

1

00:00:00,442 --> 00:00:11,435

This series presents information based in part on theory and conjecture.

2

00:00:11,435 --> 00:00:18,431

The producer's purpose is to suggest some possible explanations, but not necessarily

3

00:00:18,431 --> 00:00:26,426

the only ones to the mysteries we will examine.

4

00:00:26,426 --> 00:00:31,423

On a desolate plain near the Peruvian Andes is evidence that thousands of years ago

5

00:00:31,423 --> 00:00:48,413

man may have known how to fly.

6

00:00:48,413 --> 00:00:51,411

Huge drawings are etched in the ground.

7

00:00:51,411 --> 00:00:58,407

They make sense only when viewed from a great height.

8

00:00:58,407 --> 00:01:03,404

Miles of what looked like modern runways score the desert.

9

00:01:03,404 --> 00:01:07,401

If they were, what manner of craft landed here?

10

00:01:07,401 --> 00:01:09,400

Who were the pilots?

11

00:01:09,400 --> 00:01:13,398

We are conditioned to think that flight is the province of modern man.

12

00:01:13,398 --> 00:01:20,393

Perhaps we are latecomers to the sky.

13

00:01:21,393 --> 00:01:30,387

The land we call Peru is both lush jungle and arid plateau.

14

00:01:30,387 --> 00:01:36,384

The desert plain called Naska is host to a strange menagerie, a nine-fingered monkey,

15

00:01:36,384 --> 00:01:45,378

a huge ungainly spider, giant birds and mammoth lizards.

16

00:01:45,378 --> 00:01:52,374

They are cut into the dry earth, visible only from the sky.

17

00:01:52,374 --> 00:01:57,371

Often as we pursue our studies of ancient civilizations, we're tantalized by discoveries

18

00:01:57,371 --> 00:02:01,368

that don't seem to fit our comfortable notions about the past.

19

00:02:01,368 --> 00:02:06,365

Some of these discoveries suggest that early man knew a great deal more about flight

20

00:02:06,365 --> 00:02:08,364

than we once thought possible.

21

00:02:08,364 --> 00:02:13,361

There are no written records to guide us as we go in search of man's dream of flight,

22

00:02:13,361 --> 00:02:18,358

but there are remarkable clues to be found in legend and in monuments of earth and stone.

23

00:02:18,358 --> 00:02:23,355

Clues that suggest our remote ancestors were not strangers to the sky,

24

00:02:23,355 --> 00:02:27,353

but they may even have had help in realizing their dream.

25

00:02:27,353 --> 00:02:47,341

The urge to fly seems to have been a primal one with man, to leave the heaviness of earth,

26

00:02:47,341 --> 00:03:12,325

to taste the wind and thrill to the rushing ground below.

27

00:03:12,325 --> 00:03:16,323

Every ancient culture known to us has legends of men who flew.

28

00:03:16,323 --> 00:03:22,319

For thousands of years it has been thought that the tragic tale of Daedalus and his son Icarus was but a myth.

29

00:03:22,319 --> 00:03:40,308

How it seemed could it have been otherwise that with only wings a man could fly?

30

00:03:40,308 --> 00:03:47,304

Daedalus and his son Icarus were said to live on Crete, center of ancient Mediterranean civilization.

31

00:03:47,304 --> 00:03:52,301

The ruler of Crete, King Minos, ordered them trapped in the famous Minoan maze.

32

00:03:52,301 --> 00:04:01,296

Their only escape was on the wings that the brilliant Daedalus contrived to build.

33

00:04:01,296 --> 00:04:07,292

Daedalus warned Icarus not to fly too close to the sun, or his wings of wax would melt.

34

00:04:07,292 --> 00:04:33,276

Father and son soared high into the air, but Icarus was captured by the exhilaration of flight and recklessly reached for the sun.

35

00:04:34,275 --> 00:04:50,266

Icarus would pay dearly for his impetuous flight. His wings melted and he plunged headlong into the Aegean Sea.

36

00:04:50,266 --> 00:05:02,258

If the Icarus legend was the only story of flight in the ancient world, it could be dismissed, but there are others.

37

00:05:03,258 --> 00:05:09,254

Long after the Minoan Golden Age, the city of Florence dominated the culture of the Mediterranean world.

38

00:05:09,254 --> 00:05:15,251

It was in Florence that one of the great minds of Renaissance Europe pondered the dream of flight.

39

00:05:15,251 --> 00:05:23,246

Leonardo da Vinci was a classic Renaissance man. For years he was preoccupied with a flying machine of his own design.

40

00:05:23,246 --> 00:05:33,240

It had some of the features of a modern helicopter. One report has Leonardo testing his machine in 1505 by launching it from a hilltop above Florence.

41

00:05:33,240 --> 00:05:37,237

History does not record the results of that test.

