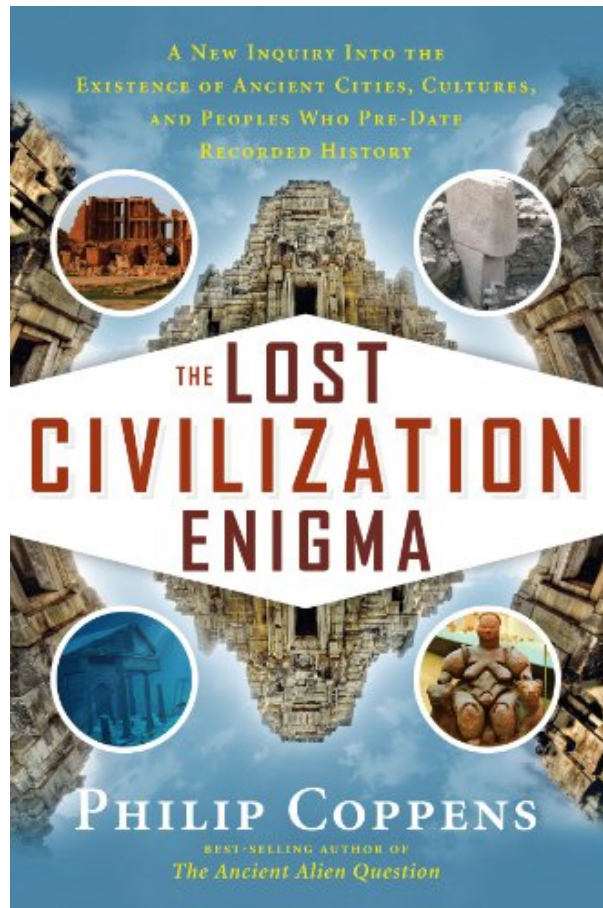
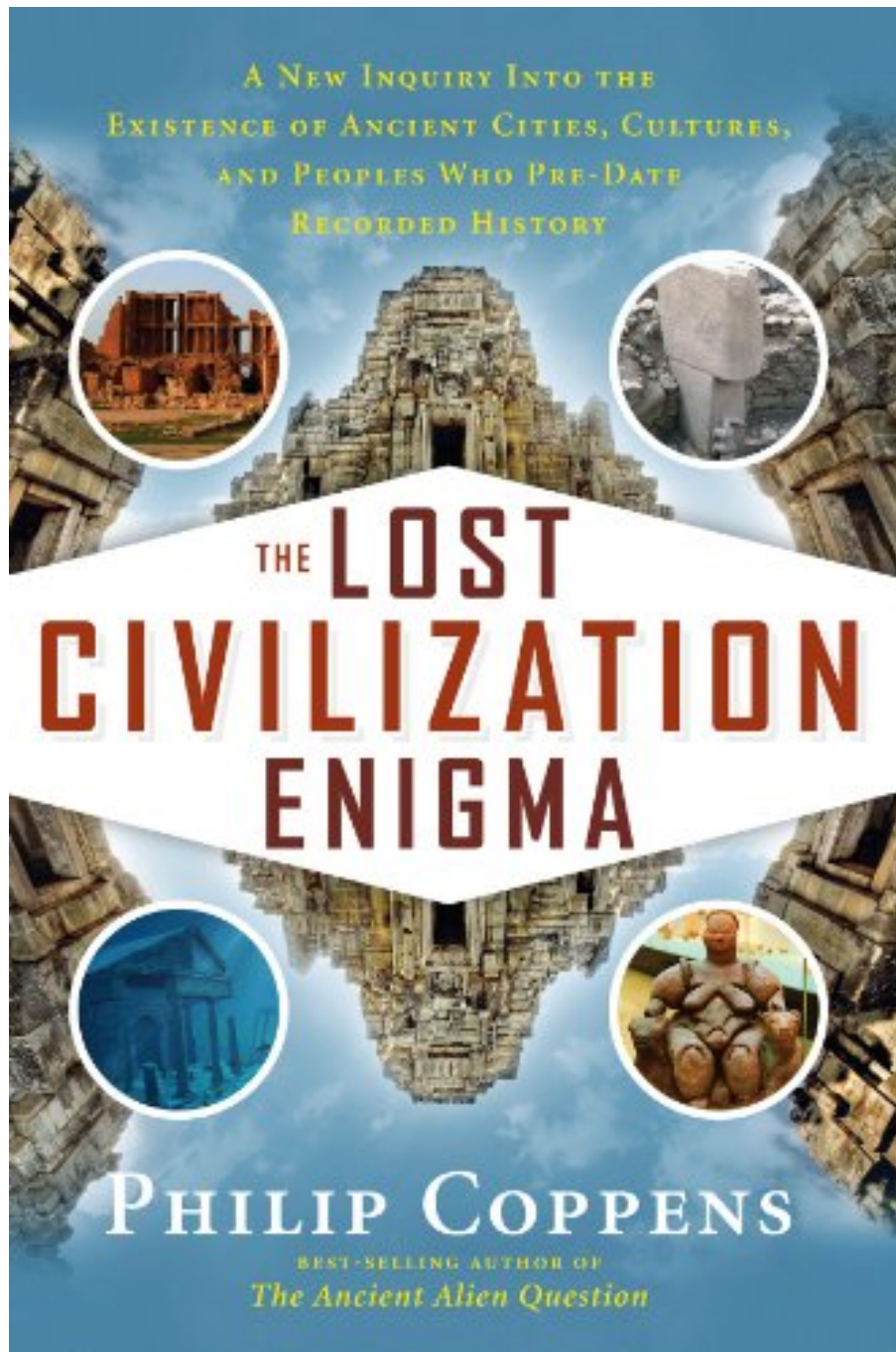


