

# ANCIENT SKIES

*"Come Search With Us!"*

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### THE UNUSUAL DESIGN OF NOAH'S ARK

BY RENE A. BOULAY\*

In previous articles in *Ancient Skies* 14:4 & 14:5, I suggested that the evidence of the existence of ancient astronauts can be found in ancient literature although the evidence is submerged in the religious and mythological attitude of the documents. This was the premise of those articles, which dealt with communications and air/space craft. In line with my researches on the puzzles and inconsistencies of the Old Testament I was intrigued with the impractical design of Noah's Ark, as described therein, and did some research which concluded that the vessel may have been saucer shaped.

I feel that there is a lot of information hidden in the Old Testament that can be explained in terms of secular literature, as well as the religious works that were omitted from the Scriptures. This article deals with the strange design and appearance of Noah's Ark and its Sumerian counterpart.

It is now generally accepted that the story of the Great Flood, or "Deluge", was not a local event nor is it unique to the Old Testament, since it is found in world-wide ancient literature. In the Near East, the story appears in Sumerian legends that antedate the Genesis story by thousands of years. (1)

The Sumerian Epic of Gilgamesh contains the Flood Story which was written down about 2000 BC from much earlier stories which probably date back to 2800 BC, when a real king called Gilgamesh is believed to have ruled in Mesopotamia. Because the Old Testament version of the Deluge was written down not much earlier than 1000 BC, it is generally believed that the Genesis story is a recent version of the Sumerian account, which had later been circulated in Akkadian or Semitic form.

The Ark of Noah. In the Old Testament the Ark is called *teba*, which means a "box" or "chest." It is described as a rectangular box with a flat bottom and straight sides, 300 cubits long, 50 wide and 30 high. Since a Hebrew cubit was 18 inches, its dimensions were 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high, and thus was said to displace 43,300 tons.

While there was a perfectly good Semitic word for "ship" the Hebrews chose to call it a box or chest. This box of Noah was not a seaworthy craft and as

described would have tossed and pitched uncontrollably in stormy seas and surely would have made a jumble of the occupants. Perhaps the Hebrews called it a box because they were a land-locked people with no experience in sea or river navigation. The chroniclers probably felt that the word for container would be more understandable to the people. In any case, it indicates that the flood legend was manipulated and modified by the early Hebrew chroniclers to suit their own purposes.

The Ark of Noah had three stories, or decks, and numerous unspecified cells, or compartments. It had a door on its side and an opening below the roof line to let in light. "Make a sky light for the ark, terminating it within a cubit of the ark" has been interpreted by some biblical scholars to mean that Noah was to construct an opening for light completely around the ark. (Heidel 234)

The craft was built of gofer wood, an expression that is completely unidentified. It has no Sumerian or Akkadian origins. In fact, this term is a complete puzzle since it appears nowhere else in the Scriptures. In view of the following evidence, we suggest it probably refers to a treated wood made waterproof by an impregnation process much like today's pressure treated lumber.

The Sumerian Ark. In the Gilgamesh Epic the craft is called magurgur, or "very great ship" and in the Akkadian or Semitic version of the Epic it is also called a "great ship", or elippu rabitu. The diluvian hero is named Utnapishtim. In Tablet XI of the Epic, the ship is described as having seven stories and then divided into nine sections. It had a door and some sort of window. Current translators report the craft as being an exact cube, with the height, length and width each being 120 cubits. Since an Akkadian cubit was 20 inches, it would make the cube 200 feet on each side. While scholars have called the ark of Utnapishtim a perfect cube, they do not seem to realize how nonsensical and impractical this design is. A cube would be highly unstable and roll over incessantly in stormy seas. The occupants would really be scrambled up! With its human and animal cargo it would seem that stability would be the most important factor in the design and construction of the craft. In fact, certain scholars have suggested a circular design for the Sumerian ark, but have been summarily dismissed. (see Heidel 236)

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There is an ambiguity with the text that easily lends itself to interpretation of a circular craft. It is not clear that the width of the ship of 120 cubits, or 200 feet, applies to the diameter or the radius of the craft. If the latter is true, the ship would be 400 feet in diameter and 200 feet in thickness and possibly have a circular conformation. The craft had six decks divided into nine vertical compartments probably radiating like spokes from the center, sort of pie-shaped sections. A streamlined

