



Type: Newsletter

Newsletter and Proceedings of the S.E.H.A., no. 125
(July 1971)

Editors(s): Ross T. Christensen and Bonny A. Fifield

Published by: Society for Early Historic Archaeology, Brigham Young
University

Published several times a year by THE SOCIETY FOR EARLY HISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, for the dissemination among its members of information on new discoveries in archaeology throwing light on the origins of civilization in the Old and New Worlds, on the earliest periods of recorded history in the two hemispheres, and on the important historical claims of the Hebrew-Christian and Latter-day Saint scriptures; also news of the Society and its members and of the B.Y.U. department of archaeology and anthropology, of which the Society is an affiliated organization. Included are papers read at the Society's and Department's annual symposia on the archaeology of the Scriptures. All views expressed in this newsletter are those of the author of the contribution in which they appear and not necessarily those of Brigham Young University or the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Subscription is by membership in the Society, which also includes subscription to other publications.

125.0 AMERICA AND THE ECUMENE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Cyrus H. Gordon, chairman of the Department of Mediterranean Studies, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts. An extemporaneous address given at the Twentieth Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures, held at Brigham Young University on October 10, 1970. Transcribed from a tape recording made by Paul R. Cheesman, SEHA trustee and assistant professor of religious instruction at BYU. Introduction by Ross T. Christensen.



Dr. Cyrus H. Gordon (center), featured speaker at the Society's Twentieth Annual Symposium, confers with Virgil V. Peterson (left), symposium chairman, and Ross T. Christensen. Courtesy Deseret News Church Section.

DR. CHRISTENSEN: It was just less than two years ago that I first made the acquaintance of Dr. Gordon—in his home at Brookline, Massachusetts. I had, of course, known of his work for many years previous.

It was at that time that he expressed to me his complete open-mindedness with regard to the Book of Mormon as a special intellectual interest of Latter-day Saints.

Dr. Gordon is a Semiticist. He first began his study of the Hebrew language at the age of five and went from there into the study of other Semitic as well as classical and Indo-Iranian languages and cultures. He is also an archaeologist. Since completing his doctorate in 1930 he has spent more than seven years in the Near East, engaged principally in archaeological exploration and excavation.

In the 1950's Dr. Gordon became a controversial figure among Semitic and classical scholars over his identification of the early spoken and written language of Crete as being really a form of West Semitic.

Within the past three years his interest has turned to Americanist studies. The investigation for which he is perhaps best known in this connection is his re-analysis of an old Phoenician inscription found in Brazil in 1872, originally branded as fraudulent, and his conclusion that it is in fact genuine (cf. Newsletter, 111.01, 118.0).

Die-hard "Independent Inventionists" used to oppose the idea that there could have been any important transoceanic influence on the developing civili-

zations of the New World. They did so primarily on the basis of their belief that no sea-craft known to ancient man could have made the voyage. We now know better!

With Thor Heyerdahl's successful experiment—his crossing of the Atlantic in a papyrus-reed vessel last summer—it is perfectly clear that such voyages were technically feasible. What are now needed are demonstrations, not that such voyages *could have* occurred, but that they *actually did* occur. And in fact the first such demonstration has already been made: a shipload of Phoenicians from Sidon actually landed in Brazil in 531 BC, according to Dr. Gordon's re-analysis of the so-called "Paraíba text."

It is a pleasure to present to you Dr. Cyrus H. Gordon of Brandeis University.

DR. GORDON: Progress in any field requires some initial motivation. Many of you have the motivation of scripture: the Old and New Testaments and the Mormon scriptures. This parallels my own experience; it was because of my interest in what was dear to me that I was led to investigation.

When one searches with competence, determination, and a desire to learn for the sake of knowledge, he often finds not less, nor merely as much as he is looking for, but much more. In my own case I have been amply rewarded. In fact, when I am asked what my views are on a particular subject I have to reply, "Do you mean as of now?". Some of the data which follow were unknown to me or anyone else as little as a couple of months ago, and indeed some of the fine points have come into my consciousness only within the past few weeks or even days.

WHY IN MIDDLE AMERICA?

I have been intensively concerned with ancient American civilization for only a short time: since 1967. Coming as a mature person, already accustomed to the ins and outs of scholarship, into a vast and new field where there are already many experts and specialists, I took a hard look at the situation. Some things made sense and others did not.

I used to be a parochial Mediterranean scholar, imagining that one would have to go to Rome, Greece, Egypt, or Mesopotamia to see really great monuments of the distant past. But I have since learned that what is to be seen on our own continent is every bit as impressive. In Central America there was a great flowering of technological civilization, second to none in the Old World.

