

Morgan 1501469

AHAC 6010 Advanced Archaeological Analysis

Report

Gobekli Tepe

Pot Belly Hill / Naval Hill



Gobekli Tepe as seen from the south

Gobekli Tepe and Interactions with Another World: Is the truth really out there?

Report commissioned for UWTSD Trinity Saint David, to be done by Jonathan Morgan.

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1 Summary

Having been asked by a good friend one day, 'who was responsible for creating such sites as Gobekli Tepe, Stonehenge or the pyramids if it were not aliens? You are studying archaeology you should know'. I decided to try and look at the data to see if there was any evidence for what is known as *palaeo-seti*, that is, is there any evidence of extra-terrestrial activity? Gobekli Tepe is just one of a number of sites where 'archaeologists' claim that the people of the time must have had help from a higher race to be able to create such monuments (Stonehenge, Great Pyramids etc). Data set 1, involves looking at texts written by 'palaeo-seti theorists' that claim there must have been interaction with a more advanced civilisation and Gobekli Tepe is evidence of this (Collins,2014; Scranton,2015). Data set 2, involves looking at other writings on this site that suggest a more widely accepted alternative to the claims made in data set 1. Where claims that the people of the time neither had the skills or the technology at the time to create such a site, experimental archaeological results from other sites may be used.

2 Definitions

Palaeo-seti - the theory that it is possible to find evidence of past interaction with extra-terrestrials at archaeological sites. Palaeo-seti is a discourse which has gained increasing status since its conception in the late 1800's (See 2014).

Pseudo-archaeology - a branch of archaeology which dismisses the need for scientific evaluation.

3 Introduction

Gobekli Tepe, also known as Pot Belly Hill (Mann 2011), is a site found in South-Eastern Anatolia, Turkey. Made up of three layers with the oldest dating to c10,000 BC (Tepe Telegrams). Although only partially excavated to date, with records showing that as little as 5% has been excavated, Gobekli Tepe is widely recognised as one of the earliest sites ever found, be it temple or not (Schmidt 2014; Luckett 2013). Gobekli Tepe has attracted huge interest and speculation since its rediscovery by Klaus Schmidt with the help of Savak Yildiz an elderly local man who led Schmidt to it in 1994 (Schmidt 2014:15).

Originally being documented in the 1960s by a team of archaeologists from the universities of Istanbul and Chicago observed countless flint artifacts at the site (Tepe Telegrams). Klaus Schmidt realised its importance whilst on a tour of important south eastern Turkish archaeological sites and dedicated the rest of his life trying to untangle its secrets.

Like any site of this magnitude many theories will be put forward as to its role in past societies, where speculation is made, without definite proof that can discredit such theory, anything may be possible. Where claims that this site is evidence of palaeo-seti or any other pseudo-archaeological claim, can there be an alternative theory or even evidence that proves or disproves this?

Claims that pseudo-archaeology operates purely under the inkblot hypothesis, that is you see only what you want to see (Feder 2008:227) will be tested against the evidence that is presented elsewhere on this site. Where no definite proof is expected to be found relating to Gobekli Tepe's past, looking at the data should be able to determine if there is any proof of palaeo-seti at this site and hopefully help me to answer the question that inspired this report.

Palaeo-seti (ancient astronaut theory) often branded pseudo-archaeology has never undergone in depth research (Richter 2012:222), this in turn leaves sites such as Gobekli Tepe open to claims which are made by these theorists.

(Shermer 2013:92) says that palaeo-seti theory is grounded in a myth known as *argumentum ad ignorantiam* or 'argument from ignorance', that is if there is no logical terrestrial account for sites such as Gobekli Tepe then the theory is that they must have been built by aliens.

Palaeo-seti was born with works such as *The Book of the Damned* by Charles Fort in the early 20th century (First edition 1919), which was the first non-fictional account of extra-terrestrial intervention. The subject never really took off outside of the fictional world until being resurrected again in the 1960's with works by Carl Sagan & Erich Von Daniken. Where Sagan's article in *Planetary and Space Science*, made little impression on the non-scientific community, Daniken's timely resurrection of palaeo-seti, at a time where space travel was high on the agenda, thrust the theory into the limelight (Feder2008:226). With Daniken selling millions of books, it is now said that a significant amount of the population are not only positive that extra-terrestrials exist, but also believe they have visited earth and left their mark (Richter 2012:222).

