This refers to the proposition that human civilisation is the product of an intelligent alien visiting the earth during prehistoric times and establishing contact with human beings. The origin of various religious beliefs, for instance, has been attributed to alien gods establishing contact with people prior to the age of recorded history. The ancient astronaut hypothesis was first proposed by Swiss writer Erich von Däniken in his 1969 book *Chariots of the Gods?* It has been rejected overwhelmingly by scientists who consider the idea to be pseudoscientific due to the lack of any credible scientific evidence.