

An Interview with Graham Hancock

By Ed Conroy

"He has come here from the land of the living, he has got rid of the dust that was on him, he has filled his body with magic, he has mastered the land with what he knew..."

- Spell 35, Coffin Texts

For the past twelve years, Graham Hancock has been bent on mastering the mysteries of northern Africa, encompassing Ethiopia and Egypt in his quest for knowledge of both the Ark of the Covenant and, most recently, the monuments of the Giza plateau. Nor, for that matter, is he a stranger to the pyramids of Mexico and Central America, or the Andes' strange ruins and landscapes.

Through the process of writing and promoting two massive books - *The Sign and the Seal: The Search for the Lost Ark of the Covenant* and most recently *Fingerprints of the Gods: Evidence of Earth's Lost Civilizations* - Hancock has emerged as a leading figure in the heightening international debate over the antiquity of civilization and the degree of astronomical knowledge extant in the world prior to the second millennium BC.

Hancock's search for the Ark, of course, might tempt a writer to cast him as a thinking person's Indiana Jones. In reality, his work has more in common in both style and significance with that of Henry Lincoln, Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh (authors of *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*) than, say, the books of Erich Von Daniken.

At a time when many people speak lightly of "paradigm shifts" in basic knowledge, Graham Hancock is laying the groundwork for a new generation of scholarship. In the course of his research, Hancock (together with his professional photographer wife Santha Faia) has visited the relevant sites, vividly describing both the scenes he has encountered and his personal impressions of them. Nor does he shrink from providing the reader with exhaustively documented information gleaned from the world's best libraries in order to provide color, detail and texture in the complex pictures he paints.

The Manchester Guardian, in reviewing *The Sign and the Seal*, said it would probably be "as popular as the 'Raider' films," describing the book as "an intellectual whodunit with whom we can all identify."

In person, Graham Hancock has little of Hollywood about him, and his books, while having been #1 bestsellers in England, have no doubt been bought by many fewer people than have seen the "Raiders" films. That is not

to say, however, that he is lacking in charisma, or in the chutzpa required to take on the skeptics-in-waiting from the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal. A tall, lanky, slightly balding and highly personable man in his late forties, Hancock is occupying a bully pulpit in the battle for what he see is nothing less than the truth about mankind's prehistory.

While informed, rational discourse on these matters has long tended to be restricted to papers in scholarly journals, Hancock, responding to marketplace demand, is taking this debate directly to the public at large. In the process, he revels in challenging the orthodoxies of contemporary academic consensus. His particular target is the received view, particularly strong among Egyptologists, that an advanced civilization dating to at least 10,500 BC - and characterized by an initiatic wisdom tradition based upon deep knowledge of observational astronomy - is categorically impossible.

Hancock has, in fact, become an eloquent advocate for the possibility of such an advanced civilization and its wisdom tradition. Yet he has not come to hold such a position overnight. Prior to undertaking his quest for the Ark, Hancock became familiar with his terrain through serving as East Africa correspondent for the London *Economist*. In 1989, Atlantic Monthly Press published his *Lords of Poverty*, an expose of corruption in the international aid establishment, for which he received an H.L. Mencken Prize (honorable mention). In *The Sign and the Seal*, he details the business he developed writing coffee-table books on countries such as Ethiopia under commissions from the governments of African dictators. He also candidly describes how, after a long conversation on the shores of Lake Tanganyika with his wife-to-be Santha, he dropped that business entirely to dedicate himself wholly to his quest for the Ark.

Simply put, that quest led him to the Great Pyramid, and, as a result of a pivotal personal experience in the King's Chamber, to a study of all of the monuments of the Giza plateau in relationship to both the stars themselves and, most importantly, the ancient Egyptians' search for immortality. As a guide, he immersed himself in ancient star lore and related myths, aided by the groundbreaking study *Hamlet's Mill: An Essay on Myth and the Frame of Time* by Giorgio de Santillana and Hertha von Dechend.

In a nutshell, the arguments Hancock advances in his 600-page *Fingerprints of the Gods* may be summarized as follows:

- It is now possible to consider new evidence pointing to the existence of a highly advanced, seafaring civilization prior to 10,500 BC, representatives of which influenced the cultures of Egypt, Central and South America, among others.
- In order to understand the true significance of the Atlantis myth, Hancock urges reconsideration of the hypothesis of the late professor Charles Hapgood (cautiously endorsed by Einstein) that the entire lithosphere of the earth undergoes dramatic shifts, causing whole areas of land once in temperate zones to be thrust into the polar

regions, such as, for example, what is now Antarctica. Utilizing evidence drawn from the Piri Reis map and other similar artifacts from Renaissance map-makers, Hancock cites the work of Rand and Rose Flem-Ath (*When the Sky Fell: In Search of Atlantis*) positing that continent as the home of the great antediluvian civilization.