4 Aims and Methodologies

4.1 Aims of this report are to be able to determine whether or not claims of palaeo-seti are relevant to Gobekli Tepe. By doing this it may also answer questions that are relevant to other sites where further claims of palaeo-seti are made. Is the ink spot theory relative to all claims made about this site relating to palaeo-seti? By looking at the data sets from both sides it may be possible to separate fact from fiction in relation to certain aspects about Gobekli Tepe. The ultimate aim is to answer the question, is there any proof of palaeo-seti at Gobekli Tepe, were the people of the time capable of building such a site with the technology available at the time and were they helped by a more advanced race?

4.2 Methodologies used in collecting and interpreting the data were primarily based around reading papers put forward on this site by archaeologists concerned with this site. Where necessary works from other sites, which answer relevant questions about this site, such as experimental archaeology concerned with the making and transporting of other such monoliths was also used. Looking at this data it should be possible to find evidence which supports evidence of palaeo-seti involvement at this site which is claimed in data set one. Claims that the technology available at the time may be addressed in relevant experimental archaeological work, this may either support or contradict these claims that are made in data set one.

5 Data Sets

5.1 Data set 1, will consist of claims made about Gobekli Tepe by archaeologists and other professions which claim that the people of the time did not have amongst other things, the tools or the knowledge at the time to build such a site of vast complexity (Collins 1014 & Scranton 2014). By making these claims the authors believe that a site of this magnitude could only have been created with help from people from a far more advanced civilisation. I will list claims made about Gobekli Tepe below.

1. People of the time did not have the tools required to build the structure.
2. People of the time did not have the technology to quarry these large stones
3. 'Giants' (tetraploids) helped move these large stones into place (Bradshaw 2015).
4. Iconography on these stones links them to The Pryramids of Egypt and other sites of great importance around the globe (Collins 2014 *et al*)
5. Depictions of alien lifeforms are found here and therefore prove that extra-terrestrials had an influence on creating Gobekli Tepe (Mufon 2014).

5.2 Data set 2, will include accounts of first hand evidence of the continued work being performed by the research staff working on Gobekli Tepe (Tepe Telegrams), published literature on the site by Klaus Schmidt (Gobekli Tepe: A Stone Age Sanctuary in South-Eastern Anatolia). Peer reviewed papers on experimental archaeology will be taken into account, these may be able to help dispute claims on the technology needed to create and move such stones used here. Also previously published works on palaeo-seti will be taken into account.

6 Results

1. People did not have the tools required to build the structure?

The stones that were used for the construction of this site are a hard limestone (Schmidt 2007; Tepe Telegrams). Limestone is a soft stone which is ideal for carving, limestone is still widely used in the building trade today, usually used for creating features on reveals around windows due to its facility to be carved. Therefore, with the abundance of flint tools found scattered around the site when Klaus Schmidt first arrived (Schmidt 2014:89), this particular argument can bear no fruit.

2. People of the time did not have the technology to quarry these pillars.



Unfinished pillar at Gobekli Tepe

The central pillars situated within enclosure D, measured in at 5.5 metres high and weighed around 8 tons each, the pillars discovered at Gobekli Tepe can vary in size from 4m high to 7m high and weigh in at up to 50 tonnes (Schmidt 2014). Fortunately, at this site, pillars have been discovered which were in the process of being quarried and

these can therefore tell us a lot about their construction. The strata of the surrounding the area has fault lines which vary in thickness of 0.6 metre to 1.5 metres. The stonemasons would pick an area where the banks were at the thickness of the pillar desired, then simply pick out around the shape of the pillar that they required then prize it off the floor at the required thickness, by doing this they never had to dig underneath (Tepe Telegrams). The largest of these stones was found broken and abandoned, the fact that they had taken the time to start to quarry it must have meant that they felt capable of quarrying such large pillars.

3. Giants moved these pillars into place.



Doctored photograph of giant skeleton

It has been suggested by certain theorists that the pillars on this site were too large to be moved by mere mortals (Collins 2014), thus needing the help of other worldly beings.

Moving these large quarried pillars may have needed the help of many people, but this does not make it implausible

that the people of the time did not move them themselves. The distances these stones were moved was not that great, the surrounding limestone plateau had all the requisite materials needed and part quarried stones, which were not used are found in the surrounding area (Schmidt 2014:98) supporting this. Schmidt (2010) suggests that the characteristics of the land with abundant good quality, hard limestone, are what made the people create the site itself (Schmidt 2010:241). Although there is no direct evidence of the methods used to transport the quarried pillars to their final destination, at Gobekli Tepe (Tepe telegrams), experimental archaeology from other sites could determine whether or not this was possible. Ethnographic records from Nias, an island in Indonesia show that with the requisite amount of people moving these pillars is not impossible (Tepe Telegrams). Pillars abandoned at the site also suggest transport was not an issue, one such pillar which is estimated at weighing 50 tonnes and measuring 7metres tall was only abandoned due to it breaking. This would suggest that size was not an issue, otherwise why spend the time trying to quarry a pillar of such size.

