

Forbidden Archaeology

Michael A. Cremo

A couple of years ago, in the middle of my talk about my book *Forbidden Archeology* to students and professors of earth sciences at the Free University of Amsterdam, a professor stood up and said, “What you say is all very interesting, but how can we accept something that goes against what thousands of archaeologists and geologists and other scientists are telling us?”

Forbidden Archeology documents evidence for extreme human antiquity. Actually, over the past 150 years archaeologists have found abundant evidence showing that human beings like ourselves have existed for hundreds of millions of years. This evidence, practically unknown to both scientists and members

Over the past 150 years archaeologists have found abundant evidence showing that human beings like ourselves have existed for hundreds of millions of years.

of the public, radically contradicts the picture of human origins that is presented to us by Darwin’s modern followers, who say that we evolved fairly recently—within the past 100,000 years or so—from some more apelike ancestors.

So the professor was correct. I was indeed asking my audience to consider something that goes against what all the conventional experts are saying.

“You know,” I responded, “it must have been quite interesting to have been a Darwinist in 1860, when hardly anyone accepted it. Even though I disagree with the Darwinists, I have a lot of respect for the early ones, because it must have taken a considerable amount of courage to stand up for Darwinism in the face of heavy opposition and disagreement from what was then the scientific establishment.”

I then added, “I am especially surprised to hear such an objec-

tion from you, because Dutch scholars have an historic reputation for intellectual independence, and now you are saying that we can only accept ideas that have already been endorsed by thousands of experts.”

At that point, sensing that the mood of the audience was against him, the professor bravely said, “I can also stand up against thousands,” and sat down.

I returned to the Netherlands for another series of lectures to students and professors of archaeology, anthropology, and biology at the universities of Amsterdam, Utrecht, Leiden, Groningen, and Nijmegen, among others. After the lectures, during the question sessions, there were many kinds of reactions from my listeners. Sometimes they were shouting at me; sometimes they sat in shocked silence, not knowing what to say or think; sometimes they asked deep questions about the nature of our knowledge of humankind’s hidden history.

Yes, the audiences were tough, unsympathetic, and skeptical, but that is to be expected when you present ideas as radical as mine. Nevertheless, despite all this, I did win some admissions that the case I was presenting was interesting, well-argued, and worthy of serious consideration. This reaction mirrors that of the scientific world in general, where *Forbidden Archeology* has attracted a great deal of attention. The book has been reviewed in most of the major journals of archaeology, anthropology, and history of science, not always unfavorably. I have also had the chance to speak about the book at international conferences, such as the World Archaeological Congress, held in New Delhi in 1994, the Twentieth International Congress for the History of Science, held in Liege in 1997, the World Archaeological Congress, held in Cape Town in 1999, and the European Association of Archaeologists annual meeting, held in Bournemouth, England, in 1999.

Not all of my audiences in the Netherlands were unsympathetic. I spoke about *Forbidden Archeology* at a lecture in Amsterdam organized by Herman Hegge of the Frontier Sciences Foundation, which publishes the bimonthly Dutch-language journal *Frontier 2000*. I also had the chance to talk to Theo Paijmans and his listeners on Talk Radio 1395 AM (Theo's show, *Dossier X*, focuses on scientific anomalies). But although I do like to speak to people who are already inclined to agree with me, I especially enjoy attempting to change the minds of people who are not so inclined.

My research into humanity's hidden history was inspired by my study of the ancient Sanskrit writings of India, collectively known as the Vedas. Among these Vedic writings are the Puranas, or histories, which tell of human civilizations existing on this planet for tens of millions, even hundreds of millions of years. My interest in India's Vedic writings is more than intellectual. For 25 years, I have been practicing the *bhakti* (devotional) school of Indian spirituality as a member of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Sometimes people are surprised to learn that the gray-haired person of over 50 years of age, lecturing before them in suit and tie, is a member of what is popularly known as the Hare Krishna movement. But indeed I am, and during my stay in Amsterdam, I took the chance to join the young local members in one of their Thursday evening chanting processions through the shopping streets of the city center. This clash of images—science and street religion—is nothing new. For ages, the *bhakti* tradition in India has always been a mixture of two seemingly contradictory elements—the emotional expression of *bhakti* through public chanting and profoundly deep scholarship.