We have to face up to the question of why this development took place in Middle America and not in the United States, Canada, or South America outside the Andean land of the Incas. A look at the map should tell us what took place. The reason that Middle America pro-

duced what it did is that it was the "meeting ground" of peoples coming in from both sides, across both oceans, as well as having connections with both the north and the south. Where there is maximum stimulation upon a talented people, there is going to be maximum achievement.

I hold no brief at all that civilized man is better than his less developed brothers in areas like the Arctic, where perfectly decent and fine Eskimos live in igloos and catch bears, seals, and whales. Not at all—not as human beings, nor in the eyes of God. What I do say is that, whereas they have lived on the fringes of the world, unstimulated by the cross-currents of civilization, others of us have lived in the middle of things, where the challenge either overwhelms us, or we do something creative and constructive about it. Geography favors developments in Middle America, where stimulation came across both great bodies of water and interacted.

TRANSOCEANIC CROSSINGS

What is the evidence for this?

The oldest specifically datable contact between the Old World and the New—datable according to modern laboratory methods—comes from Ecuador. The pottery found in excavations at Valdivia is definitely Jomon, attesting contacts from the southern Japanese island of Kyushu around 3,200 BC (cf. Newsletter, 115.0, 115.1). This was across the Pacific.

This fact has broken through the very tough skin of the Establishment, which until a little while ago, was completely isolationist and raised Independent Inventionism to the status of a dogma. Dr. Gordon Ekholm of the American Museum of Natural History at New York City, who is a pillar of the Establishment, has not only accepted this Pacific crossing but has championed it; although curiously, he now appears to maintain that the *Atlantic* was not crossed in pre-Columbian times.

I do not understand the reasoning behind such negativism, for the distances involved in crossing the Pacific are much greater than those across the Atlantic. From the bulge of Africa to the bulge of Brazil is no great distance at all, not compared with that from New York City to the familiar ports of Europe. The ocean currents and winds, incidentally, favor the transatlantic crossing by this route, i.e. from Iberia-Africa to northern Brazil (cf. Newsletter, 111.01, pp. 8, 9).

This morning I want to show you that we have something even more specific than the Jomon pottery to attest early pre-Columbian crossings of the Atlantic to the Americas. And this evidence will certainly have to be accepted, not only because of its archaeological circumstances but also because of the content of the material itself.

ECUMENE

But, before we turn to the main line of our evidence, we must discern the nature of the ancient ecumene. By "ecumene" I have in mind an order whereby differing peoples, whether or not they speak the same language, or belong to the same race, or have the same religion, or occupy the same geographic region, somehow or other form an intercommunicating group. An example would be modern Western Europe with its American extension. One might call this example a sort of Latin ecumene, for Roman Latinity lies at the bottom of it. Whether a person is Catholic, Protestant, or of some other religion really does not make a great deal of difference. In this Western European ecumene there is a meeting of minds, a common background—the use, for instance, of the same alphabet. There is essentially only one culture involved. The fact that one person is German and another French does not mean that they do not have a lot in common.

There are also other ecumenes, and there are smaller ecumenes within larger ones.

All this should be understood before we begin to speak of Old Testament history in terms of personalities.

Let us view some of the results of this type of study first, then later turn to a consideration of some biblical and other literary references, as well as other kinds of evidence.

COTTON

Consider the phenomenon of weaving, specifically of cotton.

I do not engage in discussions with Independent Inventionists on this subject for the reason that I do not think it very fruitful. If I understand what Independent Inventionism implies, it is that there was something in the human genes of the Old and New World peoples that somehow made both populations cultivate certain plants, including cotton. Their common humanity then impelled them to spin the cotton boll into a thread, to invent the loom, and on the loom to weave fabrics.

This is difficult to accept. I do not believe there is anything in my genes or yours by which, if we were raised on some far-off island in isolation, we should, as the weaver-bird weaves a particular kind of nest, plant the cotton seed, spin the thread, invent the loom, and weave the fabrics. I do not understand such reasoning in terms of psychology, physiology, or any of the sciences, exact or applied.

In the Andean area of South America weaving goes back to the third millennium BC. What is more, that weaving depended upon a number of developments in addition to the cotton that was grown there.

Botanists tell us that this cotton was a hybrid of American wild cotton and the domesticated cotton of the eastern hemisphere, such as was grown in Egypt. The reason for this conclusion lies in the fact that domesticated New World cotton possesses 26 chromosomes, i.e. 13 large ones and 13 small ones, a circumstance which can result, botanists assure us, only from hybridization.

