

Re: Meteoric and Cometary impacts in historical times – Observations in History

Source: <http://sci.tech–archive.net/Archive/sci.archaeology/2004–10/1641.html>

From: Joe Jefferson (jjstrshp_at_mindspring.com)

Date: 10/27/04

Date: Wed, 27 Oct 2004 00:04:41 GMT

Eric Stevens wrote:

>

> *On Mon, 25 Oct 2004 17:02:27 GMT, Joe Jefferson*

> *<jjstrshp@mindspring.com> wrote:*

>

> *>Eric Stevens wrote:*

> >>

> >> *On Fri, 22 Oct 2004 19:20:44 GMT, Joe Jefferson*

> >> *<jjstrshp@mindspring.com> wrote:*

> >>

> >> *>Eric Stevens wrote:*

> >> >>

> >> >> *My suspicion is that most people would have so little understanding of*

> >> >> *what had happened that they could not describe it in terms which are*

> >> >> *comprehensible today. In fact, because the ideas of such disasters are*

> >> >> *beyond the knowledge of most of us, I strongly suspect that some of*

> >> >> *their stories have come down to us even today in a form which we*

> >> >> *presently cannot readily recognise. The question is whether or not*

> >> >> *some of the physical evidence is unrecognisable to us for much the*

> >> >> *same reason.*

> >> >

> >> *>What do you base that suspicion on? Ancient peoples were able to*

> >> *>describe volcanoes as big fiery explosions coming from the ground. Why*

> >> *>do they think they couldn't just as easily describe a big fiery*

> >> *>explosion in the sky?*

> >>

> >> *I think they did, but they had nothing in their cosmology to explain*

> >> *such events. Instead they come down to us as, for example, 'Jupiter's*

> >> *bolts' (changed in later translations to Jupiter's lightning bolts).*

> >> *How do you think they would describe a repeated bombardment of up to*

> >> *Tunguska size events? What about:*

> >

> > *>A *repeated* bombardment of Tunguska size events? As in more than one*

> > *>being visible from a single place within a human lifetime? I don't*

> > *>believe there's any evidence something like that has happened since the*

- > > *very earliest days of the solar system.*
- >
- > See for example <http://home.freeuk.com/tomlyons/chapter2a.htm>
- >
- > "Krinov (1960) quotes a description of a fall at Velikii Ustig,
- > Russia, in 1296.
- >
- > *On the second week, at noon, there appeared over the town*
- > *– a dark cloud, and it was dark as night: after this there*
- > *appeared great clouds rising on all four sides and these*
- > *clouds lightning kept ceaselessly flashing. As it thundered*
- > *over the town it was impossible to talk. Even the ground*
- > *seemed to shake and sway continuously as if terrified by*
- > *this horror. And clouds of fire arose and collided with one*
- > *another: great heat arose from the lightning and thunder."*
- >
- > *This wasn't a single bolide as with Tunguska but clearly an ongoing*
- > *shower of probably smaller rocks and cometary rubble such as may be*
- > *being described by Hesiod.*

And therefore it doesn't contradict what I said.

- > *Apart from that, I have already cited:*
- >
- > *"In February or or March of 1490, three different sources describe*
- > *another remarkable event. According to Yau et al.:"Stones fell*
- > *like rain in the Chiing–yang district(Shansi Province). The larger*
- > *ones were 4 to 5 catties (about three pounds) and the smaller ones*
- > *were 2 to 3 catties (about two pounds). They struck dead more than*
- > *ten thousand people" etc*
- >
- > *Then there are two significant events and some possible trivia in*
- > <http://www.science–frontiers.com/sf103/sf103g08.htm>
- >
- > *The evidence is there alright. Its just that we tend not to be aware*
- > *of it.*

None of this in any way contradicts what I said; that multiple Tunguska–size impacts, all visible from a single location and occurring within a human lifetime, probably has not occurred since the earliest days of the solar system.

- > > <snip of Hesiod quote>
- > >
- > > *Very poetic, but how does this compare to the total body of Greek*
- > > *religious texts from that era?*
- >
- > *Possibly in much the same way that an eyewitness account of 9/11*
- > *compares to the total body of US religious texts.*

You know better than to say something like that. Hesiod never claims his *Theogony* is an eyewitness account of *anything*. It is a religious work from beginning to end, which Hesiod himself attributes to divine inspiration. If you want to argue that it was influenced by something Hesiod experienced, then go ahead and make that argument, but don't waste bandwidth with silly comparisons to eyewitness accounts of modern events.

