

On Edward Bulwer-Lytton: Agharta, Shambhala, Vril and the Occult Roots of Nazi Power

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Introduction and Summary

Some time ago I began reading the novel, *Zanoni*, by Edward Bulwer-Lytton. Near the very beginning of the novel, I read the following passage: "Plato here expresses four kinds of mania, by which I desire to understand enthusiasm and the inspiration of the gods: Firstly, the musical, secondly, the telestic or mystic; thirdly, the prophetic; and fourthly, that which belongs to love." Well, I did not recall anything about "Plato's four manias," and so I did a quick search of the Internet, and came up with the following paragraph, from the article, "Atumpan Drummers and Marsyas' Flute: Exploring Parallels Between African and Greek Conceptions of State" (1995):

"In the *Phaedrus* we read the following ironic words from the Western world's first great rational philosopher: "Our greatest blessings come to us by way of madness [*mania*] which indeed is a divine gift" (*Phaedrus*, 244a). It is here that we also learn of four kinds of *mania* for which the *telestic* variety denotes ritualistic madness (attributable to Dionysus). The remaining three kinds

of mania include the *poetic*, the *erotic* and the prophetic (*mantic*). Later, in the *Laws*, we learn that the *telestic* rites that Plato had in mind were characterized by rites of initiation, sacrifices, dance and music (*Laws*, 791a). While it is difficult at times to discern Plato's true opinion on specific matters, even from the most scholarly reading of his dialogues, the fact that Plato perceived of a general and useful social end through mania, poetry and music should become clear from the *Phaedrus* and other dialogues that support this contention. It is clear from a continued reading of the *Phaedrus* (244d-e) that the *telestic* kind of mania, which we shall take to be essentially a form of trance-possession, consists of both good and bad kinds. The crisis kind of mania is associated with human disease, attributed to a "weakness of the soul," for which Plato saw the need to purge from his state by various means. By Plato's account, the diseased individual can be delivered from their ordeal by those accomplished in achieving divinatory trances (here he is speaking of the *mantic* variety consisting essentially of a kind of prophetic diagnosis) followed by a recovery through purifications and rites (i.e., the act of *telestic* mania). In brief, the diviner determines the nature of the disease by divining the deity responsible so that appropriate rituals may be performed to appease the deity. The critical matter for Plato was to ascertain the manner in which one becomes "*correctly* entranced and possessed." [emphasis added]. The answer that he came to adopt was that the good aspect of trance is the kind brought on *by ritual* that has been passed down through the generations."

The reason why I was reading *Zanoni* was that I had once seen a reference to it, in Rudolf Steiner's discussion of the Guardian of the Threshold in his book *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment* (available on the Internet at <http://www.elib.com/Steiner/Books/>). On an idle day not too long ago I recalled the *Zanoni* reference. I searched for *Zanoni* on the Internet, and found a copy at The Gutenberg Project's website, <http://www.gutenberg.org> .

(In case you don't know about The Gutenberg Project, I will say a few words about it. It is a truly wonderful activity that has been going on for a couple of decades. The Gutenberg Project, directed by Michael S. Hart at Carnegie-Mellon University (my alma mater), places works of literature on the Internet. Here is a statement describing the Project, taken from the Project's website: "Project Gutenberg is the oldest producer of free electronic books (eBooks or etexts) on the Internet. Our collection of more than 13,000 eBooks was produced by hundreds of volunteers. Most of the Project Gutenberg eBooks are older literary works that are in the public domain in the United States. All may be freely downloaded and read, and redistributed for non-commercial use...." The works are mainly those for which the copyright has expired, and so they are mainly older works. The books are typed into computer-readable text files by volunteers. The original goal of the project is to give away one trillion e-text files by December 31, 2001. It is still going strong. If you are interested in downloading a copy of a book that you read as a child, such as Edgar Rice Burroughs' *John Carter of Mars*, you can almost certainly find it at the Project Gutenberg website (<http://www.gutenberg.org>).)

Over the course of the past year or so, I have seen an increasing number of references to Bulwer-Lytton (variously referred to in bibliographies and references as Bulwer, Lytton, Bulwer Lytton, Bulwer-Lytton, Edward George Bulwer-Lytton, First Baron Lytton, or Edward Bulwer, Lord Lytton), and so I decided to "look him up" on the Internet. Bulwer-Lytton was an English novelist, playwright and politician who lived 1803-1873. He was one of the most prolific novelists of his day. He is now remembered mainly for his work, *The Last Days of Pompeii*, which was published in 1834. *Wikipedia* (online encyclopedia) observes the following about his current-day reputation: A prolific novelist in his day, he is now almost forgotten, his name living on in the annual Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest, in which contestants have to supply the openings of terrible (imaginary) novels. This was inspired by his novel *Paul Clifford*, which opens with the famous words,

"It was a dark and stormy night"

or to give the sentence in its full glory:

"It was a dark and stormy night; the rain fell in torrents – except at occasional intervals, when it was checked by a violent gust of wind which swept up the streets (for it is in London that our scene lies), rattling along the housetops, and fiercely agitating the scanty flame of the lamps that struggled against the darkness."

The opening phrase was popularized by the *Peanuts* comic strip: Snoopy would often begin with it at the typewriter. Winners in the contest capture the rapid changes in point of view, the florid language, and the atmosphere of the full sentence.

A second contest, the Lyttle Lytton contest (<http://adamcadre.ac/lyttle.html>), also asks for opening sentences of terrible novels, but limits entries to 25 words maximum. The contest has run from 1 January to 15 April in 2001 through 2004.

There is actually a rather long sequence of events leading to my coming across, and taking more than casual notice of, Bulwer-Lytton's work. First, as a boy, I read many of Edgar Rice Burroughs' novels – not so much the Tarzan series, but mainly the Martian series and a few of his others. One of these was *Pellucidar*, which describes a "journey to the center of the earth." Over the years since then, I have had a tendency to notice books about subterranean civilizations. It turns out that there are quite a few of them. Here is a quote from *Arktos*, by Joscelyn Godwin: "The literature of the Romantic era, needless to say, is rich in fantasies of polar mysteries and lands within the earth. The best known works are probably George Sand's *Laura ou le voyage dans le crystal* (Laura, or the voyage on the Crystal); Edgar Allen Poe's *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*; Alexandre Dumas' *Isaac Laquédem*; Bulwer Lytton's *The Coming Race*; Jules Verne's *Voyage au centre de la terre* (Voyage to the Center of the Earth) and *Le Sphinx des glaces* (The Sphinx of the Ice). Novels by later and less distinguished authors include William Bradshaw's *The Goddess of Atvatabar* (1892), Robert Ames Bennet's *Thyra, A Romance of the Polar Pit* (1901), Willis George Emerson's *The Smoky God* (1908) and the Pellucidarian stories of Edgar Rice Burroughs, creator of Tarzan." Godwin might also have mentioned H. G. Wells' novel, *The Time Machine*.

All of the novels mentioned above are simply novels, represented as such (adventure stories of the science-fiction / fantasy genre). In addition to these works, however, there is a large body of literature dealing with subterranean themes that is of a quite different nature – an occult, or esoteric nature, as opposed to an "adventure-story" nature. This is the collection of works dealing with the legends / myths of Shambhala (or Shamballah or other similar spellings) and Agharta (or Agarttha, or Agarttha, or Asgartha, or other phonetically-similar spellings). The terms Shambhala and Agharta refer to a mythical kingdom inhabited by spirits that monitor and control the world. Some sources consider them to be the same thing, while others consider them to be distinct kingdoms that oppose each other. Yet other sources describe Shambhala as the capital city of the kingdom of Agharta. Shambhala (the Shangri-la of James Hilton's *The Lost Horizon* (1933)) is sometimes considered to be above ground, and Agharta subterranean (although some sources state just the reverse). One is referred to as the "left-hand" way, and the other is the "right-hand" way. One represents the forces of light and the other the forces of darkness. The legend of Agharta was popularized by Joseph Alexandre Saint-Yves d'Alveydre in his book, *Mission de l'Inde* (Mission of India in Europe, 1886). The legend of Shambhala is recounted in the book, *Beasts, Men and Gods* by Ferdinand Ossendowski (1923). Other

sources of information include the books by Nicholas Roerich (*Altai-Himalaya*(1929), *The Heart of Asia* (1929) and *Shambhala* (1930), *The Way to Shambhala* by Edwin Bernbaum.

Shambhala and Agartha are mythical in the same sense as the continents of Lemuria (Mu) and Atlantis – they exist in a different “dimension” (or “level of materiality”; or “density,” or “vibration,” to use current New-Age terminology) from that of today’s physical reality / world, and are reached by means such as meditation, hypnotic regression and astral projection. Edwin Bernbaum’s book, *The Way to Shambhala*, contains the following passage:

“An old Tibetan story tells of a young man who set off on the quest for Shambhala. After crossing many mountains, he came to the cave of an old hermit, who asked him, “Where are you going across these wastes of snow?”
“To find Shambhala,” the youth replied.
“Ah, well then, you need not travel far,” the hermit said. “The kingdom of Shambhala is in your own heart.”

The French mystic René Guénon discusses the kingdom of Agharta (spelled Agarthā) in his 1927 book, *Le Roi du Monde* (The King of the World). It is the reputed seat of the “Ascended Masters” (the Hierarchy, the Enlightened Masters, Hidden Masters, Spiritual Masters, Adepts, Initiates, Watchers, Immortals, Ancient Ones, etc.), and the “Great White Brotherhood” (Great White Lodge, Universal Brotherhood, etc.). Shambhala is the reputed seat of the Illuminati (Black Lodge, etc.) (but, depending on the source, the roles of Agharta and Shambhala with respect to “goodness” and “light” (and “above ground” and “underground”) are frequently reversed).

The location of Shambhala / Agarthā is specified either interior to the Earth or on its surface, in the latter case usually in or near the Himalaya Mountains, or in the far north. The apparent reason for the conflicting views on the exact nature of either is the fact that observation of either is evidently restricted to telepathic / telestic means (e.g., Akasha Chronicle / Akashic records, hypnotic regression, astral projection), which are notoriously unreliable and inconsistent. References to subterranean places includes not just cities and kingdoms, but vast networks of underground tunnels. As is the case for Shambhala / Agharta, and for Hyperborea / Lemuria / Atlantis, these tunnels are never identified or located by physically objective or repeatable means.

There is a strong link between mythical cities and Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs). On his trip to search for Shambhala, Nicholas Roerich relates the following experience (*Altai-Himalaya*, (1929) pp. 361-362):

“On August fifth [1927] – something remarkable! We were in our camp in the Kukunor district not far from the Humboldt Chain. In the morning about half-past nine some of our caravaneers noticed a remarkably big black eagle flying above us. Seven of us began to watch this remarkable bird. At this same moment another of our caravaneers remarked, “There is something far above the bird.” And he shouted in his astonishment. We all saw, in a direction from north to south, something big and shiny reflecting the sun, like a huge oval moving at great speed. Crossing our camp this thing changed in its direction from south to southwest. We even had time to take our field glasses and saw quite distinctly an oval form with shiny surface, one side of which as brilliant from the sun.”

The belief that UFOs are terrestrial in origin (but come from a different “dimension” or “density” or “parallel universe”) is strongly held today. (See, e.g., *Abduction: Human Encounters with*

Aliens by John E. Mack; *Secret Life: Firsthand, Documented Accounts of UFO Abductions* by David M. Jacobs; *Sight Unseen: Science, UFO Invisibility and Transgenic Beings* by Budd Hopkins; *The Adventure of Self-Discovery* by Stansilav Grof; *The High Strangeness of Dimensions, Densities and the Process of Alien Abduction* by Laura Knight-Jadczyk; and several of David Icke's books, including *The Robot's Rebellion, ...and the truth shall set you free*, *The Biggest Secret*, and *Children of the Matrix*.) Alternatively, many sources suggest an "Extraterrestrial Hypothesis" (ETH), in which UFOs come from faraway places (e.g., Orion, Sirius, Cassiopeia) (whether from our own dimension or not) (see, e.g., *The Mammoth Book of UFOs* by Lynn Picknett or *The World's Greatest UFO & Alien Encounters* (anonymous, 2002, Chancellor Press / Octopus Publishing Group, London).

It is in the occult category of subterranean or Shambhala-Agartha literature in which Bulwer-Lytton's name frequently arises. Bulwer-Lytton had a profound effect on events of both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He had a passion for occult studies, and used his knowledge of the occult as the basis for several of his novels, including *Zanoni* (1842), *A Strange Story* (1862) and *The Coming Race* (1871) (all available, by the way, from the Gutenberg Project). His work strongly influenced Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, founder of the Theosophy spiritualist movement in the late nineteenth century, and the Nazi movement of the early twentieth century. I shall present a number of quotes from the following four sources, describing this influence: *The King of the World* by René Guénon; *Shambhala* by Victoria LePage; *The Occult Roots of Nazism* by Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke; and *Arktos: The Polar Myth in Science, Symbolism and Nazi Survival* by Joscelyn Godwin.

(Other sources of information on subterranean or hollow worlds include: *The Lost World of Agharti: The Mystery of Vril Power* by Alec Maclellan (lots of detailed history); *Lost Continents and the Hollow Earth* by David Hatcher Childress and Richard Shaver (esp. the article, "The Underground World of Central Asia" by Childress); *Subterranean Worlds inside Earth* by Timothy Green Beckley; *The Hollow Earth Enigma* by Alec Maclellan; *Hollow Planets: A Feasibility Study of Possible Hollow Worlds* by Jan Lamprecht (very large bibliography); and *Our Mysterious Spaceship Moon* by Don Wilson. In the matter of mythic or nonphysical worlds, there is a vast literature, including, for example, *The History of Atlantis* by Louis Spence; *Edgar Cayce on Atlantis* by Edgar Evans Cayce; *The Legend of Atlantis* by Eliah; *The Story of Atlantis and Lost Lemuria* by W. Scott-Elliot; *Cosmic Memory: Prehistory of Earth and Man* by Rudolf Steiner (available on the Internet from <http://www.elib.com/Steiner/Books/> (detailed description of nonphysical aspects of Lemuria / Atlantis); *The Complete Ascension Manual* by Joshua David Stone (brief history of Lemuria / Atlantis); and *Telos* by Dianne Robbins ("New-Age" orientation, limited list of references).)

Madame Blavatsky was influenced not only by Bulwer-Lytton, but by a French writer, Louis Jaccoliot, who appears to have been the first Western writer to refer to the mystical kingdom of Agartha (which he spelled Asgartha). He authored twenty-one books in his lifetime, including *La Bible dans l'Inde* (The Bible in India) (1868); *Le Fils de Dieu* (The Son of God) (1873); *Le Spiritisme dans le Monde* (Spiritualism in the World) (1875); *Histoire des Vierges* (History of the Virgins) (1879); and *Occult Sciences in India* (1884).

Why is it of interest to comment on Bulwer-Lytton's writings? Because, almost solely because of his writings the Theosophy movement began, and Nazism was inspired to attempt to take over the world. The pen is, in fact, mightier than the sword – since it influences and controls it. Today, largely because of the work and inspiration of early writers like Bulwer-Lytton, the New Age movement is growing incredibly fast, from almost nothing a few decades ago other than a few people interested in Edgar Cayce and yoga. As the industrial world runs out of petroleum,

massive change will occur. What happens at this time will be controlled, as it always has been, by those of the strongest spiritual belief and commitment. Bulwer-Lytton's writings led, rather directly, to the assumption of power by Adolf Hitler, and the Second World War. It will be interesting to see what happens next.

Many people discount things unseen, and pay little attention to occult or esoteric explanations, either of strange happenings or of uncontested events (such as Hitler's incredible rise to power). Those who do, however, do so at their peril. While they may reject spiritual explanations or aspects of world events, there are many world leaders who take these matters very seriously.

It does not matter who wrote these myths or whether they exist in a spiritual realm or in the physical world. To criticize these myths as of diminished utility or value because of the source or their spiritual/physical nature is analogous to the use of an *ad hominem* attack against an argument. The *Bible* and the *Koran* include content that is of value, independent of the source. Is the moral lesson of Jesus' parable of the prodigal son of diminished value because it is merely a story? Is the utility of Synarchy as a form of planetary government dependent on reality of Agharta as spiritual or physical? The *Protocols of the (Learned) Elders of Zion (Sion)* are attacked by those who dispute its authorship, or claim that its authorship has been deliberately misrepresented. But does it matter whether it was Shakespeare or Bacon who wrote "Shakespeare's" plays? Does a rose by any other name smell as sweet? The *Protocols* are now referred to by some as the *Illuminati Protocols*, in an attempt to avoid the criticism of disputed authorship (see, e.g., David Icke's books *The Robot's Rebellion* and *...and the truth shall set you free*). The author and the source do not matter; what matters are the utility / truth / value of the content. With respect to the *Protocols*, the issue is whether a group of people is attempting to take over the world – not who the author is. Similarly, for the legend of Agharta, the issue is the utility / value of Synarchy as a basis / model for world government – not whether Agharta or Shambhala existed or exist as physically real manifestations.

More and more of today's writers, such as Neale Donald Walsch (*Conversations with God*), Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins (*Left Behind*), James Redfield (*The Celestine Prophecy*) and Barbara Marx Hubbard (*Conscious Evolution*) are convinced that a spiritual revolution is about to take place, with concomitant massive changes in Earth and in human society. The one thing that you can count on in this world / universe is change. And it may be change for the better or change for the worse. As global petroleum supplies, the world will soon plunge into chaos and the economic forces of global industrialization will lose their stranglehold grip on the planet. There will soon be a tremendous opportunity for planetary change. That change will be for the better only if the spiritual forces for good prevail over those of evil.

By the way, the "vril" (kundalini, prana, chi) life force mentioned below was the inspiration for the "vril" suffix in Bovril ("Bovine vril"), the breakfast spread so popular in England (along with its vegetable counterpart, Marmite).

