

# Study: Bronze disk is astronomical clock

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A mysterious Bronze Age disk has reportedly been identified by a Hamburg, Germany, scientist as being one of the world's first astronomical clocks.

The 3,600-year-old Sky Disc of Nebra, discovered four years ago when German grave robbers tried to sell it on the international market, indicates Bronze Age man had a sophisticated sense of time, The Times of London reported Thursday.

"We have been dramatically underestimating the prehistoric peoples," said Harald Meller, chief archaeologist of Saxony-Anhalt, where the disc was found.

The bronze disc is nearly 12 inches in diameter with a blue-green patina and inlaid with a gold sun, moon and 32 stars.

Grave robbers using metal detectors found it in 1999 alongside a pile of bronze axes and swords in a deep forest at the Nebra settlement, The Times reported.

Since the disk's recovery, archaeologists and astronomers had been trying to discover its function. Astronomer Ralph Hansen determined the disc was an attempt to co-ordinate the solar and lunar calendars to tell Bronze Age Man when to plant seeds and when to make trades, giving him an almost modern sense of time, The Times of London said.

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