



ANCIENT SKIES

"Come Search With Us!"

Official Logbook of the Ancient Astronaut Society

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"CARGO" CULTS: PAST AND PRESENT

BY ULRICH DOPATKA*

(Translated from the German by Yvonne Dunnenberger)

It might have happened in 11,000 BC in the territory which later was to be known as the Teutoburger Forest in Germany: groups of primitives tan bearskin while others split bones into delicate needles. Suddenly, the tranquility of the summer day is shattered by a thundering roar and a strange object slowly descends from the sky, landing majestically in a clearing, engulfed in a sea of flames. The panic-stricken natives flee, leaving behind all their valuable possessions; their skins, bones, clubs and spears. Something terrible and incomprehensible has happened. What could that object be? What was its purpose? What harm could it do to them?

The council of the elders was consulted, but it could not provide the answers. The priests were asked for their advice, but to no avail. Finally, the idols and totems were invoked, but they remained silent. As time wore on, eye-witnesses to the event filled the gaps in their recollection with elaborate inventions. As fear subsided, accounts of the event became more detailed and more distorted.

Overcome by curiosity, small groups of frightened natives finally returned to the landing place, and there it stood, an unknown and threatening object, unlike anything they had ever seen before. Partially hidden in the underbrush, the natives remained staring at the vehicle throughout the night, foregoing the comfort and pleasures of their homes and firesides.

As dawn broke, the tension reached its peak when the natives saw strange beings, somewhat human in appearance, emerge from the belly of the monster which had descended from the sky. At that moment, a bear broke through the underbrush and advanced menacingly towards the strangers. One of the beings raised his hand towards the animal and a flash of light struck the bear dead.

We can imagine what might have occurred during the days following the landing. Perhaps the natives and extraterrestrials were able to communicate. Maybe the strangers lived among the natives for a time and instructed them in ways of their superior culture. Or, perhaps the primitives were studied in the same manner that native tribes are observed by the ethnologists of today.

Finally, one day the strange beings departed as

quickly as they had arrived, rising into the heavens in their craft with a tremendous roar and a rushing of fire and smoke. The natives watched the vehicle disappear into the blue, never again to be seen by them. The memory of the event became dim, and as the story began to be handed down from one generation to the next by word of mouth, the details of the landing and the take-off bore little resemblance to the actual event. All that remained were drawings on the blackened walls of caves depicting human-like beings in strange dress and a fiery house descending from the sky. The rest became myth and a vague awareness that superior beings existed up in the heavens.

By the 20th Century, only a few places on Earth remained untouched by modern technology. Notably, remote areas in the jungles of South America, the African Kalahari, the jungles of New Guinea, and particularly, the Pacific Islands of Melanesia and Micronesia. Upon first contact with our technology, the cultures in these remote areas reacted basically the same as did the primitives in our hypothetical Teutoburger Forest example. Also, primitive peoples in ancient times, upon their first contact with technology, tended to venerate the superior beings as godlike. The natives of the tiny Melanesian Island of Tanna represent a striking example of this Theory.

The natives of Tanna live very primitively, not unlike their neighbors, the aborigines of Australia. But an interesting aspect of the Tanna natives is that their religion is centered upon one mysterious person: a God called "John Frum" who no longer lives among the people. The natives have tattoos on their skin which they themselves cannot decipher: "USA". Tradition maintains that the king of a far-off country called "America" visited Tanna a long time ago and lived among the natives, instructing them and creating a good relationship with them. He said his name was "John Frum". He gave the natives some coins and paper money, a helmet and other objects, including a photograph, either of himself or of another person. "God" Frum knew the secrets of nature; he explained lightning, sound, wind and the constellations of the heavens. Frum could speak in strange languages and his appearance was not Melanesian at all; he was tall and had fair skin.

Recently, Western visitors to Tanna found an entire nation anxiously awaiting the return of their God John Frum from "USA", the "promised land". Within only a few decades, an entirely new religion had developed.

What evidence do we have that our ancestors would not have reacted in a similar manner when confronted with technologically superior beings? When Christopher Columbus landed on one of the Bahama Islands he wrote in his logbook: "They welcomed us

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as if we came from heaven."

A mere hand-ful of Spanish conquistadors were able to conquer and vanquish nations with millions of people, simply because the "natives" believed the Spaniards to be their returning "gods". Hernando Cortez, with a small band of ruffians, landed in Mexico and conquered the Aztec empire because the natives believed him to be their God Quetzalcoatl, returning from across the waters to the East as he had promised to do. Cortez was tall, bearded and fair-skinned, resembling the long-departed "god".

