

Anomalous Aerial Phenomena, Abductions, and Mysterious Technologies in Ancient Greece

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Abstract

This paper investigates cases of anomalous aerial phenomena, abductions, and mysterious technologies depicted in ancient Greek mythology from a twenty-first century perspective, and in view of their commonality with occurrences observed worldwide and documented as Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena. The interdisciplinary approach aims to show that the descriptions of aerial phenomena and advanced technologies in ancient Greek myths are not solely the products of imagination but, perhaps, the rudimentary accounts of empirical observation of historical events expressed in a context of limited understanding of science and technology. The main themes of Classical Greek mythology are discussed, and their relation to the religious beliefs of the period. Key elements in the myth of The Abduction of Europe, and the myth of The Golden Fleece, point to the nation-building component of the ancient Greek mythical aerial phenomena.

Keywords

Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena, Ancient Greek Mythology

1. An Aerial Abduction That Forged History

Spring had come early in Phoenicia that year and the earth, grateful for the abundant rains of the previous months, had donned festive attire. From the ancient mountain tops covered with magnificent cedars down to the sparkling azure Mediterranean coast, the hillsides and fields were teeming with new life. It was on one particularly warm day, when the birds of prey had left their rocky nests to stretch their wings in the clear skies, and small field animals roamed out of hibernation in search of food, when the village shepherds, who brought the herds of goat and sheep out of the stables to feed on fresh grass, felt a salty breeze flowing in from the east.

The sun was approaching midday when out of a path covered by sprawling wild rose shrubs, heavy with color and perfume, emerged a small group of young women. They were childhood friends, laughing and giggling at the exchange of thoughts and secrets befitting their effervescent youth. One moment they stopped to collect roses and wild flowers (jasmine, lilac, and cyclamen) to make garlands and head wreaths; next, they burst into song and dance. Hand in hand, they resumed their path, through the cultivated rows of budding fruit trees, down to a meadow overlooking a secluded cove, where they were to spend the day. All this was unfolding under the patient eye of devoted maids who followed with the food: baskets of freshly-baked bread bursting with the flavor of rosemary and thyme, soft goat cheese, hard-boiled eggs, dried figs, and clay pots filled with aromatic honey; and to wash it all down, sweet Cyprus wine mixed with spring water in a beautifully decorated two-handed amphora.

The joyous group eventually reached their destination. While the servants busied themselves with preparing lunch, spreading heavy, hand-woven blankets over the moist soil for comfortable seating, the girls began a game of hide and seek among the rocky contours of the cove. Suddenly, one of the girls, the tall, slender leader of the pack, let out a cry; the others heard it and ran out of their hiding places in her search. They found her standing still at the water's edge. One by one, they gathered silently around her, equally marveling by a strange sight: a magnificent white bull with a silver circle on its brow and large shiny horns shaped like the crescent moon; its massive claws half buried in a puddle of sand and foamy water. The beast flexed its back and streaks of water ran down its powerful spine and haunches; the nostrils opened wide and breathed of wind and salt water. In a slow, almost deliberate motion, the large head looked up. A pair of round, dark eyes flickered and fixed the girls with a penetrating gaze, taking their breath away.

As if in a dream, the girls watched the bull move toward them. There was something hypnotizing in the slow movement of the muscular limbs, the tiny drops of salt water catching the sunlight as they streamed down the enormous back, the energy emitted from deep within the large eyes. The tall girl with the alabaster skin drew closer. She stretched out her arm to touch the horns but hesitated; she gasped and took a step back when the animal bent its front knees and lowered its head in resignation. From the top of the cliff, the shepherds abandoned their herds and joined the servants, who had stopped dead in their tracks and watched the scene. They applauded when the bull sat down to allow the tall girl to climb on its back.

Giggling with excitement, the girl removed the flower wreath that adorned her long black hair and placed it around the crescent horns. The bull raised its head and let out a deep roar, prompting the girl to wrap both her arms around the powerful neck in a tight embrace. The animal stood up abruptly, flexed its muscles, and, before everyone's stunned eyes, lifted its body up in the air and flew away with its precious cargo riding on its back: the daughter of King Agenor of Phoenicia, and granddaughter of Poseidon, god of the sea (See **Figure 1**).



Figure 1. Abduction of Europe, Greek Two-Euro Coin.

The myth goes on to say that they flew east over the Mediterranean Sea, passed the island of Cyprus, and landed some 1000 km (600 miles) away on the island of Crete. There, the white bull with the silvery horns deposited the girl gently on land and took human form. “I am Zeus, king of the Olympian gods,” he said. “I love you and want you to become my wife.” The couple had three sons: Minos, the legendary founder of Minoan civilization, Rhadamanthys, whose wisdom earned him a seat on the council of judges in the underworld, and Sarpedon, a king. Zeus entrusted the safety of his new family to Talon, a mechanical giant who patrolled the island from foreign invaders and from the wrath of his legal wife, the goddess Hera.