Since my time available for writing at the present is short, I will quote passages from several of the works mentioned above, with no further comment. All of the works quoted are currently in print, available from <http://www.amazon.com>. If you are interested in this material, I strongly urge your purchase of the books – they are in paperback, and reasonably priced. The sections quoted below contain text only, and many of the books are replete with footnotes, endnotes, graphics, and references. The works from which I extract material are those of an analytical, comparative, critical and summary nature. For detailed description of the history of history of discovery of material on Agharta, Shambhala, subterranean worlds and related topics (since the time of Jacolliot and Bulwer-Lytton), see *The Lost World of Agharti: The Mystery of Vril Power*

by Alec Maclellan and the article, "The Underground World of Central Asia" by David Hatcher Childress in *Lost Continents & the Hollow Earth*, by David Hatcher Childress and Richard S. Shaver. For detailed descriptions of individual quests to find Shambhala, consult either Ferdinand Ossendowski's or Nicholas Roerich's diaries. [I will add more descriptive material, if sufficient requests are made.]

Selections from *The King of the World*, by René Guénon

Western Ideas about Agarttha

Saint-Yves d'Alveydre's posthumous work *Mission de l'Inde*, first published in 1910, contains a description of a mysterious initiatic center called Agarttha, and many readers have no doubt assumed that this was just an imaginary tale, a sort of fiction, with no basis in reality. If taken literally, it does in fact contain some improbable accounts that could justify such an appraisal, at least for those accustomed to seeing only external appearances, and Saint-Yves doubtless had good reasons for not publishing the book, which was written long ago but never brought to completion. Moreover, until the appearance of this book there had hardly been any mention in Europe of Agarttha and its leader the Bhahmātmā, except by the rather superficial writer Louis Jacolliot [1837-1890], whose authority one cannot possibly invoke. In our opinion Jacolliot had actually heard of these things while in India, but created his own fantasy about them, as he did with everything else. However, in 1924 a book entitled *Beasts, Men and Gods* appeared unexpectedly on the scene, in which the author, Ferdinand Ossendowski, relates the incidents of a most eventful journey he made across Central Asia in the years 1920 and 1921, including, especially in its latter part, accounts almost identical with those given by Saint-Yves; and we believe that the sensation aroused by this book at last furnishes a favorable opportunity to break the silence on the question of Agarttha.

Naturally, hostile and sceptical critics did not fail to accuse Ossendowski of simply plagiarizing Saint-Yves, supporting their allegation by pointing out all the concordant passages in the two books; and in fact there are a good number that show a rather astonishing similarity, even to points of detail. First of all, in one of his most improbable passages, Saint-Yves asserts the existence of a subterranean world with branches everywhere – under continents and even under the oceans – by means of which communications are invisibly established between all the regions of the earth; moreover, Ossendowski does not affirm this on his own authority, even declaring that he does not know what to think of it, but attributes it rather to reports received from people he met in the course of his journey. On a more particular point, there is also a passage in which the 'King of the World' is depicted in front of his predecessor's tomb and where the question is raised concerning the origin of the gypsies, who, among others, are said to have lived originally in Agarttha. Saint-Yves writes that there are moments during the subterranean celebration of the 'cosmic mysteries' when travelers upon the desert stop motionless and even the animals are silent; and Ossendowski has assured us that he himself was present at such a moment of universal contemplation. But most important of all, by a strange coincidence both writers tell the story of an island now vanished where extraordinary men and beasts once lived; at this point Saint-Yves cites the summary by Diodorus of Sicily of the journey of Iambulus, whereas Ossendowski describes the journey of an ancient Buddhist from Nepal; but their accounts hardly differ, so that if two versions from such widely divergent sources really do exist it would be interesting to acquire them and compare them carefully.

Although we have pointed to these similarities, it should be emphasized that we are in no way convinced that there was indeed plagiarism; and we do not in any case intend to enter into a discussion of only limited interest. We know through other sources, independent of the evidence offered by Ossendowski himself, that stories of this kind are current in Mongolia and throughout Central Asia, and we can immediately add that there is something similar in the

traditions of nearly all peoples. Furthermore, if Ossendowski did in part copy from the *Mission de l'Inde*, it is difficult to see why he should have omitted certain passages or changed the form of certain words, writing Agharti in place of Agarththa, for example, which on the contrary is easily explained if he received from a Mongolian source the information that Saint-Yves obtained from a Hindu source (the latter being known to have been in contact with at least two Hindus); nor is it easy to understand why he would have used the title 'King of the World' to designate the head of the initiatic hierarchy, a title that appears nowhere in Saint-Yves's work. Even if a certain amount of borrowing were admitted, the fact remains that Ossendowski sometimes says things that have no equivalent in *Mission de l'Inde* and that he certainly would not have been able to invent in their entirety, all the more so as he was far more preoccupied with politics than with the pursuit of ideas or doctrines, and was so ignorant of anything touching on esoterism that he was manifestly incapable of grasping the true import of such things. For example, he tells the story of the 'black stone' that had originally been sent by the 'King of the World' to the Dalai Lama, and subsequently transported to Urga in Mongolia, where it disappeared approximately one hundred years ago; now, in many traditions 'black stones' play an important role, from that played by the symbol of Cybele to that of the stone enshrined in the *Kaaba* at Mecca. Here is another example: the *Bogdo-Khan* or 'Living Buddha,' who resides at Urga, preserves, among other precious items, the ring of Genghis Khan, on which is engraved a swastika, and a copper plaque bearing the seal of the 'King of the World'; it seems that Ossendowski managed to see only the first of these two objects, but, if this is so, would it not then have been extremely difficult for him to conjure the other from his imagination, and would it not have been more natural for him to describe a plaque of gold?

These preliminary observations must suffice, for we wish to remain apart from any polemics or questions of personalities; we have only cited Ossendowski and Saint-Yves as a point of departure for considerations that have nothing to do with what one might think of either of them, and whose importance exceeds their individualities, as well as our own, which in this domain should no longer count. Nor do we propose a more or less vain 'textual criticism,' but rather a presentation of some information that, to our knowledge, has been unavailable until now, and that might help in some measure to elucidate what Ossendowski calls the 'mystery of mysteries.'

Selections from *Shambhala*, by Victoria LePage

The Shambhalic Tradition in the West

[LePage is discussing Andrew Tomas, author of the book *Shambhala: Oasis of Light* (1976).]

Tomas's conviction of the reality of Shambhala, fed by his meeting with Roerich in 1935, was shared by a growing metaphysical school in Europe in the first half of the century. Another strand to the story – one considerably more mystical and less accessible to the rational understanding – was provided by René Guénon. Guénon was one of the foremost Sufi scholars of the twentieth century and a skilled student of the Cabala, the ancient Jewish mystical system. In 1927, he published *Le Roi du Monde*, in which he gave unprecedented esoteric information about Shambhala – information that had apparently been hitherto part of the secret knowledge which the brotherhood jealously guarded from the uninitiated. Guénon accomplished this "leak" by veiling his information in a characteristically overcondensed and cryptic style that takes patience to unravel, and to which a large part of this book will be devoted to decoding.

According to Guénon, Shambhala is a center of high evolutionary energies in Central Asia. It is the source of all our religions and the home of Yoga Tantra, having a vital relationship to the kundalini science on which all our systems of self-transformation are based. Reflecting the changes in the aeonic cycles of the earth and the unfoldment of humanity's soul, it is the prototypic Holy Land of which all other Holy Lands such as Jerusalem, Delphi and Benares are

or have been secondary reflections. "In the contemporary period of our terrestrial cycle," he stated, " – that is to say, during the Kali Yuga – this Holy Land, which is defended by guardians who keep it hidden from profane view while ensuring nevertheless a certain exterior communication, is to all intents and purposes inaccessible and invisible to all except those possessing the necessary qualifications for entry." Once it was open and more or less accessible to all, and will be again with the closing of the Kali Yuga, but presently exists in a veiled state and is understood, if acknowledged at all, only in metaphorical and symbolic terms. Guénon indicated that Shambhala exists both above and below ground. He enlarged on the vast underground network of caverns and tunnels running under the sacred center for hundreds of kilometers, attributing to these catacombs, as had Saint-Yves d'Alveydre before him in 1910, the function of an even more secret and advanced center of initiation called Agarttha. Agarttha, he said, was the true center of world government. It was the impregnable storehouse of the world's wisdom, surviving the ebb and flow of civilizations and the catastrophes of the earth, and would shortly send forth its energies to create a new planetary culture.

In the same prophetic spirit, other occult writers saw Shambhala as the venue of the imminently returning Christ. The neo-Theosophist Alice Bailey, who was of the same era as Guénon, had nothing to say about Agarttha, but described Shambhala as "the vital centre in the planetary consciousness" and the home of the great spiritual hierarchy of which the Christ was the head. She related it to the Second Coming, and through the writings of her disciple Vera Stanley Alder gave out many apocalyptic prophecies scheduled to be fulfilled in the latter part of the century. Other esotericists likened the mystical center to Campanella's City of the Sun and to Dante's Terrestrial Paradise. Like Tomas, they saw in it a significant likeness to the Rosicrucians' Invisible Academy of initiates so widely publicized in seventeenth-century Europe. That fraternity likewise was never found, but claimed to safeguard through the ages the highest spiritual and social ideals and promised the imminent coming of the New Jerusalem.

The Earth's Chakric System

[LePage is here discussing John Michell's book, *Earth Spirit*]

...The nature of the spirit that animates the earth, "subtle, omnipresent, yet ever indefinable in terms of the dimensions apparent to our senses," says Michell,

...forms the ultimate problem for modern physicists as it did for their predecessors, the magicians.... Yet we can be certain that this force, formerly identified with the holy spirit, provided the power and inspiration by which the ancient civilization was sustained.... It was held to be what some now call the life-essence, the pervading flow with which at death the spirit becomes merged, and from which arises the vital spark that stimulates new growth. Its names are legion. It is the *prana* or *mana* of eastern metaphysics, the "vril," the universal plastic medium of occultists, the *anima mundi* of alchemy.

Wilhelm Reich called it the orgone force, the Chinese call it *qi* or *chi* and understand its causal relation to all other forces.

"Chinese philosophy," says Paul Dong, an American-Chinese author writing on paranormal phenomena in mainland China, "holds that qi is the primal matrix of creation from which springs the *yin* and *yang* forces that give rise to substance and material forms ... and thus a master of qi is one who controls the very forces of life. Such a person can perform feats that are truly paranormal."

In Guénon's view, the vast network of terrestrial magnetic and electrical currents which the Chinese call respectively blue dragon and white tiger lines is analogous to the Indian system of *nadis* in the human body and is similarly fed by the main artery of terrestrial kundalini that runs like a great unifying spine through the planet. There are power centers other than Meru

scattered about the globe: Mount Athos, Mount Shasta, Mount Kailas, Arunachala and others; but these Guénon regards as auxiliaries of the main power center in Shambhala, even as the large nerve centers in various limbic parts of the human body are auxiliaries of the central nervous system.

The idea of an energetic correspondence between the human and planetary systems has also been voiced by Lyall Watson, a naturalist, anthropologist and archaeologist, who discusses the harmony between the two systems in terms that suggest their synchronization of activity. "Earth's magnetic field," he writes, "fluctuates between eight and sixteen times per second. The predominant rhythm of our brains lies in the same area." Learning that at sunrise in many parts of the world there is a unique electromagnetic transmission, he notes: "We find that frequency associated with physiology... Our systems, both planetary and personal, are governed by the same timekeeper."

According to the ancient cosmology, that synchronization was rendered possible because one universal energy gave rise to the multiplicity of all known energies, all known phenomena, whether organic or inorganic, meaningfully relating every part of the universe to every other part. Guénon's worldview rests on the same unitive principle. He sees the universal energy as synergistic, as outside the entropic processes of the cosmos and knowable only indirectly by reference to its reflected properties in spacetime. Whether we call it Kundalini, Divine Light, Holy Spirit, Shekinah or Great Life-Force – and he uses all these names in turn from the roll call of religions – it is conceived of as superordinal to all else, a power inhering at the center of all phenomena in a zone of absolute reality, absolute being and transcendental radiance that lies beyond them, yet informs them all. That power, Guénon believes, not only radiates out from the center of Shambhala, inspiring and sustaining its communities, but also plays an unsuspected central role in the life of the planet as a whole, which cannot be understood without it.

Gaia: The Earth as a Living Organism

Guénon's conception is a grand one that dignifies the earth with life, consciousness and soul. In every essential it accords with James Lovelock's Gaia hypothesis, although it goes much further. As is well known, Lovelock, a British biologist, has graced the earth with the beautiful name of Gaia after the ancient Greek earth-goddess, on the grounds that she is intelligent and purposive, "a super-organism, a living being of planetary proportions" who, like all organisms, is self-organizing and capable of maintaining her own life and well-being.

In *The Ages of Gaia*, published in 1988, he conceived of the planet as an integrated whole, a mothering web of life in which the organism and the environment interact and evolve symbiotically so as to form a single living entity, each part cooperating with every other part to promote a continuation and evolution of more life. All the planet's self-regulating mechanisms, he believed, point to this conclusion. The stability of the atmosphere over millions of years despite its unstable and reactive gases, the maintenance of an even temperature despite the sun's growing heat, and the earth's apparent ability to select, out of others equally possible, just the right climatic conditions and chemical constituents for the continuing health of its life-forms, points to the inherently living and purposive nature of our globe.

Lovelock has come under a lot of criticism for his unorthodox views in scientific circles, and he has now modified his position. In 1990 his fellow biologist, Rupert Sheldrake, referred to him as the leading proponent of the hypothesis that the Earth is a self-regulating living organism; but in a more recent essay (1996) by Don Michael in Jim Swan's *Dialogues With the Living Earth*, a footnote states that Lovelock now says Gaia *acts* like a living organism, not *is* one. Noting that the earth "has a tendency to produce stability, and to survive," he explains, "I needed to show that the stability emerges from the properties of the system, not from some purposeful guiding hand."

No doubt there are many who regret Lovelock's reformulation, which seems to deny Mother Earth anything more than a robotic nature – if such a thing can be conceived without a guiding intelligence to motivate it. However, he has already done his work in sowing valuable seeds that can be further cultivated by others. Scientists, like Sheldrake, continue to search for a viable formula by which to express their vision of Gaia as a living, goal-directed organism. Especially since the physicists' formulation of the Unified Field Theory, the pressure to redefine the earth in holistic terms, as an animate and organismic biosphere, has steadily increased.

But as has been said, Guénon, faithful to the ancient Cabalistic-Hermetic tradition, goes further. The earth, he contends, is not only alive; it is a spiritual being, as man is. On the subtle plane it too has an inner body of light, a vajra body. It too is highly evolved, with something like the equivalent of our phylogenetic structure, the equivalent of a spinal cord, of a sympathetic nervous system and of a cortical governing center even as the human central nervous system has; and therefore Mother Earth operates under the same self-governing and self-maintaining evolutionary principles as are evident in human beings.

Shambhala's Hierarchy

In his book *Mission de l'Inde*, the French esotericist Saint-Yves d'Alveydre describes this Hierarchy in Solar terms. "The highest circle, nearest to the mysterious center, is composed of twelve members who represent the supreme initiation and correspond, amongst other things, with the Zodiacal Zone. This zone is the section of the heavens marked out by the circular motion of the celestial pole over 25,920 years. The twelve members are called the twelve Suns or the twelve rays of the Sun. Manu Vaiveswata, the Hindu Lawgiver commonly known as the Son of the Sun, and Moses, who received the Hebraic tablets of the Law from the summit of Mount Sinai, are, according to this occult tradition, both legendary members of this special band, at whose head Guénon places the Christ, linking him with the missionary Sons of the Sun from Central Asia.

For Guénon, the Christ with his twelve apostles represents the Lord of the World for this age who, during it, is the supreme Lawgiver for our earth. According to Guénon:

The title "Lord of the World" belongs properly to "Manu," the primordial and universal legislator. This is the name that in various forms is found amongst many ancient peoples: Mina or Menes of the Egyptians, the Celtic Menw, and Greek Minos. In reality the name describes not a figure that is more or less historical or legendary, but a principle, a cosmic Intelligence that reflects pure spiritual light and formulates the Law (*Dharma*) appropriate to the conditions of our world and of our cycle of existence. At the same time, it is the archetype of man in his uniqueness, that is to say, of man as a thinking being (in Sanskrit *manava*).

Those on the human level of the Hierarchy who directly serve this principle mirror it from below and become themselves Lawgivers. They govern the ebb and flow of the culture tides emanating from Shambhala, according to which the spiritual brotherhoods move to and fro across the earth, obeying the obscure rhythms of history and civilization. These are the migrations that are rarely observed and never recorded in our history books, yet are the very mainspring of humanity's cultural evolution. The movements of the underground organizations that keep the religious spirit alive in society are monitored by Masters who inhabit Shambhala's inner zone.

Alice Bailey calls them Ascended Masters, Idries Shah calls them Guardians of the Tradition, John Bennett *psychoteleios* or "perfected ones," and they are also known as the Ancient Ones, the Watchers, the Immortals, the Monitors, the Hidden Directorate, the Children of Seth. All follow what is known as the Ancient Path. According to esoteric tradition, in remote times

before the advent of the Mystery schools they lived in more open communication with us, but as the age advanced were compelled to withdraw into their present obscurity, so that now they are accessible to only the most highly purified souls and with rare exceptions are known to the rest of us only through the grace of mystical vision.

Those who live in Shambhala's transcendental inner zone are its engine, its powerhouse; their consciousness turns the wheel. They are the supreme authority for this planet, forming the governing core of Shambhala and, through the ashrams and monasteries of the outer region, of the world. The inner region no doubt has its hidden settlements and cultivated environs like the outer zone, and probably an even higher technology, but the inner Masters are no longer reliant on the physical state. Sometimes incarnate, but often discarnate, they are beyond religious and ethnic categories and work at energy levels that are entirely outside the frequencies with which ordinary humanity is familiar, in ways we are not yet able to comprehend.

Shambhala-Agartha, says Guénon [actually, in *The King of the World*, Guénon refers only to Agartha, and never to Shambhala], is related to the zodiacal sign of Libra, which means "balance" or "scales," and is the quintessential point of balance for the planet; and in precisely the same sense the Directorate is a stabilizing and balancing force in the life of the race. No matter how eccentrically we deviate from the path of wisdom, no matter what descending cycle of destruction, what frightful chimeras we pursue in the course of our evolution, the Directorate negotiates a balance. It is the countervailing and normative influence in our midst, secretly conserving what we have lost, holding in our best interests what we carelessly throw away and safeguarding a future in whose reality we never really believe and are not capable of serving. In an age of superstition it promotes the sciences; when materialism prevails, it reforms religions. It waits when we rush forward, acts when we sleep, believes in life eternal when we do not, and the more we value the exoteric phantasms of the material world the more it withdraws into the invisible realms of soul, counterbalancing our periods of intense physical exploration with equally long periods of withdrawal.

