Theorists' use of many of these kinds of proof is no less valid than when they are used by Science - and Science does use them.

Fundamental to all scientific knowledge is an underlying belief that nature is rationally structured, i.e., ordered, determined, recurrent, and predictable. It is further believed that the universe is reducible to logical, i.e., mathematical, laws and descriptions. Every scientist must begin not only with this belief but also with common sense knowledge and human perception. Therefore all scientific models and instrumentation are extensions of man's sense faculties.

We must realize that the language of Science is mathematics. Numbers are the fundamental tools by which we bring order to selected events. However,

they do not exist in the universe except as human concepts. Mathematics is true by definition; that is to say, even if there were no physical universe,  $2 + 2 = 4$  would still be true. The mathematics of Science, therefore, does not necessarily give a true picture of our universe.

Scientists often commit the same errors committed by theologians. They confuse their models and their abstract language with fact. They attribute, for instance, physical reality to conceptual and mathematical constructs. It should be noted that astronomer Geoffrey Burbidge was quoted in Time (Dec. 17, 1976, p. 33) as having said, "Cosmology has much in common with religion; both rely on a very small measure of information and on a very large measure of belief."

No generalization - that is, no law - of Science has yet been proved true as applicable to the whole universe. It, therefore, uses a relatively few observational facts for which it has no contrary observations and believes its generalizations to be true for the whole universe. But the fundamental postulates of Science are in fact continually in question, and they are no more than theoretical. Nowhere is there certain knowledge.

The edifice of scientific knowledge is only as solidly founded as are its theories. The history of Science shows us that each succeeding scientific era has either undermined or radically improved upon previous scientific knowledge. We have no reason to suppose that such revision will not continue in the future. This is so regardless of the probable validity we attribute to today's knowledge. Still, when a particular scientist intones a phrase like "It is unscientific," it rings with the authority and infallibility of the Pope.

A deliberate blurring of the different kinds of proof hides the real motives of those scientists who are guilty of such utterances. They use the term "unscientific" like a sledge-hammer against all knowledge not derived by the scientific method. For a small handful of scientists to decry the work of von Daniken because he is not trained in the jargon, the analytic statements, the probability statements, and the laboratory techniques of Science is to overlook the fact that scientists in various fields do not themselves subscribe to the same kinds of truths and proofs. This accounts for much philosophic disagreement about both the fundamental concepts and the generalizations of the various sciences. It is commonly believed that there is a method of inquiry that is common to all the sciences. However, only the physical sciences can make an unquestioned claim to using a scientific method. No other of the sciences has developed a common language and common fundamental principles.

In summary then, the so-called "knowledge" of Science is not at all absolute. Rather, it is conceptual, mathematical, probable, and dependent upon available, i.e., incomplete, evidence. Above all  
(Continued on next page)

\*This article is excerpted from the lecture presented by Dr. Schievella at the Society's Fourth World Conference in Rio de Janeiro in June, 1977. Dr. Schievella is professor of philosophy at Jersey City State College, and is the President of the National Council for Critical Analysis and the editor of that organization's Journal.

BOOK REVIEW: A BRIDGE TO THE STARS  
BY DR. LUIS E. NAVIA  
Avery Publishing Group, Wayne, NJ

Originally published in German by Econ-Verlag, Dusseldorf under the title Unsere Wiege Steht im Kosmos: Das Welt bild Einst und Heute, this book is one of the new generation of publications in the ancient astronaut field. By that we are referring to works of scholars such as The Sirius Mystery, by the astronomer Robert K.G. Temple, and The Twelfth Planet, by the biblical scholar Zehcaria Sitchin. These books, all favorable to the ancient astronaut theory, approach the subject not from the viewpoint of physical evidence, but through philosophical, linguistic and historical studies.

Dr. Navia, professor of philosophy at New York Institute of Technology, is also an astronomer and qualified to speak as a scientist. In Bridge, the author convinces even the lay reader that the ancient astronaut hypothesis as a philosophical concept is not only viable, but also simple and easily acceptable within the framework of philosophical principles. A study such as this is essential in establishing a solid base for the ancient astronaut theory, and Dr. Navia proves that the theory can survive hard scrutiny, even without the physical evidence presented by the "first" generation of authors in the field.