> *But Hesiod wasn't the only one writing in such a tone. Lucretius much*
> *later wrote [<http://www.american-buddha.com/luc.cosm.soc.htm>]:*
>
> *"For fire was victorious and went round scorching many parts of the*
> *earth when the galloping steeds that draw the chariot of the sun*
> *swept Phaethon from the true course, right out of the zone of ether*
> *and far over all the lands. Then the Father Almighty, in a fierce*
> *gust of anger, struck down the aspiring Phaethon with a sudden*
> *stroke of his thunderbolt, [41] down out of the chariot to the*
> *earth. But the sun intercepted his fall and took up the everlasting*
> *torch of the firmament, and brought the trembling steeds back to*
> *the yoke from their stampede and, guiding them along their proper*
> *course, restored the universe to order. Such is the story as*
> *recited by the ancient bards of Greece, [42] a story utterly*
> *rejected by true doctrine. What may really lead to the triumph of*
> *fire is an increase in the accumulation of its particles out of*
> *infinite space. Then comes the crisis: either its forces for some*
> *reason suffer a setback, or the world shrivels in its parching*
> *blasts and comes to an end".*
>>
>> *I'm reminded of a time years ago when I saw a book that claimed two gold*
>> *artifacts from Colombia represented an airplane and a piece of earth*
>> *moving equipment. And I'll admit, they looked that way to me too.*
>> *However, shortly afterward I happened to find a big book filled with*
>> *pictures of hundreds of different gold artifacts from Colombia and*
>> *Panama. After spending about two hours looking at those pictures I went*
>> *back to the original book, and suddenly the artifacts looked to me very*
>> *much like a manta ray and a jaguar. The difference was that I had become*
>> *more accustomed to the artistic conventions of that time and place.*
>
> *I accept that point. However, I suspect that we now are faced with the*
> *need to accept that our present interpretations of these ancient*
> *documents is wrongly coloured by the conventions of this time and*
> *place.*

You may suspect that, but so far your posts indicate that you've been the one taking excerpts from ancient accounts out of context and trying to fit them into a thoroughly modern interpretive framework. I've seen nothing whatsoever that implies you've even tried to compare these ancient works to other works in the same genre from around the same time and place.

>>> **A more accurate translation may just be 'bolt'.*
>>

> >Based on what, exactly?

>

> Some translations leave out the 'thunder' bit and just stick with
> 'bolt'. I understand that 'bolt' is a more accurate translation of the
> older writings. I can't give you a reference off the cuff but I have
> several times noticed that while one translation will say 'thunder
> bolt' an other will merely say 'bolt'. Mind you, the ancient authors
> could have been justified to use the term 'thunder' to describe the
> sound of

IOW, you don't know what the original Greek term actually means, you're just making a guess based on the way some (unnamed) translators have handled a religious poem.

> >> *Have you ever heard 'the vast forests in the fire screamed....'?*

> >> *They do just that as all the trees flash into flame at the same*

> >> *instant. Its a terrifying sound if you are anywhere near when that*

> >> *occurs.*

> >>

> >> *What do you think the author was talking about?*

> >

> >*When in doubt, begin with the obvious. Hesiod was describing the origin
> of the gods.*

>

> *Yes, we all know that that is how the gods came into being. We can*

> *reproduce the phenomenon in the lab. :-)*

Your comment makes no sense whatsoever. Surely you can't be telling me you believe that Hesiod was unable to describe something he hadn't actually witnessed? Modern authors do that all the time.

> > *(And I think we are entitled to doubt that anybody has ever*

> >*seen all the trees around them in a forest literally "flash into flame*

> >*at the same instant" and survive to tell us about it.)*

>

> *I've spent quite a few years in the forest industry and do know*

> *something of forest fires. In the right conditions fires advance in*

> *leaps and bounds and large areas of tinder dry forest can burst into*

> *flame more or less simultaneously. I agree few unprotected people*

> *caught in this can survive but it is more common for the observer hear*

> *this as the fire moves towards or around them*

Just out of curiosity, what percentage of forest fires that you've experience have been associated with meteor impacts? What percentage have been started by lightning?

> >> >> *By the way, talking of disasters, would you care to have a crack at*

> >> >> *the etymology of 'disaster'? :-)*

> >> >

> >> >*It comes from Greek astrology by way of Latin; loosely meaning "opposed*

> >> >*by the stars". It can be compared with Shakespeare's "star-crossed lovers".*

> >>
> >> Try 'dis' = evil, and 'aster' = star.
> >
> >Where do you get dis = evil? The references I checked have it as 'apart'
> >or 'asunder', or simply as a prefix signifying reversal.
>
> I'm now not quite sure where I got the evil star from but the NSOED
> defines 'disaster' as "an unfavourable aspect of a star or planet". It
> also lists nearly three columns of words with the 'dis' prefix,
> virtually all of which use the prefix as negating the following word.
> However, the prefix 'dys' is later described as "Forming ns and adjs.
> w the sense 'bad, difficult, unfavourable, abnormal, impaired". It
> seems that the traditional medieval english disregard for spelling may
> have cause some of the meaning of 'dys' to leak over into 'dis' as
> applied to 'disaster'. In any case, a 'bad' star is not too different
> from an 'evil' star.

But quite different from "an unfavourable aspect of a star or planet"
which is the definition your *own* source gives.

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Joe of Castle Jefferson

<http://www.mindspring.com/~jistrshp>

Site Updated November 25th, 2001

"Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the
poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the
hand of the wicked." - Psalm 82:3-4