The Sign of Shambhala: Unidentified Flying Objects

So far we have considered only meditational techniques; but what technology produced the shining spheroid oval Roerich and his party saw speeding high across the cloudless Inner Asian skies, suddenly changing direction, in 1927? Of all the strange manifestations attributed to Shambhala this is the most mysterious, the most inexplicable. Even allowing for an hallucinatory factor, eminently possible in anything connected with Shambhala, the purely material aeronautical basis of the phenomenon, witnessed through three pairs of binoculars and familiar to the lamas present, is undeniable. It is only in the twentieth century that we can fully appreciate how mysterious this is, and can ask ourselves whether the same Shambhalic technology is responsible for the flying saucers that have been seen by millions of people in every part of the world. If so, how and where was it developed, and how long ago? What are its principles? And how has it escaped detection? We can answer none of these questions.

The lamas told Roerich that the flying object he saw was the signature of Shambhala and the sign of its blessing. When it flies overhead one may know that august powers are at hand to succor struggling humanity and to help in enterprises of humanitarian value. As to the energy that empowers its flight, it is the primal energy, "this fine imponderable matter which is scattered everywhere and which is within our use at any moment" – the same energy that Tomas has called "the intelligent force in the core of the atom." Whether the sign of Shambhala is psychophysical rather than purely physical in the sense that we normally understand the term is something we do not yet know. But not only are stories of strange aircraft traditionally associated with Shambhala, more than one sighting of UFOs have been reliably reported in the region. In 1933 the British mountaineer Frank Smythe, on reaching an altitude of 26,000 feet on

Mount Everest, saw to his amazement two aircraft hovering far above him. One had squat wings, the other a kind of beak, and both were surrounded by a radiant pulsating aura.

Up until recently the unidentified flying object was generally the mass target of either credulous cultist fascination or disbelief and scorn. But the number of hardened skeptics in the population is rapidly waning as trained enquiry by scientists and academics, plus the sheer overwhelming weight of reliable observers, is tending to support the authenticity of the phenomenon – although its interpretation is another matter. It has been almost universally assumed that the UFO, if given any credence at all, must be a spacecraft manned by extraterrestrial beings, especially since their craft appears to be capable of moving in and out of visibility, passing through material barriers and executing maneuvers that defy gravity and mass and are impossible for the human frame to withstand. But as more facts become known and their study has moved onto a more sophisticated level of research, different options are being considered.

Dr. Kenneth Ring, professor of psychology at the University of Connecticut, has conducted an exhaustive survey of the subject. In his book *The Omega Project*, Ring, like other academics, has come to the conclusion that the UFO seems to be a psychophysical event that somehow has its origin in humanity itself, coming from an unknown *terrestrial* source; and that it may be the outward manifestation of a major evolutionary advance in human consciousness. While some researchers do not go as far as that, and a few believe that flying saucers are simply a natural phenomenon – such as "earth-lights," the electromagnetic effects of tectonic stress in the earth which are known to cause peculiar psychic and hallucinatory effects in some susceptible people – in all cases the world of science fiction is being abandoned.

Dr. Jacques Vallée, a computer expert trained in astrophysics, is one of the most prominent investigators of UFO phenomena. According to Vallée:

It is curious to observe that even scientifically trained researchers who accept the idea of multiple universes, or the few ufologists who understand the idea that space-time could be folded to allow almost instantaneous travel from one point of our universe to another, still cling emotionally to the notion that any nonhuman form of consciousness is necessarily from outer space.

In the light of thousands of personal accounts of close encounters and abductions involving UFOs, and the extraordinary consistency and sincerity of these accounts, strong arguments are now being marshaled against this assumption of extraterrestrial visitation in favor of an unknown earth-agency that is manipulating the popular mind in such a way as to create a global metamorphosis of consciousness. Like the near-death experience, which is equally ubiquitous, the UFO experience with its strong psychic and paranormal overtones has features that are increasingly being interpreted as a form of spiritual awakening or initiation, although with puzzlingly physical elements.

It has been observed by modern researchers that, although these unknown aerial objects are physical enough to be tracked by radar and witnessed by hundreds of people at the same time, in many cases of close encounter a psychic dimension is present, indicative of trance, altered states of consciousness, time loss, hazy reportage, etc., which throws the objectivity of the experience into doubt. Many witnesses report leaving normal reality behind and moving as though within a lucid dream – as though ordinary space-time physics no longer applies – until they are returned to the normal world with the sense of a break in time. But in fact this is an accurate description of any out-of-the-body experience in which the physical body is left behind in an entranced sleep while the inner body, carrying the egoic consciousness with it, moves elsewhere for a time, often unaware that the physical body is not involved in its adventures.

An unusually clear example of such an experience has been recounted by a woman in Wollongong, Australia. She says she woke up in the middle of the night to see through the roof

a round aircraft, silent and without lights, hovering directly over her house. A chain, which was dangling from it over her bed, was made of some kind of energy in the form of links, and was making a horrible screeching noise. She decided to go up it out of curiosity, but on arriving in the cabin of the aircraft, now lighted, was so nauseated by the nerve-wracking noise of the energy chain that she returned to her bed and went back to sleep. She says that just at the last she was aware that, although awake and with her eyes open throughout, her physical body had somehow never left her bed.

On the other hand, some people seem to be well aware of the psychophysical nature of their encounter and state frankly that it has been a deeply personal initiatory experience resulting in physical hearings, psychic gifts or a radical change in spiritual direction....

Selections from *The Occult Roots of Nazism*, by Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke

The Modern German Occult Revival, 1880-1910

Occultism has its basis in a religious way of thinking, the roots of which stretch back into antiquity and which may be described as the Western esoteric tradition. Its principal ingredients have been identified as Gnosticism, the Hermetic treatises on alchemy and magic, NeoPlatonism, and the Cabbala all originating in the eastern Mediterranean area during the first few centuries AD. Gnosticism properly refers to the beliefs of certain heretical sects among the early Christians that claimed to possess *gnosis*, or special esoteric knowledge of spiritual matters. Although their various doctrines differed in many respects, two common Gnostic themes exist: first, an oriental (Persian) dualism, according to which the two realms of Good and Evil, Light and Darkness, order and chaos are viewed as independent battling principles; and second, the conviction that this material world is utterly evil, so that man can be saved only by attaining the gnosis of the higher realm. The Gnostic sects disappeared in the fourth century, but their ideas inspired the dualistic Manichaeic religion of the second century and also the *Hermetica*. These Greek texts were composed in Egypt between the third and fifth centuries and developed a synthesis of Gnostic ideas, Neoplatonism and cabbalistic theosophy. Since these mystical doctrines arose against a background of cultural and social change, a correlation has been noted between the proliferation of the sects and the breakdown of the stable agricultural order of the late Roman Empire.

When the basic assumptions of the medieval world were shaken by new modes of enquiry and geographical discoveries in the fifteenth century, Gnostic and Hermetic ideas enjoyed a brief revival. Prominent humanists and scholar magicians edited the old classical texts during the Renaissance and thus created a modern corpus of occult speculation. But after the triumph of empiricism in the seventeenth-century scientific revolution, such ideas became the preserve of only a few antiquarians and mystics. By the eighteenth century these unorthodox religious and philosophical concerns were well defined as 'occult,' inasmuch as they lay on the outermost fringe of accepted forms of knowledge and discourse. However, a reaction to the rationalist Enlightenment, taking the form of a quickening romantic temper, an interest in the Middle Ages and a desire for mystery, encouraged a revival of occultism in Europe from about 1770.

Germany boasted several renowned scholar magicians in the Renaissance, and a number of secret societies devoted to Rosicrucianism, theosophy, and alchemy also flourished there from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. However, the impetus for the necromantic occult revival of the nineteenth century did not arise in Germany. It is attributable rather to the reaction against the reign of materialist, rationalist and positivist ideas in the utilitarian and industrial cultures of America and England. The modern German occult revival owes its inception to the popularity of theosophy in the Anglo-Saxon world during the 1880s. Here theosophy refers to the international sectarian movement deriving from the activities and writings of the Russian adventuress and occultist, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-91). Her colourful life and travels

in the 1850s and 1860s, her clairvoyant powers and penchant for supernatural phenomena, her interest in American spiritualism during the 1870s, followed by her foundation of the Theosophical Society at New York in 1875 and the subsequent removal of its operations to India between 1879 and 1885, have all been fully documented in several biographies. Here the essentials of theosophy as a doctrine will be summarized before tracing its penetration of Central Europe.

Madame Blavatsky's first book, *Isis Unveiled* (1877), was less an outline of her new religion than a rambling tirade against the rationalist and materialistic culture of modern Western civilization. Her use of traditional esoteric sources to discredit present-day beliefs showed clearly how much she hankered after ancient religious truths in defiance of contemporary agnosticism and modern science. In this enterprise she drew upon a range of secondary sources treating of pagan mythology and mystery religions, Gnosticism, the *Hermetica*, and the arcane lore of the Renaissance scholars, the Rosicrucians and other secret fraternities. W. E. Coleman has shown that her work comprises a sustained and frequent plagiarism of about one hundred contemporary texts, chiefly relating to ancient and exotic religions, demonology, Freemasonry and the case for spiritualism. Behind these diverse traditions, Madame Blavatsky discerned the unique source of their inspiration: the occult lore of ancient Egypt. Her fascination with Egypt as the fount of all wisdom arose from her enthusiastic reading of the English author Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton. His novel *The Last Days of Pompeii* (1834) had been conceived of as a narrative of the impact of the Isis cult in Rome during the first century AD. His later works, *Zanoni* (1842), *A Strange Story* (1862), and *The Coming Race* (1871), also dwelt on esoteric initiation and secret fraternities dedicated to occult knowledge in a way which exercised an extraordinary fascination on the romantic mind of the nineteenth century. It is ironical that early theosophy should have been principally inspired by English occult fiction, a fact made abundantly clear by Liljegren's comparative textual studies.

Only after Madame Blavatsky and her followers moved to India in 1879 did theosophy receive a more systematic formulation. At the new headquarters of the Theosophical Society in Madras she wrote *The Secret Doctrine* (1888). This work betrayed her plagiarism again but now her sources were mainly contemporary works on Hinduism and modern science. Her new book was presented as a commentary on a secret text called the 'Stanzas of Dzyan,' which she claimed to have seen in a subterranean Himalayan monastery. This new interest in Indian lore may reflect her sensitivity to changes in the direction of scholarship: witness the contemporary importance of Sanskrit as a basis for the comparative study of so-called Aryan languages under Franz Bopp and Max Müller. Now the East rather than Egypt was seen as the source of ancient wisdom. Later theosophical doctrine consequently displays a marked similarity to the religious tenets of Hinduism.

The Secret Doctrine claimed to describe the activities of God from the beginning of one period of universal creation until its end, a cyclical process which continues indefinitely over and over again. The story related how the present universe was born, whence it emanated, what powers fashion it, whither it is progressing, and what it all means. The first volume (Cosmogogenesis) outlined the scheme according to which the primal unity of an unmanifest divine being differentiates itself into a multiformity of consciously evolving beings that gradually fill the universe. The divine being manifested itself initially through an emanation and three subsequent Logoi: these cosmic phases created time, space, and matter, and were symbolized by a series of sacred Hindu sigils [circle, circle plus (superimposed) dot, circle plus vertical bar, circle plus horizontal bar, circle plus plus sign]. All subsequent creation occurred in conformity with the divine plan, passing through seven 'rounds' or evolutionary cycles. In the first round the universe was characterized by the predominance of fire, in the second by air, in the third by water, in the fourth by earth, and in the others by ether. This sequence reflected the cyclical fall of the universe from divine grace over the first four rounds and its following redemption over the next three, before everything contracted once more to the point of primal unity for the start of a

new major cycle. Madame Blavatsky illustrated the stages of the cosmic cycle with a variety of esoteric symbols, including triangles, triskelions, and swastikas. So extensive was her use of this latter Eastern sign of fortune and fertility that she included it in her design for the seal of the Theosophical Society. The executive agent of the entire cosmic enterprise was called Fohat, a 'universal agent employed by the Sons of God to create and uphold our world.' The manifestations of this force were, according to Blavatsky, electricity and solar energy, and 'the objectivised thought of the gods.' This electro-spiritual force was in tune with contemporary vitalist and scientific thought.

The second volume (*Anthropogenesis*) attempted to relate man to this grandiose vision of the cosmos. Not only was humanity assigned an age of far greater antiquity than that conceded by science, but it was also integrated into a scheme of cosmic, physical, and spiritual evolution. These theories were partly derived from late nineteenth century scholarship concerning palaeontology, inasmuch as Blavatsky adopted a racial theory of human evolution. She extended her cyclical doctrine with the assertion that each round witnessed the rise and fall of seven consecutive root-races, which descended on the scale of spiritual development from the first to the fourth, becoming increasingly enmeshed in the material world (the Gnostic notion of a Fall from Light into Darkness was quite explicit), before ascending through progressively superior root-races from the fifth to the seventh. According to Blavatsky, present humanity constituted the fifth root-race upon a planet that was passing through the fourth cosmic round, so that a process of spiritual advance lay before the species. The fifth root-race was called the Aryan race and had been preceded by the fourth root-race of the Atlanteans, which had largely perished in a flood that submerged their mid-Atlantic continent. The Atlanteans had wielded psychic forces with which our race was not familiar, their gigantism enabled them to build cyclopean structures, and they possessed a superior technology based upon the successful exploitation of Fohat. The three earlier races of the present planetary round were proto-human, consisting of the first Astral root-race which arose in an invisible, imperishable and sacred land and the second Hyperborean root-race which had dwelt on a vanished Polar continent. The third Lemurian root-race flourished on a continent which had lain in the Indian Ocean. It was probably due to this race's position at or near the spiritual nadir of the evolutionary racial cycle that Blavatsky charged the Lemurians with racial miscegenation entailing a kind of Fall and the breeding of monsters.

A further unimportant theosophical tenet was the belief in reincarnation and karma, also taken from Hinduism. The individual human ego was regarded as a tiny fragment of the divine being. Through reincarnation each ego pursued a cosmic journey through the rounds and the root-races which led it towards eventual reunion with the divine being whence it had originally issued. This path of countless rebirths also recorded a story of cyclical redemption: the initial debasement of the ego was followed by its gradual sublimation to the point of identity with God. The process of reincarnation was fulfilled according to the principle of karma, whereby good acts earned their performer a superior reincarnation and bad acts an inferior reincarnation. This belief not only provided for everyone's participation in the fantastic worlds of remote prehistory in the root-race scheme, but also enabled one to conceive of salvation through reincarnation in the ultimate root-races which represented the supreme state of spiritual evolution: 'we men shall in the future take our places in the skies as Lords of the planets, Regents of galaxies and wielders of fire-mist [Fohat].' This chiliastic vision supplemented the psychological appeal of belonging to a vast cosmic order.

Besides its racial emphasis, theosophy also stressed the principle of élitism and the value of hierarchy. Blavatsky claimed she received her initiation into the doctrines from two exalted mahatmas or masters called Morya and Koot Hoomi, who dwelt in a remote and secret Himalayan fastness. These adepts were not gods but rather advanced members of our own evolutionary group, who had decided to impart their wisdom to the rest of the Aryan mankind through their chosen representative, Madame Blavatsky. Like her masters, she also claimed an

exclusive authority on the basis of her occult knowledge or gnosis. Her account of prehistory frequently invoked the sacred authority of elite priesthods among the root-races of the past. When the Lemurians had fallen into iniquity and sin, only a hierarchy of the elect remained pure in spirit. This remnant became the Lemuro-Atlantean dynasty of priest-kings who took up their abode on the fabulous island of Shamballah in the Gobi Desert. These leaders were linked with Blavatsky's own masters, who were the instructors of the fifth Aryan root-race.

Despite its tortuous argument and the frequent contradictions which arose from the plethora of pseudo-scholarly references throughout the work, *The Secret Doctrine* may be summarized in terms of three basic principles. Firstly, the fact of a God, who is omnipresent, eternal, boundless and immutable. The instrument of this deity is Fohat, an electro-spiritual force which impresses the divine scheme upon the cosmic substance as the 'laws of nature.' Secondly, the rule of periodicity, whereby all creation is subject to an endless cycle of destruction and rebirth. These rounds always terminate at a level spiritually superior to their starting-point. Thirdly, there exists a fundamental unity between all individual souls and the deity, between the microcosm and the macrocosm. But it was hardly this plain theology that guaranteed theosophy its converts. Only the hazy promise of occult initiation shimmering through its countless quotations from ancient beliefs, lost apocryphal writings, and the traditional Gnostic and Hermetic sources of esoteric wisdom can account for the success of her doctrine and the size of her following amongst the educated classes of several countries.

How can one explain the enthusiastic reception of Blavatsky's ideas by significant numbers of Europeans and Americans from the 1880s onwards? Theosophy offered an appealing mixture of ancient religious ideas and new concepts borrowed from the Darwinian theory of evolution and modern science. This syncretic faith thus possessed the power to comfort certain individuals whose traditional outlook had been upset by the discrediting of orthodox religion, by the very rationalizing and de-mystifying progress of science and by the culturally dislocative impact of rapid social and economic change in the late nineteenth century. George L. Mosse has noted that theosophy typified the wave of anti-positivism sweeping Europe at the end of the century and observed that its *outré* notions made a deeper impression in Germany than in other European countries.

Although a foreign hybrid combining romantic Egyptian revivalism, American spiritualism and Hindu beliefs, theosophy enjoyed a considerable vogue in Germany and Austria. Its advent is best understood within a wider necromantic protest movement in Wilhelmian Germany known as *Lebensreform* (life reform). This movement represented a middle-class attempt to palliate the ills of modern life, deriving from the growth of the cities and industry. A variety of alternative life-styles – including herbal and natural medicine, vegetarianism, nudism and self-sufficient rural communes – were embraced by small groups of individuals who hoped to restore themselves to a natural existence. The political atmosphere of the movement was apparently liberal and left-wing with its interest in land reform, but there were many overlaps with the *völkisch* movement. Marxian critics have even interpreted it as mere bourgeois escapism from the consequences of capitalism. Theosophy was appropriate to the mood of *Lebensreform* and provided a philosophical rationale for some of its groups.