## ON LOOKING AND SEEING

BY ZDZISLAW LELIGDOWICZ, Gora, Poland

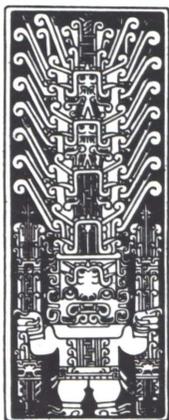
Due to the kindness of Prof. Dr. Federico Kauffmann Doig, the leading archaeologist of Peru, I was given a copy of his book "El Peru Arqueologico," Lima, Kompaktos, 1976. It is an excellent book affording scientific bases for our thesis on ancient astronauts, this time in Equador, Mexico and mainly in Peru. The author does not affirm the thesis expressis verbis, but this is apparent in the book which everybody should read.

In particular Dr. Kauffmann draws attention to the fact that so called "cats," being gods or priests of ancient America, have almost always significant elements of "birds" of prey, as feathers, curved beaks and claws, apart from grinning and showing his fangs, all more or less human in silhouette. But even he, himself, presents sometimes odd points of view.

For example, Fig. 1(right) shows the Estela Raimondi which, according to the author, gives the appearance of the divine personage not only at the front view but also at the back view lest to show its feathers and its tail. The feathers should indicate the flying nature of this personage.

I have the strongest doubts about the ancient artist's "intellectual Picasso-manner" of painting, the more that the front-view is shown only once, while the "back-view" several times, with some perspective law even. To my mind the painture shows a dynamic scene: the landing of the god, as it appeared to the artist, while having come from some height and finally stopping before him. This would be the cause of the perspective, repeating of the view, not from the back, but all the time in front of the viewer. Thus the "tail" is seen above the head till the god stands on the ground when his wings are released, and for this reason not seen.

Figure 2 shows "a personage de Puncuri," discovered in 1933 by the famous Peruvian archaeologist, Julio Tello, on the wall of a temple. According to orthodox archaeology, it is "an iconographic idol," with, generally, outlines of a "cat," and of a "fish." The author discovers here a "figure of a bird with human elements and the mouth of a cat." Grinning



this time, the fangs are lacking but the eyes are winged. The stylized arms are released indicating standing, rather than flying. The feathered arms and the tail show its flying nature, with some animals inside, birds, or flying fishes and perhaps monkeys.

To me, Figure 2 represents a spaceship seen by some "Peruvian Ezechiel." This is indicated by the animals (beings) inside, the "tail" as a jet-fire, the feet-dampers, the "winged eyes," and the "grinning" technical gears. Most interesting are the sluices through which the "winged monkeys" (or "angels") are drawing some animals into the "object." What for? Perhaps for some biological experiments? Above, inside, perhaps the "feathered gods" themselves.

This article was written and waiting for typing when surprisingly a book of A. Marks, "Wposzukiwaniu Kosmitow" (On the Search of Cosmic Beings) Lud. Spnia Wyd. 1976, came into my hands. Here, in Figure 3, we can see a very similar "personage" with "grinning," even with "fangs," though only two, perhaps an old personage with "eyes," again only one of them "winged," "feet," "tail." In addition, for coquetry, a "beauty spot" on the right side of the chin. Pity that it is only the Soviet "Venus 4-th," the first such vehicle to reach the atmosphere of that planet. Albert Einstein has said: "nothing is as it appears." I say: "all may be seen depending on the will - on what one wants to see." On my part, hearty greetings to Dr. Kauffmann in remote Peru.



Figure 2

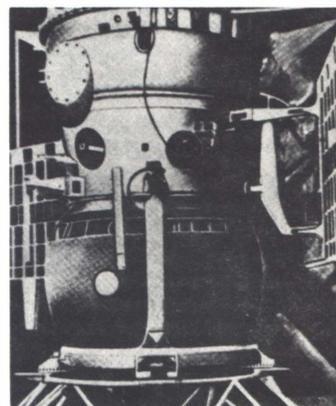


Figure 3

## MEXICO ADVENTURE - NOVEMBER 20-27, 1977

Society members will arrive in Mexico City on Sunday, November 20, and will spend two days exploring Teotihuacan, Tula, and Tenayuca.

On Wednesday, the group will fly south to Villahermosa and after visiting the open air museum of LaVenta, proceed by bus to Palenque, site of the world-renowned PALENQUE SLAB. Based at the brand new NuTuTun Hotel, the expedition will have two days to explore the extensive ruins at Palenque. Sites include the Temples of the Sun, Cross, and Foliated Cross; the Palace complex; and the Temple of the Inscriptions, which houses the Slab. When they aren't exploring the ruins, the adventurers can visit the studios of Mayan sculptor Ildefonso Vega, see the Palenque Museum, or simply enjoy the peaceful jungle surroundings.