Another tall, bearded, fair-skinned Spaniard, Francisco Pizarro, conquered the vast Inca empire of Peru, also with a small group of soldiers and without any real resistance. Again, because the natives believed Pizarro to be their god Viracocha returning as promised.

When the English explorer Captain James Cook arrived on Tahiti in the South Pacific, the natives saw in him their returning God Rongo, who is said to have left their island in a "sky-ship". The Indians of Virginia welcomed Sir Walter Raleigh triumphantly, and Cabral, the Portuguese discoverer of Brazil, was "showered" with tribute by the natives.

During the last few years, I have collected a considerable amount of material about encounters between primitive cultures and superior technologies. When ethnologists first visited the Tasaday peoples in the Philippines by helicopter, an old woman fell to her knees and covered her face. Other natives stared at the "heavenly" vehicle from a safe distance. After the first reluctant contacts, the scientists smuggled a tape recorder into the cave of one Tasaday family. The discussions recorded on the "thing which steals the voice", as the Tasaday later called the recorder, revealed that the natives had deep respect for the "big bird" which brought many precious gifts to them. The natives reasoned that if they ingratiated themselves with the "inhabitants" of the "big bird", they would be given more presents.

The Tasaday encounter is proof that fear and curiosity are the dominant feelings upon first contact with superior technology. Then, technological equipment is compared with familiar objects in their own surroundings. Thus, a steam engine became an "iron horse" and a telegraph wire a "singing string" with the American Indians.

The Papuas on New Guinea called the first seaplane they saw the "devil who came down from the sky", and the first steamboat was described as "God Tibut Amut smoking a long cigar."

Uniformly, dark-skinned natives upon first contact with fair-skinned visitors regarded the strangers as "gods". As the strangers repeated their visits, or if they remained with the natives for a while, the natives could see the human nature of the visitors. Then how was it possible that these humans possessed such strange technology? How could they fly through the air in machines? If the strangers were of human nature like the natives, then they must have acquired their superiority from the gods themselves, or from deceased ancestors.

Quite often, the primitives have tried to imitate the technological appliances which they observed. During his expedition to New Guinea in the 1920s, Frank Hurlley noticed that the natives from the village of Kaimari soon began to fashion small wooden replicas of his seaplane as toys, which were distributed to all the households. Natives from the Eastern highlands of New Guinea were observed also in the 1920s making bamboo "radio stations" which were supposed to represent the Persian Oil Company's transmitter which would bring them free cargo. The desire for more cargo and goods led the natives in New Guinea to construct airports and landing fields in the jungles for their imaginary gods.

Following World War II, the natives of a small New Guinean island built a ghost-airport near the village of Wewak, complete with bamboo airplanes,

to attract the "gods" to bring them more goods.

The Venezuelan ethnologist, Mrs. L. Barcelo, has reported an impressive example of how modern myths develop. According to tradition, the Pemon, an Indian tribe living in the Gran Sabara in Venezuela, were introduced to their culture by a God called "Chiricavai" who returned to the stars after his visit to Earth. He promised to return to the Pemon some day. Studying recent drawings by Pemon Indians, Mrs. Barcelo discovered with surprise that the Indians had included a strange object in the sphere of their God Chiricavai; an object not found in older paintings. When she asked the high priest for an explanation, he replied laconically "those are the Russians."

Why had the Pemon begun to include a symbol for the Russians in their God's heavenly sphere? A member of the tribe had somehow learned that the Russians had placed a heavenly vehicle - a satellite - in orbit in the universe. Thus the Pemon concluded that the Russians could help them communicate with their old God Chiricavai. Therefore, three members of the tribe wrote a letter to the Russians which was handed to a missionary for delivery, with a message for their God Chiricavai.

In 1932, Australian cave-paintings saved the life of the German pilot Hans Bertram. Bertram was wearing his safety goggles when he was detained by aborigines, and because he resembled paintings of their "gods" in the caves of northern Australia, it was assumed that he must be a messenger from the Gods and his life was spared.

In October, 1978, the BBC telecast a documentary in London showing the launching of a rocket in Zaire, Africa. The camera also captured the reactions of the local natives witnessing the event. Asked by an interpreter what he thought of the whole spectacle, one of the natives replied: "These are our powerful friends who send fire to heaven."

Who knows, after the space technologists have left, maybe a rocket-cult will spring up in Zaire.

