

Where Is Punt, the 'Land of God'?

by Rick Sanders

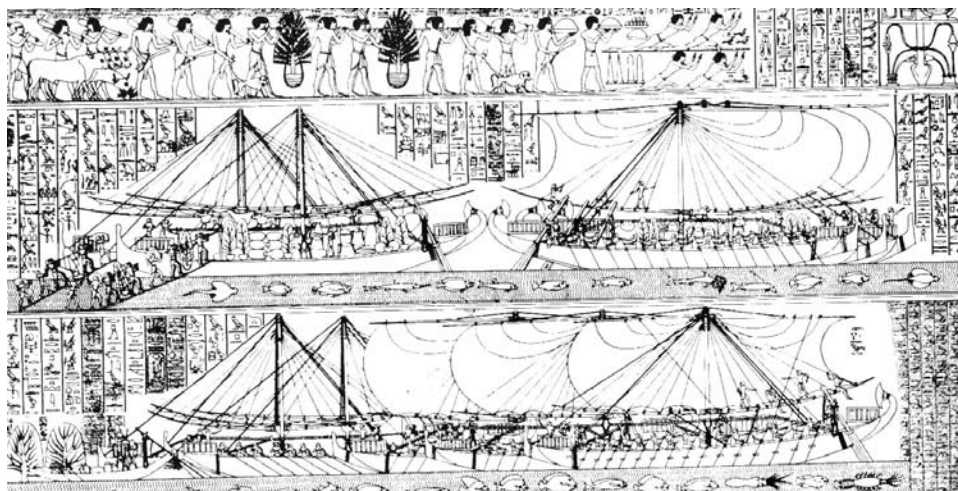
In late 2006, archaeologists excavating man-made caves on the coast of the Red Sea found well-preserved cedar timbers, together with limestone block-anchors, curved cedar steering oars, rigging ropes of sea-going vessels dating back 3,800 years old, buried at what is today called Wadi Gawasis, near what was a port on the Red Sea in pharaonic times.¹

Also found were references to the "Land of God," or Punt, which caused more than a little excitement, since the very existence of Punt had become obscured in the mists of the time.

The question that has not yet been answered is: Where is Punt? Egyptian scholars do not agree on its location: The University of Cairo says it's Yemen, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, or Sudan. Others add Zimbabwe, Hadhramaut, or India. But in our judgment, even India is too close, for none of these destinations would require a return trip of three years, which is the time agreed upon by most Egyptian historical sources for the journey to and from Punt. Nor would you need 10,000 men, the number cited by historical sources.

And then there's the question of the minerals that the Egyptians brought back from Punt—antimony and gold. The nearest antimony to Egypt is only 3,000 miles away, in Madagascar. But where did the gold come from?

As you will see below, the late Paul Gallez, an ancient map scholar, believed that the land of Punt was in the Puno region of Peru. The geographer, historian, intellectual troublemaker, and Barry Fell



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Egyptian boats depicted on the wall of the funerary temple of Queen Hatshepsut in the Eighteenth Dynasty (1540-1304 B.C.). The largest expedition during her dynasty had at least five large ships, with 30 oarsmen in each, on a journey that lasted three years.

associate, George F. Carter² translated a work from German by H. Quiring, who believes that Punt was the island of Sumatra, where the Egyptians mined gold between 1200 and 500 B.C.

Quiring mentioned two French sinologists, Pauthier and Bazin, who reported that in 1113 B.C., the Chinese emperor Chou-Kung received ambassadors from the kingdom of Ni-li, probably Egyptians, who had made a long voyage in "swimming houses" and who could determine their position by means of observation of the Sun and heavenly bodies. Carter then did a calculation, taking the average speed of a ship during the 1600s (from Francesco Carletti's *My Voyage Around the World*), and concluded that in three years you could go around the world at a leisurely pace. Therefore, Punt could be half the world away.

2. Carter wrote *Pleistocene Man at San Diego* (Johns Hopkins Press, 1957) and *Earlier Than You Think: A Personal View of Man in America* (College Station: Texas A. and M. University Press, 1981). See also Carter's article, "Egyptian Gold Seekers and Exploration in the Pacific," *The Epigraphic Society Bulletin*, Vol. 2, No 27 (Feb. 1975).