In July 1884 the first German Theosophical Society was established under the presidency of Wilhelm Hübbe-Schleiden (1846-1916) at Elberfeld, where Blavatsky and her chief collaborator, Henry Steel Olcott, were staying with their theosophical friends, the Gebhards. At this time Hübbe-Schleiden was employed as a senior civil servant at the Colonial Office in Hamburg. He had travelled widely, once managing an estate in West Africa and was a prominent figure in the political lobby for an expanded German overseas empire. Olcott and Hübbe-Schleiden travelled to Munich and Dresden to make contact with scattered theosophists and so lay the basis for a German organization. It has been suggested that this hasty attempt to found a German movement sprang from Blavatsky's desire for a new centre after a scandal involving charges of charlatanry against the theosophists at Madras early in 1884. Blavatsky's methods of

producing occult phenomena and messages from her masters had aroused suspicion in her entourage and led eventually to an enquiry and an unfavourable report upon her activities by the London Society for Psychical Research. Unfortunately for Hübbe-Schleiden, his presidency lapsed when the formal German organization dissolved, once the scandal became more widely publicized following the exodus of the theosophists from India in April 1885. Henceforth Blavatsky lived in London and found eager new pupils amongst the upper classes of Victorian England.

In 1886 Hübbe-Schleiden stimulated a more serious awareness of occultism in Germany through the publication of a scholarly monthly periodical, *Die Sphinx*, which was concerned with a discussion of spiritualism, psychical research, and paranormal phenomena from a scientific point of view. Its principal contributors were eminent psychologists, philosophers and historians. Here Max Dessoir expounded hypnotism, while Eduard von Hartmann developed a philosophy of 'individualism,' according to which the ego survived death as a discarnate entity, against a background of Kantian thought, Christian theology, and spiritualist speculations. Carl du Prel, the psychical researcher, and his colleague Lazar von Hellenbach, who had held seances with the famous American medium Henry Slade in Vienna, both contributed essays in a similar vein. Another important member of the *Sphinx* circle was Karl Kiesewetter, whose studies in the history of the post-Renaissance esoteric tradition brought knowledge of the scholar magicians, the early modern alchemists and contemporary occultism to a wider audience. While not itself theosophical, Hübbe-Schleiden's periodical was a powerful element in the German occult revival until it ceased publication in 1895.

Besides this scientific current of occultism, there arose in the 1890s a broader German theosophical movement, which derived mainly from the popularizing efforts of Franz Hartmann (1838-1912). Hartmann had been born in Donauwörth and brought up in Kempten, where his father held office as a court doctor. After military service with a Bavarian artillery regiment in 1859, Hartmann began his medical studies at Munich University. While on vacation in France during 1865, he took a post as ship's doctor on a vessel bound for the United States, where he spent the next eighteen years of his life. After completing his training at St Louis he opened an eye clinic and practised there until 1870. He then travelled round Mexico, settled briefly at New Orleans before continuing to Texas in 1873, and in 1878 went to Georgetown in Colorado, where he became coroner in 1882. Besides his medical practice he claimed to have a speculative interest in gold- and silver-mining. By the beginning of the 1870s he had also become interested in American spiritualism, attending the seances of the movement's leading figures such as Mrs. Rice Holmes and Kate Wentworth, while immersing himself in the writings of Judge Edmonds and Andrew Jackson Davis. However, following his discovery of *Isis Unveiled*, theosophy replaced spiritualism as his principal diversion. He resolved to visit the theosophists at Madras, travelling there by way of California, Japan and South-East Asia in late 1883. While Blavatsky and Olcott visited Europe in early 1884, Hartmann was appointed acting president of the Society during their absence. He remained at the Society headquarters until the theosophists finally left India in April 1885.

Hartmann's works were firstly devoted to Rosicrucian initiates, Paracelsus, Jakob Boehme and other topics in the Western esoteric tradition, and were published in America and England between 1884 and 1891. However, once he had established himself as a director of a *Lebensreform* sanatorium at Hallein near Salzburg upon his return to Europe in 1885, Hartmann began to disseminate the new wisdom of the East to his own countrymen. In 1889 he founded, together with Alfredo Pioda and Countess Constance Wachtmeister, the close friend of Blavatsky, a theosophical lay-monastery at Ascona, a place noted for its many anarchist experiments. From 1892 translations of Indian sacred texts and Blavatsky's writings were printed in his periodical, *Lotusblüthen* [*Lotus Blossoms*] (1892-1900), which was the first German publication to sport the theosophical swastika upon its cover. In the second half of this decade the first peak in German theosophical publishing occurred. Wilhelm Friedrich of Leipzig,

the publishers of Hartmann's magazine, issued a twelve-volume book series, *Bibliothek esoterischer Schriften* [*Library of Esoteric Writings*] (1898-1900), while Hugo Göring, a theosophist in Weimar, edited a thirty-volume book series, *Theosophische Schriften* [*Theosophical Writings*] (1894-96). Both series consisted of German translations from Blavatsky's successors in England, Annie Besant and Charles Leadbeater, together with original studies by Hartmann and Hübbe-Schleiden. The chief concern of these small books lay with abstruse cosmology, karma, spiritualism and the actuality of the hidden mahatmas. In addition to this output must be mentioned Hartmann's translations of the Bhagavad Gita, the Tao-Te-King and the Tattwa Bodha, together with his own monographs on Buddhism, Christian mysticism and Paracelsus.

Once Hartmann's example had provided the initial impetus, another important periodical sprang up. In 1896 Paul Zillmann founded the *Metaphysische Rundschau* [*Metaphysical Review*], a monthly periodical which dealt with many aspects of the esoteric tradition, while also embracing new parapsychological research as a successor to *Die Sphinx*. Zillmann, who lived at Gross-Lichterfelde near Berlin, was an executive committee member of a new German Theosophical Society founded under Hartmann's presidency at Berlin in August 1896, when the American theosophists Katherine Tingley, E. T. Hargrove and C. F. Wright were travelling through Europe to drum up overseas support for their movement. Zillmann's own studies and the articles in his periodical betrayed a marked eclecticism: contributions on yoga, phrenology, astrology, animal magnetism and hypnotism jostled with reprints of the medieval German mystics, a late eighteenth-century rosicrucian-alchemical treatise, and the works of the modern French occultist Gérard Encausse (Papus). Hartmann supplied a fictional story about his discovery of a secret Rosicrucian monastery in the Bavarian Alps, which fed the minds of readers with romantic notions of adepts in the middle of modern Europe. Zillmann was so inspired by the early nineteenth-century mystic Eckhartshausen and his ideas for a secret school of illuminates that he founded an occult lodge in early 1897. This *Wald-Loge* (Forest Lodge) was organized into three quasi-masonic grades of initiation. In Zillmann's entourage there worked the occultist Ferdinand Maack, devoted to the study of newly discovered rays in the context of his own 'dynamosophic' science and an edition of the traditional Rosicrucian texts, the astrologer Albert Kniepf, Indian theosophists and writers on the American movements of Christian Science and New Thought. In his capacity of publisher, Paul Zillmann was an important link between the German occult subculture and the Theosophists of Vienna, whose works he issued under his own imprint between 1906 and 1908.

The German Theosophical Society had been established in August 1896 as a national branch of the International Theosophical Brotherhood, founded by the American theosophists around William Quan Judge and Katherine Tingley. Theosophy remained a sectarian phenomenon in Germany, typified by small and often antagonistic local groups. In late 1900 the editor of the *Neue Metaphysische Rundschau* received annual reports from branch societies in Berlin, Cottbus, Dresden, Essen, Graz, and Leipzig and bemoaned their evident lack of mutual fraternity." However, by 1902, the movement displayed more cohesion with two principal centres at Berlin and Leipzig, supported by a further ten local theosophical societies and about thirty small circles throughout Germany and Austria. Paul Raatz, editor of the periodical *Theosophisches Leben* [*Theosophical Life*, est. April 1898], opened a theosophical centre in the capital, while at Leipzig there existed another centre associated with Arthur Weber, Hermann Rudolf, and Edwin Böhme. Weber had edited his own periodical *Der theosophische Wegweiser* [*The Theosophical Signpost*, est. 1898], while from the newly-founded Theosophical Central Bookshop he issued a book series, *Geheimwissenschaftliche Vorträge* [*Occult Lectures*] (1902-7), for which Rudolf and Böhme contributed many titles.

While these activities remained largely under the sway of Franz Hartmann and Paul Zillmann, mention must be made of another theosophical tendency in Germany. In 1902 Rudolf Steiner, a young scholar who had studied in Vienna before writing at Weimar a study of Goethe's scientific

writings, was made general secretary of the German Theosophical Society at Berlin, founded by London theosophists. Steiner published a periodical, *Luzifer*, at Berlin from 1903 to 1908. However, his mystical Christian interests increasingly estranged him from the theosophists under Annie Besant's strongly Hindu persuasion, so that he finally broke away to found his own Anthroposophical Society in 1912. It may have been a desire to counter Steiner's influence in the occult subculture which led Hartmann to encourage the publication of several new periodicals. In 1906 a Theosophical Publishing House was established at Leipzig by his young protégé Hugo Vollrath. Under this imprint a wave of occult magazines appeared, including *Der Wanderer* (1906-8), edited by Arthur Weber; *Prana* (1909-19), edited initially by the astrologer Karl Brandler-Pracht and later by Johannes Balzli, secretary of the Leipzig Theosophical Society; and *Theosophie* (est. 1910), edited by Hugo Vollrath. Astrological periodicals and a related book-series, the *Astrologische Rundschau* [*Astrological Review*] and the *Astrologische Bibliothek* [*Astrological Library*], were also issued here from 1910. Hartmann's earlier periodical was revived in 1908 under the title *Neue Lotusblüten* at the Jaeger press, which simultaneously started the *Osiris-Bücher*, a long book-series which introduced many new occultists to the German public.

Meanwhile, other publishers had been entering the field. Karl Rohm, who had visited the English theosophists in London in the late 1890s, started a firm at Lorch in Württemberg after the turn of the century. His publications included reprints of Boehme, Hamann, Jung-Stilling, and Alfred Martin Opper (A.M.O.), translations of Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton's romances and the works of contemporary occultists. Johannes Baum's New Thought publishing house was founded in 1912 and moved to Pfullingen in 1919. Although initially concerned with translations of American material, this firm was to play a vital role in German esoteric publishing during the 1920s.

In competition with the theosophists at Leipzig was the firm of Max Altmann, which had commenced occult publishing in 1905. In July 1907 Altmann began to issue the popular *Zentralblatt für Okkultismus*, edited by D. Georgiewitz-Weitzer, who wrote his own works on modern Rosicrucians, alchemy and occult medicine under the pseudonym G. W. Surya. The Leipzig bookseller Heinrich Tränker issued an occult book-series between 1910 and 1912, which included the works of Karl Helmuth and Karl Heise. From 1913 Antonius von der Linden began an ambitious book-series, *Geheime Wissenschaften* [*Secret Sciences*] (1913-20), which consisted of reprints of esoteric texts from the Renaissance scholar Agrippa von Nettesheim, the Rosicrucians and eighteenth-century alchemists, together with commentaries and original texts by modern occultists. From this brief survey it can be deduced that German occult publishing activity reached its second peak between the years 1906 and 1912.

If the German occult subculture was well developed before the First World War, Vienna could also look back on a ripe tradition of occult interest. The story of this tradition is closely linked with Friedrich Eckstein (1861-1939). The personal secretary of the composer Anton Bruckner, this brilliant polymath cultivated a wide circle of acquaintance amongst the leading thinkers, writers and musicians of Vienna. His penchant for occultism first became evident as a member of a *Lebensreform* group who had practised vegetarianism and discussed the doctrines of Pythagoras and the Neo-Platonists in Vienna at the end of the 1870s. His esoteric interests later extended to German and Spanish mysticism, the legends surrounding the Templars, and the Freemasons, Wagnerian mythology, and oriental religions. In 1880 he befriended the Viennese mathematician Oskar Simony, who was impressed by the metaphysical theories of Professor Friedrich Zöllner of Leipzig. Zöllner had hypothesized that spiritualistic phenomena confirmed the existence of a fourth dimension. Eckstein and Simony were also associated with the Austrian Psychical researcher, Lazar von Hellenbach, who performed scientific experiments with mediums in a state of trance and contributed to *Die Sphinx*. Following his cordial meeting with Blavatsky in 1886, Eckstein gathered a group of theosophists in Vienna. During the late 1880s both Franz Hartmann and the young Rudolf Steiner were *habitués* of this circle. Eckstein

was also acquainted with the mystical group around the illiterate Christian pietist, Alois Mailänder (1844-1905), who was lionized at Kempten and later at Darmstadt by many theosophists, including Hartmann and Hübbe-Schleiden. Eckstein corresponded with Gustav Meyrink, founder of the Blue Star theosophical lodge at Prague in 1891, who later achieved renown as an occult novelist before the First World War. In 1887 a Vienna Theosophical Society was founded with Eckstein as president and Count Karl zu Leiningen-Billingheim as secretary.

New groups devoted to occultism arose in Vienna after the turn of the century. There existed an Association for Occultism, which maintained a lending-library where its members could consult the works of Zöllner, Hellenbach and du Prel. The Association was close to Philipp Maschlufsky, who began to edit an esoteric periodical, *Die Gnosis*, from 1903. The paper was subsequently acquired by Berlin theosophists who amalgamated it with Rudolf Steiner's *Luzifer*. In December 1907 the Sphinx Reading Club, a similar occult study group, was founded by Franz Herndl, who wrote two occult novels and was an important member of the List Society. Astrology and other occult sciences were also represented in the Austrian capital. Upon his return from the United States to his native city, Karl Brandler-Pracht had founded the First Viennese Astrological Society in 1907. According to Josef Greiner's account of Hitler's youth in Vienna, meetings and lectures concerned with astrology, hypnotism and other forms of divination were commonplace in the capital before the outbreak of the war. Given this occult subculture in Vienna, one can better appreciate the local background of the movements around Guido von List and Lanz von Liebenfels, whose racist writings after 1906 owed so much to the modern occult revival in Central Europe.

Although modern occultism was represented by many varied forms, its function appears relatively uniform. Behind the mantic systems of astrology, phrenology and palmistry, no less the doctrines of theosophy, the quasi-sciences of 'dynamosophy,' animal magnetism and hypnotism, and a textual antiquarianism concerning the esoteric literature of traditional cabbalists, Rosicrucians, and alchemists, there lay a strong desire to reconcile the findings of modern natural science with a religious view that could restore man to a position of centrality and dignity in the universe. Occult science tended to stress man's intimate and meaningful relationship with the cosmos in terms of 'revealed' correspondences between the microcosm and macrocosm, and strove to counter materialist science, with its emphasis upon tangible and measurable phenomena and its neglect of invisible qualities respecting the spirit and the emotions. These new 'metaphysical' sciences gave individuals a holistic view of themselves and the world in which they lived. This view conferred both a sense of participation in a total meaningful order and, through divination, a means of planning one's affairs in accordance with this order.

The attraction of this world-view was indicated at the beginning of this chapter. Occultism had flourished coincident with the decline of the Roman Empire and once again at the waning of the Middle Ages. It exercised a renewed appeal to those who found the world out of joint due to rapid social and ideological changes at the end of the nineteenth century. Certain individuals, whose sentiments and education inclined them towards an idealistic and romantic perspective, were drawn to the modern occult revival in order to find that sense of order, which had been shaken by the dissolution of erstwhile conventions and beliefs.

Since Ariosophy originated in Vienna, in response to the problems of German nationality and metropolitanism, one must consider the particular kind of theosophy which the Ariosophists adapted to their *völkisch* ideas. A theosophical group had been active in the city as early as 1887, but its members were initially inclined towards a *Biedermeier* tradition of pious 'inwardness' and self-cultivation under the patronage of Marie Lang. Rudolf Steiner was a member of this group and his account of its interests indicates how little sympathy

led between the 'factual' Buddhistic theosophy of Franz Hartmann, who was also in attendance, and the more spiritual reflective attitude of the rest of the circle. During the 1890s Viennese theosophy appeared to reflect the predilection of the educated classes for piety, subjectivism, and the cult of feelings, a mood which corresponds to the contemporary vogue of the *feuilleton* and literary impressionism in the arts. Schorske has attempted to relate this cultivation of the self to the social plight of the Viennese bourgeoisie at the end of the century. He suggests that this class had begun by supporting the temple of art as a surrogate form of assimilation into the aristocracy, but ended by finding in it an escape, a refuge from the collapse of liberalism and the emergence of vulgar mass-movements. It appears plausible to locate the rise of Viennese theosophy within this cultural context.

When theosophy had become more widely publicized through the German publishing houses at the turn of the century, its ideas reached a larger audience. By this time theosophy represented a detailed body of teachings, as set down in the newly-available translation of Blavatsky's major work *Die Geheimlehre* [*The Secret Doctrine*] (1897-1901) and the numerous abridgements and commentaries by Franz Hartmann, Hermann Rudolph, Edwin Böhme and others. Whereas the earlier Austrian theosophical movement had been defined by the mystical Christianity and personal gnosticism of cultivated individuals, its later manifestation in Vienna corresponded to a disenchantment with Catholicism coupled with the popularization of mythology, folklore and comparative religion. The impetus came largely from Germany, and both List and Lanz drew their knowledge of theosophy from German sources. List was indebted to the Berlin theosophist Max Ferdinand von Sebaldt and counted Franz Hartmann, Hugo Göring, and Paul Zillmann among his supporters. Zillmann was the first to publish both List and Lanz on esoteric subjects. Theosophy in Vienna after 1900 appears to be a quasi-intellectual sectarian religious doctrine of German importation, current among persons wavering in their religious orthodoxy but who were inclined to a religious perspective.

