

CYBERSCRIBE-192

Menhedj, Volume One, Number 12 (August 2011)

Sixteenth Anniversary Column

Wow!!!! Thus month's column marks sixteen full years of the project. The CyberScribe started this series of monthly columns with the intention of doing it for perhaps a year. He has been gratified to know that so many people over the years have requested that he continue. So, dear readers, until told to stop, the CyberScribe will keep right on producing these fun reports on our favorite subject.

Let's start off this time with a very nice tribute produced by a friend of our chapter, Aidan Dodson. The following is abstracted from a pamphlet he produced to record some data about Amelia Edwards, one of the giants of early Egyptology (Aidan Dodson 2011). Her modest grave is beautiful and her work vastly important.

Abbreviated a bit, read on:

St Mary's Church, Henbury
AMELIA ANNE BLANDFORD EDWARDS
(1831-1892)



'Amelia Edwards was born in London, but lived for much of her life in Westbury-on-Trym, a kilometer to the southeast of Henbury. She began her career as a novelist, producing nine successful books of fiction between 1855 and 1880, besides various short stories, articles and travelogues. The direction of her career was changed, however, when, in 1873-4, she and her travel-companion, Lucy Renshaw (1833-1913), took a trip to Egypt, hiring a local sailing houseboat (dahabiya) and voyaging all the way from Cairo to Abu

Simbel, close to what is now the Sudanese frontier. This resulted not only in her most celebrated travel-book, *A Thousand Miles Up the Nile* (1877), but also the beginning of a campaign to raise funds to aid the excavation and preservation of the monuments of ancient Egypt, which were suffering widespread neglect, theft and destruction.

‘As a result, she was instrumental in the foundation of the Egypt Exploration Fund on 1 April 1882, which began its first excavation at Tell el-Maskhuta in the eastern Nile Delta in 1883. Reorganized as the Egypt Exploration Society in 1919, it remains the United Kingdom’s premier body dedicated to the study, excavation and publication of ancient Egypt’s monuments (see <http://www.ees.ac.uk>). Over the next decade, Amelia worked tirelessly for the cause of the EEF. She carried out extensive lecture tours to raise interest and funds – including a 115-date tour of the United States of America in 1889 – but her health suffered as a consequence.

‘Under her will, she left her collection of books and Egyptian antiquities to University College London, together with sufficient funds to endow the first Professorial Chair in Egyptology at any British University. The first Edwards Professor was Flinders Petrie (1853-1942), whom she had championed as an excavator for the EEF, and who is generally regarded as the founder of scientific archaeology in Egypt.

‘For the last three decades of her life, Amelia shared a house with Ellen Drew Braysher (née Young – 1804-1892), the widow of John Braysher (1789-1863). Known as ‘The Larches’, the house was destroyed by bombing in 1941, although its site is marked by a stone plaque on the front garden wall of 22 Eastfield, Westbury-on-Trym, which occupies part of the site.

‘Mrs. Braysher died only a few months before Amelia, and was buried in a grave in Henbury Churchyard in which her daughter, Sarah Harriet (born 1832) had been buried following her premature death in Paris in 1864. There they were finally joined by Amelia. The obelisk on the grave dates to Sarah’s interment: although an Egyptian symbol, obelisks are common in Victorian graveyards.

‘The Egyptian ‘ankh’ – the sign of life – on top of the grave was added for Amelia’s burial.



'The epitaph runs as follows:

'FRONT

Here lies the body of Amelia Ann Blandford Edwards novelist and archaeologist born in London on the 7th June 1831 died at Weston-super-Mare on the 15th April 1892 who by her writings and her labors enriched the thought and interests of her time.'

Quite different from the life of this peaceful woman, is this report on royal weaponry. An article (<http://tiny.cc/6yikl>), which examines a number of these royal objects and finds that were, in general, much used...they were not just for show. Read on (abbreviated):

'Elite members of ancient Egypt, including the pharaoh himself, likely wielded ornate daggers, swords and axes in battle, or to personally execute prisoners, rather than using the shiny metal for ceremonial purposes, research suggests.

'This finding is "strange considering the amount of literature that's been composed so far that basically says that all of them were for ritualistic purposes and were never used in battle," Daniel Boatright told LiveScience.

