Concho Valley Archeological Society Newsletter

January 2016

CVAS January meeting at Davidson Center at ASU

The January meeting (28th) will be held at the Davidson Center at ASU. CVAS membership approved this meeting place change during the November meeting. The ASU Friends of the Library and West Texas Collection will host a presentation on the Burt Smalley Petroglyphs Archeological Site at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 28, in the Houston Harte C.J. Davidson University Center.

In 1989, a field crew from the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory of the University of Texas at Austin conducted a pipeline survey through Irion County. On a limestone hill near Teepee Draw, they came across petro-glyphs they thought to be pre-historic. After further investigation, it was determined that they were historic carvings, Anglo-American in origin.

2016 Membership Renewals

It's time to renew our memberships for the year. We have made no changes to the yearly fees. Military (active duty) will be renewed automatically and honorary members are always covered and need not renew. You can find the membership forms on the back of this newsletter with the address.

Volunteers Needed

We need to take some of the load off our current volunteers and are looking to spread some of the duties around. Here are volunteer opportunities.

Mailing list. Currently being done by C.A. Maedgen. This consists of taking the mailed newsletter to a printer, making copies and mailing to members that are not on the email listing.

Refreshments: Currently being done by Ginger. This is bringing CVAS refreshments to the meetings. We have two containers of essentials.

Please email us at tomashmore@wcc.net, clarkc74@gmail.com or see one of us at the meeting.

The Secret of Gobekli Tepe: Cosmic Equinox and Sacred Marriage

ancient-origins.net, 4 April, 2015

Editor's Note: My first input into the CVAS newsletter on Gobekli Tepe was in July 2012. If you do not remember or did not read that article you can download it from our website. In my opinion this is probably the most important archeological site on Earth. It literally changed the history of mankind overnight when discovered by a Turkish farmer in 1995. It is a expansive series of intricately carved stone temples beginning around 10,000 B.C. The ancient Sumerian tablets, when translated, indicated the Great Flood was approximately 11,000 B.C. rather than the currently theorized much later period . And the area has now been determined to be the very beginnings of mankind's conversion to the agrarian lifestyle at a time that previous historical study told us there was supposed to be nothing but hunter-gatherers anywhere on the planet. The domesticated variety of einkorn grain now grown throughout the world stems from a wild einkorn that originated from this very area. And finally, Gobeklitepe is in the shadow of Mount Ararat. Some theorize that this may account for the many depictions of animals in stone not native to this area, possibly tying it to the story in the Bible and Noah building a temple after landing on the slopes of Mt. Ararat. So, I thought it was time for an update on the archeological findings of this fantastic site.

Göbeklitepe is an ancient and significant site which has been pushing back the beginnings of civilization further than we previously assumed. As each temple at the Neolithic site is excavated, the story of human history is rewritten. Göbeklitepe is situated in the city of Şanlıurfa (or Urfa) Turkey and it stands out as one of the most interesting prehistoric archaeological sites today. As a result of scientific research, Göbeklitepe temples have been dated to 9600 B.C., at the earliest - in archaeological language it's regarded as Pre-pottery Neolithic A.

During the construction of Göbeklitepe there was no civilization as we know it, as there was in Sumer or Egypt. The discovery of Göbeklitepe caused a paradigm shift of archaeology: religion was evident before the advent of agriculture and permanent settlement, not after, as it was thought.

German archaeologist Klaus Schmidt, head of excavations at the ancient site, Göbeklitepe may have played an I nfluential role in the subsequent civilizations, just as Sumer and Egypt had .

Göbeklitepe hosts numerous circular and square shaped temples. Klaus Schmidt and other scientists claimed that these structures could be used to perform rituals and cultic beliefs, and it's likely that Neolithic shamans headed the rituals held in these mysterious temples.

Six structures have been unearthed as a result of excavations since the beginning of the 1995 season. As of 2015, multiple structures are still being revealed. Temples were identified as A, B, C, D etc.

Common threads connecting the temples are two T-shaped pillars located in the center of the temples, with 10 or 12 pillars surrounding it. The heights of the pillars vary between 3 and 6 meters (10 and 20 feet). These T-shaped pillars can be found not only in Göbeklitepe, but also in other nearby Neolithic settlements like Nevali Çori, Hamzan Tepe, Sefer Tepe and Karahan Tepe.

