

ANCIENT SKIES

"Come Search With Us!"

Official Logbook of the Ancient Astronaut Society

(c) COPYRIGHT 1981 ANCIENT ASTRONAUT SOCIETY - ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

VOLUME 7, NUMBER 6 1921 ST. JOHNS AVE., HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS 60035 USA JANUARY-FEBRUARY, 1981

TITICACA - CRADLE OF CIVILIZATION?

BY GENE M. PHILLIPS, Founder of the Society

According to Peruvian legend, the first Inca, Manco Capac, came out of the waters of Lake Titicaca near the Island of the Sun with his wife-sister, Mama Ocllo. Furnished with a golden rod, he was instructed to proceed northward to establish an empire wherever the gold rod sank into the ground. It happened that in the area of present-day Cuzco, Peru, the rod sank into a hillside and there Manco Capac founded the Inca Empire, one of the greatest civilizations ever to exist on Earth. At its zenith, the empire dominated most of South America, except for Brazil. One of its principal features was its 10,000 miles of stone-paved highways, the longest of which was 3,250 miles, longer than the longest of the Roman roads.

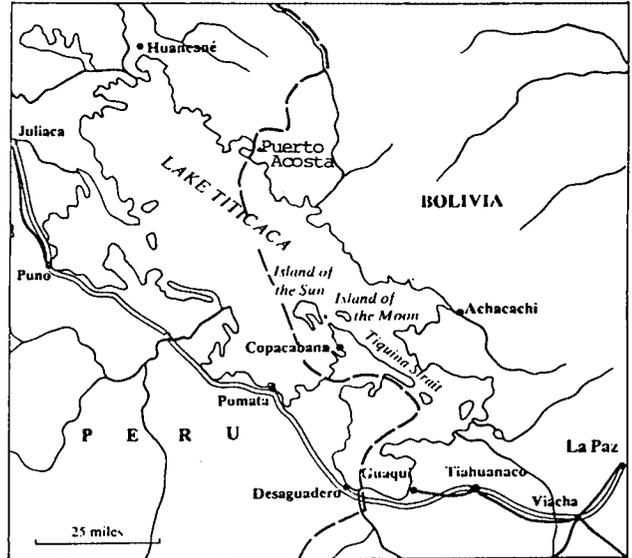
It is interesting to note that the legend of Manco Capac clearly states that he came "out of the waters", rather than "from the lake" which can lead to speculation that he splashed down in a space capsule and then emerged from the water.

According to geologists, Lake Titicaca was formed in the late Tertiary period, when the Andes Mountains pushed their way up from sea level to the dizzying height of 22,834 feet. The lake itself is situated at a "modest" height of 12,506 feet, which is enough to make it the highest navigable lake in the world. Covering an area of 3,500 square miles, its coast line extends for 540 miles and the lake is over 100 miles long. Its depth has been officially recorded at 230 meters, or about 750 feet, which is sufficient to allow steamship traffic.

Cradled in a basin in the Peruvian-Bolivian altiplano, the Titicaca region is currently densely populated by the Aymara Indians, who eke out an agricultural existence, subsisting primarily on maize, frozen potatoes (from which is made chuño, an Andean staple), and chicha, a fermented alcoholic beverage made of cornmeal.

But there is physical evidence that such was not always the case in the region. Just twelve miles south of the southernmost tip of the lake lie the remnants of Tiahuanaco, a technologically advanced culture, considered by many archaeologists to be the oldest ruins in the world. Although some misguided scholars have attributed the building of Tiahuanaco to the Incas, it is now established that Tiahuanaco was in ruins when the first Incas came upon the scene. In 1540 the Spanish chronicler, Cieza de Leon, visited the area and his description of the statues and monoliths is pretty much as they appear today.

The ruins are at an altitude of 13,300 feet, which places them some 800 feet above the present level of Lake Titicaca. Most archaeologists agree that in the distant past, Tiahuanaco was a flour-



ishing port at the edge of the lake, which means that the lake has receded almost twelve miles and has dropped about 800 feet since then. All agree that the lake is shrinking, due mainly to evaporation, since no rivers flow from the lake.

The Tiahuanaco culture, as it is called, is unique in its sculpture and in its style of stone construction. The beings depicted have a rather square head, with some head covering such as a helmet, with square eyes (or goggles) and with a rectangular mouth.

The stone works at the ruins consist of such structures as the Gate of the Sun, a portal carved from a single block of stone weighing 15 tons; the stone steps of the Kalasasaya, each of which is a rectangular block of stone about 30 feet wide; the so-called "idols" which are giant (about 23 feet tall) representations of unusual-looking beings with the typical Tiahuanaco head and face; and enormous monolithic stone blocks, many of which appear to have been cast, rather than carved.

