# **DEBUNKING ANCIENT ALIENS DEBUNKED**

#### Aerik Vondenburg

aerikvondenburg.com, 2014

Ancient Aliens Debunked is a video narrated and produced by Chris White, with commentary by Dr. Michael S. Heiser, that attempts to disprove the theories presented in the History Channel series Ancient Aliens. The video can not only be found on the website <a href="http://ancientaliensdebunked.com/">http://ancientaliensdebunked.com/</a> but also on various video-sharing websites.

To begin with, I acknowledge that I do agree with at least some of the accusations that have been directed at the "ancient astronaut theorists" (such as Erich Von Daniken and Zecheria Sitchin) by White and Heiser. I agree that some of the theorists who promote the idea that the gods and mythologies of the ancient world were inspired by extraterrestrial beings are guilty of not regarding proper methodology, and therefore have asserted interpretations that are most likely not entirely accurate. I agree, for instance, that there is not much reason to believe that the Tolima jets, the Egyptian light-bulb, and ancient nuclear warfare

are true. I also mostly agree with the Pumapunku criticisms, although Chris White did make an unwarranted assumption about the Inca not having the ability to admit that they were not the oldest civilization because it "would have been detrimental to the whole scheme." This is an unwarranted assumption, which is ironic because earlier in the video White criticizes ancient astronaut theorists for making assumptions. Furthermore, I have also found no evidence that would support Zecheria Sitchin's belief that Nibiru is an undiscovered planet in our own solar system, and that the gold that was collected from Earth was put into Nibiru's atmosphere. Therefore, this is a criticism that I agree with as well.

Unfortunately, Ancient Aliens Debunked gets less accurate as it goes on.

#### **GOLD MINING SLAVES**

In AAD, Chris White claims that the Sumerian texts "do not speak of mining gold in any way." However, not only is gold-mining referred to but it is referred to repeatedly.

It is first necessary to be aware of the fact that the texts clearly state that precious metals were important to the gods.

Let the magilum boats of Meluḫa transport gold and silver and bring them to Nibru for Enlil, king of all the lands."

-Enki and the World Order

An artfully made bright crenellation rising out from the abzu was erected for Lord Nudimmud [Enki/Ea].

He built the temple from precious metal, decorated it with lapis lazuli, and covered it abundantly with gold [. . .] the temple of Enki bellows.

—Enki's Journey to Nibru

The original texts clearly state that the gods desired precious metals for the same reason that we mortals do; namely, for their lustrous and prestigious qualities (which is what Sitchin did not understand). Of course, in order to acquire those precious metals, they had to be extracted from the earth.

On both his website and in AAD, biblical scholar Michael Heiser challenges investigators to go to the website: The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature (<a href="http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/">http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/</a>), and read the texts for ourselves to see if he is telling the truth regarding his denunciation of gods and gold-mining. I took Heiser and up on his challenge and went to the ETCSL website to investigate his claim. What I discovered is that, <a href="https://example.com/">no, he is not telling the truth.</a>

The following passages are from the website, in which the mining of precious metals is referred to[1]:

To demolish E-kur as if it were a huge ship, to break up its soil like the soil of mountains where precious metals are mined, to splinter it like the lapis lazuli mountain, [. . .]

—The Cursing of Agade

[. . .] before the commerce was practiced; before gold, silver, copper, tin, blocks of lapis lazuli, and mountain stones were brought down together from their mountains, before ...... bathed for the festival, ....., ...... time passed.

-Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta

In this next passage, there is a reference to both gold mining and the Anunnaki

#### goddess, Ninhursag:

Henceforth people shall speak of Ninḫursaĝa. So be it. Let its meadows produce herbs for you. Let its slopes produce honey and wine for you. [ . . .] Let it mine gold and silver for you, make ...... for you. Let it smelt copper and tin for you, make its tribute for you.

—Ninurta's Exploits: a sir-sud (?) to Ninurta

The mining of precious metals was overseen by the Anunnaki god, Enlil:

Ores (?) from Ḥarali, the faraway land, ...... storehouses, ....., rock-crystal, gold, silver, ......, the yield of the uplands ......, heavy loads of them, were despatched [sic] by Enlil toward Ereš. After the personal presents, the transported goods ......, Ninmaḫ and the minister ....... The dust from their march reached high into the sky like rain clouds.

—Enlil and Sud

In the following text, the human king Gudea is given the task of building a temple to the Anunnaki god, Ningirsu[2]:

Great things came to the succour [sic] of the ruler building the E-ninnu: a copper mountain in Kimaš revealed itself to him. He mined its copper onto rafts. To the man in charge of building his master's house, the ruler, gold was brought in dust form from its mountains. For Gudea refined silver was brought down from its mountains. Translucent cornelian from Meluha was spread before him. From the alabaster mountains alabaster was brought down to him.

—The Building of Ningirsu's Temple (Gudea, cylinders A and B)

White also asserts that the minor gods, who are referred to as the Igigi, were "creating the world," not digging for gold or digging irrigation canals (the canals refer to Zecheria Sitchin's findings). He then says, "It [ The Atra Hasis text ] even

specifically states that they were making mountains and rivers." However, this is not true. Here is what this eighteenth-century BCE Akkadian text actually says[3]:

When the gods instead of man

Did the work, bore the loads,

The gods' load was too great,

The work too hard, the trouble too much,

The great Anunnaki made the Igigi

Carry the workload sevenfold.

Anu their father was king,

Their counselor warrior Ellil,

Their Chamberlain was Ninurta,

Their canal-controller Ennugi.

They took the box of lots

Cast the lots; the gods made the division.

Anu went up to the sky,

And Ellil took the earth for his people.

The bolt which bars the sea

Was assigned to far-sighted Enki.

When Anu had gone up to the sky,

And the gods of the Apsu had gone below,

The Annunaki of the sky

Made the Igigi bear the workload.

The gods had to dig out canals,

Had to clear channels, the lifelines of the land. The gods dug out the Tigris river And then dug out the Euphrates. ...in the deep ...they set up ...the Apsu ...of the land ...inside it ...raised its top ...of all the mountains They were counting the years of loads ...the great marsh, They were counting the years of loads. For 3,600 years they bore the excess, Hard work, night and day.

They groaned and blamed each other,

Grumbled over the masses of excavated soil:

[. . .]