Back in Phoenicia¹, the girl’s father sent out her brother to find her. The Phoenicians were an expert seafaring and mercantile Mediterranean nation, and the young man took one of their fastest ships and sailed the sea for years. He never found his sister, but he established the city of Boeotian Thebes in southern Greece, and went on to become a legendary monster slayer alongside Perseus and Bellerophon. He also brought to Greece Phoenicia’s most prized commodity: the Phoenician alphabet.

The girl’s name was Europe (Ευρώπη: from the Greek ευρύς meaning wide-eyed, and ώπη, face, also, from the Phoenician erob, meaning “from the west”). The land named after her is known as Europe. By 500 BCE, the designation had expanded from Crete to include mainland Greece, and went on to comprise the entire continent. (The Romans called it Europa.) Her brother’s name was Cadmus. The introduction of the Phoenician or North Semitic alphabet to Greece is considered the ancestor of the Greek alphabet and precursor to the Western language alphabets. Europe’s extraordinary abduction story was a nation-building event that laid the foundations of Western civilization.

2. A Case of Perspective?

It is entirely possible that behind the perception of our senses, worlds are hidden

¹Present-day Lebanon, ancient Phoenicia was a seafaring Mediterranean nation that dominated commercial trade between about 1550 BCE and 300 BCE, when their civilization was overtaken by the Persians and the Greeks.

of which we are unaware.—Albert Einstein

Is the myth of Europe's abduction a figment of ancient Greek imagination, or the description of a real event shaped by historical perspective? An incident seen through the eyes of a generation, whose collective perception of reality was radically different from ours? Is it possible that the extraordinary flying animal that transported Europe over a distance of 600 nautical miles was, simply, a flying machine?

The case of Europe's abduction by a *flying silver bull* is not unique in Greek mythology. The *cloud goddess* Nephele, wife of King Athamas of Thessaly, sent a *flying golden-fleece ram* to rescue her twin children, Phrixos and Helle, from their murderous stepmother, Ino. The flying animal was transporting the children over the Aegean Sea to safety—with Phrixos riding in the front and Helle pillion—when Helle lost her balance and fell. She drowned in the narrow strip of water that separates the continents of Europe and Asia, henceforth named the Hellespont (present-day Dardanelles). The flying animal travels a distance of some 1840 km (1140 miles) until it safely reaches the shores of ancient Colchis, in the eastern Black Sea region (present-day western Georgia), where Phrixos, the heir to the throne of Thessaly, finds refuge and escapes death. Phrixos sacrifices the ram to Zeus (in his capacity as Zeus phrygios, φρύγιος; the protector of flight and fugitives). The myth says that Zeus placed the ram in the heavens as a constellation. Could Nephele's ram have been a flying craft of bronze or copper color equipped with handlebars, which to the Bronze Age observer would have appeared like horns? (See **Figure 2**)

Could either one or both of the two mythical flying animals have been a remotely-piloted or autonomous flying craft?



Figure 2. Greek Terracotta plaque, ca. 450 BCE, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1912.

3. Geopolitical, Nation-Building Events

In the particular case of the anomalous aerial phenomenon that resulted in the abduction of Europe:

- The female abductee is of royal and divine pedigree.
- Her native land, Phoenicia, is a dominant seafaring Mediterranean nation rival to Greece.
- The abductor is the supreme divinity of the historical era, and the geographical area.
- The union is a symbolic merge of young and old, of earthly and celestial, of East and West.
- The aerial phenomenon allegedly covered a distance of 1000 km (600 miles).
- Cadmus' naval expedition to find his sister mysteriously bypasses the island of Crete—virtually a straight-line sea route. Instead, the Phoenician prince goes on to slay a dragon, plant his teeth in the Greek soil to grow an army, and establish the legendary city of Boeotian Thebes in the Peloponnese peninsula. Thebes grew into a dominant city-state, and inspired the family sagas of King Oedipus, the enigmatic Sphinx, the cult of Dionysus, the Labors of Heracles (both the children of Zeus); and provided material for the finest expressions of classical literature by Sophocles, Aeschylus, and Euripides.
- Cadmus introduced the Phoenician alphabet to Greece, an event that linguists trace to the creation of the Greek alphabet and to the written language that would go on to record Europe's extraordinary story.
- From the three male children Europe bore to the king of the Olympian gods, Minos became the founder of the highly influential Minoan civilization. His brother, Sarpedon, became a king, and, Rhadamanthys, a judge of souls in the world of the dead.

Every element of the myth sets in motion a multi-faceted sequence of events that shapes the direction of history and brings forth successful, nation-building events in the material world.

Similar to the aerial abduction of Europe, the aerial escape of the royal twins, Phrixos and Helle, the children of a heavenly mother and an earthly father, takes a nation-building direction:

- Phrixos, the heir to the throne of Thessaly, escapes death and finds refuge in Colchis (present-day Georgia).
- The aerial phenomenon allegedly covered a distance of 1840 km (1140 miles).
- Phrixos offers the golden ram's fleece to local King Aetes, as a token of friendship and symbol of prosperity for his people.
- King Aetes displays the Golden Fleece in a garden guarded by a mythical dragon. The Golden Fleece became a symbol of power envied by many kings and heroes.
- Back in Thessaly, another city-kingdom enters political turmoil when the brother of King Aeson of Iolcos, usurps the throne and sends his young nephew into exile. The boy is raised on Mount Pelion by the wise Centaur Chi-

ron (a hybrid creature with the head, trunk and arms of a man, and the body and legs of a horse); also the teacher of the hero Achilles and of the god of medicine, Asclepius. When the boy reaches adulthood, he returns to reclaim his birthright, but his uncle challenges him to retrieve the Golden Fleece in exchange for the throne. The young prince launches a naval expedition and recruits the bravest Greek warriors to aid his quest. He succeeds with the help of the mighty sorceress Medea—a story known as Jason and the Argonauts.