4. Iconography found at this site links it directly with the Pyramids.



Claims that the pillars found at Gobekli Tepe prove that there is a link between Gobekli Tepe and the pyramids (Collins 2014; Scranton 2015; Ivan 2017) by way of the so called 'handbags' (as pictured), is pure speculation. Collins (2014) makes claims that Gobekli Tepe, was a school for learning sculpture. This was taught to us by a more

advanced civilisation and on completion of each 'class' the students were instructed to fill in the enclosures to hide the knowledge learnt (Scranton 2015:47) and therefore, it is claimed that countless civilisations have representations of handbags, this is supposedly their gift to us.

Schmidt (2006), does not interpret these high reliefs as handbags, he describes them as 'carved box like objects with handle like attachments, with each accompanied by an animal (Schmidt 2006:39). Other interpretations (Tepe Telegrams) of these box like symbols is that they are animal pens, each representing a pen like structure for the habitation of animals.

5. There are depictions of aliens at the site.



Gobekli Tepe totem pole. Urfa Museum

At this site numerous artifacts were found, one of these known as the Tepe totem is claimed to have depictions of aliens carved into it (Mufon 2014).

What has been found at the site so far (2017) consists of a total of 149 sculptures, these consist of carved animals (86), humans (38), anthropomorphic masks (4), phalli (3), human-animal composite sculptures and a further nine which are indeterminable (Tepe Telegrams). Furthermore, the animals represented here are not ferocious animals as (Collins 2014; Scranton 2015) claim, they are merely animals that would

be native to the region such as, snakes, spiders, gazelles, foxes, bears, wild boars and vultures (Schmidt 2006:38).

The 'Tepe Totem' discovered in 2009 and excavated 2010 (Schmidt 2011:74) which can be found in the Urfa Museum, has been claimed to depict that of an alien lifeform by palaeo-seti theorists (Mufon 2014). The argument put forward is that this artifact along with others has been deliberately damaged purely because it depicted an alien life form.

Schmidt (2011) writes that the totem pole consists of three main motives, one above the other. The frontal part of the head has been eradicated by the consequences of time but due to the preserved features of the head, namely

its ears and eyes, which can still be seen, it is probably a bear or large felid (Schmidt 2011:74). Below the head Schmidt says that a short neck, arms and hands are visible, remarking on how human like they are (Schmidt 2011:74), no mention of anything alien like.

The table below illustrates if there is any conclusive proof of palaeo-seti at Gobekli Tepe. The five claims of palaeo-seti used in this report are summarised by the data analysed, if any evidence is found

	1	2	3	4	5
Evidence of palaeo-seti	no	no	no	no	no
Evidence of Human activity	yes	yes	No (experimental archaeology proves it is possible)	yes	yes

7 Discussion of results

The results from interpreting these data sets is by no means conclusive, nor did I ever expect it to be. However, it has been very helpful in answering the question that was initially posed, regarding whether or not such sites as these were indeed constructed with the help of aliens. The way it helps answer this question is by many ways.

Firstly, did the people of the time have the tools necessary? Yes, they did. Even the hardest limestone is ideal for carving with the simplest of tools. Claims that no tools have been found on the site for the construction are unfounded, Schmidt himself remarks that on first noticing the site, there was an abundance of flint material (Schmidt 2014:89), this would be all you needed to carve the soft limestone. Using the same theory that the lack of tools found prove that aliens constructed the site it could be said the lack of evidence of 'aliens interaction' could prove that humans built Gobekli Tepe.

Secondly, people could not have possibly quarried the stone pillars with the technology around at the time. Again this is proved to be untrue, it is shown that the strata of the surrounding area was perfect for just this, it may of even influenced the reason for building the site there with the materials available being so abundant. Claims that the technology capable of producing these stones, was not available at the time are disproved. The stones found at Gobekli Tepe are made of limestone which is a very versatile material. Evidence found at an abandoned but nearly lifted stone shows how easily the final quarried piece would have been able to be achieved. The tools needed were certainly available and so must the knowledge have been, in the words of the Tepe Telegrams “no need to involve aliens here” (The Tepe Telegrams 2016).

