

# GOBEKLI TEPE

## 7,000 Years Before the Pyramids, Whites Were Building Astounding Temple Complex

TRADITIONALLY, WHAT WE CALL HISTORY went back about 5,000 years or so. But, suddenly, with the discovery of an amazing religious site in Anatolia, mankind's history has been doubled or more, giving us, in effect, "twice the history" in one fell swoop. Who built these amazingly carved and aligned structures—and why? And why did they end up burying them under tons of sand and dirt?

By John Tiffany

What may be the oldest temple in the world has been found in what is now Turkey.<sup>1</sup> Carbon-dated at 11,000 to 11,500 years old, it is about twice as old as the Maltese temples of Ggantija, Hagar Qim, Mnajdra and the Hypogeum (from 5,600 years ago), not to mention the Egyptian temples (of which the Temple of Hatshepsut is perhaps the oldest at about 3,462 years). We leave aside the Great Pyramid and Sphinx, of course.

When Gobekli Tepe was built, man was supposedly everywhere a hunter and gatherer. There was no agriculture and no flocks of sheep, goats or cattle. Yet it is more sophisticated than many of the temples that came after.

Gobekli Tepe is quite a mystery. These people—whatever they were—were not the primitives you would expect from their lifestyle. Says Andrew Collins, author of *Gobekli Tepe*, a book on the subject:

There is no obvious explanation for a high culture existing in upper Mesopotamia at the end of the last ice age, when the rest of the world was still populated with

hunter-gathering communities concerned with day-to-day survival and little more. However, these faceless individuals, known to archeologists as the "Pre-Pottery Neolithic" (PPN) peoples, created some of the most mesmerizing art in the ancient world, which would not be bettered for thousands of years.

PPN is actually a misnomer, as pottery, or ceramics, originated in Croatia about 17,500 years ago, during the last glacial period. It is now believed pottery was invented and forgotten several times, in various ages and places. However, since there seems to be no better name for this culture at this time, we will use the designation PPN.<sup>2</sup>

Gobekli Tepe is a hilltop site in the Armenian highlands (now part of the eastern area of the modern state of Turkey). Discovered in 1994 by German archeologist Klaus Schmidt, originally it was ignored by most researchers because it was presumed to be a medieval burial ground of little importance.

But it is now known to be something altogether different and vastly more significant—a religious site 6,000 years older than Stonehenge. That would make it about 11,000 years old—perhaps the first monumental architecture in human prehistory.

### COULD THIS BE EDEN?

It has even been suggested by Collins and archeologist David Rohl that Gobekli Tepe may be the biblical Land of Eden, or even the Garden of Eden, or that the mythical place was somewhere nearby. After all, two of the four Edenic rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates, arise in the vicinity of nearby Lake Van. (Van itself has no outlets.) The other two Edenic rivers (aside from the unaccounted-for Eden River itself) have been convincingly attributed to a



couple of other nearby rivers.

Today the surrounding landscape has been turned by farmers and settlers into a more or less featureless, brown, arid, nearly treeless area, but 11,400 years ago it must have been like a paradise—which Eden is supposed to have been. Flocks of gazelles roamed the land back then, and plenty of other game, giving the hunter-gatherers plenty of meat.

Interestingly, Mount Ararat is also close at hand, as is another mountain that has been traditionally credited with being the final resting place of Noah's ark.

Gobekli Tepe, it should be understood, is no isolated phenomenon. Several newly discovered PPN sites are being investigated in eastern and southeastern Turkey. Similar temples from the Gobekli Tepe era, at Karahan Tepe, Sefer Tepe and Hamzan Tepe, are being researched, and hopefully much new evidence of this ancient civilization will be emerging. Also, at Balikligol, a site within the city limits of Sanliurfa, a full-sized male statue was found, about 12,000-11,000 years old. Nevali Cori is another of these PPN sites.

Additional PPN settlements have been found at Baaran Hoyuk, Baaran-Herzo Tepe and Kocanizam Tepe.