- Hancock examines deluge myths from around the globe, analyses their similarities and differences, and asserts that they have more in common than is recognized by academia. They especially share metaphors that refer to the phenomenon of the precession of the equinoxes as harbingers of cataclysmic changes in both society and nature.
- He asserts that, as a result of the influence of this early high civilization, a deep sense of connection with certain stars and star-systems lay at the heart of Egyptian civilisation. That sensibility took form as a set of funerary rites intended to send the souls of pharaohs into eternal life among the stars, most notably in the constellation Orion, long associated with the god-king Osiris.
- Lastly, Hancock cautiously suggests that the possibility exists the globe could experience another shift of the lithosphere within the next 30 to 50 years, due to the state of ice build-up at the poles and gravitational pressures from an upcoming planetary alignment. Hancock insists that the public has a right to know the true history of the world and that we must objectively assess the possibility of a global cataclysm such as those which have occurred in centuries long past.

Hancock realizes, of course, that his identification with propositions such as those listed above might encourage some readers to improperly associate him with advocates for a "pole shift" and those authors who find metaphysical significance in every detail of the Great Pyramid's features. Yet Hancock remains an empiricist, writing about what he has personally investigated. In fact, Hancock now finds himself in direct collaboration with Robert Bauval as co-author of their new work *Keeper of Genesis*, that will expand on the information in both *Fingerprints of the Gods* and *The Orion Mystery*.

Based on an analysis of data obtained from over twenty years of active research, Bauval is advancing the proposition that all of the monuments of the Giza Plateau were built in such a fashion as to directly mimic the positions of the major stars of the constellations Leo, Taurus and Orion, ten and a half centuries before Christ. And, from their analysis of the principal ancient Egyptian funerary texts, both Bauval and Hancock posit that this entire complex of monuments is directly connected to the Pharaonic funerary cult of immortality. According to their interpretation of the texts, the rituals of that cult were specifically intended to facilitate the transit of initiate-pharaohs' souls into the heavenly realm of Osiris, which the ancient Egyptians believed to be located in the region of the constellation Orion. Moreover, asserts Bauval, the funerary cult involved a dimension of time travel back to 10,500 BC, regarded by the ancient Egyptians as the "First

Time," when gods such as Isis and Osiris were believed to have walked the land of Khem.

From the purely academic point of view, such information could well be regarded as simply more indication of the highly advanced fantasy lives of the pharaohs and their priests. Yet, as both Bauval and Hancock emphasize, ancient Egyptian religion was inseparable from Egyptian astronomy, engineering and mathematics. Nor was it separate from 'technology' as in the case of the pyramids and the Ark. At the present time of material limits and millennial anxiety, these ideas may suggest how humanity could be liberated from time itself through conscious survival after death.

At the very least, Hancock's work, like Bauval's, has the potential to explode the paradigm of social Darwinism - the belief in slow, progressive development of civilization - now prevailing in archaeology and Egyptology. The public at large is eager for solid information on how to jump-start the collective process of remembering and reconstructing our species' once and future relationship with the stars.

ED CONROY: Your quest for the Ark has taken you to the pyramids, and from there, to the stars. How would you characterize what you've learned on that journey?

GRAHAM HANCOCK: What we're dealing with here is an extraordinarily ancient wisdom tradition, a science of initiation and a science of immortality. I think it's like a hologram. When you bump into any bit of it, it's possible to see the whole.

By chance, or so it seemed by chance at the time, I bumped into the Ark of the Covenant in 1983, and subsequently pursued a quest to learn more about it to see if its last resting place might not be in Ethiopia. Because the Ark is an offshoot and a product of that ancient science, and because the transmission of that science to the future is holographic in its form, it was inevitable that I would bump into the rest of it.

The Ark is a doorway into a wider quest, and I could have come at it from another direction, from the pyramid. Either way it would have also led to the Ark. They're all the same thing. The science that built the pyramids, the science that created the Ark of the covenant, is a legacy of knowledge handed down from a very remote period by a civilization that we've lost all traces of. All that's left is this knowledge and wisdom, and various means and methods have been used to transmit that knowledge.

