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SOLOMON'S FLEET MYSTERY

Evidence of Phoenician voyages into the South Pacific

I stumbled into it. And hating secrets, I just had to find out.

Mount Moehau, on New Zealand's Coromandel Peninsula, plunges steeply into the sea. Draped in subtropical rain forest, downcut by waterfalls and precipitous gorges, the region oozes mystery and enchantment.

Here, says Maori legend, the Turehu people, light-skinned, with reddish hair, made their last stand.¹ The Maoris say they found them in parts of New Zealand. As the Maori encroached, the Turehu retreated further into the hills, particularly of the Coromandel Peninsula. Here the mountains of Moehau, steep and remote, became their final refuge. Since they sought concealment near the misty summit of Moehau, the Turehu were sometimes spoken of as the "Mist People". Their voices and the ghostly piping of their flutes could often be heard in the dense forest. Huge gourds they grew. They built forts from interlaced supplejack, a long thick woody vine that trailed across the tall forest trees.

According to other Pacific islanders, people answering the same physical description had come from the east – from the direction of South America – long, long ago.

And would you believe, in South America I ran into similar traditions of a light-skinned, red-haired, blue-eyed race. According to legends, these people had settled

and built cyclopean stone cities (whose ruins survive), but following a war had fled westward across the Pacific.

Was there some link, here? Could they have been the same people?

And pushing the question a little further, could these people of historical tradition have been the descendants of some ancient traders whose story we shall now relate?

Around the fifteenth century BC, two powers were taking possession of the land on the eastern Mediterranean coast. About the same time as the Hebrew (Israelite) nation was coming into Palestine, another power was being established on the sea coast adjacent to the north, a people whose career was definitely marked out for them.

It was the destiny of Phoenicia that she should become to the ancient world in material things, what the Hebrew had become in spiritual things.

Phoenicia was the great manufacturing nation of the ancient world. Her dyed textiles, glass technology, superb stonework, ceramics and gem engraving were unsurpassed.

Indeed, L.A. Waddell (citing Sir Flinders Petrie) asserts that the Phoenicians "had a civilization equal or superior to that of Egypt, in taste and skill., luxury far beyond that of the Egyptians, and technical work which could teach them rather than be taught."²

The city of Tyre was the London of antiquity, the centre of a vast global trading network.

Mistress of the seas

Phoenicia, mistress of the seas, sent ships to all ports and traversed all oceans. From the thirteenth century BC she was the dominant naval and commercial power. Her mercantile operations were enormous. This great naval power had the trade of the planet in her hands. She was a great distributing nation; her people were the carriers of the world.

The famous Indian epic, the *Mahabharata*, states that:

The able Panch (Phoenicians) setting out to invade the Earth, brought the whole world under their sway.³

They were termed "leaders of the Earth".⁴

And Phoenicia was, in the tenth to eleventh centuries BC as great as Babylon or Egypt.

The coasts and islands of the Mediterranean were rapidly covered with colonies. Today's "Venice" preserves the ethnic title of "Phoenicia".

The Straits of Gibraltar were passed and cities built on the shores of the Atlantic. They founded Gades (Cadiz) on Spain's west coast, 2,500 miles from Tyre, as the starting point for the Atlantic trade.

In the expanding range of their voyages, Phoenician ships out of Spain were battling the wild Atlantic en route to the tin of Cornwall and even to Norway (2,000 miles beyond Gades).

Eastward, there is evidence that Phoenicia built factories on the Persian Gulf and traded as far as Ceylon.

London founded

An interesting sideline concerns the founding of London.

It has been adduced from substantial evidence that some 89 years after the fall of Troy (a Phoenician colony), Brutus, a descendant of the Trojan royalty, sailed up the River Thames in Britain and founded Tri-Novantum ("New Troy"). This ultimately became London.⁵

Thus, contrary to popular misconception, there existed a highly civilized dynasty, which survived in Britain even until the Roman invasion. It left behind gold coins, at least one surviving stone inscription and a detailed chronology. Indeed, Julius Caesar and other contemporaries testified to its cultured, well-dressed city-dwelling subjects, though untamed tribes did flank the western and northern borders.⁶

Researcher L.A. Waddell gives an authenticated unbroken chronology of highly civilized independent British kings reigning in London from Brutus (c. 1103 BC) to the Roman conquerors.⁷ There is evidence that a large proportion of the people of Britain are descendants of the sea-going Phoenicians.