How did the Old World domesticated cotton get here in antiquity to be hybridized with the American wild cotton? It could not have come via the Arctic waste, because cold kills it. It could not have floated across on the ocean currents, because water kills it. Birds did not carry it across, because they detest the cotton boll and will not have anything to do with the seeds which are in it. It could only have been brought dry, by human beings aboard ship, along some warm route.

Ancient Americans even used woven fabrics for some of the same purposes they were used for in the Old World. For instance, there is no genetic reason why people in both hemispheres should mummify their dead, in the first place, or use woven fabrics for enshrining them, in the second place. Here, then, is a specific application of the product.

(Evidence of an Old World origin of ancient American domesticated cotton was referred to in an early publication of the SEHA. See M. Wells Jakeman, "The XXIXth International Congress of Americanists," *Bulletin of the University Archaeological Society*, No. 1, pp. 26-33, especially p. 32. May, 1950. Ed.)

CERAMICS

The same idea applies to ceramics. There is nothing that requires a human being, merely because he is human, to create pottery. In fact, I have been in some areas where there is no pottery and people use animal skins instead. The ceramics of the New World and those of the Old have enough technological features in common to make it most unlikely that there has been completely independent invention on both sides of the great oceans.

ASTRONOMY

Science has never been the product of a regional *milieu*. Science is the product of internationalism. To give you an illustration:

We know from cuneiform tablets and other ancient documents, as well as from classical references to science, that early civilizations had a deep knowledge of astronomy. Astronomy, which was one of the oldest of sciences in countries like Mesopotamia, as well as among the Mayas, deals with cycles of celestial phenomena.

We are informed that Thales of Miletus was able to predict eclipses. St. Augustine makes a definite statement to this effect. Herodotus records it, but does not tell us Thales was able to specify the month and the day—only that he predicted a great eclipse to the year in which it actually came to pass.

When eclipses take place, they do not occur in repeating cycles over the same spot on the globe. This is why astronomers require observatories all over the world. When an eclipse you view in Utah comes around again in its eighteen-year-plus cycle, you may have to go to Australia or Scandinavia to see it. What I am pointing out is that the very foundations of ancient science required travel and the processing of collected information from all over the world.

Now you may say, "How logical and modern all this is, but it simply could not happen!" Well, it can be shown that it not only could happen but actually did happen.

HERODOTUS

Herodotus (Book 4, Section 42) informs us of the circumnavigation of Africa by Phoenician sailors about the year 600 BC. (This, incidentally, is a feat which our own European ancestors could not duplicate until the age of Vasco da Gama and Magellan about AD 1500.) The Greek historian records that the Phoenicians brought back a certain observation which he himself, however, questioned. He doubted it because he could not understand it; and yet, like a good reporter, he tells us the story: The Phoenicians, who were sailing westward, rounding the Cape of Good Hope, observed the sun on their right.

Herodotus did not understand the respective positions of the sun in the two hemispheres. Those who have lived in the southern hemisphere know that there the sun always inclines toward the equator, which lies to the north. Thus, if you are facing west it inclines to your right. The opposite is true here in the northern hemisphere. Here, the sun always inclines toward the south; i.e. toward the equator.

It is obvious that Herodotus reported what was an actual observation made by the mariners and scientists of antiquity at the other end of the earth, the southern hemisphere. They had sent this information back to the "computer," so to speak, in the Mediterranean heartland of civilization. How else could Herodotus have gotten it? He never left the Levant and the Near East. He traveled extensively, but always in that area. So the ancients did exchange information, including scientific observations. They were creatively curious about nature and learned

all they could about the sky, as well as about animals, plants, minerals, etc., on the earth.

The implication of all this is simply that at a very remote period—perhaps going back to Chalcolithic and even Neolithic times—there was an ecumene that literally spanned the World. It had its ups and downs, but it knitted the world together. Wherever we find a high civilization we can be sure there was a confluence of civilizing forces that touched off the development.

BIBLICAL ECUMENE

The ecumene as the ancient Hebrews understood it is outlined in a very remarkable document, Genesis 10, which is the genealogy of the nations. If you read that text critically you will understand the early Hebrew approach to the world and to civilization. They recognized that there were many different countries, including distant islands, inhabited by different peoples speaking different languages. The peoples were all different; yet, somehow or other, they were all united in an ecumene—in a sort of United Nations—and they felt a kinship with one another in that they all belonged to the same network of civilization.

In Genesis 10:4, we are told that Javan (Hebrew *Yawan*), the eponymous ancestor of the Ionian Greeks, was responsible for a number of offshoots, one of which was Tarshish, located out in or beyond the Atlantic Ocean. Biblical passages bearing on the identification of Tarshish are of two categories: (1) some indicate that one can get there via the Mediterranean; (2) others tell us that one can get there through the Red Sea. The only possible place for it, then, is somewhere in or beyond the Atlantic Ocean.

