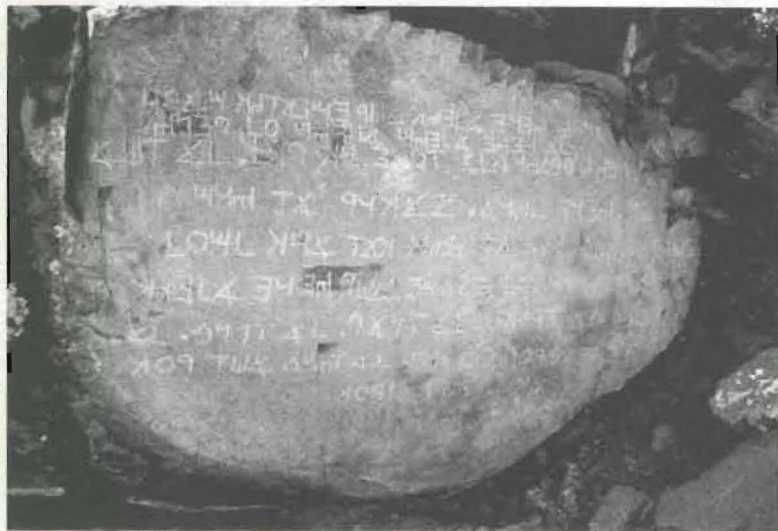




Los Lunas
Decalogue Stone
Eighth-Century Hebrew
Monument in New Mexico

Donald N.
Panther-Yates



The Decalogue Stone.

Lo

An Eig

D

Los Lunas Decalogue Stone

An Eighth-Century Hebrew Monument in New
Mexico

DONALD N. PANTHER-YATES



Panther's Lodge

Phoenix



Copyright © 2013 Donald N. Panther-Yates

1st edition July 2013

All Rights Reserved.

ISBN: 0615850995

MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

1. Jews and Ind
2. Introducing t
3. The First Inc
4. Scholars and
5. Chaco Cany
6. Apes and E
7. Los Quelite
8. Petroglyphs

References & Sugges

CONTENTS

1. Jews and Indians 1
2. Introducing the Phoenicians 12
3. The First Indians 26
4. Scholars and Savages 37
5. Chaco Canyon 49
6. Apes and Elephants 61
7. Los Quelites 69
8. Petroglyphs on Hidden Mountain 76

References & Suggestions for Further Reading 92

Yates

05

STATES OF AMERICA

LIST OF FIGURES

Frontispiece Los Lunas Decalogue Stone

1	Decalogue Stone and guardian tree	6
2	Pre-Columbian marble statues	14
3	Carthaginian coin	16
4	Bat Creek Stone	17
5	Constantine Rafinesque	29
6	Bessie Cooper Yates	44
7	Tomb of Quetzalcoatl	48
8	Kokopelli shadow	59
9	The Raven at Chaco	60
10	Mimbres ape	62
11	Chaco elephant	65
12	Penitente Morada at Abiquiu	67
13	Smashed Jewish altar	72
14	Calalus Cross	81
15	Merkabah and Sefirot petroglyph	87
16	Ten Commandments petroglyph	88

To Father S.
Without Whose Help and Devotion
This Story Might Never Have Been Told

*Then the Lord replied to Job out of the tempest and said:
Who is this who darkens counsel,
Speaking without knowledge?
Where were you when I laid the earth's foundations?
Have you surveyed the expanses of the earth?
-- Job 38:1-2, 18*

1 J
THE Decalogue Stone
sight seen by few peo
state secret. You need
the public land office
They cannot, and will
have found this Ph
Commandments had
Jewish parish priest)
monuments worldwi
remain as closely gua
it to say that the Dec
the dry, juniper-stude
edge of the Isleta Pu

It was Pro
University who first
He identified it as a s
as given in Exodus
letters on it was in
would place it in th
Temple in Jerusale

1 *Jews and Indians*

THE Decalogue Stone outside Los Lunas, New Mexico, is a sight seen by few people. Its very location is something of a state secret. You need a twenty-five-dollar access permit from the public land office to go to it, only officials are very clear. They cannot, and will not, give you directions. I would never have found this Phoenician Hebrew version of the Ten Commandments had it not been for a local *chueta* (crypto-Jewish parish priest). In an age when Muslim and Jewish monuments worldwide are being desecrated, his name will remain as closely guarded as the stone's whereabouts. Suffice it to say that the Decalogue Stone rests in a hidden cleft amid the dry, juniper-studded hills south of Albuquerque, near the edge of the Isleta Pueblo Indian Reservation.

It was Professor Robert Pfeiffer of Harvard University who first translated the Decalogue Stone, in 1949. He identified it as a short version of the Ten Commandments as given in Exodus 20 and noted that the style of Hebrew letters on it was in use from about 1000 B.C.E. This dating would place it in the age of Solomon, builder of the First Temple in Jerusalem. It became the main focus of the

Devotion

ve Been Told

out of the tempest and said:
is this who darkens counsel,
speaking without knowledge?
laid the earth's foundations?
ed the expanses of the earth?
-- Job 38:1-2, 18

Epigraphic Society's meeting in 1984, after a full account appeared by Professor Joseph Navey of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and his team.¹ Barry Fell reported later on the punctuation in the inscription.² Theories have continued to spring up about how an archaic Hebrew text of the Ten Commandments could have been incised in expert, ancient capitals in the face of a multi-ton boulder of volcanic basalt, one of the hardest minerals on earth. They range from a mad professor's joke, to a marooned Phoenician, to a troop of boy scouts, to you-name-it. Few seemed to want to believe it can exist, but there it was before my very eyes (Fig. 1).

