

THE DINOSAURS OF ACAMBARO

Waldemar Julsrud, a German hardware merchant in Acambaro, Mexico, was riding his horse on the lower slope of El Toro (The Bull) Mountain on a sunny morning in July, 1944. Suddenly, he spotted some partially exposed hewn stones and a ceramic object half buried in the dirt.

Waldemar dismounted and dug out of the ground the hewn stones as well as a few ceramic pieces. Julsrud, who was archaeologically astute, immediately realized that these ceramic pieces were unlike anything that he had seen. He was familiar with Tarascan, Aztec, Toltec, Mayan, Chupicauro, Inca, and Pre-Incan Indian civilizations. The objects he held in his hand were distinctively different than any other known Indian culture.

Waldemar, in 1923, was co-discoverer with Padre Fray Jose Marie Martinez of the Chupicauro culture at a site just eight miles away. When a few ceramic fragments were found at Chupicauro, Julsrud hired diggers to excavate. This discovery brought worldwide attention from archaeologists who at first mistakenly defined them as Tarascan, but later, they were correctly identified as a whole new Indian culture-the Chupicauro. The Chupicauro Civilization flourished from about 500 B.C. to 500 A.D., roughly a thousand years before the Tarascan.

Julsrud at age sixty-nine was on the brink of making a discovery that may prove to be the greatest archaeological discovery ever made. Waldemar hired a Mexican farmer, Odilon Tinajero, to dig in the area where the ceramic figurines were found and bring him any other similar objects. Soon Tinajero had a wheelbarrow full of ceramic pottery that had been excavated on El Toro Mountain.

Charles Hapgood notes that, "Julsrud was a shrewd businessman and he now made a deal with Tinajero that is very important for our story. He told Tinajero that he would pay him one peso (worth about 12 cents) for each piece he brought in."¹

Tinajero was very careful in the excavation process so as not to break the pieces, and the broken ones were cemented together before being brought to Julsrud.

Among the thousands of artifacts excavated were items that turned Julsrud's mansion into "the museum that scared scientists." Sculpted in various colors of clay were figurines of dinosaurs, various races of people: Eskimos, Asians, Africans, bearded Caucasians, Mongols, Polynesians, and objects that had cultural connections with the Egyptians and Sumerians as well as others.

The objects were made of clay and stone varying in size from a few inches long to statues three feet high and dinosaur objects four to five feet long. In the collection, that now numbered over twenty thousand, not one object could be found to be a duplicate of another. Each of the clay pieces had been individually made, without molds, skillfully

¹ Charles Hapgood. "Mystery in Acambaro: An Account of the Ceramic Collection of the Late Waldemar Julsrud in Acambaro." GTU. (Self Published: Mexico, 1972).

sculptured, and carefully decorated. In this collection of unequalled size, dinosaur figures numbering several hundred were scientifically identified as representing many species of dinosaurs: dinosaurs including duck-billed Trachodon, Gorgosaurus, horned Monoclonius, Ornitholestes, Titanosaurus, Triceratops, Stegosaurus, Paleococincus, Diplodocus, Podokosaurus, Struthiomios, Plesiosaur, Leviathan, Maiasaura, Rhamphorynchus, Iguanodon, Brachiosaurus, Pteranodon, Dimetrodon, Ichthyornis, Tyrannosaurus Rex, Rhynococephalia, and other unknown or yet unidentified dinosaur species.

These fantastic dinosaur figurines threaten the orthodox concepts and time scales in many fields of studies. Dr. Ivan T. Sanderson was amazed in 1955 to find that there was an accurate representation of the American dinosaur Brachiosaurus, almost totally unknown at that time to the general public. Sanderson wrote about this particular dinosaur in the Julsrud Collection,

“This figurine is a very fine, jet-black, polished-looking ware. It is about a foot tall. The point is it is an absolutely perfect representation of brachiosaurus, known only from East Africa and North America. There are a number of outlines of the skeletons in the standard literature but only one fleshed out reconstruction that I have ever seen. This is exactly like it.”