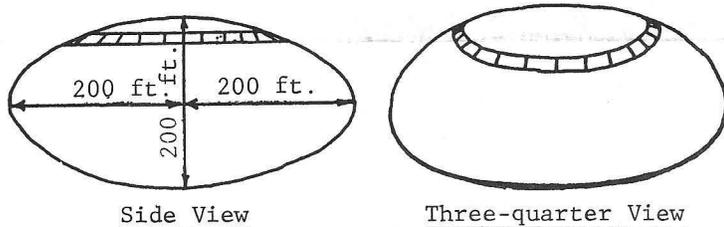
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rounded design such as is found in modern submarines would certainly have made it more stable and appropriate for the tempestuous seas it was intended for.

The Sumerian account also reveals that the god Shamash played a key but unidentified role in the design and construction of the ship. Shamash is the Semitic name for the Sumerian god Utu, the Sumerian Chief Astronaut, whose identity has been thoroughly explored by Zecharia Sitchin. In passing, it should be noted that the huge stone platform at Baalbek in Lebanon was also associated with Shamash. The Hebrew name for Baalbek is Beth-Shemesh, or the "House of Shamash." Of particular relevance also is the information provided by the pseudepigraphic book The Ethiopian Apocalypse of Enoch, which states that the ark was designed by the deity and built by a group of "angels."

The circular shape of the ark with a row of windows along the top and designed by the Chief Astronaut Shamash indicates an oval or saucer shape as the configuration of Noah's Ark, as illustrated below:



(1) Main sources: The Gilgamesh Epic and the Old Testament Parallels, by Aleksander Heidel, and the most recent translation of the Epic of Gilgamesh in Gilgamesh, by John Gardiner and John Maier.

### FLYING SERPENTS AND DRAGONS

Excerpts from the book by Rene A. Boulay

We are all familiar with the Bible's Old Testament account of how Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. What is not widely known is that there are many other ancient religious documents which describe this event, and these tell a different and startling story! For example, according to sources in the Haggadah, the wellspring of Jewish oral tradition, the consequences of their eating the forbidden fruit is described this way:

"The first result was that Adam and Eve became naked. Before, their bodies had been overlaid with a horny skin and enveloped with the cloud of glory. No sooner had they violated the command given them then the cloud of glory and the horny skin dropped from them, and they stood there in their nakedness and ashamed." (Emphasis added.)

In another early source, a Christian Gnostic tract that dates to the First Century AD, the same episode is described as follows:

"Now Eve believed the words of the serpent. She looked at the tree. She took some of its fruit and ate, and she gave to her husband also, and he ate too. Then their mind opened. For when they ate, the light of knowledge shone for them; they knew that they were naked with regard to knowledge. When they saw their makers, they loathed them since they were beastly forms." (Emphasis added.)

These are but two of the many references in early religious literature which indicate that the Adam and Eve of the Garden of Eden were physically different from modern man. There are also many myths of ancient Mesopotamia which also reveal that our ancestors may have been reptilian types - the "horny skin" and "cloud of glory" referring to their lustrious reptilian hide.

Since Adam and Eve were created in "the image of god" it is evident that our ancient gods were not human mammals like us but an alien reptilian form. Perhaps this is why the ancient gods did not want to be seen by mankind.

In the Old Testament, the overriding need for privacy for the Hebrew God Yahweh (Jehovah) is also emphasized. During the event known as the Exodus, the deity lived in a curtained area inside the sacred enclosure. He was never seen. Specific instructions were given to Moses on how to prepare the food which was left on a grill near the curtained quarters of the deity for him to snack in privacy. On Mount Sinai, when Moses asked to see the face of his god, he was told sharply that "you cannot see my face, for man may not see me and live." This prohibition against being seen by humans is repeated throughout the scriptures. It was carried to an extreme when it became an injunction of not to make a "graven image" or likeness of the deity. Apparently no one was allowed to guess what he looked like lest they stumble on the truth.

