



ANCIENT SKIES

"Come Search With Us!"

Official Logbook of the Ancient Astronaut Society

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THE ESTABLISHMENT'S CRITICISM OF THE ANCIENT ASTRONAUT HYPOTHESIS REVISITED

BY DR. PASQUAL SEBASTIAN SCHIEVELLA*

In 1996 scientists announced with much fanfare that there probably is life on the planet Mars. Jim Lovell, who was the commander of the Apollo 11 Lunar mission, then expressed what ancient astronaut theorists have been saying for over a quarter of a century. Lovell said, "How little effort we are putting into solving one of mankind's greatest mysteries: Are we Alone?"

I find this somewhat disingenuous. It is a failure to give credit where credit is due. In Lovell's defense, however, we can only hope that he was not referring to the efforts of Erich von Daniken and so many of our members who have been trying so hard and long to bring evidence to the attention of the world that we certainly are not alone.

In recent years, with notable failure, scientists have spent millions of dollars to tune in on messages possibly sent from the vast reaches of the universe, by civilizations on yet undiscovered distant planets. In the past, professionals, scientific and academic, in both the hard and soft sciences, took great pleasure in showing their disdain for the Ancient Astronaut hypothesis. What our critics have unintentionally succeeded in doing admirably, however, is to convince the world that they now believe what they formerly scoffed at; that is, that ancient astronauts may indeed exist, though our critics prefer to call them "extraterrestrials".

If a civilization had evolved to the point where it could broadcast such messages, considering the time lapse involved in receiving them from a planet billions of light years distant, the probability follows, as the night the day, that it is a near

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certainty that their scientists had long ago achieved interstellar travel - certainly interplanetary. And if, as some scientists believe, travelling faster than the speed of light may be attainable, the probability that there were extraterrestrials capable of interstellar travel rises enormously.

There has been little doubt amongst our rank and file of the probability that we are not alone. We have repeatedly said so in voice and in literature only to be ignored by those who have the power but not the will to research age-old mysteries suggesting extraterrestrial visitation. Those same powers-that-be preferred to listen to the derisive voices that fear having it revealed that we are, as Einstein has been reported to have said, only an insignificant aspect of our universe.

Few people notice the interrogative punctuation at the end of the title of Erich von Daniken's first book, Chariots of the Gods? They miss the point of it entirely. It is not a declarative claim. Rather, it is a questioning indicator, the very basis of a scientific attitude. Even though he is not a schooled scientist, to his credit he has assiduously maintained this attitude throughout his pursuit of evidence to support the Ancient Astronaut Hypothesis. Many of his critics, to their shame, have abandoned the principle of maintaining an open mind. In the past their voices rang out like the cry of embattled authority proclaiming "truth" anxiously and loudly. In the face of these mysteries, they either offered flimsy solutions, many of which in the course of time have been shown to be false, or they blatantly ignored plausible inductive possibilities.

Failing to disprove the Ancient Astronaut Hypothesis with indisputable evidence, the same old critics repeatedly dredge up the same old tired criticisms, blind to the tantalizing millenia-old mysteries. Generally, a few notable personalities are marshalled who manage to convey negative vibes towards the Ancient Astronaut Hypothesis though they do not speak to it directly. Often, it is difficult to determine what they believe. I suspect that throughout the world there are closet Ancient Astronaut enthusiasts who do not have the courage to let others know their true beliefs for fear of facing the derision that the media, playing to the powers-that-be, have foisted upon the general public. How else can it be explained that hundreds of millions of people around the world read about the subject? It is akin to the stance taken by closet anti-theists who do not wish to bear the scorn of those who claim, without proof, to know the absolute truth.

Some years ago, at a previous Ancient Astronaut Society Conference, I intimated that among the millions who have read von Daniken's books, and I might add, examined the research of many other authors in our field, are scientists, philosophers,

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archaeologists, anthropologists, engineers and scholars from every field. Some of these professionals are themselves authors of books and/or articles sympathetic to the Hypothesis. They refuse to be intimidated.