Nito Verdera, the Ibizan journalist and indefatigable investigator of Christopher Columbus, has summarized the theory of his historian friend, the now deceased Paul Gallez,³ which he has given us permission to include here.

Nito Verdera: The Egyptian Theory

"In *La Cola del Dragón*, Paul Gallez tells us that the theory referring to the earliest travels to distant lands as yet not identified with total certainty, is that of the expeditions to the Land of Punt (Richard Hennig, *Terrae Incognitae*, 4 vols, Leiden, Brill 1950, in vol. I, pages 5-13). The first known voyage to this region is that organised by the pharaoh Sahure of the fifth dynasty (circa 2550 B.C.). His ships brought back incense, myrrh, gold, silver, precious woods and slaves from Punt and the many other lands and islands they called at during the voyage. Not all these items came from the Land

3. Paul Gallez's book *La Cola del Dragón*, *The Tail of the Dragon*, (Bahía Blanca, Argentina, 1990), was reviewed in the Winter 2005-2006 *21st Century*, Winter 2005 ("A Pre-Columbus View of the Americas," by Rick Sanders, p. 70).

1. For a description of the expedition, see http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2006-03/fsuwos030606.php.



Courtesy of Nito Verdera

Nito Verdera, lecturing on Christopher Columbus.

of Punt, so we do not have to look for just one country producing all these riches.

"The pharaoh Asa (Ilesi) followed Sature's example, and around 2400 B.C. he also sent out his fleets to the Land of Punt. One of the princesses of the sixth dynasty was placed in her tomb, ready for her journey to the Land of the Dead, wearing a lip colouring with an antimony base, though this metal was totally unknown in Egypt and any of its neighbouring countries. The stone on the tomb of Knemhopet, a pilot from the island of Elephantine who had been on eleven voyages to the Land of Punt, dates back to the same period..."

"The best-known and possibly the most fruitful voyages, are those organised by Queen Hatshepsut (also called Hacheput, Hatcheposut, Hushpeswa, Hatashopsitu, Hachepsowe, Hatasuput and Hatscheposut, 1501-1482 B.C.) whose deeds are engraved in the temple of Deir-el-Bahari, which she herself ordered to be built in Thebes to honour Amen-Ra. Hatshepsut's main expedition was made up of at least five large ships with thirty oarsmen in each of them. They sailed from somewhere on the Red Sea and were away for three years.

"One of the inscriptions in the temple of Deir-el-Bahari reads: *The inhabitants of Punt asked: How have you reached this country unknown to man? Have you flown here through the sky, or have you sailed across the Great Ocean from the*



Courtesy of Nito Verdera

Paul Gallez, an expert in ancient maps, located Punt in Peru.

Land of the Gods? (Richard Hennig: *Terrae Incognitae*, 4 vols, Leiden, Brill 1950, I, 5, Ophir)...

"How can one not feel tempted by interpretations that immediately spring to mind and would seem to give each other mutual support? The expression 'Great Ocean' is what we know today as the Pacific Ocean. The Land of the Gods is the name given to the West in all mythologies, which would place the Pacific to the west of Punt and would therefore place Punt in America.