Sophisticated Instruments

Phoenician ships probed ever further. Navigation across open ocean was no problem to these explorers.

Due to the insufficient attention paid to this aspect of the subject, we have tended to belittle the size and sophistication of Phoenician shipping.

If we conceive of it as represented by types of marine craft as outlined on Phoenician coins and tombs, we shall not be able to suppose that the nation was ever employed on such voyages as those that shall shortly engage our attention.

There is evidence that they had the benefit of sophisticated instruments and large, fast, modern vessels carrying over 500 people.⁸ This will be a surprise to many readers.

"Ships of Tarshish"

The type of vessel built especially for ocean travel was designated "ship of Tarshish" to distinguish it from the smaller craft which merely plied the eastern Mediterranean.

The name of the original Tarshish (in Spain) became displaced as the horizon of the Phoenician navigators moved westward.

Herodotus records a Phoenician clockwise circumnavigation of Africa about 600 BC, on behalf of Pharaoh Necho – a distance of 13,000 miles. Herodotus sniffed at their report that the sun was on their right, that is, to their north.⁹

This establishes the fact that Phoenician nautical prowess and daring was at a level not to be seen in modern times until the century of Columbus.

It is only due to the proud announcement of the Pharaoh who sponsored the trip that we know of this voyage. The Phoenicians were not publicists.

So what other trips were being made – from perhaps as early as 1200 BC?

At La Venta, Mexico, was found a sculpture with distinctly Phoenician characteristics: bearded faces, upturned shoes, twisted rope borders and other details. It has been dated to around 850 BC. From Nicaragua to Mexico, on jade figurines, the backs of slate mirrors, funeral urns and other objects, appear bearded men who bear little resemblance to American Indians.

A well-known colony of Phoenicia was Carthage. An ancient historical work records the voyage of a convoy of as many as 60 ships, each carrying 550 people. This was around 500 BC.¹⁰

Strabo writes that Phoenician colonies (300 colonies, he estimates) were planted prolifically well down the Atlantic coast of Africa.¹¹

From West Africa, it would be a simple matter to follow the trade winds to - you guessed it - South America.

To some, the idea that ancient mariners would have known the Americas may appear too ridiculous to consider, and it will be cast aside. But before such actions are taken, surely the evidence for this position should be carefully considered.

As Michael G. Bradley aptly put it, "The truth is just now being glimpsed by a handful of specialists - it is still almost completely unsuspected by the average civilized citizen."¹²

Voyages to the New World at around the time of King Solomon of Israel now seem more likely than not.

Some twelve years' research for the book *Dead Men's Secrets* finally convinced me that these colonists of a forgotten age were indeed part of a great network of ancient civilizations that once maintained a flourishing trade between Europe, Asia, and the Americas, some 3,000 years ago.

I should not have been surprised to discover that Harvard professor Dr. Barry Fell, from his own research, had reached the same conclusion. He considered the ancient visitors to North America were probably not explorers, but rather merchants, trading

with well-established fur trappers and very likely also mining precious metals on those sites where ancient workings have been discovered.

Fell states:

Because of the depth of ignorance into which Europe fell during the Dark Ages, at times we are apt to forget how advanced were the ideas of the ancients, and how much they knew about the earth and about astronomy and navigation. 13

Fell is also convinced that "America shares a history with the Old World, and ancient Americans must have been well acquainted with much of that history as it took place."

Dr. Fell is now recognised as one of the world's foremost epigraphers.

Phoenicians in America?

In 1780, on a rock on the shores of Mount Hope Bay in Bristol, Rhode Island, there was discovered an inscription, which Fell deciphered in 1975 to read:

VOYAGERS FROM TARSHISH

THIS STONE PROCLAIMS

This suggests strongly that here on the eastern seaboard of North America there was once a port for "ships of Tarshish".

On the island of Hispaniola, Columbus discovered immense ancient mines. In Haiti, he thought he could trace furnaces in which gold had been refined. 14

Between 1850 and 1910, travelers in the Amazon region and other parts of Brazil were reporting the finding of old inscriptions on rock faces.