Why the taboo? Could it be possible that its appearance would be so foreign and repulsive that it would upset mankind, and therefore it had to be withheld from man? One would logically assume that if the gods were so superior and grand as indicated in the scriptures, that they would be flattered and pleased to have man see them and copy their magnificence.

According to the ancient Babylonian tradition, as reported by Berossus, the Babylonian priest writing in Athens in the Third Century BC, Man's ancestry and origin can be traced to one Oannes, the amphibious creature that came out of the Persian Gulf to teach the arts of civilization to man. Berossus called them Annedoti which means "the repulsive ones" in Greek. He also refers to them as musarus or "an abomination." It is in this way that Babylonian tradition credits the founding of civilization to a creature which they considered to be a "repulsive abomination." If the tradition had been invented, a more normal attitude would have been to glorify these creatures as splendid gods or heroes. Yet the fact that they chose to describe their ancestors this way argues for the authenticity of the account.

The reptilian appearance of the gods in the Old Testament was a well-kept secret; occasionally, it is perceptible, as for example the obvious worship of the seraph or "brazen serpent" during the Exodus which in certain rabbinical sources is equated with Yahweh. The Sumerians were more candid and in their epics, which can be traced as far back as 3000 BC, called their gods U-SHUM-GAL, or "great fiery flying serpent." Sumerian dictionaries avoid trying to explain this perplexing problem by merely translating the word as "dragon" without comment.

The sad fact is that in the West we have created God in our image and not the other way around. In this way we have hidden the true identity of our creators. Many other world civilizations take pride in the fact that they were descended from "dragons" or "flying serpents." The oldest of Chinese books, the mysterious Yih King, claims that the first humans were formed by the ancient goddess Nu Kua who was a dragon. Early Chinese emperors boasted of being descendants of this ancient dragon goddess. In the civilization of India, the oldest and most revered of the Hindu classics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata concern the intercourse of early man with their serpent-god ancestors. In our search of ancient literature, both secular and religious, we are overwhelmed with the enormous amount of references to dragon-like beings. If it is a constructor of early man's imagination, how could it have been so universal? These dragons were obviously serpent-gods who could fly about the heavens at will in their craft that had a flaming appearance, probably a rocket exhaust of some kind.

## WHOSE "TRACES" WERE LEFT ON THE PLAIN OF NAZCA? BY ALLA BELOKON\*

A peculiar art gallery on the Nazca desert plateau in Peru, South America is one of the most startling sights on our planet. An unusual harmony of the spider's outline and remarkable technicism of the oscillating lines surrounding a monkey struck my imagination and served as a starting impulse for my research work during the last 20 years.

The famous figures of the Nazca desert contain nearly 13,000 lines, 100 spirals, more than 700 geometric areas in the form of triangles and trapezoids and but 30 meaningful drawings of animals and birds.

The drawings of animals undoubtedly possess a great informative potential, though they are quite lost among the thousands of lines, triangles and zigzags. But to interpret the phenomenon only by considering its one insignificant part is not proper - the drawings consist of only two-tenths of one percent of the total number of figures. Further, the desert of Nazca is only one element of the phenomenon. Ground drawings similar in style are encountered in the middle part of the Andes Mountains all along the Pacific Ocean coast in South America. Thus they should in no way be attributed to the one local Indian culture such as the Nazca culture.

One is fascinated by the lines and bands which are rectilinear like rays, irrespective of the relief and nature of the soil, either intercrossing or parallel to each other, and sometimes outcoming from one point, called "a center" by Dr. Paul Kosok. There are triangles running in a chain over the hill peaks. A giant piece of work indeed, although apparently accomplished with an exceptional easiness!

According to my estimates, made on the basis of the data obtained by Dr. Gerald S. Hawkins, more than 100,000 man-years would have been required to construct by hand the figures on the Nazca desert. How could such labor-consuming activities have been performed without leaving a trace? On the aerial photographs the traces of human activities are in the form of broad and irregular spots which are visible only along the highway and the soil road which cross the desert.

The scope of work on the whole, plus a vast variety of purely geometric figures on the Nazca Plain, its weathered slopes, the nearby plateaus and hill peaks, all permits us to assume that the Peruvian ground figures are markings, or to be more precise, traces left by some unknown Wisdom. In some places they might seem to have been left accidentally, but in others, quite intentionally. Any creation by an unknown Wisdom comprises certain intellectual capabilities indicating the level of its development and technological means available.