At the area called "Puma Punku", which is about one mile distant from the principal site of ruins, the enormous stones are bluish-gray in color and appear to have been "machined", and they have a metallic ring when tapped by a rock. There is also a reddish "rust", or oxydation covering many of the stones.

Many of these gigantic stone blocks probably
(Continued on next page)

(Continued from previous page)
have not been moved since they fell thousands of years ago. However, one archaeologist speculates that the stones were prepared but never erected - that the construction was interrupted. However, it is equally valid to assume that the buildings were complete and then toppled by some natural catastrophe, such as the eruption of the Andes mountain chain, or a world-wide deluge.

It is interesting to observe the archaeological digging which is underway at the site, because at this high altitude (13,300 feet), some of the ruins are found at a level six feet below the surface of the earth. The mountain ranges which surround the area are not high enough to permit sufficient runoff of water or wind erosion to have covered the ruins to such a depth. This remains a mystery.

Legends have persisted over the centuries that there are stone structures beneath the waters of the lake, much the same type as can be found at the site of Tiahuanaco. The Indians of the region hand down such legends, but until recently, there has been no proof of such structures. In 1968, the underwater explorer, Jacques Cousteau, took his equipment and crew from the *Calypso* to explore the lake and search for evidence of such structures. Although severely hampered in their activities by the extreme altitude, the divers spent many days exploring the lake bottom in the vicinity of the Islands of the Sun and Moon, but found nothing man-made. Cousteau concluded that the legends were myth.

Now, however, in November, 1980, the well-known Bolivian author and scholar of pre-Columbian cultures, Hugo Boero Rojo, announced the finding of archaeological ruins underneath the waters of Lake Titicaca about 15 to 20 meters below the surface off the coast at Puerto Acosta, a Bolivian port village near the Peruvian frontier on the northeast edge of the lake.

Based upon information furnished by Elias Mamani, a native of the region who is over 100 years old, Boero Rojo and two Puerto Rican cinematographers, Ivan and Alex Irizarry, were able to locate the ruins after extensive exploration of the lake bottom in the area while filming a documentary on the Indians of the region.

At a press conference, the Bolivian author stated that "we can now say that the existence of pre-Columbian constructions under the waters of Lake Titicaca is no longer mere supposition or science-fiction, but a real fact." "Further," he added, "the remnants found show the existence of old civilizations that greatly antedate the Spanish colonization. We have found temples built of huge blocks of stone, with stone roads leading to unknown places, and flights of steps whose bases were lost in the depths of the lake amid thick vegetation of algae." Boero Rojo described the monumental ruins as being "of probable Tiahuanacan origin."

The Bolivian archaeologist Arturo Posnansky has concluded that the Tiahuanaco culture began in the region at about 1,600 BC and flourished until at least 1,200 AD. However, what happened to that advanced ancient culture has not been determined.

Boero Rojo's discovery, however, may prove to create more problems than it solves. If, over the past three to four thousand years Lake Titicaca has slowly receded, as appears to be the case and as the scientists all agree, then how can we explain the existence of stone temples, stairways, and roads still under the water? The only answer is that they were built before the lake filled in!

We go back now to the remains of Tiahuanaco and look at the more than 400 acres of ruins, only ten percent of which has been excavated, and find that dirt covers the civilization to a depth of at least six feet. The only thing that could have caused this is water. A large amount of water had

to have inundated the city and when it receded, it left the silt to cover the evidence of an advanced civilization, leaving only the largest of the statues and monoliths still exposed. Therefore, it is logical to conclude that Tiahuanaco was built before the lake filled in, and not as a port on its shore. As the waters continue to recede, we should find more and more evidence of this civilization.

Scientists theorize that the area of Lake Titicaca was at one time at sea level, because of the profusion of fossilized marine life which can be found in the region. The area then lifted with the Andes upheaval, a basin was formed and then it filled in to form the lake, which has been slowly receding ever since. No one has suggested that the marine life might have been brought to the altiplano by sea waters, which were at flood stage!

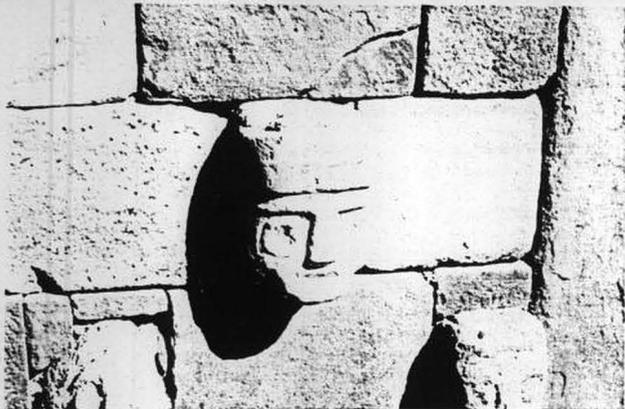
Peruvian legends clearly relate a story of a world-wide flood in the distant past. Whether it was the Biblical flood of Noah, or another one, we do not know, but there is ample physical evidence of a universal inundation. If a flourishing, advanced civilization existed on the altiplano many thousands of years ago which was reached by the flood waters, many problems would be solved - such as, the existence of the ruins of Tiahuanaco under six feet of earth at an elevation of 13,300 feet; the existence of stone structures still under the waters of Lake Titicaca; and the existence of marine life at an impossible altitude.