After a full day of leisure in Mexico City, the group will return to Chicago on Sunday, November 27.

The total cost of the expedition is US\$649.00 per person, double occupancy, from Chicago. If you wish to join the expedition in Mexico City, the price is US\$400.00, per person, double occupancy. Space is limited to 24 persons, and positions are already being filled. For a detailed itinerary, write to the Society Headquarters.

(Continued from first page)

it can be expected to be radically altered with the passage of time and the introduction of new data. This is not to imply of course that it is, therefore, of little value. On the contrary, it is of immense practical and aesthetic value. My contention here is merely that the Ancient Astronaut Hypothesis is no less valid than are the fundamental claims of science about the nature of reality and the laws of our universe.

Von Daniken's scientific critics seem to suggest that there is no truth or knowledge except that found in natural sciences. However, would they claim that there is no evidence validating events of recorded history, because no one alive today was there to see them happen? Such knowledge cannot be verified by the techniques of the natural sciences, by experimentation, or by unfalsifiable data.

The Ancient Astronaut Hypothesis is little different from much of recorded history. The proofs of the Hypothesis are to be found in the logic of both possible and probable events, in the historical documents that are held in such high esteem throughout the world, and in the wondrous artifacts of the world which cannot be explained in terms of the human knowledge and capabilities of antiquity. All these aspects, studied as a body of coherent data, point to extraterrestrial intervention.

Furthermore, the empirical descriptions in ancient documents, when coupled with empirical data considerably weaken the argument that terrestrials are responsible for those artifacts which obviously were beyond their conceptual and technical abilities. Even if one were to claim that such wonders as the South American caves, the Sphinx, the Pyramids, and the Nazca lines were created by terrestrial beings, he would be hard put to explain the destruction and disappearance of such superior civilizations.

At present, then, the Ancient Astronaut Hypothesis is primarily a historical hypothesis and peripherally a scientific one. It is founded on documentary evidence first, circumstantial evidence second, and third, in some cases, hard evidence that may not be denied except by stretching both the facts and the imagination beyond reason and probability. Scientists would do well, therefore, to permit the Ancient Astronaut theorists to use the same kinds of proof they themselves use without question. They would do well, further, to lend their interest, their methods, their techniques, and their moral and financial support to investigating the Ancient Astronaut Hypothesis as a serious search for historical knowledge. It has too long not only been ignored but unscientifically prejudged as improbable, before the needed research has been undertaken. If this is Science, then you and I have long misunderstood what Science is.

I WAS INTRIGUED by the article in Ancient Skies 4:1 about Erich von Daniken's proposed expedition into the Amazon region. Having participated in three of our Society's expeditions, including two trips to Palenque, Mexico, I have come to the strong conclusion that if pyramids and other archaeological sites were opened with excavating equipment (like bulldozers) with the proper type of careful operators and supervisors, instead of pick and shovel, a "Palenque Slab" could be discovered in days, instead of centuries.

Properly interpreted and used, the knowledge which could be gained now, in our generation, could be a giant step towards solving food and fuel shortages and technological problems of earth and space travel. Such knowledge, in the right hands, could give us physical and spiritual immortality, but in the wrong hands, could be the end of our species.

Even if the odds of finding an eternal light and power source, or extraterrestrial technology, are only 1 out of 100, we should be willing to spend millions of dollars in the search to assure that such knowledge, if and when found, will be used for the peaceful advancement and development of mankind. Thomas M. Barrett, Mequon, Wisconsin.

## THE AMERICAN ROSETTA STONE?

In 1874, a Mr. Gass and two students opened a mound near Davenport, Iowa. They found a shallow Indian burial. Deep in the mound though, they found skeletons of two adults and a child with an engraved stone (Figure 1). This is called the Davenport Calendar Stele and is now in the Putnam Museum at Davenport, Iowa.