The attraction of theosophy for List, Lanz, and their supporters consisted in its eclecticism with respect to exotic religion, mythology, and esoteric lore, which provided a universal and non-Christian perspective upon the cosmos and the origins of mankind, against which the sources of Teutonic belief, customs and identity, which were germane to *völkisch* speculation, could be located. Given the antipathy towards Catholicism among *völkisch* nationalists and Pan-Germans in Austria at the turn of the century, theosophy commended itself as a scheme of religious beliefs which ignored Christianity in favour of a *mélange* of mythical traditions and pseudo-scientific hypotheses consonant with contemporary anthropology, etymology, and the history of ancient cultures. Furthermore, the very structure of theosophical thought lent itself to *völkisch* adoption. The implicit élitism of the hidden mahatmas with superhuman wisdom was in tune with the longing for a hierarchical social order based on the racial mystique of the Volk. The notion of an occult gnosis in theosophy, notably its obscurity due to the superimposition of alien (Christian) beliefs, and its revival by the chosen few, also accorded with the attempt to ascribe a long pedigree to *völkisch* nationalism, especially in view of its really recent origins. In the context of the growth of German nationalism in Austria since 1866, we can see how theosophy, otherwise only tenuously related to *völkisch* thought by notions of race and racial development, could lend both a religious mystique and a universal rationale to the political attitudes of a small minority.

The Modern Mythology of Nazi Occultism

...Since 1960 a number of popular books have represented the Nazi phenomenon as the product of arcane and demonic influence. The remarkable story of the rise of Nazism is implicitly linked to the power of the supernatural. According to this mythology Nazism cannot have been the mere product of socioeconomic factors. No empirical or purely sociological thesis could account for its nefarious projects and continued success. The occult historiography

chooses to explain the Nazi phenomenon in terms of an ultimate and arcane power, which supported and controlled Hitler and his entourage. This hidden power is characterized either as a discarnate entity (e.g. 'black forces', 'invisible hierarchies', 'unknown superiors'), or as a magical élite in a remote age or distant location, with which the Nazis were in contact. Recurring themes in the tradition have been a Nazi link with hidden masters in the East, and the Thule Society and other occult lodges as channels of black initiation. All writers of this genre thus document a 'crypto-history,' inasmuch as their final point of explanatory reference is an agent which has remained concealed to previous historians of National Socialism.

The myth of a Nazi link with the Orient has a complex pedigree of theosophical provenance. The notion of hidden sacred centres in the East had been initially popularized by Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*, based on the 'Stanzas of Dzyan,' which she claimed to have read in a secret Himalayan lamasery. Blavatsky maintained that there existed many similar centres of esoteric learning and initiation; magnificent libraries and fabulous monasteries were supposed to lie in mountain caves and underground labyrinths in the remote regions of Central Asia. Notable examples of these centres were the subterranean city of Agadi, thought to lie in Babylonia, and the fair oasis of Shamballah in the Gobi Desert, where the divine instructors of the Aryan race were said to have preserved their sacred lore. This mythology was extended by a French author, Joseph Saint-Yves d'Alveydre (1842-1909), who described the secret city of Agartha as a theocracy that guided the course of world history. According to telepathic messages which he claimed to have received from the Dalai Lama of Tibet, this city lay beneath the Himalayas. Ferdynand Ossendowski, who travelled through Siberia and Mongolia after the Russian Revolution, gave some credence to these fantasies with his account of local Buddhist beliefs, which referred to the subterranean kingdom of Agartha where the King of the World reigned. This utopian kingdom was credited with supernatural powers that could be unleashed to destroy mankind and transform the surface of the entire planet.

These ideas of a secret theocracy in the East were supplemented by the power of *vril*. In his novel *The Coming Race* (1871) Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton had attributed this power to a subterranean race of men, the Vril-ya, psychically far in advance of the human species. The powers of *vril* included telepathy and telekinesis. This fictional notion was subsequently exploited by Louis Jacolliot, French consul in Calcutta under the Second Empire, in his studies of oriental beliefs and sects, which Blavatsky had herself quarried while working on the text of *Isis Unveiled* (1877). The *vril* was understood to be an enormous reservoir of energy in the human organism, inaccessible to non-initiates. It was believed that whoever became master of the *vril* force could, like Bulwer-Lytton's race of Vril-ya, enjoy total mastery over all nature.

Willy Ley, who emigrated to the United States in 1935 after a short career as a rocket engineer in Germany, wrote a short account of the pseudo-scientific ideas which had found some official acceptance during the Third Reich. Besides the World Ice Theory and the Hollow Earth Doctrine, which both found Nazi patrons, Ley recalled a Berlin sect which had engaged in meditative practices designed to penetrate the secret of *vril*.

Louis Pauwels and Jacques Bergier cited this article in their *Le matin des magiciens* (1960), the second part of which was devoted to the Third Reich under the suggestive title 'A few years in the absolute elsewhere.' They exaggerated the significance of this obscure Berlin sect, in order to claim that the Nazi leadership was determined to establish contact with an omnipotent subterranean theocracy and gain knowledge of its power. It was thought that this power would enable Germany to conquer the whole world and transform human life in accordance with a millenarian vision:

Alliances could be formed with the Master of the World or the King of Fear who reigns over a city hidden somewhere in the East. Those who conclude a pact will change the surface of the Earth and endow the human adventure with a new meaning for many thousands of years ... The world will change: the Lords will emerge from the centre of

the Earth. Unless we have made an alliance with them and become Lords ourselves, we shall find ourselves among the slaves, on the dungheap that will nourish the roots of the New Cities that will arise.

Pauwels and Bergier claimed that Hitler and his entourage believed in such ideas. In their account the Berlin sect was known as the Vril Society or the Luminous Lodge (perhaps a garbled reference to the Lumenclub of Vienna) and credited with the status of an important Nazi organization. A French psychiatrist was quoted to the effect that 'Hitler's real aim was to perform an act of creation, a divine operation ... a biological mutation which would result in an unprecedented exaltation of the human race and the "apparition of a new race of heroes and demi-gods and god-men"'. In this way, racism was linked with the occult mythology of an Eastern theocracy and the *vril* force to evoke a millenarian image of the intended Nazi future. This legendary account of Nazi inspiration and ambition was underpinned by a fanciful account of the Thule Society and certain of its members. Pauwels and Bergier singled out two particular individuals as Hitler's occult mentors at Munich during the early 1920s. Dietrich Eckart (1868-1923) was a *völkisch* playwright and journalist of violently anti-Semitic prejudice, and a prominent figure among the nationalist circles of Munich. He is also known to have attended meetings of the Thule Society. It is accepted by scholars that Eckart not only gave force and focus to Hitler's burgeoning anti-Semitism after the war, but that he also introduced the young party leader to moneyed and influential social circles. The second individual was Karl Haushofer (1869-1946), who had served as a military attaché in Japan and became a lifelong admirer of oriental culture. After the First World War Haushofer embarked upon an academic career in the field of political geography, subsequently gaining the Chair of Geopolitics at the University of Munich, where Rudolf Hess was his student assistant Hitler was supposedly impressed by Haushofer's theories, taken from Sir Halford Mackinder, that the 'heartland' of Eastern Europe and Russia ensured its rulers a wider dominance in the world.

According to Pauwels and Bergier, the influence of these two men upon Hitler chiefly related to the communication of arcane knowledge which was derived from unknown powers, with which contact had been established through the Thule Society and other cults. Eckart's role as an occult counsellor was related explicitly to invisible hierarchies.

Thule was thought to have been the magic centre of a vanished civilization. Eckardt [sic] and his friends believed that not all the secrets of Thule had perished. Beings intermediate between Man and other intelligent beings from Beyond, would place at the disposal of the Initiates [i.e. the members of the Thule Society] a reservoir of forces which could be drawn on to enable Germany to dominate the world ... [its] leaders would be men who knew everything, deriving their strength from the very fountain-head of energy and guided by the Great Ones of the Ancient World. Such were the myths on which the Aryan doctrine of Eckardt and Rosenberg was founded and which these prophets ... had instilled into the mediumistic mind of Hitler. [The Thule Society] was soon to become ... an instrument changing the very nature of reality ... under the influence of Karl Haushofer the group took on its true character as a society of Initiates in communion with the Invisible, and became the magic centre of the Nazi movement.

This spurious account also maintained that Haushofer was a member of the Luminous Lodge, a secret Buddhist society in Japan, and the Thule Society. As an initiate of the Eastern mysteries, rather than as a geopolitician, Haushofer is supposed to have proclaimed the necessity of 'a return to the sources' of the human race in Central Asia. He advocated the Nazi colonization of this area, in order that Germany could have access to the hidden centres of power in the East. The consequence of this link with 'unknown superiors' was that the Thule Society was thus revealed to be the secret directing agent of the Third Reich. This assertion and the other details

are entirely fallacious. The Thule Society was dissolved around 1925 when support had dwindled. While Eckart and Rosenberg were never more than guests of the Thule during its heyday, there is no evidence at all to link Houshofer to the group.

Selections from *Arktos: The Polar Myth in Science, Symbolism and Nazi Survival*, by Joscelyn Godwin

The Occult Roots of Nazism

Adolf Hitler had ample opportunity to learn the Thulean mythology in 1924, during his imprisonment in Landsberg jail with Rudolf Hess (1894-1987), who was the most committed of the early Nazis to the kind of ideals that List, Lanz, and Sebottendorff were propagating. Hess was as *völkisch* as could be: he ate biodynamic food and was interested in Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophy, magical topics, astrology, the doctrine of correspondences, and herbalism. One would know much more about the political and even the occult machinations of this period, so integral to an understanding of the twentieth-century's greatest tragedy, if Hess had been encouraged to speak instead of being held incommunicado in Spandau prison for over 40 years. The first book to present the many connections, real and imagined, between the Nazis and the occult was *The Morning of the Magicians* by Louis Pauwels and Jacques Bergier, first published in France in 1960. Many were the eager readers who first met there the names of Guénon and Gurdjieff, Haushofer and Hörbiger, and fell under the powerful spell cast by these ingenious authors. A number of those readers went on to write books of their own, more or less pillaged from the original. Most of them were French; and it is true to this day that the "Nazis and the Occult" genre is most avidly cultivated in France, while in Germany it is virtually shunned. There are good reasons for this. A German scholar and churchman, Ekkehard Hieronimus, writing about the nostalgic dream of primordial cultures, explains:

It has always fascinated me to see how everything that was actually created by the Germans in the Romantic era was not taken seriously by them, but wandered off into France or Italy. The most important book about the "black" or demonic side of Romanticism was the work of the Italian, Mario Praz [reference to *The Romantic Agony*]. The significant thing to realize in all of this is that the Frenchman's relationship to thought is very different from the German's. I would not dare to enter the lofty reaches of categorical thought: that would raise the theme [of primordial cultures] to an abstract level, which is exactly what I wanted to avoid. Everything would then end up in philosophy again – but we no longer have this possibility. I am sorry, but behind us lies all the blood that has been shed in the name of this dream, and that is deadly serious.

In other words, the Latins still play innocently with abstract ideas, even demonic ones, whereas the Germans have become wise – after the event – to the dangers of so doing.

Readers of Pauwels and Bergier will have come across another, more secret society supposed to lie at the roots of Nazism: the Vril Society, apparently founded by a group of Berlin Rosicrucians after hearing a lecture by Louis Jacolliot, or else directly illuminated by the Brahmins of India, and in any case fiercely anti-Christian. The sole primary source is an article by Willy Ley, a German rocket engineer who came to the United States in 1933 and became an author of popular scientific books – excellent ones, I might add. In an article called "Pseudoscience in Naziland," based on his own admittedly limited knowledge, Ley writes:

The next group [after Lanz's Ariosophy] was literally founded upon a novel. That group which I think called itself *Wahrheitsgesellschaft* – Society for Truth – and which was more or less localized in Berlin, devoted its spare time looking for *Vril*. Yes, their

convictions were founded upon Bulwer-Lytton's "The Coming Race." They knew that the book was fiction, Bulwer-Lytton had used that device in order to be able to tell the truth about this "power." The subterranean humanity was nonsense, *Vril* was not. Possibly it had enabled the British, who kept it as a State secret, to amass their colonial empire. Surely the Romans had had it, inclosed in small metal balls, which guarded their homes and were referred to as *lares*. For reasons which I failed to penetrate, the secret of *Vril* could be found by contemplating the structure of an apple, sliced in halves.

No, I am not joking, that is what I was told with great solemnity and secrecy. Such a group actually existed; they even got out the first issue of a magazine which was to proclaim their credo.

Pauwels and Bergier, who had apparently talked to Willy Ley but learned no more from him than he wrote here, continued their researches and discovered – how, they do not say – that "this Berlin group called itself *The Luminous Lodge*, or *The Vril Society*." They add that Karl Haushofer had been a member of it, citing Jack Fishman's *The Seven Men of Spandau* (where there is no such information). Haushofer had been in the Far East and possibly in Tibet; he was the mentor of Rudolf Hess at the University of Munich; the inventor of the science of Geopolitics, one of the established doctrines of Nazi academia, and hence the designer (according to one interpretation of his work) of the Germano-Japanese plan for world-domination. Hess was carrying the visiting-cards of Haushofer and his son Albrecht when he landed in Scotland in 1941. Albrecht was executed as one of the plotters against Hitler's life in 1944, and, according to Pauwels and Bergier, Karl Haushofer himself committed suicide, Japanese fashion, on 14 March 1946. His supposed membership of the "Vril Society" completed the mythical network by connecting the Nazis with the underground world of Lytton's *Coming Race*, and with the mysteries of Asia, of which we will have more to say when we come to the subject of Agartha in Chapter Seven; and the ritual *hara-kiri* bore unmistakable witness to a deep spiritual connection with the Far East, elaborated by the rumors of a Tibetan colony in wartime Berlin.

Actually, there is no cause to imagine sinister proto-Nazi plots hatching in this group. The exercise of contemplating an apple, presumably cut in half horizontally to reveal a five-pointed star, merely suggests that the "Truth Society" had learned something from Rudolf Steiner, who recommends similar meditations in his handbook *Knowledge of Higher Worlds and Its Attainment* [available on the Internet at <http://www.elib.com/Steiner/Books/>]. The interest in *Vril* was a commonplace among Theosophists, all of whom knew of Bulwer-Lytton's work; it was equated by some to Reichenbach's "Od" force, or to Eliphas Levi's "Astral Light." And to set the record straight, it should be mentioned that Haushofer did not die "Japanese fashion" but from arsenic poisoning on 10 March 1946, as has been documented by his interrogator, Father Edmund Walsh.

Chapter Seven: Agartha and the Polaires

The displacement of the world's spiritual center from the Arctic, which up to now has been one of our constant themes, implies that it has moved to somewhere else. Miguel Serrano thought that it had gone to Antarctica, an idea that we will examine in due course. Others have suggested a location in Central Asia or South America. Wherever it is, the spiritual center is now hidden from the profane, though it remains "polar" in the operative sense of directing the world's development and the destiny of humanity.

Two names tend to crop up whenever the hidden center is mentioned: Agartha and Shambhala (I use the simplest of their many spellings). They were named in the last chapter by Wilhelm Landig as two rival sources of occult power, the first good and idealistic, the second evil and materialistic. In saying this, Landig was unwisely relying on Louis Pauwels and Jacques Bergier, who write as follows in *The Morning of the Magicians*:

According to the legend with which Haushofer no doubt became acquainted in 1905, and the version which René Guénon gave of it in his *Le Roi du Monde*, after the cataclysm of Gobi the lords and masters of this great center of civilization, the All-Knowing, the sons of Intelligences from Beyond, took up their abode in a vast underground encampment under the Himalayas. There, in the heart of these caves, they divided into two groups, one following the "Right Hand Way," and the other the "Left Hand Way." The first of these had its center at Agartha, a place of meditation, a hidden city of Goodness, a temple of nonparticipation in the things of this world.

The second went to Schamballah [sic], a city of violence and power whose forces command the elements and the masses of humanity, and hasten the arrival of the human race at the "turning-point of time." The Wise Men, leaders of the peoples of the world, would be able to conclude a pact with Schamballah, which would be sealed with solemn oaths and sacrifices.

One would like to be able to pinpoint the original source of this scenario of Agartha-Shambhala rivalry, but it does not seem possible. Pauwels and Bergier say that Haushofer "no doubt" became acquainted with it – which means that they are guessing – in 1905, from a Vril Society for which there is no evidence before World War I. That leaves René Guénon as the implied source. Yet there is not a word in *Le Roi du Monde* about any of this: the name of Shambhala does not appear there (in any spelling), nor do the Gobi cataclysm, the caves beneath the Himalayas, or the schism in the underground world.

No matter: the myth was launched, and would be repeated by most of the French authors of the genre, even ones with a pretension to scholarship. Here is a baroque version from Jean-Claude Frère's *Nazisme et sociétés Secrètes* (1974). After the cataclysm that made Hyperborea uninhabitable, perhaps 6000 years ago, the inhabitants migrated to the region now covered by the Gobi Desert and there founded a new seat: Agartha. People flocked from all directions to this "center of the world," which enjoyed 2000 years of brilliant civilization. Then another catastrophe occurred, its cause unknown: the surface of the region was devastated, but Agartha survived underground. Thither the great initiates traveled – Frère mentions Pythagoras, Apollonius of Tyana, and Jesus – to receive orders from the Masters of the World. The Aryan people migrated in two directions: one went north and west, hoping to return to their Hyperborean homeland and to conquer their lost territories. A second group went south, to the Himalayas, and there founded another secret center in underground caverns.

Jean-Claude Frère concludes his tale thus:

...the sons of the Outer Intelligences are said to have split into two groups, one following the "Right-hand Path" under the "Wheel of the Golden Sun," the other the "Left-hand Path," under the "Wheel of the Black Sun." The first group preserved the center of Agartha, that undefined place of contemplation, of the Good, and of the Vril force. The second supposedly created a new place of initiation at Shambhala, the city of violence in command of the elements and of human masses, hastening the arrival of the "charnel-house of time."

This, Frère says, is the doctrine that the early Nazis learned between 1920 and 1925; and he points to their power over the German masses as typical of Shambhala's methods.

One can see by comparing Frère's version carefully with Pauwels' and Bergier's that although the conclusion is the same – the schism of Agartha and Shambhala – every detail leading up to it is different. To cite further versions would be to compound the chaos. Instead, having outlined the problem, this chapter will trace the history of Agartha, and the next that of Shambhala, in the

hope of clarifying what they are and what they are not.

The use of "Agartha" or some phonetically similar name for a hidden land is surprisingly recent, whatever popular writers and cranks may give their readers to believe. It had not been used before the 1870s, when Ernest Renan wrote about an "Asgaard" in Central Asia, as told in Chapter Three. But although that name came straight from Nordic mythology, it is curious how close Renan's utopian land was, both phonetically and geographically, to the "Asgartha" which another French freethinker, Louis Jacolliot, was writing about the same time.