MEMBER EXPEDITION TO MEXICO'S LAKE MIRAMAR - 1982

Arrangements are complete for the Ancient Astronaut Society's Member Expedition to explore the elusive Lake Petha (Miramar) in the Lacandon Jungles of southern Mexico. Departing Chicago on February 27, 1982 to Mexico City, then to Villahermosa, the group will overland to Tenosique, stopping enroute to explore the ruins at Palenque. From Tenosique in small planes, flying at low altitude along the Usumacinta River and crossing the imposing canyons of Boca de Cerro and San Jose, the group will stop to explore the ruins at Yaxchilan, then proceed deep into the jungle to San Quintin, a Tzeltal Indian village on the River Jatate. Bidding goodbye to the planes, the group will camp out for the next nine days, first navigating down the Jatate in rubber boats to the majestic falls of the Santo Domingo River, then shooting the rapids in the river gorge.

After a full day's march back to San Quintin, another two hours by foot will take the group to the shores of Lake Miramar, the "Sacred Lake of the Lacandons," not shown on any commercial map. Three full days will be spent exploring the unexcavated ruins on the islands in the 1200 foot deep lake, surrounded by imposing forests and high mountains. Swimming, fishing and scuba-diving in the crystal-clear waters will be enjoyed and at night the brave ones can search for small crocodiles in the Black Lagoon. Hopefully, the planes will rendezvous with the group at San Quintin at the appointed time for the flight back to civilization and the return to Chicago on March 11, 1982. Anyone interested in participating in this rugged, physically-taxing, adventure-filled journey should contact the Society headquarters office immediately for prices and full details. Space is limited.

TIAHUANACOLOGY AND THE GATE OF THE SUN

BY PROF. HANS SCHINDLER BELLAMY*

Archaeology, as understood and practised hitherto, tells us of how people lived in by-gone ages by tracing the groundplans of their dwellings and of the temples of their gods, by classifying the forms and decoration of their pottery, by arranging their tools and weapons according to shape and material, by rummaging in their kitchen waste to find out what food they ate, and by studying their burial customs. We know much about the material circumstances of life of our forebears; but we are still very much in the dark as to their real mental outlook.

The truly remarkable interpretation by Erich von Daniken of part of a distinctive and characteristic section of the material which constitutes the realm of mythology has pushed the ken of our vision regarding human experiences and technical achievements infinitely farther back - by adding a new "dimension" to research in the mythological and archaeological field: that of Space. According to this new interpretation, migrations of culture bearers took place not only on the terrestrial surface, but also there were immigrations of culture bringers from extra-terrestrial regions.

A new category of ante-historical science was thus established as the result of the marriage of archaeology and mythology, and as a consequence, new solutions of ancient enigmas are beginning to present themselves.

Unfortunately, no "directly tangible" proofs of spaceships and space travellers seem to have come down to us, or been discovered, or recognized up till now - except clumsy descriptions of the former in myths, and hardly better depictions of the latter in rock-drawings.

The new category seems to have many promising new aspects. Even though its present basis seems still extremely limited, it appears to be essentially firm and sound, and already the new findings allow us most remarkable outlooks upon the working of the minds of our remote antecedents, above all of the exactitude of their observations, and of their mathematical and technical skills.

Such a road of archaeological research has been chiefly followed by me and my collaborator, Peter Allan, since deceased. Its main basis is a "hard" one; partly because it rests on stone: namely, the most remarkable archaeological monument called the "Gate of the Sun" found on the ancient ruin field at Tiahuanaco in the vicinity of Lake Titicaca in the Andean Highlands of Bolivia, South America, and partly because the interpretation of the symbology of this sculpture has been so well established by the archaeologists for the last quarter of a century as to be unassailable.

Nevertheless, to regard one monument as a sufficient basis for a new aspect of archaeological research appears to be utterly insufficient at first sight, although nobody has ever denied the uniqueness and importance of the stone. Indeed, Allan and I have been nicknamed the "armchair archaeologists" (as distinct from the genuine "dirt" variety of the brotherhood of the spade) though we are well acquainted with the site, having spent many months there. But the opprobrious sneer has recoiled on the scoffers with a vengeance, and silenced them, even though it did not convince, or convert, them.