'Royalty are known to have gone into battle. For instance, Prince Andrew, during the Falklands War, and Prince Harry, in Afghanistan, have served with British troops. "I can't see any reason why they wouldn't four or five thousand years ago as well," he said. Boatright did caution that it couldn't be ruled out that the weapons may have been used for animal sacrifices.

'Boatright analyzed 125 Bronze Age weapons from Egypt, including daggers, swords, arrowheads, axes and spears. He also reviewed reports on 350 additional weapons from that period. Many of the artifacts had been robbed from tombs and archaeological sites more than 100 years ago, and were eventually acquired by museums or collectors in the 19th or early 20th century.

"There's very little evidence to suggest that they would [belong to] people who were necessarily the average citizen," he said. "A couple of them actually have been linked to tombs in the Theban acropolis, so linked to the Valley of the Kings." He used microscopy and other lab analyses to look for evidence of how the weapons were used. "The funny thing about this whole process was that most of them seem to actually have the capacity to be used. There are very, very few that seem to have any ornamental or purely ritualistic context," Boatright said.

'It seems about half of the 125 weapons studied showed evidence of wear and tear, suggesting they were actually used. Some of them, such as an ax with a dent in it, are obvious, while others are more subtle, like small nicks on the edge of a blade.

‘The evidence suggests that elite members of Egyptian society may have gone into battle or executed prisoners personally. "I think there's an argument for it. Whether they were actually in the middle of the battle, or standing to one side, remains to be seen," Boatright said. One interesting artifact he studied was a bronze dagger that archaeologists believe may have belonged to Kamose.

“It's quite a long dagger, actually it borderlines on a sword," Boatright said. Upon examining it, Boatright found groove marks on the blade and tiny nicks on its edge, evidence suggesting the weapon was used. "It could be something that's been used by Kamose to attack someone, or something used on a daily basis."

‘Given the violence of the period Kamose lived in, Boatright believes it is possible that Kamose used the dagger against another person, possibly to avenge the death of his father.’

Another odd object has recently been subjected to study with an unexpected outcome. The object seems to be a box of very strange configuration, and there are two very different opinions on its use. The story (<http://tiny.cc/oglte>) suggests first, that this might have been the world's first protractor. Curious? Read on (shortened here):

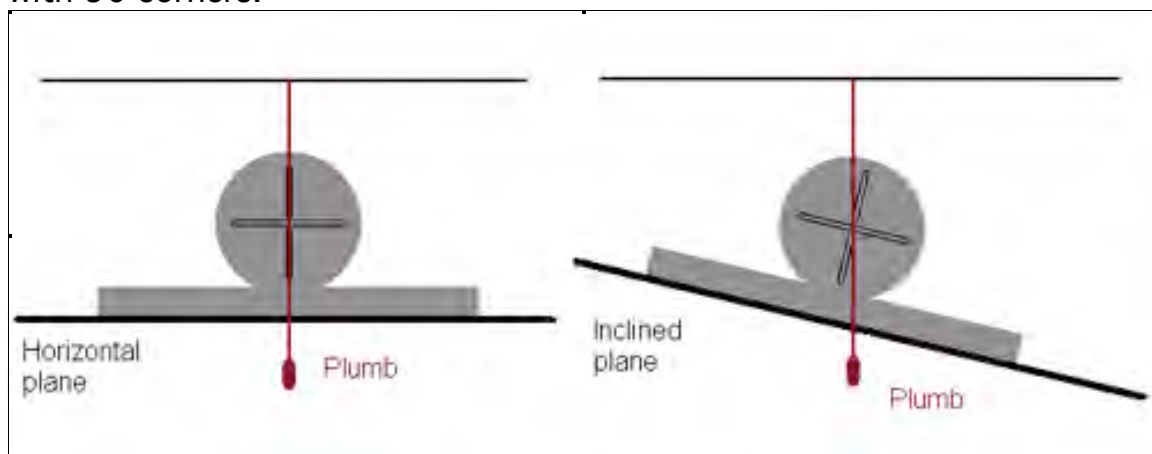
‘The bizarre object was found in the tomb of an ancient Egyptian architect. For over 100 years, it has languished while archaeologists debated its function.