To Jacolliot (1837-1890) must go the dubious credit of creating the Agarthian myth. He was a magistrate in Chandernagor, South India; among his many popular books, he produced a trilogy on Indian mythology and its relationship with Christianity. In one of these books, *Le Fils de Dieu* (The Son of God, 1873), Jacolliot tells of how he made friends with the local Brahmins, who allowed and helped him to read ancient texts such as the *Book of Historical Zodiacs* in the Pagoda of Villenoor, took him to see a Shaivite orgy in an underground temple, and told him the story of "Asgartha."

Jacolliot's Asgartha was a prehistoric "City of the Sun," the seat of the "Brahmatma" who was the chief priest of the Brahmins and the visible manifestation of God on earth, to whom even kings were as slaves. The Brahmatmas ruled India at least from the accession of Yati-Rishi in 13,300 BCE, a date which Jacolliot claims to have fixed astronomically; it corresponds to the spring equinox occurring in the first degree of Libra. Their solar capital, Asgartha, was of a splendor unparalleled, and there the Brahmatma lived, "invisible-among his wives and favorites in an immense palace," only appearing to the people once a year. To the anticlerical Jacolliot, a Deist who loathed all constraints on social and religious liberty, the Brahmatma's theocracy was anything but admirable. But if there was anything worse, in his eyes, than ancient Indian theocracy, it was the pretensions of the Christian religion, which in the companion volumes of his trilogy, *Cbristna et le Cbrist* (Krishna and Christ, 1874) and *La Bible dans l'Inde* (The Bible in India, 1872), he tries to debunk as nothing but an ape of the ancient oriental religions.

Far from crediting this prehistoric high culture of India to the Aryans, Jacolliot says that it was there long before them. The Aryans were originally Brahmins, who for 3000 years or more formed a separate caste whose name simply meant "honorable" or "illustrious." Towards 10,000 BCE, they attempted to unseat the priestly authorities, and Asgartha was taken. The priests managed to forge an alliance with the victorious Aryans, who henceforth became the warrior caste of Kshatriyas. Only much later, around 5000 BCE, was Asgartha actually destroyed, by the brothers Ioda and Skandah who invaded Hindustan from the Himalayas. Driven out by the Brahmins, they returned whence they had come, continued northwards, and became immortalized in the names "Odin" and "Scandinavia." The Norsemen, says Jacolliot, conserved so well the memory of their flight from India and their pillage of Asgartha that, when they prepared to march on Rome, they sang: "We go to sack Asgar, the City of the Sun."

Thus the myth was born, very much in the spirit of a century which had seen many a fanciful theory about the Aryan Race, its antiquity, and its geographical origins.

Soon after the appearance of Jacolliot's trilogy, a strange anonymous work called *Ghostland, or Researches into the Mysteries of Occultism* (1876) was published under the auspices of Emma Hardinge Britten, a well-known medium and a founding member of the Theosophical Society. The narrator of these "autobiographical sketches," while in India, finds his way to initiation into a certain "Ellora Brotherhood," whose secret meeting-place is near the famous rock temples of that name. Here is part of his luxuriant description of it:

I stood in a subterranean temple of immense extent, fashioned in the shape of a horse-shoe, the large oval of which was arranged as an auditorium, with luxuriously cushioned seats in ascending circles, on the plan of an amphitheatre. The lofty roof was surrounded with highly-wrought cornices, sculptured with emblems of Egyptian and Chaldaic worship, interspersed with sentences emblazoned in gold, in Arabic, Sanskrit,

and other Oriental languages. In the midst of the roof which sloped upwards, was a magnificent golden planisphere, formed on an azure plane, and so skilfully designed that the interior of the temple was illuminated from the representations of the heavenly host that gleamed and sparkled above my head. [...]

Ranged in a semicircle midway on the platform were seven tripods supporting braziers, from which ascended colored flames and wreaths of deliciously perfumed vapors, whose intoxicating odors filled the temple. Behind each tripod, seated on thrones fashioned of burnished silver, so as to represent a glittering star, were seven dark-robed figures, whose masked faces and shrouded forms left no opportunity of judging of their sex or semblance. Around me, some reclining, some sitting in Oriental fashion, were multitudes of men attired mostly in European, but with some Hindoo costumes. Their faces were concealed, however, for they all wore masks. [...]

The whole temple was furnished with fine metallic lines, every one of which converged to six powerful galvanic batteries attached to the silver thrones by six of the adepts. These persons, adepts in the loftiest and most significant sense of the term, received their inspiration from the occupant of the seventh throne, a being who, though always present, was not always visible, although as on the first night of my attendance a presence from the realms of supernal being was always there.

It was through the electrical system of this "complex battery," the positive pole of which was formed by the seven adepts and the negative by the assembled neophytes, that the narrator and his fellows were mentally impressed with vivid images of cosmic events, covering several pages in his description. The author compares the process to experiments in the electric transmission of thought made by himself with his friend Emma Hardinge Britten. But the adepts of the Ellora Brotherhood were not mere purveyors of a kind of Wagnerian synaesthetic show: we are given to understand that they radiate an unknown force to affect public opinion throughout the world.

Ghostland does not use the name of Agartha, but it is as if Jaccoliot's prehistoric center here takes on a new incarnation, as the seat of living adepts who are the hidden masters of world events. And such people do not even have to journey to Ellora to work their powers: the narrator says that once he was made an adept, he was able to occupy the seventh, presiding throne while his body lay sleeping hundreds of miles away. What is missing, however, is the single dominating figure, represented by Jaccoliot's Brahmatma, whose powers make him the clandestine ruler of the world.

Saint-Yves d'Alveydre

Did the Asgartha myth of Jaccoliot really come from a secret Indian tradition? One would readily dismiss it, were it not for the testimony of Saint-Yves d'Alveydre (1842-1909), whose theories on prehistoric earth changes we will meet in Chapter Sixteen.

Saint-Yves was a self-educated Christian Hermetist who had made a successful marriage, enabling him to publish his theories of world history and government and to cultivate political ambitions. In his quest for universal understanding, he decided in 1885 to take lessons in Sanskrit, the classical and philosophical language of India. He learnt far more than he expected. Saint-Yves' tutor was a certain Haji Sharif (or Hardjji Scharipf, 1838-?). Nobody knows who he was, or what became of him later, though the gossip current among Saint-Yves' disciples and René Guénon's circle of friends had him leaving India at the Sepoy Revolt of 1857, and working as a bird-seller at Le Havre. However, there is no doubt that he existed, and that he was responsible for putting the Agarthian idea into Saint-Yves' brilliant but unbalanced mind.

The manuscripts of Saint-Yves' Sanskrit lessons are preserved in the library of the Sorbonne, written in exquisite script by Haji and embellished by philological comparisons from Hebrew and Arabic. On the very first lesson (8 June 1885), Haji signed his name with a cryptic symbol and styled himself "Guru Pandit of the Great Agarthaian School." Elsewhere he refers to the "Holy Land of Agarththa" (his favored spelling) and its protector the "Master of the Universe." In due course he informed Saint-Yves that this school preserves the original language of mankind and its 22-lettered alphabet: it is called Vattan, or Vattanian. From references to Agartha and Vattan in the Sanskrit lessons and in Saint-Yves' own notebooks, it is plain that the conversations with Haji, during 1885 and 1886, centered on this hitherto unknown alphabet and its homeland – which, far from having been destroyed thousands of years ago, was supposedly still in existence.

Saint-Yves could not get close enough to Agartha through his teacher, but he possessed other means of access: he had mastered the art of disengaging his astral body, and in this way was able to visit Agartha for himself. The detailed report on what he found there became the crowning volume of his series of politico-hermetic "Missions": *Mission des Souverains*, *Mission des Ouvriers*, *Mission des luifs*, and now *Mission de l'Inde* (The Mission of India). Printed at his own expense, like all his works, it was dated 1886 and styled "Third Edition": a common deception aimed at making a new book look like a best-seller.

No sooner were the sheets off the press than Saint-Yves became nervous: had he gone too far? Later writers would claim that his Indian informants had threatened him with death if he published the secrets of Agartha. In the event, the entire edition was destroyed before publication, with the exception of two copies, one kept by Saint-Yves himself and the other secreted by the printer.

Mission de l'Inde, to put it bluntly, takes the lid off Agartha. We learn that it is a hidden land somewhere in the East, below the surface of the earth, where a population of millions is ruled by a "Sovereign Pontiff" of Ethiopian race, styled the Brahmatina. This almost superhuman figure is assisted by two colleagues, the "Mahatma" and the "Mahanga" (who had not appeared in Jacolliot). His realm, Saint-Yves explains, was transferred underground and concealed from the surface-dwellers at the start of the Kali-Yuga, which he dates around 3200 BCE. Agartha has long enjoyed the benefits of a technology advanced far beyond our own: gas lighting, railways, air travel, and the like. Its government is the ideal one of "Synarchy" which the surface races have lost since the schism that broke the Universal Empire in the fourth millenium BCE, and which Moses, Jesus, and Saint-Yves strove to reinstate. Now and then Agartha sends emissaries to the upper world, of which it has perfect knowledge. Not only the latest discoveries of modern man, but the whole wisdom of the ages is enshrined in its libraries, engraved on stone in Vattanian characters. Among its secrets are those of the relationship of soul to body, and of the means to keep departed souls in communication with incarnate ones. When our world adopts Synarchical government, the time will be ripe for Agartha to reveal itself and to shower its spiritual and temporal benefits on us. To further this, Saint-Yves includes in the book open letters to the Queen of England, the Emperor of Russia, and the Pope, inviting them to use their power to hasten the event. There is much more in the book of an extremely bizarre nature, rather as if Bacon's *New Atlantis* had been rewritten by Jules Verne and C. W. Leadbeater. Perhaps the oddest thing is Saint-Yves' own stance. Far from presenting himself as an authorized spokesman for Agartha, he admits that he is a spy. Dedicating the book to the Sovereign Pontiff and signing it with his own name in Vattanian characters (just as Haji had written it out for him), he expatiates on how astounded this great dignitary will be to read the work, wondering how human eyes could have penetrated the innermost sanctuaries of his realm. Saint-Yves explains that he is a spontaneous initiate, bound by oath of secrecy to no one, and that the Brahmatma, once over his shock, will admit the wisdom of what he has dared to reveal.

Hints about Agartha and the Brahmatta were leaked in Saint-Yves' own poems as well as in Papus' writings and letters. The small coterie of French esotericists who held Saint-Yves in awe thus had some inkling of it before the posthumous publication of *Mission de l'Inde* in 1910. As for the question of Saint-Yves' sources, besides Jacolliot there is an obvious resemblance to the novel of Bulwer Lytton, *The Coming Race* (1871), which tells of a subterranean realm of highly developed beings who possess the mysterious "Vril force" and will one day emerge from their caverns and dominate us – no doubt for our own good. Saint-Yves was close to Bulwer Lytton's son, the Earl of Lytton, a former Ambassador to France and Viceroy of India who translated Saint-Yves' *Poème de la Reine* (The poem of the queen, 1892) and presented it to Queen Victoria. But a work like *Mission de l'Inde* cannot be explained away by literary influences alone. I believe that Saint-Yves did "see" what he described, and that he did not consider himself, to the slightest degree, to be writing fiction or deriving anything from anyone else. The proof is in his utter seriousness of character, and in the publications and correspondence of the rest of his life, which take Agartha and its Brahmatta for unquestionable realities. But it is quite another matter to accept his Agartha in all the actuality and physicality that he attributed to it. Here is an extract from Saint-Yves' description of the subterranean city of Agartha, offered for comparison with the semicircular auditorium of the Ellora Brotherhood and its spectacles:

Thousands, even millions of students have never penetrated beyond the first suburban circles; few succeed in mounting the steps of this formidable Jacob's ladder which lead through initiatic trials and examinations to the central cupola.

The latter, a work of magical architecture like all of Agarttha, is lit from above with reflecting panels that only allow the light to enter after it has passed through the entire enharmonic scale of colors, in comparison to which the solar spectrum of our physics treatises is merely the diatonic scale.

It is there that the central hierarchy of Cardinals and Archis, arranged in a semicircle before the Sovereign Pontiff, appears iridized like a view from beyond the Earth, confounding the forms and bodily appearances of the two worlds, and drowning in celestial radiances all visible distinctions of race in a single chromatic of light and sound, singularly removed from the usual notions of perspective and acoustics.

Mission de l'Inde insists that there really is a "Coming Race" beneath the surface of the earth, technologically and spiritually superior to ourselves, and that they, or their leader, are the true rulers of our world. A couple of years before writing *Mission de l'Inde*, Saint-Yves had come across another version of the idea of hidden masters: that of the Himalayan Mahatmas Morya and Koot Hoomi who wrote, at Madame Blavatsky's behest, the "Mahatma Letters" to A. P. Sinnett, A. O. Hume, and others. Here, too, were preternaturally wise men, safe in their mountain fastnesses, in command of psychic powers and secret knowledge that gave them a lofty contempt for the science of the modern West. Saint-Yves welcomed Koot Hoomi's letters ecstatically on their appearance, but after his investigations at first hand he soon found them redundant.

The notion of a secret realm where the Wise live and work had existed since the mid-eighteenth century in the Freemasonry of the Strict Observance, with its "Unknown Superiors." Baron von Hund, in founding this order, doubtless had in mind the Rosicrucians of the early seventeenth century, presented as moving surreptitiously among humanity and, incidentally, having their central shrine in an underground vault. The rumor, repeated by Guénon, that after the end of the Thirty Years' War, in 1648, the Rosicrucians abandoned Europe for Asia is the very link needed to identify the hidden masters of the East with those who, like the Count of Saint-Germain and Alessandro Cagliostro, had attempted the renovation of the West.

What became of Agartha after Saint-Yves? A few Parisian occultists kept its memory alive in the face of the stronger attractions of the Theosophical Society, which knew no more of it than

what Madame Blavatsky had read in Jaccoliot. Here is a new definition, taken from a series of articles by one "Narad Mani," which supplied the backbone of Guénon's own hostile study of the Theosophical Society:

The true Hindu Center, spiritual in essence, which none of the leaders of Blavatskyism have ever been in touch with, is "AGARTTHA." And let him who has ears, hear: it is located, so said Saint-Yves d'Alveydre, in "certain regions of the Himalayas, among twenty-two temples representing the twenty-two arcana of Hermes and the twenty-two letters of certain sacred alphabets," where it forms "the mystic Zero, the Unfindable. The Zero is All or Nothing: All for harmonic Unity, nothing without it; all through Synarchy, nothing through Anarchy."

Another center masks this one: it is the Masonry of the Taychoux-Marous, unknown to the Blavatskyians, whose branches spread secretly in Asia and in many Christian countries. [Note] This Masonry, whose headquarters is in the temple of J.... is composed of 33 Lodges. Each Lodge is composed of a master and 33 workers. Each worker has 33 pupils. Behind the 33 Lodges, there is an occult Committee, at the summit of which is the Dalai Lama, currently a prisoner of the English in Calcutta, and who, according to the customs of the country, should have been dead for 22 years. The Dalai Lama is called Tuldan-Gyatso.

Such statements may intrigue, but they do not help to clarify the nature of Agartha, nor its relations to Tibet past or present. The whole idea might well have been forgotten after World War I and the death of Papus, always the most energetic proponent of Saint-Yves' discoveries. But in 1922, the Polish scientist Ferdinand Ossendowski wrote in a sensational travel and adventure book, *Beasts, Men and Gods*, that he had heard tell in Mongolia of a subterranean realm of 800 million inhabitants called "Agharti"; of its triple spiritual authority "Brahyma – the King of the World," "Mahytrna," and "Mahynga," its sacred language "Vattanan," and many other things that seemed to corroborate Saint-Yves. The book ended on a somber note of prophecy from one of Ossendowski's informants; that one day (the year 2029, to be exact) the people of Aghardi [sic] would issue forth from their caverns and appear on the surface of the earth.

Any unprejudiced reader, finding in three chapters of Ossendowski's book a virtual précis of the "Agartha" described in *Mission de l'Inde* – not omitting the most improbable details – would conclude that he had capped an already good story with a convenient piece of plagiarism, altering the spellings so as to make his version, if challenged, seem informed by an independent source. But Ossendowski denied this indignantly, asserting in the presence of René Guénon that he had never even heard of Saint-Yves d'Alveydre before 1924. Guénon's interest was kindled, and in 1925 he wrote that he had no reason to doubt Ossendowski's sincerity. More than that, Guénon was moved to write his own book on the subject and its ramifications, which appeared in 1927 as *Le Roi du Monde* (The king of the world). He began by saying that "independently of Ossendowski's testimony, we know from quite different sources that tales of this kind are current in Mongolia and all of Central Asia." Guénon does not tell us what these sources are, nor what degree of similitude is meant by "tales of this kind." His Agartha, whose name means "the inviolable," is the spiritual center of the world, ruled by a "King of the World" who is not to be confused with the Satanic "Princeps huius mundi." To prove its reality, Guénon spins one of his most fascinating webs of connections, correspondences, and multi-faceted symbols taken from the myths and religious traditions of East and West. But is there any physical truth behind it, such as Saint-Yves claimed there to be? Near the end of the book, Guénon faces the ontological question of Agartha:

Now, should its placement in a definite region be regarded as literally true, or only as symbolic, or is it both at the same time? To this question we simply reply that, for us, the

geographical facts themselves and also the historical facts have, like all others, a symbolic value; which moreover evidently does not remove any of their own reality in so far as they are facts, but which confers on them, beyond this immediate reality, a superior significance.

So Guénon at the very least did not count out a geographical Agartha: if one were proved to exist, it would only bolster the superior reality of the symbolic one. Guénon's biographer Jean-Pierre Laurant comments on this that "the two interpretations have in fact nothing contradictory about them: they can even join with an appetite for the marvelous that Guénon did not repudiate, his life long." And the late Marco Pallis, the traveler in Tibet, writer on Buddhism, and translator of Guénon, who wrote an article discrediting Ossendowski's sources, called *Le Roi du Monde* "disastrous" in conversation with this author, because the great metaphysician had let himself wander off into sensationalism.