The anomalous aerial phenomenon in the myth of the Golden Fleece is another example of a multi-faceted sequence of events that shapes the direction of history and brings forth successful, nation-building in the material world.

Another prominent asset in the Olympian gods' collection of flying animals was *Pegasos (Pegasus), the flying stallion*. Unlike Europe's bull and the Golden Fleece ram, however—both capable of flying without any means of visible propulsion—Pegasos was equipped with a pair of powerful white wings protruding from each side of his underbelly (See **Figure 3**). A pure white stallion, according to Hesiod, Pegasos was sired by Poseidon, god of the sea, and the blood of his mother, the monster Medusa. The myth goes on to say that the gods kept the flying stallion at Olympus, but Zeus allowed the hero Bellerophon, the son of his brother Poseidon, god of the sea, to ride him and kill the she-monster Chimera (a fire-breathing hybrid creature, with the body and head of a lion's, a goat's head rising from her back, the udders of a goat, and a serpent for a tail).

One can discard the stories of flying animals as entertaining fiction, the consequences of aerial phenomena random, and the geopolitical significance inconsequential, but a question arises: How can imagination alone account for a lesser mentioned yet astoundingly anomalous element in the myth of Europe: Talon?



Figure 3. Bellerophon, mounted on Pegasos, fighting the Chimera; detail of a Greek pebble mosaic from Olynthus, Greece, c. 400. Courtesy of the University of Mississippi; photograph, David Moore Robinson.

4. Talon: A Wedding Gift Two Millennia Ahead of Time

Blushing brides throughout history have been known to request, and receive, extravagant and distinctive wedding gifts, in some cases, even the life of their betrothed, but few have received a gift that surpasses the limitations of contemporary imagination, defies logic and exceeds historical and scientific boundaries by measure of two millennia.

For, equally perplexing to the flying bull is the element of *Talos or Talon* (Τάλως or Τάλων), the giant man of bronze that Zeus brought to the island of Crete to guard Europe and her children from invaders, and primarily from the wrath of his wife, Hera (In another version of the story, the automaton is a gift from Zeus to his son, Minos). Did ancient Greeks come up with this story, or did the story come to them? Did a robot once frequent the rocky shores of Bronze Age Crete?

According to the ancient Greek poet Hesiod, Talon was an automaton (from the Greek word αὐτόματον, meaning “acting of itself,” from autos, meaning “self”). It was forged by Zeus’ brother Hephaistos, the god of fire and metallurgy. Talon was made of bronze. It stood 30 meters (98 feet) tall, and it circled the entire island (a coastline of 1046 km or 650 miles) three times a day. Talon could be switched on and off through an opening in one of its ankles (See **Figure 4**). Interestingly, Talon or Talus is one of the three joint bones in the ankle, and the Greek word for “heel”.

Even if one attributes the origin, the specifications, and the function of Talon to imagination, the question persists: How did a Bronze Age society, whose knowledge of metallurgy was limited to forging shields and lances, possess knowledge of advanced mechanical engineering?



Figure 4. Winged “ΤΑΛΩΝ” armed with a stone. Obverse of silver Didrachma from Phaistos, Crete, c. 300/280-270 BCE (CABINET DES MÉDAILLES, PARIS).

Or, was Talon not the product of ancient imagination but an advanced robotic device, whose owner, a supreme being named Zeus, had access to millennia ahead of its time?

Whether the product of poetic imagination or something entirely different, the aerial phenomena and mysterious technologies described in the myth of Europa, and the myth of the Golden Fleece, take place in a material world known to the witnesses. Activities and technologies beyond the understanding of a Bronze Age society have withstood the passage of millennia and are described by ancient observers to have occurred within the boundaries of human reality. Are these stories imaginary or inspired by real events? Nothing in the ancient narrative suggests these are experiences of altered reality as a result of an ecstatic experience or of an alternate state of mind caused by hallucinogenic substances, or the effects of being in a dream state.

Accounts of inexplicable events were witnessed and recorded according to the observers' collective historical perspective; by a society that demonstrated keen curiosity about the natural world, and whose observations laid the foundations of modern science and epistemology; by the same people who first examined the atom, invented logic and ethics, and designed and constructed architectural marvels like the Acropolis of Athens, and the Antikythera Mechanism.

5. Unidentified Aerial Phenomena (UAP)

Anomalous. Unrecognizable and lacking identification;

UAP: Unidentified anomalous phenomenon (in space, air, sea).

UAP definition changed to anomalous to include Space/Air/ Undersea phenomena.

USP: Unidentified Sensory Perception Phenomena.

