

Zangger's Flood from Heaven: Was Atlantis Troy?

Eberhard Zangger's book, *Flood from Heaven*, uses Plato's *Timaeus* and *Critias* plus archaeological investigations on the Trojan plain to show that the historical destruction of Troy was the origin of the legendary destruction of Atlantis and that this has been obscured by major errors in reading/interpreting the sources on the location of Atlantis and Plato's initial failure to understand Atlantis was Troy.

Critias had supposedly been told by his ancestors (Solon had the story from an old Egyptian priest a Sais) that an island out near the pillars of Heracles once was preparing to take over the world. Only the Greeks, especially the Athenians, prepared to oppose them, but, on the same day, the Greek army was swallowed up and Atlantis disappeared.

Now where was this Atlantis? Where were the pillars of Heracles? According to archaeologist Richard Henning, the term was not applied to the straits of Gibraltar before 500 BC. Servius, on the *Aeneid* ii. 262, says *columnas Herculis legimuset in Ponto et in Hispania* ("We read of pillars of Hercules both in the Black Sea and in Spain".) Herodotus is the first to use the term "Atlantic Ocean" (*Hist* i. 202) and there is no evidence of eastern Mediterranean peoples of the Bronze Age beyond the pillars of Hercules.

Phys Carpenter says that, since there are no islands in Egypt, the hieroglyph for island properly = "sandy tract/shore of any foreign land". Plato's *Timaeus* 25A says that "in front of the mouth of the pillars of Heracles" was a island greater than Libya and Asia (which, for the ancients, would mean Asia Minor, mod. Turkey). Aristotle in *Meteor.* 2.1.354a on the pillars of Heracles says that "the water outside the straits are shallow, owing to mud" (inappropriate for Gibraltar). So the pillars of Heracles could link to Atlantis, but what about a link to Troy? Poseidon founded Atlantis and built the walls of Troy. Hot and cold streams are mentioned at both. And Priam, last king of Troy, traced his ancestry through Laomedon, Ilus, Tros, Dardanus, and Electra to Atlas; hence, one could call the descendants of Atlas "Atlanteans" as readily as "Dardanians".

Atlantis s said to have been sheltered from north winds and Homer often refers to "windy Troy". Atlantis' kings, periodically as a ritual, had to capture & kill a bull, put its blood on pillars and burn the body. Carl Blegen at troy showed that "Anta House" opposite a tower VII pillar was a ritual building for burned offerings. Atlantis had an elaborate network of waterways: a concentric series of walls and moats. Troy had the whole plain full of abandoned riverbeds and artificial channels. Blegen speaks of the prosperity of troy deriving from control of the sea passage through the Dardanelles to the Black Sea and of the land routes from western Asia Minor.

A 14th century BC wreck of a merchant ship off Ulu Burun in south turkey shows the variety of items traded, ranging from Canaanite amphorae, Mesopotamian cylinder seals, Mycenaean cups, hippo teeth and ostrich eggs, raw copper, finished bronze tools and weapons, all mobbing somewhere in a single ship. We now that Troy & the Troad was rich in metals while Greece was not. Henri Frankfurt concluded that Troy was a world market where raw materials and finished products were bought and sold.

The difficult passage through the Propontis to the Black Sea (a strong current and heavy head winds) created a great need for anchorages to wait out the breezes and Troy was a likely stopping place and may well have provided skilled pilots for the passage. Korfman characterizes Troy as a

pirate fortress that exercised control over the passage. At the battle of Qadesh (1287) the Drdny (Dardanians?) were allies of the Hittites against the Egyptians, who might therefore have seen the Trojans as aggressive enemies - and therefore a source of the Egyptian story?

Zangger took core samples in the Troad & found there had been many marshes and rivers. Zangger reconstructs Troy VI (at its most powerful) as comparable (on a reduced scale of about 7 miles) to the rectangular plain (300 x 200 miles) with a ditch all the way around, cited by Plato. The name of the river Scamander (originally the Xanthus) derives from "man's foam" (man-made foam?). The texts say the Atlanteans bored an underground canal 50 stades to the sea. Zangger finds a comparable canal at Troy. Atlantis had 2 inner docks near the city hollowed out and roofed over. Troy had a workman's village called "docks". Zangger reconstructs channels to the northeast as 2 arcs - which might look a bit like concentric rings.

What about Atlantis sinking into the sea? Since Greece had neither copper nor tin, it imported raw metal. Pylos and other Greek cities exported finished weapons to many places, including Troy. But after the destruction of Troy VI, VIIA was rebuilt smaller, with more defenses. It probably bought fewer arms from Greece. So, after the Trojan war, with Troy gone, with no Trojan markets or pilot service, passage through the Dardanelles and Bosphorus would be more dangerous, part of the wider instability in the Mediterranean linked to the Sea Peoples, coming after the death of Ramses II of Egypt and the last major Hittite king. Troy's vanishing? The interruption of Greek trade would have brought disasters at home. And after the Trojan war many Greek leaders returned only after a long absence or never; thus, the Achaeans would have been vulnerable.

Zangger finds evidence of flood (and earthquake) at Tiryns (via drill cores in the plain below Tiryns), 14' of alluvial mud, which would have wiped out the lower town and caused them to build a dam to redirect the water to avoid future recurrences. Might this be one source of the notion of Atlantis, or of an earthquake destroying Mycenaean civilization?

From the Egyptian perspective, the scenario might have been a powerful threatening Atlantis (Troy), opposed by the Greeks, and earthquake, flood, confusion, end of trade & closing of the Black Sea. This, Zangger believes, evolved into the Atlantis legend. This does suppose 2 different Greek accounts of the destruction of Troy, but Zangger addresses this, saying that Plato did not originally recognize the identity of Troy and Atlantis - which then led to his leaving the *Critias* unfinished.