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Atlantis and the Old Ones

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Summary of Atlantis and the Old Ones: An Investigation of the Age of Civilisation

(There is no Colin Wilson book by this title, of course. Atlantis and the Kingdom of the Neanderthals: 100,000 Years of Lost History appeared in 2006)

Charles Hapgood, an American professor of history, became convinced in 1989 that a civilisation, ‘with high levels of science’, had existed at least 100,000 years ago.

In the mid-1950s, Hapgood had written a book called Earth’s Shifting Crust, to which Einstein contributed an Introduction, arguing that the whole crust of the earth undergoes periodic ‘slippages’, one of which in 9500 BC had caused the North Pole to move from Hudson Bay to its present position. And in 1966, his Maps of the Ancient Sea Kings had suggested that mediaeval maps called ‘portolans’ – used by sailors to navigate ‘from port to port’ – proved that there must have been a worldwide maritime civilisation in 7000 BC.

In 1989 he told the writer Rand Flem-Ath that he intended to bring out a new edition of Earth’s Shifting Crust, containing his evidence that civilisation had existed since before 100,000 years ago. But before he could do that, he walked in front of a car and

was killed.

I agreed to collaborate with Rand Flem-Ath in trying to solve this mystery. After a long search, I was fortunate enough to track down the man who claimed to have convinced him that civilisation dated back a 100,000 years. He was an eccentric recluse who lived in a small town in New England. When I asked him to explain what had convinced him that there was civilisation a 100,000 years ago, he specified two things: (1) that Neanderthal man was far more intelligent than we assume, and (b) that ancient measures prove that man knew the exact size of the earth millennia before the Greek Eratosthenes worked it out in 240 BC.

A little research of my own quickly verified both statements. Far from being a shambling ape, Neanderthal man had a larger brain than we have, was well acquainted with astronomy, played musical instruments, and even invented the blast furnace. As to the size of the earth, the ancient Greeks had a measure called the stade – the length of a stadium. The polar circumference of the earth proves to be exactly 3,600 stade. Yet the Greeks did not know the size of the earth. They must have inherited the stade from someone who did know.

On a cruise down the Nile in 1997 I stumbled on another crucial discovery: the Nineveh number, a vast 15 digit number found inscribed on an Assyrian clay tablet in the ruins of Assurbanipal's library. Yet the Assyrians were no great mathematicians. The French space engineer Maurice Chatelain – who provided the first moon rocket with its communication system – discovered powerful internal evidence that the Nineveh number must have been worked out about 65,000 years ago.

He also learned that two more numbers, even larger, were found inscribed on stele in the Mayan sacred city of Quiriga.

These shared with the Nineveh number a remarkable characteristic: they could be divided precisely by the number of years it takes the earth to complete its 'precessional cycle' round the sun, just under 26,000. (Precession of the equinoxes is the backward movement of the signs of the zodiac, so that in the heavens, spring begins slightly earlier each year.)

So it seems the Assyrians inherited their knowledge of precession from some early 'founder' civilisation – presumably the same civilisation from which the Maya, thousands of years later and thousands of miles across the Atlantic, inherited theirs.

I came upon one more important discovery on that Nile cruise. It was something that happened in the temple of Edfu, and it took six more years before its full significance dawned on me, and provided a sudden insight into the secret of Egyptian temples. Of this more in a moment.

I had come upon another interesting piece of evidence that 'high levels of science' date back much earlier than we suppose. It started with the mystery of the Libyan desert glass. Two British scientists driving through the Libyan desert discovered large quantities of a fused green glass, highly valued by Arab craftsmen for making jewellery. Their first assumption, that these were 'tektites', a fused glass that comes from outer space, had to be abandoned since it lacked the typical air bubbles, and left them with the only alternative hypothesis: that this glass had been manufactured by some strange industrial process around 6000 BC. But that would have required large quantities of water. It was Hapgood who was able to assure the investigators that there had been vast lakes in the desert in 6000 BC. When Lord Rennell of Rodd described the mystery to a scientist named John V. Dolphin, who had worked on testing the atom bomb in the desert of Australia, Dolphin told him that the glass looked

just like the fused sand left behind after an atom bomb test, which led Lord Rennell to consider the possibility that the makers of the Libyan desert glass had mastered atomic energy. Hapgood dismissed this notion, being himself convinced that the ancients simply had some other method of producing very high temperatures – of around 6,000 degrees.