Former rubber tapper Bernardo da Silva Ramos, in a now rare book in Portuguese, has published 1,500 reproductions from such rock carvings. They are all covered over with the letters of the Phoenician alphabet.

Investigator Pierre Honore discussing the finds of other Brazilian travelers and explorers of last century, states:

Today there is a whole library full of their reports; and they too were firmly convinced that the inscriptions were Phoenician texts. They were sure that King Solomon (975-935 BC) had once come to the Amazon with his ships; that the gold countries of Ophir, Tarshish and Parvaim were not to be looked for in the Old World at all, but here in the Amazon region on the Rio Solimoes, Solomon's River. 15

It is reported that in Havea near Rio de Janeiro are letters several feet high inscribed upon a sheer cliff face in cuneiform. The inscription reads:

BADEZIR OF THE PHOENICIAN TYRE.

THE FIRST SON OF JETHBAAL ¹⁶

(Jethbaal ruled Tyre from 887 to 856 BC.)

In 1872, on the coast of Brazil near Paraiba, Joaquim Alves da Costa found on his property a stone that bore numerous characters which no one understood. He copied them and sent them to the President of the Instituto Historico. A translation is as follows:

We are Sidonian Canaanites from the city of the Merchant King. We were cast

(2) up on this distant island, a land of mountains. We sacrificed a youth to the celestial gods

(3) and goddesses in the nineteenth year of our mighty King Hiram

(4) and embarked from Ezion-geber into the Red Sea. We voyaged with ten ships

(5) and were at sea together for two years around Africa. Then we were separated

(6) by the hand of Baal and were no longer with our companions. So we have come here, twelve

(7) men and three women, into "Island of Iron". Am I, the Admiral, a man who would flee?

(8) Nay! May the celestial gods and goddesses favor us well.

This eight-line inscription proved to be in Phoenician characters. There are reasons to believe that the king referred to was Hiram III (553-533 BC). Brazil was known, anciently, as Hy Brasil. The incorporation of 'I' or 'Hy' is typically Phoenician.

According to Cyrus Gordon, Head of the Department of Mediterranean studies at Brandeis University, Massachusetts, the Phoenicians certainly knew Brazil, which they called "Island of Iron". Hy Brasil means "Island of Iron". Iron is still the country's main resource.

When I first learned of this inscription, I was skeptical. Mention of it was omitted from my book *Dead Men's Secrets*, since I preferred to publish only discoveries which could be confirmed beyond doubt as genuine. Others also considered it to be a fraud.

As we noted, at the time the alleged inscription was found, the script was not known. No one other than the original translator could read it. That has now changed.

Significantly, it contains Phoenician idiosyncrasies that were unknown in 1872 but which are now authenticated by other inscriptions found since.

Concerning many such initially rejected finds, Barry Fell says:

One by one competent scholars who hold responsible positions in universities and museums are now coming forward with confirmations of the decipherments.¹⁷

Shipping routes westward at first

The trend of Phoenician colonial development prior to 1000 BC was mainly in a westerly direction.

However, it is quite certain that they did not long rest satisfied with that.

With their overland routes to the east at risk from unrest in Babylonia, the Phoenicians gave careful attention to an alternative eastern route.

We know that Hiram I, king of Tyre, shared a friendship with Israel's King David, and with his son Solomon.

There was also a religious sympathy. These early Phoenicians — contrary to the now current notions of popular writers — were monotheists.

As a result of a commercial treaty, Hiram assisted in the erection of Solomon's Temple and Israel granted Phoenicia the two ports of Eilat and Ezion-geber on the Gulf of Aqaba.¹⁸

Like Gades in the west, the Persian Gulf colonies must now be viewed not as an end of Phoenician navigation in the east, but as the starting point for more distant navigation.

Fortunately, a mass of undigested historic data leaves no doubt concerning this fact.

King Solomon's silver

We find that the ships employed in the prosecution of the silver trade in both easterly and westerly directions were now "ships of Tarshish".

Suddenly we find gold and silver in such abundance in Jerusalem that Solomon made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones... for abundance" ¹⁹

And why? "... for the king had at sea a navy of Tarshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tarshish, bringing gold and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks." ²⁰

There can be no question that the peacocks came from South-East Asia. But whence the abundance of silver?