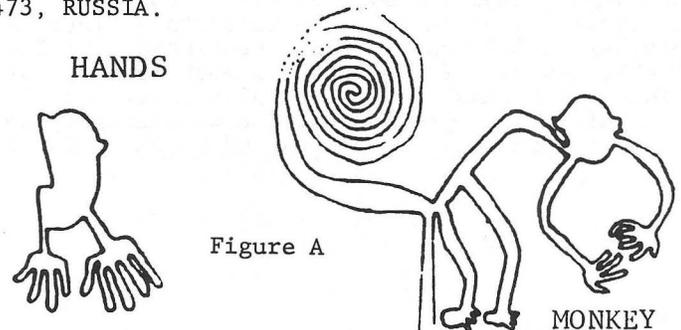
I agree that it is quite possible to create such a complex by hand, provided each figure is considered separately, rather than as part of a whole picture. The figures' peculiarities and dynamism, the so-called "mechanistic" approach to their implementation, as well as the drawings' general similarity to computer graphics permit me to put forward a hypothesis on their construction: In my opinion, the figures may have been made under the action of a flow of directed energy, of unknown nature, from the air!

The peculiar characteristics of the figures might help us to identify certain parameters of the hypothetical energy source, such as a flat controlled front and changeable flow aperture. The energy flow may probably have exerted mechanical action of the dense soil conglomerate (volcanic pebbles) by pushing them apart or scattering them around, thus changing the chemical composition of the surface layer.

Has some coded information been left on the Nazca desert? Is there a symbolic meaning to the figure with four fingers on one hand and five fingers on the other? (See Figure A). We have not yet deciphered either the author or the Nazca markings or

the purpose of the work. However, the rigid mathematical logic of the information enclosed in the figures' layout, the high technological level of their construction and the explicit purposefulness of the drawings - all raises hopes in our breast that a Different Wisdom has attempted to communicate with Mankind.

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## A PRE-COLUMBIAN STEAMROLLER? BY WILLIAM W. JENNA, JR.\*\*

A piece of pottery was unearthed in 1959 near the Plain of Nazca in Peru, South America. (See Figure B) The artifact has since come into my possession. I have shown it to several museum curators, including the highly respected Dumbarton Oaks Museum in Washington, D.C. and they all authenticated the piece as being a superb example of the pottery style of the Vicus culture of Peru and dated between 100 and 500 A.D. All of the curators, however, were mystified by the shape of the pottery, which looks very much like a modern steamroller! But how could anyone possibly have known what a steamroller looked like some 1500 years before the dawn of the Industrial Revolution, and by a culture which presumably did not use the wheel.

I have no explanation for the artifact. It is a complete puzzle to me, but I do feel that it is just another link in the chain of evidence that points to the possibility of the existence of early extra-terrestrial visitation to Earth, or at the very least, the existence of a technologically advanced civilization that we currently have no knowledge of, that somehow disappeared from the face of the Earth without leaving a trace, much like the theory of the continent of Atlantis.

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Figure B. Photo of a piece of pottery attributed to the Vicus culture of Peru, dated between 100 and 500 A.D.

# THE SEARCH FOR EXTRATERRESTRIAL INTELLIGENCE

BY ERICH von DANIKEN\*

The cosmos is teeming with life, including life-forms that are similar to the human race. And at least one of these extraterrestrial civilizations visited our planet millennia ago. That is easily proved, so why do those who are involved in the search for extraterrestrial intelligence (SETI) not want to know? And by the way, the difference between scientists and amateurs often consists only in a little phrase: amateurs are people who get paid nothing for doing a lot, while professionals are people who will not do anything for nothing.

The degree to which the SETI scientists have already allowed themselves to be squeezed into a straightjacket is demonstrated by the Declaration of Principles Concerning Activities Following the Detection of Extraterrestrial Intelligence. This was adopted in April 1989 by the Board of Trustees of the International Space Travel Academy and the Board of Directors of the International Institute of Space Law, and all scientists officially involved in SETI research must abide by it. The Declaration consists of regulations which dictate how the SETI scientist who discovers extraterrestrial intelligence should react. Some of these regulations are as follows:

"We, the institutions and individuals taking part in the search for extraterrestrial intelligence, recognize that this search forms an integral part of space research, and that it should be pursued with peaceful intentions and in the common interest of all humanity. We are inspired in this search by the enormous importance of delivering proof of extraterrestrial life, even though the likelihood of such discovery may be small.

