

provide the crucial test for any theories involving widespread natural disasters. Two potential such clusters were described, in the 20th and 25th centuries B.C. in radiocarbon years, probably equivalent to the 31st and 25th centuries BC in calendar years respectively. Professor A. de Grazia concluded the seminar by advocating the application of Velikovsky's views to the interpretation of the archaeological and environmental record but it seems questionable that the audience was convinced.

JUAN MACKIE

THE PAPER READ BY DR MACKIE AT THE SYMPOSIUM, "THE SYNCHRONISM OF CULTURAL CHANGES AT THE END OF THE NEOLITHIC PERIOD IN EUROPE: THE EVIDENCE OF RADIOCARBON DATES" WILL APPEAR IN A FUTURE ISSUE OF THIS REVIEW.

EBLA

NEW DISCOVERIES

At Tell-Mardikh (30 miles south of Aleppo in Syria) a very important find of cuneiform tablets has been made by Italian scholars Dr Paolo Matthiae and Dr Giovanni Pattinato. The first announcement of the discovery was in June 1975. The tablets are in a West Semitic language different from Ugaritic or Akkadian, but have been quickly deciphered because of the discovery of a bilingual vocabulary list of about 1000 words in Sumerian and the new language (now named Eblaite, as the ancient city uncovered has been identified as Ebla).

The script is a mixture of logograms and syllabic units. The tablets have been dated at about 2400BC because of the Bronze Age artefacts found with them. Tremendous interest has been aroused by this find, as many Biblical names have been deciphered, including Ab-Ra-Mu (Abraham), E-Sa-Um (Esau), Da-U-Dum (David), Sa-U-Lum (Saul), Mi-Ka-Ilu (Michael), Is-Ra-Ilu (Israel) and Ib-Rum (Eber). Names of Biblical cities deciphered include Hazor, Megiddo and Gaza; and also Urusulina (Jerusalem), the earliest known reference to the name. Names of gods deciphered include Dagon (apparently the chief god of Ebla), Baal, Ishtar, Chemosh.

15,000 tablets were discovered during 1976, comprising economic records, tax receipts, accounts of tributes, exchange of goods. There are also some mythological, cultic and ritual texts which should prove of great importance to Biblical studies. It is thought likely that the main body of tablets has not yet been uncovered.

Some historical information gleaned so far is that the second king of Ebla was Ib-Rum (Eber), that the queen was of equal status with the king, that Ebla waged successful war against Mari (a city on the Euphrates), and that the kingdom of Ebla ended when the capital was destroyed (estimated date, 2250 BC, possibly by Naram-Sin of Akkad).

Professor David Noel Freedman of the University of Michigan has visited the site of the excavations and has described the discovery as "one of the most spectacular finds of all time". He is also reported as saying: "If the patriarchs and their descendants did not actually live in Ebla, they clearly belonged to the same cultural tradition." The Biblical Archaeology Review issued a warning against over-estimating the importance of the finds, saying: "Unfortunately, many readers of the sensational American press reports were under the impression that the names found at Ebla referred to actual Biblical personages." However, the finds undoubtedly point to an advanced Canaanite civilisation in the pre-patriarchal period, and compare in importance with the Ras-Shamra tablets in Ugarit (found in 1929) and the Mari tablets (found in 1933).

S.I.S. REVIEW

It is not yet clear what relevance, if any, the discoveries have to Velikovskian studies. Velikovsky himself does not touch on the pre-patriarchal period in his Revised Chronology. Interestingly enough, nothing has been found so far to connect Ebla with the civilisation of Egypt. However, the names of Sodom and Gomorrah have been tentatively identified on the tablets by Dr Pattinato, and the destruction of Ebla may possibly have some connection with the destruction of these cities, reported in the Bible, for it is not yet quite clear whether Ebla was destroyed by human conquest or a natural disaster. Studies of this period from a catastrophist angle are taking place both in the USA and in England, and will undoubtedly be stimulated further by the Ebla discoveries. In this connection, some speculative comments made by Professor Freedman will be of interest.