Says Heeren:

Silver is also found in Siberia and in China or South Asia, but the large annual importation of the metal from Europe in consequence of the high price it bore in the East sufficiently prove that it was found there in small quantities. We may therefore conclude with certainty that the greater portion of the silver possessed of old by the Asiatic nations was imported, and there can be no question that the Phoenicians were the channel of importation. ²¹

Ultimate destination: Ophir

The ultimate destination of the ships of Hiram and Solomon was a place or region called Ophir.

"And they came to Ophir," says the Scripture, "and fetched from thence gold." "And the navy also of Hiram, that brought gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir great plenty of almug trees, and precious stones."²²

From the books of Genesis²³ and Josephus,²⁴ it can be found that Ophir was the general name for the rich southern countries lying on the African, Arabian and Indian coasts.

But when we ask, Where was that Ophir which could be reached from Ezion-geber that provided silver in such abundance, we are faced with a problem.

It can be shown that the source was not Asia, the greater portion of whose silver was imported.

Silver was so scarce in Arabia, that it was assessed at ten times the value of gold.²⁵

Yet in Solomon's Jerusalem it became as common as stones.

I am aware of the nineteenth century explorers' tales that supposedly identified the mines of Ophir with central Africa. There are people who refuse to accept that the massive stone fortress known as the ruins of Zimbabwe (and situated in that country) could have been built by native Africans.

Such identification with King Solomon must be regarded as romantic fiction.

Zimbabwe is AD not BC and almost certainly it is the work of a powerful indigenous African empire.

"Three year" voyages

That the expeditions pushed into regions much more distant than the Indian Ocean is apparent from the "three years" required for the double voyage, only nine months being required for a return journey to the extremities of Arabia.²⁶

Thomas Johnston suggests that Ophir "must be looked for in the farther East, and in a territory that was not only capable of supplying silver in practically unlimited quantities, but of affording conclusive evidence of occupancy by the Jews and Phoenicians."²⁷

Johnston argues persuasively that the route of the expeditions can be traced beyond the peacock lands, through Indonesia, the Torres Strait (at the north of Australia), and via Samoa and Tahiti to Mexico and Peru. It appears that they founded colonies along the route.

An American destination accords well with the fact that the world's largest silver deposits are in the Americas – in the United States, Mexico, Canada and Peru.

Reached from two directions

The Bible says that the distant land of Tarshish was rich in silver, iron, tin and lead.²⁸ It could be reached from the Mediterranean port of Joppa (Jaffa),²⁹ or the Red Sea port of Ezion-geber.³⁰

A glance at the map tells us that the only part of the world that one would reach by ship from either the Mediterranean or Red Sea ports is the Atlantic seaboard.

Cyrus Gordon of Brandeis University, Massachusetts, says that a text mentioning "gold of Ophir" found at Tell Qasile on the Mediterranean coast of Israel, suggests that Ophir could be reached via Gibraltar. I am aware that many places have been

suggested as the location of Solomon's fabled mines. New respect for the seagoing capabilities of early navigators makes the Americas a strong possibility.

"Ofir"

The Ugha Mongulala tribe of north-west Brazil preserve written records of an ancient city called *Ofir* (Ophir) which once stood at the mouth of the Amazon River.

This is the ONLY independent mention of a specific locality called Ophir, outside of the Bible. Could this be significant?

Their tradition states that:

Lhasa, the prince of Akakor... commanded the construction of *Ofir*, a powerful harbor city at the mouth of the Great River [the Amazon]. Ships from Samon's [Solomon's?] empire docked there with their valuable cargoes. In exchange for gold and silver...³¹

Perhaps, like that of Tarshish, the name *Ophir* became displaced, and as the trade of the Phoenicians moved further eastward and westward, it moved with the trade, until in course of time it came to be applied to a more distant region controlled by the Phoenicians.

Corroborating this, the Phoenician *Ophir* or *Ofor* means, in their ancient language, the Western Country.³²

And what land lay to the west? The Americas, no less.