From Ezekiel 27:12 we learn that the products of this country were notably iron, silver, lead, and tin. So Tarshish must be an Atlantic community producing these particular metals.

I Chronicles 7:6, 10, informs us of a Tarshish that was an offshoot of Benjamin, one of the Hebrew tribes. These traditions are to be taken seriously.

I am going to show you evidence which justifies a combining of these two influences—Indo-European, specifically Greek, and Hebraic—in this far-off metal-producing land known as Tarshish.

Genesis 10 is concerned not only with the Near East, but with the world-wide scene, as we shall see if we heed the details. Genesis 10:26-30 tells us that Joktan, a branch of the Semites in south Arabia, was responsible for developing Ophir, a distant land productive of gold. Later, Solomon's ships had to go tremendous distances before bringing back its goods.

AMERICAN SCENE

What means of checking this do we have on the American scene?

No less an authority than ancient Plutarch tells us there were Greek communities beyond the Atlantic that were unable to perpetuate the speaking of the Greek language. They got thinned out because of admixture with other inhabitants. Those living in the homeland made attempts to reinfuse the area with Greek blood so as to restore its Greekness, culturally and linguistically.

Has anything been preserved?

White men did not, fortunately, altogether obliterate the Indians that were found in this hemisphere when Columbus and his followers came. In some countries, like Mexico, Central America, and Peru, there are millions of them that still preserve their psychology and many of their traditions and languages.

AZTEC LINGUISTICS

In the Aztec country, Mexico, there was a word, *teocalli*, which meant "God's house" and is the word for a shrine or temple. At the beginning of the past century, one of the great intellectual giants of Europe, Alexander von Humboldt, pointed out something which was later dropped by scholars but which we shall have to come back to. He said that this Aztec word was equivalent to Greek *theou-calía*, "house of god"; *theos* means "god" (the root is *teo*, as you find it in this Aztec form), and *calía* is one of the Greek words which means "building," particularly a religious structure or shrine.

A culture word of this kind is indeed striking. But there are actually a number of other such loan words which attest connections with the Old World. I shall confine myself, however, to a single word of a rather intimate nature.

Strange as it may seem, the conjunction "and" is a late development in all languages, including our own. The Greeks said *kai*, the Romans *et*, and the Scandinavians *og*, while we say "and." These languages are all related to one another, and yet they have different words for "and" because the original language did not have it. This is also true of the Semitic languages and Egyptian.

But the and-words did come in. They were developed in the early part of the Bronze Age if not before.

Without their knowing anything of the Aztec language, it became evident to students of comparative Egypto-Semitic that the primitive word for "and" in its full expanded form was **iwan*. Which is also the Aztec word for "and"!

Now, lest you feel that a word like "and" cannot spread culturally, I wish to remind you that the Turkish

and Persian languages had no word for it until they were conquered by the Arabs. Thereafter, the word they used was *ve*, pronounced *we* or *wa* in Arabic. Such words do get around if they are useful, even though they may not seem to be of the kind that a people would borrow.

I do not wish to become too technical, but I want to tell you something of the Aztec verbal system, something which, to the best of my knowledge, has never been noticed before. And in fact the Symposium here today is the first group to which I have communicated this discovery.

The Aztec word for "come" is *huitz*. "You come" or "you will come" is *ti-huitz*; "he comes" or "he will come" is *ye-huitz*. Now, in the Hebrew verbal system the preformative *ta-* or *te-* or *ti-* means "you," while the prefix *ya-* or *ye-* or *yi-* means "he." For instance, *ti-shmor* is "you watch," or "you will watch," while *yi-shmor*, means "he watches," or "he will watch."

This is a very intimate element built into the grammar—preserved in the paradigms—of one of the great American families of languages.

There also seems to be an Indo-European influence in Aztec, shown in the adding of what we call an "augment" to indicate the past tense. This takes the form of an epsilon in Greek. In Aztec it is the prefixed vowel "o." Thus, *o-ti-huitzah* is the expression for "you came," the past tense being indicated by this augment, as in Indo-European languages.

TLALOC

Let us now consider another type of evidence more in keeping with religious institutions.

There is a Mexican god of moisture and rain called Tlaloc. Those who have analyzed the language of the Aztecs have pointed out that the ending *oc* is added to the root. The root, *tlal*, it happens, is also the Semitic root for dew. Both Baal of Ugarit and Jehovah of Israel are gods of living waters: of rain in the rainy season, and of dew, which is equally necessary for the ripening of the fruit and the maturing of the harvest in Palestine and Syria during the seasons in which there is no rain.