Unknown to Hapgood and Lord Rennell, a Bulgarian inventor name Ilya Velbov – who later called himself Yull Brown – had solved this problem. Brown made the extraordinary discovery that if the hydrogen and oxygen in water are separated, and then re-combined in a kind of oxy-acetylene flame, it will punch an instantaneous hole in a piece of hard wood, burn tungsten (requiring 6,000 degrees), vaporise metals, melt a firebrick, and weld glass to copper. Brown called this mixture ‘Brown’s gas’, and the Chinese used it in their submarines to turn seawater into drinking water. Yet because no one understands the process, science has shown total lack of interest in it. However, Brown had no doubt it was known to the ancients, who used it to extract purified gold from gold ore.

Brown’s total refusal to compromise with American industry ruined his one excellent chance of achieving fame and riches, and he died unknown.

But if Hapgood is correct about his 100,000 year old science, what evidence remains? Well, a modern builder would admit that, for all our technology, he would have no idea of how to go about building the Great Pyramid. The same is true of the magnificent ruins of Tiahuanaco, in the Andes, whose harbour area has blocks so big that no modern crane could lift them. These builders seem to have had some technology for moving immensely heavy weights.

Lake Titicaca, on which Tiahuanaco was once a port, is full of

sea creatures. At some time in the past, a geological convulsion raised it two and a half miles in the air. Geologists assume this was millions of years ago; but this is absurd. Who would build a great port on a lake with no other ports or cities? Surely, Tiahunaco must have been at sea level when the convulsion occurred. In their book *When the Earth Nearly Died, Compelling Evidence of a Cosmic Catastrophe of 9500 BC* (1995), D. S. Allan and J. B. Delair argue that the convulsion was probably due to the impact of a comet or asteroid. The date, of course, is the date Plato assigns to the destruction of Atlantis 'in a day and a night'.

The story of the great flood is preserved in the legends of the Haida Indians of Canada and of many other tribes. But which flood? Plato speaks of no less than four. The first of these was the Atlantis flood. The second is referred to in the Book of Enoch and the rituals of the Freemasons, and it took place approximately two thousand years after Plato's flood. 'Seven burning mountains' fell to earth from space, according to the evidence of Professor Alexander Tollmann, the largest in the Sunda Strait, and it set in motion a great migration north, which created civilisations in India and then in Sumeria (the Sumerians are regarded as the founders of European civilisation). The third flood, around 6000 BC, created the Black Sea, and was the flood of Noah and the Epic of Gilgamesh. The fourth, 'Deucalion's flood', occurred in the Bronze age, around 2200 BC. Another vast catastrophe struck in 535 AD, causing worldwide famine, drought and plague, which destroyed, among others, the civilisation of the Maya in Central America, and of the Nazca Indians of Peru, whose giant line-drawings on the surface of the desert, we now know, were designed to persuade the gods to send rain.

These drawings can be seen only from the air, and have given rise to the theory that the Nazca shamans, with the aid of 'psychedelic' drugs (which the Indians are known to have used) were able to achieve out-of-the-body experiences that enabled them to do this. The Indians of the Peruvian forest use a drug called ayahuasca, which (according to anthropologist Jeremy Narby) they claim taught them the properties of 80,000 plants and the structure of DNA.

Shamanism thereafter becomes one of the central themes of this book, and it is argued that shamans have a knowledge of nature that goes far beyond that of modern science. There seems to be no doubt that shamans possess powers that we would consider 'magical', and many examples are given here. The healing abilities of shamans can also be used for the opposite purpose, to produce sickness and death. The Kahuna priests of Hawaii can use the Death Prayer to kill enemies. And it was when reading about their power to protect temples with a curse, and the story of one rash youth who became paralysed from the waist down after entering a 'forbidden' temple in a spirit of bravado, that I suddenly saw the meaning of an incident that had happened in 1997 in the temple of Edfu. The curse of Tutankamun was undoubtedly more than a legend,

The book now returns to the subject of the search for 'ancient knowledge', and to the Scotsman and Freemason James Bruce who went to Ethiopia in search of the lost Book of Enoch. We consider evidence advanced by Robert Lomas and Christopher Knight that Enoch travelled to the British Isles, and that a stone (or wooden) structure built on a hilltop could be used as an astronomical computer, which explains, among other things, the length of the 'megalithic yard' noted in all megalithic sites by Professor Alexander Thom - he spoke of their builders as 'Stone

Age Einsteins'. Lomas and Knight argue that the rituals of Freemasonry date from 'Tollman's flood' in 7500 BC.