It says, "*I am Jehovah thy God who hath taken thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of slaves. There must be no other gods before my face. Thou must not make any idol. Thou must not take the name of Jehovah in vain. Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. Honor thy father and thy mother so that thy days may be long in the land that Jehovah thy God has given to thee. Thou must not murder. Thou must not commit adultery. Thou must not steal. Thou must not give a false witness against thy neighbor. Thou must not desire the wife of thy neighbor nor anything that is his.*"

The inscription is marked with an unusual tree growing from beneath the boulder. This has serrated pea-green curled opposite pinnate leaves, twisted smooth gray

¹ ESOP vol. 10, part 1 (1982).

² ESOP vol. 13 (1985), pp. 35-41.

roots and stem, and opinion to a hone about it except it w autumn. After doir Acacia (R. *Pseud-A* was first introduced ante quem non seem it was Spanish cry Perhaps I should acacias contain cy are the source of g

Ever since in 1590, the Land Land" for Jews. A immigrating from records to be of S century, New M Unfortunately, th Southwest has b There is no single Jews, only scatter about Jews in N radio programs who stumbled on appointed New M on them and la

after a full account
y of the Hebrew
Barry Fell reported
ion.² Theories have
haic Hebrew text of
en incised in expert,
boulder of volcanic
th. They range from
oenician, to a troop
d to want to believe
y eyes (Fig. 1).

th taken thee out of the
must be no other gods
Thou must not take the
day and keep it holy.
ys may be long in the
Thou must not murder.
steal. Thou must not
st not desire the wife of

an unusual tree
has serrated pea-
isted smooth gray

roots and stem, and a weeping ungainly shape, closest in my opinion to a honey locust. My source could tell me little about it except it was unique, with beautiful golden foliage in autumn. After doing some research, I believe it a rare False Acacia (*R. Pseud-Acacia tortuosa*). Since the prized garden plant was first introduced into North America in 1640, this *terminus ante quem non* seemed to lend credence to the explanation that it was Spanish crypto-Jews who carved the stone it shades. Perhaps I should have said "guards." Several species of acacias contain cyanide and can cause sudden death. Others are the source of gum Arabic and medicinal balms.

Ever since the Spanish set foot on New Mexican soil in 1590, the Land of Enchantment has been a "Promised Land" for Jews. An estimated forty percent of the colonists immigrating from Spain to the New World were noted in records to be of Sephardic Jewish ancestry. In the nineteenth century, New Mexico became a haven for German Jews. Unfortunately, this whole chapter in the history of the Southwest has been handled in a step-motherly fashion. There is no single comprehensive source book on its crypto-Jews, only scattered treatments. Most of the information about Jews in New Mexico has been disseminated through radio programs and newspaper accounts. Stanley Hordes, who stumbled onto the secret of crypto-Jews when he was appointed New Mexico State Historian, wrote a dissertation on them and later published a timid monograph on the

subject.³ A bolder and better book is Richard G. Santos, *Silent Heritage. The Sephardim and the Colonization of the Spanish North American Frontier 1492-1600* (New Sepharad Press). Furthermore, a good overview of the state's Jewish experience can be found in Henry Tobias's *A History of the Jews in New Mexico* (University of New Mexico Press). Yet few of the publications pursue the thread of crypto-Judaism back beyond the mid-seventeenth century. For the whole story we are dependent on rare witnesses willing to talk, like our *chuet*. On his father's side he is descended from *genizaro* Manuel De La Mora from Belen, while his mother's matrilineal line goes back to a Pueblo Indian woman. Moreover, as proven by DNA he is a Sephardic Cohen, traditionally claimed to descend from Aaron, the brother of Moses. So, like Tony Hillerman's heroine in *Skinwalkers*, the priest's ancestry is Jewish and Native American.⁴

³ Stanley Hordes, *The Crypto-Jewish Community of New Spain, 1620-1649: A Collective Biography*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Tulane University, New Orleans, 1980. In December 2001, the *Atlantic Monthly* magazine published a hostile attack, "Mistaken Identity? The Case of New Mexico's Hidden Jews," by Debbie Nathan and Barbara Ferry.

⁴Santa Fe DNA Project, available online at <http://www.familytreedna.com/public/NuevoMexico/>. The Cohen Modal Haplotype was studied by Michael F. Hammer, Karl Skorecki, and their colleagues in a January 2, 1997 paper in *Nature*, volume 385, entitled "Y Chromosomes of Jewish Priests." This launched an

It seems Jewish writer Else Lasker-Schül and Franz Kafka died p "Red Indian." The m playlet, *Tsvishn Indianer*, "Among the Indians, on claim to fame wa comedians Eddie Can milked the same gag accessorized series of Movable Indian," desc actor Ed Ames (Mingo American entertainer (v

entire industry of comme Skorecki, David Goldstei Old Testament Priests," Lemba tribe of South Af *American Journal of Human* Cohanim (singular Cohen Aaron was anointed as th DNA analyses, it appear are closer to the original cousins.

