

FORUM FIVE



5. Student Course Guides (No comment necessary)
6. Travel Grants (Especially to Vice Presidents)
We would not object to a \$3 fee increase if someone would stand up and tell us EXACTLY where the other \$31 went.
Wayne Arnold (Ed 2)
Fred Gojmerac (Med 2)
Paul Smith (Arts 2)
Joan A.E. Matus (Sc. 3)

Speaking, not in defense, but merely to set the record straight: 1) Council did not vote themselves an increase in salary. Council does not get paid at all. The executive are the only members to receive a salary. The motion before Council to increase executive salaries, was defeated January 28. (By the way, the motion to increase salaries was presented by a student's representative, not a member of the executive.) 2) Darryl Ness does not receive \$22,000. Your sources are wrong. 3) If you know of a way to get rid of HUB, and the debts incurred by the students who wanted HUB (in 1969), let Council know. PLEASE. 4) The flame burns natural gas, not propane. 5) Vice presidents, like everyone else, are innocent until proven guilty. In a corporation the size of ours, a travel budget is a necessary expense. 6) Gateway went to great pains to tell you EXACTLY where that \$31 went. See our Budget issue, December 4, 1973.

A.C.

Chariots of the Gods?

In response to John Czuroski's article relating to *Chariots of the Gods*, I would like to express my delight in his courageous stand for the "revolutionary new ideas" that Erich von Daniken purports.

Unfortunately, my admiration for Mr. Czuroski's views terminates at that point, for in his brilliant attempt to refute the scholars who participated in the forum panel, he missed the whole point of what Dr. Cahill said. Basically, the three other

members of the panel criticized the movie on the technical and literal level. They interpreted the "new ideas" literally and attempted to refute their feasibility in relation to archaeological discoveries, physical science, and genetics.

Dr. Cahill clearly stated that Daniken attempted to create a new myth. That is, not myth defined as a certain historically fallacious tale, but myth referring to a general, human expression about life and death. Myth is symbolic, often unexplainable, and puts a basic human experience into the form of a story. A good example is the "Adamic Myth" in the Bible. Some believers take the story literally, but if one observes it in terms of what it symbolizes one sees a more primary experience of our human predicament being described.

The same is true of Daniken's work; one can take it literally, but one goes on with silly, supposedly rational arguments, discussing something that is inexplicable. Questions related to certain basic human experiences such as life and death cannot be explained rationally.

Therefore, one finds a culture believing in and creating myths, in order to survive. Daniken attempted to create a new myth about man's origin and development, and was not really concerned with historical, archaeological, physical, or genetic truth. If one judges his success by the response in numbers of people at SUB on Thursday evening, it seems as if he has been quite successful.

Harvey Brust
Arts 3

After several years of experience with the *Chariots of the Gods* phenomenon, I have found that adamant believers like John Czuroski have to be answered lest others, simply fooled by the faking in the film, continue to take the fantasy for real. It may be noted that Mr. Czuroski's long exposition invokes data only from the works of Erich von Daniken: like others "absolutely convinced", Mr. Czuroski has accepted von Daniken's assertions at face value without undertaking a careful analysis of his basic premises, the

nature of his arguments, or the specific evidence he cites, by a thorough review of other sources of information.

Mr. Czuroski, then, gives no sources other than the assertions of von Daniken himself. Here are the sources I used, readily available for examination. The gladiators are portrayed in their cultural and artistic context in the book *Val Camonica* by Emmanuel Anati (1961); the naked men and women painted on the wall of the Sefar rockshelter in their artistic context in *The Search for the Tassili Frescos* by Henri Lhote (1959); the female figurines of the Late Jomon culture in their context by *The Birth of Japanese Art* by Edward Kidder, Jr. (1965) (Mr. Czuroski appears to find the Jomon stylistic rendition of the female form improbable: how would he ever explain a Picasso, I wonder); and the Maya sculpture from the tomb in Palenque in its cultural and artistic context in *Maya Sculpture from the Southern Lowlands, the Highlands, and Pacific Piedmont* by Merle Greene et. al. (1972).