CONROY: In *The Sign and the Seal and Fingerprints of the Gods* you alluded to the possibility that Moses' Ark was only one of many similar strange boxes in Egypt.

HANCOCK: It's become more and more clear to me that there was a leakage of this science from Egypt into Israel. If one looks at the traditions concerning the construction of the Temple of Solomon, and at certain

objects such as the Shamir, the stone or serpent that cut rocks, again you find yourself confronted by a glimpse of this hologram. It draws you in.

CONROY: What was the experience, though, which personally "drew you in" to the hologram?

HANCOCK: It was my travels in Ethiopia in 1983, which took me to Axum, which is where the Ethiopians believe that the true Ark resides. It was my encounter with the guardian of the Ark, and what he said to me that planted this seed in my mind. At that time I knew very little about the Ark other than what I had seen in the Indiana Jones movie. I had to go through certain other processes. I needed to go through other processes of learning and discovery and also personal change as an individual before I was ready to let that seed that was planted in 1983 grow.

CONROY: Now, a dozen years later, you've expanded your scope tremendously to deal with the relationship between this ancient wisdom tradition and the starry cosmos itself. What influence took you in that direction?

HANCOCK: The arguments I found in Hamlet's Mill served as another entry point into the hologram, because once you start picking up those numbers from those myths, if you follow the trail it will eventually lead you to the Great Pyramid.

CONROY: Both de Santillana and von Dechend identify the precessional change of the equinoxes with an ancient body of myths in which the periodic "breaking of the mill" of heaven is characterized as a time of "floods" and other cataclysms. In Fingerprints, you also write of this cosmic process as a harbinger of actual physical floods. Is this your interpretation or theirs?

HANCOCK: This is my interpretation working with theirs. Santillana and Von Dechend have cracked an ancient code, and other people are now working on that ancient code. They realized, and I think they were the first people to realize this, that an entire corpus of ancient myths had been specifically created to transmit and convey hard astronomical information. These myths are in fact a technical terminology dressed up in the language of a story, and once you begin to realize what the terms mean, these stories suddenly make sense.

Now all of the stories in this body of myth that they refer to, and it is a world-wide body of myth that is found in all cultures that are not supposed to have had any contact in antiquity, have dealt with the phenomenon of the precessional movement of the stars, which is caused by a wobble on the axis of the earth. It's a perceived phenomenon, it's not the stars that are moving - it's the earth that moves, with that phenomenon having given us numbers which accurately convey the rate of precessional motion, as accurately as modern science can do today.

These myths all direct themselves toward a cataclysm, frequently a flood, although other metaphors are also employed. There are two things at work here. Once you begin to plug into this ancient astronomical language, you begin to realize that "flood" is a technical term for the swallowing up or drowning of particular groups of stars at the moment that they were expected to appear as a result of the precessional motion of the earth. The flood was an astronomical metaphor, in that sense, but there's something very important to this. By the way the English word disaster is interesting. Ast is one of the ancient Egyptian words for "star," and a dis-aster is literally a separation or a breaking apart of the stars, and this is precisely what these myths speak of.

They create a metaphor for the phenomenon of precession, where as a result of the precessional motion of the earth, stars do not appear at their appointed address in the sky at their appointed time. They drift or slip, and they appear to be swallowed up by the waters of heaven. In this sense, the ancient astronomical language, while speaking of floods and disasters, is actually describing and memorializing astronomical events, but it's not as simple as that. There is an extremely clear indication in the myths that terrestrial disasters are also connected to this astronomical phenomenon.

This is not an issue that Santillana and von Dechend went into. They confined themselves, and I think they did a brilliant job, to the first step in decoding this ancient astronomical language, a language that was designed to resist time, a language that was designed on the vehicle of myth to travel eternally through time. They did that, but they didn't take the next step and draw out the very powerful indication in the myths that it isn't just the swallowing up of the stars by the phenomenon of precession, but rather that this celestial phenomenon, from time to time, at irregular intervals, appears to have a terrestrial effect.

Now one gets into the concept expressed in the Hermetic "as above, so below," and the implication that I draw from the myths and document in Fingerprints of the Gods, is that what these myths are saying is that they are not just distributing this astronomical information for the fun of it, it's not just some perverse desire to transmit astronomical notation from thousands of years ago to the distant future. There's a purpose behind it.

CONROY: And what was that purpose?