⁵ See Lilian Friedberg, "The Holocaust," *American In*

It seems Jewish Indians are an old joke. The Austrian writer Else Lasker-Schüler styled herself an American Indian, and Franz Kafka died proclaiming he wished he had been a "Red Indian." The metaphor reaches back to a Yiddish playlet, *Tsvishn Indianer*, an 1895 entertainment translated as "Among the Indians, or the Country Peddler." Fanny Brice's claim to fame was the song "I'm an Indian," and comedians Eddie Cantor, Woody Allen and Mel Brooks milked the same gag.⁵ Today, Marx Toys makes an accessorized series of "Cherokee Chief Black Hair The Movable Indian," described as looking "very much like the actor Ed Ames (Mingo of Daniel Boone show)," the Jewish-American entertainer (who is of Russian Askenazi parentage).

entire industry of commercial DNA fingerprinting. See also Karl Skorecki, David Goldstein, et al. in *Nature*, volume 394, "Origins of Old Testament Priests," as well as the fascinating proof that the Lemba tribe of South Africa carried the same Jewish DNA in *American Journal of Human Genetics*, volume 66. The priestly sect Cohanim (singular Cohen) were all members of the Tribe of Levi. Aaron was anointed as the first High Priest (Cohen Gadol). From DNA analyses, it appears that New Mexico's Sephardic Cohanim are closer to the original Palestinian type than their Ashkenazic cousins.

⁵ See Lilian Friedberg, "Dare to Compare: Americanizing the Holocaust," *American Indian Quarterly* 24/3 (2000) 353-380.



Fig. 1. Decalogue Stone and its guardian acacia tree.

My own family tradition handed down that one of my ancestors was both an Indian chief and member of a *minyan* in Daniel Boone's Kentucky. Were there any securely documented Jewish Indian chiefs? I immediately googled,

"Who is the most
Norman Greenbaum,
hit wonder "Spirit in
tumble sabbatical thr
Indian mascots, the t
lost tribes of Israel, F
Watauga Settlements
Confederacy.

The American
candidate that answ
Bibo, Jewish Indian
brothers preceded H
Mexico in 1866.
Spiegelberg family o
up a trading post to
Solomon joined ther
1869. He soon beca
he married Juana Va
who converted to
Hebrew school in S
of the Acomas, Am
buried with his In
Colma, California."

In Novemb
Historical Society d
Jewish pioneers of

"Who is the most famous Jewish Indian?" The answer: Norman Greenbaum, Sixties musician and creator of the one-hit wonder "Spirit in the Sky." That sent me on a rough-and-tumble sabbatical through the obscurities of crypto-Judaism, Indian mascots, the theory of the Indians' descent from the lost tribes of Israel, Freemasonry, the Spanish Inquisition, the Watauga Settlements in Tennessee, and the history of the Confederacy.

The American Jewish Historical Society had one candidate that answered the description. Don Solomon Bibo, Jewish Indian Chief, was born in Prussia in 1853. His brothers preceded him west, and they all settled in New Mexico in 1866. The Bibo brothers worked for the Spiegelberg family of pioneer merchants. Eventually they set up a trading post to exchange goods with the Navajos, and Solomon joined them from Germany at the age of sixteen, in 1869. He soon became governor of Acoma pueblo. In 1885, he married Juana Valle, the granddaughter of his predecessor, who converted to Judaism. Their children were sent to Hebrew school in San Francisco. "Solomon Bibo, governor of the Acomas, America's only known Jewish Indian chief, is buried with his Indian princess in the Jewish cemetery in Colma, California."

In November of 1999, the New Mexico Jewish Historical Society dedicated its 12th annual conference to "the Jewish pioneers of the Territory of New Mexico and the



Indian acacia tree.

own that one of my
member of a *minyan*
ere any securely
mediately googled,

Pueblo Indians with whom they became so close.” The keynote speaker was Mel Marks, author of the 1995 book *Jews among the Indians*. A picture of Jake Gold, “among the first Jews to settle in Santa Fe, with unidentified Pueblo Indian woman and baby” decorated the program, and conference goers could view the first public display of Solomon Bibo’s revolver.

I felt better about my heritage when I read about Indian Jews in an article on Crypto-Judaism on the Internet. Many Portuguese and Spanish Jews, despite the laws against Jews emigrating to the New World, fled to Latin America, hoping to escape the long arm of the Inquisition. Unfortunately, the Inquisition followed close behind. There were auto-da-fe’s and arrests in Mexico City and Antioquia in Colombia well into the eighteenth century. The grisly machinery of the Holy Office was not shut down until the 1820s.

Some of the “secret Jews” joined themselves to another persecuted group: the indigenous people who were the majority population at that time in Latin America, the “Indians.” They intermarried with them, forming what is now called “*Mestizo Jews*.” The most well-known group of “*Mestizo Jews*” is in Venta Prieta in eastern Mexico. They look like American Indians, but have “reconverted” openly to Judaism.

Unfo
much
Mexi
Leer
Mexi
adv
once
sons
the c
but i
...
child
Jewi

The
the Indians.