Another famous site, Catal Hoyuk, was the first in a series of discoveries in a process slowly unveiling the secrets of the prehistoric Turkish and Armenian PPN re-

**The discovery of a massive megalithic temple complex** in southeastern Anatolia, close to the Syrian border and the Euphrates River, was one of the most important finds in world history. What was found buried under the Turkish soil was astounding to scientists. Not only were there finely worked massive stone pillars and enclosures that were oriented to heavenly bodies, it was created between 10,000 and 8,000 B.C. Even more amazingly, topographic scans have revealed that other structures near the site, still awaiting excavation, probably date to 12,000 to 10,000 B.C. More than 200 pillars in about 20 circles are currently known.

gion. But Gobekli Tepe is the oldest of these sites uncovered so far. Surprisingly, the existence of these amazing sites has been little reported by the general press.

## **ESTABLISHMENT IS PHILO-SEMITIC**

The establishment wishes to continue the myth that civilization first sprang up in southern Mesopotamia. Evidently this is due to a philo-Semitic prejudice—although every scholar knows that the pioneers of civilization in southern Mesopotamia were the Sumerians, who were not Semitic at all.

Gobekli Tepe is noted for its massive T-shaped pillars,

but such pillars are also to be found at Nevali Cori. Nevali Cori is dated to 8400-8000 B.C.—much later than Gobekli Tepe—but was discovered earlier, in 1979. Nevali Cori, an important site, was sadly submerged in 1991 with the construction of the Ataturk Dam. Harald Hauptmann, its excavator, found some large statues there made of limestone. The artifacts rescued from the impending reservoir now reside in museums. Included are a life-size carving of a head, oddly egg-like, with crude ears and a bizarre “pony-tail” that is actually a serpent ending in a mushroom-like cap. The head is believed to represent a PPN deity of unknown name associated with the ritual use of “magic” mushrooms, probably of the genus *Psilocybe*.

## A MULTI-MILLENNIAL CIVILIZATION

Clearly the PPN civilization, if we include its possible “spinoffs,” lasted for thousands of years. Shortly after Nevali Cori was lost beneath the rising waters of Lake Ataturk, Gobekli Tepe emerged from the sands.

However, we must mention another PPN site, Cayonu, about 60 miles (96 km) from Gobekli Tepe. Cayonu conforms to a grill plan, indicating considerable planning went into its design. Cayonu is full of surprises. Archeologists Robert and Linda Braidwood, Americans, along with Halet Cambel of Turkey, began excavating Cayonu in 1964. They found, to their astonishment, floors made of terrazzo—a mixture of burnt crushed lime and clay. It had been thought terrazzo was invented by the much later Romans.

Use of metals was also found—which means that this PPN site was neither pre-pottery nor was it Neolithic. There seemed to be evidence of smelting of copper, although some argue the copper was cold hammered instead. The site is not far from copper deposits at Ergani in Diyarbakir province, where valuable obsidian is also found. Cayonu, dated to 7500-6600 B.C., is often seen as a forerunner of Catal Hoyuk. Gobekli Tepe is 2,000 years older.

Cayonu people had the world’s first domesticated pigs. Cayonu also revealed a hoard of human skulls—one found under a slab that may have been an altar and stained with human blood, leading some scholars to believe this is evidence of human sacrifice. There is also evidence of people being slain in huge pits, and children being buried alive in jars or roasted in large bronze bowls.

All of the Gobekli Tepe “complexes” excavated there so far have had T-shaped pillars. The excavating has been done by Klaus Schmidt and Harald Hauptmann of the German Archeological Institute in Istanbul.

## TEMPLES PRESERVED—A STROKE OF LUCK

It is lucky Schmidt decided to excavate Gobekli Tepe when he did, since the site was scheduled to be used as a quarry and the ancient limestone monoliths there to be used as a foundation for a new highway being built.

When Gobekli Tepe was constructed, agriculture and animal husbandry were still unknown, and man roamed the land as a hunter and gatherer of wild vegetation. But how could hunters and gatherers build a henge-like structure, in some ways even more sophisticated than Stonehenge and its associated sites?

It is said that primitive hunters, past and present, have more leisure time than farmers. But even if this is true, why would they choose to go to all the effort of creating Gobekli Tepe? Obviously, there was some deep religious purpose to the site—perhaps the first organized religion.

And then, after using the site for 1,000 years or so, the Gobekli Tepe people dragged vast quantities of soil to the spot and completely covered it up. This in itself was a

huge undertaking. Why they would do this is even more of a mystery than why they built it in the first place.