The large monolithic "Sun-Gate" of Tiahuanaco was evidently originally the centre-piece of the most important part of the so-called Kalasasaya, the huge chief "temple" of Tiahuanaco. Its upper part is covered with a stupendously intricate sculpture in flat bas-relief - which has been addressed as a "calendar" practically as long as the monolithic gateway has been known to exist; thus the "sun-gate" has also been called the "calendar

"gate". This "calendar", though it undoubtedly depicts a "solar year" cannot, however, be made to fit into the solar year as we divide it up at present. After many futile attempts had been made, by employing a "cinderella"-like chopping off of toes or heels to make the calendar fit into the glass-slipper, or by trying other sizes or shapes of that footwear (see A. Posnansky and F. Buck, both of La Paz, Bolivia) the sculpture, which indeed has a highly "decorative" aspect, was eventually generally declared to be nothing but a mere intricate piece of art.

However, Allan and I continued to contend that the sculpture was a calendar, though one of a special kind, designed for a special purpose, and, of course, for a special time. Hence, it must exclusively refer to the reckoning of that time, and to certain aspects obtaining then. Hence, also, we must not "make" the calendar "speak" in the terms of our time, but we must let it speak for itself, and listen to what it says to us and learn from it. When we do so we gain an immense amount of most remarkable insights into the world of the people of that area and of that age, into the manner of thinking of their intellectuals and generally into the way the craftsmen and laborers lived and worked.

To tell that in detail would be a long story, and it took Allan and me, and some other helpers, many years of really heavy intellectual labor to puzzle out the Tiahuanacan system of notation, to analyze the whole problem of their symbology and to make the necessary calculations (at that time without the aid of computers which then hardly existed) and the result filled a book of over 400 pages, "The Calendar of Tiahuanaco", published in 1956 by Faber and Faber, London.

Our thorough analysis of the sculpture on the Sun-Gate revealed the astounding fact that the calendar is not a mere list of days for the "man in the street" of the Tiahuanaco of that time (say, to know the date of market-days, or of holidays) but actually, and pre-eminently, a unique depository of the astronomical, mathematical and allied sciences, the quintessence of the knowledge, of the bearers of the Tiahuanacan culture. The enormous amount of information that it has been made to contain, and that it wishes to impart to anyone ready and able to take it, is communicated in a way that is, once the actually very simple method of notation has been grasped, singularly lucid and intelligible: counting by "units" of pictorial or abstract form! The different forms of those units attribute special, very definite and important, additional meanings to them and make them do double, or multiple duty. By means of that method any "number" can be expressed without employing definite "numerals" whose meaning might be difficult, if not impossible, to establish. It is only necessary to recognize the units and to consider their forms, and to find out their groupings, count them out, and to render the result in our own numeral notation. Some of these results seem to be so unbelievable that superficial critics have turned them down as being mere arrant nonsense; but they are too well dovetailed and geared in the greater system, and in many cases supported by peculiar repetitions and cross-references that one has to accept them as correct - or, of course, to reject them in disgust. He who takes the latter course, however, also accepts the onus that he must offer a better explanation! Only thus is real progress achieved.

The "solar year" of the time when the calendar sculpture was designed had very probably practically the same length as ours - but as is shown by the symbolisms of the sculpture, the Earth rotated more slowly then and the Tiahuanacan "year" had therefore a length of only 290 days, divided into 12 "twelfths" of 24 days each, plus two intercalary days. These "groupings" (290,24,12,2) are clearly

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and unmistakably shown in the sculpture. (The reason for the speeding up of the terrestrial rotation to 365 1/4 days cannot be discussed here.)

At the time of the floruit of Tiahuanaco, the present Moon was not yet the companion of our Earth, but was still an independent "exterior" planet. There was another "satellite" which moved round our Earth then (rather closely: centre to centre distance 5.9 terrestrial radii, our present Moon being 60 radii). Because it was so close, it moved round the Earth more quickly than our planet rotated; therefore it rose in the west and set in the east (like the Mars satellite Phobos, for instance), and so caused a great number of solar eclipses, 37 in one twelfth, or 447 in one solar year (and, of course, an equal number of satellitic eclipses). Also, these groupings (37, 447) are shown in the sculpture, with many corroborating cross references. Different symbols show when these solar eclipses, which were of some length, occurred: at sunrise, at noon, at sunset, etc.

I present this only by way of a small sample of the manifold exact astronomical information that the calendar gives. The calendar shows also the beginning of the year, the days of the equinoxes and the solstices, the incidence of the two intercalary days, information regarding the obliquity of the ecliptic (then about 16 1/2 degrees, now 23 1/2) and of the latitude of Tiahuanaco (then about 10° S, now 16.27°S), and many other astronomical and geographical references, from which other interesting and important data can be calculated, or inferred, by us, and were certainly also known to the Tiahuanacan scientists.