⁶ Rick Aharon
article from
17, 2001, at
removed). W
when he gav
Society for C
2003. Rabbi
He used to t
going to op
to Judaism a
conversion
named Beth

became so close." The
 or of the 1995 book *Jews*
 Gold, "among the first
 identified Pueblo Indian
 rogram, and conference
 play of Solomon Bibo's
 age when I read about
 Judaism on the Internet.
 despite the laws against
 fled to Latin America,
 n of the Inquisition.
 ved close behind. There
 co City and Antioquia in
 th century. The grisly
 not shut down until the

joined themselves to
 indigenous people who
 n at that time in Latin
 intermarried with them,
Mestizo Jews." The most
Jews" is in Venta Prieta
 like American Indians,
 openly to Judaism.

Unfortunately they have for the most part received much rejection by the ethnically "pure" Jews of Mexico City. A notable exception was Rabbi Samuel Leer [Lerer], a Conservative Rabbi who arrived in Mexico City in 1968, and became their spiritual advisor. He performs marriage ceremonies for them once they formally convert to Judaism, and helps their sons through the Bar Mitzvah process. He performs the conversions [he said], "not because they need to but in order not to antagonize the other rabbis here . . ." Every couple married since 1968 as well as the children born to these couples are now incontestably Jewish.⁶

The big question was how long Jews had been among the Indians. From my own understanding, after talking with

⁶ Rick Aharon Chaimberlin, "Crypto-Judaism in America," online article from *Petah Tikvah (Door of Hope)* 16/2, available online Nov. 17, 2001, at <http://www.nashuanh.com/bmy/Crypto.htm> (since removed). We confirmed this story with Rabbi Lerer personally when he gave the keynote address at the annual conference of the Society for Crypto-Judaic Studies in San Antonio, Texas, Aug. 3, 2003. Rabbi Lerer was ordained by Chief Rabbi Ha-Cohen Cook. He used to tell converts, "You are Jews, crypto-Jews, but now I'm going to open you up!" Even though many of these were returning to Judaism after a lapse of 500 years, Rabbi Lerer considered their conversion "symbolic." The congregation in Puebla, Mexico, was named Beth Smuel after him.

American Indian elders over the years, was: ever since there have been Jews.

American Indian cultural anthropology has gone through an exciting period in the past fifteen years. Beginning with Greenberg's 1987 work on language and extending through Cavalli-Sforza's *History and Geography of Human Genes*, many of our notions about this "one percent of the population that accounts for 50 percent of the country's diversity"⁷ have been challenged and reformulated. In an article on human lymphocyte antigens, Guthrie sums up and significantly adds to the growing consensus about the peopling of the Americas. A tentative chronological outline lists no fewer than 28 discrete migration events from 40,000 B.C.E. onwards, all substantiated by medical research, gene typing, and anthropological literature.⁸

One unpleasant thorn in the flesh of dogmatic geneticists in the last decade has been Haplogroup X. This European mitochondrial gene type occurring in American Indian populations has a fascinating story. It was reported

⁷ H. L. Hodgkinson, J.H. Outtz & A.M. Obarakpor (1990) *The Demographics of American Indians: One percent of the people: Fifty percent of the Diversity*. Report prepared for the Institute for Educational Leadership, Inc. and Center for Demographic Policy. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

⁸ James L. Guthrie, "Human Lymphocyte Antigens: Apparent Afro-Asiatic, Southern Asian, and European HLAS in Indigenous American Populations," *Pre-Columbiana* 2/2-3 (2001) 90-163.

only seven
Native Ame
founding m
the suggest
Europe and
that travel
Stanford p
mysterious
be circumpo
Asia or pro
meantime,
year-old ske
resembling
This intensi
how and
Kennewick

⁹ Michael D.
Ancient Lin
American Jo
¹⁰ See David
and the Bat

only seven years ago.⁹ Its addition to the four orthodox Native American lineages inspired the hunt for more "minor" founding mothers. What was most controversial about it was the suggestion that it might be an ancient link between Europe and North America, representing a founding lineage that traveled across the Atlantic Ocean (as, for instance, Stanford proposed in 1997). Perhaps it explained the mysterious Red Earth People of ca. 5,000 B.C.E, presumed to be circumpolar. Simultaneously, the race was on to find X in Asia or prove it was the result of recent admixture. In the meantime, Kennewick Man was unearthed, an 8,000-plus-year-old skeleton declared to be Caucasoid, and recognized as resembling modern Europeans more than Native Americans. This intensified the debate on who are Native Americans, and how and when people first came to the Americas. The Kennewick skeleton has been in and out of court ever since.¹⁰

⁹ Michael D. Brown et al (1998) "mtDNA Haplogroup X: An Ancient Link between Europe/Western Asia and North America?" *American Journal of Human Genetics* 63/6:1852-1861.

¹⁰ See David Hurst Thomas, *Skull Wars: Kennewick Man, Archaeology, and the Battle for Native American Identity* (Basic, 2001).

2 *Introducing the Phoenicians*

"The facts pouring in from every side bring us to the...general conclusion that ancient American civilization was stimulated by transoceanic contacts from the east and west; among them contacts with the Mediterranean were especially creative. This is, for example, also borne out by the discovery of Alexander von Wuthenau-Hohenthurm that before 300 A.D. no American Indian types are depicted in the tens of thousands of sculptured ceramic figurines from Mesoamerica, but only Far Eastern, African Negro, and various Mediterranean types—especially Semites."¹¹ The author of this surprising verdict was Cyrus H. Gordon, and his words came in the aftermath of an archeological bombshell called the Metcalf Stone. Gordon was professor of

¹¹ Alexander Von Wuthenau was an art historian and Professor of Art at the University of the Americas in Mexico City. Although he argued that the ancient and early Americas were filled with an international mélange of peoples from Africa, Asia and Europe (*Unexpected Faces in Ancient America*, 1975), he specifically identified a group of carved heads as "Moorish-looking." Found in Mexico, such heads are dated between 300 - 900 C.E. and another group between 900 -1500 C.E. One such artifact of the former period von Wuthenau describes as "an old man with hat."