Who were these people? Were they White men, as most scholars believe, or some other race? Were they the mysterious Swiderians?

The stones are placed in rings, at least 16 of them (excavation is unfinished; only 5% of the area has been “dug”). The tallest pillars are 18 feet tall and may weigh 15 tons, all finely worked by ancient hands.

Each ring is much like another, with two special pillars at its center, shaped like a capital T. These “T” shapes represent people; arms and fingers are carved on their sides; and some sort of stole or other garment can be made out—also pendants with bull heads, “H” shapes, or an eye cupped by a crescent. These may be symbols of office of some sort. They wear fox pelts for belts, it appears.

However, it should be noted that the Gobekli Tepe people were at one point carving a 50-ton monolith out of the bedrock—almost as massive as any stone used by the highly advanced Egyptians. This from a culture that was working 6,500 years before the time of the pyramids.

The twin pillars of “Enclosure D” are further adorned with belts with U-shaped or comet-like buckles.

The stones of the ring face inward and can be elaborately carved with horizontal or leaping foxes, wolves, lions, vultures, boars and scorpions, while some other ones are blank. Yet other ones have glyphs resembling our letters C and H, while a few have holes through them by which stars could be sighted.

“There are possibly dozens more sites like Gobekli Tepe waiting to be uncovered in Anatolia.”



**Above, three of the carved T-pillars** at Gobekli Tepe—created 7,500 years before the Step Pyramid at Saqqara. The left pillar shows a male lion, the middle a net pattern and the right a fierce boar. Above the boar are depicted what appear to be several birds resembling dodos. Middle right photo: One of the only three dimensional carvings, most likely a lion. This carving is unique in the ancient world, at least so far. Only 5% of the entire Gobekli Tepe complex has been unearthed, and it is believed that even larger sites still lie buried under the earth in the nearby region. Bottom right, this deep relief carving appears on a limestone bowl discovered at Nevali Cori, a settlement founded a thousand years after Gobekli Tepe. It shows two human figures dancing with what could be a frog or a pregnant animal.



## THE MYSTERIOUS SWIDERIANS

The Swiderians were a people living originally in the area of what is now Poland, where they are said to have had an advanced culture. Their distant ancestors, the Eastern Gravettian people, lived from around 30,000 B.C. to 19,000 B.C. in the area of Czechoslovakia. A catastrophic comet impact, about 10,900 B.C., may have led to their building Gobekli Tepe. (More about that later.)

Not very far away, about 200 miles to the east, is Bingol Mountain, dominated by Kalatepe Peak, considered by locals to be the roof of the world. Bingol Mountain is supposedly “the place of the gods.” Here is one of the world’s richest deposits of obsidian, which probably drew the enigmatic Swiderians to the region.

They were striking looking people, with long facial features, and unusually tall. To the primitive Semites in the area, they seemed like giants or angels, and the Semites concocted tales of giant Nephelim, Annunaki and “Watchers” (a kind of angel) to explain them—tall tales



of fallen angels mating with mortal women and giving rise to a hybrid race. New Agers today substitute UFO aliens for the angels, but there seems no reason to jump to the conclusion that Gobekli Tepe was built by mythological giants, angels or spacemen.

The fox symbology, so prominent at Gobekli Tepe, may be especially significant. In much of Europe and Asia, the fox is a trickster god; in Northern Europe the wolf, another canid, is substituted in this role. Interestingly, North American Indians use another canid, the coyote, as their trickster god. In Germanic traditional religion, Fenris the wolf is the son of Loki, another trickster god. The fox or wolf tail is symbolic of a comet.

Rep. Ignatius Donnelly in 1882 wrote that the world was devastated by a comet before the last ice age; modern scholars have revised this down to 10,900 years ago. Donnelly, a Minnesota congressman and scholar of all things Atlantean, wrote a book called *Ragnarok*, wherein he proposed that a giant comet had passed close to the Earth in a past age. The intense heat from the comet touched off huge fires that raged across the face of the globe. He suggested the comet had dumped vast amounts of dust onto our planet, triggered earthquakes, leveled mountains and initiated the ice age. He even explained some of the miracles in the Bible with his comet, proposing that the standing still of the Sun at the command of Joshua was possibly a tale commemorating this event. In many ways, Donnelly was ahead of his time in the study of catastrophism.

