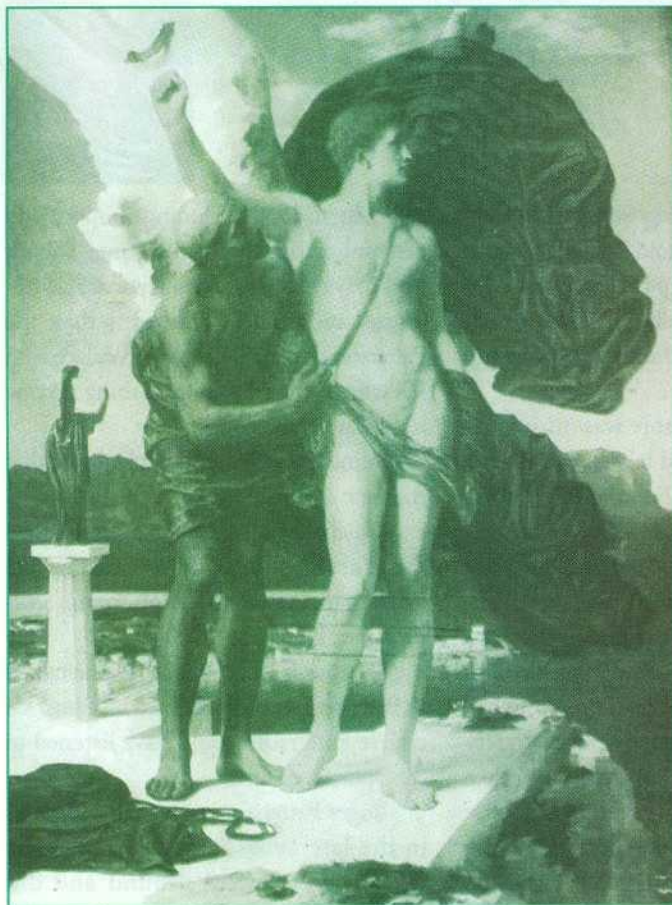


HUMANOIDES

The Flying Green Man

by Edward J. Altmann

Painting by Lord Leighton



He is mentioned in the holy Koran. There is a shrine to him on a small island in the Persian Gulf. He flies. He is green. And he lives forever. He was a contemporary of Moses and also of the Prophet Mohammed.

And he is one of the greatest mysteries in the Middle East and possibly, just possibly, the key to an entirely separate line of intelligent beings on our world.

He lives in Persia, hidden away, anonymous. Then, once a year, he performs his sacred duty of the *hadj*.

"Hadj" is one of the pillars of Islam. It is the obligation of every member of the faithful, who is able, to make a pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca once during his or her lifetime.

Khadir (or Akhdar), the Green Man, is a good Muslim. Once a year he goes to Mecca from Persia, present-day Iran. But rather than taking a boat, or a caravan, or other conventional means of transportation, he flies. Not on Pan Am, nor Air Singapore, or any other airline. *He flies*.

He flies from his secret home in the

mountains of Persia, over the Persian Gulf, over the sands of the Nafud and the Rub Al Khali, all the way to Mecca and the holy Ka'aba.

Faillaka Island

On the way, he stops to rest on a small island in the Bay of Kuwait—Faillaka Island.

The Shi'ite Muslims who used to live on Faillaka Island constructed a small shrine on the northeast corner of this low-lying island. Numerous sweet-water wells make Faillaka an attractive place. For, until the undersea wells of Jubail and the oasis on Tarut Island, there were no wells along the west shore of the Gulf.

There were none until very recently, when the deep layer of geological water was tapped into at over 500 feet.

But, for over 10,000 years (and perhaps even longer), Faillaka Island has been occupied and, unbelievably, every occupation has had a connection with this unusual, mythical flying creature.

Almost 2,500 years ago, Alexander the Great was on the march through this part

of the world, conquering the Persians and traveling up to the borders of India. Before he died in the marshes of present-day Iraq, the young general ordered his troops to occupy Faillaka Island. They did, and they established a small mint, houses, statues, and a tiny Ionic temple.

By order of Alexander the Great himself, the island was named "Ikaros."

Think back on your Greek mythology. Ikaros, or Icharus, was the young son of the architect/engineer/inventor Daedelos. On the Mediterranean island of Crete. King Minos' wife had given birth to a half man, half bull—the minotaur. Daedelos was hired by the King to construct a deep, forbidden lair for this frightening beast.

Daedelos created a labyrinth—one of those mysterious mazes that appear everywhere on our world and whose real meaning we have lost in our machine age.

King Minos, worried that Daedelos would reveal the secret of his creation, decided to imprison the great man along with his teenage son, Ikaros. Their prison was a high tower. Fortunately, Daedelos wasn't only a great architect, he was also an in-



Bird man from Faillaka Island.

ventor. He was one of those cult figures who presented mankind with tools. Remember the Inca myths about Quetzalcoatl? The Egyptian myths of Thoth? These figures are in our most ancient histories, slowly doling out technology.

Daedelos requested honey—a lot of honey—for their meals, and also a lot of candles. Then he captured the pigeons that flew onto their high window ledge and stripped them of their feathers.

Soon he was able to glue thousands of feathers onto his arms and his son's arms, using the wax and the honey as glue. As they stood on the window ledge, he cautioned his teenage boy, "Fly not too high. The sun will melt the wax and you will fall."