HANCOCK: The purpose appears to me to convey a warning that this phenomenon of precession which causes these astronomical disasters also causes very real, terrestrial disasters - but not every time the mill breaks. The "breaking of the mill" is the notion of the equinoctial point of sunrise on the spring equinox gradually slipping through each of the 12 zodiacal constellations, and the mill breaks when the vernal point slips completely out of one constellation and into the next. When it does so, the background constellations against which the sun rises at the summer and winter solstices, and at the autumn equinox also change. All the coordinates on the mill change when the mill flips.

What comes down from antiquity is a sense that this moment of change, this moment when the mill is about to slip from one constellation into the next, is a moment of danger - but not always the case that this moment of danger results in an earthly disaster. There appear to be other trigger factors involved. What the myths indicate in as plain language as can be imagined is that we need to be very awake and very aware in these times of danger when the mill is about to slip. And we live in one of those times now.

CONROY: The structure of Fingerprints of the Gods takes the reader from consideration of the great monuments of the New World into a meditation on equinoctial precession. From there you jump into Egypt with your introduction to the astronomical alignments of the Great Pyramid and analysis of the pharaonic funerary cult of the Pyramid Texts, which are all about immortality in the stars. It's a lot of material, but it appears that you're heading into implicitly saying that the state priesthood of ancient Egypt intended to find a way to preserve human consciousness among the stars themselves.

HANCOCK: I have reached the point where I am convinced that they actually did it. I believe that they did it. You have here a remarkable science for want of a better word, and this like all sciences had many objectives, but its primary objective was the obtaining, the securing of immortality of consciousness.

Now the issue at the moment in my mind is unresolved as to exactly the function of the stars in this. What comes to me out of my studies of the ancient texts is a notion that would be familiar to the Gnostics and indeed is in the closely related Hermetic texts, which is that immortality of the soul is not something that can be achieved by faith. Salvation is not to be achieved through faith alone - this is the contrary of the orthodox Christian message. The Gnostics said that salvation is to be attained through knowledge.

It appears from the Egyptian funerary texts and also from The Tibetan Book of the Dead and other ancient surveys of the afterworld, or whatever we want to call it, that at the moment of death the soul faces confusion, terror. The purpose of these ancient initiations and the knowledge associated with them, in my opinion, was to assure that the soul of the deceased would not be confused at the moment of death, but would be highly oriented and aware and awake, and ready to deal with the challenges ahead.

I think what was involved with this was a process of reflecting and refining the mind all the way through life. It seems pretty clear to me that by obliging initiates to involve themselves deeply in the study of the mysteries of the stars, they had created a mechanism for forcing the mind to go to work. To grasp and understand the perceived motions of the stars, both on a daily basis and on the long-term precessional basis, the whole operation of the solar system and the universe, requires an extraordinary operation of the will and intellect, and I wonder whether the stars were a kind of

teaching board in this system, designed to bring the mind of each initiate to an extremely high level of development.

So one's objective in life is manifold, but crucially important within that objective is the constant acquisition and mastering of knowledge and experience, and a life spent not accumulating knowledge and experience is a life wasted, over which hangs the possibility of extinction. Certainly the ancient Egyptian texts make that perfectly clear, that the possibility of extinction isn't only connected to the failure to use the gift of life to acquire knowledge, it's also connected to behavior of a certain kind, how we lead our lives, and in this sense there's a great concordance with the Christian message - there's a moral issue. And the moral issue seems to be very simple in karmic terms, that if you do harm, and you do badly, you pay a price. If you pursue the initiate's quest then that very quest would rule out the tendency to do evil.

Again and again I come back to this emphasis in the texts on the acquisition of knowledge, which cannot be poured into your ear, it is something that you as the initiate have to work at, you have to study it, and that involves overcoming challenges and difficulties and working your own way around them, and that is what this ancient quest for immortality is all about. All the clues and guidelines on the quest still exist for people who are open to this possibility.

The necessity to acquire knowledge and experience is very important in these ancient texts. I don't think we should ignore it.

CONROY: How is this conclusion related to your studies of the monuments on the Giza plateau?

HANCOCK: The book, as you rightly point out, dwells heavily on Egypt, because preserved in Egypt are more pieces of the puzzle than anywhere else in the world. They were very clever. Preserved in Egypt are monuments that no reversion to barbarism could destroy - even the barbarism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, even Howard Vyse with his dynamite, even the Muslim caliph who tried to dismantle the third pyramid at Menkaure. They couldn't do it.

