

Are some things unknowable?

Word count: 944

## Object 1: Elongated Skulls



Figure 1: Elongated skulls found in Antarctica

(Old.archeo-news.ru, 2014).

The photo demonstrates elongated skulls found in Antarctica by a group of archeologists from the United States in 2014. I chose this object because I study biology at a high level(HL), so we study such things as DNA structure and from a scientific point of view, this topic is interesting.

I looked through a lot of information on the subject of elongated skulls, and more questions, disagreements came up between professional archeologists, which made the object even more unknowable. First of all, the shape of these skulls from a biological point of view is much larger than that of modern humans, as the skulls are bigger in volume and weight than normal for the human body. The eye socket is also larger than a human has. Why is the volume of skulls so big in size? The difference in DNA tests exacerbated the debate among scientists and led people to assume

that these were not human skulls. Technology at the moment does not allow us to find out their origin, which makes this object unknowable. Secondly, if it is believed that humanity did not visit Antarctica before the modern era, there is a discrepancy with the knowledge that humans did not communicate with each other while living on different continents. Due to the lack of knowledge in the **technological sphere**, it is impossible to identify, since innovations have not yet reached such a level as to determine the origin of the object by 100%. It is also currently unknown how people in antiquity moved between continents and got to the territory of Antarctica due to a lack of knowledge from a historical point of view. Knowledge in **history and technology** currently does not provide such an opportunity which makes this object unknowable.

## Object 2: Voynich Manuscript



Figure 2: Voynich Manuscript (Shaw G., 2020)

The picture demonstrates such an object as the Voynich manuscript, which was written in the 15th century. The manuscript is currently in the custody of the Yale University's Beinecke Rare Book Library from 1969 year.

I chose this object because at the age of 12, I went with a friend to the library and we found unusual books, the knowledge of which needed to be comprehended. We spent several hours a day poring over the contents of different books with symbols such as runes. For this reason I chose the Voynich manuscript, it is interesting what type of knowledge is enclosed there.

The manuscript contains knowledge about astronomy, biology, astrology, pharmaceuticals that were revealed through the illustrations. Scientists have been studying the manuscript since it was found, for years. Attempts to decipher it have previously been unsuccessful because the symbols were from different languages of the world. A large number of people, native speakers of different languages, were in the process of studying. However, no more records in the same language have been preserved, which makes it impossible to decipher and make this object unknowable since the knowledge contained in this book is written by different symbols of the world.

This is an indicator that the writer of manuscript(knower) wrote about knowledge that cannot be achieved due to a **lack of linguistic abilities and data**, despite the efforts of various **linguists** who are trying to decipher the manuscript, even understanding a large number of ancient forgotten languages. And the absence of connections between symbols and languages has created an inability to reconstruct the provenance of this language, making the object and the contents therein unknowable.

### Object 3: Photo of my grandfather



Figure 3: own photo

This is a picture of my grandfather on my dad's side, which was taken in a village in Kazakhstan called Urjar in 1970. I chose this object for the IA exhibition because I had never seen my grandfather and I wanted to write about him.

My grandfather Oshan passed away from illness at a young age when my dad was just born, so dad does not know much about his father. What is unknown to me is what kind of person my grandfather was, what kind of character he had. The knowledge and information I heard from my relatives and grandmother is a small part of his whole life. My grandmother is not alive either, so I cannot ask her what my grandfather was like. In her lifetime, I asked little about grandfather, because I was a kid, I had a maternal grandfather, so I did not feel the absence of my second grandfather. This photo is just the rest of information about him. I as a knower can not receive information about him. Personally, I do not know how he would have treated me, his son's first child. I believe he would have loved all of his grandchildren

and would have been a great grandfather, but this object(photo) cannot give feelings, information about my grandfather's personality and no one can tell about him.

Exactly what kind of character he had, what kind of life he had, how he grew up will remain unknown to me, because no one can tell much about him and this object too. Now I want to know more about him and his character, but all his children were too young to remember a lot. At this point I know very little information about him and have only seen two pictures where his face can be seen clearly. What kind of grandfather he would have been to all of his grandchildren will remain unknowable. So, in my personal life as well as in the personal life of many people some things(similar to this situation) are unknowable.

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