

In the King's Chamber

an experience by anthropologist Dr. Hank Wesselman, PhD.
(reproduced with his permission)

My last month's column (2/08) was focused upon an encounter that 'happened' during a travel group that I led to Egypt in January 2003. This in turn prompts me to share yet another unpublished encounter from that trip with you. I must admit to a few trepidations in offering this one as it is fairly far out, but those of my readers who have been with me for a while should be able to accept it with equanimity.

January 15, 2003: Toward the end of our trip, our Egyptian guides had arranged for us to enter the Great Pyramid at Giza. They also ensured that we had the King's Chamber in the heart of this greatest of monuments entirely to ourselves for an hour and a half at high noon at my request.

Our group gathered at the base of the Pyramid in the late morning and stared upward in awe at its unimaginable mass. After a few words from our guides, we then entered the tight stone tunnel in the monument's side, crouching low and scuttling through the first part. Then we straightened up as we began to ascend the long chamber of the 'grand passage.'

Countless others have written about this long transit to the famous 'King's Chamber', so I will add only that in viewing the unusual architecture of the walls and ceiling that I had seen many times in photographs, I was completely unprepared for the real thing. This passage was and is an engineering marvel for any time and place, but the sophistication and the strangeness of its design is totally out of place in a edifice that could be 5000 years old, or 10,000 or even older, depending on who you talk to.

What kept appearing in my mind as I sought to attach a cognitive label to describe the architecture of this strange passage was the word 'alien.' I wonder now in retrospect if that insight in some way set up what was to happen next. When we achieved the top of the passage and entered the famous King's Chamber, one of our group felt the need to go into lecture mode, gesturing toward the huge red granite blocks that lined the chamber's floor, walls and ceiling, informing us all that the stone itself is actually 55% crystal.

This implied that we were standing inside a crystal room that is slightly off-center in a precisely designed and engineered mountain of stone—a pyramid that could be pointed directly at someplace beyond the sky... at some star system out there in the universe, depending on the season and time of day or night, of course. As members of the group examined the room and even lay down in the well-known red stone 'sarcophagus' located to one side of the chamber, testing it out, I allowed my conscious awareness to expand in the shamanic way, taking in the

details of our surroundings with enhanced clarity. I also began to engage in what I think of as 'deep listening' about which I will say more next month.

Although most mainstream Egyptologists proclaim with their full authority that this great monument was a tomb for the Pharaoh Khufu, my insights in those moments revealed that the pyramid is not, nor was it ever, a tomb.

But if this was true, I wondered, what was it? The great pyramid must have taken generations to build so its exact dimensions, its positioning, as well as its design, was obviously pre-eminently important to the builders.... but why? And what was it designed for?

Science is not adept at dealing with 'why' questions, but I had brought my drum into the chamber, and so while my fellow travelers continued to proclaim this and that from their own background reading, I quietly lit a candle, placed it in the exact center of the floor in a small tin can to catch any wax due to a passing breeze (fat chance). Then I lit some incense to honor the builders of this great stone complex, whatever it was.

This act, I might add, was much in keeping with the rituals of the ancient Egyptians, for one can see individuals offering incense carved into stone on the walls of every temple in Egypt. Incense was, and is, an offering of our profound respect, as well as our love, to the Gods... those same transpersonal forces we have been talking about in many of my monthly columns, and the ancient Egyptians knew this.

It was just after high noon as I knelt on the stone floor and lit the incense from the candle, smelling the wonderful pinon scent of the American southwest rise into the air of this sacred chamber in the smoke (maybe a first). I was aware that one of the mysteries of the pyramids is that there is not a single hieroglyph carved into any of the stones of this edifice. This has given rise to the hypothesis that maybe the Egyptians didn't build the Pyramids—that the builders were actually members of an earlier culture—an idea that has generated an avalanche of well-intentioned but usually misinformed new age books.

As members of the group continued to try out lying in the 'sarcophagus,' others sat down on the floor, leaning back against the stone walls of the chamber, and they began to 'tone.' The acoustics of the room were quite extraordinary, and slowly, slowly, I began to work in the drum... until the toning came to an end and only the drum was sounding.