In the 1940's and 1950's, as the Julsrud Collection was amassing, the State of Guanajuato, Mexico was little explored paleontologically and archaeologically and remains so today. But here in the agriculturally rich Valley of Acambaro, within the last four thousand years, lived a civilization or civilizations that had an intimate first-hand knowledge of dinosaurs.

In 1999, Don Patton and I journeyed to Acambaro, about one hundred eighty miles north of Mexico City, to explore its mystery for ourselves. Soon after our arrival in Acambaro, it was revealed to us that the Julsrud Collection was locked up in storage and not available to the public. After a couple of days of negotiating with the Mayor, Secretary of Tourism, and the Director of the Acambaro Museum, we were given permission to view a portion of the collection. The storage area was ceremonially unlocked by the Mayor; dim light filtered through the shadows as we peered into the dusty rooms, and boxes were piled to the ceilings with artifacts wrapped in newspaper and haphazardly placed in crumbling cardboard containers.

We were officially given the city's conference room to view the artifacts as two Mexican policemen stood guard watching us armed with Ak-47 rifles and pistols. City employees scurried back and forth bringing boxes upstairs as I unwrapped ceramic figurines while Don professionally photographed them.

The collection at its largest numbered thirty-three thousand five hundred figurines including musical instruments, masks, idols, tools, utensils, statues, faces of races from many nations, and dinosaurs. The figurines eventually took over the twelve-room Julsrud

mansion crammed into every corner and lining the floor until Julsrud had to sleep in the bathtub, for that was the only place left.

In a six-hour period, we were able to unwrap a little more than eight hundred of the ceramic figurines. Working at a fast pace meant that the fourteen boxes had been opened and emptied of their contents onto the conference table. Among the items were about seventy-five exquisite dinosaur-like pieces.

There was an absolutely astonishing moment of breathless magnitude as one object was unwrapped, and there before us was a *Maiasaura* dinosaur figurine.

In the 1940's and 1950's, the *Maiasaura* was completely unknown. No hoaxer could have known of the *Maiasaura*'s existence much less made a model, for it wasn't until 1978 or 1979 that skeletons of adult *Maiasaura* were found with nests and babies.²

Don and I became overnight celebrities in Acambaro being interviewed on radio and television stations in Mexico. I handed out dinosaur t-shirts to politicians and suggested we could make Acambaro a tourist attraction with Dinosaurs of Acambaro t-shirts, postcards, and a dinosaur park. People would come from around the world to see the Acambaro Collection with dinosaurs.

I accidentally touched off a national scandal as I inquired, "How many boxes do you have in storage?" I was told there are sixty-four, and then I muttered to myself, "There were once thirty-three thousand five hundred figurines, and here, there can only be five to six thousand at most left." A newspaper reporter overheard me, and the next week, we once again became front-page news as an investigation was launched into the whereabouts of the artifacts.

Julsrud also stirred up controversy over the collection, but its gathering storm on the horizon of history took several years before releasing its full fury on the scientific community. Unconfined by academic restraints or burdened by preconceived ideas, he began to speculate as thousands of figurines were unearthed all baked by the open-fire method. The most startling sensational feature of the collection was dinosaurs and humans in close relationship to one another. Waldemar pondered the very real possibility that these artifacts came from a culture much older than the Olmecs, Mayans, or Chupicauro.

The collection contained evidence of a culture of vast antiquity. The objects pointed to a woodland setting, and that the Acambaro area was once a heavily forested area instead of a dry valley as it is today. Geologists have found that the valley itself was once filled by a great lake until about five or six thousand years ago. The site of the caches of ceramic pottery objects was once the beach of the lake. Originally, the objects were buried in sand. The fauna, plants, trees, and flowers representing the art of this unknown civilization were that of the woodland, lakes, and forest environment.

² The Dinosaur Encyclopedia. (Kingfisher Books: New York, N.Y.), p. 80.