'Now, a physicist has thrown her hat into the ring, arguing that it is the world's first known protractor. The intriguing suggestion is based on the numbers encoded within the carvings on its surface.

'The architect Kha helped to build pharaohs' tombs during the 18th dynasty, around 1400 BC. His own tomb was discovered intact in 1906. Among Kha's belongings were measuring instruments including cubit rods, a leveling device that resembles a modern set square, and what appeared to be an oddly shaped empty wooden case with a hinged lid. Schiaparelli thought this last object had held another leveling instrument. The museum in Turin, Italy, where the items are now exhibited identifies it as the case of a balancing scale.

'But Amelia Sparavigna, a physicist at Turin Polytechnic, suggests that it was a different architectural tool – a protractor. The key, she says, lies in the numbers encoded in the object's ornate decoration, which resembles a compass rose with 16 evenly spaced petals surrounded by a circular zigzag with 36 corners.



'Sparavigna says that if the straight bar part of the object were laid on a slope, a plumb line would revealed its inclination on the circular dial (as illustrated in this graphic).

'The fraction of one-sixteenth features in a calculus system the Egyptians used, says Sparavigna, and they also identified 36 star groups called the decans, which later formed the basis of a star clock. She suggests the object was "a protractor instrument with two scales, one based on Egyptian fractions, the other based on decans".

'But Kate Spence, an archaeologist at the University of Cambridge who specializes in ancient Egyptian architecture, is not convinced and maintains the object is simply a decorative case. She says that unlike those on known

measuring instruments, the markings in question are not particularly accurate: "When the Egyptians want to be precise, they are." She says the Egyptians tended to define angles by measuring the two sides of a rectangle, and that no similar instrument is known.'

Although the CyberScribe understands that this next item does not relate to Egyptology, it is an Egyptian topic and it is grand enough to have fascinated a Pharaoh! What about a bridge across the Red Sea? Fantastic? Read on (<http://tiny.cc/ccsn7>) (much abbreviated here):

'Meet the next great gonzo engineering project: A 20-mile Red Sea-spanning bridge connecting Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The bridge has been spoken about for years and multiple attempts to begin work on it have fallen through; overcoming the odds now will be a feat of both political finesse and engineering.'



'Post-revolution Egypt is reportedly about to embark on an audacious joint construction project with Saudi Arabia: A bridge over the Red Sea that would

link the two country's roads and railways. The bridge is slotted to take the form of a series of suspension spans and causeways on the lines of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. Although the bridge is not expected to interfere with shipping, nearby Israel and Jordan are livid that construction could potentially hurt their geopolitical position--and the Egyptian public is worried the crossing is a sign of increased Saudi influence.

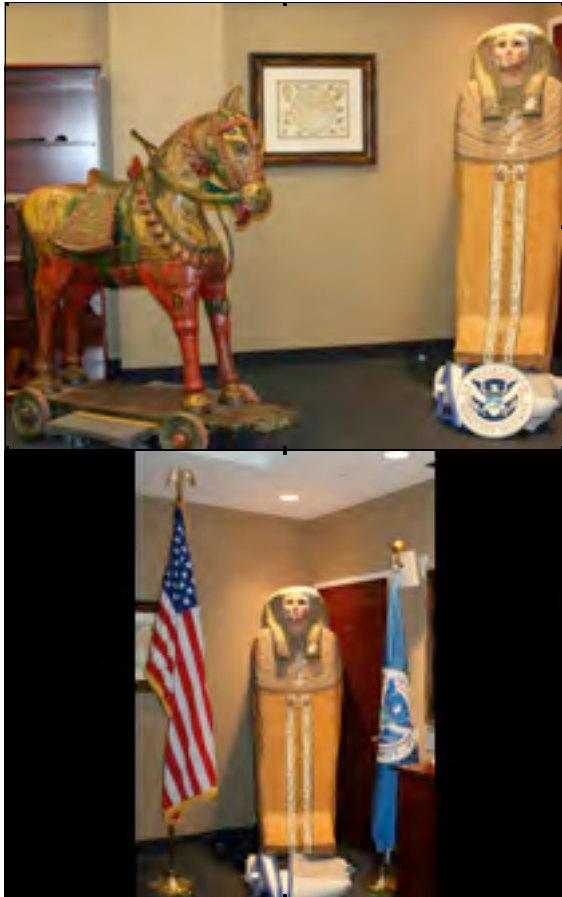
'The proposed 20-mile bridge would be built over the Red Sea at the Straits of Tiran, a series of narrow sea passages between Egypt and Saudi Arabia. However, the Straits of Tiran are also a highly strategic waterway--both Jordan's lone seaport of Aqaba and Israel's only Red Sea port, Eilat, send all their cargo through the straits. The bridge will be a toll crossing; Egyptian authorities expect that payments from pilgrims traveling to Mecca will account for a large percentage of revenue.