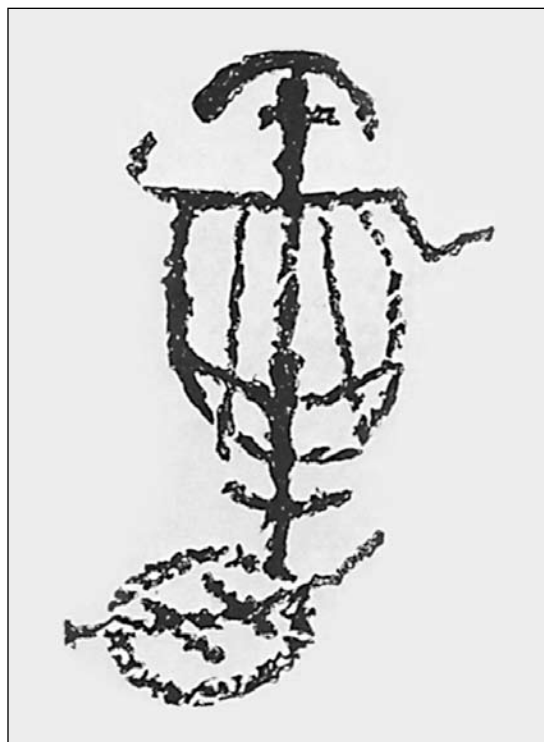
"According to the tales of the life of Ramses IV in the Harris Papyrus kept in the British Library, the pharaoh Ramses III sent an expedition of 10,000 men to Punt in 1180 B.C. The last expedition that we know of, which set off at around the middle of the second century B.C., was arranged with the help of traders and bankers from Massilia, our modern-day Marseilles (Hans Philip: article on "Massilia" in Pauly's *Real-Encyclopädie der classichen Altertumswissenschaft*/ XIV/2, Stuttgart, Druckenmüller, 1930).

"The Egyptian ships built for ocean going were about thirty meters long and up to eighty-five tons in capacity. Under favorable weather conditions, their flat bottoms enabled them to sail at great speed. When the wind dropped, the oarsmen would take over the job of propelling the vessel, so that the voyage could continue without having to wait for a change of wind.

"Egyptian scholars do not agree on the location of the Land of Punt. Some of them suggest Eritrea, others Somalia, Zimbabwe, Hadhramaut, or India. However, all these places are far too close to the Red Sea to justify the length of the voyage; three years according to all the relevant Egyptian records.

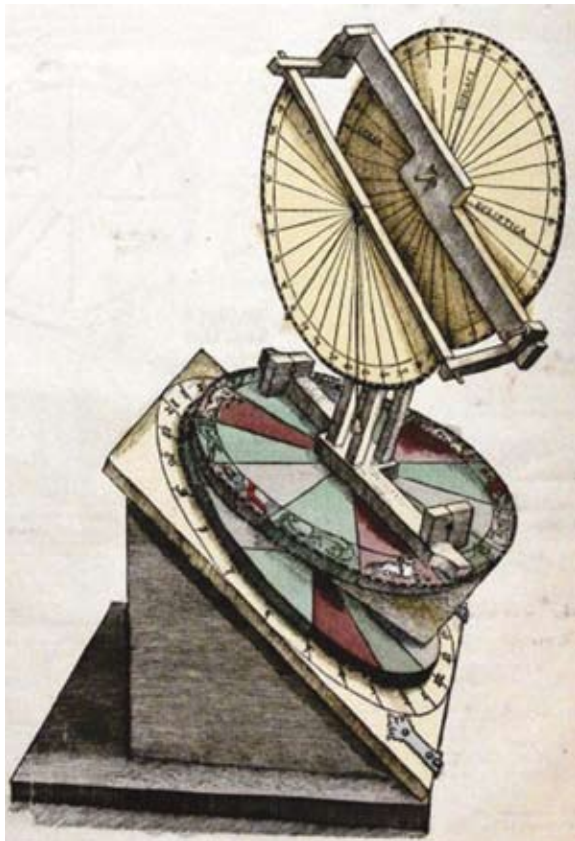
Paul Gallez: Punt Is in Peru

"In his article 'Trois thèses de predecouverte de l'Amerique du Sud par le Pacifique' (*Gesnerus* 33, 1976, Aarau, Zurich), Paul Gallez offers a new interpretation. He locates the Land of Punt in South America, probably, in the Puno region of Peru, on the shores of Lake Titicaca. 70% of Peru's annual gold pro-