A most interesting thing then happened. The only way to describe it is that the drum, in some unknown manner, seemed to create, or perhaps summon, a sound much like the wind. As the drum continued a steady theta rhythm beat of perhaps 4-6 beats per second, a whispering rushing sound could be clearly perceived. It seemed to sweep through the space, from one side to the other, now here, now there, bouncing off the walls and ricocheting around the stone room, rushing by me with hissing sweeps.

At one moment, it was above me, then it was around me, then to the right corner

near the ceiling, then to the left near the floor. Then it seemed to be making figure 8s in the air in the center of the room. All this time, the candle flame was utterly still. Almost everyone heard the whispering, hissing, rush of sound and exclaimed about it afterwards. What happened next exceeded all my expectations.

At 12:30 PM, our Egyptologist had arranged to have the lights in the Pyramid extinguished and the fans turned off for about 30 minutes... and when the chamber went dark and I allowed the drum to subside into silence. Slowly, carefully, I leaned over and blew out the candle. The blackness was now total, the silence absolute. I lay down on the stone floor in the exact center of the room, heedless of the dust.

My conscious awareness had been powerfully altered by the drum, and I decided to see if I could journey, shamanically, to learn about the builders, as well as the designers, of the Pyramid. With that focused intention, I opened my inner doorway and my physical body was immediately swept by a tremendous surge of the power in response.

We're talking about that universal field of energy or power that Obi Wan Kenobi called The Force. All indigenous peoples know about it and all shamans know from direct experience that The Force is real.

Without any prior preparation or thought, my body began to shake and as I mentally 'unfastened my seat belt,' my conscious awareness was literally sucked outward from my body and upward toward and through the Pyramid's apex. The sense of movement was swift, causing momentary vertigo. I felt like I was riding a whirlwind, and before I could even think about it, I found myself precipitated out into starry universe, into a photo montage not unlike the onset of the warp drive in the Star Wars or Star Trek films...

I was suddenly surrounded spots of light (orbs?) that immediately elongated into light lines streaking by me on all sides... and then very swiftly, almost instantaneously, I found myself (or my conscious awareness) settling. The sense of movement was gone and I was 'there', looking out at what can only be described as an alien world.

In this extraordinary circumstance, the 'I' that is Hank Wesselman assumed a passive state in the sense that 'I' became fully watchful, yet fully subordinate to whatever experience I had been drawn into. After 25 years of shamanic practice, this was a known experience for me.

And here is what I saw...

'I' was standing toward the back of a huge room, at least 4-5 stories tall, constructed of smooth, polished, blood-red stone. The walls, ceiling, and floor were all made of this striking red stone that had been carved into flowing shapes, including massive pillars holding up the ceiling far above. There were very few straight lines.

The room was 'open' in the sense that one whole end of it opened to the outside,

and beyond, I could see a landscape of low relief dominated by plants (and trees?) and water (lagoons?) of a distinctly peculiar color. The greens and blue-greens of the vegetation and the off-turquoise lagoons were as intense as the red of the huge stone room, producing a startling contrast to each other.

But even more surprising was that there were two suns in the polished bronze of the sky, one closer to the horizon, producing double shadows behind objects in the foreground. One was decidedly larger, like a small version of our sun, the other more like a distant star. Yet there was no question—I somehow 'knew' that this was a double star system.

I use the word 'objects' here because now, in writing about this many years later, I do not remember clear impressions of what the objects in the foreground might have been. This is much in alignment with my visionary experiences of the shaman's worlds. I frequently perceive things, places, beings, for which I, as an embodied human, have no cultural constructs through which to assign meaning. As 'I' continued to observe the surroundings, there was a pervading sense that all was familiar, that the objects were both utilitarian (furniture perhaps) as well as decorative, designed to enhance the living environment.

I reeled in my emotions which were in some turmoil and began to focus on how I was seeing this alien world, for there was no doubt in my mind that this was in fact another planet. It was then that I realized 'I' was observing through the eyes of one of its inhabitants.

Those who have read my Spiritwalker Trilogy will know that this ability—to look through the eyes of another person—is not unfamiliar to me. Nor is this ability unknown in the shaman's world. We are not talking about fiction here, nor is what I am conveying to you fanciful imagination. We're talking about a very real experiential phenomenon.