-Atra-Hasis

The lower-rank gods, known as the Igigi, were "excavating soil," not creating the planet Earth. It was their job to "dig out canals" and "clear channels." The water that supplied the irrigation canals derived from "the Tigris river," and "the Euphrates." Therefore, they were not actually creating these rivers, but rather were using them as a source of water for the irrigation canals. Indeed, these canals are mentioned throughout the Sumerian texts:

[. . .] the senior gods oversaw the work, while the minor gods were bearing the toil. The gods were digging the canals and piling up the silt in Harali. The gods, dredging the clay, began complaining about this life.

—Enki and Ninmah

After the canals are mentioned in the Atra Hasis text, there are a series of dots that represent damaged portions of the original text; which includes the following lines:

...raised its top

...of all the mountains.

White apparently assumes that the Igigi were raising the tops of the mountains; however, he does not take into account the missing text. How are we to know what was originally there? Are we supposed to assume that we should insert the word that would indicate that the Igigi were *making* the mountains. But that is another assumption, which White tells us that we should not do. If we are going to make assumptions, then I propose the following assumption: The missing words indicate that the Igigi were *mining the precious metals* ... "of all the mountains." However, unlike White, I can use textual evidence to support this interpretation.

# THE EXTRATERRESTRIAL ANUNNAKI

White claims that there is no evidence that advanced divine beings, who are referred to in the Sumerian texts as the Anunnaki, were extraterrestrials that descended from the sky, and even calls the idea "preposterous." White also challenges anyone to come up with a "word for word" text that says that the Anunnaki came down to Earth in flying ships. Notice the words "word for word." This is a bit of an escape tactic on his part in case anyone is actually able to find a reference to the extraterrestrial nature of the Anunnaki—which is what I am about to do.

In order to understand the Anunnaki, this group must first be properly defined. It is apparent that both White and Heiser do not understand the difference between the Elohim, the Nephilim, the Rephaim, the Igigi, the Anunnaki, and the gods. It is first necessary to understand that the beings who became known as "gods" in the Mesopotamian world were the elite aristocracy of a preternatural species who were referred to as the Anunnaki (i.e., "the Anuna gods") by the early Mesopotamians. Although they are sometimes associated with the underworld (e.g., Nergal, Ningishzida, etc.), they cannot all be limited to this classification. The Anunnaki were the royal ruling class because they were direct descendants of the patriarchal king, Anu (i.e., An); hence the appellation ANUna-ki, which means "those of princely blood," or "royal offspring" of Anu (Gwendolyn 1998: 7; Leeming 2005: 21). Therefore, the Anunnaki and the socalled "gods" were related. Indeed, in the Epic of Gilgamesh, as well as other texts, the Anunnaki are specifically referred to as "gods" (Flood Chapter, tablet 11, etc.). For more on this subject please see both the essay on my website (aerikvondenburg.com): "Heiser is Wrong," and especially The Esoteric Edition of my upcoming book, The Genesis of Revelation, titled The Secret Universe, (which I expect to be finished in 2018), in which the relationship between the Anunnaki, the Igigi, the Nephilim, the Rephaim, the Elohim, and the gods, is examined and explained in more detail.

In the following text, the Anunnaki are described as having the ability to ascend up into the sky:

When Anu had gone up to the sky,

And the gods of the Apsu had gone below,

The Annunaki of the sky

Made the Igigi bear the workload.

—Atra Hasis

According to the texts, the divine rulers descended down to the Earth. In these cases, the word "heaven" is the firmament of the sky (similar to the Hebrew word *Shamayim*)—which is the original definition of this word.

After the ..... of kingship had descended from heaven, after the exalted crown and throne of kingship had descended from heaven, the divine rites and the exalted powers were perfected, the bricks of the cities were laid in holy places, their names were announced and the ..... were distributed.

—The Flood Story (Segment B)

After kingship descended from heaven, kingship was in Eridug.

—The Sumerian King List

The original divine king who ruled over "Eridug" (i.e., Eridu) was the Anunnaki god, Enki (i.e., Ea). The record is clear that the Anunnaki were of the same species as the so-called "gods."

Enlil, the beaming light, ....., whose utterance is immutable, the most powerful of the Anuna gods,

. . . . . ,

—A dedication of a statue (Šulgi V)

I am named with a good name by Ninḫursaĝa. I am the leader of the Anuna gods. I was born as the firstborn son of holy An."

-Enki and the world order

White also says that the Anunnaki descending in vehicles is "pure fiction." He then goes on to make an even more preposterous claim: that is, that the ancient symbol of the winged disk (Figure 1; Figure 2) "are not associated with the Anunnaki at all."

The image of the winged disk appears all throughout the ancient Mesopotamian/Levantine world. It is commonly interpreted by mainstream scholars as a "solar disk"—or, in the case of Zecheria Sitchin, as the planet Nibiru. However, the sun disk interpretation is only plausible in *some* cases, not in others. Furthermore, Sitchin's Nibiru interpretation does not seem to be accurate at all.

It is believed that the wings represent the natural orbital type movement of the Sun; however, not only are the gods sometimes shown inside these flying disks (Figure 3) but they are also shown being taken up into the air by these same objects as well (Figure 4). The solar disks that are found that actually do represent the Sun are depicted with light rays emanating from them, as opposed to wings (Figure 5). Furthermore, if the wings on the disks are intended to represent the orbital movement of the celestial object this does not explain why there are no wings on the images of the crescent Moon. The crescent Moon symbols often appear alongside the symbols of Sun, and, just like the actual wingless symbols of the Sun, they do not have wings, nor do they have depictions of the Moon god (Nanna-Sin) inside them or being taken up into the

# sky by them.



Fig.1

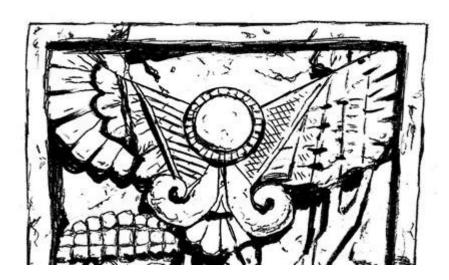


Fig.2



Fig. 3

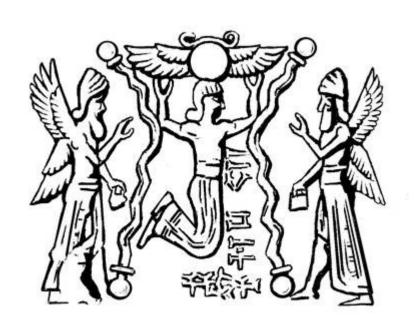


Fig. 4



Fig.5

The following is an excerpt from my upcoming book: The Secret Universe: An Exploration of the Extraterrestrial Deity Hypothesis and the Mysteries of the Universe:

According to the following ancient Egyptian texts, the god who dwells in the disk is Horus.