Mixed crews

While the expeditions were under Jewish and Phoenician direction, they undoubtedly carried crews and marine force of composite nationality, In the next chapter we shall touch on evidence suggesting that considerable numbers of Seythians and Thracians were employed on the Phoenician fleets. At this time in history Hebrew, Phoenician, Scythian and Thracian were the dominant factors in the national life of the eastern Mediterranean. The Thracians and Scythians were then the two great nations of south-eastern Europe.³³

Eastward

There must have been, from Ezion-geber, a general push of the giant "ships of Tarshish" toward the east.

To control the South Arabian markets could not have been the sole purpose of Solomon building his great ships. If these ships had been merely constructed to trade with Yemen, and back, and if, as the Scripture says, the journey had taken three years, then Solomon and Hiram were inept investors. The cost of the ships, the expense of working them, the interest on capital for such a long interval, as well as the deterioration of cargo in such a climate, would have outweighed any advantage of using sea transport, as against an overland route.

Furthermore, it seems most unlikely that expeditions to a place as close as Yemen could have wakened such enthusiasm, as to have brought Solomon and his court from their safe capital into the heart of a discontented country to witness the departure of the ships and their crews, as 2 Chronicles 8:17 records.

If we continue the line to Java and Sumatra, we will have reached the native home of the peacock, which was collected on the return journey of Solomon's and Hiram's expeditions.

Penetrating beyond Indonesia, we shall discover some facts of a rather startling nature.

The "ships of Tarshish" encountered unknown perils as they ventured into new regions. One particularly dangerous passage was along the north-western coast of Australia.

Any mariner approaching the north-west coast of Australia could find the West Kimberley area near Derby one of the most dangerous on the coast. A violent rip runs up to ten knots and creates whirlpools. To come in at the entrance to King Sound, ships must run through this riptide. There are many reefs and shoals. Navigation is hazardous.

Around the entrance to King Sound lie the islands of the Buccaneer Archipelago. King Sound itself is about 90 miles long and at its widest about 35 miles across.

A feature of this area is the extreme rise and fall of tides: up to 35 feet, which leaves ships high and dry.

Here salvage diver Allan Robinson found what he believed to be the wreck of an ancient Phoenician ship.

He noticed that in the mud of the swamp off the mainland, there was a strange shape. Small mounds of mud seemed to project above the surroundings to form a shape more like a banana than a ship.

The contour was quite plain. A bronze plate was retrieved and declared by a university official to be of Phoenician origin.

The Phoenician wreck was near an overgrown mine of galena. And galena is an ore of silver, lead and zinc.

It is not surprising that, if the ships of Solomon and Hiram came as far as Java and Sumatra (which, as we said, was the native home of the peacock – one item of Solomon's cargo), that they would have found the nearby coast of Australia.

Their route would have taken them through Torres Strait. And, conceivably, they could have sailed down the eastern coast of Australia.

Should it surprise us, then, that Phoenician-style engravings have been found on a marble slab in North Queensland? Or that further south along the coast, in New South Wales, many strange symbols, ships, and figures of Egyptian, Phoenician and Syrian style have been discovered carved on rocks along the Hawkesbury River?

Ancient Aboriginal legends tell how people in large ships like birds (the bird-headed prows of the old Phoenician triremes?) sailed into Gympie (now 34 miles inland), dug holes in the hills, erected the "sacred mountain" found nearby and interbred with local inhabitants. Interestingly, evidence of ancient mining and smelting was recently found here, as well as traces of a causeway or stone quay.

Near Toowoomba in Queensland, recently, a group of seventeen granite stones was discovered, bearing ancient inscriptions. These were identified as Phoenician. One of them has been translated to read "guard the shrine of Yahweh's message". Another says, "God of gods".

Some years ago, a farmer in the Rockhampton area plowed up a large ironstone slab. Today the slab sits in the museum of Rex Gilroy near Tamworth, New South Wales. It bears another Phoenician inscription that reads, "Ships sail from this land under the protection of Yahweh to Dan."

Dan was an ancient trade center in north-west Israel just south of Tyre, a Phoenician port. These discoveries were reported in an issue of the Ravenshoe *Northern Star* dated July-August-September, 1996.

As I commented in the book, *Dead Men's Secrets*, fiction couldn't challenge your imagination more. And yet here it all is, fact after fact, story after story, about the lives and discoveries of a people thousands of years ago.