## HARBINGERS OF DISASTER

Supernatural canids are widely seen as harbingers of disaster. A holy book of Zoroastrianism, the *Bundahishn*, is stated: “As Gokihar falls in the celestial sphere . . . onto Earth, the distress of the Earth becomes like that of a sheep when a wolf falls upon it.” (Gokihar is usually translated as “meteor” by those who fail to make a distinction between a meteor and a comet—the name itself is interpreted as “wolf progeny.”)

One can envision the force of the impact of a large cometary nucleus—perhaps 129 miles in diameter and traveling at 298 miles per second—causing a terrible cataclysmic impact. One can barely imagine the kinetic energy of such a collision.

In fact the Dacians, who lived in Romania before it was conquered by the Romans, had a battle standard known as the *draco* or dragon, which had a wolf’s head and a body resembling the tail of a comet.

(As an aside, the Dacians, Thracians and Getae, all of them inhabiting more or less the Romanian region, were far from being savage barbarians; they had a high culture. But that’s a topic for another article.)

In ancient European mythology we find an old Scottish story about the supernatural canid: “*The tayl of the wouf and the world’s end*”—a reference to the world falling apart after the appearance of a wolf’s tail, which is probably a metaphor for a comet.

Much fuller stories of how a great Fenris wolf or dog, a reincarnation of the trickster god Loki, had brought destruction to the world must have existed all over the Germanic lands, and beyond them.

We English speakers still say, when baneful disturbances arise, “The devil (or all hell) has broken loose,” while in the northern lands such as Iceland they say, “*Loki er or boendum*”—or, “Loki is out of control.” All these stories seem to be fragmentary memories of a terrible cataclysm, coupled with a reasonable fear that it could all happen again one day. Is this why Gobekli Tepe was built—to remind the local people and posterity of these awful events, and/or to beg the gods to prevent them?

Collins insists that a large, fast comet crashed into Earth about 10,900 B.C. At that time, the Swiderians were thriving in Central and Eastern Europe. He says they were a striking-looking people, tall and hawk-nosed. He suggests that they were a hybrid race, part Neanderthal—which this writer finds hard to believe. The artist’s conceptions of

Swiderians do not seem to me to resemble Neanderthals, and I would need more information from physical anthropologists on any studies of any Swiderian remains. My impression is that they seem to be known more from their tools than from fossil bones.

While it seems most Europeans today have a percentage of Neanderthal DNA, it also seems unlikely the Swiderians in particular were something like half Neanderthal.

Someone suggested Swiderian man may have been much similar to Kennewick man, the American from some 9,000 years ago.

Be that as it may, the Swiderians may have lived in humble tents, but they were accomplished miners. Their mining operations in Poland’s Swietokrzyskie Mountains are among the earliest mining activities anywhere in the world. This society was responsible for the founding of post-Swiderian cultures of the Mesolithic Age as far north as Norway, Sweden and Finland, and as far east as the Upper Volga Valley of Russia, and as far south as the Caucasus Mountains.

“Gobekli Tepe may be where civilization as we know it began—including the start of formal religion.”

What the Swiderians mined was obsidian—volcanic glass, prized for making razor-sharp tools and weapons.

Around 10,500 B.C., Collins believes, Swiderian groups moved from the East European plains into eastern Anatolia, where they gained total control of the regional trade in obsidian at places like Bingol Mountain in the Armenian highlands and Nemrut Dag, close to Lake Van.

Even if they did not themselves build Gobekli Tepe, this would have brought them into contact with the communities that did build it, around 9500-9000 B.C.

Collins says:

Everything suggests the Swiderians possessed a sophisticated cosmology gained in part from their cousins the Solutreans of Central and Western Europe. They believed in a sky world entered via the Great Rift—the fork or split in the Milky Way caused by the presence of stellar dust and debris—corresponding to the position in the northern heavens occupied by the stars of Cygnus, the celestial swan (aka the Northern Cross).

The idea here is that the tribal shaman ingested magic mushrooms to enter the spirit world, transmogrified himself into a bird—a swan in Europe or a vulture in Southwest Asia—and flew into the Great Rift to communicate with the gods and spirits living in the world beyond. Even more importantly, the shaman could counter the actions of the creature—call it the celestial fox—responsible for the recent cataclysm and prevent a rerun of that event.