The Polar Fraternity

The same trait led Guénon in 1927 to lend at least temporary support to a most extraordinary enterprise: the founding of the "Polaires." The history of this movement is said to date back to 1908, when a young Franco-Italian, Mario Fille, met a hermit who lived in the hills near Rome. Going by the name of father Julian, this hermit confided to Fille a sheaf of old parchments, telling him that they contained an Oracle. Consultation of this Oracle took place through word and number manipulation, but the processes called for were painstaking and lengthy, and Fille did not bother with them until about twelve years later (that is, about 1920), at a time of personal crisis. Thereupon he followed the instructions, which were to phrase one's question in Italian, adding one's name and the maiden name of one's mother, turn them into numbers, and make with them certain mathematical operations. At the end of several hours' work, a final series of numbers emerged which, when retranslated into letters, gave a cogent and grammatically correct answer to one's question. Fille was amazed. Apparently the Oracle never failed to behave with perfect reliability, though its answers were sometimes in English or German. Obedient to Père Julian's command, Fille alone possessed the key to its manipulation.

One of the first questions to ask such an oracle is "Who are you?" Working with his friend and fellow-musician Cesare Accomani, Fille learned that this was called the "Oracle of Astral Energy": that it was not a method of divination like some Kabbalistic oracles or the *I Ching*, but an actual channel of communication with the "Rosicrucian Initiatic Center of 'Mysterious' Asia," situated in the Himalayas and directed by the "Three Supreme Sages" or the "Little Lights of the Orient," who live in – Agartha. These at first included Father Julian, then, after his passing on 8 April 1930, purported to come from a "Chevalier Rose-Croix" who was guessed to be a favorite of the neo-Theosophists, the "Master Racoczy," sometime incarnated as Roger Bacon, Francis Bacon, and the Comte de Saint-Germain.

Fille and Accomani settled in Paris, where the Oracle was demonstrated to a group of journalists and writers in the hope that they would publicize it. Some were favorably enough impressed to contribute to Accomani's book about it: *Asia Mysteriosa*, published in 1929 under the pseudonym of "Zam Bhotiva." One of these was Fernand Divoire, editor of *L'Intransigeant* and author of *Pourquoi je crois l'occultisme* (Why I believe in occultism, 1929). Another was Maurice Magre: poet, novelist, and author of *Pourquoi je suis Bouddhiste* (Why I am a Buddhist, 1928). Implicitly equating the Oracle's source with that of Blavatsky's Theosophy, Magre wrote that "The existence of this brotherhood, variously known as 'Agartha' and as the 'Great White Lodge,' is what it has always been, but unproven by those 'material evidences' of which the Western mind is so fond." And after paying further respects to Blavatsky and her Masters, he adds that "The revelations of Saint-Yves d'Alveydre in *La Mission de l'Inde*, despite their apparent improbability, must contain part of the truth."

A third supporter of *Asia Mysteriosa* was Jean Marquès-Rivière, who had written on Tibetan Buddhism and Tantrism. In his Foreword, he mentions that both Emmanuel Swedenborg and the early nineteenth-century visionary Anne Catherine Emmerich had believed in a spiritual center in Tibet or Tartary. He continues:

Now, the center of transhuman power has a reflection on the earth; it is a constant tradition in Asia, and this Center (a terrestrial one? *I do not know to what degree*) [his emphasis], is called in Central Asia *Agarttha*. It has many other different names which there is no point in recalling here. This Center has as its mission, or rather as its reason for existence, the direction of the spiritual activities of the Earth.

If the Polaires' center was somewhere in Asia, then one might ask what was "polar" about them. The *Bulletin des Polaires*, 9 June 1930, explained:

The Polaires take this name because from all time the Sacred Mountain, that is, the symbolic location of the Initiatic Centers, has always been qualified by different traditions as "polar." And it may very well be that this Mountain was once really polar, in the geographical sense of the word, since it is stated everywhere that the Boreal Tradition (or the Primordial Tradition, source of all Traditions) originally had its seat in the Hyperborean regions.

For a mouthpiece of the spiritual center of the whole earth, associated if not identified both with Blavatsky's White Brotherhood and Saint-Yves' Agartha, the Oracle fell sadly short of expectations. Its answers were elaborate, but not always conclusive. For example:

Q. Do the Three Supreme Sages and Agarttha exist?

A. The Three Sages exist and are the Guardians of the Mysteries of Life and Death. After forty winters passed in penitence for sinful humanity and in sacrifices for suffering humanity, one may have special missions which permit one to enter into the Garden, in preparation for the final selection which opens the Gate of Agarttha.

Few of its statements provided any precise occult or mystical knowledge. One point of interest, however, is that it shared with René Guénon a strong aversion to the theory of reincarnation. One of the "Little Lights," Tek the Wise, says that:

They are without number, the planets which must be traversed in innumerable existences; but what is certain is that there is no return to the same planet.

A fourth article in support of the Oracle was to have been contributed by Guénon himself. He had been interested, he said, by its enigmatic aspects, and had tested it by posing certain doctrinal questions. But the Oracle's responses were vague and most unsatisfactory, and moreover, between Guénon's question and the arrival of its answer, Fille and Accomani founded "a society dressed up with the baroque name of 'Polaires'," whereupon Guénon dissociated himself from them.

Others who briefly accepted the Oracle's authenticity and are cited in *Asia Mysteriosa* include Arturo Reghini, the Italian writer on oriental traditions and alchemy, who was responsible for introducing Julius Evola to the works of Guénon; and Vivian Postel Du Mas, who had been a member of Schwaller de Lubicz's "Veilleurs" after World War I, and in the 1930s led an esoteric-political group whose doctrines were based on the Synarchy of Saint-Yves. Maurice Girodias paints a lively picture, in his autobiography *The Frog Prince*, of the vaguely Theosophic community run by Du Mas and Jeanne Canudo, and of their efforts to fight Hitler and Mussolini

on the astral plane by directing thought-waves, just as the Polaires had tried to influence world events and heal lost souls by mental projection.

A more famous associate of the Polaires was Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes and propagandist for spiritualism; but his connection began only after his death on 7 July 1930. As a result of mediumistic communications on both sides of the English Channel, Zam Bhotiva (Accomani) got in touch with Grace Cooke, a London medium, in January 1931. Through her he heard Conan Doyle promising that the Polaires were "destined to help in the moulding of the future of the world... For the times are near." Mrs. Cooke's spirit guide, another Tibetan Sage named White Eagle, told her that Bhotiva had come because of instructions from Tibet. The Chevalier Rose-Croix added that Conan Doyle was now going to help the Brotherhood: "See – the star rises in the East – it is the sign of the Polaires, the sign of the two interlaced triangles!"

On a very different front from English Spiritualism, the Polaires also seem to have had some connection with Krishnamurti, at least in their own opinion. Christian Bernadac, a novelist who wrote an important book on Otto Rahn (see below), states simply that Krishnamurti was "the Polaires' Messiah." Maurice Magre and Fernand Divoire had in fact contributed in 1928 and 1929 respectively to the *Cahiers de l'Etoile*, a Krishnamurti-centered publication; and many of the Polaires must have been Theosophists, too. A member of the White Eagle Lodge also hinted to me in 1987 that the Polaires had taken over the Order of the Star, complete with its symbol, when Krishnamurti dissolved it on 3 August 1929. It would be quibbling, perhaps, to mention that Krishnamurti's order had used a five-pointed star, and the Polaires a six-pointed one.

During 1929 and 1930, the Polaires are said to have made excavations and archival researches in the Cathar country: the region south of Toulouse which suffered from the Albigensian Crusade, from 1209 to the final fall of Montségur in 1245. According to a local newspaper the Polaires had found traces of Christian Rosenkreutz' passage through the area, in the ruined castle of Lordat. This is probably the same episode as was recounted, rather cynically, by Pierre Geyraud: he tells of how Zam Bhotiva discovered through the Oracle the "Wand of Pico della Mirandola," which was supposed to tremble when it approached gold. Zam set off with his lady companion to find the lost treasure of Montségur, but having no success either there or in Spain, left the group in discouragement.

It was surely not mere chance that the Polaires' investigation coincided both in time and place with that of Otto Rahn (1904-1939), which would result in his best-selling book, *Crusade against the Grail*. Rahn, who was a member of the SS from 1936 and possibly long before, was largely responsible for the mythological complex that associated the Cathars and Montségur with the Holy Grail and its Castle. We have already touched on this myth in summarizing Landig's *Götzen gegen Thule*, where Bélisse was its spokesman. To this day, it fuels a profitable pilgrimage and tourist industry in the Ariège region, and is cultivated with particular zeal by the "Lectorium Rosicrucianum" founded in Haarlem, Netherlands by Jan van Rijckenborgh.

One possible link between Rahn and the Polaires was in the person of the Comtesse Pujol-Murat, one of Rahn's main patrons in the Ariège, who had been associated with the order." The elderly Maurice Magre also retired to the region. Like Bélisse, Rahn regarded the French and Germans not as natural enemies but as separated families. His work describes a succession of noble peoples persecuted by the Roman Catholic Church who include the Aryan Visigoths, the Albigenses, the Protestants expelled from France in 1685, and the Camisards. This is another version of the familiar theme of opposition between the Polar tradition and Judeo-Christianity, casting the latter as the oppressors. But whatever Rahn may have got from the gentle and harmless Polaires, and whatever value his work may have for the equally beneficent Rosicrucians and neo-Cathars of today, it was soon polluted by the influence of the Thulean blood-mythology. Here is an extract from his second book, *Luzifers Hofgesind* (Lucifer's court, 1936), written at the command of Heinrich Himmler:

By the name of "Lucifer's Courtiers" I mean those who are of Nordic blood and who, faithful to this blood, have chosen as the supreme object of their quest for the Divine a *Mount of Assembly* situated in the farthest midnight North, and certainly not Mount Sinai, or Mount Sion, in the Middle East.

Returning to the Polaires, we find them regrouping after Accomani's departure as a more popular movement with an emphasis on practical magic, astrology, and herb-lore. By 1936 there were separate groups for men and women in Paris, and sister groups in Geneva, New York, and Belgrade, all working under Mario Fille's direction in a well-meaning but woolly-minded way for the welfare of humanity. One cannot say much more about them because the Polaires' documents, deposited at the Theosophical Society's headquarters in Paris, were looted during the Occupation, along with the archives of many Freemasonic and esoteric organizations. Christian Bernadac surmises that Alfred Rosenberg wanted these materials for his academy at Frankfurt, which was supposed to establish a historical basis to justify the Nazi movement.

Who should have denounced the Polaires but their erstwhile friend, Jean Marquès-Rivière, who had now become an active collaborator with the German Occupation? This former student of Mahayana Buddhism organized an exhibition on *Le Juif et la France* (The Jew and France, September 1941), wrote the script of a long film on the ritual crimes of Freemasonry, and worked to establish a "Permanent Museum of Secret Societies," after the model of the Nazi's exhibitions of degenerate art. He is another disconcerting example of a man of evident spiritual knowledge seduced by the Black Order.

A Brahmatma in Charenton

Subsequent developments of the Agarthian myth evoke more pity than terror. There is, for example, the story of Madeleine V., born in 1889 to a comfortable French family. Like many visionaries, she experienced angelic visitations even as a child of seven. After marriage, motherhood, and the death of her husband, she gave herself fervently to Catholic mysticism. In about 1930, she became aware of René Guénon and his circle, read all his books, and entered into a correspondence with Marcel Clavelle (=Jean Reyor), Guénon's chief agent in France after his move to Cairo. After an exchange of about a thousand letters, Clavelle called a halt, whereupon, in 1937, Madeleine went to Rome to see the Pope. Frustrated by her failure to obtain an audience, she addressed God directly and was rewarded by an interior vision of the Holy Spirit as a dove flying from her head. A voice called "Roi du Monde, Roi du Monde," and in her vision there appeared the great Pontiff, who invested her with the Ark of the Covenant as the Lord of the World.

Back in France, believing she had attained what Guénon called the "supreme identity" or "deliverance," she again saw Clavelle, who initiated her into the Order of the Divine Paraclete in 1938. In 1942 she performed a ritual for her dying son, which left her and him no longer distinct: she was henceforth androgyne. Little more is known about her until her committal as a mental patient in 1951, except that she lectured, published poems, and spent her inherited capital. Thereupon began the first year of the Brahmanic Era, as she set up in the asylum of Charenton as "The Divine Brahmatma," imagining Guénon as the Mahatma on her right hand and her husband Pierre on her left. Her internment she believed to be the result of a Freemasonic plot; it did nothing to lessen her influence, in her own eyes, as she directed the secret society "Agartha 8" and the Brahmanic Action Front, with its 15 million members in France. Giving audiences like a *grande dame* in her room, decorated like a fortune-teller's booth, and wearing a tiara of gold paper, she elaborated her vast plans for world government. When the students marched up the Champs Elysées in May 1968, she believed that it was a demonstration by her

own party, and that the plans to erect her statue in the Place Victor Hugo had only just been foiled by her opponents. A close follower of the news, she kept her finger on the pulse of world affairs, and wrote constantly: symbolic treatises, letters to the United Nations and the authorities, plans for the union of religions, and the like. Every two weeks, her children would take her out to a restaurant.

Madeleine's story, which is told in the medical doctoral thesis of Jean François Allilaire, might be read as a cautionary tale: but to whom? Her beliefs and interests are within a hair's breadth of Saint-Yves d'Alveydre's: they share the Catholic mysticism, the Agarthian myth, the political involvement, the twin-soul theme. Her feeling of supreme identity and her general happiness are not questioned by Dr. Allilaire: yet she is classified as insane, while Saint-Yves was merely eccentric. And what of Guénon, whose writings planted the seeds of delusion in an already sensitive head? Did not he, too, believe in the King of the World and in the uniqueness of his own mission, offering what his biographer Jean Robin called "the last chance of the West" before the end of the cycle?

Another case-study could be made of Robert Ernst Dickhoff, (1904?-) the self-styled "Ph.D., D.D., Mystic, Adept, Mason of High Degree, Sungma Red Lama, Sa-Ish-Ka-Te (Red Fire), Messenger of Buddha, Grand Lama of the White Lodge of Tibet, Section of New York," not forgetting "Ufologist." The author of a book, *Agharta* (1951), Dickhoff at least cannot be accused of plagiarism from Pauwels and Bergier. His Agartha is "the Holy abode of the Buddhist world, located in the Sangpo Valley, China." We realize that we are scraping new depths when we read this:

Before Agharta became the recognized Holy City to be used by Buddhist Lamas it had to be cleansed of a remnant of Venus serpents masquerading in convenient human bodies, who had held the terminal city for many eons and from which stronghold they spread evil propaganda, designed to fight the Martian wizards' mentality, who also had selected human bodies via the principle of reincarnation.

I am told that the cleansing was done by 500 Lamas who were instructed by the Grand Lama to march on the stronghold of the Evil Master of evil masters, who called himself "King of the World."

We will meet these serpents again when we come to Antarctica. For now, it is enough to say that Dickhoff had probably been reading *Amazing Stories* rather than Guénon. He had certainly been keeping dubious company, consorting with Prince Om Cherenzi-Lind, who had given him the title of Most Reverend Red Lama, and with Walter Siegmeister, who regarded him as the Maitreya. Cherenzi-Lind was a notorious pretender of the 1930s and 1940s, whose modest claim was to be the current incarnation of Koot Hoomi, Regent of Agartha, and Director of the Great White Brotherhood. "Aghartha," Cherenzi-Lind writes unhelpfully, "has its principal seat in a well-known place, *Aghartha*." At present, he adds, it is in the Great World Sanctuary Ch'an Cheng Lob, in Tien Shan (Tartary), where the Regent usually lives and keeps in telepathic contact with his colleagues. Siegmeister wrote as "Raymond Bernard" on the hollow earth, UFOs, underground realms in South America, and many other topics: he is probably responsible for the idea that Agartha (he spells it *Agharta*) is the interior of the globe, where the flying saucers come from, and that Shamballah is its capital city. We will return to him in Chapter Nine.

Whatever else one may say about Agartha, it does seem to have been a source of delusion, if not of certifiable insanity, to almost everyone who has written about it. Like the archetype of polar origins, to which it is closely linked, it seems to wield a power that is not always for the good. Here, at the end of this chapter I have just lifted the lid of a Pandora's Box into which we will have to peer more closely when we come to the theme of the hollow earth and the polar

openings. But first we must scrutinize Agarthā's double, or ally, or deadly enemy (depending on who one listens to): the city or realm of Shambhala.

Chapter Eight: Shambhala

Since Shambhala is a Tibetan term, in order to define it one cannot possibly do better than to consult the Tibetans themselves. The present, Fourteenth Dalai Lama gave the following explanation in 1981 to a group undergoing initiation into the Kalachakra Tantra:

The Kalachakra Tantra [...] has been intimately connected with the country of Shambhala – its ninety-six districts, its kings, and retinue. Still, if you lay out a map and search for Shambhala, it is not findable; rather, it seems to be a pure land which, except for those whose karma and merit have ripened, cannot be immediately seen or visited. As is the case, for example, with the Joyous Pure Land [Tibetan terms omitted], Sky Territories, the Blissful Pure Land, Mount Da-la, and so forth, even though Shambhala is an actual land—an actual pure land – it is not immediately approachable by ordinary persons such as by buying an airplane ticket. Perhaps, if, in the future, spacecrafts improve to the point where they can proceed faster than light, it might be possible to arrive there, but the tickets might be expensive! In fact, we can consider the tickets to be meritorious actions, and thus it takes someone rich in merit to arrive there.

The Dalai Lama's words indicate that Shambhala is not a physical place in any normal, geographical understanding of the term. The Kalachakra Tantra itself, is a system for transforming mind and body into purity, is used by some of its numerous initiates with the object of ensuring a future rebirth in the pure land of Shambhala. Since Buddhism does not limit the possible rebirths of human beings to fleshly bodies, life in a realm that, from the physical point of view, is immaterial, is a distinct possibility and may even be a desirable one.

One of the Dalai Lama's secretaries, Khamtul Jhamyang Thondup, contributed a description of Shambhala to a book by Andrew Tomas which fills out the picture a little more. "Its appearance," he says, "depends on one's spiritual status [...] therefore it is difficult to define it precisely." However, the Kalachakra teachings say that Shambhala is made from atoms of the five elements with their potentialities, projected into the center of unconditioned empty space. The result, as Thondup describes it, is the typical palace of fantasy, with pillars of precious gems, wish-fulfilling cows, and more, inhabited by gods and god-kings.

