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COMPETENCE HELD HOSTAGE

The History-of-Astronomy Journal Watch: #2 of a Series

[ 8 Yr-Old OutBrains Muffia. Nazi Germany OutFreespeeches It ]
A. Diller's Discovery of Spherical Trig's Use in 2nd Century BC:
SIXTY YEARS OF History-of-Astronomy Denial of Credit.
Archons Promote, Fund, & Honor the Suppressors.

How Long Will a Muffia Reign-of-Error Disgrace Academe?

The 1991/5 Journal for the History of Astronomy and 1991/9 Isis (Hist.sci Soc) carried promotion of the O. Neugebauer-Muffia's lovably preposterous theory (central to the Muffia cult) that high pre-Ptolemy Greek astronomy secretly depended upon simple-minded Babylonian arithmetic schemes. Both articles (in their notes 38 and [ & n.22], resp) recommend G.Toomer's 1988 collection of alleged evidences for the theory. (See our not entirely respectful comments, at J.Historical Astron 1.2 [n.4], on this and the 2 other gossamer pseudo-proofs of Hipparchan use of Babylonian astronomical techniques. See also ibid [n.23].) The funniest of all these alleged "evidences" (repeatedly flogged by longtime BrownU Neugebauer-lapdog G.Toomer) is the claim by O.Neugebauer (Princeton Institute for Advanced Study) at p.305 of his 1975 History of Ancient Mathematical Astronomy, that Hipparchos' klimata (Strabo 2.5.34f: neatly illustrated at Neugebauer 1975 p.1313) were computed in arithmetical-Babylonian style, by a 3rd-order arithmetical scheme. (Which the Toomer 1978/9 p.210 rendition, in the Dictionary of Scientific Biography [1], misrepresented as 2nd-order — until DR's 1978/3/18 letter to the DSB corrected this at the proof stage.)

But the Muffia (Babylonian) arithmetical scheme explains only 6 of the 13 klimata, while the lovely spherical trig (Greek math explanation, by classicist Aubrey Diller) fits 12 of the 13 klimata, after improvement by DR's introduction of standard ancient rounding into the reconstruction. DR has also included the 19th klima; the fit to the Hipparchos-Strabo latitude is again perfect, a fine fruitfulness test: Diller didn't even know of that klima, so he couldn't have adjusted his theory to it. [Same for 12/3/4 klima, which hugely clashes with Neugebauer.] Table 1 provides a Princetutte-Muffia vs Diller-DR comparison.

(There's not a single historian who's mentioned, let alone respected, regarding ancient Greek geographical mss. He overmodestly protested that his klimata discovery was a fluke, since — as a philologist — he pleaded little knowledge of math. Which only shows just how brilliant he was. I used to tell Diller — emphasizing the high irony — how it's possible that, centuries hence, it is this atypical discovery that he may be more remembered for, than any other part of his lengthy lifetime of the most refined scholarship.)

A typically nasty & intolerant 1934 Neugebauer letter to Diller attacked Diller's theory as trash. [Which may explain why Diller had to publish his discovery outside the US Hist.sci

1 Greek astronomy's only major suppressed source was the ever-politically-dangerous hellenocentric heresy: see DIO 1.17, DIO 1.3 [n.04-06, DIO 2.1 [n.14

2 For even more recent promotion of these alleged evidences of Babylonian inspiration of great Hellenistic math astronomy, see John North's 100% politically-correct Fontana History of Astronomy and Cosmology 1994 (p.94). The Muffia is right about absolutely everything. And DR & DIO do not exist. See also North at JHA 25:243, 1994.


4 The Muffia arithmetical scheme is equivalent to the equation \( \phi = 50M^2 - 62M^2 + 1307M - 84545 \), where geographical latitude \( \phi \) is in stades (rounded in Table 1 to 100 stade precision), at scale (in ft) 700 stades/12.

