

# Alien Skulls and Their Makers

## *The Creation of the “Sealand Skull” and the Hoax It Unintentionally Inspired*

BY TIM CALLAHAN AND H. H. LØYCHE

A FEW YEARS AGO, WHEN DONALD PROTHERO AND I (TC) were writing *UFOs, Chemtrails and Aliens: What Science Says*, we divided up the topics that each of us would address. One of my subjects was examining alleged physical evidence of extraterrestrial contact. This included what were purported to be the skulls of ancient extraterrestrials who supposedly died while visiting our planet in times long past. We covered: the Paracas skulls from Peru; the so-called “Starchild” cranium, of uncertain provenance, but supposedly from a mine in Mexico; the Rhodope and Adygea skulls from southern Bulgaria and the Russian federal republic of Adygea in the Caucasus region near the Black Sea, respectively; and, finally, the Sealand skull from Denmark.

Of these only the Paracas skulls and the “Starchild” were human. The Paracas skulls, with their elongated craniums, do look exceptionally weird. However, these skulls, like those of the

Huns, skulls from the island of Malta (dating to ca. 3,000 BCE), the Maya and the Mangbetu of central Africa (among many others), owe their peculiar elongation to deliberate cranial deformation. During infancy and early childhood the skulls of human beings are quite malleable. If the child’s head is bound tightly or other means are used to deform it, the cranium will be altered into an elongated shape. Thus, the Paracas skulls, though strange looking, were terrestrial in origin. The so-called “Starchild” skull belonged, not to an extraterrestrial, nor to a hybrid of grey alien and human, but rather to a very young Native American child who died of congenital hydrocephalus. The word derives from Greek words meaning “water” and “head” The bulging cranium of the “Starchild” resulted not from a large brain but from the fatal accumulation of large amounts of cerebrospinal fluid on the brain.

While the Rhodope and Adygea skulls are definitely



The Sealand Skull: A plaster sculpture from two views by Danish science fiction author and artist H.H. Løyche.

skulls—or, more correctly, broken portions of skulls—they are neither alien nor human. The Rhodope skull is a severed portion of a cow skull. Its “eyes” are, in fact part of a damaged ethmoid bone. The “eye” openings are actually holes for the passage of olfactory nerves from the brain. Likewise, the Adygea skull is a broken portion of the skull of a species of wild goat native to the Caucasus, *Capra caucasica*, about which Don and I, along with Russian paleontologist Alexey Bondarev, wrote in the fall 2016 issue of *ΣΚΕΠΤΙΚ* magazine.<sup>1</sup> That leaves the Sealand Skull, which we described in our 2017 book, *UFOs, Chemtrails and Aliens* (121-124) as described below.

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One last allegedly alien skeletal find is the Sealand skull. It looks generally human and is (probably) close to human in size. However, its eye sockets are enormous relative to the size of the skull itself. They resemble those of either a tarsier or an owl monkey—both are nocturnal primates. The skull’s upper canine teeth are elongated to the point of being fangs.

The skull, complete with its lower jaw, was allegedly discovered by workers repairing sewer pipes in a house in Olstykke, on the island of Sealand, Denmark. It is also claimed that the skull was sent to the Niels Bohr Institute in Copenhagen where it was dated, using carbon-14 dating, to between CE 1200 and 1280.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the author of the online article making this claim is unclear concerning where the skull was carbon-dated, since the Niels Bohr Institute had ceased carbon-dating by the middle of the 1960s, and the Sealand skull, according to the same article was discovered in 2007. A more likely possibility is that the carbon-dating claim is bogus. While photographs of the skull are displayed on many websites, none of them indicate where the skull *now* resides. Not surprisingly, there is also no information regarding DNA tests on the skull.

Compounding the Sealand skull’s dubious provenance is the possibility that it might be a bit of ceramic artistry, as opposed to actually being made of bone. One of those posting on a forum noted, among other things, that, in photographs of the skull, the interiors of the eye sockets appear to have been artificially darkened. The poster also pointed out that the condyle of the lower jaw, which should be a rounded knob for articulation with the skull, is sharp and flat. It’s not likely to have worked to open and close the jaw.<sup>3</sup> In fact, in the available photos of the skull it’s impossible to tell if the zygomatic arch, which stretches, in human skulls, from the ear to a junction with the

cheekbone, is or is not fully separated from the temporal bone of the cranium above the ascending ramus of the lower jaw. That’s the part of the lower jaw that articulates with the skull. This separation of the zygomatic arch (or process) from the temporal bone of the cranium is necessary to allow two of the four muscles that move the jaw, the temporalis and the external pterigoid, to attach to both the skull and the jaw. These two muscles stretch through the opening between the temporal bone and the zygomatic arch. So, if the zygomatic arch isn’t separated from the cranium of the Sealand skull, it’s unlikely its jaw would work well, and it’s likely the skull is a fake.