THE LOST CIVILIZATION ENIGMA BY PHILIP COPPENS



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About the Author

Philip Coppens is an internationally renowned investigative journalist and author and a regular contributor to magazines such as *Atlantis Rising* and *NEXUS* magazine. He is labeled a skeptic by the believers and a believer by the skeptics, a unique position which makes him a well-recognized voice of reason. He is the author of eight books, including the bestselling *The Ancient Alien Question*, and is one of the leading contributors to The History Channel's popular series, *Ancient Aliens*. He lives in Edinburgh and Los Angeles.

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The Lost Civilization Enigma

By Ruth Ann Hixson

The Lost Civilization Enigma

By Philip Coppens

ISBN 13: 978-1-60163-2326

In *The Lost Civilization Enigma*, Philip Coppens makes a strong case that civilization began many millennia before the 4,000 B.C. put forth by a majority of archeologists. And he did it without attributing it to aliens. Instead, he reasoned that our ancestors were smart enough to become civilized as long as 10,000 years ago. Coppens gathered information from digs around the world that point to humans living in villages and towns. Their homes may have been made of biodegradable materials but their temples were made of stone. It has been the common theory among archeologists that civilizations developed independently of each other. According to Coppens, different archeological sites around the world reflect that there was a burgeoning trade going on between different cultures on the European continent as well as across the seas to America. He theorizes that most of the copper mined in Upper Michigan was traded to Europe because there is not enough copper in the archeological record of America to account for the amount that was mined. It seems in the past the archeologists sought to discredit finds by amateurs in the field. In the 1930's in France, a site was contaminated purposely because it had been found by a peasant farmer. The farmer was even arrested and charged with fraud. Since it was before carbon dating, it was impossible to tell what were ancient artifacts and what were fakes. So the site was not considered a true archeological excavation. In Turkey Gobekli Tepe was another accidental discovery. It was first described as a Byzantine cemetery by American archeologist Peter Benedict. Subsequently, German archeologist Harald Hauptmann, and Adnan Misir and Eyup Bucak began excavating in 1995. They soon learned that the site was much more. They found a series of circular and oval structures dated to approximately 10,000 B.C. which is 5,000 years older than the Sumerian civilization. He also notes the sites around the world that have pyramids. Pyramids are found in more places than Egypt, Mexico and Central America. They are also found in China, Peru, and Bosnia. From the cave paintings in France to the rock paintings in northern Africa, evidence shows that the early humans weren't just hunters and gatherers, but they were also intelligent and capable of producing quality work. Stonehenge is not only rock megalithic site in the British Isles. On the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides is a megalithic stone circle called Callanish. It is not as well known as Stonehenge but is just as awe inspiring. Coppens uses these examples and many, many more to make the case that the human race was civilized long

before there was written language. This book is an interesting read for those who are interested in ancient cultures. It is well written and informative. 3 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

A blind tour guide in the realm of darkness

By peter

As a sort of disclaimer to my one-star rating, I will say that I mostly agree with Coppens' thesis (best described by the last sentence in the book) and was already a bit of a 'believer' or at least strongly open to evidence to past civilizations. Being what it is, prehistory is a dark realm that we may never understand very well, and it takes careful work to shed any light on it at all. Unfortunately, the more I read of this book, the more my opinion changed from "intriguing" to "drivel". This shift particularly happened when I began fact-checking the easy-to-check facts, which I will cover briefly. My other disclaimer is that I carefully read the first half of the book (3 chapters) and largely skimmed the last 4 as I couldn't take anymore. I think this was enough reading to write a cautionary review, but those who disagree may discount my whole review based on this admission.