In 2017, the New York Times published a series of articles on the unidentified aerial and marine (including underwater) sightings observed by United States navy personnel serving on the USS Nimitz and USS Theodore Roosevelt between 2004 and 2015² (Copper, Blumenthal, & Kean, 2017). The articles rekindled the public imagination and decades-long demand for answers on what are commonly known as Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs), and generated enough momentum among (former) air force pilots and military intelligence experts to come forward and make unprecedented public (and classified) statements about their experiences; forcing key elected government officials in the United States Congress to conduct government hearings to address important issues of national security as to the type, provenance, capabilities and, most importantly, the intentions of the intelligence behind these worldwide sightings.

Largely known as “The Disclosure Project,” the process led to the release of formerly classified United States Navy information such as the famous “tic-tac” video, and to a series of testimonies—in public, and in sensitive compartmented facilities (SCIF). On April 12, 2021, the Pentagon confirmed the authenticity of

²Glowing Auras and “Black Money”: The Pentagon’s Mysterious U.F.O. Program, by Helen Cooper, Ralph Blumenthal, and Leslie Kean, The New York Times (Dec. 16, 2017).

the photographs and videos. The sensitive nature of the information obtained through the testimonies of highly ranked (former) members of the United States military, the Department of Defense, and the intelligence community led to the creation of a governmental body for the study of these aerial and marine sightings. It also established new terminology to standardize and categorize the information, henceforth known as Unidentified Aerial Phenomena (UAPs). In 2022, the United States government created the All-domain Anomaly Resolution office (ARRO), a joint collaboration between the Department of Defense, NASA, and other government bodies. In 2023, an enhancement to the Whistleblower Protection Act enabled important whistleblowers to give groundbreaking testimonies³.

In the public arena, Disclosure marked a significant change of direction in the way the average citizen could access government-held secrets. What began as the official government investigation into the alleged UFO crash in Roswell, Indiana, in June 1947, led to the creation of a series of secretive bodies for the study of this and similar phenomena—from the elusive Majestic 12⁴ (Salla, 2013) to the highly popularized Hynek Files, named after Dr. J. Allen Hynek, who served as the scientific advisor to the United States Air Force for U.F.O investigation known as Project Sign, Project Grudge, and Project Blue Book⁵ (Hynek, 1948). Half a century after Roswell, information on the phenomena was considered the stuff of ridicule and incredulity, largely thanks to strict government measures, elaborate public misinformation campaigns, and social taboos. Privately funded scientific bodies like the SETI (Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence) Institute were formed to counter the lack of information on space exploration provided by the government funded and controlled NASA (The National Aeronautics and Space Administration). Non-profit, volunteer organizations like MUFON (The Mutual UFO Network) carried disciplined research and maintained records on multiple aspects of the phenomena, and sustaining public interest. Steadily, the demand for Disclosure made its way to the dinner table, and stories of “Little Green Men” became subject matter to countless television shows, main stream entertainment, online podcasts and blogs, and eventually to the halls of the United States Congress.

Most importantly, Disclosure generated serious scientific research on a multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary level to examine these phenomena. The fields of astrophysics and engineering formed unusual partnerships with specialized disciplines like neuroscience, parapsychology, and the noetic sciences to study the intelligence and “consciousness” behind UAPs and their “effects” on those who experience them. The groundbreaking work of Dr. Avi Loeb of Harvard

³UAP Cyprus Center. <https://www.uapcy.org/updates-testimonies-and-informative-videos>

⁴Majestic 12 or MJ-12 is known in UFO conspiracy circles as the code name for a purported secret committee of military leaders, government officials, and scientists formed in 1947 by an executive order by U.S. President Harry S. Truman to facilitate recovery and investigation of alien spacecraft. See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Majestic_12. See: Michael E. Salla, *Kennedy’s Last Stand: Eisenhower, UFOs, MJ-12 & JFK’s Assassination*, 2013.

⁵Allen Hynek, J.

<https://www.osi.af.mil/News/Features/Display/Article/2302429/project-blue-book-part-1-ufo-reports/>. See: <https://findingaids.library.northwestern.edu/repositories/6/resources/373>.

University's Galileo Project (Loeb, 2021), and Dr. Gary Nolan, of Stanford University's School of Medicine (Nolan, 2023), are two such examples⁶. In addition to national security and the science behind these phenomena, the disclosure of hitherto classified military information revealed staggering details on the "effects" of these phenomena on the human population from simple observation to communication, abductions and closer encounters.

Central to the investigation of any UAP phenomenon is the terminology coined by Dr. J.A. Hynek, in his landmark 1972 book, *The UFO Experience: A Scientific Study*. Dr. Hynek coined the term *Close Encounters* and introduced a sixfold system of classification based on proximity:

A. Sightings at a distance of more than 150 meters (500 feet) are classified as:

- 1) Nocturnal Lights: observation of lights in the night sky.
- 2) Daylight Discs: UFOs seen in the daytime, of discoidal or oval shape.
- 3) Radar-Visual: UFOs backed by radar confirmation.

B. Sightings within 150 meters (500 feet) are classified as:

1) ***Close Encounters of the First Kind***: Visual sightings less than 150 meters (500 feet) that show an appreciable angular extension and considerable detail.

