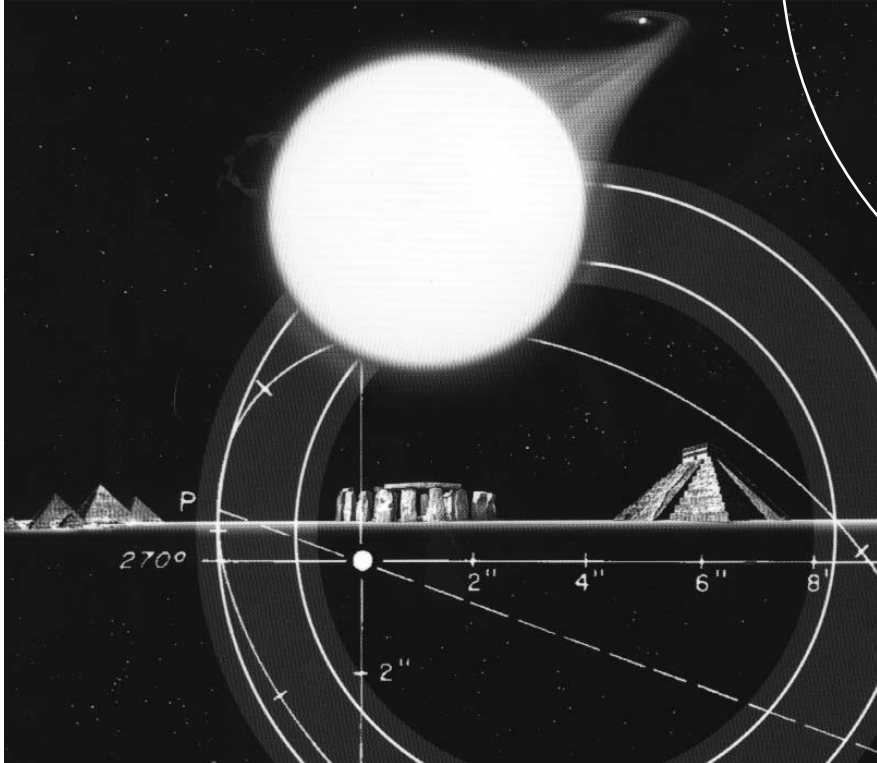


Precession and the Golden Age

How Much Did the Ancients Know?

By Walter Cruttenden



The equinox moves slowly taking about 24,000 years, more or less, to precess through all twelve signs and return to its starting position. Plato called this cyclical time period the "Great Year". The motion of the equinox is how one tells the time within this great cycle.

In 1901, divers working off the Greek island of Antikythera found the remains of a 2,000-year-old clock-like mechanism.

Now in the Greek National Archaeological Museum, the extraordinary find is a complex assembly of twenty or more precision gears designed to compute the motions of the Sun, Moon and planets. Nothing comparable is known from ancient scientific texts, and from a traditional historic point of view, such a mechanism should not have existed for at least another thousand years. The discovery of the Antikythera Device is equivalent to finding a supercomputer on a farm in the 18th century.

Archaeological finds that upset our current understanding of history are growing increasingly common. The incredible discovery of six pyramids in Caral, Peru, is a case in point. These structures that surround a huge plaza and circular kivas (no one knows what they were used for) have been reliably dated to 4,700 B.C. That is 400 years before the accepted date of the Great pyramid at Giza. Like the Greek computing device, they are out of place and out of time sequence with our current understanding of history. It was not expected that ancient people in South America built pyramids before the Egyptians.

The Antikythera device, ancient pyramids, astronomically aligned megaliths and similar structures found around the world were apparently built to monitor the movement of the heavens - at least that could be one of their uses. The vast majority of Neolithic tombs built prior to about 1000 B.C. in Europe and North Africa; ziggurats of the Middle East; henges and great stone markers in Britain and around the world, appear to be oriented toward the equinox, solstices or four cardinal points. With this preponderance of evidence it now seems likely these ancient builders not only understood the motions of the heavens but most likely tracked the precession of the equinox as well.

Precession of the Equinox

The "precession of the equinox" is the slow movement of the equinox (that point in time each Spring and Fall when night and day are of equal length - and the Earth's axis sits at an exact ninety degree angle to the Sun) against the background constellations.

On the first day of spring, the Vernal Equinox, if you look due east at sunrise, you can see the constellation Pisces is fading from view and Aquarius is rising to take its place. This is what is meant by the "dawning of the age of Aquarius". It is not just an astrological colloquialism but a convenient way for layman or astronomer alike to note the rough position of the equinox relative to the twelve constellations of the zodiac.

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Although most historians and scientists still teach that the precession of the equinox was not discovered until about 150 B.C. by Hipparchus, that is now being questioned. Giorgio de Santillana, the late professor of the history of science at MIT, documented in his book, *Hamlet's Mill*, that this cycle was well known to dozens of ancient cultures around the world. In fact he tells us the Great Year is one of the most prevalent myths of all time, as popular as the great flood myth.