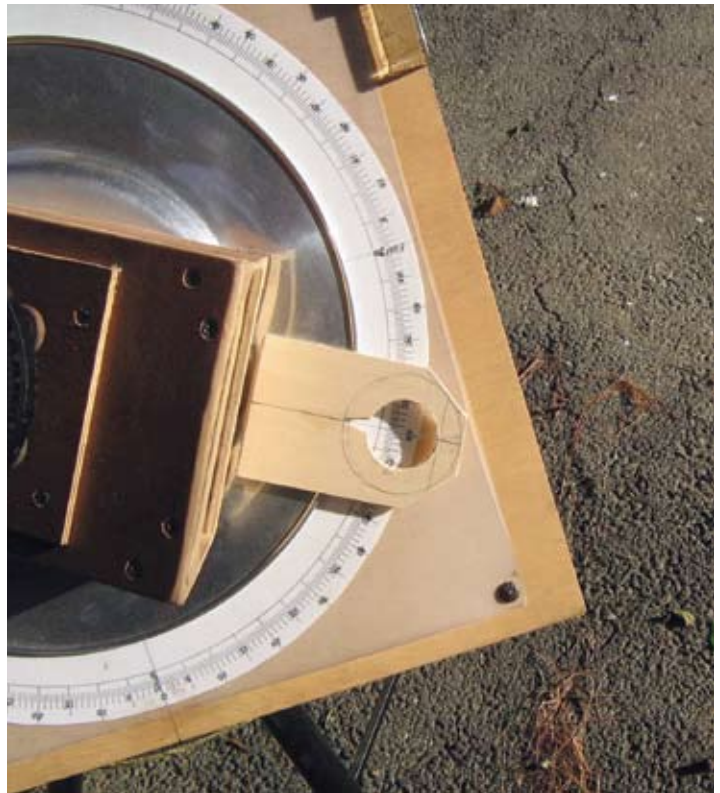


From America B.C., © Barry Fell (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1976), p. 118

This drawing by Maui of his tanawa or calculator, was found in the Caves of the Navigators, Sosorra, Irian Jaya (West New Guinea). The tanawa serves as an analog computer, integrating three different measurements.



The tanawa, or torquetum, as pictured centuries after Maui.



Rick Sanders

The degree circle on a recent torquetum built by the author. The torquetum was used to determine longitude and the equatorial circumference of the Earth using lunar distances.

duction comes from there, together with antimony, mercury, zinc, tin, and cobalt. Old gold and antimony mines can be found in the area, though archaeologists disagree as to their exact age. The boats used to sail on Lake Titicaca, made of *cat-tail* (a long-stemmed, reed-like, grassy plant of the Typhaceae family with a cylindrical ear) are so similar to those used in ancient Egypt that Thor Heyerdahl went to Puno to recruit workers to build him his papyrus boat Ra II on the banks of the Nile."

Astrognation

We need not be surprised at all this since as long ago as the 19th Century B.C., Pharaoh Senusret II built a canal that connected the river Nile to the Red Sea, a canal which has survived until the present day as an irrigation canal. Herodotus tells us that the pharaoh Necho II (circa 600 B.C.) sent out a fleet which took three years to circumnavigate Africa (clockwise).

There is much other evidence of Egyptian voyages to the Americas, as *21st*

Century has reported in previous issues.⁴

4. Among many articles on this topic are:

Julian Fell, "Barry Fell, Epigrapher: Biography of a Renaissance Man," *21st Century*, Winter 1999-2000.

Marjorie Mazel Hecht, "Eratosthenes in Action: The Decipherment and Discovery of a Voyage to America in 232 B.C.," *21st Century*, Winter 1998-1999.

_____, "Eratosthenes' Astronomical Instruments Guided Maui's Voyage in 3rd Century B.C.," *21st Century*, Spring 1999.

Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., "On Eratosthenes, Maui's Voyage of Discovery, and Reviving the Principle of Discovery Today," *21st Century*, Spring 1999.

Ross Perfect, "Pitcairn Island Petroglyph Deciphered," *21st Century*, Winter 2001-2002.

Ross Perfect, "Pitcairn Island Petroglyph Shows Knowledge Of Lunar Eclipse for Finding Longitude," *21st Century*, Winter 2001-2002.

Sentiel Rommel, Ph.D., "Maui's Tanawa: A Torquetum of 232 B.C.," *21st Century*, Spring 1999.