My first tiny alarm bell went off in his first chapter, which is a screed against the Scientific Establishment and their Constant Denial of the Truth, because They hate to look bad in public. He goes on and on (punctuated by constant, unprofessional exclamation points) and begins to veer towards a conspiracy-theory mentality. Now, as any explorer of rejected knowledge will tell you, any embrace of rejected knowledge requires some kind of narrative explaining why the mainstream does not accept this knowledge (fair enough), but I would also caution people to be wary of narratives that involve conspiracy and collusion, as these quickly turn into rabbit-holes of paranoia and foolishness. A more reasonable narrative, in this case, exists: the case for many of these ancient civilizations are shoddy, hoaxes, or simply in-credible, lacking documentation and verification. Coppens can't seem to see the irony in producing a poorly written book (poor citation and footnoting, evidence that is shaky at best, an overly-familiar writing style, conspicuous name-dropping, and, at the risk of seeming overly judgmental, a frankly childish choice in fonts and font-size) demanding legitimacy from the academic establishment. Science exists as a painstakingly built edifice, for which scientists often act as custodians, cleaning out trash (and good theories sometimes); but such an edifice will not be undermined by half-assed theorizing.

A brief overview:

The first chapter, titled "The New Inquisition" angrily explains to the patient reader that Science hates amateurs and will work to undermine them in any way possible. True enough in certain circumstances, and certainly a comforting narrative to someone relegated to the fringes of scientific inquiry.

Chapter Two is about "the Old World", rambling about how Troy and the Greeks were from Northern Europe, Hyperborea is the Isle of Lewis, the Egyptians travelled in the Sahara to trade, ending on the only solid evidence in the whole book, the recent excavations of ancient sites in Turkey (plus Jericho) such as Gobekli Tepe. He wanders around this solid piece of land for 13 pages before plunging back into the murky depths of wild speculations.

Chapter Three is about the 'New World', shedding invaluable insights (sarcasm) on the copper trade in Northern Michigan and its link to Europe, as well as the 'Burrows Cave'. He touches on Caral in Peru, another solid piece of archaeology but only dated to 2627 BCE by his admission (pushes back our timeline a bit, but hardly revolutionary). Ah, then the Ica stones, most of which he admits are probably frauds (certainly the incredible ones anyway), then some jungle wanderings in the Amazon while we search for lost gold. I will quote the last sentences of this chapter: "As a whole, the only conclusion we can draw now is that, as is the Old World, the New World is far older and far more homogenous than standard history is wont to tell us. There is solid archaeological evidence that the New World is just as old as the New World, and the pyramid complex at Caral is probably the best evidence for that. Caral was unexplored less than two decades ago, and even that story is not yet fully uncovered from the dust of time." Well, true, but hardly revelatory, and all points made better in other books or by the reputable archaeologists who have uncovered sites such as Caral.

Finding sites that push back our timeline do not support Diffusionist theories or the wild claims that modern humans have been around for millions of years.

Chapter 4: I got pretty far into "The Big A: Atlantis" before I chucked the book across the room. After 30 pages of mostly aimless wandering amid wild speculations and wink-wink insinuations, Coppens lets us know that "it is my belief that Sens [France] was the capital, the sacred spiritual center of Atlantis." Sens, of course, has nothing to do with Plato's descriptions of Atlantis, and is just as likely as Stonehenge. Neither, of course, are underwater, which inconveniences Coppens not a bit, though he admits that the timing (Sens was abandoned 9000 years after Plato describes Atlantis sinking) is off, but not before lobbing a hail-mary that says that Solon was not referring to 9000 "solar years" but "lunar years". Why anyone in ancient Greece would decide to measure 750 years in months (presumably what Coppens, quoting Mestadgh, meant, though a true lunar year is 12 moons, or about 354 days) is beyond my ken.