Homage to you, O ye gods, who live in your Hall of Maati, who have no taint of sin in you, who live upon truth, who feed upon truth before Horus, the dweller in his disk.

—Litany from the Book of the Dead

Then Thoth told Isis not to fear, but to put away all anxiety from her heart, for he had come to heal her child, and he told her that Horus was fully protected because he was the Dweller in his disk, [. . .]

—The Legend of the Wanderings of Isis

What is exceptional about these passages is that Horus was not a Sun god. Why then would he be associated with the disk? This next passage is even more revealing:

Horus took the form of a great winged disk, which flew up into the air and pursued the enemy, and it attacked them with such terrific force that they could neither see nor hear, and they fell upon each other, and slew each other, and in a moment not a single foe was left alive. Then Horus returned to the Boat of Ra-Harmakhis, in the form of the winged disk which shone with many colours [sic] [. . .]

—The Legend of Horus of Behutet and the Winged Disk

Why would the Sun be described as flying and maneuvering around in battle? And why would the Sun be described as having many colors? In these instances, interpreting the winged disk as the Sun does not make sense. However, a flying disk that shines with many colors does concur with many modern-day reports of so-called "Unidentified Flying Objects."

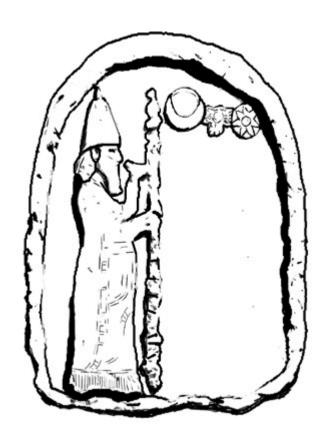
One of the problems that serves to obscure the original meaning pertains to translators of the hieroglyphics themselves who are influenced by the mainstream interpretation. In these cases, the assumption is made that the disk is referring to the Sun, and the word "Sun disk" is erroneously inserted into the translation. Furthermore, other cases may represent the mistaken interpretations of the ancient scribes themselves—which most likely occurred in a subsequent era.

Conversely, it is acknowledged that there are other instances in the artworks and the texts where the disk *is* described as the Sun—indeed, this seems to be what happened during the reign of Pharaoh Akhenaten. Therefore, the challenge is to differentiate between disks that actually do refer to the Sun, versus disks that refer to the flying vehicles of the gods. Due to the poetic language and abstract cultural imagery of the time, discerning between the two requires careful examination. In these cases, contextual indications must be taken into account.

However, there may be another reason why the Sun and the flying disk of the gods were conflated. It may be possible that the Sun was believed to be a giant fiery flying disk that was also piloted by the gods, in much the same way that the smaller fiery disks that were also seen in the sky were controlled by the gods. Indeed, it was believed by many in the ancient world that the Sun god caused the Sun to rise and set each day.

In some instances, the image of the winged disk is found next to symbols that appear to be depictions of the Sun and the Moon (e.g., the stele of King Nabonidus). This seems to confirm that the winged disk cannot be associated with the Sun. However, mainstream scholars claim that these other Sun-like images are not the Sun, but rather the planet Venus (Ascalone 2005: 93, 110, 221). However, just like the symbol of the Moon, the Venus goddess is never depicted inside such disks. The Venus interpretation also does not explain why the "Sun disk" has wings and Venus does not? Nor does it explain why the winged disk is depicted taking people up into the air. Nor does it explain accounts of flying disks that are not associated with a Sun or Venus deity.

One possible reason why the winged disk is sometimes shown alongside images of the Sun and the Moon is because the artists were conveying the message that the gods oversaw human activity in their flying disks from a vantage point that was next to the Sun and the Moon. (see figure 6).



(Fig. 6)

What is also significant about this particular image is that the symbol that is next to the flying disk and the moon bears seven points; however, the star symbol that was associated with Venus was an eight-pointed star (Benard and Moon 2000: 26, 69). This is a small but significant difference.

Nevertheless, it must also be acknowledged that there may have indeed been instances when the Sun-like image of the pointed star did represent Venus (e.g., Kudurru Melishipak stele). Therefore, it is possible that the winged disk and the Sun were originally separate images that, in some instances, were conflated. This conflation began to occur in ancient times and has been further promulgated by modern-day scholars. Indeed, it must be understood that these images were rendered in different regions and in different times. Moreover, they occurred in an era in which absolute definitions were not firmly established and maintained by academic-based institutions. Consequently, complete consistency should not be expected. This is due to the natural fact that observers interpret such images according to their own understandings. Therefore, the best that an objective examiner can do is to consider each depiction on a case-by-case basis.

White also claims that there are no depictions of the Anunnaki riding in the disks, and even calls it "a lie." However, we actually *do* have images of the Anunnaki gods inside flying disks. See figure 3.

Both White and Heiser accuse ancient astronaut theorists of misinterpreting the data in order to force it to adhere to their belief system. However, it is first of all naive to assume that mainstream scholars do not interpret data according to their own understandings as well. Moreover, it should be understood that Heiser and White base their interpretations on their own Judeo-Christian point of view, and therefore are guilty of the very same practice.

According to White, there is nothing in the texts that indicate the existence of so-called flying saucers. However, in the following ancient Egyptian material the disks of the gods are described as objects that could be opened up and entered into:

I enter in by the Disk, I come forth by the god Ahui. I shall hold converse with the Followers of the Gods.

—Book of the Coming Forth by Day (Book of the Dead),

The Chapter of Advancing to the Tchatchau Chiefs of Osiris

What is also significant about this passage is that the disk does not refer to the Sun god, Ra. Indeed, another reference to a disk that does not refer to Ra appears in the following passage:

Hail, Power of Heaven, Opener of the Disk, thou Beautiful Rudder of the Northern Heaven. Hail, Ra, Guide of the Two Lands, thou Beautiful Rudder of the Western Heaven. Hail, Khu, Dweller in the

House of the Akhemu gods, thou Beautiful Rudder of the Eastern Heaven. Hail, Governor, Dweller in the House of the Tesheru Gods, thou Beautiful Rudder of the Southern Heaven.