When we were in Peru, I was awed by the agricultural terracing on the sides of the mountains at the very tops of the steep peaks. These appear to be the oldest and now unused of the terracing. As you look down the mountains, you see more and more terracing, and of more recent origin. We are told that only the Inca (the ruler) could use the lower portions and the fertile valleys - that the "peons" had to go to the very peaks to cultivate the soil for their subsistence. This seems highly unlikely in what we know to have been a pure communistic society.

I pondered the logistics involved, and I had no problem with the spring planting. It would be no difficult task to carry a sack of seed to the top of a mountain, scratch out some soil and plant the seeds. But then, I wondered, it must have been a very tough job in the fall to carry the harvest two or three thousand feet down to the valley floor. Then it struck me. If there really had been a world-wide flood which covered most of the earth's surface, leaving only the mountain tops protruding into the sunlight, then the few remaining survivors of the deluge would naturally plant their seeds on the mountain tops. They had no problem with getting the crops down, because they lived up there. Also, they used boats to move from one mountain top to another. As the flood waters receded, the terracing began to creep down the mountain sides, as can be seen today, with the ones near the bottom being the freshest.

As Boero Rojo stated, "the discovery of Aymara structures under the waters of Lake Titicaca could pose entirely new theses on the disappearance of an entire civilization, which, for some unknown reason, became submerged." The Tiahuanaco culture could have been the victim of a world-wide flood, and the civilization in the region was all but wiped out when their homes and other structures were covered with sea water. Because of its natural basin-like area, the flood waters that filled Titicaca could not run off and have slowly evaporated over the centuries.

All Photographs used in this article were taken by the author during the Ancient Astronaut Society's Member Expedition to Peru and Bolivia in 1977.



A



C



E



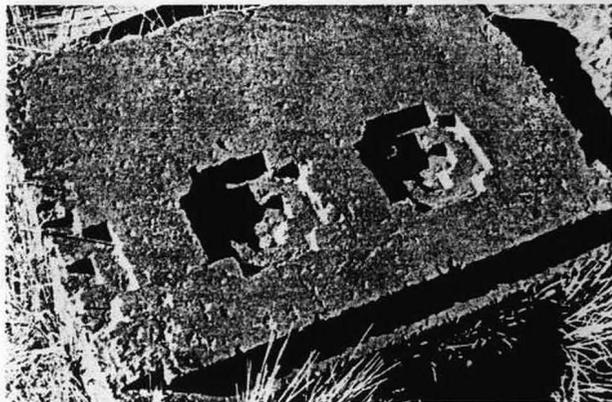
G



B



D



F

LEGEND:

- A. Typical Tiahuanaco head.
- B. Tiahuanaco giant found with two left hands.
- C. Stone lintel found at Tiahuanaco which appears to have been cast.
- D. Archaeological digging at Tiahuanaco.
- E. Enormous stones at Puma Punku.
- F. Section of possible building frieze at Puma Punku, also appears to have been cast.
- G. Huayna Picchu overlooking ruins of Machu Picchu, Peru. Note terracing at the peak.

BOOK REVIEW: SIGNS OF THE GODS?
By ERICH VON DANIKEN
Published in hardcover by
G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York

This is Erich von Daniken's best book yet. It is very well written, the translation flows easily and the book is remarkably free of typos and mechanical errors which have characterized some of his earlier books.

Confining himself to an in-depth examination of only a few subjects (although they vary from ancient astronauts to pre-cognition), von Daniken projects his true genius and puts his scholarship in evidence in this unique analyses of the subjects.

The first chapter of Signs reads like a mystery novel. Taking the baton from George Sassoon and Rodney Dale (authors of The Manna Machine), von Daniken examines a variety of historical clues to determine what happened to this incredible machine after its usefulness came to an end. The result is a gripping tale of intrigue, mystery and wonderment.

After an interesting chapter on genetic engineering, the author takes the reader to Malta, where he examines the unexplainable tracks and grooves cut deep into the solid rock surface of that Mediterranean island and describes the monolithic stone structures and underground vaults also found there.