One thing that such scholarship reveals is that time proceeds in cycles rather than in linear fashion. According to the Puranas, the basic unit of these time cycles is the day of Brahma, which lasts 4.3 billion years. The day of Brahma is followed by the night of Brahma. During the day of Brahma life is manifest, and during the night of Brahma life is not manifest. If we consult the ancient Sanskrit calendar of cosmic time, we learn that we are about two billion years into the current day of Brahma.

Now let's imagine that we have a "Vedic archaeologist." Based on the information given above, he or she would expect to see

signs that living things have been present on earth for about two billion years. Interestingly enough, modern science says that the oldest signs of life on earth do indeed go back two or even three billion years. These signs of life include fossils of algae and other single-celled creatures. But our Vedic archaeologist would not be surprised to also find signs of more advanced life forms, including the human form. A conventional archaeologist, however, would not expect to find any such thing. According to conventional views, human beings like ourselves have appeared fairly recently on earth, within the last 100,000 years or so.

Taking all this into consideration, our Vedic archaeologist would make two predictions: First, scientists digging into the earth should find signs of a human presence going back hun-

In other words, if the facts do not agree with the favored theory, then such facts, even an imposing array of them, must be discarded.

dreds of millions of years. Second, this evidence will largely be ignored because it radically contradicts the ideas of human origins currently held by the scientific community.

This leads us to the concept of what I call the knowledge filter. The knowledge filter represents the dominant ideas of the scientific community regarding human origins and antiquity. Evidence that conforms to these ideas passes easily through the filter. Evidence that varies slightly from these ideas may pass through the filter with some difficulty. But evidence that radically contradicts these dominant ideas will not pass through the filter. Such evidence is forgotten, set aside, or, in some cases, actively suppressed.

The existence of the knowledge filter is something that scientists themselves will admit. When archaeologist Wil Roebroeks of the University of Leiden visited me in Amsterdam, we had a long talk about it, and he shared with me some of his own personal experiences with knowledge filtration in treatment of evidence for the earliest occupation of Europe, particularly northern Europe. Of course, it goes without saying that I think the filter operates differently and to a greater extent than he would accept. For example, Roebroeks thinks the filter operates to unfairly include evidence for a very early occupation, whereas I believe it operates to unfairly exclude it.

In *Forbidden Archeology*, I document two things:

1. Hundreds of cases of scientifically-reported evidence for extreme human antiquity, consistent with the account of human origins given in the ancient Sanskrit writings of India.
2. The process by which this evidence has been filtered out of normal scientific discourse.

Let's now look at some particular cases.

In the last century, gold was discovered in the Sierra Nevada mountains of California, and miners came from all over the world to extract it. At first they simply took the gold from streams, but afterwards they began to dig mines into the sides of mountains. Inside the tunnels where they were digging into solid rock, the miners found human skeletons, spear points, and numerous stone tools. These finds occurred at many different locations. One of them was Table Mountain in Tuolumne County, California.

According to modern geological reports, the rock in which the miners found the bones and artifacts at Table Mountain is about 50 million years old. Our Vedic archaeologist would not be surprised at this. But our conventional archaeologist would be very surprised, because his textbooks say that no humans (or even apemen) existed at that time.

The California discoveries were very carefully documented and reported to the scientific world by Dr. J. D. Whitney, a geologist for the state of California. His work (*The Auriferous*

At that point the museum officials simply said they were not going to bring out the artifacts for filming.

Gravels of the Sierra Nevadas) was published by Harvard University in 1880. So why do we not hear anything about these discoveries today?

Whitney's work was dismissed by Dr. William H. Holmes, a very influential anthropologist who worked at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. He said in the Smithsonian Institution's annual report for 1898–99: "Perhaps if Professor Whitney had fully appreciated the story of human evolution as it is understood today, he would have hesitated to announce the conclusions formulated [that humans existed in very ancient times in North America], notwithstanding the imposing

array of testimony with which he was confronted." In other words, if the facts do not agree with the favored theory, then such facts, even an imposing array of them, must be discarded. This is a good example of the operation of the knowledge filter.