42

00:05:39,236 --> 00:05:44,233

Before Leonardo was born, a structure called the Jantar Mantar was built in India.

43

00:05:44,233 --> 00:05:53,227

It was apparently an astronomical observatory. The complex arrangement of its architecture performed the functions of telescope and computer.

44

00:05:53,227 --> 00:05:58,224

With its help, the thinkers of India contemplated the stars.

45

00:05:58,224 --> 00:06:03,221

Ancient Indian chants contain one of the most detailed descriptions of a flying machine.

46

00:06:03,221 --> 00:06:12,216

The chants may have been flights of fancy, or they may have been the accounts of early journalists passing on something they had seen.

47

00:06:12,216 --> 00:06:17,213

In either case, the chants describe an airborne vehicle called Varana.

48

00:06:17,213 --> 00:06:24,209

A form of energy called sidli made it possible for the machine to fly to distant stars.

49

00:06:24,209 --> 00:06:31,204

It is a curious fact that in some ways the ancient Indian observatory resembles a rocket gantry.

50

00:06:43,197 --> 00:06:51,192

Throughout the ancient world, we see time and again an advanced knowledge of astronomy mingled with legends of flight.

51

00:06:51,192 --> 00:06:58,188

For the graves of Egypt are dominated by the presence of Osiris, the flying god who brought knowledge to the Nile Basin.

52

00:07:05,184 --> 00:07:08,182

What inspired the ancient obsession with flight?

53

00:07:13,179 --> 00:07:23,173

Why are the pyramids aligned in such a way as to be perfect landmarks for incoming aviators?

54

00:07:34,166 --> 00:07:39,163

The thick jungle of Central America was once home for a remarkable people called Maya.

55

00:07:39,163 --> 00:07:43,161

Archeologists believe they flourished in this region for 15 centuries.

56

00:07:43,161 --> 00:07:47,158

Then, quite suddenly, the Mayans vanished.

57

00:07:52,155 --> 00:07:58,152

They left behind pyramids and temples. Their capital cities must have been lavish.

58

00:07:58,152 --> 00:08:04,148

Yet no roads connect these widely separated islands of civilization in the jungle.

59

00:08:05,147 --> 00:08:14,142

Perhaps the Mayans were familiar with the principles of flight, for there is evidence that like other ancients, the Mayans were on intimate terms with the heavens.

60

00:08:14,142 --> 00:08:21,138

Certainly, their observatories made it possible for them to construct the calendar as accurate as any in use today.

61

00:08:21,138 --> 00:08:26,135

It makes us think that perhaps they too knew something of flight.

62

00:08:27,134 --> 00:08:34,130

It is 1911. Wilbur and Orville Wright are demonstrating their flying machine for the U.S. Army.

63

00:08:34,130 --> 00:08:42,125

Their solution to the problem of flight was to attach a wing shaped like a bird to a primitive engine that burned oil.

64

00:08:43,124 --> 00:08:50,120

It was a solution appropriate to the dawning industrial age, but was it the only solution?

65

00:09:02,113 --> 00:09:08,109

Long furrows were cut into the hard soil of the Nazca Plain 2,000 years ago.

66

00:09:09,108 --> 00:09:16,104

By whatever method the lines were created, they were meant to be seen from the sky, but by whom?

67

00:09:23,100 --> 00:09:29,096

The Nazca Plain on the western shoulder of the Andes in the country we call Peru.

68

00:09:30,096 --> 00:09:37,091

The huge designs found on the desert floor that can only make sense from the air have been duplicated in other parts of the world.

69

00:09:37,091 --> 00:09:44,087

The Mojave Desert near Barstow, California. Here, an ancient man stares upward.

70

00:09:44,087 --> 00:09:49,084

From the ground it is impossible to tell exactly what shape the figure has taken.

71

00:09:49,084 --> 00:09:54,081

How then do you know the shape of the figure?

72

00:09:54,081 --> 00:09:58,079

How do you know exactly what shape the figure has taken?

73

00:09:58,079 --> 00:10:03,076

How then did a primitive Indian tribe make the drawing?

74

00:10:09,072 --> 00:10:15,068

One possibility, one explanation for the method used, might have been the existence of ancient aviators.

75

00:10:15,068 --> 00:10:21,065

A unique experiment was mounted to prove the point.

76

00:10:21,065 --> 00:10:27,061

Could men working on the ground be directed by someone hovering overhead?

77

00:10:30,059 --> 00:10:34,057

The site selected for the experiment was the Mojave Desert.

78

00:10:45,050 --> 00:10:48,048

A hot air balloon was the choice for a flying platform.

79

00:10:49,048 --> 00:10:55,044

It is a simple device requiring only fabric and a means for heating air to make it work.