Now naturally these exhibits will not be popular with some people. The majority of the scientific community has greeted them with deathly silence because of early indoctrination in the theory of evolution. It tries to ignore them for the sole reason that it cannot explain them.

I ask, was it simply to control the nearby Arabian trade that Solomon and Hiram created the costly fleet of large armed ships of Tarshish? Or were these large, sophisticated vessels fitted out to travel the earth's surface?

The biblical account suggests the latter. And the implications are dynamite.

Into the Pacific

As an eastern port on the Red Sea became a reality, the Phoenicians, with Solomon of Israel, now pursued with eagerness a further expansion eastward, to parallel that in the west.

And beyond Australia, they left a trail right across the Pacific. *Samoa* rises up dramatically from the sea. But its native population has traditionally not pronounced it as Samoa, but as *Samo*. And this was also the name of a Phoenician colony (pronounced the same way) on the coasts of Asia Minor — *Samos*.³⁴

The name *Samo* means, according to Pliny, "a mountain height by the sea". Both locations have a similar appearance, rising up from the sea. In fact, modern navigators term the Pacific Samoa "high islands", in contrast to the low coral atolls that surround it for hundreds of miles in all directions.

The principal island of Samoa is named *Upola* — the equivalent of the Scythian *deity Apollo*. And the main town of Western Samoa is *Apia* —which is the name of the Scythian deity, the Earth,³⁵ as well as the name of the Peloponnesus³⁶ — a Phoenician locality.

Next, traveling east, the ships of Solomon and Hiram would have reached the Society Islands. Here is *Tahiti*, with a silent "h". This is identical to *Tabiti* (probably also with a silent "b"). *Tabiti* was the Scythian Vista. Both names would be pronounced *Ta-iti*.

The name of Tahiti's chief settlement, Papeete, is only a slightly modified form of the name of the Scythian Jupiter, or father, *Papeus*.

Morea, the name of an island separated from Papeete by a narrow strait, is the same as *Morea*, a principal district of the Hellenic Peninsula in the Mediterranean, colonized by the Scythians shortly before the period of Solomon's expeditions. *Morea* was given that name because the contour of the shoreline resembled a mulberry leaf. This explanation is also applicable to *Morea* of the Pacific.

It would seem that in the Pacific the Phoenicians followed the same policy as in the Mediterranean. They established stations for the ships to call at on these long voyages. It appears that these colonies were placed under the care of responsible governors, drawn from the Scythians of the marine corps, since most of the names we have referred to were clearly drawn from this source.

There is no other explanation for the presence of Scythians in the heart of the Pacific.

Enormous stone remains in many of the Pacific Islands can be linked with local traditions.

Strong's Island is one example. An ancient tradition says that "an ancient city once stood round this harbor which was occupied by a powerful people called Anut, who had large vessels in which they made long voyages, many moons being required in their prosecution."³⁷

Early European missionaries to the Pacific found in these islands evidence of numeric skill, cosmogony, astronomical knowledge and religious system which was plainly Phoenician.

For example, the Phoenician skill in the use of numbers and astronomy is reflected in the same extraordinary skill of the Society Islanders. And their names of stars and constellations and the use to which they applied their knowledge of the heavenly bodies was the same as that of the Phoenicians.

Their sacred groves, open-air temples or marais, their human sacrifices, and their methods of initiation and practice, were identical to those of the priests of Astarte on the eastern Mediterranean.

It should be noted that, throughout the period of the Solomon-Hiram voyages, both Israel and Phoenicia were monotheistic, worshipping the one true Creator. But later, both nations descended into the worship of Baal the sun-god and Astarte (Ashteroth) the "queen of heaven". The expeditions were, however, continuing during this period. Thus, although monotheism had been planted first throughout the world wherever the expeditions went, this was eventually corrupted as new generations of sailors brought their practices with them.

The Phoenician alphabet of 16 letters was the same as the Samoan. The natives of Samos (Samo) in the Mediterranean were famous as seamen; likewise the Pacific Samoans were famed for their nautical skill.

The gymnastic systems used in the Mediterranean, as a means of training for war, as well as the implements used (including spear, javelin, bow and arrow, dart, sword, falchion, and sling and boomerang) are found over the entire route of the ships across the Pacific to the Americas.