An earlier antecedent of Gobekli Tepe imagery may be found in the Lascaux Caves of the Dordogne region of France, dated about 16,500-13,000 B.C. Even here, back in the Magdalenian culture of the Upper Paleolithic, we observe the people, believed to have been Cro-Magnons, following the hermetic axiom of “as above, so below.” There are something like 600 paintings of animals in these caves and relatively few depictions of humans. This was during the ice age, when mammoths, woolly rhinoceroses, saber-toothed cats and other remarkable megafauna mixed in with reindeer and other animals more familiar to us today.

In Lascaux’s “Shaft of the Dead Man,” there are four figures: a rhino, which seems to be walking away from the scene, a wounded bison, a “bird” on the top of a pole and a man or birdman. (He has the head of a bird.) He seems to be lying on his back as if dead or in a trance, probably induced by magic mushrooms. He is looking up, as if at the sky.

According to German scholar Dr. Michael Rappengluck of the University of Munich, if you connect the eye of the shaman, the eye of the bird on the stick and the eye of the bison, you form a triangle exactly like the asterism known as the Summer Triangle of the stars Deneb, Altair and Vega. Each star belongs to a separate constellation: Deneb, which happens to be the one star in the sky



**Above, another of the amazing** carved pillars unearthed at Gobekli Tepe. Shown are what appear to be a vulture holding a solar disk, with another buzzard to its right. Above that figure look to be two flamingo carvings. In the middle of the column is what researchers say is a scorpion and below that an additional bird figure, perhaps another of the dodo-like birds. Interestingly, some scholars believe the people of Gobekli Tepe may have practiced excarnation (defleshing) as a funerary ritual. In this case, corpses would be left to have the flesh removed by vultures and other birds of prey. To prevent the loss of large bones, perhaps the body would have been covered in a netting. Once the bones were cleaned by the birds and other scavengers, they would have been buried. According to scholars, when one finds only tiny human bones left at a burial site (finger and toe bones that fall through such a netting), it is a cue that excarnation may have been employed.

that is farthest away of those that can be seen by the naked eye, is part of the constellation Cygnus the Swan (mentioned above).

Vega is today considered part of the constellation Lyra, but anciently was seen as part of a constellation called the Falling Eagle (Aquila Cadens) or Falling Vulture (Vultur Cadens). Vega was called the Vulture Star by the ancient Egyptians.

Altair is part of another eagle constellation—so all three represent birds, and it seems that in ancient times the swan, the vulture and the eagle were almost interchangeable.

Significantly, Deneb was the pole star when the shaft art was created, about 16,500-15,000 B.C. Vega was the pole star around 13,000 B.C.-11,000 B.C.

It is likely that either the Lascaux people themselves migrated to the Gobekli Tepe area, or that their lore found its way there.



**The Balikli Gol figure, circa 11,500 B.C.—the first life-sized human statue?**

## OVALS GALORE

In the megalithic sites on Malta, many of the structures have an oval shape. This was once considered rather unique, although there are ovals also in Sardinia. Perhaps significantly, various towns near Sens, an ancient settlement in France that was evidently very important in the Neolithic, are aligned on a set of concentric ovals.

At Gobekli Tepe, the stones are yet again arranged in ovals.

Gobekli Tepe Complex A, the first structure to be excavated at Gobekli Tepe, is oval, as are complexes B, C and D.

Complex A is nicknamed the “snake column building,” because depictions of snakes dominate the carvings on the T-pillars here. One carving is of a net containing captive snakes. But one pillar is carved with a bull, a fox and a crane—one above another. There are also pillars that show only a bull, or only a fox etc.

Complex B at Gobekli Tepe, according to Phillip Copen, is “9 meters in diameter east to west and 10-15 meters north to south”—another oval. This is the only complex so far dug to floor level—revealing the terrazzo mentioned above. Part of it is still unexcavated. Two central pillars, weighing more than seven tons each, are decorated with a large fox.

Archeologists believe 300 T-pillars once stood at Gobekli Tepe. If each weighed only five tons on average, the

enterprise involved excavating, carving and moving 1,500 tons of stone—a tremendous effort for these people, back around 10,000 B.C.