—Book of the Coming Forth by Day (Book of the Dead),

The Addresses of the Northern Heaven (The Addresses of the Four Rudders)

It is evident that the "Power of Heaven" was not the Sun god Ra, because this Sun god is mentioned in the very next sentence as a being who was separate from the "Opener of the Disk." It is also telling that the opener of the disk is associated with the "Northern Heaven," since the Sun is not usually associated with the north, but rather with the east and the west. This most likely indicates that the author was not referring to the Sun, but rather to some other "Power" in the sky who was associated with a disk. In this case, could the disk have been a reference to the planet Venus? However, this is unlikely because no deity that could possibly be associated with Venus is mentioned in the entire passage. In order to assert a Venus interpretation, one would have to assume that the Power in Heaven was a Venus deity. However, there is no textual evidence to support such an assumption. Furthermore, not only do any deities that could possibly be associated with the Sun or Venus appear in other passages that refer to the disk but there are also references to gods who dwell in arc-shaped enclosures—i.e., domes—that "belong to the sky":

- [. . .] that you might say that this Pepi [the pharaoh] will be among them, the gods in the sky, for you have assembled those in the (sky's) arcs and banded together those who are the Imperishable Stars.
- —The Pyramid Texts of Pepi I, Spells for the Entering and Leaving the Tomb

The word "sky's" appears to have been inserted by the translator, most likely due to missing text. Some might be inclined to believe that this is a reference to the arch of the firmament of the sky; however, this is unlikely because the word "arcs" that is next to it is plural. Therefore, it can be maintained that the passage most likely refers to the arch-shaped objects that the gods, and perhaps even some selected pharaohs, ascended to the sky in. In the following passage, the arch-shaped object is referred to as an "enclosure":

- [. . .] he [the pharaoh] is the one who will go up to Horus's enclosure that belongs to the sky.
- —The Pyramid Texts of Pepi I, Commending the Spirit to the Gods

The vehicles of the "Star-gods" are also referred to as rising boats (i.e., vehicle crafts) that "sail" through the sky:

O thou First, Great God [Pauta], who didst come into being of thine own accord, Isis and Nephthys salute thee, they sing unto thee songs of joy at they rising in the boat [. . .]

—Book of the Coming Forth by Day (Book of the Dead), A Hymn of Praise to Ra

Thou shalt come forth into heaven, thou shalt sail over the sky, and thou shalt hold loving intercourse with the Star-gods. Praises shall be made to thee in the boat.

—Book of the Coming Forth by Day (Book of the Dead), The Osiris Ani, Whose Word is Truth, In Peace, the Truth-Speaker, Saith

The reason that the deities, who are referred to by the Sumerians as the Anunna/Anunnaki, are described as ascending and descending from the sky, and are referred to as the "star gods" by their neighbors in Egypt, is because . . . they came from the stars.

# THE EZEKIEL UFO

The biblical book of Ezekiel reports a close encounter that a man has with divine being who flies down from out of the sky in a fiery craft. This account is often referred to by ancient astronaut theorists as evidence of the extraterrestrial nature of Yahweh/Jehovah. Of course, White and Heiser refute this

interpretation.

Heiser claims that ancient astronaut authors "tend to ignore the vocabulary of Ezekiel chapter 1," and says that the flying throne of Yahweh is "never described as round or silvery or some sort of disk shape." However, this is not true.

It is first necessary to understand that the craft that Yahweh descends from the sky in *is* described as both luminescent and metallic:

I looked, and I saw a whirlwind coming out of the north—an immense cloud with flashing fire that was surrounded by a brilliant light. The center of the fire looked like glowing metal, and in the fire was what appeared to be four living creatures.

-Ezekiel 1:4

In some translations, the metal is reported having a golden "amber" color; and in others it is called "electrum," which is a pale golden- and silver-hued alloy.

After this description of a shiny metallic object, we are given an account of strange beastly creatures (i.e., the cherubim) who are under a large object that is referred to as a "dome."

A voice came from above the dome over their [cherubim's] heads as they stood still with their wings lowered. Above the dome over their heads was something that looked like a throne made of sapphire. On the throne was the figure that looked like a human.

-Ezekiel 1:25

The word "dome" (translated from the Hebrew word *raki'a*) appears in many versions of the Bible[4]. In some translations it is interpreted as "firmament," which is also a reference to an expansive arch shape. The dome is said to have been made out of "crystal"; however, the reference to crystal is used to describe

an object that was "shinning." Here is how the word appears:

Over the heads of living creatures there was something like a dome, shining like crystal, spread out over their heads.

-Ezekiel 1.22

It is very much possible that an ancient way of describing a smooth, hard, and shiny glass-like material would be to compare it to crystal. Furthermore, this account is very similar to sightings that occur in the present era, in which flying saucers are seen that appear to have glass-like domes on top of them. Since domes mostly exist in a circular shape, it is possible that the object that Yahweh was seen upon may have been what we would refer to in our own era as a saucer. In this case, it can be maintained that the account that is reported in the book of Ezekiel is indeed consistent with modern-day descriptions of extraterrestrial objects.

The dome language is a description of the roundness that Heiser claims is not there. If Heiser disagrees with how the Hebrew word *raki'a* is translated, then it must be understood that he is disagreeing with a mainstream rendering of the word.

Another word that is mentioned in the Ezekiel text that is used to describe the aerial vehicle of Yahweh is "cloud" (Ezekiel 1:4-5). The image of the flying cloud is another reoccurring description that is not only found in other biblical books, and not only in other ancient texts, but in modern-day UFO reports as well.

Consider the following examples, in which we are told that the flying cloud of Yahweh was also related to a so-called flying "pillar" that was used by Yahweh to fly through the skies:

During the last watch of the night the Lord looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud at the Egyptians and threw them into confusion.

-Exodus 14:24

By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night.

Exodus 13:21

When Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stay at the entrance of the tent, while Yahweh would speak with Moses.

—Exodus 33:9

The following is an excerpt from *The Secret Universe:* 

Although we might tend to interpret the image of a pillar as a vertical column, the reports, including the biblical accounts, do not specifically describe it this way. If the pillar of fire, or pillar of cloud, was horizontal, it would match with what witnesses in our own time also more commonly describe as cylindrical, or "cigar-shaped" UFOs (Kean 2010: 54, 75, 195; Sturrock 1999: 11, 90).