They also pointed out that Rosslyn Chapel, near Edinburgh, founded by the Templar William St Clair, contains carvings of exclusively American plants such as sweet corn and aloes, although Columbus did not discover America until fifty years after it was built. The evidence indicates that when the Templar fleet left La Rochelle to escape the mass arrests (and executions) inaugurated by Philip the Fair in 1307, some ships sailed to America.

How did they know that America was there? The answer seems to be: from maps (like those of Hapgood's 'Ancient Sea Kings') discovered by the original Templars after the fall of Jerusalem to the Crusaders in 1112 AD. King Baldwin gave the nine knights permission to stable their horses in the basement of the old Temple of Solomon, deserted since the Romans had destroyed it in 66 AD after a Jewish uprising. Many documents belonging to a sect called the Essenes had been stored there, one of them (the 'Heavenly Jerusalem' scroll) full of Masonic symbols. It seems clear that the Essenes were part of the Masonic tradition, and were aware of the existence of America. The evidence indicates that Jesus was not only an Essene, but was regarded by them as the Messiah who would overthrow Roman rule. He was crucified after an unsuccessful attempt to stir up revolt, and was replaced as leader of the Essenes by his brother James.

Subsequently, St Paul virtually invented the religion called Christianity, in which Jesus 'the Christ' is the Saviour who redeems man from Original Sin (a thought that certainly never entered Jesus's head). And when the original Christians were massacred by the Romans in AD 66, St Paul's version

(preached abroad to gentiles) went on to conquer the world. For purely political reasons it was adopted by the Emperor Constantine to hold his rickety empire together, and the Council of Nicaea laid down the doctrine of the Trinity as a dogma. Pope Leo X would say later: 'It has served us well, this myth of Christ'. (But then, as we shall show, Pope Leo belonged to the original religious tradition that flowed from the Essenes, and was a member of a secret society known as the Priory of Sion, founded in 1112 by the first Knight Templars.)

Lomas and Knight argue that Hiram Abif, the Temple architect, whose legend of murder by three 'apprentices' is the foundation stone of Freemasonry, was in fact an Egyptian pharaoh named Sequenenre, murdered by Hyksos assassins in an attempt to wrest from him a secret ritual for turning a pharaoh into a god. Sequenenre's son subsequently drove the Hyksos (the 'Shepherd Kings') out of Egypt. And six hundred years later, the story was turned on its head when Sequenenre was transformed into 'Hiram Abif', architect of Solomon's Temple. Rosslyn was, in due course, built by a Templar and Freemason in imitation of Solomon's Temple.

Solomon strayed from the old religion to become a worshipper of Venus, and we learn how the planet Venus is the only planet to form a perfect pentagram in the sky – the fundamental symbol of magic.

We go on to explore the story of the 'original (Essene) Christianity', and how it became the secret guarded by a line of French kings, the Merovingians, who knew that Christianity was an invention of St Paul and the Council of Nicaea, and who hoped one day to replace the Catholic Church and restore the original Christianity. They were overthrown when King Dagobert II was murdered and replaced by the Carolingian dynasty, but

kept alive the knowledge of the secret of the Priory of Sion. This secret was accidentally discovered by a parish priest named Beranger Sauniere in a village called Rennes-le-Chateau (which lies in the middle of a natural 'magical' landscape in which hills form an exact pentagram).

Sauniere also learned that Jesus had not died on the cross, but had been taken down after six hours and nursed back to health, after which he fled to France with his wife, Mary Magdalen, and lived in Rennes-le-Chateau, then called Aireda. The Merovingian kings were direct descendants of Jesus and Mary Magdalen. In the mid-90s, following these clues, an art historian named Peter Blake discovered a cave that he believes to be the tomb of Jesus and Mary, and learned that several popes and cardinals (including Richelieu) has been members of the Priory.