The historical traditions, practices, circumcision and some other customs such as test of virginity were clearly Jewish.

Further customs (tattooing, spear and javelin throwing) were clearly Thracian.

Their worship of the skulls of ancestors, cannibalism, and use of bow and arrow as a test of strength were peculiarly Scythian.

Research has established that the implements of war and the festivals and games among these Polynesians were the same as those found in the ancient Mediterranean. And the foregoing is just a small sampling of the many parallels.

Here are startling facts, pointing to the presence together of four races — Hebrew, Phoenician, Scythian and Thracian — in the mid-Pacific in the remote past.

How can this be explained, if not through the instrumentality of the historic expeditions of Hiram and Solomon?

The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* notes concerning the Polynesians that, while their facial features sometimes suggest Mongoloid affinities, their light skin, wavy hair and full beards, as well as their blood types, suggest European ties.³⁸

This is certainly consistent with the planting of outposts in the Pacific by European members of Solomon's and Hiram's crews, such as Scythians and Thracians.

And on to the Americas

The Maya population already inhabited central portions of the American continent.

Votan, the first historian of the Maya (c.1000 BC), actually reported the arrival around that time, on the Pacific coasts of Central America, of seven large ships.

In his book on the origin of the race, Votan declares himself a descendant of Imos, of the land of Chan, of the race of Chivim.

Research shows that present-day Tripoli in Syria was, in the time of Solomon, a town in the kingdom of Tyre, and was anciently known as Chivim.

Votan is said to have led some of his people to Yucatan in Central America, where he found inhabitants already there. Here he established the kingdom of Xibalba and built the city of Nachan (probably Palenque).

A copy of Votan's book, written in the Quiche language, existed until 1691, when it was very likely burned, along with other native relics, by the Spaniards at Huehuetan, but not before extracts had been copied from it.³⁹

Fray Lizana set down in his *Historia de Yucatan* the tradition that from the west (that is, from the direction of the Pacific) "many" people had come.⁴⁰

Indeed, there is abundant physical evidence in Central America which appears to indicate Phoenician and Hebrew penetration of these remote regions. Evidence of occupancy, linguistic features, physical characteristics, intricacies of customs, as well as traditions and place names.

Some resemblances

It will be of interest to note a few similarities to be found between the indigenous peoples of America and the Hebrews.

The religion of the Mexicans strongly resembled that of the Hebrews in numerous minor details. De Bourbourg noted the perfectly Jewish dress of the women at Palin and on the

shores of Lake Amatitlan.⁴¹ Like the Hebrews, the Mexicans tore their clothing on receipt of bad news. Another similarity was giving a kiss on the cheek as a token of peace.⁴²

The Hebrew nation were ordered to worship Yahweh the true and living God. James Adair, a trader with the "wild" Indians of the south-east of North America, discovered that the North American Indians styled the living God as *Yahewah*.⁴³

Like the Hebrews, the North American Indians offer their first fruits, they keep their new moons, as well as the feast of Atonement at the same time as the Jews. The brother of a deceased husband marries his widow. In some places, circumcision is practised. There is much analogy in rites and customs, such as the ceremonies of purification and the manner of prayer.

It was reported last century that the Indians likewise were abstaining from the blood of animals, as also from fish without scales. They had various "clean" and "unclean" animals.

A replica "Ark of the Covenant"?

Researchers Rivero and Tschudi indicated that they:

have a species of ark, seemingly like that of the Old Testament; this the Indians take with them to war; it is never permitted to touch the ground, but rests upon stones or pieces of wood, it being deemed sacreligious and unlawful to open it or look into it.

[they] celebrate the first fruits with religious dances, singing in chorus these mystic words: — YO MESCHICA, HE MESCHICA, VA MESCHICA, forming thus, with the first three syllables, the name of Jeho-vah, and the name of Messiah thrice and pronounced, following each initial. The use of Hebrew words was not uncommon in the religious performances of the North American Indians, and Adair assures us that they called an accused or guilty person haksit canaha, "a sinner of Canaan"; and to him who was inattentive to religious worship, they said,

Tschi haksit canaha, "you resemble a sinner of Canaan". Les Carbot also tells us that he had heard the Indians of South America say "Alleluia" ⁴⁴

Adair, who wrote these facts in his *History of the American Nations* (pp.15-212), lived 40 years among the Indians.