Semitic studies at Hebrew, Phoenician Stone was a small Georgia man hun backyard barbec acknowledge that same ancient man Crete in the second "After studying the affinities of the two best known Linear B. The do reminiscent of M remind us of the '1' in the Aegean '100.' "

In 1994, results of nearly native state of *Plain Sight*; a second this writing (200 coast of the C discovered," began Stone, she men because they are

the Phoenicians

every side bring us to
 ancient American civilization
 contacts from the east and
 the Mediterranean were
 ample, also borne out by the
 Luthenau-Hohenthurm that
 in types are depicted in the
 ceramic figurines from
 tern, African Negro, and
 specially Semites."¹¹ The
 as Cyrus H. Gordon, and
 ath of an archeological
 Gordon was professor of

historian and Professor of
 in Mexico City. Although he
 cas were filled with an
 Africa, Asia and Europe
 5), he specifically identified a
 king." Found in Mexico,
 C.E. and another group
 act of the former period
 n with hat."

Semitic studies at Brandeis University and an expert on Hebrew, Phoenician, Aramaic, and Ugaritic. The Metcalf Stone was a small flat piece of sandstone turned up by a Georgia man hunting for suitable materials to construct a backyard barbecue pit in 1966. Most scholars today acknowledge that the writing on it is Minoan, executed by the same ancient mariners who built the palace at Knossos on Crete in the second millennium B.C.E. As Gordon wrote, "After studying the inscription, it was apparent to me that the affinities of the script were with the Aegean syllabary, whose two best known forms are Minoan Linear A, and Mycenaean Linear B. The double-axe in the lower left corner is of course reminiscent of Minoan civilization. The single vertical lines remind us of the vertical lines standing each for the numeral '1' in the Aegean syllabary; while the little circles stand for '100.'"

In 1994, epigrapher Gloria Farley published the results of nearly fifty years of fieldwork in and around her native state of Oklahoma. The massive book was titled *In Plain Sight*; a second volume was anticipated at the time of this writing (2005). "Evidence of Old World visitors to the coast of the Gulf of Mexico does seem to have been discovered," began Farley, quietly. In addition to the Metcalf Stone, she mentioned four other artifacts. We list them because they are all relevant to our story.



Fig. 2. These pre-Columbian painted marble statues, found along the Etowah River in Cartersville, Georgia, hardly correspond to one's mental image of ancient Native Americans. The bony, elongated oval faces, large noses, and thick lips point rather to a Semitic type. The female figure (right) is detailed with a cloth head covering, belt, and skirt. Both originally wore copper gorgets (removed by grave looters). *Etowah Indian Mounds State Historic Site.*

Much like the discoverer of the Metcalf Stone, Minna Arenowich was working in her flowerbed on Cedar Street in Columbus, Georgia, when she dug up a bronze Roman coin. It bore the image of Antoninus Pius (emperor 135-161 C.E.). In 1963, Mrs. Joe Hearn of LaGrange was also digging in her

yard when she unearthed symbols. These were script from ancient Sumer about 2040 B.C.E. "A Enlila, who knew that eighth year of the reign goats to the sun-god Sumer" (p. 11). A coin 1957 was "probably Iberia." The boy too traded it for fifteen c with a bronze coin c soil of South Carol year of the destruction Fig. 3). The fourth on the banks of the with an image initial identified as a Celt Tifinag script (p. Institute for the Columbus State U

Archeologi

did not come to li of a known site. W Roman coin in



d marble statues,
 tersville, Georgia,
 nage of ancient
 ted oval faces, large
 a Semitic type. The
 a cloth head
 ally wore copper
Etowah Indian

Metcalf Stone, Minna
 ed on Cedar Street in
 bronze Roman coin.
 mperor 135-161 C.E.).
 as also digging in her

yard when she unearthed a small lead tablet with strange symbols. These were eventually identified as cuneiform, a script from ancient Sumer (modern Iraq) and dated from about 2040 B.C.E. "According to the translation, the scribe Enlila, who knew that it was the twenty-seventh or twenty-eighth year of the reign of Shulgi, listed a gift of sheep and goats to the sun-god Utu and the goddess Lamma-Lugal of Sumer" (p. 11). A coin found in Phenix City by a small boy in 1957 was "probably minted in the Carthaginian colony in Iberia." The boy took it to a local grocery store where he traded it for fifteen cents worth of candy. It can be compared with a bronze coin owned by the author recovered from the soil of South Carolina and dated to around 146 B.C.E., the year of the destruction of Carthage by the Romans (cf. p. 277, Fig. 3). The fourth object was a four-foot-tall stone standing on the banks of the Chattahoochee in Carroll County incised with an image initially dubbed "the Indian princess," but later identified as a Celtic goddess surrounded by North African Tifinag script (p. 10). It is now in the collection of the Institute for the Study of American Cultures (ISAC) at Columbus State University.