They jumped off and soared away from their prison, higher and higher. The young man, exhilarated, flew until Crete was just a small dot, far, far below him. Then the sun's energy did its harmful work and he plummeted down into the sea now named after him.

Why, in another sea, so far away, did Alexander remember this story of flight and name this other island after the flying boy? What is the connection between a flying person in ancient Greek mythology and a flying creature in the Muslim religion? And at the same island, but separated by 2,500 years?

The Bird Man of Sumer in Illinois

There is more. This small island was known during Sumerian times. Steatite stone seals have been found tying this place to the coast of the present-day kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the islands of Bahrain. Ruins from that ancient time (3000 B.C. and possibly even earlier) have also been found here. And, at least



Bird man from Cahokia.

in 1983, a small clay tablet was displayed in the island's tiny museum.

This tablet clearly depicted a man-like bird (or a bird-like man) on one side. There were lines etched into the other side (perhaps a map). Interestingly, the tablet resembled the "Bird Man of Cahokia" shown on a clay tablet found in the Cahokia mounds of Illinois. The figure is also reminiscent of the Shalako legends around Taos Pueblo.

Modern Flying Men

In 1994, during a weekend break from working on the U.S. Army Intelligence facilities at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, I went for a 12-hour hike in the Chiricuhuas. For the entire day, I was all alone in this strange and mysterious land. Then, in the late afternoon, I heard the sound of wings beating the air. Modern wings—to be exact, rotor blades. Three or four helicopters flew near me but, due to the terrain and the growth, I never saw them; I only heard them. My imagination recalled the stories of a flying dragon—remnant of the dinosaur age—that are told down there near the Mexican border.

And I also remembered the days in 1991 when U.S. helicopters, on a dark night, were "herding" the Iraqis on Faillaka Island. Lights shining from the sky; metallic, inhuman voices; and occasional shots destroyed the night over the island—the modern flying men, over an island haunted by legends of flying men.

Strange, three different civilizations (Sumerian related—the



September 1991—the author at the Burghana oil fires while serving as a lieutenant colonel, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

so-called Dilmun—Hellenistic Greek, and Muslim), separated in time by over 5,000 years, and yet they all refer to a flying creature somehow connected to this tiny island.

We possess most of our information regarding this “Green Man” from the holy Koran, the book dictated to the prophet Mohammed by the angel Gabriel. His name in Arabic, Khadir, means “green.” He walked and talked with the Prophet Musa (Moses), and his sense of justice was strange, almost unearthly.

It is this sense of justice, alien to Musa (and to me), that later struck me as I was reading a small volume, purchased in the Arabian Gulf state of Qatar.

Moses and the Green Man

Moses and Khadir were walking one day when they saw a man about to be executed. Moses pleaded for the man’s life, and Khadir reluctantly agreed. Soon the man committed another murder. Khadir told Moses that “had you allowed justice to take its course, an innocent life would have been spared because a guilty life was taken. But you interfered and now a guilty life was spared while an innocent life was

lost.”

J. R. R. Tolkien translated an anonymous book called *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. In the story, this “dark and swarthy” knight from King Arthur’s round table has an unusual struggle with a giant green man. The Green Knight allows Sir Gawain to cut off his head but, in one year’s time, he will return and cut off Sir Gawain’s head. Strange justice, but in many ways similar to the harsh justice of Khadir, who was also green.

And, for an even greater coincidence, on the shores of the Persian Gulf, on the Arabian side, there is a tiny emirate, part of the seven emirates that comprise the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.), called Umm al Qawain.

Literally translated, this means “Gawain’s Mother.”

Combined with the coincidence of the two green men, their strange, almost otherworldly sense of justice, and the unusual name, this seems to me more than chance or accident, or unrelated coincidence.

Could Sir Gawain have his origins in this part of the world, and could this medieval tale have its origins in the same common thread that connected the Green Man

to the three different cultures of Faillaka Island? Granted, these theories are pure speculation at this stage, but they are speculation based on enduring legends and the archaeological evidence of the small clay tablet.

When one stands where the sand meets the sea, it seems incredible that any tale or legend could have survived in this harsh environment for more than one lifetime, let alone thousands of years. And yet these stories have survived and were found by archaeologists almost as if they were meant to be preserved as a record of those who came before us on this world.

In 1991, I stood in the middle of the burning Burghana oil field. Almost 700 oil wells were bubbling, gushing, sizzling, and burning millions of gallons of crude oil. At noon, the sky above me, normally unbearably bright during the Arabian day, was black as night. Below, there was a forest of eerie glows and flames.

Then and many times since, I have often wondered if, mixed in with the sounds of the burning oil, there may have been the sound of flapping wings overhead. Wings on a creature who first saw the earth far below him, when it looked very, very similar to the hell that was now surrounding me.

The Intelligent Dinosaur

In the heart of Los Angeles, there is a small area set aside, protected from the building frenzy all around it. The La Brea Tar Pits are a remnant from a time long ago. Natural seepage here trapped hundreds of animals and even some humans. Trapped them, and preserved their bones in the tar, so that future generations could develop skeletons and then images of our world and its varied inhabitants.

Part of this small natural preserve houses a museum and a bookstore. In one of the volumes for sale there, the authors asked Carl Sagan if it were possible that the dinosaurs developed intelligence. Dr. Sagan replied that, considering the long span of time that the dinosaurs ruled the earth compared with the relatively short time that humans have walked here, it was possible that there was an intelligent race of