Julsrud tried to gain the attention of the scientific community but was met with indifference and academic silence. Since archaeologists, paleontologists, historians, and anthropologists chose to ignore him, Julsrud proceeded to publish his own book in Spanish, Enigmas Del Pasado. Waldemar, in print, theorized that the colossal collection of ceramic and stone artifacts had been buried by a people who had experienced catastrophes. He conjectured that there had been a period of catastrophes that had changed the face of the earth, and that there must have been ancient civilizations wiped out by the catastrophes. His most radical suggestion that clashed violently with scientists was that man had existed contemporaneously with the dinosaurs.

Although there was sound evidence that Julsrud was on to something of major scientific importance, he was ridiculed by the authorities when his book was published.

Was there a precursor civilization in Acambaro during the Ice Age as geologists reckon time? In the collection are unmistakable representations of the one-humped American camel of the Ice Age, Ice Age horses, as well as of animals resembling rhinoceroses of extinct species. There are many figurines of giant monkeys such as actually existed in South America in the Pleistocene.

During excavations, among the figurines were found some teeth. These teeth were taken to Dr. George Gaylord Simpson in 1955, at that time, America's leading paleontologist, who worked at the American Museum of Natural History. He identified them as the teeth of *Equus Conversidans* Owen, an extinct horse of the Ice Age. In the Julsrud Collection are two figurines of *Equus Conversidans* Owen. The image of the Ice Age horse is also engraved on ceramic pots in the collection.

In 1947, upon the publication of Julsrud's book, a few newspapers and magazines in Mexico briefly reported on the discovery. But Julsrud could not get any scientists or authorities in Mexico to come and investigate for themselves the excavation of the figurines.

Finally, in 1950, an American newspaperman, Lowell Harmer, ventured to Acambaro to inspect the collection. Harmer went to the site of El Toro Mountain and photographed Julsrud and the digging while some dinosaur figurines were being extracted from under the Maquey roots in a new excavation. He reported, "Anyone would feel that these great saurians could only be created by long-gone artists who knew them well."³

The establishment scientists continued to act as if nothing of significance had happened in Acambaro that could threaten the evolutionary paradigm. Despite their efforts to downplay or explain away Julsrud's discoveries as that of an eccentric kook, the information was slowly leaking out to a wide audience that would take seriously the Julsrud Collection as a legitimate find.

William W. Russell, a Los Angeles newspaperman, was soon on the scene. Russell himself photographed the excavations as freshly dug pits produced objects coming out of

³ Lowell Harmer. "Mexico Finds Give Hint of Lost World." Los Angeles Times. (March 25, 1951).

the ground with roots entwining them.⁴ The objects must have been in the ground for many years for tree roots to grow around them at a depth of five or six feet beneath the earth. Russell reported that he judged from the evidence the objects to be very old.

The discoveries were now too far disseminated into the literature of the general public for scientists to intellectually suppress them with the cloak of academic silence. The professional archaeologists would have to deal with the irritating problem in Acambaro.

In 1952, Charles C. Dipeso of the Amerind Foundation felt the popular accounts circulating in the newspapers and magazines such as *Fate*, prevailed upon him to begin an examination of the strange collection. Samples were sent and laboratory tests of them “proved nothing.” Dipeso thought the tests would dismiss the collection as a hoax, because they would demonstrate them to be of modern manufacture.

The figurines could not be falsified merely because of the life forms representing Mesozoic reptiles. Dipeso, in June of 1952, arrived in Acambaro to examine the collection owned by Julsrud. Taking no more than four hours, he claimed to have viewed thirty-two thousand items in the mansion. In fact, he asserted his examination was very precise and thorough to the extent that he detected the figurines’ depressions forming eyes, mouth, and scales, to be sharp and new. No dirt was packed in any of the crevices.⁵

Dipeso must have been the bionic archaeologist handling objects at speeds that exceed those of superman. To have achieved this Herculean feat, he would have had to steadily inspect one hundred thirty-three artifacts per minute. In reality, it would take several days to unpack the massive jumble of intact, broken, and repaired pieces from the boxes. Once the boxed pieces were disentangled and set up with those already on display in the mansion, it would take many more days to even give a cursory examination.