80

00:10:56,043 --> 00:11:03,039

In modern times, the first balloon flight took place in France. The year was 1783.

81

00:11:03,039 --> 00:11:08,036

The principles remain the same. The technology virtually unchanged.

82

00:11:18,030 --> 00:11:20,029

That's more!

83

00:11:28,024 --> 00:11:38,018

Then as now, there is a purity to balloon flight. An exhilaration undampened by the drone of engines for the blur of supersonic travel.

84

00:11:39,017 --> 00:11:41,016

Organs

85

00:11:41,016 --> 00:11:43,015

Two, three, two, one.

86

00:11:45,014 --> 00:11:47,012

Five, four.

87

00:11:47,012 --> 00:11:49,011

Directly over it.

88

00:11:49,011 --> 00:11:51,010

That's all.

89

00:11:59,005 --> 00:12:03,003

Walk over there. Walk towards it.

90

00:12:03,003 --> 00:12:15,995

Suddenly, from on high, it is possible to understand how a land drawing could have been directed from the air thousands of years ago.

91

00:12:32,984 --> 00:12:48,975

Music

92

00:12:48,975 --> 00:12:50,973

We got it. Don't worry.

93

00:12:50,973 --> 00:12:56,970

There is nothing in the barstow experiment that could not have been done by earlier inhabitants of the desert.

94

00:12:56,970 --> 00:12:58,969

Sound of the car.

95

00:12:58,969 --> 00:13:01,967

We'll get back over this way. Let's walk back.

96

00:13:01,967 --> 00:13:06,964

Did American Indians launch balloons? Or are there other explanations?

97

00:13:06,964 --> 00:13:08,963

Sound of the car.

98

00:13:08,963 --> 00:13:10,961

Sound of the car.

99

00:13:10,961 --> 00:13:12,960

Sound of the car.

100

00:13:12,960 --> 00:13:22,954

Dr. William Clulo, chief archaeologist at the University of California, Los Angeles, has spent many years studying the mythology of American Indians.

101

00:13:22,954 --> 00:13:28,950

One of the few important practitioners in a simple society like this is what we call the shaman.

102

00:13:28,950 --> 00:13:32,948

Many people would refer to it as the healer or the medicine man.

103

00:13:32,948 --> 00:13:43,941

But among the capacities of the shaman, we can number in many tribes the ability to take flights outside of his actual body.

104

00:13:43,941 --> 00:13:58,932

That is, he projects a part of his personality or his psyche outside of his body, goes beneath the earth, beneath the water, or into the heavens, in order to secure some formative of an intuitive statement about what is wrong in the society.

105

00:13:58,932 --> 00:14:05,928

And he performs healing and curing with the aid of the intuitions that he gets in these projected flights.

106

00:14:05,928 --> 00:14:11,924

Sound of the car.

107

00:14:11,924 --> 00:14:16,921

Perhaps the symbolism of myth refers to flights that really occurred.

108

00:14:16,921 --> 00:14:27,915

Indian shamans may have been intermediaries who traveled between a primitive culture on earth and a more highly advanced one in the sky.

109

00:14:27,915 --> 00:14:38,908

Time and again, in out-of-the-way places where primitive men made their home, there are faint suggestions left of the relationship between man and flight.

110

00:14:38,908 --> 00:14:50,901

When a plateau in Peru named for a dead bull, there are drawings more than 10,000 years old.

111

00:14:50,901 --> 00:14:59,895

One interpretation placed on them is that they depict the ancients welcoming visitors from the sky.

112

00:14:59,895 --> 00:15:06,891

They might be dismissed if it were not for other signs in Peru.

113

00:15:06,891 --> 00:15:15,885

Many engineered roads late a thousand years ago connected the mighty cities of the Inca Empire, but

the Incas did not possess the wheel.

114

00:15:15,885 --> 00:15:23,881

Were these roads runways for another form of vehicle, an airborne vehicle?

115

00:15:23,881 --> 00:15:31,876

Is there a connection to flight in the circular ruin of Saxa-Waman?

116

00:15:31,876 --> 00:15:48,865

The calendar ring of the Incas suggests an advanced knowledge of space and time, the kind of knowledge that might have led to ancient flight.

117

00:15:48,865 --> 00:15:54,862

But far and away, the most convincing evidence is found elsewhere.

118

00:15:54,862 --> 00:16:02,857

A fantastic collection housed in the National Museum of Aeronautics in Lima, Peru suggests that this may be the case.

119

00:16:02,857 --> 00:16:08,853

It is not a collection of precious artifacts, but rather an assortment of stones.

120

00:16:08,853 --> 00:16:17,848

The stones were discovered in 1963 in the tiny village of Ica that lies only 40 miles from the Nazca Plain.

121

00:16:17,848 --> 00:16:22,845

Bizarre drawings on the stones depict the curious breed of mechanical bird.