'The Red Sea is one of the world's most seismically active zones, and any bridge built there would be at high risk of damage from a catastrophic earthquake. They don't call it the Great Rift Valley for nothing.

'According to Der Spiegel's piece on the project, much remains unsure. The Saudi Arabia-Egypt Bridge has been spoken about for years and multiple attempts to begin work on the project have fallen through. Egypt is currently suffering through one of the worst economic downturns in years, and any attempt to build the bridge would come with a heavy Saudi price in terms of influence and economic concessions. Then there are the engineering and geopolitical concerns. However, if completed, it will be one of the most interesting public works projects of the decade.'

One of the greatest concerns of Egypt has been the theft of ancient Egyptian cultural items. From time to time smuggling rings are discovered and broken. Just recently, a large organization of such smugglers was detected and the major players arrested...including a much-respected American collector. The story below (<http://tiny.cc/cf9pq>) is one distributed by the US agency called Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The story (shortened for space reasons) relates a tangled and sometimes rather confusing set of events and personages...and a respected museum. Read on:





'Antiquity dealers and collectors from Michigan, New York, Virginia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) were charged today in connection with a scheme to smuggle illicit cultural property into the United States. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) agents dismantled an organization responsible for conspiring to smuggle Egyptian Middle Eastern and Asian antiquities into the United States and conspiring to launder money in furtherance of smuggling.

'ICE investigations seized Egyptian antiquities to include but are not limited to a Greco-Roman style Egyptian sarcophagus, a unique three-part coffin set belonging to Shesepamuntayesher from the Saite period or 26th Dynasty, approximately 664-552 B.C. In addition to Egyptian antiquities, other Middle Eastern and Asian artifacts along with more than a thousand antique coins have been recovered.

'ICE HSI agents arrested: Salem Alshdaifat, an antiquities dealer who operated a business called Holyland Numismatics in Bloomfield, Mich.; Joseph Lewis, a collector and benefactor of Egyptian antiquities; and Mousa Kouli, an antiquities dealer who operated a business called Windsor Antiquities in New York. Ayman Ramadan, a Jordanian antiquities dealer, who operated a

company called Nafertiti Eastern Sculptures Trading, in Dubai, UAE, is a fugitive. The defendants face multiple counts of smuggling and money laundering.

'As alleged in the indictment, defendants, together with others, engaged in a scheme to smuggle cultural antiquities into the United States. As part of the smuggling scheme, Lewis allegedly purchased a Greco-Roman style Egyptian sarcophagus, a nesting set of three Egyptian sarcophagi, a set of Egyptian boats and Egyptian limestone figures from Khouli, who purchased those items from Alshdaifat and Ramadan.

'Khouli allegedly provided Lewis with false provenances which stated that the Egyptian antiquities were part of a collection assembled by Khouli's father in Israel in the 1960's when, in fact, both Lewis and Khouli knew that Khouli acquired the Egyptian antiquities from other dealers.

'Most of the smuggled antiquities have been recovered by ICE HSI agents. The innermost sarcophagus of the nesting set was seized during a search of Khouli's residence in September 2009. The middle sarcophagus and most of the outer sarcophagus were seized in November 2009, after they arrived via sea cargo at Port of Newark, N.J. The Greco-Roman sarcophagus, funerary boats, and limestone figures were seized during a search of Lewis' residence today. A civil complaint seeking forfeiture of Egyptian sarcophagi, Iraqi artifacts, cash, and other items seized in connection with the government's investigation was also unsealed this morning in Brooklyn federal court.'