Dark and Golden Ages

Ancestral people acknowledged the precession of the equinox and believed the Great Year had its seasons. Similar to yet different than the seasons of spring, summer, fall and winter in the solar year - the Great Year was thought to be punctuated with a Golden Age of incredible beauty at one end, and a Dark Age of misery at the other. The Vedic Indians and early Mediterranean cultures had different names for these periods of the Great Year, and the Greeks simply called them the Iron, Bronze, Silver and Golden Ages. Thus, there was a valid reason why we find ancient cultures so intent on tracking the precession of the equinox.

Just as we want to know our place in the solar year with its changing conditions, ancient people wanted to know their place in the Great Year. Many of the ancient myths, before the last Dark Age, spoke of a long lost Golden Age and lamented the coming of the Dark Age and its pending loss of culture and knowledge.

And this is what an examination of the archaeological record shows. Around 4,000 to 5,000 years ago Mohenjodaro and the Indus Valley were in full bloom; the megaliths of Britain and the great pyramids in Caral, Peru, and Giza were newly constructed; the ziggurats, gardens, dams and great water systems of Mesopotamia were fully functioning. A vast agricultural civilization also existed within the Amazon and much of the Americas, and the amazing fifty-ton, carved architectural columns of Gobekli, Turkey, were already 5,000 years old!

Mankind was at a high state of civilization and had been for centuries. Evidence shows that countries traded far and wide and had the technological capability to master much of their environment just as we do today. Yet, this was not to last. All of the great ancient civilizations, every one, slowly fell silent over the next few thousand years as the Earth approached a worldwide Dark Age, an age that was not overcome until the Renaissance period of the 14th through the 17th centuries.

Truth or Fiction

Today we are taught that there was no Golden Age, man was a simple hunter-gatherer that grew to his modern state in a roughly linear path. To believe otherwise is to believe in fairy tales.

Yet, this is not a matter of belief, it is a matter of science. We know the cycle of the precession of the equinox is real. We know the Great Year is woven into the myth and folklore of just about every ancient culture that existed on Earth. And we can see the archaeological record indicates a high state of civilization that declined into a Dark Age before beginning to advance again with the Renaissance. The precession of the equinox, with alternating high ages of enlightenment and low ages of darkness, may not be the accepted paradigm but it does make sense of anomalous artifacts like the Antikythera device and ancient, astronomically aligned structures because it puts them into a workable context. In the Great Year such phenomena are no longer anomalous - they are expected.

But it is difficult to imagine how civilization might be so influenced just by a slight wobble of the Earth's axis, the current theory of precession. Could precession have a different explanation? Some modern astronomers seem to think so.

Just as the cycle of day and night is caused by the Earth spinning on its axis, and the cycle of the seasons is caused by the Earth on its tilted axis orbiting the Sun, it now appears that precession and the cycle of the Great Year might also be caused by an orbit. But this orbit is not so small as the Earth going round the Sun. This is a grand orbit of our Sun carrying the solar system in a huge arc around another nearby star. Under this new theory it is the constant change in direction of the solar system that produces the apparent motion of the stars- the precession of the equinox.

As our Sun moves in a great orbit it carries the Earth in and out of the influence of another star. This in turn affects our magnetosphere, ionosphere and consciousness itself, much like our closest star the Sun affects all life, causing all manner of plant and animal to grow, spawn, sleep or wake. It is this larger motion that indirectly produces the cycle of the Great Year and makes sense out of ancient mythology and the history of our distant past.

If it is proven that we are indeed in a grand cycle now in the ascending age it portends a very bright future for mankind. Perhaps then instead of denigrating our ancient ancestors as mere primitives we will begin to seek out the knowledge of the lost higher ages, and once again learn to build and live in harmony with nature and the heavens.

Where are we now in the precession cycle, and how are we being affected by our current position ?

The ancients tell us that the low point of the current cycle occurred about 1500 years ago, just a few hundred years after the fall of Rome, and in the midst of a long descending or Dark Age. It is interesting to note the Vedic Indians calculated this point long before Rome ever existed.

Consciousness is now accelerating at a rapid rate as seen outwardly in our pace of technological development as well as inwardly in the growing interest in yoga, meditation, healthier foods, cleaner environment, etc. It can't come fast

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enough or soon enough for some of us!

The Mayan also hinted at a higher age and spoke of the year 2012 as being a milestone in the expansion of consciousness, sort of like a day in early spring when everything starts to bloom at once. They told us it would be marked by the alignment of the galactic center with the winter solstice (again they used astronomical coordinates - an easy to understand marker in any language in any age). NASA confirms that the galactic center and the winter solstice do indeed align sometime between 1990 and 2020, depending on the exact point you use for the galactic center. What is so amazing is that the Mayan, which begin their count of the various "Sun's" (their term for ages) near 3100BC, could predict such an alignment so long ago!

For more information see www.TheGreatYear.com.

Amateur archaeoastronomer and author of the binary theory of precession, Walter Cruttenden is the author of the new book, *Lost Star of Myth and Time*, and the producer of the award-winning documentary, *The Great Year*, as seen on PBS. www.LostStarBook.com



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