Charles Dipeso said that further investigation revealed that a family living in the Acambaro area made the figurines during “the winter months while their fields lie idle.” Dipeso believed his family of hoaxers got their ideas from the local cinema, comic books, newspapers, or books from the local library.

Dipeso himself did not truly believe the Julsrud Collection to be fakes. Before he returned to America to write the articles denouncing the collection, Julsrud stated, “Mr. Dipeso declared to me that he had been completely convinced of the genuineness of my discovery. He wanted to buy for his museum a certain amount of pieces of Tarascan origin.” Julsrud would not sell any of the artifacts but sent Dipeso to another man who dealt in antiquities. That dealer told Dipeso that Julsrud’s ceramics came from a man and his three children who lived thirty minutes outside of town near the irrigation plant of Solis. Julsrud said, “Why then didn’t Dipeso go there and find out the truth? The

⁴ William N. Russell. “Did Man Tame the Dinosaurs?” *Fate*. (March, 1952), pp. 20-27; “Report on Acambaro.” *Fate*. (June, 1953), pp. 31-35.

⁵ Charles C. Dipeso. “The Clay Figurines of Acambaro, Guanajuato, Mexico.” *American Antiquity*. (April, 1953), pp. 388-389.

obligation of a serious scientist is to investigate himself and not give credence to the first man who tells him something.”

In the first place, it was against the archaeological code of ethics and illegal for Dipeso to be acquiring Indian artifacts to take back to his museum. Secondly, the “black market” antiquity dealer who sold Dipeso the artifacts wanted to make sure that Dipeso didn’t buy from Julsrud, so the dealer made up the story of the hoaxer family.

Francisco Aguitar Sanchaz, Superintendent of the National Irrigation Plant of Solis said, “That on the basis of four years intimate knowledge of the inhabitants of the entire area and of archaeological activity there, he could positively deny that there was any such ceramic production in the vicinity.” The Municipal President of Acambaro, Juan Terrazaz Carranza, issued on July 23, 1952, an official statement No.1109 refuting Dipeso’s allegation.

This Presidency under my direction ordered that an investigation be carried out in this matter, and has arrived at the conclusion that in this municipal area there does not exist any persons who makes these kinds of objects.

There are many other problems associated with Dipeso’s spurious allegations. He fails to mention that the ceramic artifacts of varying clay composition and styles have been individually and not mold-made. There were not only ceramic pieces but also stone pieces.

The ceramic collection has unsurpassed variety and beauty that has won the admiration of professional artists. No peasant family could possibly make thousands and thousands of non-duplicated sculptures with such skill and artistic finesse.

Earle Stanley Gardner, who practiced criminal law and became world-famous as an author of detective fiction, looked at the collection. Gardner voiced the expert opinion of a defense attorney when he said that if a group of fakers had made all the pieces, their style would be recognizable on the whole collection.

Every criminal, every criminal gang has its own method of operations. Police can often identify a criminal or gang from the method of a crime. It is obvious that no one individual or group could have made the pieces.

Charles Dipeso insisted in his insinuations that the collection was an elaborate hoax: the diggers making pits, burying the objects, and later digging them up. Dipeso finished his 1953 report with resounding confidence, “Our investigation proved conclusively that the figurines are not prehistoric and were not made by a superior prehistoric race that associated with dinosaurs.”⁶

⁶ Charles Dipeso. “The Clay Monsters of Acambaro.” *Archaeology*. (Summer, 1953), pp. 111-114.

Much of Dipeso's report was absolutely unfounded or mere conjecture. What would be the motive for faking the objects? Economically, at twelve cents a figure, for a hoaxer to manufacture the objects, to say nothing of the additional costs to bury them and then dig them up again, Tinajero, a poor Mexican farmer, could never have afforded to make thirty-three thousand five hundred figures losing enormous sums of money.