"We remind all involved of the agreement which regulates all governmental activities of research into, and utilization of space...which also applies to all state-funded groups....(Article XI)

"We confirm the following principles which must be followed in the case of disseminating information about the discovery of extraterrestrial intelligence:

"1. Every person and every government or private research institution, or government ministry, which believes it has received a signal or other form of proof confirming the existence of extraterrestrial life, should try to test whether the most plausible explanation does, in fact, provide proof of extraterrestrial intelligence, and is not a natural phenomenon of some other kind, before any public announcement is made. If no definite proof for the existence of extraterrestrial intelligence can be provided, the discoverer is allowed to publish his findings under the term "unknown phenomenon".

"2. Before the discoverer makes any public announcement that proof has been provided of the existence of extraterrestrial intelligence, he must immediately inform all other researchers and research institutions who are party to this declaration...The parties to this declaration will make no public announcement about the discovery until it is certain that the discovery relates to extraterrestrial intelligence. The discoverer should inform the official authority under whose auspices he is working....

"8. No reply may be made to an extraterrestrial radio signal or other signs of alien intelligence, before the necessary international consultations have taken place....

"9. ...If reliable evidence is found of extraterrestrial intelligence, an international committee of scientists and other experts will be called in, that will act as central focus for further analysis and subsequent observations. This committee will also supervise the dissemination

of information to the public. The committee should be composed of members of all the above-mentioned international institutions; other members can also be co-opted...The International Space Travel Academy will serve as official administrative organ for this agreement and declaration...."

What should we make of all this? Scientists naturally avoid sensationalism anyway. Every major discovery is always tested and tested again before it is published. No one wishes to appear foolish in front of colleagues by having to retract a false discovery. It is of course quite sensible if the International Astronomical Union or the SETI Commission No. 51, both mentioned in other places in the Declaration, want to be absolutely certain that there is real proof of the existence of aliens before the news is relayed to the world. What seems strange, however, is the requirement to inform all sorts of other committees and commissions before the discovery can go public. In plain English, this amounts to censorship; for even when someone is 100 per cent sure that he has produced evidence for the existence of extraterrestrial intelligence, he is still not allowed to publicize the fact. Before this can happen, the powers which have a monopoly over access to information are to have their say in deciding which particular fragments of truth may be released. One has to ask how this censorship process can be reconciled with the freedom of information guaranteed by law in all free countries of the world.

Yet all the passages in the Declaration that are concerned with dealing with the public are ultimately just a waste of paper. We - the masses, the people - have long known that extraterrestrials exist! Why do those who devote themselves to the search for extraterrestrial life exclude the most relevant themes and people from their consideration? How can a respectable branch of science - which the SETI group has now become - allow itself to be so prejudiced as to ostracize certain other paths of investigation? Does science not rely upon a broad base of information? Without UFOs and ancient astronaut philosophy, the scientific discipline of SETI is incomplete and its results, widely publicized in the media, are half-hearted, not to say amateurish. It is science which accuses amateurs of failing to take all relevant aspects of a theme into consideration; of being one-sided, unbalanced and incomplete. But in this case, I regret to say, the tables are turned: you, my dear SETI researchers, are shutting yourselves off in an elitist ivory tower and failing to take account of the whole picture.

\*This article is adapted from the author's latest book in English, The Return of the Gods, which is available in hardcover from Element Books, Inc., P.O. Box 830, Rockport, MA 01966 USA. Mr. von Daniken is the author of the best-selling book Chariots of the Gods? and 23 other books in the ancient astronaut field, which have sold almost 60 million copies world-wide. His address is Postfach, CH-3803 Beatenberg, SWITZERLAND.

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JOSEPH B. GILL's book THE GREAT PYRAMID SPEAKS has been reprinted by Barnes & Noble and is available in hardcover at all their bookstores.

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