And the knowledge filtration process continues to influence the California gold mine discoveries even today. I appeared on a television show called *The Mysterious Origins of Man*, produced by BC Video and broadcast by NBC, the largest television network in the United States. This show was based in part on my book *Forbidden Archeology*. The show also featured the work of other researchers who challenge the current ideas of human prehistory.

Among them was Graham Hancock, author of *Fingerprints of the Gods*. Graham and his wife Santha stopped to visit me in Los Angeles, on their way to Japan, where they were going to investigate some underwater pyramids, *apparently* of human construction. In the course of our conversation, we agreed that a lot of the really exciting scientific research is going on outside the normal channels.

In any case, when the producers were filming *The Mysterious Origins of Man*, I asked them to go to the museum of natural history at the University of California at Berkeley, where the California gold mine artifacts are stored.

The producers asked the museum officials for permission to film the artifacts. The museum officials, assuming that the producers were working on a tight deadline, said they could not bring out the objects on short notice. The producers then explained that they had six months time to finish their work. The museum officials then said they had another problem—a shortage of staff and money. They would have to pay their workers "overtime" to bring out the objects and could not afford to do it. The producers replied that they would pay the museum workers any amount of money required. But at that point the museum officials simply said they were not going to bring out the artifacts for filming. Finally, the producers just used some nineteenth-century photographs of the objects in the show.

When the show finally aired in February 1996, it inspired extreme reactions from the orthodox scientific community in

the United States. This was the first time that a major American television network had ever broadcast a show that seriously questioned the Darwinian account of human origins.

Why was the scientific community so angry? One reason is they did not like anti-Darwinian ideas reaching American schoolchildren through the popular medium of television. The president of the National Center for Science Education, as reported in the journal *Science*, complained that after *The Mysterious Origins of Man* was broadcast, the phones in his organization's headquarters were ringing constantly. Science teachers from all over the country were calling, saying that their students who saw the show were asking them difficult questions. Meanwhile, on the Internet, scientists wondered what effect such television programs might eventually have on government funding for certain kinds of scientific research.

Most of the opposition to the program came from what I call the fundamentalist Darwinian group within the scientific community. This group adheres to Darwinism more out of ideological commitment than scientific objectivity. If this group was disturbed when NBC showed *The Mysterious Origins of Man* in February 1996, they became even more disturbed when they learned that NBC was going to show it again, despite their protests. After the show aired the second time, Dr. Allison R. Palmer, president of the Institute for Cambrian Studies, sent an email message (dated June 17, 1996) to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) of the United States government, asking the FCC to punish NBC for showing the program to the American people. This letter was circulated on scientific discussion groups by Dr. Jere Lipps, a paleontologist at the University of California at Berkeley, in order to generate more pressure from scientists on the FCC. Palmer and his supporters wanted the FCC to censure NBC for showing the program, compel NBC to repeatedly broadcast a public apology, and compel NBC to pay a substantial fine. Fortunately, this effort did not succeed.

What all this shows is that science does not always operate according to its high ideals. The way science works, we are normally told, is on the basis of free and open discussion of evidence and ideas. But in the case of *The Mysterious Origins of Man*, we see elements of the scientific community restricting access to evidence and preventing open discussion of it. Yes, there is in fact a knowledge filter. I have fully documented the

reactions to *The Mysterious Origins of Man*, along with other reactions to *Forbidden Archeology*, in a book titled *Forbidden Archeology's Impact*.

Now let's consider a case from the more recent history of archaeology. In 1979, Mary Leakey found dozens of footprints at a place called Laetoli, in the East African country of Tanzania. She said that the footprints were indistinguishable

Scientists who find things that should not be found sometimes suffer for it professionally.

from those of modern human beings. But they were found in layers of solidified volcanic ash that are 3.7 million years old. According to standard views, humans capable of making such prints should not have existed that long ago. So how do scientists explain the Laetoli footprints?

They say that there must have existed in East Africa 3.7 million years ago some kind of apeman who had feet just like ours. And that is how the footprints were made. That is a very interesting proposal, but unfortunately there is no physical evidence to support it. Scientists already have the skeletons of the apemen who existed 3.7 million years ago in East Africa. They are called *Australopithecus*, and their foot structure was quite different from that of a modern human being.