A half century ago the existence of intelligence beyond the Earth received little credibility. But as we all know, intelligence exists on this planet so why not on others. With a science still in the embryonic stage, compared to the age of other possible extraterrestrial civilizations, we have succeeded in extending our intelligence beyond the confines of our planet. Evidence of our intelligence exists on a space platform orbiting the Earth. The technological remnants of our intelligence exist on the Moon, on Venus and on Mars and even now traveling within and beyond the bounds of our solar system. Active intelligence will undoubtedly exist, in the foreseeable future on the Moon and on Mars. Moreover, it will probably be extended throughout our solar system in the form of manned space platforms around others of our sister planets. We will surely wish to study them up close and will probably build orbiting home ports for the equipment we shall need for robotic mining of them. These technological possibilities have given science the persuasive edge for suctioning out of government coffers considerable sums of money both for legitimate purposes as well as for enterprises labelled "scientific research" which are either on the fringe of credibility, or of minimal practical value.

Consider the time, effort and money spent on a computer search for prime numbers and the absolute value of pi. Likewise, others are in pursuit of psychic phenomena such as precognition, psychokinesis and the like. Scientists spend inordinate sums of money on discovering and creating subatomic particles with a billionth-of-a-second life span. There are other enterprises, however, which, though labelled "scientific research", are sometimes tinged with unverifiable claims and consequently are clearly on the fringe of credibility. It seems as if the pot is calling the kettle black when we are accused of not being able to prove our Hypothesis.

To date science has spent millions of dollars researching point particles, multi-universes (an oxymoron to say the least), gravitons, quarks, gluons, tachyons, black holes, brown holes, worm holes, anti-matter, superstrings, dark matter, shadow matter, different dimensional worlds and much more too numerous to list here, many of which are little more than concepts, with little if any verifiable evidence to support their existence. Some of them are stabs in the dark - or mathematical constructs lacking support from empirical data. Today, it is evident that a number of scientists are delving in to too many untestable bootstrap theories. Science News, one of the reviewers of the book The Edges of Science, by Richard Morris, refers to them as "... some current science activity and...the controversy generated as the boundary between physics and metaphysics becomes blurred." Credible scientific claims must be falsifiable or verifiable. They must be able to be tested, to be subject to direct or indirect observation. If they are not, such so-called theories are epistemic gobbledygook, fanciful speculation - not theories. To the extent to which scientists resort to metaphysical claims supported by mathematics, they cannot meet the requirements of science. Our Hypothesis, based on a physical world and physical evidence, does.

As any analytic philosopher can attest, there can be an infinite number of mathematical models of the universe. In 1921 Einstein said, "As far as the laws of mathematics refer to reality, they are not certain and as far as they are certain, they do not refer to reality." Bertrand Russell, one of the great philosophers of our century, said "Mathematics is the subject in which we don't know what we are talking about nor whether what we're talking

about is true." And Godfrey Harold Hardy, a noted mathematician of both the 18th and 19th centuries, is quoted as having said "A mathematician is someone who not only does not know what he is talking about but also does not care."

Let me be clear about this. I do not wish to denigrate mathematics. Without it, we would never reach the stars, not to mention develop the technology that runs the world today. However, there seems to be a tendency to confuse the expanded language of mathematics with an expansion of knowledge. For instance, in math, it is possible to prove there are, as some mathematicians have said, ten dimensions. In math there may very well be. But the principle of verification indicates that there are only four: length, width, depth and time. In my philosophy, from the point of view of knowledge, there is a fifth dimension, that is, mind. It is, after all, our minds that determine how each of us measures, that is, perceives, the world, not, however, as Protagoras proclaimed, that "Man is the measure of all things."

I do not insist that mind correctly describes the physical world. Likewise, anyone who claims that the ten mathematical dimensions describe the physical universe ignores the admonitions of Einstein, Russell and Hardy. I know that this smacks of an appeal to authority. Clearly, we must distinguish between dogmatic authority, which cannot offer proof or verification, and expert authority that does. But in the realm of expert authority, at least there are always other experts who are ever ready to research and to test the claims of their fellow experts. In other words, in the matter of epistemic claims, a self-corrective principle is our watchdog against those who in place of verifiable knowledge would misuse their positions of authority through a corruption of language; that is, making claims that cannot be - note that I did not say "that are not" - that cannot be verified.