2) ***Close Encounters of the Second Kind***: A UFO event with an alleged physical effect (interference in the functioning of a vehicle or electronic device; animal reaction; witness physiological effect such as paralysis or heat or other discomfort; physical trace impressions on the ground, scorched vegetation, or a chemical trace.

3) ***Close Encounters of the Third Kind***: An encounter with a UFO piloted by or transporting an animated entity (humanoid, human, or robot).

In the decades that followed, other researchers extended the Hynek scale to include:

The Bloecher subtypes to describe the presence of an animated entity: (a) Aboard a UFO; (b) Aboard and outside a UFO; (c) Near a UFO; (d) Independent of a reported UFO; (e) Without a UFO; (f) Experience of "intelligent communication" without the presence or report of a UFO.

4) ***Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind***: A human abduction by a UFO. Including cases "where the witness experiences a transformation of their sense of reality" (Vallée & Aubeck, 2010) (cases reported by Dr. Jacques Vallée⁷).

5) ***Close Encounters of the Sixth Kind***: Direct communication between human and alien entity.

6. Anomalous Aerial Phenomena Abductions in the Modern Era

Modern research on Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena (henceforth UAP)

⁶Avi Loeb, author of *Extraterrestrial: The First Sign of Intelligent Life Beyond Earth* (2021) New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, and, *Interstellar* (2023), New York: Mariner Books. Also see: <https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/galileo/home> Dr. Garry Nolan, <https://stanfordmag.org/contents/first-contact>.

⁷For a brief account on the body of work and invaluable contributions of Jacques Vallée to the field of ufology, see: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques_Vallée.

reports an astonishing number of occurrences between human and otherworldly entities, where the non-human shape-shifts to appear as an animal or a humanoid. Author and abductee Whitley Strieber calls these phenomena, “Illusions designed to break (the human’s) will” to attract, alleviate fear, and facilitate an abduction⁸ (Strieber, 2011). The investigation has necessitated the creation of a new terminology to describe the nature of the experience and the degree of involvement: an individual involved in a UPA phenomenon can be a “witness”, an “experiencer” or an “abductee”.

Reported animal manifestations in the modern era include domesticated animals like dogs, wild animals like wolves, coyotes and bears, and cases of small-size, hairy, bipedal beings who appear out of thin air and try to lure humans into following them. Unlike the benign nature of the anomalous encounters in classical myths, however, modern-day cases range from startling to fatal. Indigenous tribes of North America report cases of horrifying encounters, in remote or less populated areas, with large, hybrid animal-humanoid creatures with antlers known as Yee Naaldlooshii (Skinwalkers), Big Foot, Sasquatch, Tornik (Alaska Bushman), Adlet, Kushtaka, Tizheruk, Qalupalik, (aquatic), and others. For centuries, these accounts have been branded as folklore and belong to the domain of the supernatural and the paranormal, but in recent years, their frequency and impact on the local populations have forced the authorities to investigate them, in collaboration with the native communities. Various researchers associated with The Navajo Nation, the independent government body that manages the Navajo reservation and maintains the records of the Navajo tribe, reports a history of documented cases⁹ (Lyon, 2000).

According to documented cases, the animal-humanoid appears suddenly, as if gained access through an invisible doorway, and disappears similarly into darkness or thin air. The appearance is preceded (or announced) by unusual silence or stillness, noticeable by the sudden ceasing of all bird and animal sounds, and the overwhelming of the witness (henceforth, experiencer) by a sense of fear and premonition. In other cases, the immediate area is engulfed by intense light of white-orange frequency that paralyzes the experiencer, and, in certain cases, alleviates or replaces the experiencer’s fear with a sense of calmness. In rare cases, the experiencer reports a case of temporary sleep paralysis. Nearly all reported incidents take place near water sources: coastal areas, lakes, rivers, and in some cases, near underground water sources. A large percentage of incidents occur around rocky terrains and boulders.

The experiencer might retain none or full memory of the encounter, or might achieve recollection over supervised regression or hypnosis. The encounter might occur once or multiple times in an individual’s lifetime. In certain cases, the encounter or the abduction might be a recurring generational phenomenon

⁸Strieber, W (2011). *Solving the Communion Enigma*. Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin. Also, <https://www.unknowncountry.com/>

⁹Lyon, W. H. (2000). Americans and Other Aliens in the Navajo Historical Imagination in the Nineteenth Century. *American Indian Quarterly*, 24, 142-161.

within a family bloodline. There have been documented cases of group encounters, where one individual might be an “experiencer” while the others are mere witnesses or have no recollection of the incident.

7. Hybridization/Re-Seeding Process

According to a 1998 opinion poll¹⁰, one in every fifty Americans at the time claimed to have been the victim of alien abduction. In the abduction cases involving the race of non-humanoid entities known as the Greys, the female experiencers report a “Hybridization/Re-seeding process”. Of paramount importance to the investigation of modern-day abductions is the phenomenon of “Seeding, Breeding and Hybridization” as reported in documented cases of single or recurrent abductions of humans—mostly females—resulting in pregnancies and births of hybrid children.