Evidence for my assertion that there is a clear record of the gradual indigenous development of human civilizations in various parts of the world may be found in such sources as *The Aztec, Maya, and their Predecessors* by Muriel Porter Weaver (1972); *Peru Before the Incas* by Edward Lanning (1967); *The Prehistory of Africa* by J.D. Clark (1970); and *Aku-Aku* (1958) and *Reports of the Norwegian Archaeological Expedition to Easter Island and the East Pacific* (1962) by Thor Heyerdahl. These last two works, incidentally, detail actual, successful experiments in the cutting, moving and mounting of large stones by manual labor. Finally, for an analysis of the many old theories invoking a "supernatural" origin for human civilizations in the intervention of a mysterious and powerful super-race from afar, one may read the book *Lost Tribes and Sunken Continents: Myth and Method in American Archaeology* by Robert Wauchope (1962).

To paraphrase Mr. Czuroski, it is not just that von Daniken is so wrong; it is simply that he produces no viable evidence that he is right! In science, theories must be testable; the basic premises, the arguments, and the specific evidence cited for a theory must stand up to critical examination. The crux of the issue at hand, actually, is that *Chariots* is not science: it is fantasy; or as Dr. Cahill put it, myth: a myth apparently highly appealing to many people of our society. *Chariots of the Gods*, then, is to be analysed as a psychological phenomenon of our time. Von Daniken's personal background is very revealing in this regard, and I would urge those interested in the phenomenon of *Chariots* to read the article Dr. Cahill cited in the journal *Encounter* of August 1973.

Sincerely,
Ruth Gruhn
Anthropology

editorial

Referendum in retrospect

It is difficult to assess the outcome of last Friday's fee referendum. What were the reasons of those 1133 students who voted NO? - If NO - voters believed that their money might be better spent on a case of beer, they have taken a selfish and questionable stand.

There may, however, have also been some NO-voters who simply objected to the manner in which this referendum was conducted. These students deserve respect because they showed concern in SU affairs and proved that the SU-executive cannot fool everyone.

Let me explain. There is certainly a need to increase the fees in order to maintain SU services. Who would seriously object to an increase, considering the current inflation rate? I personally would even accept a five-dollar hike if services are maintained, improved and, maybe, extended.

But why did the SU executive rush the referendum in such an annoying way, thus eliminating any serious discussion of the issue? Executive members have reportedly been talking about the possibility of a referendum since November. Why did they allow students only four days to contemplate this "straightforward" question?

Except for five letters in the *Gateway*, one editorial and a badly-publicized forum, there was no possibility to discuss the proposed hike or consider alternatives.

The opposition-paper *Poundmaker* never had a chance to publish anything on the topic. I certainly do not regard *Poundmaker* as an outstanding example of journalism but it could have put forward some criticism and thus contributed to a discussion.

Mantor's excuse that he did not want to delay the referendum because the fee increase might have turned into an election issue is nonsense. Every increase is an election issue, even after a period of three weeks. If the executive postponed the referendum from an earlier date because it was looking at alternatives (as Mantor suggests), why did they not make it a public issue in November?

Maybe a public discussion might have brought forward some alternative. Throwing a referendum with four days notice displays a certain arrogance on behalf of the SU executive.

In my opinion George Mantor and his crew tried to manipulate the students of this campus. Their concept must have been "rush it, nobody will notice anyway."

Students noticed and voted NO.

Next year's executive will have to cope with the mistakes of this year's crew. Is there any way out? I would suggest to repeat the referendum (maybe on the election ballot so that no more money is wasted).

Students should be fully informed about implications, alternatives and consequences of a NO-vote. This will receive the approval of those who objected to the method in which last Friday's referendum was conducted. Better information might also convince some of the "beer-voters" that they might profit by voting YES and ensuring SU services.

Harold Kuckertz, Jr.

The Gateway

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