122

00:16:22,845 --> 00:16:28,841

On another is represented what could be a modern space shuttle.

123

00:16:28,841 --> 00:16:34,837

The stones are designed in the same style as Nazca ceramics.

124

00:16:34,837 --> 00:16:38,835

The message on the stones is evidently controversial.

125

00:16:38,835 --> 00:16:46,830

Representatives of the Peruvian government have been reluctant to discuss them.

126

00:16:48,829 --> 00:17:03,820

Golden icons molded by primitive Indians in the highlands of Colombia reinforce the notion that somewhere in man's past, the dream of flight was realized.

127

00:17:03,820 --> 00:17:12,814

The relics look astonishingly like modern delta wing fighter planes.

128

00:17:13,814 --> 00:17:16,812

Off the coast of Peru lies the Bay of Pisco.

129

00:17:16,812 --> 00:17:22,808

Inscribed on a hill is a 60-foot marker.

130

00:17:22,808 --> 00:17:28,805

It points inland on a direct line to the mysterious Nazca Plain.

131

00:17:28,805 --> 00:17:35,800

The base camp for prehistoric aviation may have been the Nazca Plain.

132

00:17:35,800 --> 00:17:39,798

The patterns have been laid out with great precision.

133

00:17:39,798 --> 00:17:43,795

Why did the ancients construct the Nazca Lines?

134

00:17:43,795 --> 00:17:45,794

Nobody really knows.

135

00:17:45,794 --> 00:17:50,791

The markings were first discovered in the 1920s by the Nazis.

136

00:17:50,791 --> 00:17:53,789

The ancients construct the Nazca Lines.

137

00:17:53,789 --> 00:17:55,788

Nobody really knows.

138

00:17:55,788 --> 00:18:01,785

The markings were first discovered in the 1920s by a pilot flying over the plane.

139

00:18:01,785 --> 00:18:07,781

Since then, many have attempted to solve the mystery with no success.

140

00:18:07,781 --> 00:18:15,776

For the past 30 years, a German mathematician named Maria Reich has devoted her life to solving the riddle.

141

00:18:15,776 --> 00:18:21,772

After nearly half a lifetime of sleeping in an adobe hut and working under a blistering sun,

142

00:18:21,772 --> 00:18:28,768

Reich does not know what motivated the ancient Peruvians to execute this grand design.

143

00:18:28,768 --> 00:18:37,763

A 1968 study financed in part by National Geographic determined that some of the lines have astronomical alignments,

144

00:18:37,763 --> 00:18:41,760

but no more than could be expected by chance.

145

00:18:46,757 --> 00:18:52,754

And yet, the lines seem to be pointing.

146

00:18:52,754 --> 00:18:59,749

Do they point the way to other outposts where ancient aviators once touched ground?

147

00:19:02,747 --> 00:19:06,745

It is a persistent fancy we must allow ourselves to have,

148

00:19:06,745 --> 00:19:10,743

for there seems to be no other explanation on earth.

149

00:19:15,740 --> 00:19:30,730

Music

150

00:19:31,730 --> 00:19:39,725

It is hard to shake the notion that here, on the plains of Nazca, there once flew ancient aviators.

151

00:19:39,725 --> 00:19:58,713

Music

152

00:20:04,710 --> 00:20:07,708

Cape Kennedy, 1970.

153

00:20:07,708 --> 00:20:11,706

The forlorn remains of a launch pad no longer in use.

154

00:20:15,703 --> 00:20:23,698

Will future generations examine the ruins of our technological civilization and wonder at the purpose of such structures?

155

00:20:24,698 --> 00:20:31,693

Will they understand the inner workings of radio telescopes or control towers

156

00:20:31,693 --> 00:20:38,689

and see them as evidence that in the 20th century man was reaching out to the stars?

157

00:20:39,688 --> 00:20:54,679

Music

158

00:20:55,679 --> 00:20:59,676

There's evidence that man has lived on this planet at least three million years.

159

00:20:59,676 --> 00:21:03,674

Were the inhabitants of other worlds idle all that time?

160

00:21:03,674 --> 00:21:06,672

Or were they too, reaching for the stars?

161

00:21:06,672 --> 00:21:10,670

Perhaps realizing their dream long before we could even speak it.

162

00:21:10,670 --> 00:21:16,666

And could it be that what it has taken us so long to do was merely to copy something we saw in our remote past?

163

00:21:16,666 --> 00:21:22,662

The answer may await us in the stars. A reunion of pupil with teacher.

164

00:21:22,662 --> 00:21:24,661

It's not so wild a dream.

165

00:21:27,659 --> 00:21:28,659

Music

166

00:21:28,659 --> 00:21:31,657

Coming up next, Agent Joe Pistone infiltrates the mob.