Almost all pillars residing in Göbeklitepe have various animal reliefs on them, depicting the snake, fox, crane, boar and other assorted creatures. The reliefs show us a quite sophisticated sense of art. Besides the various animal sculptures, totem poles and signed tablets were also unearthed.

We see also ambiguous symbols on some pillars. In addition to ""H" and "I" symbols, several sun and moon symbols were found engraved on some pillars, revealed Schmidt. The sun and moon signs which were engraved on the Temple D center pillars are quite remarkable. The moon is depicted as crescent, and the sun is portrayed with a cavity in its center. Some of these symbols will undoubtedly be vital to solving the secrets of Göbeklitepe.

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The astronomical meanings of these symbols is not controversial. With regard to their positions in the sky, the meaning of these symbols are likely to have cosmic or celestial significance. Perhaps Göbeklitepe temples were built as observatories for the purpose of observing celestial objects like planets and constellations.

Italian archaeoastronomer Giuglio Magli from Milano Polytechnical University propounds that Göbeklitepe temples may have been built for observing Sirius, the brightest star in night sky. According to Magli, the Göbeklitepe community might have celebrated the birth of this new bright star.

Likewise, another astronomer, B. G. Sidharth expresses that 12 pillars located around the center of Temple D could symbolize the 12 months of the year. Sidharth also thinks the "H" sign on one of the center pillars symbolizes the Orion constellation. He believes the sun and moon signs imply a solar eclipse. According to Schmidt, however, the H-like sign characterizes the male and female relationship. When examined closely, it does seem a kind of relationship between two individuals: both thrusting out their hands to one another.

Furthermore, Joe Plegge emphasizes that the holed stone in Temple D might have been designed for determining equinox and solstice days.

The center pillars which depict the "H" and sun-moon signs stylize the human body, as it is generally accepted. Arms and hands can be seen precisely. Human faces are not clear. It might be that they are not humans, but gods or goddesses of the Neolithic. We see arms bestride both sides of the pillar, and the hands come together on omphalos, or navel. This standing position might be considered special and perhaps sacred. Sumerian goddess Inanna was characterized in a standing position just like center pillars of Göbeklitepe. Likewise, huge statues of Easter Islands were constructed in this kind of sacred standing position (hands on omphalos). According to some, this posture symbolizes "birth" or "rebirth".

Pillar in human figure with hands on navel, belt of "H" designs and fox tail loincloth.

Sun and moon symbols are not seen only on the center pillars of Temple D of Göbeklitepe. Later in history we see these signs on Sumerian and Akkadian cylinder seals and on other ancient artworks.

According to historian Emel Esin, Proto-Turks once named this symbol as "Kün-ay (Sun-moon)". Kün-ay has a sacred meaning in Proto-Turkish culture. Emel Esin clarifies that this Kün-ay was the sign of the first crescent day: the first day of the first month of spring. At the same time, naturally it symbolizes the equinox day of spring, 21 of March. On that day, day-time and nighttime are of approximately equal duration. On the equinox Proto-Turks - and still modern Turks –celebrated the coming of spring, in a sense an awakening of nature, and the rebirth of earth. In this period, the fertility and of earth would increase, and soil would give plenty of produce.

Akkadian seal and sun-moon

Emel Esin also emphasizes that Chu Turks were using this symbol on their state flag circa 2000 B.C. in Middle Asia. According to Esin, Kün-ay sign is the origin of modern-day Turkish Republic state flag with crescent and star. Kün-ay sign has been found in artworks of Hun Turks. Additionally, we see Kün-ay and crescent-star motifs on Gokturk state coins. In modern-day Mongolia (an old Proto-Turkish region) the state flag features two pillars and Kün-Ay sign.