I think there is a sense in which the great pyramids are, to use a modern analogy, the hardware, passed down to us from an unknown antiquity. I'm not claiming that they were built 12,500 years ago - to me, it's just as good that they were built with knowledge that originated then. It's the knowledge that lives, and at certain times, it attaches itself to certain vehicles, sometimes to myths, and in this case, to monuments capable of lasting virtually forever.

Ancient Egypt is of vital importance because a bit of the software came down to us, too. In these extraordinary funerary texts, such as The Book of the Dead, which is better described as The Book of the Coming Forth by Day, The Book of Two Ways, The Coffin Texts, The Book of Gates. I am now

certain that encoded in these texts is all the information we need, in combination with a study of the monuments and a study of the ancient skies, which we can now do with computers, to read a very clear and unmistakable message from a lost civilization.

In a way, attaching this to the cult of immortality was very clever, because we all want to live forever.

CONROY: In *The Orion Mystery*, though, Robert Bauval says we've been using the wrong program to decipher the software.

HANCOCK: We've absolutely been using the wrong program to decipher the software. This has been the whole problem. The software has been attempted to be deciphered in terms of preconceived notions about primitive cults, and in terms of artifacts dug out of the ground. But the key, all along, that was needed to make the software run, the password, if you will, is the sky. That's where nobody looked, nobody looked at all before people like Santillana and von Dechend, and more recently and crucially, Robert Bauval.

CONROY: Both you and Robert point out what you regard as the importance of the Great Pyramid's two so-called "ventilation" shafts, with the southern shaft from the King's chamber pointing to the belt of Orion, and the southern shaft of the Queen's chamber pointing to Sirius at the time of the Great Pyramid's supposed construction, or 2,000 BC. And, since Gantenbrink's little video-equipped robot, Upuat, discovered a limestone door with metal hinges toward the end of the southern shaft of the Queen's Chamber, those shafts have become all the more intriguing.

HANCOCK: One cannot be in any doubt about the astronomical function of the Great Pyramid because of those shafts.

CONROY: The interpretive possibilities inherent in the information that you have compiled are vast. Where do you go with this material?

HANCOCK: I'd like to say Robert Bauval has made the most crucial single breakthrough in this area of research that has ever been made. Robert is the person who looked up at the sky and saw that this was the frame of reference with which the Egyptians were working. This is a complex multi-layered message, but he put the first stage of that down, and he and I are now working on a new book which is entitled *Keeper of Genesis*, and it is our attempt to take the decoding of this scientific message to its logical conclusion, as far as it can be taken. I think that what we're looking at is an anti-cipher, a deliberate attempt to convey a message to the future, and all that is required to convey that message is to be literate in astronomy, to have ability to conceptualize ancient skies, not the skies as they look today, but ancient skies, which now anybody can do with a PC. Then you can rather rapidly begin to read this message.

CONROY: How so?

HANCOCK: In *The Orion Mystery*, Robert put down the first of those things that proclaim themselves very loudly. The pattern of the three pyramids on the ground mimics not the patterns of the three stars in the epoch of 2,500 BC at which the shafts point to the stars, but the pattern of the three pyramids on the ground at a much earlier date - 10,500 BC. What you find is a massive monument on this scale with shafts pointing to specific stars at a specific date, say 2,500 BC, 4,500 years before the present, and you find that the pattern of those pyramids on the ground mimics the pattern of the stars in Orion's belt in 10,500 BC, then obviously an enormous question mark is raised and you start to wonder what is going on.

In *Fingerprints of the Gods*, I showed that the Great Sphinx is also one of those loudly self-proclaimed things that points to the Age of Leo, a point of 10,500 BC. Robert and I have since gone on and looked further and found that every aspect of the Giza monuments, not just the Sphinx and the three great pyramids but the satellite pyramids - those that lie off the south face of the Menkaure, and the causeways - and all the large temples all fit into a gigantic diagram of the sky in 10,500 BC. It includes specifically the constellation of Orion, the constellation of Leo, and that of Taurus, and the group of stars between the horns of the bull that are called the Hyades. Here we also find ourselves in the pyramids of Dashour, somewhat to the south of Giza. All of these monuments signify a moment some 12,500 years before our present time.

It's rather like receiving a radio message from outer space. When the SETI people scanned the sky they looked for anomalies, they looked for a signal that stands out by its differences which raises a question "what does this mean?" I think that's what we have here in the monuments of Giza, a beacon that says "Look further, find out what this was all about."