In medically supervised cases under hypnosis or regression reported by Harvard University Medical School psychiatrist John E. Mack¹¹, the female experiencer or abductee recalls been taken to a medical facility inside alien craft, where she undergoes artificial insemination by an alien being. According to those reports, the impregnated female abductee remains aboard the alien craft for an undetermined period of time for monitoring and feeding of nutrient-based substances, after which the fetus is transferred from the mother’s womb into an incubation device. Purported “mothers” are frequently returned to the incubating craft to provide emotional nurture for the hybrid alien-humanoid children, the majority of which are reported to be weak and do not survive (Mack, 1994, 2009).

For the above stated reasons, the subject of human abductions by non-human and/or other-worldly entities is of predominant importance to the present-day investigation of UAPs. It precedes or predates the witnessing of non-human origin aerial and marine crafts and technologies, as documented by modern medical and psychological cases, and appears to be the core of the entire phenomenon. This study supports the position that any research on Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena, and the scientific and technological investigation around their origin and possible motives, must first and foremost focus on the pilots who navigate these crafts, their interests, motives, and the history of their relationship with this planet and its human population. And in the case of animal abductions and mutilations, their interest and relation to the animal species of this planet.

8. A Complex Narrative

Look for patterns; don’t get lost in the details. What is needed is not more specialized scholarship but more interdisciplinary vision.—Joseph Campbell

Scholars define myth as a narrative of unknown origin, collective stories asso-

¹⁰Strieber, W. (2023). The Good Trouble Show with Matt Ford (Apple podcast).

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-good-trouble-show-with-matt-ford/id1676750079>

¹¹Mack, J. E. (1994, 2009) *Abduction: Human Encounters with Aliens*, Simon and Schuster, *Passport to the Cosmos: Human Transformation and Alien Encounters*. Three Rivers Press (2000).

ciated with the elements of cosmology (creation myths, origins of the cosmos), metaphysics (the relation between Man and the cosmos, epistemology), sociology (the relation between Man and human society), anthropology (the study of Humankind), psychology (the science of human behavior), and, primarily, religion. The word μύθος (myth), says C. Kerényi, is equivocal, blunted and hazy because it cannot be separated from the word λέγειν, meaning “to put together”¹² (Jung & Kerényi, 1978). By the fifth century BCE, the mythological narrative was already the subject of critical debate.

The first known mythographer, the philosopher Euhemerus (late 4th-century BCE), considered myths to be accounts of real events, albeit subject to historical distortion and exaggeration, whereas the philosopher Plato (c. 428-348 BCE) was a severe critic of the myths’ influence on the uneducated mind. Plato, however, used the allegorical character of myth to convey his ideas on the nature of belief versus knowledge (The Allegory of the Cave; Plato, c.380 BCE)¹³.

Are myths the primitive symbolic versions of sacred texts or narratives of true events from the very distant past? The question cannot be readily dismissed. Do certain mythical narratives, perhaps, merit the same attention as the extraordinary events the world’s religions accept as spiritual truths?

Edith Hamilton, the pre-eminent author of Greek, Roman, and Norse mythology, draws the distinction between primitive mythology, characterized by the elements of darkness, ritualistic magic, and sacrifice, and the beauty and humanized world of classical Greek mythology. The Greeks, unlike the Egyptians, made their gods in their own image, says Hamilton. Man’s relation to nature was at the core of Greek myth, not religious belief¹⁴ (Hamilton, 1942).

Be it of symbolic or etiological nature, Greek mythology is primarily the art of telling stories; of gods and the supreme entities that rule over the affairs of mortal beings. Within the context of religious belief, where the prevailing theory is a relationship between myth and symbolic behavior, such as cult and ritual, and between myth and symbolic places of worship, such as temples and religious objects, in classical Greek mythology, nature appears to have been the temple, and the natural elements of fire, earth, air, and water, were its religious artifacts.

Classical Greek myths are creation myths: they explain the natural world and the elements in an orderly manner, account for the cycles of nature and, through them, the mystery of life and death. Unlike the Latin etymology of “fable,” the Greek word “μύθος” (mýthos) carries a wider range of meaning to include “a word or speech (as opposed to έργα ‘deeds’) to something said, a thought, a purpose, a rumor, a report, a saying, fiction (as opposed to λόγος ‘historical truth’), the plot of a play, a narrative, a story.”

The stories are complex and sophisticated. From Chaos (the void) emerged Uranus (Sky), Gaia (Earth), Eros (love), and other divine beings. Life unfolds on

¹²Jung, C. G., & Kerényi, C. (1978). *Essays on a Science of Mythology* (p. 2). Princeton University Press.

¹³Plato. Republic Book VII. 514a-520a.

¹⁴Hamilton, E. (1942). *Mythology*. Little, Brown and Company.

the physical world and in hidden and inaccessible realms like the Abyss (the underworld) and the Elysian Fields (where the mortal soul hopes to spend the afterlife). The narrative is exquisite; bred from the Greek mind's acute observation of the natural world, and delivered in masterful ways that capture the imagination, seduce the senses, and feed the mind's inexorable curiosity for adventure and knowledge. A Pantheon of twelve major divinities led by Zeus solidified control over the Titans and set up residence on Mount Olympus from where they rule the world; each god is the source and principle of the natural element he or she represents. Their interactions with mortals birthed demigods, monsters, and the heroes destined to tame or exterminate them.