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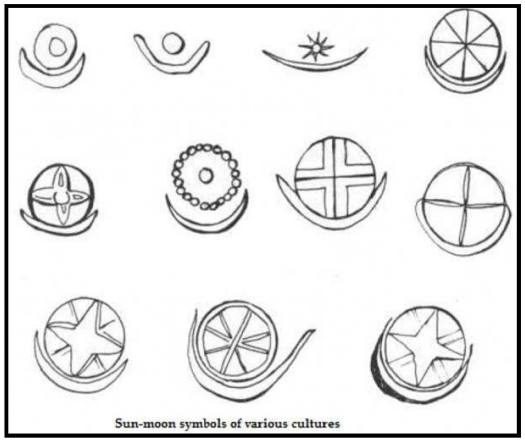

Sun-moon symbols of various cultures

Proto-Turkish Kün-Ay and Göbeklitepe's sun-moon signs are not just similar: they are exactly same! On both symbols, we see a cavity at the center of sun symbol. This is such a commonly repeated description that we can't say it is a coincidence. According to Emel Esin, the cavity at the center signifies the luminous side of nature. It describes coming of spring, it describes rebirth of nature, and fertility as well.

Dr. Cathy Burns refers to the crescent-star motif as a "fertility symbol" in her study "The Hidden Secrets Of The Eastern Star". Similar crescent-star motifs can be seen on Aphrodite temple images, and on ancient Cyprus coins. As it is well known, Aphrodite was the Greek goddess of love, beauty, procreation and fertility. In Greek mythology, she is corresponded with the Sumerian goddess Inanna. Additionally, one of the symbols of Inanna was also the crescent-star. Hititttes saw this as a sign of rebirth. Lakota Indians used the crescent-star symbol for defining the solar eclipse.

B. G. Sidharth's comment about sun-moon images relates, in that he believes the sun-moon symbols found on the center pillar in Temple D describes a solar eclipse.

It is likely that the crescent-star sign then symbolizes rebirth of nature. If so, the sun-moon motif on the Göbeklitepe pillar might also symbolize the beginning of spring, time of the equinox, and rebirth of nature and earth.

More on Gobekli Tepe

Tom Ashmore

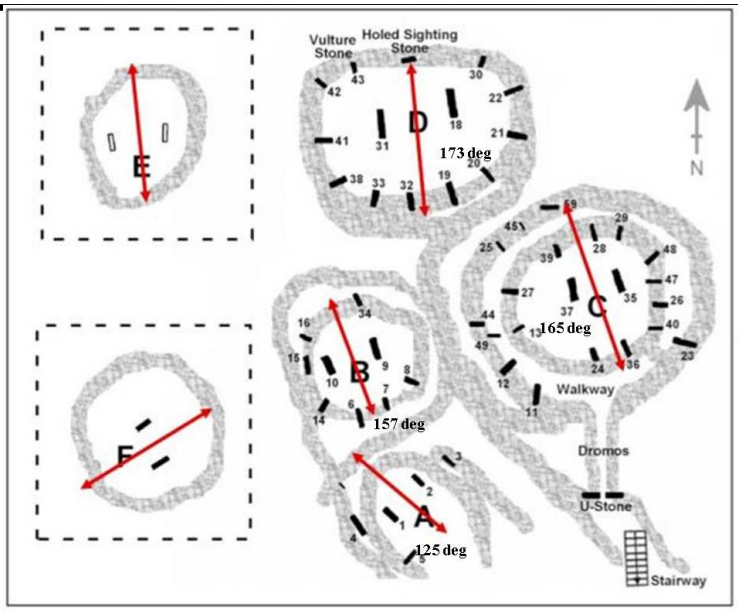
Structures identified with the Pre-Pottery Neolithic A (PPNA), have been dated to the 10th millennium BCE. Remains of smaller buildings identified as Pre-Pottery Neolithic B (PPNB) and dating from the 9th millennium BCE have also been unearthed.

A number of radiocarbon dates have been published. The Hd samples are from charcoal in the lowest levels of the site and would date the active phase of occupation. The Ua samples come from pedogenic carbonate coatings on pillars and only indicate the time after the site was abandoned.

Sightings were scientifically measured for each enclosure.

Enclosures B,C,D are each 8 degrees different. Enclosure A is 32 degrees different from Enclosure B.