Complex C is the “circle of the boar,” depicting several wild pigs. There are currently nine pillars around the wall, but several were removed at some time in the past. One pillar shows a net full of birds, evidently cranes. Pillar 27 features a very artistic carving of a reptile, probably a lizard.

Complex D is called the “stone age zoo,” because of the large number of creatures depicted. Pillar 43 has scorpions carved in it. There are also symbols—possibly an early form or forerunner of writing, like an upright capital H, as well as an H turned on its side.

A temple lower on the hill has an oval shape again, and has an opening leading to a burial chamber.

On the north slope of the hill is a rectangular “lion column building,” although the carvings on the four pillars

could just as well be tigers or leopards.

Not all the structures at Gobekli Tepe have been unearthed—only 50 of the suspected 200 pillars have been dug up, and further surprises may be in store. But one thing is clear: A civilization worthy of the name existed here millennia before anyone would have imagined a few decades ago.

Karl Schmidt believes Gobekli Tepe was part of a death cult, and that the animal carvings were put there to protect the dead. There is evidence the site may have been used for funerary rites.

Although no evidence of habitation has been found at Gobekli Tepe, archeologists believe a sedentary population of some 500 lived here to maintain the stones and were supported by a larger population of hunter-gatherers, with agriculture being developed to feed the workers. Thus, religion would seem to be the mother of farming.

The circles or ovals of T-pillars range from 16 to 32 feet across. Around the ovals are walls of mud brick with stone benches and small niches. The megaliths are 3.3 to 13 feet high. However, a few years ago Schmidt’s team found a very weathered, half-excavated stone that would have been 30 feet tall but seems to have cracked before it could be fully carved out of the bedrock and was abandoned.

Carbon dating of organic matter adhering to the megaliths clearly demonstrates Gobekli Tepe was built around 9000 to 10,000 B.C.

Gobekli Tepe, says Schmidt, “is not a settlement or domestic buildings. Evidence of any domestic use is entirely lacking. No remains of settled human habitation have been found nearby. That leaves one purpose: religion. Gobekli Tepe is the oldest temple in the world. And it isn’t just a temple; I think it is probably a funerary complex.”

The team has found human bones in soil that once filled open niches by the stones. Schmidt believes the ancient hunters brought the bodies of their dead there, and that the corpses were stripped of their flesh by scavengers, possibly buzzards, i.e., excarnation. One of the carved pillars seems to depict an excarnation tower flanked by vultures.

Gobekli Tepe, Schmidt says, “was probably a site for funerals, but it was also a place to celebrate the life of the hunter, and the hunt itself.”

But while game was abundant, it was not abundant enough to feed all the stone workers. So they began cultivating the *Einkorn* wheat that grows wild in the area, Schmidt believes. In fact, several of the oldest forms of wheat have been traced to a spot just 11 miles from Gobekli Tepe, further solidifying the belief that the people of Gobekli Tepe were also the world’s first organized agriculturalists.

There is a solitary “mulberry fig” tree on the hill (“tepe” means hill in Turkish); perhaps the mulberry fig was also domesticated by these ancients. The tree is regarded by the locals as sacred.

In short, the Gobekli Tepe people began farming in order to support their religious community, Schmidt thinks—but the farming changed the paradisiacal environment, possibly leading to their downfall.

Farming has negative impact on man and beast; both the humans and animals become scrawnier and sicklier.

The landscape began to alter around 8000 B.C., as the trees were chopped down and soil eroded away, leaving the area bare and arid. At this time, Gobekli Tepe was buried. Says Schmidt, “For some reason the hunters, or ex-hunters, decided to entomb the entire site in soil.”

Could the Eden narrative in the Bible be an allegory for this shift from a hunter-gatherer lifestyle to farming? Does Cain symbolize the ancient hunters and Abel the newfangled farmers? It is quite possible. Several thinkers and writers, such as anthropologist Hugh Brody, have pondered the idea. Accumulating information increasingly places this allegory in the Gobekli Tepe region, where *Einkorn* was first grown and pigs were first domesticated.

A 40-minute drive from Gobekli Tepe is the Kurdish city of Sanliurfa. Could this have been the village of Ur, hometown, supposedly, of the patriarch Abraham? Notice

the “ur” in SanliURfa. This is where the enigmatic, life-size Balikli Gol statue was found. (See page 10.) Even if Abraham as such did not exist (and Ur was not “of the Chaldees”), there could be some element of truth to the Ur story. Some nearby places are mentioned in Genesis, such as Harran.