The collection is not only skillfully made but contains dinosaur species that only a highly educated person who had burrowed deep into the recesses of paleontological literature could have known of the rare life forms. Odilon Tinajero had neither the artistic competence nor educational background to perpetuate such a hoax. Tinajero left school in the fourth grade and could barely read or write.

Acambaro is a dry, arid, and treeless area, yet all the ceramic objects had been baked in open fires. There would have to have been huge truckloads of firewood consumed consistently which is very expensive in Acambaro. The smoke rising from the fire could not have possibly gone undetected by the entire community.

Professor Ramon Rivera of Acambaro High School's History faculty launched a month-long investigation interviewing people of all ages and occupations. Professor Rivera had a vast knowledge of the history of the area and close contacts with the inhabitants of Acambaro. Rivera filed this report,

The truth is that there is not the most remote idea suspicion of there having lived in Acambaro, or near or far from here, anyone who made in quantity or little by little such pieces. This fact has been investigated by all possible means, covering the time from more than a century ago up to now. There are old people living here who can still give details otherwise unrecorded from the date of the independence of this country.

Another consideration that is often ignored in the debate over the authenticity of the artifacts is that many of them are made of hard stones and not of ceramic. These stone objects show all the effects of erosion, and the stone objects are of the same style as the ceramics, and the erosion factor is almost impossible to fake.

In 1954, the storm of controversy surrounding the Julsrud Collection reached such a crescendo of interest that official archaeologists of the Mexican government decided to investigate. Dr. Eduardo Noguera, Director of Pre-Hispanic Monuments of the Instituto Nacional de Antropologiae Historia was the lead investigator. Dr. Noguera was accompanied by Rafael Orellana Ponciano Salazar and Antonio Pompa y Pompa of the Instituto Nacional de Antropologiciae Historia, and upon arrival, they inspected the collection and proceeded to El Toro Mountain to select undisturbed sites for excavation.

Dr. Noguera supervised the dig at a site that he and the other prominent Mexican archaeologists selected. After several hours of digging, many figures were discovered.

The archaeologists declared that the pieces gave every sign of antiquity and of having been buried a long time ago. The figurines were dug up in the presence of a number of witnesses who included people from the local schools and members of the Chamber of Commerce. Immediately, the archaeologists congratulated Julsrud on his remarkable discoveries. Two of the archaeologists promised to write about the discovery in a scientific journal.

Noguera realized that the dinosaur figurines posed a problem that could ruin his professional career. The archaeologists simply faced a dilemma to either tell the truth, that regardless of what anybody would think, they had chosen a site and dug up dinosaur figures, or to hide the truth in some alternative explanation.

Noguera went back to Mexico City, and three weeks later, submitted a report with his subordinates that the collection must be a hoax because of the life forms involved—dinosaurs. Dr. Noguera wrote,

Actually in spite of the apparent scientific legality with which these objects were found, it is a case of reproduction and to say falsification, made in a relatively recent epoch. In my opinion it is composed of three types of objects one of them figurines which pretend to be time reproductions of animals extinct for millions of years; possibly the maker of these objects was inspired by some books on paleontology which were in vogue at the end of the past century or the beginning of the present one.

Julsrud was gravely disappointed that in a span of a few weeks, the archaeologists first vindicated the collection and then cleverly maneuvered to deny their own discoveries. Julsrud, undaunted by all the academic goofy dust sprinkled over the collection by rigid orthodox scientists to make it go away, pressed on in his efforts to convince the skeptics. Soon stepping into the scene in Acambaro, a man who would ridicule the contentions of Julsrud's opponents with a series of arguments and facts that would prove to be indisputable.

In the summer of 1955, Charles Hapgood, the Professor of History and Anthropology at Keene State College of the University of New Hampshire, spent several months in Acambaro and conducted a very detailed investigation of the collection. Charles Hapgood had already begun to distinguish himself as the author of a number of books which later included, Earth's Shifting Crust (1958), Maps of the Ancient Sea Kings (1966), and The Path of the Pole (1970).