The chapter on the author's visit to the ruins of Zimbabwe in Africa's Southern Rhodesia (now called Zimbabwe) is a very enlightening report, as he connects the enigmatic structures with the Dogon story of the Sirius star system.

Readers who are seeking something different and perhaps a little "way-out" will be fascinated with von Daniken's discussion of "mind-consciousness", "four-dimensional space-time" and the travel of particles from the "future to the past."

Finally, von Daniken takes the opportunity to rebut some of his critics, notably the BBC Television production which attacks the ancient astronaut theory in general and von Daniken in particular (shown in the United States on the NOVA series) and Carl Sagan, the American astronomer. At this point, however, the "plot thickens". Signs of the Gods? was published originally in German by Econ (Dusseldorf) under the title Prophet der Vergangenheit. The German edition contains almost a full page of text of von Daniken's criticism of Sagan's attacks on the author (at pages 259 and 260).

When the book was translated into English and was being prepared for publication by Souvenir Press, London, the galley proof was sent to von Daniken for his review and corrections. This reviewer personally saw the galley proof and it did contain the passages concerning Sagan. After von Daniken approved the galley proof, Souvenir Press cut out the passages without von Daniken's knowledge. He learned of it only after the book was published.

The U.S. edition of the book published by G. P. Putnam's Sons apparently used the same plates, because the material is also missing from the American edition and the pages of the two English language editions are identical.

This is what Souvenir Press did not want you to read as it appears in the original:

"The well-known American astronomer Carl Sagan carried off the prize. This professor has an organization of his own at his disposal; a company which sees to it that big magazines all over the world publish again and again interviews and eulogies of Sagan.

"NEWSWEEK wrote:

'With his growing media renown, Sagan has become less a scientist than a science salesman... At Cornell, Sagan is working

furiously on preparations for his own public TV series - under the aegis of Carl Sagan Productions. Between tapings, his staff runs him around the country on the frenetic schedule of a superstar and hands out a 41-page biographical fact sheet crammed with his credits and kudos.' (Seeking Other Worlds, August 15, 1977.)

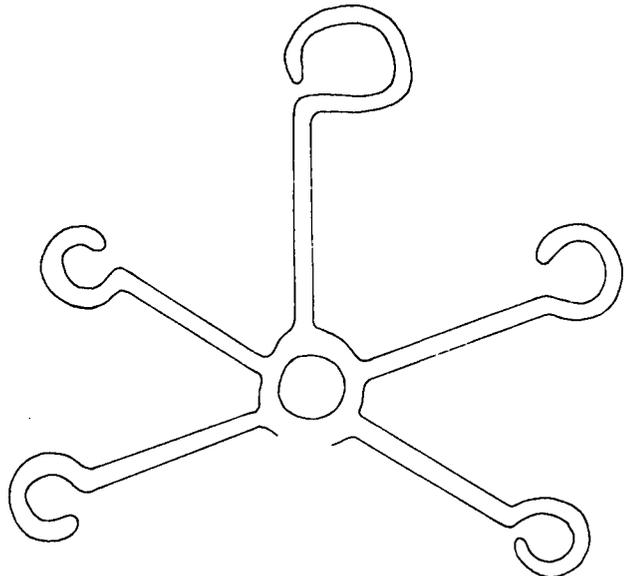
"This modest explorer of the universe called my first book in interviews 'the most unlogical book of the century'. Flattered by such attacks from a superstar, I feel obliged to dismiss his objections to the ancient astronaut hypothesis - as comprehensively as he does - as 'the most contradictory excuses of the millennium'. Conceited as he is, the good astronomer Sagan is a lousy critic. His arguments seem to be valid; sometimes they appear convincing and logical - yet they remain hollow, are not elaborated and merely touch the subject. As Sagan is so busy caring about his own ideas, he does not have time to acknowledge other opinions as thoroughly as this would be necessary for a factual discussion. Sorry."

What appears in Signs of the Gods? at page 217 is the following:

"The well-known American astronomer Carl Sagan carried off the prize." Period!

This is the rankest form of censorship! Gene M. Phillips.

ZECHARIA SITCHIN's new book THE STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN is now available in hardcover from St. Martin's Press, New York 10010. It will be reviewed in the next issue of Ancient Skies.



A seldom-shown marking on the Plain of Nazca, Peru. What is it? A sky-hook?

ANCIENT SKIES is published bi-monthly by the ANCIENT ASTRONAUT SOCIETY, 1921 St. Johns Ave., Highland Park, Illinois 60035 USA, for distribution to its members. Telephone (312) 432-6230.

The Ancient Astronaut Society, founded in 1973, is a tax-exempt, not-for-profit corporation organized exclusively for scientific, literary and educational purposes.