This question came up when I was speaking at the World Archaeological Congress in Cape Town, South Africa. Also speaking there was this scientist, Ron Clarke. In 1998, Clarke discovered a fairly complete skeleton of *Australopithecus* at a place called Sterkfontein, in South Africa. This discovery was widely publicized all over the world as the oldest human ancestor. It was 3.7 million years old, the same age as the Laetoli footprints. But there was a problem.

Clarke reconstructed the foot of his Sterkfontein *Australopithecus* in an apelike fashion, as he should have, because the foot bones were quite apelike. For example, the big toe is very long and moves out to the side, much like a human thumb. And the other toes are also quite long, about one and a half times longer than human toes. Altogether the foot was not very humanlike. So after Clarke gave his talk, I raised my hand and asked a question: "Why is it that the foot structure of your Sterkfontein *Australopithecus* does not match the footprints found by Mary Leakey at Laetoli, which are the same age, 3.7 million years old, but which are just like those of modern

humans?" You see what the problem was for him. He was claiming to have the oldest human ancestor, but there is evidence from elsewhere in Africa that human beings like us were walking around at the exact same time. So how did he answer my question? He said that it was his *Australopithecus* who made the Laetoli footprints, but he was walking with his big toes pressed close in to the side of the foot, and with his other toes curled under. I did not find that to be a very satisfactory explanation.

Scientists who find things that should not be found sometimes suffer for it professionally. One such scientist is Dr. Virginia Steen-McIntyre, an American geologist whom I know personally.

In the early 1970s, some American archaeologists discovered stone tools and weapons at a place called Hueyatlaco, in Mexico. They included arrowheads and spear points. According to archaeologists, such weapons are made and used only by humans like us, not by apemen.

At Hueyatlaco, the artifacts were found in the bottom layers of the trenches. Of course, the archaeologists wanted to know how old the objects were. So when archaeologists want to know how old something is, they call in some geologists because the geologists will be able to tell them, "The layer of rock in which you found these objects is so-and-so thousand years old." Among the geologists who came to date the site was Virginia Steen-McIntyre. Using four of the latest geological dating methods, she and her colleagues from the United States Geological Survey determined that the artifact-bearing layer was 300,000 years old. When this information was presented to the chief archaeologist, the chief archaeologist said it was impossible. According to standard views, there were no human beings in existence 300,000 years ago anywhere in the world, not to speak of North America. The current doctrine is that humans did not enter the Americas any earlier than 30,000 years ago. So what happened? The archaeologists refused to publish the date of 300,000 years. Instead they published an age of 20,000 years for the site. And where did they get that date? It came from a carbon-14 date on a piece of shell found five kilometers from the place where the artifacts were found.

Steen-McIntyre tried to spread the word about the true age of the site. Because of this, she began to get a bad reputation in her profession. She lost a teaching position she held at a uni-

versity, and all of her opportunities for advancement in the United States Geological Survey were blocked. She became so disgusted that she went to live in a small town in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado and remained silent for ten years, until I found out about her case and wrote about it in *Forbidden Archeology*, giving her work some of the attention it deserves. Partly because of this, the Hueyatlaco site is now being studied by more open-minded archaeologists, and hopefully before too long her original conclusions about the age of the site will be reconfirmed.

An anatomically modern human skull was found by the Italian geologist Giuseppe Ragazzoni at Castenedolo, near Brescia, northern Italy, in the late nineteenth century. Ragazzoni found not only this skull, but the skeletal remains of four persons, in layers of rock which, according to modern geological reports, are about five million years old.

Sometimes when Darwinist scientists hear of modern-looking skeletons being found in very ancient layers of rock, they say: "There is nothing mysterious here. Only a few thousand years ago, someone died on the surface, and his friends dug a grave and placed the body down fairly deep. And that is why you think you have found a human skeleton in some very ancient layer of rock."