Hapgood excavated a number of sites that were on previously undisturbed ground and found many pieces of ceramic figurines of the "Julsrud" type. To eliminate any possibility of fraud that Tinajero or anyone else had manufactured the ceramics, Hapgood

decided to excavate beneath a house that had been built in 1930, long before any artifacts were found on El Toro Mountain. They found a house directly over the site owned by the Chief of Police and asked permission to dig beneath the floor of his house. Permission was granted, and they dug a six-foot deep pit beneath the hard concrete floor of the livingroom, unearthing dozens of the controversial objects. Since the house had been built twenty-five years previously, it exonerated Julsrud, eliminated the hoax theory, and negated Dipeso's as well as Noguera's reports at all the important points.

In 1968, Charles Hapgood returned to Acambaro accompanied by Earle Stanley Gardner, whose detective mysteries became the basis for the famous Perry Mason television programs. Mr. Gardner, trained in criminology and a past investigator of archaeological problems, was himself supremely impressed with the vastness and variety of the collection. It was quite clear that Mr. Gardner considered the theory of the collection being fakes completely asinine.

The radiocarbon 14 method of dating was still in its infancy, but Hapgood acquired specimens for C-14 testing.⁷ Gardner and Andrew Young (inventor of the Bell Helicopter) financed the testing.

Hapgood submitted the samples to the Laboratory of Isotopes, Inc in New Jersey. The results were as follows:

Sample No. 1: (I-3842) 3590 + - 100 (C. 1640 B.C.)
Sample No. 2: (I-4015) 6480 + - 170 (C. 4530 B.C.)
Sample No. 3: (I-4031) 3060 + - 120 (C. 1110 B.C.)

The radiocarbon dates of up to 4,500 B.C. for Carbon on the ceramics would make the collection the oldest in the Western Hemisphere.

In 1972, Arthur Young submitted two of the figurines to Dr. Froelich Rainey, the Director of the Pennsylvania Museum for Thermoluminescent Dating. The MASCA Lab had obtained thermoluminescent dates of up to 2,700 B.C. In a letter dated September 13, 1972, addressed to Mr. Young, Dr. Rainey said,

. . . Now after we have had years of experimentation both here and at the lab at Oxford, we have no doubt about the dependability of the thermoluminescent method. We may have errors of up to 5-10% in absolute dating, but we are no longer concerned about unexpected bugs that might put the whole system in doubt. I should also point out, that we were so concerned about the extraordinarily ancient dates of these figures, that Mark Han in our lab made an average of 18 runs on each one of the four samples. Hence, there is a very substantial bit of research on these particular pieces . . . All in all the lab stands on these dates for the Julsrud material, whatever that means in terms of archaeological dating in Mexico,

⁷ Taylor and Berger. "American Antiquity." (Vo. 33, No. 3, 1968).

or in terms of “fakes verses authentic pieces”.

But when the lab at the University of Pennsylvania found out that dinosaurs were part of the collection, they conducted a retest and retracted the thermoluminescent dates as invalid. They came up with a ridiculous assertion that the ceramics gave off regenerated light signals and could be no more than thirty years old.

A thermoluminescent technician admitted that no other ceramics existed, in his experience, that produced regenerated light signals, and no other thermoluminescent dating of ceramics had ever been done by utilization of a regenerated light signal. In short, the testing was a hocus pocus laboratory trick to avoid the obvious conclusion that dinosaurs and man lived together.

