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Gooney Ducks and Naked Physicists

Part XVII Math: The Language of Moo?

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Abstract: An allegory of modern science.

Part XVII

*The glow retreats, done is the day of toil; It yonder hastes, new fields of life exploring;
Ah, that no wing can lift me from the soil, Upon its track to follow, follow soaring!*

Wow! Stand aside, Tesla! I, too, had a revelation!

Glorious inspiration just came upon me like a bolt out of the blue!

The image is still a little fuzzy, but...

I see a “device” (a metal box) about 3 feet high and 2 feet square.

Inside, a transparent tubing goose-necks—down, up, and down again—through what appears to be some form of electromagnetic/ionization/crystallization/osmosis process.

I can't see exactly how it all works, but I can tell you: A coffee-colored “saltwater smoothie” is poured into a reservoir at the top, a shiny, avocado green button is pushed, and with a quiet whir and clicking sound, the glutinous fluid transforms and small, reddish-brown energy pellets (about an inch and a half high) pop out the other end. And guess what?

They're all shaped like pyramids!

Ha, ha, ha! A vision of a “machine” that produces pyramid-shaped energy pellets?

A little over the top? Oh, yeah! But you can relax, Freud. I got this one!

Talk about your massive, mastodon metaphor in the room!

Of course! The little pyramids symbolize (or equal) math!

So the language of math must be the ultimate “clean” energy to fuel the future!

Go green (or avocado)? Yeah, I'm starting to envision whole new possibilities!

The Great Pyramid could be like that old Buick languishing in the junkyard.

Rip rap? Don't throw away your old pyramid! Recycle, repurpose, reprocess!

Grave robbers, Egyptologists, opportunists, and souvenir hounds have stripped it clean and hauled away all the superfluous gilt and glitter (all the *objets-orientales*).

They've done all the heavy lifting. Now what's left is the *real* treasure, the basic raw material—the truth that holds it all together—the math!

Junkyard gem? Imagine if all the equations necessary for physical science, astronomy, gravity, etc., are right there written into the geometry of the Great Pyramid—just there for the taking!

Great Giza! And to think of all the time and energy expended on proving and reproving geometry...when, all along, geometry could really be the proof of something else!

Wow and double wow! I think it's time to take a cruise to Cairo!

Twenty-eight

Aah...Cairo, Paris of the Nile, the City of a Thousand Minarets. Hot diggity! Just one problem:

*Don't know much about history.
Don't know nothin' 'bout Egyptology.*

Yeah, I've seen the movies read the books, even watched Liz Taylor play Cleopatra, but still... I wouldn't know the difference between the pyramids of Khufu and Khafre!

So, before I rub shoulders with boatloads of archaeologists and scientists headed up the Nile, I'd better "bone up". Maybe I'll take a look on Wikipedia.

Hmm, lemme see...Camel riding lessons at Point Defiance? Ah, here we go:

Egyptology is primarily regarded as being a philological discipline.

Philological? That's a new one on me. I guess I better look that up, too.

Philology: the study of language in written historical sources.

Wow! How 'bout that, Louie!

Here I thought Egyptology was about mummies, tombs, sarcophagi, and Pharaohs' curses! But come to find out all this "Archaic-ology" is mostly about philology: the study of the structure and development of language!

Hoppin' hieroglyphics! That sure gives me a new take on language and literacy!

Yeah, if the study of language were limited to just words, symbols, graffiti, and pictures (on papyrus scrolls, painted on walls and pottery, carved into stone, oracle bones, etc.), what a roadblock that would be! How could you ever hope to study the knowledge and sophistication of societies and cultures of "prehistory", where no actual "written" records exist!

But if I set aside my preconceptions and realize language can take a form other than writing—that knowledge and understanding can be expressed through a material object—then...

Bam! It smacks you right in the face! The Great Pyramid!

Like a million dollar rain or scientific manna from heaven handed down on a silver platter, that "Jewel of the Nile"—that ultimate artifact—is the philological "missing link"!

It's the bridge—a language of communication between the prehistoric and the historic! Wow!

So the Great Pyramid is a great big "stone book"—a record of the knowledge of "prehistoric" societies written in their own "prehistoric" language! And garsh, sha-zam, and gall-lee!

It's a language we don't have to translate; it's one we already understand...Math!

Boy howdy! Shades of Alley Oop? Math: the language of the Pyramids, the language of Moo?

That sure simplifies things!

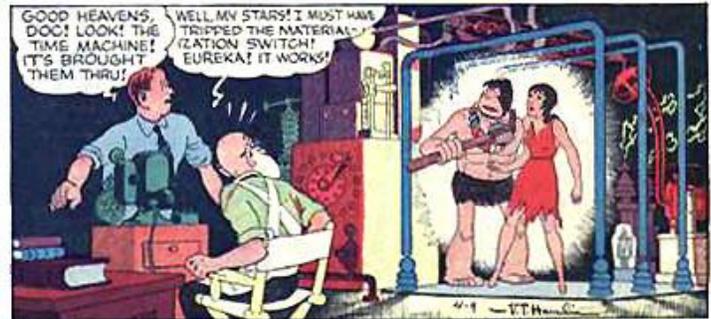
Spanish, French, German, Italian, Russian,

Chinese, Hebrew, Arabic, Farsi, Hindi?

Language barriers? Blah blah, fishcakes!

Hieroglyphics, Demotic, Greek?

Rosetta Stone? No need to decipher the chiseled diorite!



And Schleicher's Fable? Forget that concoction of phonemes, laryngeals, and labiovelars ("Avis, jasmin varnā na ā ast, dadarka akvams, tam..."), trying to reconstruct some *hypothetical* language spoken by prehistoric man—some imaginary Proto-Indo-European language (PIE). The real deal—the slice of language pie we're looking for—isn't spelled "PIE", its spelled "Pi"!

So, the search is over! The antediluvian/pre-Babel/post-Babel/classic/prehistoric "lost language of Atlantis" has been discovered! Rising up like an island in a sea of sand, there it stands—the Great Pyramid—an entire language in itself: Math!

Wow! What a unique approach to the art of communication!

The modern world may have its computer—with GPS global communication and access to knowledge through the binary language of math. But if the power were lost, what then?

The computer would still be there, but the means of communication would be gone.

And the spoken and written languages? They can change, be lost, or mistranslated.

But the language of the Great Pyramid—the language of Mu/math—that's another story!

Just as the internal language of math is always part of us, the language of math can't be separated from the structure of the Great Pyramid. The language is always right there!

And imagine, expressing *intangible* language and knowledge with a *tangible* form!

Building an edifice, a sculpture, a statue of language? Talk about timeless beauty!

Venus de Milo, step aside! Make way for Mighty Erudity!

For sure, it may be a different type of "writing," but it's communication in its purest form.

My stars! A language (math) simplified to one historical structure?

One "thing," one object, to represent and embody an entire language?

What succinct eloquence! The Great Pyramid (like Popeye after eating a can of spinach),

sticks out its chest, flexes its biceps, and thunders: "I yam what I yam, and dat's what I yam!"