There is a second phase of the story (<http://tiny.cc/1h9ri>) where an innocent museum got tangled up in this smuggling web:

'The aftershocks of a federal probe that dismantled an international smuggling ring of Egyptian antiquities is being felt in Richmond at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, which has closely re-examined the ownership origins of eight artifacts on loan from a Chesterfield County businessman indicted in the scheme.

'Last week's arrest in New York of Joseph A. Lewis II, a chemist who has made his mark in the pharmaceutical and cosmetic skin-care business, was "absolutely a surprise," said Alex Nyerges, the museum's director and CEO. Lewis, indicted on smuggling conspiracy and money laundering charges, has amassed with his wife a significant collection of valuable Egyptian artifacts —

some of which are displayed in their Chesterfield home. They have lent a number of items to nationally recognized museums, including the VMFA.

‘Earlier this year, the Lewises loaned the museum eight pieces — alabaster and limestone canopic jars, wood canopic boxes and terracotta lids, mummy bead sets, and a mummified falcon and ibis — for display in the recently reinstalled Egyptian galleries.

‘The museum has been transparent in publicly identifying the types of artifacts from the Lewis collection it holds and their provenances. Based on the museum's information, Lewis purchased two of the items from private collections, three from dealers and three from auction houses. At least two of the items can be readily traced online to auction sales held by Bonhams, a privately owned British auction house and auctioneer of fine art, collectibles and antiques.

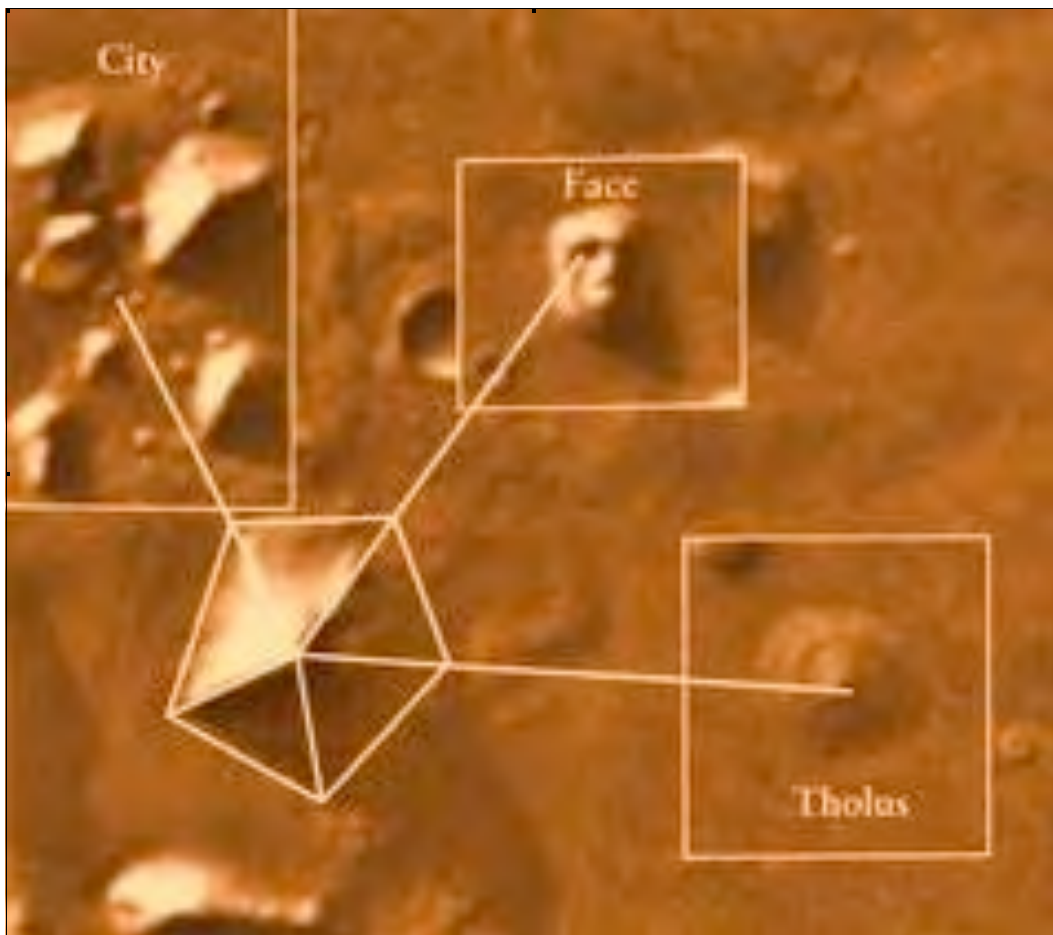
‘The auction and lot numbers the museum was provided for those items indicate Lewis purchased an Egyptian alabaster canopic jar from Bonhams on Oct. 28, 2009, for 13,200 pounds, or \$21,273, and an Egyptian conglomerate limestone canopic jar on Oct. 28, 2010, for 3,360 pounds, or \$5,415.

