



Baity pioneered study of man and the stars

CORVALLIS (AP) — About 5,000 years ago, on the walls of caves throughout Europe and central Asia, priests drew bulls with fire in their horns and circular designs like geometric flowers.

The designs represent comets and the fire bulls reflect meteor showers that occurred about 3,000 B.C., when the constellation Taurus — the bull — was in the early morning sky, archaeologist Elizabeth Chesley Baity says.

Baity studies why these caves in vast geographical areas share similar drawings. She made her first visit to Oregon State University recently to discuss the field in which she's a pioneer — archaeoastronomy, the study of the effects of astronomical events on human cultures.

"What all else did those people have to see? They didn't have movies, or TV — and there was the sky with all those things going on over their heads," she said.

Baity and some colleagues believe that so much was going in the sky during those years that it caused ice ages, killed dinosaurs, destroyed cities and pro-

mpted construction of "megalithic" works such as Stonehenge and the pyramids.

Baity began her working life as a foreign correspondent for a North Carolina newspaper. While in Africa and Asia, she saw so much she didn't understand that she got another degree — one in anthropology.

In Spain to research a master's thesis on people who walk on coals, she heard of another ritual in which bulls run at midnight with torches tied to their horns.

When she discovered cave drawings of the ritual that dated back to the Bronze Age (3,500 to 1,000 B.C.), she was hooked. She found fire bull drawings in widely separated caves, along with other designs she suspected were based on astronomical phenomena.

She couldn't prove her theory, she said, until she was introduced in 1980 to research on a comet which crossed the Earth's orbit about 20,000 B.C.

"This giant comet was probably the principle agent of catastrophic events on

Earth since that time," Baity said.

Apparently, the comet began to disintegrate about 3,150 B.C., giving rise to the Taurid Meteor streams. The streams went into orbit around the sun and are still visible from Earth at Halloween and in late June. Also about this time, she said, cultures as geographically distant as those of the Mayans and

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— Elizabeth Chesley Baity

Egyptians began to use the symbols she interprets as meteors and bulls.

Stonehenge and other massive structures were built in orientation to the stars, Baity said, partly so that times of meteor showers could be predicted. Religious rituals were scheduled to coin-

cide with the showers.

"Early man knew more about astronomy than about many other things. Why? Because he was fearful of the drama going on up there," Baity said.

About 3,000 B.C., she said, Taurus was the last constellation to rise before the sun rose and must often have been the backdrop for meteor showers — hence the flaming bull. Also significant to the fire-bull theory is the fact that Taurus was included in the first zodiac charts in Western Asia about that time.

Baity believes the fire bull ritual was an imitation of the meteor showers. At midnight, bulls were allowed to run with flames streaming from their horns like comets' tails. The cave drawings illustrate this religious ritual.

Baity spends the winter in California and the rest of the year in North Carolina. She has stopped teaching and is working full time on a book about the fire bulls and other symbols.

Judge allows clergyman to continue prison visits

SALEM (AP) — Oregon State Penitentiary officials have been ordered by a federal magistrate to allow a Pentacostal minister who had been barred from the prison to resume visiting inmates.

Albert Dillon of the United Pentacostal Church in Salem was ousted from his volunteer role at the prison because corrections officials said he was trying to convert people to the Pentacostal religion.

In a complaint filed in 1983, inmates Joseph Griffith and Robert Reimers claimed they had been denied their right to religious freedom when Dillon was barred.

In a recent order signed by U.S. Magistrate Michael Hogan of Eugene, the plaintiffs were ordered to allow Dillon "to again conduct Bible study classes . . . to conduct non-demoninational protestant services" and "to baptize converts."

The corrections officials also were fined \$2,400 and ordered to make changes in institution rules governing the exercise of religious beliefs.

Prison superintendent J.C. Keeney said lawyers advised corrections officials that they could not monitor a minister's volunteer activities in the prison, and that "as long as he's not a security threat we were advised to let him back in as he was before."

Computer manufacturers, customers at odds over price

By Larry Blasko
Of The Associated Press

Every ordinary home computer bug who thought he needed his \$1,000 bill more than IBM or Apple is entitled to take a bow — the Mighty Caseys of the industry have struck out.

When IBM announced it would stop producing the PCjr, Big Blue joined the ranks of those who had spent a lot of money to find out most home consumers won't part with \$1,000 to buy what amounts to an entertainment machine.

Before the IBM announcement, Apple had announced it was closing its factories for a week, Coleco said it was abandoning its Adam, and Texas Industries pulled out of the home market.

After the IBM announcement, many analysts expressed "surprise" that IBM was abandoning the home market. However, it's possible that the opposite occurred — the home market abandoned IBM, mostly on the issue of price.

It should be said there's nothing wrong with the IBM PCjr as a computer, especially after IBM discovered that almost no one likes to type on "chiclet" keys. Nor, for that matter, is there anything wrong with the Apple II series as a computer. Both machines work just fine. Both have lots and lots of software available.

But maybe both just cost too much money.

For those who have to go to their computer table and break the news that Junior is now an orphan, bear in mind that the PCjr is mostly compatible with the original PC — indeed, it was said that IBM had the notion that managers would bring "homework" from their office PCs and run it on Junior.

For those who haven't purchased a computer and are looking for some serious discounting, the machine would be an excellent buy if the with-monitor price gets to around \$700.

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