In Numbers 12.5, Yahweh is described descending in a "pillar of cloud." However, it may have not been the pillar that "stood" at the entrance of the tabernacle, but rather Yahweh himself, after having emerged from the object. Indeed, the passage does not indicate that Yahweh himself was the pillar, but rather that he was "in" the pillar:

Then the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud; he stood at the entrance to the tent and summoned Aaron and Miriam. [. . .] —Numbers 12.5

The accounts clearly indicate that it was a craft could both descend (Exodus 34.5; Numbers 12.5) and ascend (Exodus 40.36; Numbers 9.17). Furthermore, we are also told that Moses was able to "enter into" this object (Exodus 24.18).

Indeed, in the Old Testament/Tanakh, accounts of an other-worldly individual who flew in the sky are reported:

[. . .] to him who rides the ancient skies above, who thunders with a mighty voice. Proclaim the power of Elohim, whose majesty is over Israel, whose power is in the skies.

—Psalm 68.33-34

Among the words that are used to describe the object that Yahweh flew through the skies in was "cloud."

Behold Yahweh, riding upon a swift cloud, coming into Egypt.

—Isaiah 19.1

It is more likely that the object was not a literal so-called "cloud," but rather something that appeared like a hazy light-hued object from the ground. A modern-day example of this phenomenon occurred in 1966, when an army officer stationed off the coast of Wake Island reported seeing a "cloud" expand with a light inside of it. The object then sped away into the sky after hovering for several minutes[5]. Some of the UFOs emit vaporous smoke that can also be confused for a cloud-like appearance[6]. Indeed, one of these objects was described as being "enveloped in smoke trails"[7]. Likewise, in the Pyramid Texts, we are told that one of the vehicles that transported the pharaoh up into the heavens appeared as a "cloud":

Pepi Neferkare has gone up on a cloud and descended [. . .]

—The Pyramid Text of Pepi II, Ascending to Nut

Descriptions of so-called "clouds" were not the only objects that the gods were seen moving through the skies in. There are also references to flying objects that made a whirring commotion and stirred up dust as they launched and landed. For example, in the Vedic Hymn to Vata text, we read that the flying "chariot" of the gods whirled dust upon the earth when it thundered up into the heavens:

Now for the greatness of the chariot of Vata. Its roar goes crashing and thundering. It moves touching the sky, and creating red sheens, or it goes scattering the dust of the earth.

—To Vata, Vedic Hymns, Mandala X, Hymn 168

These descriptions are significantly similar to the "whirlwind," "cloud," "chariot of fire" imagery that is found in the Bible. It can be contended that in both of these cases, the so-called "chariot" may simply refer to a transportation craft, not to a literal two-wheeled vehicle that is pulled by horses. Therefore, it is possible that the so-called "horses" that pull the "chariot of fire" that appear in 2 Kings 2.11 was a cultural interpretation that was inserted by a pious scribe who was not present to personally witness the events.

The whirlwind description appears throughout the ancient Levantine/Mesopotamian and biblical texts. It is often referred to as an object that was controlled by a deity.

In 2 Kings 2.1, Elijah is taken up into heaven in a "whirlwind." These accounts imply that the whirlwind had the ability to transport an individual up into the sky. This may be because the flying objects may have not only kicked up a whirlwind of dust and smoke as it ascended and descended but also may have even made the sound of a whirling wind type of noise as it did so. Indeed, some modern-day UFO witnesses also describe the sound of whirring, rushing, or humming sounds that emanate from "UFOs" (Sturrock 1999: 272). In his book *Intruders*, author Budd Hopkins presents interviews that he conducted with people who have come in to close proximity to extraterrestrial crafts; some of whom describe ships that made a "humming or whirring" sound, like that of a "spinning top." Other witnesses report UFOs that rapidly rotate (Kean 2010: 66; Sturrock 1999: 226) and UFOs that stir dust up into the air as they depart from the ground (Sturrock 1999: 264). Indeed, accounts of UFOs that rotate or spin and that emit sound are numerous[8].

In order to understand what is happening in the book of Ezekiel, it is necessary to understand the history of this text. The fact is that the history of the book of Ezekiel is especially dubious, and it is on this point that I agree with Heiser that the report is not to be taken too literally. This is because it does appear that the authors referred to Babylonian iconography, which the priest-scribes had been exposed to during the exile period. Indeed, it is understood by scholars that the book of Ezekiel was composed during that time, and that it was most likely not actually written by Ezekiel, but rather by members of a priestly school in Babylon who were influenced by him (Blenkinsopp 1996: 167). It is also evident that the scribes were simply repeating diatribes that had already been reported in the books of Isaiah and Jeremiah. It was most likely these priest-scribes who were responsible for the stylistic embellishments that appear in the account.

According to Heiser, the use of Babylonian imagery was used to put Yahweh into a relevant context. It is an explanation that I agree with.

The book of Ezekiel begins with an account of a man by a river. The account is suspicious because it begins in first-person, but switches to second-person in the second paragraph; who then proceeds to repeat redundant information. This indicates that the report has been effected by a second person. The account then switches back to first person before the vision of Yahweh takes place.

What must be understood is that, in many cases, witnesses tend to interpret these type of events according to their beliefs.

Both my own research and the preceding historical review suggest that AAN (Alien Abduction Narratives) Tellers bring their own personal and social histories into the events, "experiences," and testimonies surrounding their "alien abduction." From a psychosocial perspective, they are influenced by a number of factors, including their religious backgrounds, personal spiritual styles, quasi-religious

movements around abduction, leadership and integration into specific groups, narratives of conversion, and rituals of conversion.

When religious contexts are already operating within an individual's social network, they can influence the process by which a personal narrative develops. Just as seemingly ordinary events can acquire new meanings during a process of religious conversion, it is not difficult to see how a series of attentional changes and anomalous perceptions can be integrated into an AAN. In addiction, AANs can influence the personal religious context by adding a new subjective component to an existing religious framework.

—Scott R. Scribner, Alien Abduction Narratives and Religious Contexts[9]

The book of Ezekiel is not a literal description of what actually happened; although, like most other ancient accounts, it was most likely based on some sort of original event that was embellished by scribes at a later time. Indeed, it must be understood that the priest scribes were essentially ministers of propaganda.

