

Tracking the Sea Peoples Who Settled South America

by Charles Hughes

Axis of the World: The Search for the Oldest American Civilization

by Igor Witkowski

Kempton, Ill.: Adventures Unlimited Press,
2008

Paperback, 238 pp., \$18.95

(illustrated, with 12 color plates)

In his first book in English, Igor Witkowski, a Polish author living in Warsaw, explains the archaeological mysteries of the Pacific Islands and the Pacific coast of South America, focussing on the Indus Valley civilization, Easter Island, and Pacific Coastal, and Andean Plateau civilizations of ancient South America, to mention a few.

The "Axis" in his title describes a latitude band encircling the Earth from 27 degrees North to 27 degrees South, which Witkowski thinks is the major path of colonization of the Pacific in ancient times.

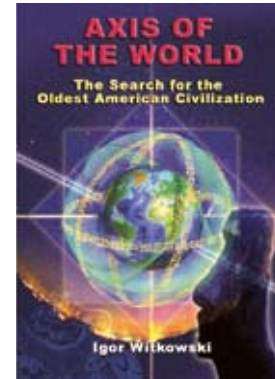
Some of the topics Witkowski explores:

Was there a landmass in the middle of the Pacific in ancient times? Did the Polynesians build the megalithic walls and statues on Easter Island; or the stone city of Nan Madol, containing more than 25 million tons of basalt stone, on the island of Pohnpei in the Carolines; or the multi-ton stone walls and buildings at Tiahuanaco in Bolivia, and similar structures in Peru? Did the dwellers of the Pacific Islands possess and employ a written script?

Is it true that the Incas and their ancestors lacked a written script, and could only keep records on knotted strings? Was there any truth to the observations of the Spaniards, that some of the Inca nobility and Polynesian chieftans were as light

skinned as the Spaniards? Or that the civilizations of the Andes could melt and work platinum metal with a melting point above that of iron, and possessed vast amounts of gold and silver, and fabricated bronze?

Witkowski deals with all these questions, but I will not, to keep this review to a reasonable length. The author believes that the people still living in the Pacific area today originated in the Indus Valley civilization, the ruins of which are found on the border of India-Pakistan, and that their ancestors were of the Dravidian language group. He also claims that Polynesian scripts, such as Easter Island's Rongo Rongo boards, descended from the Indus Valley seal inscription. That is, Indus Valley script equals Easter Island writing, and Polynesian is a Dravidian-based language.



A More Credible Model

A quite different model, which I believe is more credible, can be deduced from the researches of Barry Fell, who points out that the Indus Valley script conveys an Indo-European language, probably early Sanskrit, deciphered with the aid of Java scripts, some signs of which were like the Indus Valley seal script. The Java language was a form of Sanskrit, according to Fell.

Fell said that Easter Island Rongo Rongo was a pictographic script conveying the Polynesian language, the text explaining the early exploration and settlement



British Museum, personal photograph

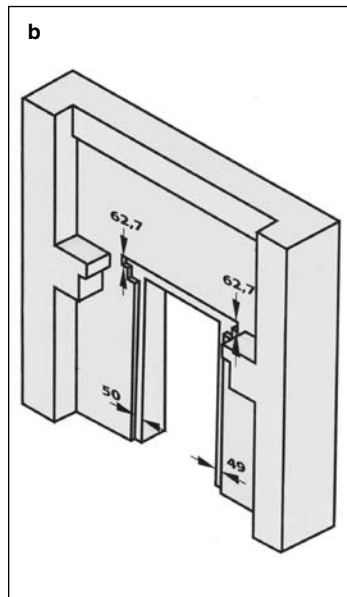
Examples of Indus Valley seal inscriptions. Witkowski thinks that the Polynesian scripts are descended from the Indus Valley scripts, while Barry Fell connected them to early Sanskrit, an Indo-European language.



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A stone block at Puma Punku.

Witkowski's drawing of a typical serially manufactured block at Puma Punku. The measurements are in millimeters.



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of Easter and other islands. Fell was fluent in Maori, a language spoken in New Zealand, where Fell grew up and went to school with Maori schoolmates.

For readers wanting to pursue this fascinating problem, I recommend reading the articles by Barry Fell on the translation of Indus Valley script and Rongo-Rongo writing, in *21st Century Science & Technology*, Summer 2001: "Let the Stones Speak," and in Winter 1999-2000, "Barry Fell, Epigrapher." Also read the translations by Professor Szalek cited by Witkowski in the references, items 7 and 8, p. 229 in the bibliography of *Axis of the World*.

An Ancient Melting Pot

One must realize, I believe, that the Polynesians are a real ancient melting pot of many different people over a vast time span. They were, and are today, an example of a sea people who were able from early times to sail over the entire Pacific Ocean.

When did they do this? When did they begin and from where? It is foolish to speculate on these questions, and postulate a hypothesis about the colonization of the Pacific, as there is archaeological proof that both New Guinea and Australia were colonized by people using boats as long ago as 40,000 years!

Was South America's Pacific coast reached by sea peoples? It surely was. A site in Southern Chile dating from 30,000 B.C. shows the remains of wooden houses and remains of crops, such as potatoes.

This site at Monte Verde, Chile, shows that South America was civilized and practicing agriculture, 20,000 years before people in the Middle East did!

The World's Strangest City

The final chapter of this book is the most interesting, as it deals with the very strange civilizations of the South American Andes plateau, and the sites of Tiahuanaco in Bolivia, and Inca Cusco in Peru. The author thinks that the push across the Pacific from the Indus Valley reached the Pacific coast of South America, and resulted in the founding of the civilizations of the Tiwanakans and the Inca. He shows examples of written scripts from the Andes, debunking the axiom that these civilizations were "illiterate" and had only knotted strings to con-

vey concepts, such as the Inca Quipu cords.

Witkowski also shows that the stone work at the Tiahuanaco site in Bolivia is fashioned to an accuracy of 0.1 millimeter, and that some stones have more than 50 surfaces—this on the world's hardest rock, basalt and andesite. Some of the stones used for building construction have cutouts which were filled with molten metal to connect two or more stone blocks together for extra strength.

The age of the Tiahuanaco and Puma Punku ruins are dated by mainstream archaeologists at about 1500 B.C. to 500 A.D. Aside from the

remarkable stone work, the mystery consists of why a civilization center was built at an altitude of 12,000 feet above sea level, where crops are almost impossible to grow.

The vast lake near to Tiahuanaco, Lake Titicaca, is partially salt water and contains marine animals, but it has no connection to the ocean. Stranger still, divers have discovered ruins of stone walls and a temple on the bottom of the lake!¹

I recommend reading this provocative book, although I believe that its main hypothesis about the origin of the Polynesians is mistaken.

1. See *Ancient America: Contributions to New World Archeology*, N. Sanders, Ed. (Oxford Oxbow books, 1992, pp. 117-143.)



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A reconstructed wall at Tiahuanaco.