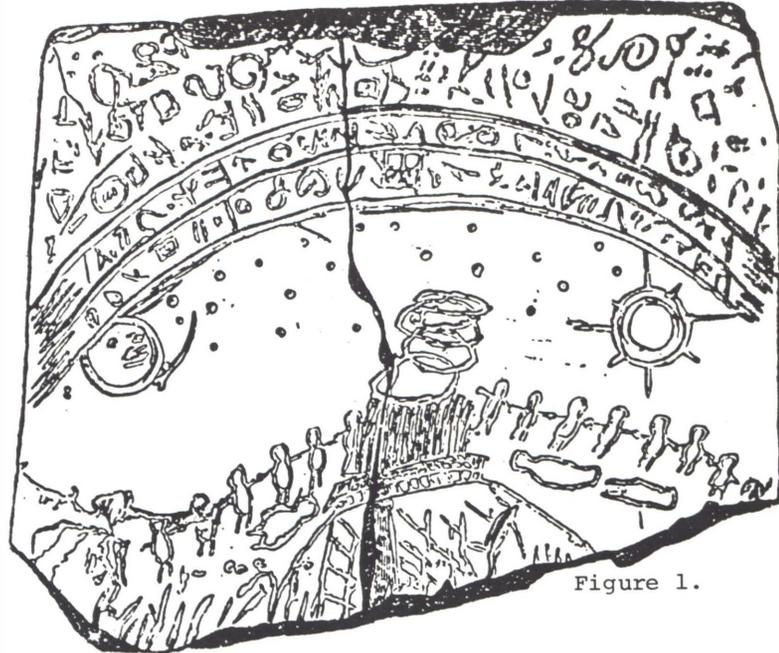


Figure 1.

In about 1890, both Harvard University and the Smithsonian Institute called the inscription a forgery. They could have read the Egyptian hieroglyphs at the top, above the arcs, which tell how to regulate the calendar. Egyptian had been read prior to that date. Maybe they did read it, and still declared the inscriptions to be forgeries, because at that time all scientists were of the opinion that Christopher Columbus was the first to cross the Atlantic ocean. They failed to realize that when the Church plunged Europe into the Dark Ages, the progress of mankind was stopped for more than 1,000 years.

In 1975 John Williams, a young Connecticut school teacher, was helping Prof. Barry Fell search for ancient inscriptions in New England. Williams secured a photo of the Davenport stone, which Barry Fell read. The arc below the ancient Egyptian is Iberian-Punic, to be read from right to left. It tells the reader to follow the above instructions. The lower arc, reading from right to left, is in the Libyan language and repeats the instructions of the top arc. Below the arcs is a scene depicting the Festival of Osiris. A mirror circle at extreme left reflects light from the sun, at right, onto a stone called the "Watcher." This times the beginning of the vernal equinox to the minute.

This information was originally obtained by Adolph Erman from a tomb of the XVIII Dynasty in Thebes, Egypt. However, the Davenport stone tells the way the equinox was celebrated in Iowa around 700 B.C. O. L. Hope, 425 E. Davidson Ave., Gastonia, NC 28052.

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# SOME ADVICE ON TIAHUANACO AND NAZCA

BY PROFESSOR HANS SCHINDLER BELLAMY

The two highlights of the Ancient Astronaut Society's "Fantastic Journey" to South America will undoubtedly be the visit to the archaeological remains of Tiahuanaco in the altiplano of Bolivia and to the Desert Markings in the coastal desert of Nazca in Peru.

Unfortunately, only a comparatively little time will be available for either of these sites. To use the time well a few relevant references may therefore be of value.

As a person well acquainted with both Tiahuanaco and Nazca, and with the problems of those sites, I regret that I shall not be able to participate in the "Fantastic Journey" and help members to appreciate the most important points.

Tiahuanaco in general may appear to be somewhat disappointing to many visitors because its position in a wide plain is rather dull. Also, its most interesting chief points do not hit the eye immediately and become evident only on longer and closer acquaintance.

The salient points, which I stressed at the Second World Conference of the Ancient Astronaut Society in Zurich, Switzerland, in 1975, are:

First - The Tiahuanaco of the "Classical Period" (the period of the Sun-Gate, the Great Idol, and of related monuments) was a harbour city, as is proved by the unmistakable remains of related installations. Still more important are the strandlines of the sea of that time. They are not easily observable at the site itself, but are very distinct on the sides of the hills bordering the valley of the Desaguadero River to the south of Tiahuanaco. When followed up, these strandlines prove that Tiahuanaco at the time of its floruit was not situated on the shore of a larger Lake Titicaca, but near the head of a great long gulf of a sea which was for all intents and purposes, the proto-Pacific.

All these points have been fully discussed in my books, "The Calendar of Tiahuanaco" and its predecessor "Built before the Flood."