In order to understand this situation, it is necessary to deconstruct this report down to its basic primary components. When we do this, we are left with is a man who witnessed phenomenal lights in the sky, a luminescent, metallic, and a dome-shaped flying craft that made a turbulent sound as it descended, and a preternatural humanoid being who piloted the craft. It can therefore be maintained that this account is indeed consistent with extraterrestrial phenomena.

## **PANBABYLONIANISM**

This next topic surprised me because not only is White disagreeing with ancient astronaut theorists, but he is also disagreeing with mainstream scholarly consensus—which both White and Heiser present themselves as being the guardian upholders of. According to White, there is "no evidence of literary borrowing" between Mesopotamian and biblical texts (i.e., "Panbabylonianism"). As someone who has not only studied the ancient texts but who has also consulted scholarly works that examine this topic, I am truly stunned by this blatant disregard for the truth.

For an in-depth explanation of this topic, please see the essay "Heiser is Wrong" that is posted on my website (so as not to be redundant). The investigator will be able to read for themselves not only material from reputable scholars but the translated Mesopotamian source texts themselves.

## **VIMANAS**

According to the ancient Hindu texts, "vimanas" were the dwelling places of the gods. According to some of the accounts, some of these vimanas could fly.

Ancient astronaut theorists posit that these were references to what are referred to in our era as "UFOs." Of course, White disagrees.

White would have his audience believe that the vimanas are from a modern-day fabricated text called the *Vymmanika Shaastra*. However, the vimanas are indeed referred to in authentic ancient texts. By emphasizing the *Vymmanika Shaastra* White is doing something that he accuses the ancient astronaut theorists of doing: that is, of using a "straw man" argument. By using this

polemical technique, White gives the appearance of completely refuting his opponents position by replacing it with an inferior example that can be easily discredited, which is then extended to the entire topic itself.

Some of the earliest references to vimanas actually appear in the Mahabharata. Scholars believe that the primary core versions of this work stretch as far back as ancient Vedic times—in the eighth and ninth centuries BCE. The first edition is believed to have been completed sometime around 400 BCE (Brockington 1998: 25-26; Bryant 2007: 5). Therefore, not only was the Mahabharata based on an earlier version (i.e., the Bharata) but it was inspired by an even earlier oral tradition (Brockington 1998: 3, 68). When White says things like, "the vimanas were not even mentioned in the earliest texts," he is not being entirely truthful.

The other work that the flying vehicles of the gods appear in is the Ramayana. Like the Mahabharata, this too was based on an earlier oral tradition. The Ramayana developed into its present form sometime between 500 BCE and 300 CE (Brockington 1998: 27, 34).

Another work that flying vimanas appear in is in the Bhagavata Purana. Scholars generally agree that this text was compiled sometime between the fourth and tenth centuries CE; however, all of the Puranas are based on an earlier tradition that can be traced all the way back to the Vedic Age (1500-500 BCE) (Bryant 2007: 7, 113).

Furthermore, just like the other ancient Hindu texts, this document was embellished with cultural motifs and devotional aggrandizement as it passed through different hands through the centuries (Bryant 2007: 112). Indeed, it is known that these older texts developed over the course of hundreds of years (Brockington 1998: 3, 27). This is a fundamental factor that White and Heiser do not take into account; which is why White argues that the vimanas are not

described as metallic flying saucers, but rather as ornamented palaces, some of which were pulled by horses. However, in order to decipher ancient texts, it is necessary to look past such external cultural and religious embellishments that were formulated by devotional scribes at a later time, and break the descriptions down to their primary and most likely original characteristics. When we do this what we are left with is a report of divine beings who had the ability to fly through the sky in luminescent objects.

And the gods in cloud-borne chariots came into view the scene so fair [. . .] Bright celestial cars in concourse sailed upon the cloudless sky.

—The Mahabharata, Book II. Swayamvara. Part IV, the Suitors

A section of the Mahabharata, called the Bhagavad Gita, indicates that the progenitors of humankind, who are referred to as the *Manus*, were interplanetary beings:

The seven great sages and before them the four other great sages and the Manus come from Me, born from My mind, and all the living beings populated the various planets descend from them.

—Krishna, The Bhagavad Gita, Chapter X, (The Opulence of the Absolute)

Likewise, in the classic Hindu epic the Ramayana, the following descriptions of the flying illuminated cars of the gods is found:

The Gods themselves from every sphere,

Incomparably bright,

[air] Borne in their golden cars drew near

To see the wondrous sight.

The cloudless sky was all aflame

Where'er the shining chariots came That bore those holy ones. —Ramayana, Canto XLIV. The Descent Of Gangá. With Indra near him, to the sky On a bright car, with flame that glowed, —Ramayana, Canto LXIV. Dasaratha's Death. Vibhíshan set upon the throne; The flying chariot Pushpak shown. How Brahmá and the Gods appeared, And Sítá's doubted honour [sic] cleared. How in the flying car they rode To Bharadvája's cabin abode. The Wind-God's son sent on afar; How Bharat met the flying car. —Ramayana, Canto III. The Argument. Then, at his hest, the car rose high And sailing through the northern sky —Ramayana, Canto CXXIX. The Meeting With Bharat. There are also repeated references to supernatural beings who dwell in the sky: Lord Vishnu slew his demon foes,

With the light of a hundred suns

And mid the dwellers in the skies

—Ramayana, Canto XII. The Heavenly Bow.

In the Bhagavata Purana (i.e., the Srimad Bhagavatam) there is an account of a great war. The warrior king is aided by the use of a flying vehicle. In the following passage from this text, it is reported that one of the flying vehicles was also referred to as a "Saubha," which translates as aerial city. This large mother-ship was able to move so fast that it seemed to defy the laws of physics—which is indeed similar to modern-era UFO reports.

Moving hither and thither like a whirling firebrand, from one moment to the next seen on the earth, then in the sky, on a mountain top and then in the water, remained that Saubha airship never in one place.