Seen in profile, the skull is extremely short. Human skulls in which the cranium is so shaped are called brachycephalic. In itself, this doesn’t constitute a problem and is in no way abnormal. However, in human brachycephalic skulls the eye sockets are much smaller in relation to the cranium than in the Sealand skull. Given the seeming depth of the Sealand skull’s eye sockets, it’s doubtful there is enough room in this skull for the occipital lobe of the brain. The occipital lobe is the visual perception center of the human brain. To accommodate such huge eyes and the visual acuity of any being possessing them, the occipital lobe of this skull should be large. Of course, those contending the Sealand skull belongs to an alien could argue that its alien brain was structured differently from ours. However, such an argument would take away any chance at a pass/fail test to judge the skull’s validity. As stated earlier the huge eye sockets of the Sealand skull have been compared to those of two nocturnal primates, owl monkeys and tarsiers. However, while the outer rims of the eye sockets of these two primates are noticeably rounded, those of the Sealand skull are flat and squared-off in a way that looks artificial, rather than natural. Of course, since there is no indication on any of the websites as to where the Sealand skull is, there is no way to test it. As such, the Sealand skull cannot be considered as evidence of much of anything.

So we don’t even know where the Sealand skull can be located—or even if it’s really a skull rather than a manufactured artifact.

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Such was my knowledge of the alleged alien skull until early November 2020, when Danish science fiction author and artist, H. H. Løyche, having recently read our book, wrote to us, revealing the true origin of the “Sealand Skull.” Here is his account.

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In April 1996, I had the first Danish cli-fi (climate change based science fiction) novel published 17 years before the term “cli-fi” was coined for the genre. (There were forerunners abroad, notably J.G. Ballard, but also John Wyndham, Arthur Herzog, Martine McDonough and others.) The reviewers were excited about such originality, some even beside themselves with joy, and thus it came to mark the beginning of a long line of works based on speculating about future climate.

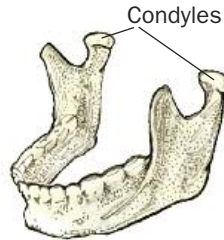
In addition to my writing, I was also an artist doing freelance cover art and illustrations. As a hobby, I occasionally fashioned small sculptures for exhibition. Among these was an alien skull made of plaster, wallpaper paste, and rust. It's far from my best piece of art. I shaped it without any reference other than my memory of classic anatomy drawing classes as a student at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Denmark. I would have preferred researching it in more anatomical detail, especially the teeth. But I lacked the time since it was soon scheduled for exhibition at Eurocon 2007, a science fiction convention in Copenhagen. Afterwards I stored the skull away in a cardboard box and didn't think much about it—apart from at another convention in 2009, when during a public interview, photos of my art including the skull, were projected on a screen.

It was not until the end of October 2020 that, by sheer coincidence, I discovered that a multitude of webpages had uploaded my photos of the skull, asserting that my work of art was an actual alien skull! The skull was connected to a bizarre conspiracy theory involving a supposed centuries-old secret society called *The Order of the Light of Pegasus* (*l'Ordre Lux Pégasos*). Eager to protect my copyright, I began a systematic registration of the URLs. I soon gave up when I realized that versions of the story had spread in Czech, Russian, and Spanish, had made headlines in British tabloid newspapers, and had even inspired documentary videos on YouTube. Among the latter, the American artist Su Walker had applied forensic methods to the skull in order to make a drawing of how the creature looked when alive. What I once peeled off an imagined alien, she has put back pretty accurately. Uploaded March 31, 2020, it is a piece of art in its own right.<sup>4</sup>

The source of this hoax seems to be a person named Anton Spangenberg, who a decade ago submitted an article about the skull with photos to Unexplained-Mysteries.com. The text suggested in

## Anatomical flaws of the Sealand skull

While the Sealand skull is very intriguing and evocative as a work of art, it does not stand up to anatomical analysis.



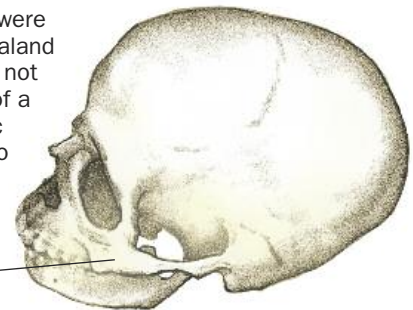
A human jawbone or mandible



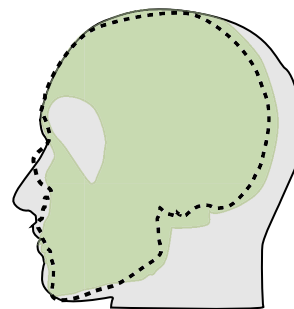
Two closeup views of the human condyle

The Sealand skull condyle seems too flat to work well as a moving joint.