(There is no sterile season without harvest in a reasonably good year in that part of the world. This is an artificial creation of comparative religionists that has unfortunately gotten into the textbooks. If any of you have visited there or lived there for the twelve months of the year, you know that this is not so.)

The point is that *tlal* has a Semitic derivation, idiomatically latching onto the texts from Ugarit, the Bible, and elsewhere, where the dew, expressed by this word, as well as the rain, are the seasonal functions of their god of fertility.

Tlaloc was depicted at times holding forked lightning in his hand. The posture is exactly the same as we

find with the storm god, Baal, in Phoenicia and Syria. The god of rain, i.e. the storm god, is there shown iconographically holding forked lightning.

WORLD HISTORY

There is a tremendous amount of detailed work to be done if we are to come near exhausting a subject which is so important to us. There are many reasons for this, but as far as I am concerned the most important of all is to lay a foundation so that we can someday write a true history of the world.

Are you aware of the fact that a history of the world before 1492 is at present impossible because of prevailing attitudes? As long as respectable scholarship is dedicated to the proposition that there was no contact across the two oceans before Columbus, there can be no real history of the world. Incidentally we Americans, who pride ourselves on our importance in the world, belong to that hemisphere for which there is as yet no ancient history.

This should not be the case, nor is it necessary. There is more than enough evidence to enable us to set the matter straight.

PERSIAN INFLUENCE

Let us now look at a later part of the Old Testament: the Book of Esther. This work refers to events that took place in the days of the great king Xerxes (Ahasuerus), who ruled from 485 to 465 BC.

Esther 1:14 mentions that one of the king's counselors was named Tarshish. It was a custom to name a child after some interesting, remote land that the country had conquered, or perhaps where the father of the child had some mission. Or, if the father took the mother along, the child might be born there. Examples of such Roman personal names are Germanicus (German) and Britannicus, which recalls Britain, the most westerly province of the Empire.

The Hebrew author of Esther, in praising Xerxes, notes (10:1) that the king imposed tribute upon the land, as well as upon the "isles of the sea"! The latter may well reflect not only conquered lands, but the overseas outposts of Achaemenian interests at the ends of the earth. Indeed, there is specific evidence of contact between Persia of this particular period and Middle America.

In the Temple of the Warriors at Chichén Itzá, Yucatan, is the great stone couch of the ruler. It is held up by carvings of warriors of various types with their hands raised high above their heads, palms forward, harking back to the theme found at Persepolis, capital of the Persian Empire. The Persian throne is supported by

many figures in varying costumes, representing the component parts of his world empire sustaining his authority. It is in this manner, with outstretched arms, that the support of his subject peoples is shown iconographically.

Accordingly, when we see the biblical statements that tribute was imposed, not only upon the land but also upon the islands, and also that one of the king's advisors was actually named Tarshish—and on top of this find specifically Iranian influence of this period in the New World—we must open our eyes and our minds to the possible implications.

THE "SYRIANS OF PALESTINE"

Herodotus (Book 2, Section 104; cf. 2:4, 10, and 7:89) speaks of the Phoenicians and the "Syrians of Palestine" as two peoples who practiced circumcision, unlike the other populations of the area. Moreover, he attributes this custom to Egyptian influence. The "Syrians of Palestine" can only refer to the Jews, who themselves, by the way, attribute the practice of circumcision to their experience, their contact, with the Egyptians (Joshua 5:2-9). What has not been sufficiently noticed is that Herodotus also mentions (Book 7, Section 82) that the Persians engaged the Phoenicians and the "Syrians of Palestine" to operate 300 triremes against their Greek enemies. Accordingly, it is clear that among the Jews there was considerable interest and competence in navigation, not just in the days of Solomon, when he teamed up with Hiram of Tyre, but down through the centuries thereafter.

At Masada, another wonderful place to go, especially since it has been excavated, there appears, dating from the last century BC, a wall painting of a ship.