At this moment, I became aware of 'others' crossing the vast hall near me, and my emotional state upgraded to astonishment. They were impossibly tall, linear, and rather spindly humanoids with dark, reddish brown skin. They were bipedal, and their legs and arms were long, as were their fingers. Their feet were encased in elegant sandals with turned up toes that looked like they were made of (or covered by) golden foil. Again, these beings seemed utterly familiar somehow and I concluded that I was picking up on the perspective of my 'host'.

It was their faces that were the shocker. They looked superficially unlike any depictions of 'aliens' that I had ever seen. My first impression was that they looked like bird people. This is because their faces displayed an elongated 'rostrum' creating a plane to the face that projected forward and downward utterly unlike a human nose, or a human face for that matter. It wasn't a 'beak' but rather a completely different form of cranial morphology unknown on our world.

In addition, each of the beings I saw was wearing an off-white head covering not unlike a pair of men's boxer shorts that encircled the head above the eyes and hung down in back and the sides along the elongated neck to the boney shoulders. I was immediately struck by how similar this interesting cowl resembled the headdresses of the dynastic Egyptians depicted on statuary. These head coverings were not that different. Yet they were not quite the same either.

As one of the bird beings (I had come to categorize them that way in an attempt to assign some sort of meaning to them) approached, I got a better view of their eyes. They were long, dark and tapering, and I couldn't see any 'whites'. Their faces were linear, elongated and delicate. It was at this point that I looked down and perceived the body of the one through whom I was seeing.

The lower torso seemed to be covered by a short 'kilt' (only way to describe it) made of an off white reflective, almost luminescent material that appeared to be finely woven and was elegantly folded into pleats. My glance moved to my arm and hand. There was a five-fingered hand with very elongated fingers and an opposable thumb considerably more delicate than our human version, and there didn't seem to be any nails or claws.

'My' reddish-brown skin was smooth and dry and somewhat granular like the surface of a lizard or an American football. There were no scales, but rather what seemed to be vestigial outlines of them. And then, imagine my shock when I perceived the suggestion of small pointy breasts on my skinny chest, set high and wide, the nipples indistinct, more like pores really, and located very close to the 'armpits.'

I had apparently merged with a female... and with this realization, I received my first thought pulse from my host, or rather my hostess, a mental pulse signifying agreement. 'She' was aware of my presence, but to what degree, and how she felt about this, I didn't know.

My physical body, lying on the floor of the Kings Chamber in the great Pyramid, quivered. I knew this because an aspect of my conscious awareness—my body's soul—was still there. But part of it was also here, observing this place and these beings, sending what it was seeing 'here' to my mental soul that was operating at lightning speed.

I appeared to have made a connection across the space-time continuum of what shamans call The Middle Worlds. I had utilized the ancient, time-tested methodology of the shaman, and I appeared to be merged with an alien being somewhere else in the Universe. But where? There was no way of determining this.

Curiously, I felt no fear, but as the moments passed, I picked up on a rapidly growing sense of unbridled curiosity that seemed to be originating from the woman's mind (dare I call her a 'woman, I thought?), a curiosity that was matched by my own.

Again I glanced down at her body, and yes, there were 'breasts' if you could call them that. Then something happened reminiscent of my trans-temporal connections with Nainoa. In response to my own curiosity, her body responded and her long tapered fingers (was there an extra joint in them?) gently moved across her chest, examining the breasts, and then moved higher.

In this way, I discovered she was wearing a collar-like necklace composed of what seemed to be many rows of flattened, smooth stone beads. By craning 'my' long neck, I could make them out. They were blanketing 'my' shoulders and upper chest and there appeared to be alternating rows of green and red beads. And

there were also beads of what appeared to be gold.

As I studied the pleasing pattern, it seemed to flicker or vibrate, and I was struck by their resemblance to the Egyptian jewelry that I had seen in museums. The hands moved on to the sides of the head. There seemed to be no ears such as ours, just crescents of raised smooth skin, producing a double ridge around an ear opening, somewhat higher on the skull than our own.

As the fingers continued to explore the head, moving carefully under the cowl or covering, I felt a pulse of what could only be called amusement. It was coming from her. The skull was elongated upward and backward, following the direction of the plane of her rostrum, and it was completely hairless. Whatever she was, she was not a typical mammal, despite her 'breasts', and my inner scientist decided that these people might be another class of beings altogether.