Such things, technically called intrusive burial, can certainly happen. But in this case, Ragazzoni—himself a professional geologist—was well aware of the possibility of intrusive burial. If it had been a burial, the overlying layers would have been disturbed. But he checked very carefully during the excavation, and found that the overlying layers were perfectly intact and undisturbed. This means that the skeletons really are as old as the layers of rock in which they were found, in this case five million years old.

Early in the twentieth century, the Belgian geologist A. Rutot made some interesting discoveries in his country. He found hundreds of stone tools and weapons in layers of rock 30 million years old. I mentioned in connection with the California gold mine discoveries that sometimes we are not allowed to see the ancient objects in the museum collections. In this case I was able to see the artifacts. Once when I was in Brussels for some newspaper interviews, a friend of mine was driving me

I learned that the layers of the earth in which the skeleton was found are about 300 million years old.

around, and I suggested that we go to the Royal Museum of Natural Sciences, because that is where I thought Rutot's collection should be. The first museum officials we spoke to had denied having any knowledge of the collection, but finally we found an archaeologist who knew the collection. Of course, it was not being displayed to the public.

This archaeologist took me into the storerooms of the museum, and there I took photographs of Rutot's collection of hundreds of 30 million-year-old stone tools and weapons from Belgium.

Up to this point, all of the finds we've discussed were either made by professional scientists or were reported in the professional scientific literature. But if this evidence for extreme human antiquity really is there in the layers of the earth, then we might expect that people other than professional scientists might be finding it. And their reports, although they might not appear in the pages of scientific journals, might appear in the pages of more ordinary literature. I think we can predict that this should be happening. And in fact it does happen.

Let us consider an interesting report from the *Morrisonville Times*, a newspaper published in the little town of Morrisonville, Illinois, in the year 1892. It tells of a woman who was putting a big piece of coal into her coal-burning stove. The piece of coal broke in half, and inside she found a beautiful gold chain, ten inches long. The two pieces of coal were still attached to the ends of the chain, demonstrating that the chain had been solidly embedded in the coal. From the newspaper report we were able to determine the mine from which the coal came. According to the Geological Survey of the State of Illinois, the coal from that mine is about 300 million years old, the same age as the human skeleton found in the same state.

Let's go back to the scientific literature. In 1862, a scientific journal called *The Geologist* (volume 5, p 470) told of a human skeleton found 90 feet below the surface in Macoupin County, Illinois. According to the report, there was a two-foot thick layer of unbroken slate rock directly above the skeleton. From the government geologist of the state of Illinois, I learned that the layers of the earth in which the skeleton was found are about 300 million years old, making the skeleton the same age as the gold chain found in the same state. In 1852, *Scientific American* reported that a beautiful metallic vase came from five meters deep in solid rock near the city of Boston. According to modern geological reports, the age of the rock at this place is 500 million years old.

The oldest objects that I encountered in my research were some round metallic spheres found over the past 20 years by miners at Ottosdal, in the Western Transvaal region of South Africa. The objects are one or two centimeters in diameter. Most interesting are the parallel grooves that go around the equators of the spheres. The spheres were submitted to metallurgists for analysis before they were filmed for the television program *The Mysterious Origins of Man*. The metallurgists said they could see no way in which the spheres could have formed naturally in the earth, indicating they are the product of intelligent work. The spheres come from mineral deposits over 2 billion years old.

We are nearing the end of this brief review of evidence for extreme human antiquity. I have given you only a small sample of this evidence. I could go on for quite some time, because there are hundreds of such cases from the scientific literature of the past 150 years.

I will end by saying this. We have been told by the Darwinists that all the physical evidence ever discovered by scientists supports their picture of human origins, which has human beings like us coming into existence about 100,000 years ago. I think we can safely say that is not true. There is a chain of discoveries going from 100,000 years ago all the way back to 2 billion years. I did not find any evidence older than that. I think it is, at the very least, an interesting coincidence that the ancient Sanskrit writings say humans have been present on earth for two billion years.

What does all of this suggest? It means we need an alternative picture of human origins, and I intend to present one of my own in my next book, *Human Devolution*. In that book, I will suggest that we have not evolved upward from the apes on this planet, as modern science tells us, but that we have devolved from an original spiritual position in higher levels of reality.

For more great articles like this one...**buy the book!**



www.disinfo.com