Discussing the Biblical story of Sodom and Gomorrah, Freedman said: "Here there is a very old tradition which is associated with the collapse of the Canaanite civilisation... The Bible takes the position that these cities were destroyed by fire and brimstone from Heaven because of their immorality. Great cities of the Early Bronze Age are scattered all over this area. Now we know they formed part of a kingdom. They all came to an end during the last century of the third millennium. We know that the Kingdom of Ebla ended around 2,250 BC. The outlying areas collapsed subsequently, once the capital was destroyed, and it is possible that this general destruction was remembered by the Israelites and associated with a great natural catastrophe which overtook the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah".

HYAM MACCOBY

READING:

The Times, 26. 6. 1975; 31. 10. 1975; 21. 3. 1976.
Orientalia, Vol. 44, Fasc. 3, 1975.
University of Michigan News, 29. 3. 1976.
The Guardian, 14. 6. 1976.
Biblical Archaeology Review, Sept 1976, pp. 36-7.
Kings of Uruk, No. 2 (Nov. 1976), pp. 107-9.

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LONDON

MAY 30, 1976

VISITING SPEAKERS

DR ALFRED DE GRAZIA, speaking "off-the-cuff" and answering questions at the meeting for members in London on 30th May last year:-

PALAEO-AETIOLOGY

I believe that religions began as planet-worship, in the wake of such catastrophes as put forward by Velikovsky; I also believe that's where, owing to the disruption of the Solar System, mankind began as we know ourselves.

I think that at a certain point the early hominid was struck, possibly genetically, and the genetic change occurred at the same time as atmospheric change and environmental change. You have to have catastrophes in order to explain this mutation, and the odds are that the mutation we're talking about, this great mutation that created the 'two-headed primate', was one mutation out of — well, millions, maybe, that were occurring at the same time.

"The 'two-headed primate' is ourselves: we have a single organic entity, but a double (schizoid) brain. It turned out, the more I studied the history of primordial man, that he was created fast: homo sapiens had to be transformed rather swiftly into the present homo sapiens sapiens — which actually I call homo sapiens schizotypicalis. (This is a term I've

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coined: psychiatrists speak of schizotypal persons — the kind of person who could be potentiated for schizophrenia but has not arrived at it. I certainly don't like the present term; when it became clear that Neanderthal had a culture and a brain and was entitled to be called homo sapiens too, they wanted some special sub-group term for ourselves, and have begun recently to call us homo sapiens sapiens — a final touch of arrogance, considering how well we're doing!)

"The nature of the creation, in terror, and the kind of transformation that occurred to this creature made him quite mad, that is, classically schizophrenic; and human institutions and customs as well as human thought forms and religions are basically schizotypal — schizotypal — in form. And it's continued that way: the people whom we call schizophrenics are deviants from this normal schizophrenic mode of behaviour and thought, the character type which actually dominates human culture.

"As far as the origin of religion is concerned: you have to realise that every single people in the world believes that they were on hand at Creation; they believe they have a record. Why is it only in the last 150 years that science has thought up the idea that there was no moment of creation, but just an infinite evolutionary series? What we are talking about is the creation of the human mind. ♪

PALAEO-CALCINOLGY

♪ I'd like to introduce the subject of some work I've been doing on the 'Burnt City' of Troy IIg. There's much evidence to lead one to believe that Troy was burnt by some agent whose identity has not yet been fixed — not at the hand of the invader, not through accident — and I think I may have, by simple logical analysis of the reports that have come out of the excavations of Schliemann in the 19th century, and of the Blegen expedition of the 30's, by the University of Cincinnati, shown that the accepted versions of what happened to burn that city down could not be substantiated.

"The characteristics are a very heavy layer of ash and calcinated debris, no signs of earthquake, very few bones, some treasure that was left on top of a wall and immediately covered with a very heavy ash downpour, no bones of the persons who left the treasure there — which was in a big box, the outlines of which were still there though the wood had disappeared, possibly at that very time in the hot ash: the metals in some of the ornaments — gold, silver — were fused by the heat. The lower parts of the walls of most of the buildings of that level were still standing, but the roofs had collapsed (the roofs were made out of bamboo or wood, clay and water), and they also showed signs of great scorching. The city was apparently abandoned very quickly, because there's a lack of bones, and because all kinds of gold ornaments — threaded gold beads, and the like — were found strewn around the floors of several of the houses.