The ancient writer Hesiod (*Theogony*, c.700 BCE) is considered to be the father of a collection of local traditions about the gods believed to have been the source of ancient Greek myths. Hesiod's narrative is believed to have borrowed from Homer (*The Iliad*, and *The Odyssey*, c.700 BCE); and that, from the oral tradition of older poets, Minoan (Crete) and Mycenaean (mainland Greece), dating as far back as 1700 BCE. Between 900-800 BCE, these stories are depicted in art of the geometric period, in clay pottery and other media. The ensemble of these myths, known as Greek mythology, served as the subject for countless works of epic poetry—tragedy, comedy, and other genres that have survived the passage of millennia as classical Greek literature.

According to Hesiod, the supreme beings who resided above the clouds of Mount Olympus kept, and regularly dispatched, flying creatures to the aid of one human protégé or to punish another, as seen in the stories of The Golden Fleece, and of Pegasus. Greek myths also make reference to a category of rare and indeterminate species of hybrid creatures: some are part-human and part-animal like the Minotaur; others are part-human and part-metal like the ferocious Stymphalian Birds that allegedly devoured humans with their beaks made of bronze, metallic sharp feathers and venomous dung. The Stymphalian Birds were eventually killed by Heracles with the help of special technology, a set of bow and arrows given to him by his protector goddess of justice and wisdom, Athena.

It is an inherent theme and characteristic of Greek myths that the alleged manifestations, close-encounters, abductions, interactions, and child-bearing unions between earthly and otherworldly beings were “other-worldly” events that occurred in the known material world. They were not depicted in relation to ritual or religious activity. Similarly, the automaton, the flying animals, the animals with embedded metallic parts, the hybrid monsters, and the technologies capable of mastering and manipulating the natural elements were collectively understood to be “other-worldly,” but believed to have taken place in real time, in specific geographical locations, in the known material world.

Equally important (at least by our modern standards of interpretation) is the assumption that, within the context of Greek myths, the purported encounters with otherworldly beings and their technologies were not perceived as ecstatic, mystical experiences; nor did they lead to profound religious or personal trans-

formations or awakened insights. By contrast, post-twentieth century cases report that experiencers undergo profound inner changes, experience an interest in spirituality, and develop ecological interests and concerns¹⁵ (Mack, 2000). Greek myths report no religious or mystical undertones in the seduction, abduction, and liaison between a human and the supreme deity. The manifestations of the alleged gods in humanoid form performing extraordinary acts—shape shifting, flying, weather manipulation, command of the natural elements, and other—are perceived within earthly space and time, and within the boundaries of daily human reality. Interestingly, there are no cases of anomalous phenomena, close-encounters, or abductions involving the ancient Greek priesthood. Abductions occur predominantly within royal households and are often repeated along generational blood lines.

9. Nation-Building Events

Jacques Vallée's seminal work, *Wonders in the Sky*, reports an astounding number of cases of anomalous aerial phenomena documented worldwide from antiquity to modern times. Most cases are associated with religious beliefs and, at best, weather-like patterns. Records of close-encounters are limited, most likely censored by the fear of religious and political persecution. Unlike the fear, suspicion, and stigma involved modern cases of reported close-encounters, abductions, and unions between a human and an otherworldly entity, the liaisons between ancient Greeks (female and male) and ancient Greek gods were perceived as privileged. Although rare, there are cases of liaisons between female goddesses and human men, mostly kings, as in the case of the cloud goddess Nephele, and the sea goddess Thetis, mother of the hero Achilles—both cases resulting in nation-building. The offspring of Zeus' paramours include minor gods like Dionysus, demigods and heroes like Heracles, and great beauties like Helen of Troy—the latter hatched from an egg with her sister, Clytemnestra, and her twin brothers Castor and Pollux from another, after Zeus seduced their mother Leda, Queen of Sparta, in the form of a swan. The two sisters became famous Queens and leading personalities of the Trojan War, and the two brothers were heroes and turned into the constellation Gemini. All events resulted in socially-oriented, nation-building events.

A unique case of a human-initiated experience with an otherworldly force was that of the pregnant Semele, daughter of the King of Thebes, who requested to see her lover, Zeus, in his divine form. The manifestation resulted in her death, engulfed in Zeus' flames, but the case is not treated as a spiritual experience—as it would, perhaps, in a traditional religious context. In what can be described as the first birth by Cesarean section, Zeus removed the fetus from the dead mother's womb, and incubated it in his thigh. The twice-born child was Dionysus, the god of wine and of the effervescent power of nature.

There are two totally different orders of mythology, says the twentieth-century

¹⁵Mack, J. E. (2009). *Abduction: Human Encounters with Aliens*.

mythologist Joseph Campbell: the nature-oriented mythology of the agrarian society that connects Man to his nature and to the natural world, and the socially-oriented mythology of the nomadic people that links Man to a particular society or group. European mythology is an intersection of the two systems¹⁶ (Campbell & Moyers, 1988). The geopolitical consequences of the aerial phenomena that form the central theme of the myth of The Abduction of Europe, and the myth of The Golden Fleece, suggest a transition from the nature-oriented character of the Greek myths to a nomadic, socially-oriented, seeding, and, perhaps, nation-building theme.