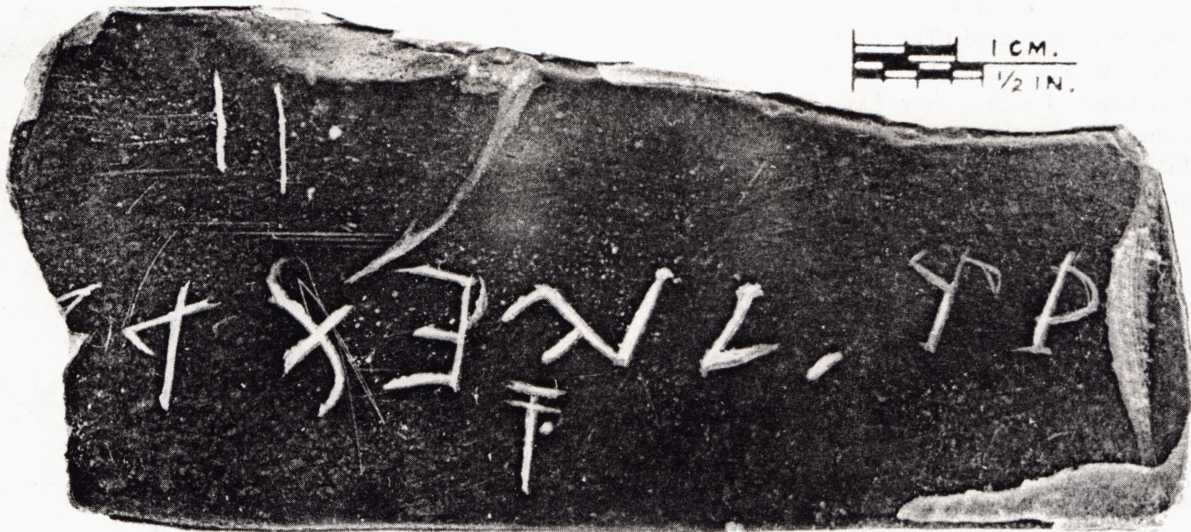
At Beit Shearim of the second and third centuries AD, representations of ships appear in the numerous tombs of this important rabbinic town.

Vespasian and his sons Titus and Domitian, who ruled from AD 69 to 96, struck coins commemorating the VICTORIA NAVALIS ("Naval Victory") of the Romans over the Jews called JUDAEA NAVALIS ("Naval Judaea").

COINS IN TENNESSEE

In 1823 John Haywood, chief justice of the Tennessee Supreme Court, wrote a book entitled *Natural and Aboriginal History of Tennessee* (George Wilson: Nashville; re-edited and republished by Mary U. Rothrock, McCowat-Mercer Press: Jackson, Tennessee, 1959).

In his book Haywood illustrates and describes a number of Roman coins found in that area, including some inscribed with names of the Emperors Antoninus



Hebrew inscription excavated by the Smithsonian Institution at Bat Creek, Tennessee, in 1885. Inscription reads LYHWD, "Unto Judah."

Pius, Marcus Aurelius and Commodus. Moreover, Bar Kokhba coins of the time of the Second Jewish Rebellion against Rome, AD 132-135, have been found by farmers in three scattered areas of Kentucky, one of them the most unlikely place for a fraud to have been perpetrated: Clay City, with less than 500 inhabitants and they only very unsophisticated farmers who are not at all interested in esoteric matters such as Bar Kokhba numismatics.

These coins have all turned up in a haphazard manner. Nevertheless, once we can show that the connections implied were not only possible but certain, things appear in a new light.

HEBREW INSCRIPTIONS

In 1885 a prestigious American institution, the Smithsonian of Washington, while doing field work in our own Southeast, found an untouched tomb at Bat Creek, Tennessee, and excavated it to the bottom, where nine undisturbed skeletons were found. Under the head of the skeleton which from its position seems to have been that of the chief person, was found a stone containing a pure Hebrew inscription which includes LYHWD, "Unto Judah." In the form of its letters it resembles Jewish coins of the First and Second rebellions against Rome, which date respectively to AD 66-70 and AD 132-135.

I am not yet willing to pinpoint which of the two dates it belongs to, but it is definitely authentic. Moreover, unlike the Paraíba text from Brazil (Newsletter, 111.01, 118.0), the Bat Creek inscription cannot be attacked on the grounds that it should have been found

in a bona fide archaeological excavation under professional supervision but was not; for it was indeed. And it was published in a prestigious tome of an institution with a peerless reputation, back in 1894. It has been on record all these years and can now no longer be hidden away, sequestered, or just destroyed!

(See Cyrus Thomas, "Report on Mound Explorations of the Bureau of Ethnology," *Twelfth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology 1890-91*, pp. 17-730, especially pp. 393-394. Government Printing Office: Washington, 1894. Ed.)

EVIDENCE DISAPPEARS

Much evidence, by the way, simply disappears when it runs against standard opinion. Some of you must know that there exists a Roman figurine head of about AD 200 found in a professionally excavated site in Mexico, for it has been published. But it is the hardest thing in the world to get anyone to show it to you, for such an artifact comes to be shunned as though it were obscene. When people want to avoid any contamination from contact with such things, the artifacts tend to disappear.

