

calendar. Our point of entry to the inquiry into the reason for building the pyramids will thus be this timing and of course since we will be studying the rise of civilization everywhere there will also be ample cross-referencing to other ancient cultures.

WORLDWIDE PYRAMID BUILDING AS RELATED TO THE MAYAN LONG COUNT

In the understanding of the Classical Maya, whose high culture rose about three thousand years after the first Egyptian pyramids were built, different deities, gods, and goddesses ruled different time periods. When a new such deity was “seated,” a shift took place in life on Earth. In chapters two and three we will see that in actual fact it is possible to understand human evolution as a process taking place over time based on the shifts symbolized by these deities. This calendar may thus provide a timeline of shifting mental states and it is because the human mind is reorganized at such shift points that civilizations will rise and fall. In this view, *it is not the evolution of civilization that has created the mind, but the evolution of the mind that has created civilization.* This goes directly counter to the materialist viewpoint and would at first sight seem difficult to prove. Yet, while such mental shifts may not be directly measurable by physical instruments, it is certainly possible to observe their effects and this is why they can still be studied with a scientific method.

Based on such studies, I assert we will be able to understand, among many other things, that the emergence of human civilization, including the building of pyramids, was based on a mental shift. It is then because our own minds have evolved since then through a series of shifts that we no longer experience the world in the same way as the ancients did and do not endeavor to build pyramids of this size ourselves. The actual message to us from the pyramids would thus more than anything else be about the nature of our minds. If we are able to grasp this message, as I suggest is possible, we will gain a deeper insight into what it means to be a human being and what may be in store for us in the future.

If indeed the Mayan view that there are “preset” consciousness shifts along the time line of history is correct, then it seems that in order to understand the enigma of the Egyptian pyramids (and incidentally all other events in history as well) we will need first to study the timing of their appearance. To provide a background to this, Figure 2 shows how the building of significant pyramids in different parts of the world is related to the Long Count of the Maya (which is the calendar that begins in 3115 BCE⁵ in the middle of the time line) and especially to its very beginning.

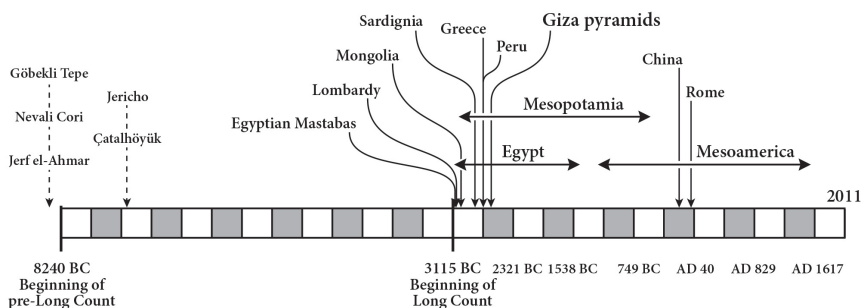


Figure 2. Important examples of pyramid building in the thirteen first baktuns of the Long Count⁶ in different parts of the world. The broken lines at the beginning of the pre-Long Count show some of the world’s oldest rectangular structures.^(7, 8, 9, 10)

This Long Count calendar (that was famously supposed to end in 2012) primarily consists of a series of time periods called baktuns, each of a duration of 400 periods of 360 days (so-called tuns), translating into 394.3 common solar years. Thirteen baktuns of this time period thus amounts to a total time of 5,125 years, which is the time-span that recently was completed. As mentioned, the qualities of these different time periods vary, and in the figure the baktuns are marked either as white or gray, depending on whether they are periods of creative light (in the following called DAYS; described by small caps to distinguish them from regular days) or resting periods of darkness (NIGHTS), respectively. The alternations between such DAYS and NIGHTS provide the background to the fact

that the Mayan Long Count is a wave movement, something we will describe and explain in chapters two and three.

When it comes to the Egyptian pyramids most archeologists base their ages on king lists and have dated Pharaoh Djoser's pyramid in Saqqara, the oldest of them, to around 2600 BCE. The Giza pyramids have been given a slightly lower age, and this is where these have been placed in the diagram. It should be noted, however, that, based on carbon-14 datings, samples of wood from these monuments have been estimated to be about two hundred¹¹ or even four hundred years¹² older. Regardless of this uncertainty, it is clear the Egyptians began to build small pyramid-like platforms called mastabas¹³ close to the beginning date of the Mayan Long Count. A question that is immediately raised from Figure 2 is then why no pyramids were built in the world before this date and a reasonable hypothesis seems to be that pyramid building was related to and somehow triggered at the beginning point of this calendar. Interestingly, this date is also very close to the time (3100 BCE) when Menes unified Upper and Lower Egypt,¹⁴ a unification into one nation that at the time was looked upon as a creation by "the gods."¹⁵ This was the event that started the long line of Pharaonic dynasties and the establishment of this monarchy can rightly be looked upon as the dawn of human civilization. For those, like myself, who adhere to the time-line of events generally accepted by historians this synchronicity is quite remarkable.

Naturally, if the Long Count calendar took its beginning at the dawn of civilization, this would indicate it has something to tell us about what caused this. This is all the more so as also to the much later Maya, this particular time marked the beginning of a "new creation" by the gods,¹⁶ and it was for this reason their Long Count took its beginning then. The Maya would use this calendar as a basis for knowing when to erect their own pyramids and altars at significant shift points, (included in the Mesoamerican time span in Fig 2).¹⁷ Therefore, in a larger perspective their pyramid building may be looked upon as a continuation of a process of creation that had started earlier with the Egyptians.

Although the Giza pyramids may be the most awe-inspiring ever built, they are, as is evident from Figure 2, far from the only ones. Several pyramids, such as those in current-day Iran,¹⁸ Greece,¹⁹ Peru,²⁰ and Sardinia²¹ in Italy, were also built at the time of the beginning of the Long Count. Recently, an increasing number of large hills that may be pyramids, even if they are not built from the bottom up by stones, such as in Lombardy in Italy,²² and Mongolia,²³ have also been found from the same time. Based on these facts it is hard to dispute that this particular time was special when it comes to pyramid building on our planet.

Later, over the millennia very large pyramids have been erected in different parts of the Americas,²⁴ as well as smaller ones, for instance in Rome, Nubia, Canary Islands and elsewhere. Typically, the building of pyramids seems to coincide with the founding, or centralizing stages of different civilizations or nations. In China, the so-called First Emperor, Qin Shi Huang, for instance, built them as tombs around the time of the unification of this nation in 221 BCE. The last pyramid in the world built with the explicit purpose of reflecting a connection to divine creation is probably the seventh version of the Temple Mayor in the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan, built shortly before the conquest of this by Hernan Cortes in 1521 CE. Based on such observations, it seems we would risk missing the point if we looked upon the pyramids as a product of each civilization by itself. Rather, what makes sense is to study pyramids in the overall context of their relationship to the emergence and evolution of civilization.

Naturally, many pyramids may also have disappeared or still remain hidden. If we include platforms, pagodas, and a variety of related structures our planet harbor many such monuments. Even if they are not pyramids in a strict sense, they may still have had a similar purpose. These monuments then also include, for instance, the famous megalithic sites on the British Isles—Stonehenge, Avebury, and Newgrange—that I will discuss in chapter four. According to the best datings of modern archaeologists, the construction of these began around 3100 BCE,²⁵ or, in other words, again simultaneously with the beginning of the Mayan Long