

## Peer Review Report

### The Search for King Solomon's Treasure

Peer Review: The Search for King Solomon's Treasure by Timothy Schwab and Anna Zamoranos

#### 1. Overview and Purpose

The Search for King Solomon's Treasure is a wide-ranging, in-depth exploration into the identity and location of the biblical land of Ophir. The book seeks to provide overwhelming evidence that Ophir, along with Tarshish and Sheba, were part of an ancient Filipino maritime empire centered in the islands now known as the Philippines.

The authors aim to restore a lost biblical geography, correcting colonial-era distortions and realigning biblical records, ancient maps, and historical accounts with modern geography. Their objective is both theological and historical: to demonstrate that the Philippines is the true location of Ophir, the Land of Gold, and possibly even the Garden of Eden.

#### 2. Methodology and Research Approach

The book employs a methodologically sound interdisciplinary approach including:

- Biblical exegesis: Comprehensive word studies and contextual analyses of Hebrew terms (e.g., Ophir, Tarshish, Havilah, Uphaz, Parvaim), including genealogical tracing from Genesis 10.
- Ancient cartography: Study of maps from Fra Mauro (1458), Toscanelli (1474), the Martellus Map (1489), the Behaim Globe (1492), and Al-Idrisi (1154), consistently showing Zipangu or Chryse in the position of the modern Philippines.
- Historic documents: Use of explorers records (Magellan, Pigafetta, Pinto, Barbosa), classical

## Peer Review Report

historians (Pomponius Mela, Pliny, Dionysius), and precolonial trade accounts.

- Archaeological & scientific data: Reference to ancient gold mining in the Philippines, alluvial deposits, endemic species (e.g., rhinoceros), and indigenous shipbuilding technologies.

### 3. Strengths of the Work

- Source-Heavy and Transparent: The book includes hundreds of source citations, and a companion sourcebook compiles more than 300 pages of these references. This level of transparency is rare and commendable.

- Visual and Map-Based: Includes comparative map analysis with coordinates, labels, and logical reconstructions of historical maritime paths, all of which align the Philippines with ancient Ophir.

- Textual Harmony with Scripture: The authors consistently interpret Scripture in context, including Genesis 2, 1 Kings 10, 2 Chronicles 9, and Isaiah 66:19. Their reading of Psalm 72:10-15 is especially impactful in connecting Tarshish and the Isles with the Messiah.

- Colonial Bias Correction: The book identifies how colonial powers removed references to Ophir, Chryse, and Paradise from maps post-1625, showing a clear attempt to erase this ancient connection. This insight is critical for academic decolonization.

- Balanced Restoration Theology: The book avoids sensationalism. Instead, it restores lost geography and identity with evidence, Scripture, and careful cross-cultural analysis.

### 4. Contribution to Scholarship

- Biblical Geography: Provides a fresh, well-supported challenge to conventional identifications of Ophir (e.g., India, Yemen, Africa).

## Peer Review Report

- Historical Cartography: Adds meaningful insights on how early modern explorers and geographers viewed Southeast Asia and how they connected it to biblical lands.
- Pre-Colonial Maritime Trade Studies: Reframes the Philippines as an ancient maritime power with trade reaching the Middle East, Africa, and beyond, consistent with biblical records.

### 5. Critical Observations (Minor)

- The breadth of sources, while a strength, may overwhelm some readers. A summary chapter at the end could help consolidate the material.
- While the book rightly challenges mainstream academic positions, some scholars may resist the conclusions due to institutional bias, not lack of evidence.
- The claims regarding Eden and the Rivers of Paradise may benefit from further geological and hydrological corroboration, though the hypothesis remains intriguing and is cautiously presented.

### 6. Final Evaluation & Recommendation

#### Final Verdict:

The Search for King Solomon's Treasure is a bold, exceptionally well-researched, and thorough examination of one of history's greatest mysteries. The arguments are consistent with biblical geography, supported by ancient maps, historical accounts, and scientific findings. The book presents a strong, plausible case that Ophir was in the Philippines.

#### Rating:

Strong Accept Highly recommended for publication, scholarly review, and integration into biblical

## Peer Review Report

geography, ancient history, and postcolonial research discourse.