Eden, according to the Bible, was ringed around with mountains. This could refer to the Taurus Mountains, visible from Gobekli Tepe. So it would seem that Eden, so far as there was an Eden, was located in the Armenian highlands of what is today called Turkey.

## A COSMIC IMPACT EVENT?

It has been proposed that fragments of a comet impacted Earth, deposited silica- and iron-rich microspherules across several continents and triggered the Younger Dryas cooling episode, or mini ice age, 12,900 years ago. The Younger Dryas lasted some 1,300 years. Could Gobekli Tepe be designed to commemorate this disaster?

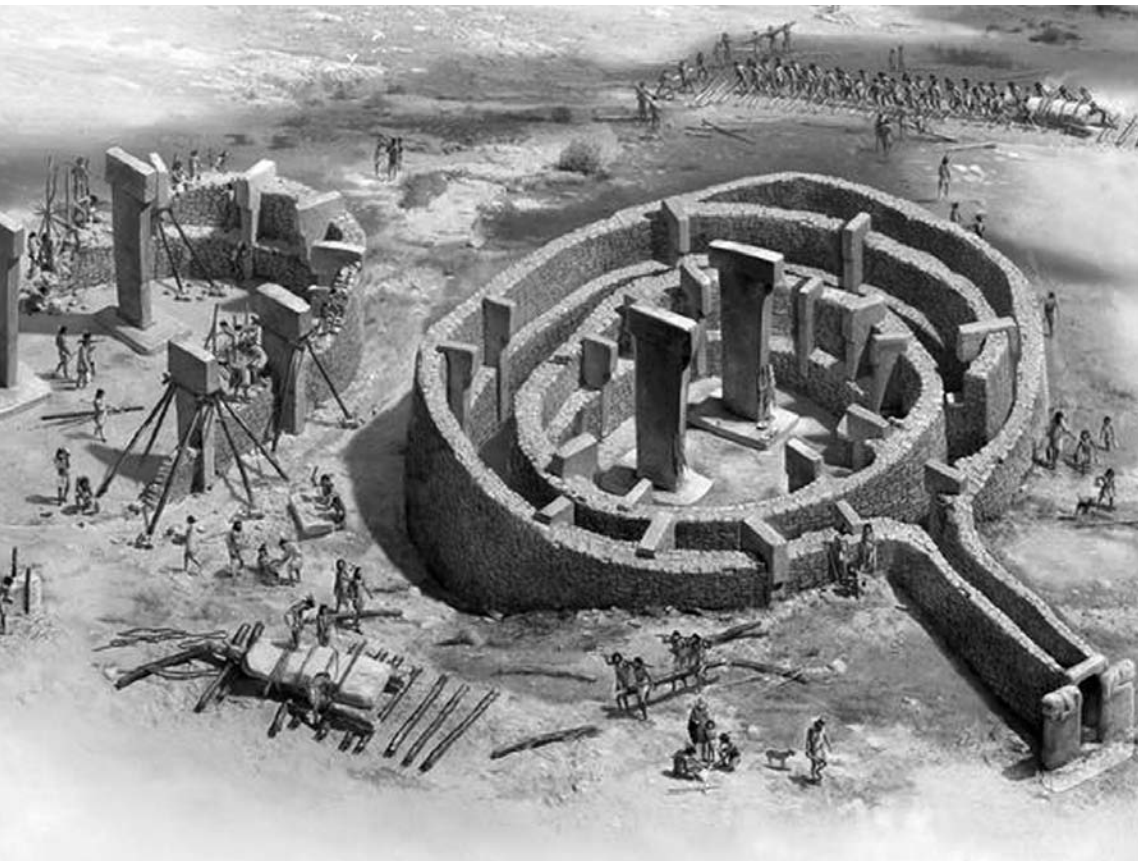


The fox, symbolizing the cosmic trickster, holds a place of special importance at Gobekli Tepe. The fox is also an ancient symbol of comets in many cultures. Is there a message here for us today?