Archeologists often dismiss such finds because they did not come to light in the progress of an official excavation of a known site. Who is to say that someone did not plant the Roman coin in Minna Arenowich's garden? The same



Fig. 3. Carthaginian coin shows goddess Tanith on the obverse surrounded by dolphins (much crimped) and a horse and palm tree on the obverse, Punic emblems of state.

objection, however, cannot be raised with the Bat Creek Stone. It was exhumed in a tomb containing the skeletons of an East Tennessee chief and eight retainers by the Smithsonian's own William Emmert in 1889. Bat Creek is a tributary of the Little Tennessee River in the heart of Cherokee country about thirty miles southwest of Knoxville. Cyrus Thomas, head of the Smithsonian's mound survey, thought the epigraphy an example of historical-era Cherokee writing and published it in 1894--upside down.¹² The stone was then tossed in a back room of the Smithsonian and largely forgotten until Cyrus Gordon. He identified the letters inscribed on it as Paleo-Hebrew in square capitals diagnostic

¹² "Mound Explorations," in *Twelfth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1890-91* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1894), pp. 391-4.

of the second century
ל קר RQ L'YHWD,
now on indefinite loan
History to the Mo
Tennessee (catalog n

Fig. 4. The Bat Creek Inscription.
McClung Museum, Knoxville.

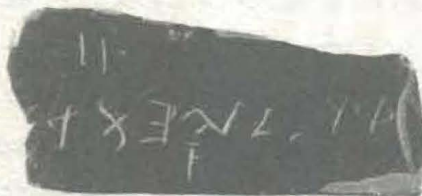
A firestorm
effort not lacking in
academia were care
Stone was a fake. A
had the last word.

Or have th
venerable journal
not been answered
under preparation,
to have successful
Rejecting compari
treatise of 1870
reminded archeolo

¹³ See Gordon 1971, p

of the second century C.E., reading (from right to left): ל קר RQ L'YHWD, "a comet/*roq*/phoenix for Judea."¹³ It is now on indefinite loan from the National Museum of Natural History to the McClung Museum of the University of Tennessee (catalog number 134902; Fig. 4).

Fig. 4. The Bat Creek Inscription.
McClung Museum, Knoxville.



A firestorm broke out to prove Gordon wrong. In an effort not lacking in elements of anti-Semitism, the forces of academia were carefully marshaled to show that the Bat Creek Stone was a fake. After several decades, skeptics seem to have had the last word.

Or have they? The definitive exposé appearing in the venerable journal *American Antiquity* in October of 2004 has not been answered (Mainfort and Kwas). In one reply, still under preparation, a professor at Ohio State University seems to have successfully disposed of its arguments (McCulloch). Rejecting comparison of the stone's Hebrew to a Masonic treatise of 1870 – on which, more anon – McCulloch reminded archeologists that a radiocarbon test performed on

¹³ See Gordon 1971, pp. 136-7, Appendix.

wooden ear spool fragments found with the skull of the individual buried with the stone yielded a secure date "significantly pre-Norse, not to mention pre-Columbian . . . consistent with Gordon's first or second century A.D. paleographic dating of the text." He observed that the Bat Creek inscription contained peculiar letter forms and punctuation unknown to casual students of Hebrew in nineteenth century America, but evident in many other examples of ancient Square Paleo-Hebrew. "The fact that Cyrus Thomas, the Smithsonian's chief debunker of allegedly Old World inscriptions, did not see this glaring similarity, demonstrates, if nothing else, that he was incompetent for this task." Thus, the Bat Creek Stone appears to have been reinstated as a Jewish icon. Its authenticity has been confirmed.

The stone's reference to Jewish hero Bar Kokhba also appears to be vindicated, a connection first made by Gordon. *In situ*, it lay directly beneath the skull of the dignitary whose tomb the Smithsonian was excavating. "Comet for the Jews" was the slogan of a large-scale revolt against Rome 132-135 C.E., This last nationalistic insurgency of Israel before the Zionist movement of the twentieth century was led by Simon Bar Kokhba, whose name meant "Son of the Star."

Coins struck during Bar Kokhba's regime have been extracted in Kentucky - Louisville 1932, Clay City

1952, Ho
Missouri
Mississippi
lower right
"Year Tw
on the rev

Thus, the connect
finds dating from
179). And in 18
archaic version
beneath a pile
elucidated this a
marker).

How did
According to a c
of the Jews, after
the sea to a land
settled in was E
West (Thompso
"devastating def
in 135, the Jews
for faraway pla
were living or w
considered Bar K
Bar Kokhba pa

ound with the skull of the
ne yielded a secure date
mention pre-Columbian . . .
or second century A.D.
He observed that the Bat
eculiar letter forms and
students of Hebrew in
t evident in many other
o-Hebrew. "The fact that
chief debunker of allegedly
see this glaring similarity,
t he was incompetent for
one appears to have been
ts authenticity has been

ish hero Bar Kokhba also
ion first made by Gordon.
ull of the dignitary whose
ing. "Comet for the Jews"
olt against Rome 132-135
ncy of Israel before the
century was led by Simon
on of the Star."

khba's regime have been
ouisville 1932, Clay City

1952, Hopkinsville 1967—and in southeastern
Missouri from the St. Francis, a tributary of the
Mississippi, 1922. . . They read in Hebrew *Simeon*
lower right around to lower left on the obverse and
"Year Two [133 A.D.] of the Deliverance of Israel"
on the reverse (Covey 1993 p. 76).