‘Lewis also has loaned a mummy mask to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, which is displaying the artifact in its Funerary Arts gallery, said museum spokeswoman Amelia Krantrovitz. She said the mask originally was loaned to the museum in 1997 by the Harer Family Trust, "and the museum received notification in 2007 that the object had been sold to Lewis. In addition, Lewis reportedly has lent other artifacts to Atlanta's Michael C. Carlos Museum at Emory University.

‘Federal authorities said most of the smuggled antiquities have been recovered. According to the indictment, the artifacts were smuggled from Dubai between October 2008 and November 2009 and ultimately were bought by Lewis. He is alleged to have bought them from Khouli, who in turn acquired them from Salem Alshdaifat, owner of Holyland Numismatics in Bloomfield, Mich., and Ayman Ramadan, who operates Nafertiti Eastern Sculptures Trading in Dubai, authorities said.’

Always on the cutting edge of everything, more or less, the CyberScribe has discovered a boatload of stuff that will rock his faithful readers. Mars and Egypt have a connection!!!! The article (<http://tiny.cc/mog44>) provides a number of “proofs” to ascertain that the planet Mars is not only inhabited, but that it was colonized by ancient Egyptians!!! The odd sentences and the very great lack of grammar are preserved, and they are presented here as seen in the original. Read on (abbreviated somewhat here):

‘Strange buildings, profiles from the human form, pyramid schemes, are just some of the artifacts identified on the red planet, under consideration by researchers around the world that confirm the existence of intelligent life. So while the space agencies of official research is silent on those (discoveries).



‘It could be the greatest discovery of the century or the most colossal hoax of all time, the fact is that an amateur astronomer, David Martinez, while using Google Mars, Google Earth version containing the mapping of Mars,

found on the surface of the planet a mysterious structure that would look like a long white building, with thin blue and red streaks.'

'The construction, cylindrical in shape, is 700 feet long (210 meters) tall and 150 (45 meters) and was named after its discoverer "Bio Station Alpha".

(The CyberScribe wishes to interject here. He went to the proper website to see a film 'proving the above'. The 'object' is, as might be suspected, a pixel error in the photo. Oh well.)

'The construction, cylindrical in shape, is 700 feet long (210 meters) tall and 150 (45 meters) and was named by its discoverer "Bio Station Alpha". To convince the unbelievers not to be a clown or even a visionary has also provided the object's coordinates (71 ° 49'19 .73 "N, 29 ° 33'06 .53" W) of the Google application note. "It could be a powerhouse, a" container "biological or a gas station. I hope that is not a weapon, "Martinez said in his video.

'The answer came from NASA June 7, 2011.

"The images of the Martian surface have been carefully studied by NASA and by scientists and researchers around the world" - says the government agency responsible for the space program of the United States of America - "there is no evidence or scientific data to confirm a structure on the surface. There was a time in which a feature of the planet was described as a face, but closer observation, with a higher definition, has revealed a phenomenon of erosion."