Precession of the Earth is one degree every 72 years. So, each enclosure of B,C & D needed to be closed and a new one reset every 576 years (8 deg X 72 years). The first enclosure stayed the same for 2,304 years (32 deg X 72 years)



Artifact carbon dating

Lab-Number	Date BP	Cal BCE	Context
Ua-19561	8430 ± 80	7560–7370	enclosure C
Ua-19562	8960 ± 85	8280–7970	enclosure B
Hd-20025	9452 ± 73	9110–8620	Layer III
Hd-20036	9559 ± 53	9130–8800	Layer III

By using artifact dating period of Enclosure B (9130 – 8800 B.C.E.) we can determine the date of Enclosure A (oldest) to be (11,403 – 11,104 B.C.E). This matches very well as the post deluvial time frame of around 11,000 B.C.E.

Mesoamerican 'Fool's Gold' Mirrors Found in Arizona Reveal Ties to Ancient Mexico

http://westerndigs.org, Blake de Pastino on January 12, 2015

Archaeologists exploring the ties between ancient cultures in the Southwestern U.S. and central Mexico have turned their attention to some unusual artifacts excavated in Arizona: more than 50 mirrors encrusted with the brilliant mineral pyrite, crafted in distinctly Mesoamerican styles.

The mirrors were originally unearthed in the 1930s and 1960s, during excavations of a major settlement of the Hohokam culture now known as Snaketown.

Most of the mirrors were found broken, burned, and buried with cremated human remains, with 36 mirrors having been discovered in 16 separate graves.

They were just one of the many signs of cultural interaction from Mesoamerica discovered at Snaketown — along with ceremonial ball courts, copper bells, and the remains of colorful macaws.

But until an effort was undertaken in 2001 to analyze the grave goods and repatriate them to the modern Gila River Indian Community, the pyrite mirrors went unstudied.

"I thought that the pyrite mirrors were a very interesting topic and that I'd find a lot of information on them," said Dr. Emiliano Gallaga of Mexico's National Institute of Anthropology and History, who took part in the repatriation project.

"But with time, I found that everybody mentioned them, but there was no research about them."

So Gallaga documented the mirrors' sizes, shapes, materials, and methods of manufacture, with a view to determining where they were made, how, and by whom.

His analysis revealed that the mirrors were likely created in central Mexico from local materials, in a painstaking, time-consuming process that made them costly status symbols.

"Today, a mirror is a normal item of our daily life, but in the past, an item that could reflect an image was really expensive.

"According to our research, a single, small mirror could need 900 to 1300 hours, or 110 to 160 days, for a single craftsperson to do. So they are expensive to make."

Early accounts and depictions of mirrors used among the Olmec, Maya, and Aztecs showed that they were often worn by elite members of society as ornaments, sometimes on the chest, other times on a belt at the base of the back, or on headgear.

"Mirrors were not only an item to see yourself; they were also portals to another dimension, to the ancestors, and a prestige item too," Gallaga said.

Radiocarbon dates associated with the burials dated the mirrors from between 650 to 950 CE, a broad range from the Classic Period of Mesoamerica, when the Maya network of city states and the metropolis of Teotihuacan were at their peaks.

What's more, the techniques used to make them — with delicate flakes of pyrite glued to sandstone or other rock with adhesive likely made from tree resin — bear the distinctive signs of Mesoamerican craftsmanship.

This, combined with the fact that there were no known deposits of pyrite, also known as fool's gold, that were used by the Hohokam, suggest that the mirrors were made much farther south from where they were buried.

WE'RE ON THE WEB AT
CVASSANANGELO.ORG

Meeting Location

Please remember that our meetings are now in the classroom at the Fort Concho Living History Stables, **236 Henry O. Flipper St. We enter through the side door.**

2016 Membership Application

Name_____

Address_____

City_____

Zip_____ **Phone**_____

Cell_____

Family members_____

_____

Email_____

I pledge I will not intentionally violate the terms or conditions of any current or future state or local statute concerning cultural resources or engage in the practice of buying or selling artifacts for commercial purposes, or engage in the willful destruction of archeological data, or disregard proper archeological field techniques

Signature_____ Date_____

Individual	**$15**	☐
Family	**$20**	☐
Student or military N/C		☐

(active military only)

Mail to: CVAS, 132 Kilt Road, San Angelo, TX 76901