The evidence suggests that a significant portion of the early American civilization came from the eastern shores of the Mediterranean. Its intermediaries were Phoenicians and Hebrews, who were accompanied by Thracians and Scythians, who were accustomed to hire themselves out as mercenaries.

They sailed from Ezion-geber on the Red Sea to a destination called Ophir, whose actual location has been traditionally difficult to determine.

This should, however, occasion no surprise, since the Phoenicians adopted a policy of secrecy as to their routes and destinations after the Greeks displaced them on the eastern Mediterranean some 150 years before the expeditions that sailed from Ezion-geber.

Their route may be tracked across the Pacific by observing such traces as still exist of the presence of nations which formed the personnel of these expeditions. This is possible because the Phoenicians, on their longer routes, were accustomed to establishing stations for repairing and revictualling their ships and ports of call.

For how long?

How long did these voyages continue? We have no means of determining accurately. However, it is likely that they continued for some 300 years, until the Assyrians and Babylonians occupied strategic land and closed areas of Middle East territory that were crucial to the continuance of the voyages.

Lighter skinned peoples

At the time of the conquest of Peru, the Spaniards noticed that many of the Inca ruling caste were paler of skin and had reddish tints in their hair, as distinct from the native mountain peasants of the Andes, who were generally of distinctly Mongoloid ancestry.

Inca legends spoke of certain white and bearded men who advanced from the shores of Lake Titicaca, established an ascendancy over the natives, and brought civilization.

Ancient representations in stone, as well as portrait jars from the ruins of the city of Chan, in coastal Peru, show white, bearded men. And mummified corpses of chiefs from the oldest layers of graves in this region bear hair that is auburn or blond, wavy and fine.

Reports frequently surface concerning ancient "white" tribes still surviving in isolated pockets of the Americas.

South American legend records that some of the bearded white men who built the enormous stone cities found in ruins there eventually left to sail westward... into the Pacific Ocean.

Polynesian legends still current are living proof that the bearded white men arrived safely in Polynesia.

But there is evidence more substantial than legend on some of these islands: pyramids, helmets and panpipes. As well as proof that irrigation, trepanning and head-deformation were practised. These same Pacific Islanders knew that the earth was round – and they had a vast astronomical knowledge, as well as a calendar curiously similar to that in the Americas.

On some of the islands, early missionaries found people of a lighter skin, who sported reddish hair and blue eyes. Which made me prick up my ears when I learned of a discovery on the other side of the world.

Some sarcophagi had been found at the old Phoenician city of Sidon. On these were some lavishly colored representations which suggest that some of the deceased were blue-eyed and had dark red hair.

Now I prefer not to speculate. It's just a thought. In the introduction to this article I was musing on a New Zealand Maori tradition of light-skinned people with red hair and blue eyes, having long ago been driven by the Maori people into a last refuge on the Coromandel Peninsula.

In distributing their products to the ends of the earth, the Phoenicians brought within the range of their influence practically every center of population, civilized and uncivilized, known to the ancient world.

And the thought just crossed my mind. Could some descendants of the crews of the Hiram-Solomon maritime expeditions have reached even the remote land of New Zealand?

I think we all love mysteries. And there we have another mystery to titillate our mental powers.... We can safely say that most of our past is unknown.

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End notes:

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- 7 Waddell, pp. 385-393
- 8 Johnston, Thomas Crawford *Did the Phoenicians Discover America?* London: James Nisbet and Co., Ltd, 1913, pp.70-104,289. Compare with Jonathan Gray's *Dead Men's Secrets*. Adelaide, South Australia (P.O. Box 3370, Rundle Mall, South Australia), 1996, pp.77-81
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19 1 Kings 10:27

20 v.22 See also Ezekiel 27:12, which mentions tin.

21 Heeren *Historical Research*. Quoted by Johnston, pp.127,128

22 1 Kings 9:28; 10:11

23 Genesis 10:29,30

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31 2 Chronicles 20:36

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34 Pliny, v.37

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37 Johnston, *Ibid.*

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43 Bancroft, Vol. V, p.91 note

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With warm regards

Jonathan Gray

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