It is clear, then, that mathematics does not exist somewhere in the universe in the absence of intelligence. On Earth it was conceived in the mind of man, perhaps even with a little help from ancient astronauts. The latter idea, of course, I suggest with absolutely no evidence to support it.

History seems to support the thesis that pre-scientific man had not yet conceived and evolved such a high order of mathematics. How the Sumerians or, for that matter, as the Encyclopaedia Britannica cites, "How the Egyptian obtained his correct (mathematical) results is a matter for conjecture." How the cubit, the length from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger, and all its consequent diverse and confusing real measurements was dispensed with has never been clearly explained. Thought the Greeks are given credit for having invented mathematics as we now know it, the period out of which their form of mathematics emerged is clouded in uncertainty and mystery and extends a few millenia, about 4000 years approximately, prior to the emergence of math as we now practice it. Perhaps those who are searching for evidence of the source of mathematics on Earth will one day present us with irrevocable proof. Certainly the evidence acquired so far for the Ancient Astronaut Hypothesis clearly indicates that space travel could not have been achieved without a sophisticated knowledge of mathematics.

In any case, mathematics is only a tool, albeit a very powerful one, that helps us to deal with our environment in the broadest sense of that term. There are limits to the correlation between math and the physical world, however. Yet, these limits are no excuse for withholding funds for research into what for now appear to be metaphysical concepts. I reiterate, however, that mathematics must never be equated with reality.

I surely do not object to funds being appropriated for fringe enterprises or what may appear to fall

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into that category. Many of the ideas leading to today's technology were once heaped with ridicule. At one time the idea of heavier-than-air flight was laughed at. It has been reported that even so great a mind as that of Lord Kelvin, a noted British physicist of the 19th century, insisted that the atom would never be smashed. To cite the instances of ridicule and ridiculous concepts from the minds and mouths of the great thinkers of the past would fill volumes. In progress, ever has it been so. But, except in instances of unverifiable claims, as intelligent beings it is incumbent upon us all to withhold judgment until the evidence is in. To our critics, I direct a paraphrase of Einstein: Reflect on how you have treated great men and their ideas, and how you now follow their teachings.

The end result of research is often too open-ended to predict in advance what will or will not be beneficial. This is what so many do not seem to understand. If the history of research and discovery, with all its strange conclusions and errors, were not ignored, skeptics regarding the Ancient Astronaut Hypothesis might be less adamant about ridiculing it.

Why do not scientists and our government use their massive powers to pursue research into and demand access to sources and hidden archives wherein lie possible solutions to many of the mysteries that have plagued us for centuries? Is it because they see no practical value to be achieved? Are they fearful of world mass panic? Do they fear the reaction of competing governments or religious institutions which are the caretakers of these archives?

Why are the documented empirical descriptions of ancient astronauts in the great religious tomes of the world ignored selectively or called the mental meanderings of crazed or hyper-imaginative minds while other non-observable and unverifiable claims in those same works are espoused and claimed to be the absolute truth? Consider how frequently visitation has been referred to in the course of history. It extends back even before the birth of Christ. Moreover, it has been written about by many members of our Society throughout the world espousing the probable existence of extraterrestrial intelligence; it is certainly not beyond reason or possibility that Earth has been visited.

My point is: surely it makes sense to investigate possible sources of knowledge, here, in our own back yard, that might answer the question, "Are we alone in the universe?", at considerably less expenditure of funds than the millions of dollars we spend on such fringe enterprises as a search of messages from outer space. The chances of making contact with extraterrestrial intelligence by our present methods are infinitesimal. Were we to succeed, the dangers would be, though not likely, catastrophic - since such intelligences might be war-like entities with the capacity to destroy our world. The movie industry has made much of that scenario. The unfortunate fact, however, is that the millions being spent are being wasted because they are but a drop in the bucket compared to the vast sums of money required to make a meaningful effort of this kind with some chance of success. Ignoring this, science has the political clout, the expertise and the power of authority to sway the holders of the purse strings.