Later chapters apparently wander all over, discussing the Great Pyramids, Europeans in China, the Irish, crystal skulls (one of which, MAX, he seems to credit with his marriage), Mu, the Bimini crystal, druids, and the antikythera device, squeezed into a tidy 80 pages.

Now, these summaries could be construed as unfair and biased characterizations. You don't know me. So I present, as evidence, a list of some of the facts that I did check (only online or with previous knowledge, you can make your own guesses about the facts that are difficult or impossible to follow up on) and are patently false or misleading enough to make you question the judgement and integrity of the author. I presented the summaries only for the curious review-checker.

--page 78- "Siculus said that Hyperborea was an island whose size was comparable to Sicily; this fits the Hebrides." This was my first fact check, and was easily the most rewarding line of inquiry. Sicily is 9,927 sq. miles, while the Outer Hebrides, the Isle of Lewis chief among them, can be generously said to be 1,000 sq. miles in size or less. Even accounting for sea level rise over the millennia, Lewis would not have gotten much larger before it ceased to be an island and reattached to Scotland. Being off by a factor of 10 is pretty serious, and thus it could just as fairly be said that Siculus was referring to the whole Isle of Britain, which is 10X larger than Sicily. Also, I believe that Siculus said that it was "no smaller than Sicily", an inconvenient detail which Coppens glosses over. John Toland was the first to identify the confusing and likely mythical island of Hyperborea as Lewis in 1726, but Coppens gives him no credit, instead citing Aubrey Burl in a column from a webpage (webpages are a disconcertingly major source of info for Coppens) . Burl says that he was reading a book called "The Sphinx and the Megaliths" by John Ivimy, which seems to be where he pulls "quotes" from Diodorus Siculus about Hyperborea: "at the rising of the Pleiades, the sun is seen to set at the equinox" and that there is a temple to Apollo where Apollo "skimmed the earth at a very low height". Burl doesn't specifically cite page numbers, and Coppens credulously cites Burl; tellingly, he doesn't cite Diodorus Siculus, who doesn't appear to have said those words at all (no, not even that nonsensical bit about the sun setting at the equinox). More interestingly, Coppens appears to cite Wikipedia's citation of Burl in its article "Theories about Stonehenge" which gives some of the same information (edited by a person alias Cuchullain, no apparent connection to Coppens) Coppens includes and gives the same citation as Coppens, complete with defunct web address and listing its access date as Feb. 8, 2010. Now, either Coppens happened to access this webpage (now moved to their new website, found here <http://www.archaeologyuk.org/ba/ba63/column2.shtml>) on the same date as the Wikipedia editor, or Coppens is using Wikipedia as a citation shortcut in the course of his "journalism". The larger and more important conclusion to draw from this inquiry is that a) Coppens cannot read a map (possible, given the serious dearth of maps in his book on archaeology), b) Coppens credulously cites other authors' works without doing a minimal level of fact-checking, or c) Coppens ignores inconvenient facts, just as he accuses "Science" of doing. Neither of them bode well for his project.

--page 101: "Again, the U shape and the boar underline the craftsmen's technical expertise in carving, which is shown even more so on pillar no. 27, featuring the earlier-mentioned three-dimensional reptilian creature. This intricate sculpture could be regarded as being on par with Michelangelo's statue of David." A bold

claim, and one that doesn't hold up to a quick google search, which shows a slightly cartoonish reptile, typical of ancient cultures, but you could only compare it to David if you had never seen any other sculpture in your life. Evidence of advanced stone sculpture, certainly, but certainly more than a stretch to put it on par with a Renaissance marble masterpiece.