They knew, for instance, that the Earth was a globe which rotated on its axis (not that the Sun moved round a flat Earth), because they calculated exactly also the times of the eclipses invisible at Tiahuanaco, and therefore visible on the other hemisphere. One begins to wonder whether they actually were also able to travel round the world, and to speculate in what sort of vessel!

A few more facts revealed by the "calendar", all of which are interesting and some really surprising. As shown by a significant arrangement of "geometrical" elements we can establish the fact that the Tiahuanacans divided the circle (actually, astronomically the solar course, but certainly also mathematically) into 264 degrees (rather than 360). Also, they determined - ages before Archimedes and the Egyptians - the pi-ratio, the most important ratio between the circumference of the circle and its diameter, as 22:7, or, in our notation, 3 1/7. They could calculate squares (and hence certainly square roots). They must have had a good knowledge of trigonometry, and the measuring of angles (of 30, 60 and 90 degrees) and their functions. They could calculate, and indicate fractions, but do not seem to have known the decimal system, nor did they apparently ever employ the duodecimal system for practical purposes, though they knew it. (For a still unknown reason, however, the number eleven and its multiples often occur.) They were able to draw absolutely straight lines and exact right angles, but no mathematical instruments have ever yet been found. We do not know the excellent tools they must have used for working the glass-hard andesite of their monuments; cutting, polishing and incising. They must have had tackle for lifting and transporting great loads (up to 200 tons) over considerable distances, even over expanses of water from the quarries to the sites.

It is difficult to see how all the tremendous figuring work involved in producing the various cultural remains of Tiahuanaco can have been done without some form of writing, and without a system of notation different from the "unit" system employed in the calendar sculpture. If they did have a system of writing they must have used it only on

perishable material. (One is really tempted to conclude that all the figuring was done by extra-terrestrial culture bringers on computers, who took everything away with them when they left the Earth.)

I have so far dealt with some of the aspects of the world of the time of Tiahuanaco, namely those that are connected with the "calendar" as a monument of what I want to describe as "fossilized science". But the calendar sculpture, and similar slightly older ones found at the site, must also be regarded and appreciated from an aesthetic point of view: as a great artistic achievement as to design and execution, and as an absolute masterpiece of arrangement and lay-out.

The most tantalizing fact is - the Tiahuanaco culture has no roots in that area. It did not grow there, from humbler beginnings, nor is any other place of origin known. It seems to have "appeared" practically full-blown "suddenly". (Only a few "older" monuments, as can be inferred from the "calendarial" inscriptions they bear, have been found, but the difference in time cannot have been very great. The different, much lower cultures, found at considerable distances from Tiahuanaco proper, addressed as "Decadent Tiahuanaco", or as "Coastal Tiahuanaco", are only very indirectly related to the culture revealed by the Calendar Gate. Some of their painted symbols are somehow somewhat related to the calendar symbols, but make no sense whatever: they are, if anything, barely ornamental.

Tiahuanaco apparently remained for only a very short period at its acme of perfection evidenced by the Calendar Gate, and then perished suddenly, perhaps by cataclysmic happenings in connection with the breakdown of the former "moon".

We have at present no means of determining when Tiahuanaco rose to its supreme height, and when its culture was wiped out, as, naturally, the calendar itself can tell us nothing about that. It will certainly not have been in the "historical past" - but well back in the "prehistoric past". It must indeed have been before the planet Luna was captured as the Earth's present Moon, about 12,000 years ago.

As the Tiahuanaco culture has no roots anywhere on Earth, can it have been established by extra-terrestrials? The idea is by no means preposterous. Maybe representatives of a far-advanced culture made an attempt at planting their culture there, to revitalize our planet which had already been devastated by floods caused by the close satellite, but their attempt had eventually miscarried because they had underestimated certain dangerous developments that eventually happened contrary to all expectations and calculations. It almost would appear to be so. With more detailed and devoted search and research, I have no doubt that findings in the Tiahuanaco region will prove the ancient astronaut theory and form a basis for that branch of prehistoric science whose establishment I suggested more than four decades ago: Tiahuanacology.

*Prof. Bellamy is the author of several books, including The Calendar of Tiahuanaco; The Great Idol of Tiahuanaco; Moons, Myths and Man; and The Book of Revelation is History; all published by Faber and Faber, London, England. Unfortunately, all are out of print. Prof. Bellamy is now retired, living at Blechturm-gasse 23-5-10, A1050 Vienna, AUSTRIA.

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