Within the context of Greek mythical narrative, the anomalous aerial phenomena involving human abductions by alleged flying animals result in socially-oriented, geopolitical, seeding, and nation-building experiences. They involve members of royal households and generational bloodlines, creating new ones (as in the myth of The Abduction of Europe), or protecting the established ones from war and internal strife (as in the myth of The Golden Fleece). Perhaps, the successful outcome (if one can term it as such) of the anomalous events described in Greek mythology is rooted in the fact that they were not clouded by the religious fervor, superstition, social and institutional censorship that characterize the reporting of similar phenomena in the modern era. The anomalous aerial phenomena and abductions of Greek myths are depicted without interpretation or emotional effect (neither elation nor fear) by people whose perception is wondrous yet unclouded from social and institutional biases.

Although perceived as a figment of the poetic imagination, the anomalous aerial phenomena in Greek mythology are, nevertheless, homogeneous in the description and quality of the story. Their “truth” resonates in the fact that they occurred in a historical period before monotheism, and before the establishment of systems of organized belief, state, and ideology that are more likely to oppress and suppress non-conformist points of view. Occurrences beyond the understanding of a Bronze Age society were described vividly and in detail, suggesting, perhaps, that the ancient Greeks accepted them to have occurred not through dream, ecstatic experience, or ritual but within the boundaries of daily life, and in agreement with the material reality of recognized geographical locations. Leading to events and conditions that solidified and strengthened the political foundations of the ancient Greek world and, to a larger extent, shaped the course of Classical European history.

10. UAPs: From Nature-Oriented to Nation-Building to Seeding and Acclimation?

Anomalous aerial, marine, and in cases, inner earth phenomena appear to be irrevocably connected with human history. Ancient and indigenous cultures on every inhabited continent (no public data is available for cases in Antarctica), and historical eras from the Mediterranean and Africa to the Nordic countries,

¹⁶Campbell, J., & Moyers, B. (1988). *The Power of Myth* (pp. 22-23). In B. S. Flowers (Ed.), *Double-day*.

to the Americas and the Pacific, showcase written and oral accounts of visitations or appearances by mysterious strangers—some are fearsome, others wise and benevolent, but always powerful and otherworldly. Some of these visitors take up residence and become known as “celestial beings,” “star gods,” “the Shining Ones” who impart knowledge of skills and tools to the locals. They arrive in magical flying crafts, display powerful weapons; some enter into unions with the locals. Most sacred texts, including the Bible, share similar stories. In the course of history, reports of such events were met with doubt, suspicion and stigma, until social and political changes, primarily in the United States, led to the politicization of the subject and creation of new standards of investigation under the umbrella of national security. The ancient Greek mythical phenomena investigated in this study suggest that encounters with otherworldly beings were not considered hostile but representative of an era, of a people, and, perhaps, of a geographical location in Mediterranean Sea. The phenomena led to unions between the indigenous population and otherworldly beings, created important political alliances, demographic changes, promoted literacy and exploration, and, as shown in the myth of the abduction of Europe, might have manipulated the course of history and laid the foundations of western civilization. It is possible that modern-day investigations of the phenomena might bear similar findings.

11. Conclusion

Investigated from a twenty-first century perspective, the incidents described in this study as anomalous aerial phenomena and mysterious technologies in ancient Greek mythology display an intriguing commonality to the events and occurrences observed systematically worldwide since the mid-twentieth century, and are currently known as Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena.

The ancient Greek mythical aerial phenomena described in the myth of The Abduction of Europe, and the myth of The Golden Fleece, point to a socially-oriented, geopolitical, seeding, and nation-building component that extends beyond the traditional themes of classical mythology. The juxtaposition and similarities with modern-day anomalous phenomena and abductions suggest that the descriptions of aerial phenomena and advanced technologies in ancient Greek myths are, perhaps, not the product of poetic imagination or religious symbolism, but the rudimentary accounts of empirical observation of historical events expressed in a context of limited understanding of science and technology. In contrast, the allegations of a human-alien hybridization program that characterizes the abductions associated with UAPs in the modern era appear eerily similar to the depictions of the breeding of ancient Greek demigods and, in some cases, monsters.

Unlike the entertaining aspect of the anomalous aerial phenomena and mysterious technologies depicted in ancient Greek myths, the modern era events investigated as Unidentified Aerial Phenomena appear to be complex, in-

ter-dimensional, and, according to some researchers and alleged “experiencers,” they are paranormal and para-psychological; opening up a new field of investigation as consciousness-related phenomena. Unlike the nation-building role inherent in the ancient Greek anomalous aerial phenomena and abductions, modern era investigations of UAPs focus on the retrieval and re-engineering of advanced technology of non-human origin. The origins, purpose, and relation to the human population of planet Earth of present-day investigations remain the subject of government secrecy, public scrutiny, and social, political and spiritual debate.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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