I glanced down at her lower torso again, and my human mind decided against further exploration. My gaze shifted to her feet—five very long toes, no nails, and her sandals. On closer inspection they seemed to be made of some very tough fiber paper perhaps. They glittered as though gilded and appeared to be stenciled with a pleasing red and green design, reminiscent of her collar-necklace.

It was at this point that I began to consider a radical thought. Could these beings be the ones who had come across the Universe as souls and embodied in human forms in Egypt thousands of years ago? Could these bird beings be the ancestral race that came from the stars to become the Egyptians?

I had talked with the kahuna Makua about such phenomena. He was quite emphatic that there had been many such migrations that had come to Earth from the stars. He had also conveyed that the beings who had come here did not arrive in space ships. They had come as seeds of light, as souls...

Could these beings, and this place, be an ancestral source for such a migration, I wondered? Then, I remembered the Pyramid. Could this enormous structure be a device for interstellar communication—a real honest-to-God functioning star gate that would operate if you knew how to open it? Was this what I had inadvertently done by using the ancient shamanic method of the ancestors, with the Pyramid providing the interstellar longitude and latitude because we just happened to be there at the right time?

I had no answers to these questions then, and I sensed that I probably never would. My gaze shifted to the ceiling and it was then that I perceived that the red stone was painted or engraved with frescos, with panels of imagery and geometric designs, easily 50-70 feet above the floor, supported by those smooth pillars of red stone that were thick, yet not massive.

Was the vast room temple-like? Yes it was, yet it was different. Long ledges or shelves lined the walls to head height, with the walls above them were carved with more panels of curious symbols in relief (glyphs?)... but were they Egyptian? I did not know, nor was I given a chance to study them. A vibration, a tone of sound, was perceived. It was both felt as well as heard.

The bird being then turned her awareness away from the walls and walked gracefully across the hall with long, flowing strides and out onto a wide veranda into the open air. The warm dry wind smelt dusty, somewhat smokey, like the deserts of Egypt, I thought.

To my right and to my left, I saw other similar openings, precisely delineated, emerging from the red stone wall behind me, and I realized that I was seeing a complex of monolithic structures literally carved from the living rock of a natural escarpment, extending horizontally in both directions, following the contours of the land, and vertically as well almost like an apartment building.

There were other such openings as my gaze swept up the red cliff, layered and sculpted into the polished stone, with narrower verandas supported step-wise by rows of pillars. I could see other bird beings clustered here and there on them, and at my level as well. As I studied these beings, their tall, linear, spindly morphology suggested this world had a gravitational force that was considerably less than that of Earth.

I would love to be able to say that I saw a pyramid, but in fact, I did not. Thoughts and feelings seemed to be flowing rapidly through the mind of the bird being with which I was merged, giving rise to a supposition that 'they' were communicating with a form of telepathy. But I, with my human perspective, had no clue what was being 'said.' I simply couldn't identify with, or decode the mental pulses. They were totally foreign to me... or perhaps 'alien' is the correct term.

As another bird being approached me, I got another shock. The face and body of this individual bore a curious resemblance to the statues and images I had seen of the Pharaoh Akhenaten, whose narrow elongated almost hatchet face with the long eyes, and elongated feminine body with spindly lower limbs could be described as a human version of the bird being before me. Were some of their bird-like features transmitted with their souls, I wondered?

I had no answers to these questions, of course. And then, as my eyes scanned my surroundings, seeking to record as much as possible, the lights and fans in the King's Chamber were switched on again and my focus wavered. Just as the other bird being stepped forward to engage my hostess, I lost the connection and the vision faded. It was like switching channels on a television, and suddenly, I was back in the Pyramid, my eyes blinking at the sudden glare of the lights. The feelings of power that had held me in the invisible fist throughout began to depart in ever-diminishing surges.

As I slowly sat up, my mind was racing with excitement, generating question after question. Could those be the beings who had designed and built the pyramids as well as those immense temple complexes here in Egypt? Had they come here from wherever 'there' was, bringing their engineering and architectural skills with them? Had my ability to journey to them been enhanced by the red crystal room in the pyramid? Did the builders select Egypt as their place of residence because of the red crystal granite of the Aswan area was the closest approximate to that of their own world?