(See Robert Heine-Geldern, "A Roman Find From Pre-Columbian Mexico," *Anthropological Journal of Canada*, Vol. 5, 1967, No. 4, pp. 20-22; see also Newsletter, 79.0. Ed.)

I went with a group of friends to Piraeus, the seaport of ancient Athens, some years ago and asked to see the Phoenician inscription that used to be on prominent display there. It has been published many times. (Classicists sometimes forget that one of the main sources of

Phoenician inscriptions is Attica, where about a dozen published examples have been discovered.) The museum staff told me there was no such thing. The director assured me he had never heard of such a thing. I asked, "Would you mind getting out your catalog?" He replied, "Not at all." After fingering through the pages of the catalog he was able to find it and said, "Yes, but it will take me two weeks to get it from the storage room."

This is the way the Establishment frequently treats materials they find uncomfortable, and the less said about it the better. I think the moral is quite clear. We as Americans, interested in the culture of our own continent, should begin to put things into perspective.

CRETAN SEAL STONES

Do you know how the Minoan civilization of Crete was discovered by Sir Arthur Evans at the turn of the century? Some seal stones turned up in the hands of dealers. Seal stones! They looked different from other seals that he knew. So he began to talk to the dealers, to find out the source, which turned out to be peasants in central and eastern Crete. He explored the area and finally decided to excavate Knossos, the largest of the ancient ruined cities in that area.

It was these seal stones, *not* found in the course of professional excavation, that pointed to the great Minoan civilization.

Evans was a man of faith of a sort. He felt that a great nation like the Minoans, much praised by the classical Greeks, could not have been illiterate. They must have had a written language, although there was no one at that time who had any evidence of it.

He dug and found not only what he was looking for, but much more besides. He found not only the Minoan Linear A material but also thousands and thousands of tablets of Linear B, which was the earliest form of Greek.

SPAIN

There are now being found quite a few Phoenician inscriptions in Spain. Spain, we know from historic records, was a great Phoenician center. It has only been in the present century that any Phoenician inscriptions have been brought to light in Spain, because previously the peasants would simply destroy them or throw them away. No one cared about them. If inscriptions did happen to turn up somewhere, the skeptics would say, "You are dealing in fakes of no value."

In other words, Spain has become a productive area for Phoenician investigation only within the past few decades.

AMERICA

My prediction is that the same thing is about to happen in America. Everyone knows about the great Maya, Aztec, and Inca civilizations of Middle and South America, but there also exists important material in our own North American soil, some of it in places that are familiar to Mormons. There are other areas, however, that were unfamiliar to all of us, that is until the material began to come forth, in what many would still consider to be the most unlikely places, such as Georgia, Tennessee, and Kentucky.

We Americans have a great ancient past. It is only through positive effort, overcoming frustration, and not paying attention to heckling and criticism that we are entitled to know the truth about these matters. Such effort alone can make it possible for historians to put on record, for the first time, a comprehensive history of the human race.

COLOR TRANSPARENCIES

(shown after the foregoing address)

I have selected, at the request of Mr. Virgil V. Peterson, symposium chairman, four color transparencies of pre-Columbian New World portraits which help to bring out the evidence on Old World contacts.

While you are looking at these I want you to remember that no artist can invent a human type. If someone paints a Chinese accurately this indicates that he has either seen such a type or has been exposed to the work of other artists who have seen it.

A geometrical design can be invented. Any artist or pseudo-artist can put together a square, a triangle, or four dots, color them up a bit, and have a work of art for the modern museum. But this cannot be done with human racial types; these cannot be invented.

SLIDE ONE: This is part of a heroic-size head from southern Mexico. It is Maya.

SLIDE TWO: Here we have a group of Preclassic figures, which means before about AD 300. They come from various parts of Mexico. One of the interesting observations that a number of writers have made without realizing its implications is that the further back we go in time and the farther away from the Bering Strait, the less "Indian" the ancient peoples looked.

Notice the beard, certainly not typical of American Indians. Here also is scarification as well as a prominent nose.

The remarkable thing in Middle America is that, before AD 300, we do not find Indian types at all. By Indian types I mean those that resemble the American Indians as we know them since the discovery by Columbus. There were no Aztec nor Maya types, but



SLIDE ONE: Heroic-size Maya head in the collection of Dr. Alexander von Wuthenau, Mexico City. SLIDE TWO: Ceramic figures of non-“Indian” type. From (l. to r.) Guerrero, Veracruz, Tlatilco, Maya zone (incense burner), and Nayarit. All are of Preclassic (Book of Mormon-period) date, except that from Nayarit. SLIDE THREE: Large ceramic head of Negroid type. From a Mixtec (Postclassic) site in Oaxaca. SLIDE FOUR: “Mediterranean merchant prince,” a face adorning a large ceramic incense-burner found in the Maya zone of Guatemala.

rather a number of Old World types from across both oceans.