Strange as it seems, originally, many of our scientists were and even now are as culpable as anyone else in establishing a skeptical attitude regarding the possible existence of other civilizations in the universe. It is only recently that science seems to have come to its senses. What has undermined public acceptance of the possibility of extraterrestrial visitations are the criticisms which are colored more by what is left unsaid than by what is said, more by what has not been researched than researched. Such is the case also with the American media which heaps scorn upon professional people,

philosophers, scientists and the like, who support our Hypothesis, wreaking havoc upon their reputations and their careers. The media is hardly an example par excellence for open-mindedness.

Our critics find their strength of argument in innuendo, intimidation, suggestion and half-truths based, certainly, more on what they don't investigate than on what they do. They do not want to divert their time and energy, more particularly, their funds into documentary, linguistic and astro-archaeological research. Nor do they want to risk having funds diverted from their pet projects.

A common practice of our critics is to pick a few (the same few) of our claims and prove them wrong. Therefore, it follows that any evidence we present must be suspect. In philosophical language, this commits the fallacy of the small sample. But they carefully avoid discussing much of our evidence about those findings for which they, themselves, admit they have no warranted explanations. Further, they ignore the simple principle of logic that, in general, even young people know: To prove someone wrong in some things does not prove him wrong in everything.

We offer no threat to science or to reason. We are not trying to form a cult in which the modus operandi is to open the gate of Heaven, or to brainwash anyone. We wish only that the facts and the evidence uncovered by our researchers be judged on logical and scientific principles fairly and without prejudice and particularly without preconceived and outdated concepts and convictions.

As a matter of fact, social acceptance of the possibility of extraterrestrial intelligence is obviously a direct result of the authors among us. As we all know, their writings are read by hundreds of millions of people. Even though the Hypothesis is older than the time of Plato, there was little acceptance, excitement, or credibility connected with it just thirty years ago.

Why are scientists not directing their attention to eliminating acceptance of supernatural and/or metaphysical concepts, concepts that are beyond verification? Such ideas are still undermining the development of human reason. These are tasks worthy of their ability. They would then be working in concert with us who are deeply concerned to explain beliefs founded on physical evidence.

The good news is that public criticism of the Ancient Astronaut Hypothesis seems to be waning. That is not to say that a negative frame of mind is not basic to our critics' thinking. Some may recall the showing last year of a new television special based upon Erich von Daniken's works. There was not the hue and cry that followed the showing of the first such television special 25 years ago. Thanks to everyone in the Ancient Astronaut Society there is now greater acceptance of the possibility of visitations to Earth in our past. What seems to be taking place is that society as a whole is no longer as skeptical about the possible existence of extraterrestrials. After all, the government and noted scientists are willing to spend our hard-earned money to get in touch with them. Obviously, it is but a short step in logic, in the minds of our fellow men, that ancient astronauts probably exist. If we are not alone, and if man is such a young species related to the age of the universe, and if the universe is 10 to 15 billion years old, surely evolution could have taken its course on the other distant planets, or near-by ones, hundreds of millions or even a few billion years before man made the scene on Earth. This is so particularly in view of the fact that there is a high probability that there are billions of other planets, habitable and uninhabitable, which went through the evolutionary process hundreds of millions of years before Earth was even formed.

But the presence of planets is not the only necessary condition of the evolution of life. Certain

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natural conditions are necessary to permit and sustain the evolution of life as we know it. The very chemicals out of which those necessary for life must evolve, must first, themselves, be able to evolve. A planet must be big enough and its gravity strong enough to prevent the atmosphere from escaping. The proximity of a planet to a sun determines the intensity of molecular movement, hence, the density, pressure and stability of an atmosphere effecting the planet's ability to retain it. It is crucial that out of the inorganic matter, the ingredients for life must evolve in the right proportions of such chemicals as carbon dioxide, oxygen, water and amino acids. Other constituents damaging to life must not be extensively present. From this emergence of life, evolves intelligent technologically advanced civilizations capable of intergalactic space flight on about a third of a billion planets in our galaxy alone, according to one statistic. Moreover, millions of those civilizations surpass ours in age by hundreds of thousands of years, if not millions of years.