Many independent groups have confirmed the impact evidence. Scientists examined sediment sequences from 18 dated Younger Dryas Boundary (YDB) sites across three continents (North America, Europe and Asia), spanning nearly one-third of the planet. All sites display abundant microspherules in the YDB, with none or few above and below. In addition, three sites (Tell Abu Hureyra, Syria [only 100 miles from Gobekli Tepe]; Melrose, Pennsylvania; and Blackville, South Carolina) display vesicular, siliceous scoria-like objects, or SLOs, that match the spherules geochemically. These SLOs form only at exceedingly high-temperatures, in the range of 3,100-3,600 degrees (1,700-1,980 Celsius)—the boiling point of quartz. This is too hot to be attributed to any human action at the time, or even to volcanoes. It can only indicate a cosmic bolide collision. Nanodiamonds are also associated with this phenomenon, as is iridium (like the Cretaceous-Tertiary (K-T) boundary of dinosaur extinction fame).

The YDB comet impact was a disaster of biblical proportions. We know it coincided with the disappearance





At left, a National Geographic artist's recreation of a finished oval enclosure at Gobekli Tepe and another under construction. Archeologists believe that some of the pillars aligned to stars and other celestial events, possibly Sun rises and Sun sets of equinoxes and solstices. This is really quite incredible for people living in 11,500 B.C., indicating the culmination of an even older stoneworking technology and astronomical observational science. Even more intriguing is the possibility that many more "Gobekli Tepes" lie under the earth—as yet undiscovered in the vicinity.

of the Clovis people (with the most advanced technology of their time), mammoths, mastodons, giant ground sloths, dire wolves and saber-toothed tigers, among others. All these animals existed in abundance until the end of the Allerod interglacial period, then vanished with the onset of the YD mini ice age. They may have been decimated in the wildfires caused by the comet impact.

If you are familiar with the Tunguska explosion in Siberia, the YDB impact 12,900 years ago was many times more violent than that.

Possible craters from the multiple YDB impacts have been tentatively identified at Charity Shoal in Lake Ontario, and Bloody Creek, Nova Scotia. Another one is called Corossol Crater, located just south of Settyo, Canada—four kilometers in diameter, it would have caused a fireball extending across half of Canada. At Merewether, Canada, there are a set of four craters that hypothetically are part of the YD disaster—one of which forms a conspicuous circular lake.

One of the things the impacts may have caused is the draining of Lake Aggasiz, a massive, ancient Canadian lake that contained more cold fresh water than all the Great Lakes combined today. Until the comet fragments hit, it seems the lake was held back by a dam of ice left from the previous glaciation. This dam was destroyed by the comet, and the lake emptied out into Hudson Bay, cooling the ocean dramatically and causing the mini ice age.

Some scientists now believe other glacial lakes may

have been released, causing flooding in several areas of Europe and the Mediterranean. This may have been the Great Flood of biblical lore and a disaster of such proportion that our ancient ancestors built places like Gobekli Tepe to implore the gods to prevent such an event ever occurring again. ♦

#### ENDNOTES:

1 It is elementary, but important, to note that there were no Turks in Turkey back then. In early Turkey, perhaps better called Anatolia, Hittites, Lydians, Carians, Armenians, Assyrians, Kurds, Persians, Phrygians, ancient Greeks and Byzantines, Romans and numerous other peoples thrive. The Turks finally arrived in the area in the early 11th century A.D., following their 1071 victory over the Byzantines in the vicinity of Malazgirt (Manzikert).

2 <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2178312/Artists-Ice-Age-Prehistoric-pottery-shows-man-mastered-clay-17-500-years-ago-settled-farmers.html>

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Collins, Andrew, *Gobekli Tepe: Genesis of the Gods: The Temple of the Watchers and the Discovery of Eden*, Bear & Co., Rochester, Vt., 2014.

Coppens, Philip, *The Lost Civilization Enigma*, New Page Books, Pompton Plains, N.J., 2013.

Knight-Jadczyk, Laura, *The Secret History of the World and How to Get Out Alive*, Red Pill Press, 2005.

[http://wn.com/younger\\_dryas\\_event](http://wn.com/younger_dryas_event)

**JOHN TIFFANY** is an assistant editor of THE BARNES REVIEW. He has for decades been interested in diverse ethnic groups, ancient history, mathematics, science, real-life conspiracies and the problem of crime in our government. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in biology from the University of Michigan and has studied comparative religions and mythologies.