John Tierney demonstrated the phoniness of the University of Pennsylvania’s thermoluminescent test. Tierney had two fragments of Julsrud-type ceramics excavated at El Toro Mountain in Acambaro, and in 1956, in Julrud’s presence, Tierney submitted these pieces to Dr. Victor J. Bortolet, Director of Research at Daybreak Nuclear/Archaeometrics Laboratory Services for dating. Dr. Bortolet determined the pieces’ upper limit of age to 2,000 years old. He definitely demolished the MASCA Report of the objects being made thirty or even a hundred years ago.⁸

John Tierney took a half dozen samples of Julsrud ceramics of different clay compositions to a team at Ohio State University. The team of experts consisted of Dr. J. O. Everhart, Chairman of the Department of Ceramic Engineering, Dr. Earle R. Caley, world-renown archaeological chemist, and Dr. Ernest G. Ehlers, a mineralogist in the Geology Department. Tierney said, they reported that they could not believe that the artifacts had been made in modern times, nor could they probably have been made by some amateur who tried to perpetuate a fraud. Upon his notifying them that they had authenticated Julsrud artifacts, they lapsed into a profound and apparently permanent silence.

In 1997, B.C. Video released the program, “Jurassic Art”, with the Acambaro segment, which was originally supposed to have been a part of NBC’s television special, “The Mysterious Origins of Man”. Neil Steede, who is President of the Early Sites Research Society West and the Mexican Epigraphic Society, in the program, attempts to debunk the collection as of recent manufacture. Steede, toward the end of the program, takes two samples from the Julsrud-type ceramics: one of a female figure and the other a dinosaur figure. The samples were sent to an independent laboratory and startling results came back, for the female figure was dated at 4,000 years old and the dinosaur figure at 1,500 years old. Steede tap dances around the authenticity of the artifacts, as he embarrassingly embraces the female figurine’s 4,000 year old date as credible, while he waltzes past the dinosaur figurine’s date of 1,500 years old as unreliable for the laboratory test did not give the true reading.

⁸ John H. Tierney. “Pseudoscientific Attacks on Acambaro Artifacts: The Ceramic Technology of Intellectual Suppression,” World Explorer Magazine. (Vol. 1, #4), pp. 52-61.

In reality, the dinosaur figurine creates too much tension for orthodox science, and Steede must find an “out” by throwing away the C-14 date.

The Japanese company, Nissi, sponsored a television crew to go to Acambaro and produce a program for Japanese television regarding the Acambaro figurines. The program entitled, “Did the Ancients See Dinosaurs” was aired on February 2, 1997, in Japan. There is a stunning moment in the program as the Japanese narrator is looking over an animal figurine, and he holds it up next to his Japanese book on dinosaurs. Amazingly, the Julsrud dinosaur figurine matches the color drawing of an *Amargasaurus Cazaai* in the Japanese dinosaur book. The narrator quickly picks up another dinosaur figure and thumbs through the dinosaur book. This figure is very similar to the *Sauralophus Osborni* as drawn in the Japanese dinosaur book. The narrator ponders the perplexing problem that ancient people about four thousand five hundred years ago must have seen dinosaurs, because they could not have known what they looked like by merely seeing their skeletons in the ground. The narrator points out that when modern man found dinosaur skeletons such as Sir Richard Owen, that the life-sized models of *Megalosaurus*, *Iguanodon*, and *Hylaeosaurus* were ridiculously inaccurate.

Investigation of Dinosaurs of Acambaro

The claim has been made that only Waldemar Julsrud’s excavations ever discovered such distinctive ceramic objects, especially dinosaur figurines. Why haven’t other excavations found Julsrud-type ceramics and dinosaur figurines?