Such civilizations with a history of science far surpassing ours would surely be capable of terraforming dead planets or at least of creating artificial environments that would sustain them indefinitely as generation after generation of them wander throughout the galaxy. If we can do it on a space platform, surely they can do it on life-barren planets and generational-occupied spaceships. However the question arises, "Where is the evidence that any of this has ever occurred?"

Even considering that question, there has to be an explanation for the literary, pictorial and observational accounts, extant from the past to the present throughout the world, of a superior technology of beings from space. That we may not have conclusive evidence does not eliminate the possibility and the circumstantial evidence that we have been visited.

Only a cynical or irrational skeptic could be irresponsible or illogical enough to suggest that all such claims of observation must be attributed to insanity, fantasy and imagination. Of such critics we can only note, with sadness, that "You can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink."

LIFTING THE VEIL OF SECRECY TO THE PAST

BY JAMES A. MILLER*

"One thing is certain: there is much that remains unexplained about the past of mankind on Earth which occurred tens of thousands of years ago. We members of the Ancient Astronaut Society will strive by both conventional and unconventional means to lift the veil of secrecy to the past." Thus concluded Erich von Daniken in his Message to Members in the Official Program of the 24th Anniversary World Conference of the Society held in Orlando, Florida last August.

The most obvious question becomes: "WHY is there a veil of secrecy to the past?" The answer also is obvious: establishment scientists with their false dogma and false paradigms have created the veil of secrecy deliberately for their own glorification and to further their own selfish and self-serving interests.

The Ancient Astronaut Society has raised its flag; it will be dogmatic in the search for TRUTH. It will not beg the establishment scientists for acceptance. To paraphrase the German physicist, Dr. Max Planck: for false paradigms to fall a new generation of scientific researchers must come onto the scene, created by those with vision to not be deceived by the so-called "status" of certain over-bearing, arrogant and self-glorifying, self-serving "scientists". Thus we should not attempt to rebut the

false paradigms of the scientists, but rather let them choke on their own false dogma. Let us in the Society do our own business.

As the membership in the Ancient Astronaut Society attests, there are many free thinkers around with TRUTH on our side, so who needs the establishment false dogmatists? They are the reason for all the secrecy in the first place.

With due deference to the philosophers in our Society, notably Dr. Pasqual S. Schievella, we should cease referring to ancient astronauts as a "theory" or a "hypothesis", which terms are used to "reach" the Establishment for its approval, which will never happen. We should condition ourselves to use the words "truth" and "fact" when discussing our subject, because there is ample physical evidence around the world to prove that ancient astronauts, or extraterrestrials, did in fact visit the Earth in times past.

Some effort must be expended to teach the public the difference between "science" and "technology." Science is the pursuit of knowledge, while technology is the practical application of that knowledge. There is little "science" in placing a small robot on Mars, but a vast amount of "technology" is required to make it happen. Our news media parade big-name "scientists" before the public whenever an important event occurs, such as the Mars landing; however, it was not the scientists who accomplished the feat, but rather the engineers and mechanics who developed the technology to make it happen.

We must strive to assimilate "amateur" and "professional" archaeologists in the same working relationship as now exists in the field of astronomy. We should do away with the petty protocols used by the establishment archaeologists and speed up the exploration of archaeological sites. We must bring the raw data to the public, without the filtering process, so that everyone can see for themselves what has been unearthed. Almost all the great discoveries in archaeology were made by amateurs, not by archaeologists, although the latter take credit for them.

Life has always existed in the Universe, and always will. Life has no beginning and no end - it IS. Life is not a curve, not in repetitive cycles and is not Earth centered, but rather life is an endless continuum, with infinite branches in shape, form, location and intelligence, forever in the Universe, or Universes. Religious abstractions of every kind the mind can conceive have nothing to do with life. They exist only in the affairs of human social intercourse.

We must band together to free ourselves from the stagnant, ignorant quagmire of petty protocols and false dogma which are forced upon us by the professional and academic establishment, social manipulators, and their financial controllers. We need to reject their teachings and follow our own instincts about the past. The faint rumblings of the distant drummers and pipers of the past echo down through the corridors of time for those of us who can hear and understand the reality of our forefathers from the stars, the ancient astronauts.

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