For the concluding two chapters of the book, we return to the mystery of Hapgood's 100,000 year-old civilisation.

It is clear that the ancients possessed some extraordinary ability to multiply huge numbers, very like those possessed by modern calculating prodigies (such as 5 year old Benjamin Blyth, who took only a few minutes to work out how many second he had been alive). We explore *The Infinite Harmony* by Mike Hayes, which shows the intimate relation between the DNA code and the I Ching. This leads to a consideration of synchronicity, which modern science refuses to recognise, and the 'certain blindness in human beings' that causes us to 'filter out' so much our experience. Goethe, like William James, was fully aware of this blindness, and the scientific 'filters' that cause us to see 'God's living garment' as a world of dead matter. Goethe's *Theory of Colour* is explored. We speak of 'eidetic vision', the odd ability of certain people (like Nicola Tesla) to be

able to recreate some object inside their heads. (It is also fundamental to training in magic.)

Julian Jaynes realised that man is trapped in a grey world created by the left cerebral hemisphere, the 'scientific' part of the brain. But then, Annie Besant and C.W. Leadbeater, two founders of the Theosophical Society, wrote a book called Occult Chemistry that describes quarks more than half a century before science posited their existence.

We move on to another scientist, Chandra Bose, who saw nature – even metals – as alive. And this takes us back to Hapgood, who after his retirement became interested in some very odd aspects of science – for example, the discovery of lie-detector expert Cleve Backster that plants can read our minds. While still a college professor, he did experiments with his students that demonstrated that plants that are 'prayed for' flourish more than plants that are ignored, while plants that are 'prayed against' often died. Hapgood became very interested in the 'life fields' discovered by the American scientist Harold Burr, and the recognition that these can be controlled by 'thought fields'. Hapgood's studies of anthropology led him to conclude that man has been as intelligent as ourselves for at least 200,000 years, and perhaps for two million. There is, in fact, evidence that our ancestor homo erectus was sailing the seas on rafts 800,000 years ago.

Most amazing is Hapgood's experiments with hypnosis, which proved conclusively that he could hypnotise his students to accurately predict the future.

The final chapter of this book contains some of its most remarkable discoveries, beginning with the unearthing of a half-million year old plank that had been carefully planed on one side. Then we consider Neanderthal man and some facts that

prove his high level of intelligence – and whose red ochre mines in South Africa date back 100,000 years. One sculpture, the Bearkhat Ram, has been dated back to a quarter of a million years ago.

We consider the fact that ‘shamanic’ cultures take ‘group consciousness’ for granted – the kind of telepathic awareness that enables flocks of birds and schools of fishes to change direction simultaneously. Ancient man almost certainly possessed this same telepathic ability. Kevin Kelly’s book *Out of Control* describes how the whole audience at a computer conference in San Diego learned this ability in a quarter of an hour. In this sense, societies like ancient Egypt were almost certainly ‘collectives’, which could explain their ability to lift massive weights.

We pass on to the extraordinary discoveries of John Michell, who pointed out that the Nineveh number can be divided by the diameters of the sun and moon, and that a mathematical principle called ‘the Canon’ seems to lie behind ancient science: the notion that our universe appears to be designed along mathematical lines – the ‘code of numbers that structures the universe’, which implies that there is an intelligence behind this design. An example is the sequence of ‘Fibonacci numbers’ that play such a basic part in nature, from spiral nebulae to seashells. We discuss the Anthropic Cosmological Principle, formulated by astronomer Brandon Carter, which states that the universe aims at the propagation of life, and at Fred Hoyle’s statement that ‘Our planet is perfectly suited to the incubation of life’, and that ‘it looks as if some superintendent has been monkeying with the physics’.

In that case, what is it that makes human freedom so limited? Man is confined in ‘close-upness’ which deprives him of

meaning. We glance again at some of the evidence that man may have been around far longer than science supposes – such as an iron nail embedded in a piece of coal several million years old, and a mastodon's tooth engraved with a horned beast, that came from a Miocene bed of 25 million years ago.

We quote the Nobel Prize Winner Frederick Soddy, who discovered isotopes, on the 'evidence of a wholly unknown and unsuspected civilisation of which all other relic has disappeared. And we end by quoting Plato: 'that things are far better taken care of than we can possibly imagine'.