Thus, the connection with Bar Kokhba is supported by coin
finds dating from the period of his rebellion (Thompson p.
179). And in 1860, a tablet inscribed in Hebrew with an
archaic version of the Ten Commandments was found
beneath a pile of stones near Newark, Ohio. Gordon
elucidated this as a mezuzah (Jewish boundary or home
marker).

How did Bar Kokhba and his men get to Tennessee?
According to a continuator of Josephus, the ancient historian
of the Jews, after their suppression "the Hebrews fled across
the sea to a land unknown to them before." The country they
settled in was Epeiros Occidentalis, the extreme limit of the
West (Thompson p. 179). We also read that after the
"devastating defeat of the Second Revolt under Bar Kokhba
in 135, the Jews virtually abandoned Judea . . . Others left
for faraway places in the Diaspora where they knew Jews
were living or welcome" (Biale p. 162, 165). Some rabbis had
considered Bar Kokhba to be the Messiah (p. 164). Could the
Bar Kokhba party have known they would be well received

by the Cherokees, and is that why they went into exile where they did? Was there perhaps, as Melungeons later claimed, an Iberian Punic colony in North America?

Melungeons are a people who have been dwelling in the Appalachian Mountains of the southeastern United States for at least 400 years. The word could mean "cursed by God" in Arabic. Their origins have been the subject of intense speculation for at least three centuries, with theories ranging from shipwrecked Portuguese to ancient Carthaginians.¹⁴ Typically, they are described as having dark skin, black or dark-brown straight hair, brown or blue eyes and European features. A popular culture book written by a self-identifying Melungeon (Kennedy 1997) renewed interest in investigation of the group's origins and stimulated an abundance of scholarly research. A detailed biogenetics study undertaken by Professor Elizabeth Hirschman of Rutgers University supported what Kennedy had earlier proposed: The Melungeons were, in part, a Sephardic Jewish and Moorish community that began as early as 1540 with the Soto

¹⁴ Melungeons are sometimes also referred to as Black Dutch. The term Melungeon is also used in Brazilian history to refer to settlements by Portuguese Jews and Moorish adventurers among Amerindians of the Wild Coast: the great bulk of Brazil's African slaves came from Angola and were Malungin-speaking (a Southwest African language).

Expedition in what
The composition
intervening centuri
Moors who found
Countries, German
fleeing the Iberian

Let us turn
to weigh additional
Bandelier National
Los Alamos, birth
outnumber cowbo
moved from Geor
this famous Native
thousand years ol
elk herds and litt
descend into a d
pockmarked tuff.
catacomb overha
interconnecting r
at its entrance
inhabitants had v
Hinged Ogam (F

The gene
Greek or Roma
government buil
of Ephesus. I q

they went into exile where
lungeons later claimed, an
rica?

who have been dwelling in
southeastern United States
could mean "cursed by
have been the subject of
centuries, with theories
Portuguese to ancient
described as having dark
hair, brown or blue eyes
culture book written by a
1997) renewed interest
origins and stimulated an
detailed biogenetics study
Hirschman of Rutgers
ly had earlier proposed:
a Sephardic Jewish and
arly as 1540 with the Soto

ed to as Black Dutch. The
history to refer to
rish adventurers among
t bulk of Brazil's African
ngin-speaking (a

Expedition in what became the southeastern United States. The composition of this community grew over the intervening centuries with incoming Sephardic Jews and Moors who found refuge in such way stations as the Low Countries, Germany, France, Italy, Greece, and England after fleeing the Iberian Peninsula due to religious persecution.

Let us turn now from the Southeast to the Southwest to weigh additional evidence for Semites among the Indians. Bandelier National Monument lies twelve miles southeast of Los Alamos, birthplace of the atomic bomb, where Ph.D.s outnumber cowboys and Indians. When my wife and I moved from Georgia to New Mexico, we made a beeline to this famous Native American site. It is believed to be about a thousand years old. The road takes you through forests with elk herds and little sign of human habitation. Suddenly, you descend into a dry canyon with interesting huge cliffs of pockmarked tuff. We soon stood at the entrance to a shallow catacomb overhanging the exposed kiva and maze of interconnecting rooms of the stone and adobe village. There at its entrance was unmistakable proof that the ancient inhabitants had writing. Before us was a textbook case of Hinged Ogam (Fig. 7).

The general impression given by Bandelier is of a Greek or Roman or Tunisian site minus the temples and government buildings. The array of storerooms reminded me of Ephesus. I questioned one of the Park Service rangers

about the stonework. How did the people who lived here hew and dress all those blocks of sandstone, slate, and even granite? With obsidian knives, he explained. He pointed our party up the path to what he called Quetzalcoatl's Cave. According to anthropologists, Quetzalcoatl ("Feathered Serpent") was a mythic figure, a god associated with the wind and air, a prominent part of much Mesoamerican belief. We had no idea what a cave consecrated to him was doing in New Mexico, though one of us remembered that the English novelist D.H. Lawrence went on a bit about the Feathered Serpent when he lived in Taos.