SLIDE THREE: No fair-minded person can deny that this is an African. Look at his color, flat nose, and thick lips. This is a portrait, if not of an individual—though it may be that—then certainly of a well-known type.

How can it be denied, in view of an artifact such as this, which was found in America and is dated archaeologically to a time centuries before Columbus, that ancient people from Africa actually got here by boat? This is evidence of a kind that cannot be dismissed. Nor is it a matter of just one Negro, or one Semite, or one Chinaman. There are hundreds of examples.

And something that we should not forget, although I think many art historians have not yet realized it, is that there is more variety and liveliness in the portraiture of human beings in ancient Middle America than in any category of classical art. Not even Greeks, Romans, or Egyptians came anywhere near it. You can see the amount of variety you get from these few portraits I am showing you.

This is Mixtec from Mexico.

SLIDE FOUR: This handsome gentleman, whom I like to call an "East Mediterranean merchant prince," is certainly no Indian of any category. This portrait is part of an American incense-burner of a well-known type. It is Preclassic, i.e. from before AD 300. It was found in Guatemala in the Province of Chimaltenango at an ancient Maya site called Iximché. It is now in the Musée de L'Homme in Paris. There is no doubt as to its authenticity.

This man represents an elite type that made an impact in this hemisphere in Preclassic and Early Classic times. Whether we ought to call him Hebrew, Phoenician, Greek, Etruscan, or Syrian, I do not care. I am not able to ascertain that he is one of these and not any of the others. But one thing is certain: he is a visitor to America from the Mediterranean. That area is of particular interest to us, not only to those involved in Book of Mormon studies, but also to those engaged in studies of the ancient Near East.

This example is as eloquent as any written inscription could be.

125.1 TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM. Preliminary plans for the Twenty-first Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures were laid at a meeting of the SEHA Board of Trustees, held on June 24.

The date for the yearly gathering was set in late October.

Further announcement concerning the Symposium will be made in the next issue of the *Newsletter and Pro-*

ceedings. In the meantime, it is suggested that members who hope to participate begin work at once on the final drafts of their papers.

125.2 NEW COURSE IN SCRIPTURAL ARCHAEOLOGY. "How far can we go in our claims of archaeological support for the Book of Mormon, the Bible, the Pearl of Great Price?"

This query heads a one-page leaflet announcing a new course to be offered at Brigham Young University by the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology beginning in September. The spirit-duplicated flyer was mailed recently to all students majoring in the Department and to several hundred Latter-day Saint educators.

The flyer continues: "TRUE OR FALSE? Noah's ark has been found frozen in solid ice, high on the slopes of Mt. Ararat in northeastern Turkey. TRUE OR FALSE? Some of the original Egyptian papyri once in the possession of Joseph Smith recently turned up in the basement of the Metropolitan Museum, New York City. TRUE OR FALSE? The Smithsonian Institution of Washington uses the Book of Mormon as a guide for archaeological field work in Middle America. TRUE OR FALSE? A stone carving apparently depicting Lehi's vision of the Tree of Life (1 Nephi 8) has been discovered in southern Mexico."

The new, lower-division course is entitled, "Archaeology 280, ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE SCRIPTURES," and is described as an "introduction to the study of the Hebrew-Christian and LDS scriptures, especially their historical parts, in the light of modern archaeology." The class instructor, fall semester, will be Dr. Ross T. Christensen. The new class does not yet appear in the current BYU catalog of courses.

Archaeology 280 is designed for students who want authoritative views as to the question of archaeological support for the Book of Mormon and the other scriptures. The approach will be that of "historic" or text-related archaeology; i.e., the claims of the scriptural accounts themselves will first be examined—following which the findings of archaeology will be drawn upon to check and clarify those claims.

"Archaeology and the Scriptures" has no prerequisite; it may be taken by beginning freshmen. It is suitable for archaeology majors but is planned with non-majors also in mind. It should be especially helpful to prospective LDS missionaries and to those preparing to teach in the seminaries and institutes.

The new course does not affect the remainder of the course-offerings in the Department. For example, the present upper-division courses in biblical and Book of Mormon archaeology (Archaeology 310 and 350, respectively), planned on a more advanced level for juniors and seniors, will continue to be offered at least once a year.