CONROY: So it would appear that the ancient builders took the Hermetic maxim "As above, so below" literally.

HANCOCK: Or rather that the Hermetic maxim was derived from their own practice of science. There is a huge question mark here which sets the mind on a course. Once you're confronted with this anomalistic situation, if you're of a certain frame of mind, you're impelled to investigate it further. I don't think that was accidental. I think it was a designed effect of these monuments, that they were specifically designed to create this questioning function in human beings. They are one of the ways of ensuring that this ancient process of initiation continues, even if the direct line of transmission from human being to human being by oral transmission breaks down, it can be resumed again through these monuments.

CONROY: What has been the reception to *Fingerprints* and *The Orion Mystery* among the Egyptological community?

HANCOCK: The answers from the Egyptological community has been to ignore both books. The reason for this is that the vast majority of Egyptologists do not have even the most basic grounding in astronomy. I will

quote you from Dr. Alexander Pogo of the Palomar Observatory. He is quoted by Santillana and von Dechen. "I give up quoting examples of the obstinate belief among our Egyptologists of the immobility of the heavenly pole." In other words, as Dr. Pogo was pointed out, the Egyptologists don't have a bloody clue about precession. They don't even know that the pole star changes with the epochs. They are not even on the field, never mind at first base, and this is an extraordinary betrayal of the high culture of ancient Egypt, because Egyptian high culture and wisdom were connected to the study of the stars. If we seek hard, physical proof of this, many Egyptologists will tell you - and it's knee-jerk response, because they have not studied it, they have just heard it from certain professors - they will tell you that the ancient Egyptians knew nothing of astronomy. This is a matter that can be disproved by a single monument. It can be disproved by the Great Pyramid of Egypt.

The Great Pyramid could not have been built other than by master astronomers. The precision of the alignments of the Great Pyramid are in themselves are proof that this monument was created by master astronomers. The alignment to due north is within three-sixtieths of a degree off due north, three arc minutes off due north, and could only have been done with astronomy. Any engineer will tell you that.

It was, furthermore, a very refined and precise observational astronomy, of the kind that takes an enormously long period of time to develop. The Greenwich Observatory is nine-sixtieths of a degree off true north, so we have a building in the modern world which is less well aligned to due north than the Great Pyramid. Both buildings were aligned with astronomy so it is clear that the ancient Egyptians were master astronomers.

The point that I am making about the Egyptological establishment is that they have consistently failed to recognize this, and they have not taken into account the astronomical factor in their understanding of ancient Egypt. I don't see any sign of interest of change, but I don't expect to... They will go to their graves believing that the ancient Egyptians knew nothing about astronomy. You can tell them and show them evidence that the ancient Egyptians were masters of astronomy and they still will not see it. It's something strange about the human mind. We get locked into particular world views and mindsets, and once we get locked into a world view it is the hardest thing on earth to change it. I think it is harder than moving a mountain to change a scientists world view.

CONROY: This situation, of course, affects the way we as a culture think about wisdom traditions. It appears that such Egyptologists are quick to apply the term "Pyramidiot" to anyone who disagrees with them.

HANCOCK: They apply the term "pyramidiot" to anyone who suggests that the pyramids are in any way mysterious or extraordinary, whether one suggests that from the point of view of engineering or astronomy, orthodox Egyptologists will call you a "pyramidiot." These are orthodox Egyptologists,

I would add, who know nothing about engineering or astronomy, so one has to wonder who the idiots really are.

I think that the cause of human knowledge - I want to say this very strongly - has been betrayed by Egyptologists for the past 150 years. I think that they've set back the possibility of a momentous discovery about ourselves because of their narrow-minded and ignorant focus on one dimension of a truly multi-dimensional culture.

CONROY: What one dimension is that?

HANCOCK: The dimension that they are focused on is the stuff they can dig out of the ground. If you can't dig it out of the ground, it wasn't there. That's their attitude, and they don't seem to realize that what survived into the future in terms of material artifacts in the ground may not give a representative impression of the overall culture. They have to open their minds to other non-material artifacts that have survived, such as these extraordinary texts, which have been passed down to us. They have to stand in front of the three great pyramids and consider the possibility that they aren't tombs, that they may be something else. Until they do that, they won't see further than the dust of their feet.

An edited version of the above appeared in GNOSIS No. 38. Ed Conroy is the author of Report on Communion, an investigation of Whitley Strieber and his visitor experiences (William Morrow/Avon). For further information see <http://www.gnosismagazine.com>