Rick Sanders and Bertram Cooper. "Building and Using Maui's Tanawa," *21st Century*, Fall 2001. <http://www.21stcenturysciencetech.com/articles/fall01/Tanawa/tanawa.html>

Rick Sanders, "Ancient Navigators Could Have Measured Longitude," *21st Century*, Fall 2001 <http://www.21stcenturysciencetech.com/articles/fall01/navigators/navigators.html>

_____, "When Thor Heyerdahl Was Delighted to Be Wrong: The Case of the Guara or Centerboard," *21st Century*, Fall 2003.

In 232 B.C., Captain Rata and Navigator Maui set out with a flotilla of ships from Egypt in an attempt to circumnavigate the Earth. The Maui expedition was under the guidance of Eratosthenes, the great scientist who was also the chief librarian of the library at Alexandria.

This expedition left cave drawings discovered in modern times, showing one of the navigational instruments, a tanawa (or torquetum as it later became known) which Maui had brought with him, along with an inscription deciphered in the 1970s by epigrapher Barry Fell: "The Earth is tilted. Therefore, the signs of half of the ecliptic watch over the south, the other (half) rise in the ascendant. This is the calculator of Maui."

At that time, Eratosthenes had just measured the polar circumference of the Earth. Finding your latitude is easy, but finding your longitude, and the cir-

_____, "Was the Antikythera an Ancient Instrument for Longitude Determination?," *21st Century*, Spring 2003 <http://www.21stcenturysciencetech.com/articles/Spring03/Antikythera.html>



Stonehenge: Remnants of an orderly circular arrangement of posts and marker stones, dating to about 2600 B.C., give evidence that Stonehenge was a sophisticated luni-solar observatory, capable of eclipse prediction among other measurements. Imagine the half-degree marks on the edge of the torquetum's equatorial circle as each representing a vertical post in the Stonehenge observatory.

cumference of the Earth near the equator, as a function of your latitude and the equatorial circumference, is difficult. We know that Maui was thinking about this, because his cave drawings also include a proof of Eratosthenes' experiment to measure the Earth's circumference.

Our hypothesis is that the torquetum was used to determine longitude and the equatorial circumference of the Earth using lunar distances. To do that job, the navigator would have to carry with him an almanac that gave the lunar distances from prominent places for each relevant night of the year, for about 19 years.

Ancient Observatories

We have no proof yet that those almanacs existed, but we do know that the data required could be provided by a conceptual use of the Great Pyramid in Egypt and the Stonehenge, built so close to each other in time (2450 and 2300 B.C. respectively), and of some of the South American pyramids built in the same rough time frame. Imagine the little lines representing the half degrees on the edge of the torquetum's equatorial circle as all representing huge vertical posts or stones.

The torquetum could also be used to gather data sufficient to predict eclipses, which are a relatively easy way to find

your relative longitude (unfortunately, they are very infrequent). All you have to have is a relatively precise local *time* of observation of the eclipse at two points, east and west of each other.

The most famous example of finding relative longitude is the eclipse which took place during the battle of Arbela (in ancient Assyria), Sept. 20, 331 B.C., recorded at both Arbela and Carthage (Tunisia)—at the "fifth hour" at Arbela and the "second hour" at Carthage, which would put Carthage at the approximately correct 45 degrees west of Arbela.

Now, if you can predict eclipses, you can send out expeditions to observe them and kindred events as we have done many times in the last 500 years. Kepler's Rudolphine tables predicted the transit of Mercury for Nov. 7, 1631, and he encouraged observers to be on the lookout for it. Because of the bad weather, only three people saw it, but that was the first time in human history.

Captain Cook's long trip to the South Seas (1769) to observe the transit of Venus is another case in point. These events can be used to determine longitude, and to evaluate various methods used to determine longitude; and also measure the absolute distance of the planets from the Sun.

So do not look around the corner for the land of Punt; it might be halfway

around the world. Man, as Lyndon LaRouche keeps reminding us, and as his Youth Movement has demonstrated, is not a monkey.

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