—The Bhagavata Purana, (Srimad Bhagavatam) Canto X, Chapter LXXVI

Of course, these accounts became increasingly embellished over the centuries, until cultural aesthetics and devotional aggrandizement overtook literal depictions. This explains why the flying vehicles of the gods were described as if they were ornate palaces. This is also why some accounts depict the flying vehicles of the gods as being drawn by magical horses. It must be understood that literacy was not common in the ancient world. The reason why we do not have direct first-hand reports is because those who witnessed such phenomena were not able to directly document and therefore preserve a literal account of their experience. By the time these oral reports reached those who were qualified to document it, they had most likely been effected by others. These accounts were then altered even further by scribes who put these accounts into a relevant cultural/religious context. Indeed, this same type of process occurs in many present-day historically-based Hollywood movies. Such depictions often tend to stray from a realistic portrayal of events in order to heighten dramatic effect.

The records tell us that the gods not only flew through the skies in air-craft but were the original governors of the archaic world. It is typically assumed that when the gods were described by the scribes as coming down from the "heavens," that this was an indication that they had descended from the invisible world of spirit; however, in the ancient world, the term heavens originally referred to the sky. Likewise, the term "worlds" may not have been a reference to heaven and Earth, but rather to planets. Indeed, a reference to planets does appear in the following text:

O mighty-armed one [Krishna], all the planets with their demigods are disturbed at seeing Your great form.

—Arjuna, The Bhagavad Gita, Chapter XI, The Universal Form

Therefore, it can be concluded that this is yet another topic that White and Heiser have failed to "debunk."

#### **NAZCA LINES**

The Nazca lines are a series of large geoglyphs that are located in the Nazca desert in Peru. It is believed that the lines and images were created sometime between 400 and 650 CE. The largest figure is over 600 feet (over 200 metres) across. Ancient astronaut theorist Erich Von Daniken believes that the lines were tracks made by extraterrestrial craft. *Ancient Aliens* also presents the idea that the Nazca desert was an airport for the gods. However, this interpretation is unlikely because based on numerous eye-witness accounts, flying saucers do not need runways, nor do they make long geometric tracks when they take off and land. Also, according to *Ancient Aliens* (Von Daniken and Tsoukalos) "entire mountain tops were removed." In this case I do agree with White that what appear to be flattened mountains are actually nothing more than naturally occurring plateaus.

Nevertheless, there are also reasons to believe that the lines and the images were meant to draw the attention of the gods flying overhead. One possible reason for this is because the Nazca people seem to have believed that the gods could control acts of nature and therefore bring water to that arid region

(which is the type of theory purposed by archaeologist Johan Reinhard). This type of explanation is more plausible than some of the other theories that have been submitted by some investigators who have attempted to devise an explanation that does not involve air-borne gods. For example, one explanation is that the lines were intended to point to astronomical events in the horizon, such as solstices, which would indicate that Nazca was some sort of astronomical observatory. However, this theory was discredited by archaeo-astronomy experts who went to the site and did the calculations (Aveni 2000: 97, 102-105; Kelley and Milone 2011: 455). Indeed, not only do the Nazca lines point in random directions but the astronomical theory also does not account for the animal images.

Another make-shift theory, that was purposed by archaeologist Johan Reinhard, was that the lines were intended to be sacred paths to areas where the water gods could be worshiped. This is the theory that Chris White subscribes to; although this is also not plausible because the lines lead in all directions, and most lead nowhere. The lines are clearly indiscriminate and therefore are intended to be designs, rather than pathways. Likewise, the pathway theory also does not account for all of the images, such as hummingbirds, spiders, monkeys, lizards, etc.

One of the images that appear at Nazca is a humanoid type being with large eyes. Ancient astronaut theorists claim that this is an alien being. Skeptics, on the other hand, claim that this is nothing more than a "fisherman"[10]. Due to the crude nature of the rendering and because the contours in the ground can be confused for the image itself, arriving at a conclusive deduction in this case seems impossible. Therefore, until a qualified and unbiased researcher is able to actually visit the site and conduct a proper examination, it can be contended that the fisherman interpretation no more conclusive than the alien

interpretation.

Some skeptics of the extraterrestrial deity hypothesis claim that the Nazca images can be seen from nearby hilltops, and therefore an aerial view is not necessary; however, I have not been able to locate a single credible source to support this claim, and the so-called "debunkers" have failed to provide one. In fact, to his credit, White does not even make this claim in AAD, which is most likely because he could not find a verifiable source either. Moreover, I find it very difficult to believe that each and every Nazca marking is completely visible from the hills. Indeed, when photographers journey to Nazca to take pictures of the markings they do not take pictures from nearby hill tops, but rather from the air (Gluek 1982). In an interview with the *Chicago Tribune*, Nazca photographer Marilyn Bridges said that "Flying is like having a God's eye view, and that's the audience for whom these figures were made" (Foerstner 1992). Likewise, according to the *Ancient History Encyclopedia*[11], "most" of the designs are only visible from the air.

Therefore, it can be concluded that this is yet another subject that White and Heiser have failed to "debunk."

## **MEDIEVAL UFO PAINTINGS**

According to White, the UFOs that appear in medieval paintings are nothing more than ordinary angel motifs. However, another possibility is that it is not angels that influenced the UFO interpretation, but rather the other way around. In other words: visions of otherworldly beings who come down from out of the sky could be extraterrestrials who have been misinterpreted as angels.

## **CHRIS WHITE**

Who is Chris White? White is not only the producer and narrator of *Ancient Aliens Debunked* but he is also the director of a Christian internet radio station called *The Revelations Radio Network*. He also produces a local Christian television program and is an active evangelist who speaks at various discipleship programs. Here are a couple of his websites:

http://chriswhiteministries.com/

http://conspiracyclothes.com/nowheretorun/#sthash.FX7FEjKc.dpbs

Of course, people who are active in the Judeo-Christian tradition will have inherent problems with the extraterrestrial deity hypothesis. Therefore, even if White was not able to find straw-man targets he would surely devise some other way to disagree with these findings. This is because although he presents himself as scientifically-minded truth-seeker he is actually an "apologist." (The word apology, in this case, refers to a defender of traditional Judeo-Christian creed.)

Near the end of his video White says, "because the consistent stories of the ancient cultures conflict with the ancient astronaut theory they [the ancient astronaut theorists] literally just throw out the evidence."

Consistent? Really?