Second - The most important monument on the site of Tiahuanaco is the "Sun Gate," in Spanish "Puerta del Sol," also called the "Calendar Gate." (Its present position is most certainly not the original one.) The front of this huge monolithic slab bears a sculpture in bas-relief which appears extremely complicated at first sight but is open to a logical mathematical explanation after detailed analysis of its symbolism. It is revealed as a fascinating calendar - the oldest in the world. (The best photos can be taken with the sun coming from the left of the Gate. Then, the shadows help to bring out the details of the shallow relief.)

The full and detailed discussion of the meaning of the symbolism is the main subject of my book "The Calendar of Tiahuanaco."

Third - The Tiahuanaco remains were chaotic till, about two decades ago, after a thorough exploration and excavation campaign, a great reconstruction process was undertaken. At least two edifices have been restored: the large "Temple of Kalasasaya" and the adjoining remarkable "Old Temple." In the alluvial soil which filled the latter the huge "Great Idol of Tiahuanaco" was found some 40 years ago. It is now in the "Open Air Museum of American Man" in LaPaz. The restoration and reconstruction (or renovation) work was carried on with the most interested and careful diligence. However, it should not be overvalued and allowed to draw the attention away from the most important Sun Gate.

The peculiar heads set in the wall of the "Old Temple" are a striking feature and were certainly placed there as "watchers" of the Great Idol. The Idol originally stood in the center of that "sunk" temple. Also, the Great Idol bears important cal-

endrical reliefs. (See my book: "The Great Idol of Tiahuanaco.")

The Psammoglyphs on the Nazca Desert: I regret that I shall also not be able to take part in your visit to the Nazca area which I know rather well.

Although I am afraid that I am not in a position to tell you anything definite about the Nazca "psammoglyphs" (figures scraped into the desert sand), nobody else seems to be either. There is no one who could enlighten you as to exactly why, when, by whom, and how, these peculiar huge drawings were scraped into the surface of that unchanging desert.

Nor is there anyone who really knows anything about the "lines." There are many many hundreds of these, running criss-cross through the desert, with no definite preference as to direction up to eight kilometers in length and always perfectly straight. The same refers to the acute "triangles," trapezoids, rectangles, and other polygons. There are also quite a number of spirals, some of them even angular, as well as zig-zags, and other patterns.

As regards the figures, please appreciate that they are not depicted "by themselves" but are always in connection with a line or a rectangle; also, that they begin at one point and always finish exactly opposite that point, and are traced in a single line. Notice that the spirals go inwards to a center and then turn round and run in a parallel line to where they began.

How the very large figures were traced on the desert floor is inconceivable. Enlargement from a small tracing on a grid is not likely. The result can never have been seen by the makers themselves. The outlines of the figures are very exact and were never "corrected." Walking about on the desert floor would have destroyed them - as can be seen from the vandalistic footmarks by tourists and by the tracks of motor-vehicles by thoughtless visitors who leave the Pan-American Highway that crosses the area. (The highway was built before the desert drawings were discovered!) - How the long, straight lines, and the acute triangles were laid out without very exact theodolites is also a mystery.

Please, appreciate also that there are many "palimpsestic" tracings. That is: two (and, in a few instances, even three) tracings were superimposed one over the other, or partly so, at different times, though there were actually acres of desert floor which might have been used.

Those of you who want to take photographs of the Nazca psammoglyphs which are not absolutely disappointing should take them only "soon" after sunrise, or "shortly" before sunset. Otherwise, the drawings can hardly be made out in the photos. At those times the slight ridges made by the sand and small stones swept or scraped to the edges of the shallow troughs cast a shadow which brings the tracings out.

The best height is probably between 500 and 700 meters for figures, and up to 1000 meters for lines and triangles. However, I myself covered the Nazca Desert in a Cessna plane whose "slow" speed was frequently too fast (a helicopter would be the best, but was unobtainable at that time.)

Practically everyone who has seen the mysterious pictures and lines of the Nazca Desert has been tempted to make an attempt at an explanation or solution. Up till now all such attempts have been futile. (I myself have never yet dared to get my "Nazca" manuscript printed). Still, you are free to make your own attempts at explanation or solution. If you curb your fantasy you may perhaps hit a really good new idea! (If you think that the lines and triangles are directional pointers - ask yourself which of the dense tangle of them you would follow if you were a rocket pilot, or an astronaut.)

I regret that I was in that area about 20 years ago - before Erich von Daniken's books "opened my eyes." Maybe his ideas allow new explanations which have a good element of possibility.