In August of 1999, Don Patton and I ventured back to Acambaro to seek answers to such questions that have plagued the Julsrud Collection. By chance while having dinner at a local Acambaro restaurant, we stumbled upon Ernesto Narrete Marines. In the 1970’s, Ernesto was the Commander of the Federal Police for the Celaya Zone of Guanajuato State, which includes the Acambaro area. Ernesto received a tip one night in 1978 that illegal excavations were taking place on Chivo (Goat) Mountain, and that the artifacts were being traded for pistols, rifles, and machine guns as well as other weapons on the “black market”. Commander Ernesto Marines, who was trained by Scotland Yard, conducted a thorough investigation. The investigation revealed that artifacts dug up on Chivo Mountain were being taken to the Laredo border and traded for arms. A federal crime was being committed, and Ernesto apprehended Jaime Aquirre and Raul Hernandez on Chivo Mountain. Jaime and Raul had in their possession three thousand Julsrud-type pottery figurines. Ernesto has the collection catalogued as evidence, and he himself observed nine dinosaur figurines. These illegally excavated genuine artifacts were handed over to Dr. Luis Mota, Mayor of Acambaro, 1978-79, and kept in City Hall. The artifacts were used as *prima facie* evidence in the trial of Jaime Aquirre and Raul Hernandez. Jaime and Raul were sentenced to the federal prison in Mexico City where they are still serving time. The fact that Jaime and Raul were sentenced for trading genuine artifacts should silence the critics who say that no other Julsrud-type ceramic pieces have ever been found. If the men had been peddling phony pottery fakes of

modern manufacture, they could never have traded them for arms and would not have been sentenced to prison.

Ernesto drew sketches for us of the dinosaurs he had seen in the collection.

While in Acambaro, we were introduced to Dr. J. Antonio Villia Herrejon, who has a medical practice in Guadalajara and Acambaro. Dr. Herrejon was involved in the excavations on Bull Mountain and Goat Mountain from 1950-1955. Dr. Herrejon, along with others still living, were all adamant that the ground they dug in was hard packed with no loose soil. Twice Dr. Herrejon accompanied Julsrud on burros to an area below Goat Mountain that was near a lake. There, he said, on terrain that was overgrown with grass and cactus, they dug up many ceramic pottery pieces including enough dinosaur figurines to fill two bags to be carried back on a burro.

Antonio Herrejon recalled that in the 1940's and early 1950's virtually nothing was known about dinosaurs in Mexico. They had no books, pamphlets, matchbox covers, movies, or other information about dinosaurs. Herrejon postulated that the only dinosaur skeleton on display in Mexico in the 1940's was that of a Brontosaurus at the Chupa Railroad Station in Mexico City.

The figurines he saw in the late 1940's and 1950's were simply curious-looking creatures that only many years later were correctly identified as dinosaur species. Dr. Herrejon said that even most of the Brontosaurus-looking dinosaurs did not look like a typical saurian dinosaur. We pressed him as to what he meant by not typical. He replied, "They had spines all down their backs-little spines." We drew dinosaurs with dermal spines and Antonio pointed vigorously stating in Spanish, "That's it, that's it!" Dr. Herrejon had unwillingly helped to verify the Julsrud dinosaur figurines as authentic. No one knew in the 1940's and 1950's that some species of saurian dinosaurs had dermal spines. It was the work of Stephen Czerkas in a 1992 report that brought to light this aspect of dinosaur anatomy.

Dr. Herrejon was intimately aware of the immensity and details of the thirty-three thousand five hundred ceramic pieces in the Julsrud Collection. He said it was astonishing that not one piece was a duplicate of another. They were all individually distinct. This fact was also observed by others who closely examined the collection. Antonio commented, "If there was a fabrication, who was its artist? No single artist could make thirty-three thousand five hundred figurines, all different in style. If there was a hoax, then there must have been many artists. How could such a conspiracy be kept silent all these years? Surely, someone would have known about such activities."

I inquired of Dr. Herrejon, what was on the artifacts when they were dug up? Antonio said that they were encrusted with dirt and other materials (patina). During Easter week of 1951, Antonio spent two days with Julsrud cleaning the dirt and patina off recently dug ceramic pieces. Herrejon and Julsrud did not realize that later, the absence of patina on the objects would erupt into a question of accusations that they could not be either old or authentic. Julsrud ignorantly commenced the cleaning of all the artifacts in the 1940's,

having it done by Tinejero and his helpers. However, there are many eye-witnesses who saw Julsrud's excavating of the ceramic pieces and confirm that the artifacts had patina and dirt on them.

In my handling of several pieces of the Julsrud Collection, I have observed pieces that still have dirt embedded in the crevices as well as some patina on the surface.