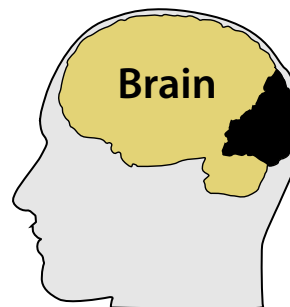
At the time alien claims were being made about the Sealand skull, critics felt it did not seem to have enough of a gap behind the zygomatic arch to accommodate two of the muscles that move the jaw.



Zygomatic arch on a human skull

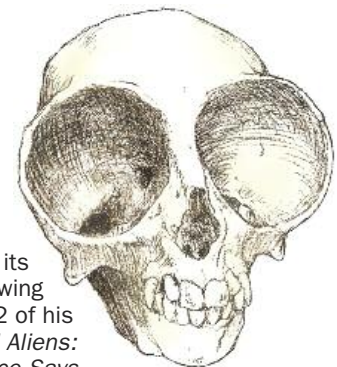


A human skull (grey) compared to an extremely brachycephalic human skull (outside the 99th percentile—dotted line) compared to the Sealand skull (green). The Sealand and brachycephalic skull have comparatively less room for the occipital lobe of the brain which is associated with vision.



The occipital lobe of the human brain.

An owl monkey skull with its enormous eye sockets. Drawing by Tim Callahan from page 122 of his book *UFOs, Chemtrails and Aliens: What Science Says*.





H. H. Løyché holds his alien skull sculpture. Photo by Jan Türk Kalleisen

a roundabout way that the artifact was of extraterrestrial origins, claiming that it was “impossible to fit the animal into Linnaean taxonomy,” that it was dated to “between 1200 and 1280 CE,” and speculated that the creature was either “a night creature, [that] lived underground or on a planet orbiting a remote or dim star, probably an orange or red dwarf.” When uploaded on September 9, 2010, it swiftly broke the site’s comment record and went viral.

However, another site, the Canadian blog *Terraforming Terra*,<sup>5</sup> caught my attention even more. The blog’s first entry is dated February 12, 2007, simultaneous with the release of a Danish anthology,<sup>6</sup> in which my short story “*Gaden, hvor jeg råbte dit navn*” (“The Street Where I Called Your Name”) was published. It was written in Danish, has never been translated into any other language, and was never uploaded anywhere. Since this story was probably the first ever to use the expression “*Terraforming Terra*” it suggests that the Canadian bloggers were somehow familiar with my story.

Their blog advocates unscientific ideas, such as promoting more agricultural development of Greenland (whose growth season is extremely limited due to lack of light), and completely ignores the fact that 80% of Greenland’s ‘land’ would be ice-clad ocean if the ice were to melt and that the rest consists mostly of rock, and other issues such as the crucial role of ice in reflecting sunlight, etc. Considering the blog’s content this raised an interesting question: what purpose did my alien skull serve on such a blog?

Like many other online promoters of the extraterrestrial skull claim, Spangenberg’s original article also mentioned *The Order of the Light of Pegasus*. This organization is also pure fiction, stolen from another cli-fi novelette I wrote (among others) in 2009 in connection with the UN’s Climate Change Conference, COP15, in Copenhagen. Not many knew the story

then that I was aware of, but Spangenberg not only mentioned the order, he listed many of the prominent order members that are in my fictional novelette. Spangenberg would not even have had to understand Danish because that novelette is among the few works I’ve written in English.

Another site, however, suggests that the culprit is Danish and the motivation to create a hoax stemmed from my involvement as a climate activist at COP15 where I made a dozen presentations that included nonfiction scientific proposals, along with art and fiction. Why not attack a popular author, who had warned about climate change for years through convincing essays and cli-fi, by creating a hoax that suggests that I cannot distinguish between what I have created in my fictional imagination and reality?

The numerous comments originally posted on *Unexplained-Mysteries.com* are no longer available, but a few have survived, quoted elsewhere, including on *Terraforming Terra*. Comments dated November 11, 2010—two months after Spangenberg’s material was uploaded—attempt to lend provenance to the claim that the skull is an alien by creating a long history for its existence, and associating it with centuries of prestigious intellectuals and artists. They also suggest Spangenberg either used multiple pseudonyms or didn’t operate alone, and that the promoters of the alien skull story didn’t refrain from outright lying. Here is a quote wrongly attributed to me:<sup>7</sup>

Via my Danish publisher I have from Toke Hanson received a request to try and answer some questions regarding the so-called Sealand skull. I asked him to forward you this message on my behalf.