5 See Diller Klio 27.5:258 (1934) [pp.266. Published in Leipzig, Germany.]

6 Without accounting for conventional ancient rounding (in ft), the Diller scheme will fail at the [Phoenicia and S. Little Britain klima. But, even if one ignores rounding, the Diller theory still works for 10/13 of the data (vs. the Muffia theory's 6/13). [Its rms fit is 8 times better than the Muffia-Princetutte's; Diller-DR's is 10 times better.]
Hipparchos' Klimata \( \phi \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Klima</th>
<th>Longest Day ( M )</th>
<th>Hipparcos-Strabo ( \phi ) [Data]</th>
<th>PrincetonInst-Muffia ( \phi ) [Babylonian]</th>
<th>A.Diller-DR ( \phi ) [Greek]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cinnamon</td>
<td>12(^{2}/4)</td>
<td>8800</td>
<td>10200</td>
<td>8800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meroë</td>
<td>1(^{3})</td>
<td>11800</td>
<td>12800</td>
<td>11600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syene</td>
<td>1(^{3}/2)</td>
<td>16800</td>
<td>17600</td>
<td>16800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Egypt</td>
<td>14(^{1}/2)</td>
<td>21400</td>
<td>21800</td>
<td>21400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoenicia</td>
<td>14(^{1}/2)</td>
<td>23400</td>
<td>23700</td>
<td>23400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhodes</td>
<td>14(^{1}/2)</td>
<td>25400</td>
<td>25500</td>
<td>25400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hellespont</td>
<td>1(^{5})</td>
<td>28800</td>
<td>28800</td>
<td>28800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massalia</td>
<td>15(^{1}/4)</td>
<td>30300</td>
<td>30300</td>
<td>30300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borysthenes</td>
<td>1(^{6})</td>
<td>34100</td>
<td>34100</td>
<td>34100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanais</td>
<td>1(^{7})</td>
<td>38000</td>
<td>38000</td>
<td>38000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.Little Britain</td>
<td>18(^{1})</td>
<td>40800</td>
<td>40800</td>
<td>40800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.Little Britain</td>
<td>19(^{1})</td>
<td>42800</td>
<td>42800</td>
<td>42800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Comparison of Theories Explaining Hipparchos' Klimata \( \phi \)

Table: Comparison of Theories Explaining Hipparchos' Klimata \( \phi \)

dictatorship, in the relative academic freedom of Nazi Germany! (See fn 5.) Decades later, Neugebauer 1975 p.734 n.14 splendidly branded Diller's result "absurd." Soon after, Rawlins 1982C fortuitously rediscovered 7 Diller's solution — adding improvements (fn &d 10) & independent confirmation (fn 9) — after over 4 decades of neglect & gross Muffia abuse. Neugebauer's wrath was incited by the very import of Diller's find, which overthrew one of the most critical of the Muffia sales-manual's alleged proofs of Babylonian influence on high Greek mathematical astronomy, as did DR-H.Thurston's undoing of 2 parallel 1991 papers. 

This is not for a moment to forget academe's invaluable productivity and credits (14 its consecutive vowels.)

12 On 1994/5/8, at the Dibner Inst (MIT) Muffia conference, DR bluntly asked aloud if anyone else present wished to claim (as his own) the discoveries here cited, namely: the [period-relation] sources for the Almajest planet mean motions. [DR solved three planets. A Jones later solved Mars&Jupiter.] When G.Toomer & G. Gingerich (both present) said nothing, DR then requested a swift end to Muffia's '# suppression of the fact [1980/4/13 DR letter to O.A. Diller] that DR was discoverer. (Toomer 1984 App.C uses the 3 correct DR solutions & the revolutionary find that period-relations solve the motions, but won't say who 1st revealed all this.) Silence since.

13 In light of the lengthy Muffia Muff-Catalog at 3A of "Casting Pearls Before Pyglets" (DIO 4.1 #4), Keith Parker suggests alternatives: "Ibn-Rushd's holding that all potential dissenters by the perceived starvation-threat of grant-severance and denial of publication and conference-invitations (DIO 1.1 fn 20 & DIO 1.2 fn 57).

The best part is that even while Ivy League kooks suppress at will the most patently-true cult-offending discoveries (such as Diller's) for over half a century — and still counting, academe's & (its institutions & journals) bilishly continues to advertise itself to the taxing-paying public as the epitome of a rational and openminded free marketplace of ideas. 

News Notes added 1997: [1] The above-cited DIO 1.1 #6 discovery (1991), that the yearlength on crucial Babylonian cuneiform tablet BM 55555 (c.100 BC) was based on Greek observations, is seen (as J.O. Neugebauer noted) to have been accepted outside the Muffia asylum so widely & so generally that it was even displayed at the British Museum explicitly due toDIO's finding. [2] Muffia peddlers of funny there's-a-Babylonian-in-the-woodle explanations for pre-Ptolemy Greek astronomy keep non-citing, i.e., taking the nonexistence of our stark Table 1 (opposite page): actual testing finds that on 8 year-old's brain takes under 15 timeseconds to see that the Diller-DR theory (Greek) fits Hipparchos' klimata (c.130 BC) better than the PrincetonInst-Muffia theory (Babylonian). But, after 63 years of mental struggle, the Princeton-Muffia klasm still 7 sees the reverse, while privately slandering & excising the non-blind as fools. And the insecure History-of-science community (Princettutting its integrity, to maintain a vital longstanding umbilical cord to the Institute) stays paralyzically silent on this insular cult's own public silence. Adapting an old joke to a modern one: What do you call a History-of-Astr archon with 2 brain cells? Pregnant.

11 Praiseworthy exception: O.Pedersen was the party communicating Nadal & Brunet 1984 to AHES, for which Pedersen deserves explicit credit here. It should be added that Pedersen has wisely kept himself clear of the Muffia Babylon—Greece monomania — and is also as skeptical as DR regarding the field of archaeoastronomy. (R.Newton used to suggest that the main accomplishment of archaeoastronomy was the establishment of a word containing 5 consecutive vowels.)