In this case, the question must be asked: What does White consider to be

consistent? As an active Christian evangelist, he surely must consider the Bible to be consistent. This must be why he has not come out with a video titled *The Holy Bible Debunked*. However, any legitimate scholar would disagree with the claim that the biblical record is consistent. I refer the investigator to works of the distinguished New Testament scholar Bart D. Ehrman, who systematically disproves the assumption that the Bible is in any way "inerrant" in the following books:

- Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why. HarperSanFrancisco. 2005.
- Jesus, Interrupted: Revealing the Hidden Contradictions in the Bible (And Why We Don't Know About Them). HarperCollins, USA. 2009.
- Forged: Writing in the Name of God—Why the Bible's Authors Are Not Who We Think They Are. HarperCollins, USA. 2011.
- Forgery and Counterforgery: The Use of Literary Deceit in Early Christian Polemics. Oxford University Press, 2012.

Likewise, here are two books that I recommend concerning the Old Testament:

• Friedman, Richard Elliott. Who Wrote the Bible? Harper One, 1987.

Silberman, Neil Asher. Finkelstein, Israel. The Bible Unearthed:
 Archaeology's New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origins of its Sacred Texts.
 Free Press, 2001/Touchstone, 2002.

There are also numerous websites that are devoted to exposing inconsistencies in the Bible. All it takes is a simple key-word internet search for "Old Testament contradictions," or "Bible inconsistencies," etc.

Let's look at the case of Saul, for example:

Saul inquired of God but received no answer. 1 Sam.28:6. Saul died for not inquiring. 1 Chr.10:13, 14.

Saul killed himself. 1 Sam.31:4; 1 Chr. 10:4, 5.

An Amalekite killed Saul. 2 Sam.1:5-10.

The Philistines killed Saul. 2 Sam.21:12.

Indeed, discrepancies appear all throughout the scriptures:

"Yahweh" caused David to number the people. 2 Sam.24:1.

"Satan" caused David to number the people. 1 Chr. 21:1.

I could continue, but I believe that the point has been made. Therefore, White's assertion that traditional interpretations, especially pertaining to Judeo-Christian ideology, are somehow "consistent," is utterly absurd.

White admits in his video that something "weird" did happen in the ancient past. Even his master consultant, Dr. Michael S. Heiser, acknowledges that the Nephilim passage in Genesis 6 "is admittedly weird," and even stumbles around a little as he attempts to explain it. I think that we can logically conclude at this point that the truth is they don't really know what happened.

White claims that these are not just some isolated cases of *Ancient Aliens* getting a few things wrong, but that the entire theory is wrong—which is also absurd. Furthermore, according to White, everyone must have "higher standards when it comes to verifying what is true"; and yet he repeatedly cites the notorious editable website Wikipedia as one of his sources.

I therefore urge people not to be misled by Chris White and his inaccurate video, *Ancient Aliens Debunked*.

## **POST SCRIPT CONCERNING MYSELF**

A relevant question that must be addressed concerns my own methodology and my own agenda. What is it, you ask?

In the first chapter of *The Secret Universe*, I write about the process that lead me into the research and writing of the book. I explain the objective, empirical, and epistemological methodology that I referred to during my quest for understanding. What I discovered is that it begins with the prerequisite of ridding one's self of all extraneous and artificial influences and beginning anew (*tabula rasa*) with only deductions that either have scientific validity, or that at least can be experienced empirically (*a posteriori*). What I also aim to do is to differentiate

between deductive conclusions verses theoretical conjecture.

Although I too grew up influenced by the Judeo-Christian tradition, I am no longer limited to any one particular interpretation. Although I still maintain a great regard for "Jesus" himself, I now describe myself as an independent researcher. Most of all, I am a free-thinker who writes for other free-thinkers.

I do acknowledge that White and Heiser have brought up some legitimate points concerning lax methodological standards on the part of the ancient astronaut theorists. I strive to maintain a truthful standard in my own work by checking and rechecking the information for accuracy. However, if there is anything that I have overlooked then I apologize in advance. Any possible errors are not a case of intentional deception on my part. My aim is only to contend the thesis that the data pertaining to the extraterrestrial deity hypothesis is substantial enough to merit serious consideration.

Thank you for your time.

—Aerik Vondenburg

#### **IMAGES**

Figure 1. Winged disc. From the Stela of Pebeh. Egypt. Painted plaster. (Ptolemaic Period). British Museum, EA8466.

Figure 2. Winged disc (from a male figure grasping a tree). Ivory Panel. 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE (Neo-Assyrian). Metropolitan Museum of Art, 59.107.6.

Figure 3. Ashur/Shamash in his Flying Disc. Part of an alabaster wall relief from the throne room of Ashurnasirpal II at Nimrud in Norther Iraq. 870–860 BCE (Neo-Assyrian). British Museum, ME 124531.

Figure 4. Winged disc and levitating figure. Chalcedony cylinder seal of Nabu-Nasi, Son of Amel-Resh. 9<sup>th —</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE (Neo-Assyrian). British Museum, 89082.

Figure 5. Top Section of a Stele Decorated With a Libation Scene Before a Seated God. White limestone, late 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BCE, Mesopotamia. Louvre, Department of Near Eastern Antiquities. J. de Morgan Excavations, sb 7.

Figure 6. King Nabonidus. Basalt stele. 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE (Neo Babylonian). British Museum, 90837.

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- . Note: A series of dots represent damaged portions of the text. Three dots enclosed within brackets represent omissions made by myself of irrelevant or redundant text.
- [2] . Most likely the same god known as Ninurta.
- [3] . http://www.jcu.edu/bible/200/Readings/Atrahasis.htm Note: the entire text is available in: *Myths of Mesopotamia: Creation, the Flood, Gilgamesh, and Others,* by Stephanie Dalley, (ed., trans.). Oxford University Press, 1989.
- [4] . E.g., the Common English Bible, the Complete Jewish Bible, the Contemporary English Version, the Expanded Bible, God's Word Translation, the Good News Translation, the Names of God version, the New Century Version, the New Revised Standard, and others.
- [5] . http://www.nicap.org/bluebook/unknowns.htm
- [6] . https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC\_0000015469.pdf; https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC\_0000015465.pdf
- [7] . https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC\_0000015475.pdf
- [8] . e.g., <a href="http://bluebookarchive.org/page.aspx?pagecode=MISC-AFOSR4-325&tab=2">http://bluebookarchive.org/page.aspx?pagecode=MISC-AFOSR4-325&tab=2</a>;

https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC 0000015463.pdf; https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC 0000015469.pdf

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- [10] . http://www.jasoncolavito.com/blog/the-nazca-astronaut-a-fishy-story
- [11] . http://www.ancient.eu.com/article/665/