However old it was, tens of thousands of dressed stones were required to build Bandelier, and hundreds, if not thousands, of metal tools. Obsidian shatters on stone. Nor can you use stone to chop stone: an archeological experiment attempting to do this produced an 80% degradation of tools within a few hours (Thompson 1994 p. 148). The first stone-cutting tools were discovered in the ancient Mediterranean world, and they were made out of copper. Lebanon was one of the first locations it was quarried, followed by the island of Cyprus, whose name means "place of copper." As veins were chiseled bare, its discoverers, the Phoenicians, moved on to Sicily, Sardinia, the Balearic Islands, and the Iberian peninsula. Zinc, a necessary alloy to create the strength of forged bronze, came from

mines in Cornwall
coveted and essential

As mines of
Egypt dispatched
across the seas to
of the world's rich
to one theory (Th
colonies were located
St. Lawrence, the
to which we can
into the Gulf of Mexico
also accessible from

One of
located in
America.
which required
Ontario
copper?
located
northwest
explores
tribes also
York Territory
artifacts
Old World

people who lived here hew
dstone, slate, and even
explained. He pointed our
led Quetzalcoat's Cave.
Quetzalcoat ("Feathered
associated with the wind
Mesoamerican belief. We
ed to him was doing in
embered that the English
bit about the Feathered

f thousands of dressed
ier, and hundreds, if not
shatters on stone. Nor
ne: an archeological
is produced an 80%
urs (Thompson 1994 p.
were discovered in the
they were made out of
first locations it was
f Cyprus, whose name
were chiseled bare, its
n to Sicily, Sardinia, the
nsula. Zinc, a necessary
ed bronze, came from

mines in Cornwall, along with tin. Bronze was the most
coveted and essential material of its day.

As mines continued to be depleted, the pharaohs of
Egypt dispatched Minoan, and then Phoenician, explorers
across the seas to search for new sources. "They found one
of the world's richest deposits in North America," according
to one theory (Thompson 1994 p. 137). "Phoenicia's secret
colonies were located along several major rivers, including the
St. Lawrence, the Susquehanna, and the Amazon" (p. 146 –
to which we can evidently add the Chattahoochee, emptying
into the Gulf of Mexico, and the Rio Grande of New Mexico,
also accessible from the same sea routes).

One of the world's richest copper deposits was
located in the Lake Superior region of North
America. Unlike the copper ores of the Middle East
which required smelting, the deposits in Michigan and
Ontario consisted of pure nuggets called 'native
copper.' Some of the most accessible deposits were
located on a large island called 'Isle Royale' in
northwestern Lake Superior.... Minoan and Egyptian
explores noticed [this] native copper when visiting
tribes along the East Coast in 3000 B.C. . . . The New
York Testing Laboratory has confirmed that [copper]
artifacts found in American mounds were made using
Old World casting technology. . . The shapes of the

copper tools found in American archeological sites are identical to those of the ancient Mediterranean, including chisels, dagger blades, wedges, hoes, scythes, axes and spear points After 1000 B.C. . . . since iron deposits were more plentiful than copper and did not require alloying to produce hardened metal, the demand for copper rapidly declined" (Thompson, pp. 146-149).

The age of iron had arrived. It, too, apparently reached into North America. Unlike copper, iron oxidizes and vanishes in the soil, but we have ample testimony to the fact that it was forged on this side of the Atlantic. Throughout the Ohio Valley, corresponding approximately to the distribution of Hopewell mound sites, are scattered thousands of ruined furnaces, foundries, and slag heaps. These were examined in 1951 by Arlington Mallery in a book titled *Rediscovery of Lost America*.¹⁵

Phoenicians were at the center of much of this activity. A Semitic people, they were originally Canaanite, like the Hebrews. They are probably the same as the Sea Peoples employed by the Egyptians to build such monuments as the Temple of Ramses III at Medinet-Habu. They became

¹⁵ See also "America's Mysterious Furnaces," website at <http://www.iwaynet.net/~wdc/>.

important mercenary
overtook the Nile
Lydians, they colo
Carthage as their c
Phoenicians mixed
retained their Punic
on the worship of
male supreme be
sacrifice. "For mo
guarding an Atlant
remained an enigm
(Covey 2004 p. 11

It seemed
why the Los Lu
Hebrew.

frican archeological sites
ancient Mediterranean,
blades, wedges, hoes,
... After 1000 B.C. . .
are plentiful than copper
g to produce hardened
pper rapidly declined"

ed. It, too, apparently
copper, iron oxidizes
ample testimony to the
side of the Atlantic.
ending approximately to
d sites, are scattered
dries, and slag heaps.
gton Mallery in a book

ter of much of this
originally Canaanite, like
me as the Sea Peoples
ch monuments as the
Habu. They became

" website at

important mercenaries on different sides in the turmoil that
overtook the Nile empire. Allying themselves with the
Lydians, they colonized Libya, and in 814 B.C.E founded
Carthage as their capital. Throughout their long history, the
Phoenicians mixed with many other nationalities, though they
retained their Punic language and religion. The latter focused
on the worship of Tanith, a sea goddess, and Bel (Baal), a
male supreme being who demanded human and animal
sacrifice. "For most of its history a closed society jealously
guarding an Atlantic trade and colonial monopoly, Carthage
remained an enigma to Greeks and to less curious Romans"
(Covey 2004 p. 117). But it need not be a mystery to us.

It seemed we were getting closer to understanding
why the Los Lunas Decalogue Stone was in Phoenician
Hebrew.