

Item# 2666. Gran Sabana, Venezuela:
Pre-Columbian stone carving

PHOTO
ATTACHED

Date: About 1000-500 BC

Finder: Professor G. E. Challenger

Date of discovery: 18 May 1897

Circumstances of discovery:

While exploring the summit of a tepuí.

Description:

A hand-carved stone artefact resembling a lunging or rearing reptile. The head and the front and rear pairs of legs form three angled prongs of varying lengths, which project from a central shaft representing the spine and tail. The figurine features details including glaring eyes, ferociously bared serrated teeth and long, jagged claws.

*It is still unclear whether this object is a war club, a tribal fetish or an ornamental Shachon ...
GdN*

Dimensions and mineral composition:

Length: 505 mm; maximum breadth: 167 mm;
thickness: 118 mm; weight: 10.9 kg.

Fluorometric analysis conducted at the British Museum indicates that the artefact was sculpted from an unusually large fragment of chondritic meteorite.

It is composed primarily of the silicate minerals olivine and pyroxene, as well as feldspathic material, but also contains traces of beryllium and potassium.

Radiometric dating of the stone has proven to be inconclusive.

17 Nov 2002
RC

Discussion:

The precise form of this artefact is new, and cannot be related stylistically to any known culture in either the region or the continent as a whole. The decorative carving is reminiscent of certain peculiar features of the disputed Eltdown Shards and Pnakotic Fragments, but the Gran Sabana piece is much more substantial and elaborate. It is a highly significant addition to the repertoire of pre-Columbian effigies.

*Inconclusive? It was incoherent! That lunatic Clijsters claimed the tachyon emissions which skewed his results so badly meant that the rock must have once travelled faster than the speed of light. My eye! "Fallen backwards through time," were his exact words, heaven help me.
GdN
We deal in the prehistoric - not the pre-human!
GdN
As long as it isn't a fake
GdN*

Provenance:

Received as part of the Challenger bequest.

ENDS

Removed by Professor Catherine Renie with the authority of the President of the Society - but without my blessing.

Gervas Den Nijs, 21 April 2004