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Letters

Cross and circle journeys

"Sunwatchers of the American Southwest" (SN: 6/18/83, pp. 394) presents additional clues toward evaluating the diffusion of astronomical knowledge between Central Mexico and the southwestern United States. Both the cross in the Cave of Life in the Petrified Forest, and the circle with appendages at Painted Rock State Park in Arizona, seemingly have their origins in places such as Teotihuacan and later, in Teotenango, Humango and Cerrito de la Campana in the State of Mexico. The spirals earlier described by Sofaer (SN: 8/26/78, p. 148) and the Prestons as well as crosses and circles are commonly found in this area where they have been given an astronomical value by several authors including Aveni, Hartung, Buckingham plus others. Their diffusion to the Southwest has also been suggested by those signing below.

The question we are now asking of our material is to what extent groups of people counting these symbols and their uses among their intellectual baggage actually traveled between Central Mexico, the American Southwest and vice

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138 Krakatau 1883: The Shock Felt 'Round the World

Cover: In May 1883, when the cover photograph was taken, billowing ash and gas clouds presaged the tragic eruption at Krakatau in the Dutch East Indies (modern Indonesia). By Aug. 28, the volcanic blasts and seawaves had devastated much of Java and Sumatra. Today, Krakatau remains the "classic" geophysical event. (Smithsonian News Service Photo courtesy of the family archives of R. Breon)



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versa and what this means in terms of the flowering of Postclassic culture in the south and the development of Hohokom, Anasazi and later peoples to the north.

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Comparing anxiety

Epidemiologic studies indicate that anxiety-related behaviors ("Solving the Mystery of Anxiety," SN: 7/16/83, p. 45) are distributed along a normal curve of distribution. The 13 percent of the population at the upper end of the curve are at risk for all types of related problems. Those at the lower end of the curve seem to have no problems at all. Since panic, anxiety attacks, phobias, certain kinds of insomnia, explosive personality, about half of anorexics, many hysterics and unstable personalities all respond to small doses of tricyclics (immediate response)

as do hyperkinetic children, one is tempted to look for a common mechanism. They may all have a "hair-trigger mechanism" in common, with the varied presenting symptomatology due to their different genetic inheritance and environmental experience. Finding individuals at the extremes of the distribution curve and studying their differences might be fruitful.

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Correction: The article "Tauri's companion may be a protoplanet" (SN: 5/28/83, p. 342) mistakenly listed Martin Cohen as a member of the staff of California Institute of Technology. He is with the NASA Ames Research Center at Moffett Field, Calif.

Correction: In the article "Toward Gene Therapy: Lesch-Nyhan Syndrome," (SN: 8/16/83, p. 90) it was stated "... 0.15 percent of the U.S. population ... has [HPRT-related] gout ..." This should have read "... 0.0015 percent of the U.S. population (15 people per million) has [HPRT-related] gout ..."

AUGUST 27, 1983

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