Thirdly, people of the time would not have had the physicality to make such a site therefore requiring giants to build it are dismissed quite easily. Experimental archaeology has shown that with the required amount of people present it would be well within their limitations. Claims that only giants would have been able to move such large monoliths (Collins 2014), are contradicted in ethnographic records from the Indonesian island of Nias. Here records show that it was possible to move megaliths over distances of 3km with the required amount of people and the stones at this site only had to be moved between 100-500 metres (The Tepe Telegrams 2016).

Fourthly, the iconography found at this site links it to the pyramids. This seems to be, on analysing the data put forward by palaeo-seti theorists farfetched to say the least. Where they make the link, I do believe they just see what they want to see (ink blot), where they are similar shapes that is all. Schmidt and the Tepe Telegrams put forward a reasonable explanation of the ‘handbags’ found here to be depictions of animal pens. Even if this were not so with the quality of workmanship found at the site if they wanted to depict a handbag I am sure they would have been capable of depicting one in greater detail, furthermore there are no handbags being carried by the stylised human figures.

Last of the claims looked at, is the totem pole and claims that it depicted in the past, before damage, depictions of aliens. There is no possible explanation for this other than the inkblot theory, they really want to see what is not there. There is no evidence of aliens being depicted there. Schmidt (2011) gives a

good account of what he believes it to represent and by studying photos it is hard to disagree with him. The totem stone which is held in the Turkish museum has been subject to many claims regarding the damaged/missing faces. Claims such as the faces have been deliberately removed to hide the fact that they were images of aliens holds no bearing here.

Did as Collins (2014) repeatedly states, the people of the time need a more advanced civilisation's help to create such a monument? All the evidence points to no. The techniques used in the construction of Gobekli Tepe were simple techniques using the simplest of tools. The materials needed were readily available and in the immediate vicinity, the site amazing as it is still has many unanswered questions but palaeo-seti is not one of them.

8 General discussion.

Although the data used, was somewhat unorthodox it could be compared to Horf's 'Damned Data' which he used for The book of the damned. Data on this subject is often dismissed by the more conservative archaeologist for fear of ridicule therefore some of the data used was from rather dubious sources, which would not normally be used for such a project. Having said that for the topic chosen this was necessary, to use this data. Palaeo-seti research still awaits more in-depth research (Richter 2012:222). The needs for using data from these sources is because generally archaeologists speak to other archaeologists about this subject but do not tend to write on the subject (Feder 2008:11), therefore opening the doors for the more unscrupulous to use this subject to sell their books in the interest of making money alone. It is obvious that more people watch television programmes on this subject than attend archaeological lectures or read verified archaeological literature. It is far easier to watch a programme on a subject than read a book on it and the birth of such programmes like ancient aliens has made this possible for the masses. You certainly only get what you pay for when doing this but who wants to go out and buy a book for one hundred pounds, on a subject they don't really understand. It is far easier to watch a programme which may also be advertising their book for a far lower amount, which is far more accessible to the masses. It is unsurprising that so many people believe that these monuments may have been created with the help of aliens. Whilst researching to answer my friends question the amount of support for the argument of palaeo-seti was more widely accessible than that which did not. The authors of

the books supporting palaeo-seti all claim to be archaeologists whilst, also writing in a more seductive manner to the reader. Where the more traditional archaeologist may use more traditional terms the palaeo-seti archaeologist may rely more on its readability than its credibility.

With the growing acceptance of space travel and recent events such as Elon Musks, launching of the SpaceX Rocket, which caused a media uproar with claims of UFO sightings it is little wonder so many people are open to the suggestions of palaeo-seti. Palaeo-seti has influenced, tv shows. computer games, and even the last Indiana Jones film amongst other things. With such an interest amongst the general population it shows the need for certain aspects of this theory to be addressed.

The report may not have achieved its original goal of answering the question as to whether aliens helped make such sites as these, but it has answered the question was it possible for humans to have created it. That answer is yes, they could have easily, just like they built the Great Pyramids and Stonehenge. It has not proven that aliens did not construct this site but that was never the purpose, it will also not help my friend believe that humans were capable of building such monuments either. That is little wonder with the sheer amount of data saying that it must have been aliens, as we were far too basic to be able to do it ourselves, but it is far easier to make money from fiction than fact.

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9. list of figures

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