"Now, despite the myth — and that's what led Schliemann astray — you can show pretty well that it would have been impossible for the Greeks to be coming in at that moment and burning the city, and for the Trojans to be getting away. (Schliemann says that one of the reasons why the treasure was found on top of the wall was that the Greeks with their Horse had penetrated the city unexpectedly, there was panic, and therefore the treasure was packed hastily. However, why the Greeks who were pursuing the persons who were trying to carry the treasure over the wall did not pick up the treasure is quite myster-

ious, and why it was instantly buried by this enormously heavy rain of ashes — which is thought to have been about 14 feet high.)

"There are a number of other reasons to suspect that the explanation of an invader's torch could be the wrong one. Accident is quite impossible, too, given the level of ashes, and also the possibility of taking the treasure right out the main gate — if the city is burning and you want to save the treasure, you just carry it out the gate under a strong escort.

"Also discoverable is a layer of copper and lead, melted and blending in a very thin layer throughout much of the ground of Troy IIg. Further, a kind of greenish-yellow colour pervaded the outside street areas — not the interiors. So I wondered whether it was possible that some kind of vulcanism had taken place, but the nearest volcano is long extinct. I've also been wondering whether it might be a radiation fire, or a lightning phenomenon — Troy is built on an eminence, which would attract lightning.

"The Cincinnati expedition sent back in 1937 400 bags of soil samples for analysis, from every layer and all parts of that level of Troy. I found out that these bags were still unopened, and I've managed to arrange for an analysis of the samples, but it will be some time yet before they put out their first results: they're reluctant to consider anything but standard methods of operation in archaeology and in geology. Also, we don't know what area of countryside the ash covered — there again, it's one of the weaknesses of conventional archaeology that if there's something in the way of a pot to be found they'll dig furiously, but they won't think of going 100 yards out and drilling a core... — We should be quite impartial, I think, in our testing for signs of catastrophe everywhere. ♪

DR DE GRAZIA'S STUDY, "PALAEOLOGY OF HOMO SAPIENS SCHIZOTYPICALIS", AN ABSTRACT OF MANY OF THE POINTS COVERED IN HIS UNFINISHED BOOK "SCHIZOPHRENIA AND PRIMEVAL DELUSIONS", WILL BE PUBLISHED IN FUTURE ISSUES OF "KRONOS". THOSE WHO WISH TO READ MORE FULLY ABOUT THE PROBLEMS OF THE "BURNT CITY" ARE REFERRED TO DR DE GRAZIA'S PAPER, "PALAEO-CALCINOLGY: DESTRUCTION BY FIRE IN PRE-HISTORIC AND ANCIENT TIMES", PUBLISHED IN TWO PARTS IN "KRONOS" 1:4 AND 11:1.

DR IRVING WOLFE, during informal discussion with members of the Society after the General Meeting, 5th September 1976:—

♪ I imagine most of you have seen one book or another in a bookstore and said to yourself, 'I must get round to reading that book one day.' I would say, in my case, probably ninety percent of the books I see I simply do not find time to read; and they're forgotten. Now, I have known of 'Worlds in Collision' since it first came out in 1950, but it wasn't until 1972 — I think, that I saw the book in a department store and — by one chance in a hundred — instead of walking by I bought it.

"I took it home, and started to read it; and the reaction was instantaneously positive: I was tremendously excited. I found that I would come across an idea on a certain page and suddenly all kinds of connections would start coming into my head.

"Pretty soon, I found that as I was preparing my lectures (my specialty is Shakespeare) I suddenly began to see things that I thought had some bearing on Velikovsky. I didn't know what to make of these; but I made notes; and after a while I would have words underlined and notes: "Is this a catastrophic memory?" and suddenly I began to see patterns in things; and it struck me that what I was seeing in Shakespeare were possibly effects of what Velikovsky says happened. Eventually I began to find that reading Velikovsky simply shed an entirely new, additional or deeper light on my study of literature: in other words, I found that there's more to Shakespeare than meets the eye;