'According to Alfred McEwen, a geologist at the University of Arizona Director of the Planetary Imaging Research Laboratory, "Bio-Station Alpha is just a technical problem of the image caused by cosmic energy that has interfered with the camera. It seems an artifact but is a linear strip produced by a cosmic ray. "

'Some blogs and American media, however, think differently and say that is present on Mars, a form of intelligent life, has always been hidden from public, and that NASA is involved in a cover-up activity of the truth. It was also strongly believes Dr.. Thomas C. Van Flandern, an astronomer and world-renowned American writer, specializing in celestial mechanics, and sadly passed away a few years ago to an incurable disease.

'Dr. Thomas C. Van Flandern (now deceased) said that certain geological features of Mars, such as the face of Cydonia, are not of natural origin (but are) produced by extraterrestrial life forms, probably the inhabitants of a planet (that) exploded about 3 million and 200 thousand years ago that he was present when there is the asteroid belt. "We have shown in a comprehensive way that some artifacts on the surface of Mars has been artificially produced" - explained in the course of his lectures - "the evidence indicates that were made about 3 million and 200 thousand years ago when it exploded" Mars was a moon of Planet V '. According to the scientist, the artifacts present on the red planet would be built to attract the attention of potential visitors from outer space (the same as we do ourselves a day on our natural satellite, the moon) or for other reasons unknown to us. After the destruction of the celestial body, its inhabitants would be directed to the earth.

"It 'a strange coincidence that the face of Mars may have the appearance of a hominid as our " Lucy", (a species of Australopithecus, whose fossil remains were found in Ethiopia in the first half of the seventies) and that both date back to 3 million and 200 thousand years ago. So I leave you with the thought that there may be a grain of truth in the film "War of the Worlds", with the difference that we are the Martians. "

'There are large complexes photographed by the High Resolution Stereo Camera (HRSC) on board ESA's Mars Express Orbiter European Space Agency (ESA), which would be in Reull Vallis, a valley carved from Mars that appears to be water. This site consists of at least nine statues are impressively human faces and animals, as well as a strange pyramid construction. Andrew D. Basiago, 47, president of Mars Anomaly Research Society, is convinced that the new findings establish a link between ancient Egypt and the Red Planet.

"My guess - Basiago says - is that Mars was once a former colony of ancient Egypt and not vice versa. I say this because the land has a rich biosphere that could have supported the ancient civilization in an attempt to reach Mars. The Great Pyramid of Giza and the platform at Baalbek may have been the launching ramps and represent a proof of this effort. I find it less convincing that humans have reached first, then Mars and Earth, because the red planet is less fertile. Humans on Mars are probably the descendants of the settlers of the Earth, separated from us by the disaster of the solar system occurred in 9,500 BC.

"In 2008, Andrew D. Basiago published a paper entirely based on NASA PIA10214 photos, taken by the U.S. space probe Mars Rover Spirit in 2007,

which contains a detailed analysis of the photographs of some species of humanoids, and animals that live on the surface of Mars, along with many artifacts on the ancient Martian surface.'

Well, the CyberScribe suggests that those interested in the type of super duper, gee whiz science these guys use, should take time to look up this site: <http://tiny.cc/zgdrv>, where you will get a pdf file that shows all the 'findings' in full, glorious color.

However, the CyberScribe leaves you with an important Latin maxim: cave ne lectorem!!!

There is much more, but the cyb is out of space, and perhaps this is more than enough. See you next month!

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Where The Heck Is It? – August 2011



This photo comes from a series of once top-secret Nazi German archives that have recently been declassified. The scene shows a bunch of native

excavators exposing one of those huge underground labyrinths, like the ones you saw in the movie 'Indiana Jones'. Note the pair of mummies on the courtyard floor, and the wooden chest full of solid gold nick-knacks.

Or do you disagree with the above explanation? If so:

What is this place called and whom was it built for?

Where is it located (be very specific in your answer)?

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Where The Heck Is It? July 2011



A seldom-told story relates that the now-famous McDonald's hamburger chain had a rather slow and spotty history...first founded in the 10th Dynasty, but only becoming popular in the middle of the 1900 BCE. The largest part of the modern success was due to the golden arches.

Here is the original McDonald's restaurant in Egypt, brainchild of the famous Krok-Hotep. Popular at first, it lacked the signature arches...and the restaurant chain nearly failed

Or do you disagree?

If so, where do you think this building is located? Gebel el Silsila

Who do you think built it? Ramesses II and Merneptah