--pages 109-113 My other favorite section: copper in Michigan. "Archaeologists have somewhat reluctantly accepted that much more copper was used than what they have been able to attribute to European mines." Not true, and lacks any sort of citation. Though I happen to know that he pulled this fact from other quacks, it's one of the many instances where he appears to pull unsubstantiated claims from his butt. Then he says, "The era around 3000 BC saw more than 500,000 tons of copper being mined in the so-called Upper Peninsula, in the American state of Michigan." This number has no basis in reality, and is in fact the result of a formula with random variables plugged in, based largely on how many pits were dug in Michigan. The amount of copper dug out cannot be accurately known. "The copper pits range from 10 to 30 feet deep with connecting tunnels; one archaeologist [who? one suspects that Coppens does not himself know] estimated that their digging would take the equivalent of 10,000 men working for 1,000 years." A suspicious claim because there is no citation and it's a nice round number. So, using the dimensions of the excavations given on the next page (5 miles x 25ft x 30 ft if they were all placed in a row), you get 19.8 million cubic feet of material removed, which would mean that 10,000 workers working for 1,000 years moved about 1 cubic foot per year per worker, an appallingly inefficient speed. Above this claim is a citation of a claim made by Octave DuTemple, but no footnote tells us where he found this claim, and no work (DuTemple edited a nice book about the copper mines) by the man exists in Coppens' bibliography; another case of secondhand information, apparently. Then Coppens informs us that America "did nothing sensible" with the vast amount of copper they apparently had, which is evidence of transatlantic trade; the Europeans took all of the copper and made axes, the Native Americans weren't sensible enough to make anything but some ceremonial objects. However, if these cultures were in contact, it would make more sense that you would see Native American bronze axe-heads, as they would have learned how to make them from the more sensible Europeans whom they traded with. Then he asserts that the copper miners likely went south for the winter (solving the problem of no long-term settlements found near the mines) to Aztalan, Wisconsin. Why? Because it is a mere "30 miles south of the snowline" and is connected to the mines "via rivers." I live in Michigan, and I can tell you that there is no such thing as a snowline in our region and would be nonsense regardless. Furthermore, Aztalan is on a river in the Mississippi watershed, and thus is not possibly connected to the Great Lakes by river. Why anyone would sail all the way around the UP, down Lake Michigan, and deep into Wisconsin is a mystery not deemed worthy of Coppens' time. To him, all really-old archaeological sites must have been related somehow.

--page 179 Small things, really but all on the same page, so WTH. "...methinketh he protesteth too much" makes him sound like a moron, as the phrase is from Shakespeare, who says "the lady doth protest too much, methinks," and is easily found online. He asserts that 'Atlantis' is a translation from the Egyptian word 'Keftiu' and that Plato says that 'Keftiu' was a translation of "an original Atlantean word". This is patently false and verging on nonsensical; Coppens would do well to consult primary sources instead of relying on the occult writings of his predecessors. Also: "One of the most remarkable facts about the disappearance of Atlantis is that the 'continent' slowly sank." This directly contradicts his (accurate) quote of Plato 18 pages earlier: it sank "in a single day and night of misfortune." This detail was changed by Coppens because it was convenient, or he has the brain capacity of a squirrel.

--Coppens goes into extensive detail on several well-known hoaxes without shedding any light on the matters and misleading innocent readers through careful selection of details. His best defense for these frauds seems to be "Well, they didn't make much money, and why else would you lie about these things?" On the contrary, all of these hoaxers gained some money and a certain amount of notoriety, certainly more than Coppens' lets on. I don't want to argue the specific case against each of these hoaxes (the Bimini Crystal, Burrows Cave, the Ica Stones, and the Bosnian Pyramids, in order of believability) but I would certainly encourage anyone who reads about these finds to read some more about them and not take Coppens' word or the word of his

associates.

This book is almost 300 pages of baseless speculation, insinuations, frauds, unsubstantiated claims, hearsay, and wishful thinking. Some of it may be true, but there's no reason to sift through it to find out when there are more reliable scholars out there who have done it better.

I would not characterize this book as "diamonds on the rough" or "interesting enigmas marred by frauds and poor scholarship" or "worth a read, even if you don't buy everything", but rather as "tripe that is not worth your precious time". If you've made it this far, you may be wondering if such a long-winded review is, in fact, worth your precious time. I would argue that if this saves you from purchasing and reading 279 pages of childish bullshit, then I have done my job.

On a brighter note, for those interested in amateur archaeology, Atlantis, ancient civilizations and the like, I can wholeheartedly recommend John Michael Greer's Atlantis book and Charles Hapgood's "Maps of the Ancient Sea Kings". Hapgood does excellent work, and Greer examines the history of ideas about Atlantis from Plato to Cayce, then examines the historical and geological possibility of Atlantis, makes a guess as to where it might be if it existed, then examines what this ancient site may have been like in brief narrative form. I found it refreshing and delightful (I would further recommend most of his other books, but that's for another time).0 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Very interesting, but know what you are buying

By J.K. Turner

The author is a bit of a conspiracy theorist, but the book is interesting nonetheless. I find it really fascinating reading about the advanced nature of some ancient cultures. Especially how old some of them are. It blows my mind to think that Cleopatra was closer to the moon landing than the building of the pyramids.

He kind of goes crazy with some of the info, but all the info and history is really cool. See all 102 customer reviews...

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