Were the pyramids designed to allow them to communicate across the Universe, perhaps even serving as stargates to transport souls in both directions? But if so, how had they come here in the first place, before the pyramids were built? Had they used the minds and souls of Neolithic or even Paleolithic shamans to accomplish this? Was the Egyptian god Thoth, depicted as a human being with a bird's head, one of them?

No answers appeared in my mind.

As my traveling companions began to stir and gather themselves to return to the outside world, I did the same, my mind seething as I picked up my shamanic gear—drum, incense, candle etc—and began to review all that I had seen. Even after 17 years of trans-temporal travel and connection in a future slice of time with the one known as Nainoa, this one would take some getting used to.

I shared some of this vision with the group at our meeting in the hotel later in the afternoon but only after encouraging the others to share first. Most had heard the strange whirring wind-like sound but none had had the contact with the bird people. They listened in silence as I talked about what I had experienced.

I talked about it in more detail with my roommate Stephen later in our hotel room. When I described the bird beings in more detail, he expressed great excitement. Digging into his luggage, he extracted a copy of a periodical I had never seen before—World Explorer Magazine. This issue (Vol. 3, No. 3) featured an article by David Hatcher Childress titled The Strange Tassili Frescos of Algeria. Half of this essay featured images copied from ancient rock art on the formations at Tassili, a remote section of southern Algeria, by a French investigator named Henri Lhote whose book *The Search for the Tassili Frescos* (1959) recorded his adventures in this desolate area toward the middle of the Sahara Desert. Lhote's descriptions of a once fertile and now lost world in that arid region captivated the imagination of his readership at that time. But it was when Stephen showed me the cover of the Magazine that I felt like I had been punched in the stomach.

There, rendered in color, was Lhote's copy of one particular rock art panel depicting four Bird-Headed 'Goddesses', dancing or walking in profile, with that same elongated rostrum to the face, and the same elongated spindly bodies, necks and limbs. Three were dark skinned, while one in the back was white. All had that same curious cowl or head covering and those tiny conical breasts near the armpit. The one in front had the collar like necklace covering the shoulders. I was simply stunned. I sat down heavily on my bed as I stared at the image. There was no doubt although Lhote's images seemed more human than the ones I had seen. It was as though the original rock artist had humanized their vision of these bird beings. So someone else had been there and seen them, I thought... a shaman most likely. Or had the beings come here in their natural form? No way of knowing.

The image was repeated in the essay with a subscript that it was derived from Lhote's color photo (No 1: Jabbaren) and bore the explanation 'Egyptian influence. 18th Dynasty? 27 x37 cm. This interpretation was doubtful in my opinion because other images from the Tassili range of towering rock outcroppings have since been dated at 6000-8000 years old.

It is curious to me that I have been unable to regain the connection with the bird woman or her world since that day. This, of course, has caused me to speculate that maybe the Pyramid is indeed a device that is needed to make this interstellar contact. Our guide Emil informed us that only the King, the Pharaoh, was allowed to use that room, giving rise to its name across time—the King's Chamber.

If this is true, the Pharaoh was indeed the emissary of the gods/goddesses—the beings who in all likelihood may still live on their home world.

In sharing this extraordinary encounter with you, the reader, I claim nothing. I only report what I saw and experienced, and what I have written is derived from the extensive notes I made immediately afterward. I wonder if perhaps others, like the rock artist from Tassili so long ago, have also had contact with the bird people on that distant world with its buildings made of blood red stone and two suns in the pale desert sky above the turquoise lagoons.

Perhaps in sharing this with you, the reader, the opportunity will come for you to go to Egypt with me. In fact, my wife Jill and I will be leading such a trip to Egypt later this year. The dates are Nov. 30- Dec. 12. Details are posted on our website (see sidebar).

So until next month, allow me to invoke the spirit of Chief Makua, my great Hawaiian friend... and with his blessing (and his words), I extend to each of you the Light and the Love of the Ancestors, The Source of Life, rejoicing in the Power and the Peace, braided with the cords of Patience, revealing the tapestry of the strongest force in the Universe... your Aloha.