No one by the name Toke Hanson has ever sent me a request, and my Danish publishers—there are several—as well as my foreign ones, confirm that they were never contacted by anyone named Toke Hanson or Anton Spangenberg. Although my name does not appear on the blog, there can be no doubt whatsoever that these comments were deliberately posted to appear as if they were mine, without my consent or knowledge. Another states:<sup>8</sup>

The persistent rumors about *l’Ordre Lux Pégasos* were among the main sources for my awarded 2009 novelette *The Manuduction*, and it remains a fact that even if the order as such is non-extant (today), rumors of it can be tracked far back in time.

I did write the cited novelette, but, as I have already noted, *l’Ordre Lux Pégasos* is pure fiction. It had nothing to do with my motivation for writing the novelette and was only added as literary spice. The story is



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about a Nobel Prize winner's attempt to pass down artistic traditions to younger generations, set mainly in North America on a backdrop of global warming, where a UN project strives against all odds to save a climate that has passed well beyond the tipping point. It was meant as a tribute to the British author J.G. Ballard (November 15, 1930–April 19, 2009), who spurred my writing. In my opinion, his 1962 novel *The Drowned World* (Berkley Books) stands out as the utmost primordial cli-fi. It is not a coincidence that *Time Magazine* in 2010 ranked *The Drowned World* among the top ten best post-apocalyptic books.

Yet another disingenuous quote from the same source, without naming me, states that my father and brother saw the skull at the time it was unearthed:<sup>9</sup>

Not only do I have family in the area where tales of the secret order are told, [they live] in the very town of Ølstykke where the skull was found. My father as well as my older brother have at the time of its uncovery seen it with their own eyes, and they described its eye sockets as grapefruit sized and its teeth somewhere between human and those of a dog. Therefore, I am certain that the skull exists.

As to the “Order of the Pegasus Light,” another website says this of it and its relation to the alleged burial of the skull:<sup>10</sup>

Perhaps to conceal the secret behind its existence someone stored it for ages and later deliberately buried it. It is interesting to note that residents in Ølstykke and nearby villages have from former times told about a local member of *l'Ordre Lux Pégasos* (the Order of Pegasus' Light), whom accordingly on behalf of the order protected various items—among them a mysterious cranium and several devices made of extraordinary light, albeit unbreakable, metal or ceramics. The skull is said to have originated from the Balkans, but it has also been stored in Paris, France, and in Munich, Germany, before arriving in Denmark.

Another website elaborated further on the fictitious Order of the Light of Pegasus, dating its founding to the Middle Ages and claiming membership in the order by a number of famous writers:<sup>11</sup>

But we do know one thing, the Order was established in 1350, and not much else. According to legend, writers William Shakespeare, H.G. Wells, Thomas Jefferson, Joseph Heller, Rene Descartes, Ambrose Bierce and Giovanni Boccaccio all belonged to the order. The “Secret Order” was established in 1350.

On the website, cited just previous to the one above, the authors also include, among others, initiates such

as prominent science fiction author Octavia Butler, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, and Ahmed al-Baghdadi.<sup>12</sup>

Given that so many supported an extraordinary claim inspired by my art and literary work, it is stunning that my name occurred not even once. This suggests that the originator of the Sealand Skull hoax wanted to keep people from discovering me—the one individual who could reveal the truth about the skull and its related mythology. Whoever this is, they know details about me that cannot be derived from my writing alone. For instance, they claimed that a member of *l'Ordre Lux Pégasos* lived in the small town of Ølstykke, where the skull was found during replacement of sewer pipes on an estate formerly belonging to a horse butcher. Between 2001 and 2008 I resided in Ølstykke, in a villa built by a horse butcher around 1900. Spangenberg even mentioned the presence of stone axes and other Neolithic tools. I have myself found Neolithic tools in Ølstykke, where they are quite common. These factual details leave me unable to shake off the nagging suspicion that the hoax was fabricated by someone near me, possibly a friend, family member, or more likely, a competitor, or a science fiction fan (fan fiction has grown in popularity over the decades). But once started, the skull story took on a life of its own.

I still don't know the identities of Anton Spangenberg or Toke Hanson, which are, in any case, likely pseudonyms. Whether the Sealand Skull conspiracy theory was a mere joke or fabricated to serve as a dishonest prop for the ancient alien theory remains unclear. What is clear is the utter dishonesty of the perpetrators of this hoax. **S**

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3. “Sealand Skull Update” *Terraforming Terra*, November 11, 2010 <https://bit.ly/2J5HlxZ>
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