The Tibetan idea of Shambhala conforms to the world view of Mahayana Buddhism. Thondup's words about its appearance being dependent on one's spiritual status are a key to its comprehension. What is said of Shambhala is just as true of New York or London. One perceives the city as one's state – perhaps a better word than "status" – permits one to perceive it. To some it is Hell, to others Heaven, or at least Purgatory. In his guidebook for pilgrims (in whatever sense), *The Way to Shambhala* (1775), the Third Panchen Lama puts it like this:

Jambudvīpa [the earth] always remains the same, yet one can see it in completely different ways; hence the parable that a beaker of water has a completely different appearance for three different kinds of beings, gods, men, and pretas [hungry ghosts]. For gods, there is pure nectar in it; for men, water; and for pretas, pus and blood.

Since to the Buddhist all existence, even that of the gods in their heavens, is illusory, the distinction between a "real" city that one can find on a map or at the end of a road, and an "unreal" one like Shambhala, is not as clear-cut as it seems to the materialist. Neither is there so sharp a division between materiality and immateriality, the world of stuff and the world of mind: for what is any city but the result of hundreds of years of thought, on the part of millions of

people? It takes on the lineaments of their creative ideas, be they noble or ignoble. From the ultimate point of view, both New York and Shambhala are equally real to their perceivers, or equally unreal to those who can see through the veil of Samsara.

What is the experience of those pure enough, as the Dalai Lama might define it, to visit Shambhala and see for themselves what manner of place it is? To the naive visionary, perhaps it is full of gem-encrusted halls where priceless treasures are piled in heaps: a place where there is no suffering, and every wish comes true. In Tibetan Tantric practice, the meditator may summon up such places in all their detail, and endow them with a sense of reality that may even become palpable to others. The Kalachakra Tantra itself is a very complex meditation of this kind. But the practitioner also knows that, however realistic the visionary experience, it is not ultimately real. If success is reached in the meditative creation of cities and landscapes, gods and demons, then the practitioner gains the corresponding capacity for the "de-creation" of the material, everyday world, that is, for the awareness that earthly cities, like Shambhala, are mind created illusions. Given these assumptions, it is thinkable that Shambhala has never existed as a physical place, but that the possibility, even the frequency, of visionary journeys there have made it a familiar locale to Tantric initiates. Perhaps there is an analogy with *Ghostland*, where we read of the narrator traveling while his soul slept hundreds of miles away to preside over gatherings of the Ellora Brotherhood in an Indian underground temple; and with *Mission de l'Inde*, in which Saint-Yves d'Alveydre said that he witnessed the life and ceremonies of subterranean Agartha, while we know that he never set foot outside Europe.

It is no wonder, then, that the Tibetans are impossible to pin down on the subject of Shambhala's geographical location. *The Way to Shambhala* is written in such a manner as to confuse rather than guide the profane pilgrim. The Panchen Lama III there gives several different versions of its geography, with details that hint clearly enough that it is a mythical world-in the real sense:

The people who live on the fringes of the snowy mountains have their bodies halved, such that on their right thighs they have male generative organs, but on their left, female ones. There too grow exclusively the paradise-trees of Jambudvipa. Then comes a wood, called Samantasubha, and beyond it stretches the great realm of Shambhala. [...]

This great wonderland is quite circular, and its border is surrounded by a wreath of glaciers.

Yet if Shambhala is now beyond the confines of materiality, it may not always have been so. Jeffrey Hopkins, writing his historical introduction to the Dalai Lama's Commentary, explains that the Kalachakra Tantra traditionally goes back to Gautama Buddha himself, who expounded it at the request of Suchandra, "King of Shambhala." Subsequent kings are said to have kept the Kalachakra initiation alive in Central Asia, so that it could be brought to India in the tenth century CE, and to Tibet in the eleventh. The Italian Tibetologist (and friend of Evola), Giuseppe Tucci, says that tradition places this kingdom near the river Sita, which he equates with the Tarim, a large river flowing eastwards through Chinese Turkestan (Sinkiang), north of Tibet. The Panchen Lama wrote that the "wide realm of Shambhala" extends between Mount Kailas (in the south of Tibet, about 700 miles from the Tarim) and the "nearby River Sita." Then again, Lama Thondup calls Shambhala one of the six regions of the "central continent of the south," these being in order from the north: (1) the Land of Snow, (2) Shambhala, (3) China, (4) Ho-T'ien [South Sinkiang], (5) Tibet, and (6) India. This would appear to place it in southern Siberia, or possibly in western Mongolia.

Shambhala in the Gobi

Moving now to Western authorities, we find the Theosophists unanimous in identifying Shambhala with a lost civilization of the Gobi Desert. There is an early allusion to it in Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled*, where she says that long before Adam and Eve there was a vast inland sea extending over Central Asia. "An island, which for its unparalleled beauty had no rival in the world, was inhabited by the last remnant of the race which preceded ours." Later, in the *Secret Doctrine*, she corrected this statement: it was the last race but one, the Lemurians, who had taken refuge in this place. Here is the relevant passage from the Commentaries on the Book of Dzyan, with Blavatsky's additions in italics:

The last survivors of the fair child of the White Island (*the primitive Svera-dwipa*) had perished ages before. Their (*Lemuria's*) elect, had taken shelter on the sacred Island (*now the 'fabled' Shamballab, in the Gobi Desert*), while some of their accursed races, separating from the main stock, now lived in the jungles and underground ("*cave-men*"), when the golden yellow race (*the Fourth*) became in its turn "black with sin." From pole to pole the Earth had changed her face for the third time ...

Elsewhere she says that this sacred island, "according to belief, exists to the present hour; now, as an oasis surrounded by the dreadful wildernesses of the great Desert."

After Blavatsky's death and the schisms in the Theosophical Society, there were many who emulated her style of prehistory, based on sources inaccessible to the common scholar. Annie Besant and Charles W. Leadbeater, who together led the Adyar Theosophical Society in the first decades of our century, relied on Leadbeater's clairvoyance, which he would exercise in genial fashion, sitting comfortably around a table with his amanuenses, and discussing tricky points with Besant and others less psychically eloquent." In *Man: Whence, How and Whither* (1913), which catalogues the results of these historical investigations, "Shambhalla" appears as a city founded in about 70,000 BCE by the Manu (priest-king-founder) of the Aryan Race, on the shores of the Gobi Sea, with the White Island opposite it. There is no suggestion that it still exists, because after all the Masters of the Theosophical Society were well known to have their base in Shigatse, possibly in an esoteric school attached to the monastery headquarters of the Panchen Lama.

Another who found her own route to the "akashic records" was Alice A. Bailey, channel for one of the junior Theosophical Mahatras, Djihwal Khul. She, or rather he, wrote in one of their first books, *Initiation, Human and Solar* (1922):

The central home of this Hierarchy is at Shamballa, a centre in the Gobi desert, called in the ancient books the "White Island." It exists in etheric matter, and when the race of men on earth have developed etheric vision its location will be recognised and its reality admitted.

Bailey's Shambhala is the seat of the "Lord of the World," who has made the sacrifice (analogous to the Bodhisattva's vow) of remaining to watch over the evolution of men and devas until all have been "saved" or enlightened." This is perhaps the earliest use of the title "Lord of the World," referring to the spiritual being presiding over earth's evolution from an invisible but still geographical center. The comparison of place and function with René Guénon's Agartha and its "King of the World" is too obvious to need underlining. And in Alice Bailey one also finds the theme of this great initiate's annual appearance, just like that of Jaccoliot's Brahmatma. No wonder, then, that some have simply equated Shambhala with Agartha. Nicholas Roerich, whom we will treat at length below, hints at this, while Alec MacLellan and Jean Angebert plainly assert the identity of the two.

Just as Agartha is believed by some to have a physical existence underground, so there are those who maintain that Shambhala is more than an etheric location on the surface of the earth. A Dr. Lao Tsin wrote in the *Shanghai Times* in 1925 that he had toured Shambhala, a warm valley in the wilderness of Tibet, and seen its advanced laboratories, but had promised not to reveal its whereabouts. Such reports, hovering between fact and fancy, recall the Tibetan hideout of Talbot Mundy's novel *Om*, where the feminine avatar of a new age is being prepared; the Shangri-la of James Hilton's *The Lost Horizon* (1933); and the Asian center of Wilhelm Landig's *Götzen gegen Thule*.

One chooses the kind of Shambhala that one wants to believe in. But of all the varieties, that of Pauwels and Bergier is most at variance with the Tibetan model. It must have taken a peculiar perversity on the part of their source or informant to turn the materialistic Agartha of Saint-Yves, with its two-tongued race, inflatable mattresses, underground railroads, and threats to invade us, into the place of actionless meditation; and the pure land of Tibetan Tantra into the violent and earthly power-house. Among all their progeny, perhaps the ultimate degradation is that of Trevor Ravenscroft's *The Spear of Destiny* (1973), a bloodcurdling work of historical reinvention which makes Agartha and Shambhala into the centers of Luciferic and Ahrimanic influence, respectively. These are the twin sources of evil in the cosmology of Rudolf Steiner, who had little regard for the wisdom of Tibet. "The Initiates of Agartha," writes Ravenscroft, "specialised in astral projection and sought to inspire false leadership in all civilizations in the world. The Adepts of Schamballah sought to foster the illusion of materialism and lead all aspects of human activity into the abyss." Often one can detect the source of someone's Shambhala and Agartha theories simply through examining their spelling of the names: Ravenscroft evidently relied on Pauwels and Bergier.

The Roerich Family

On quite another plane is the contribution to the Shambhala mythologem made in the 1920s and 1930s by the Roerich family: Nicholas, the painter and worker for world peace; Helena, his wife and channel for the Master Morya; and their son George, later a professor at Yale University. The Roerichs made an expedition through China and Mongolia to the borders of Tibet in 1925-1928, as the result of which they published several books of travel and reflections, one of them, by Nicholas, entitled precisely *Shambhala*.

Nicholas Roerich saw in Shambhala the symbol of the coming age of world peace and enlightenment, and it is only just to say that he adapted what he learned at first hand in Mongolia to his own world-view. His expedition had a deep spiritual, even a magical intention – and a political one, too. But it never reached Lhasa. The Roerichs were forced by the temporizing of the Tibetan government to spend the winter of 1927-28 waiting for permission to proceed, during which several people and most of the animals died of exposure. It is no wonder that Roerich's writings show a contempt for the Lhasa government and even for the Dalai Lama XIII, balanced by sincere admiration of the exiled Panchen (or Tashi) Lama IX, the holder of the Kalachakra tradition.

Roerich writes of Shambhala:

Shambhala itself is the Holy Place, where the earthly world links with the highest states of consciousness. In the East they know that there exist two Shambhalas – an earthly and an invisible one. Many speculations have been made about the location of the earthly Shambhala. Certain indications put this place in the extreme North, explaining that the rays of Aurora Borealis are the rays of the invisible Shambhala.

But this is incorrect, he continues: Shambhala is only north in relation to India, being perhaps on the Pamir, in Turkestan, or in the Central Gobi.

Roerich found his way into esotericism through the Theosophical Society, and he always remained a friend to Madame Blavatsky and her Masters. He regretted that the conception of the Great Mahatmas had become separated from that of Shambhala, to which, he said, it is very close. He also associates it with the conceptions of the subterranean city "Agharti," and of the White Island. Blavatsky's island refuge in the Gobi Sea was reachable only by subterranean passages; Roerich's "Splendid Valley" is reached by passages from the Himalayas. The underground caverns of Central Asia are inhabited to this day, he tells us, by the people called the Agharti or the Chud. Throughout Asia he heard tales of this vanished tribe, peaceful and highly civilized, who were forced to take refuge underground when the "White Tsar" and his cruel warriors (that is, the Mongol hordes) invaded the Altai region. When the time of purification comes, say the legends, they will emerge in their glory.

Although he was ready to listen to such tales, and to believe that mysterious things are concealed underground, Roerich lacked the credulity of an Ossendowski concerning a subterranean Agartha. He comments that "although the legend [of the Chud] speaks of the time of the Tartar yoke, you can distinguish that the essential bases [sic] of the legend is far more ancient and you can distinguish the traces of the typical effects of migration. [...] When you collect all the fairy-tales of lost and subterranean tribes, will you not have before you a full map of the great migrations?" When he found in the Altai mountains menhirs, stone circles, and alignments just like those of Britain and Brittany, and when he saw among the inhabitants features that could have been those of Frenchmen or Spaniards, Roerich concluded that the migration had in fact taken the best and most courageous of the Central Asian people on a journey to the shores of the Atlantic. Agharta, in short, was not of great interest to him except as a facet of the Shambhala myth.

The religion of Roerich's Shambhala, if one can call it that, centered around Fire. Nicholas connects it with the ancient cults of Fire and the Sun, whose Swastika symbol he found repeatedly carved on rocks and painted on tankas. He was certainly aware of the history of this symbol as associated with the Aryan Race. But it disturbed him very much to find it in the temples of the Bön-Po religion as well as in Buddhist ones – indeed, to find that this "black faith" reveres what he calls "some mysterious gods of Swastika." He tried to rationalize its usage by saying that the Bön-Po drew the symbol of Fire counter-clockwise, in the reverse direction from the Buddhists." But every serious study of the Swastika symbol shows that whenever it appears in ancient iconography, it turns indifferently either way.

Just as for Madame Blavatsky, Tibet's indigenous, pre-Buddhist religion of Bön-Po signified for Roerich the worst kind of sorcery and black magic. Even within Buddhism, the sympathies of these Theosophists were limited to the Yellow-Hat (Gelugpa or Reformed) sect to which the Dalai and Panchen Lamas belong, causing Blavatsky and her master K.H. to regard the Red-Hats as ministers of evil. With the best will in the world, then, one cannot altogether respect their interpretations of Tibetan religion. Had Roerich known the present Dalai Lama XIIIV, he would surely not have been so quick to denigrate the office of the Dalai Lama in favor of the Panchen Lama;" but he could have known only of the ill-starred Dalai Lama XIII, whose sole achievement (as Narad Mani pointed out cynically in Chapter Seven) seems to have been to avoid getting murdered by the Chinese before his majority. Could Roerich and Blavatsky see the present-day flowering of Western Buddhism, of which they were pioneers, they might be more friendly to the red-hatted Karinapa lineage, and even to Bön-Po as assimilated by the Dzogchen Tantric school.

Like the *Treatise on Cosmic Fire* of Alice Bailey and Djhwal Khul, Helena Roerich's and Morya's books on "Agni Yoga" are devoted to explaining, with more elaboration than clarity, what the Agni or Fire of Shambhala is, and how it will function in the New Era: it is the "great eternal energy, this fine imponderable matter which is scattered everywhere and which is within our use at any moment." This could be a definition of Bulwer Lytton's Vril force. In the 1940s, Roerich says, "energies of cosmic fire will approach the earth and create many new conditions

of life." Alas, they did indeed! If Nicholas Roerich, the indefatigable worker for world peace, had known the form in which Agni would be compelled to manifest in 1945, he might have been more cautious in recommending it, and in identifying it as the core of the Kalachakra teaching. But a man who could get excited when the Mongolians said, on looking at his photographs of New York City, "this is the land of Shambhala!" had evidently not fully described the nature and the trajectory of the modern West.

On 5 August 1927, in the Kukunor district, the Roerich party witnessed a classic UFO, twenty years before the "official" beginning of the phenomenon with Kenneth Arnold's sighting in 1947. Although it is now a commonplace in the better class of UFO literature, I give the fullest of his accounts here:

We all saw, in a direction from north to south, something big and shiny reflecting the sun, like a huge oval moving at great speed. Crossing our camp this thing changed in its direction from south to southwest. And we saw how it disappeared in the intense blue sky. We even had time to take our field glasses and saw quite distinctly an oval form with shiny surface, one side of which was brilliant from the sun.

The lama with the party remarks: "A very good sign. We are protected. Rigden-jyepo himself is looking after us!" In the Roerichs' books, Rigden-jyepo is the prophesied Lord of the New Era of Shambhala, who is currently preparing an invincible army. He is the "Ruler of the World," and none less than Maitreya, the Last Avatar who brings the Kali Yuga to an end and opens the new Krita or Satya Yuga. The Roerichs did not expect to have to wait long for this apocalyptic event: Helena, writing in 1930 as "Josephine Saint-Hilaire," gave the heralds of Northern Shambhala five years to arrive; a lama in Nicholas' *Heart of Asia* said "someone of greatness will come" in 1936. We learned in Chapter Six who was cast in this role by Miguel Serrano, an admirer of Roerich's paintings and a sharer of much of his philosophy. A saner alternative might refer to Tenzin Gyatso, who was born in 1935 and identified as the incarnation of Chenrezig, hence as Dalai Lama XIV, in 1937.

There is a hint that the Roerich Expedition had an active part to play in this changing of the Ages. It concerns a Stone from a distant star that belongs to Shambhala; it is likened to the *lapsit exillis*, the Grail Stone of Wolfram von Eschenbach's romance *Parzival* (IX, 469), as also to the Philosophers' Stone of Western alchemy. "The greater portion of this stone remains in Shambhala, while part of it is circulating throughout the Earth, retaining its magnetic link with the main stone." The latter is said to be "on the tower of the Rigden-jyepo," whence it radiates for the benefit of humanity. Andrew Tomas, who says that he heard from Professor [George] Roerich that the stone supposedly came from Sirius, interprets the broad hints in Helena Roerich's *On Eastern Crossroads* to mean that a small fragment of the central Stone had been sent to Europe to aid in the foundation of the League of Nations, and that it was returned to Shambhala by Nicholas Roerich on his expedition. Several of his paintings, on the Chintamani theme, seem to refer to this secret mission. Likewise in Ossendowski there is the Mongolian legend of an oracular Black Stone, sent to the Dalai Lama by the King of the World; until a hundred years ago, it used to be in Urga (now Ulan Bator, capital of Mongolia). This may be the same fragment, reputedly owned by King Solomon, Emperor Akhbar, a Chinese Emperor, and Tamerlane the Great.

Urga, rather than Lhasa, seems to have been Roerich's choice for the future spiritual center when Shambhala becomes manifest on earth. When he passed through the city, he saw a site prepared for the chief Temple of Shambhala. He thereupon presented his painting "The Ruler of Shambhala" to the Mongolian Government, who undertook to build a shrine for it. One wonders, if the story of the fragment of stone is true, whether Urga was where Roerich surrendered it, and whether the shrine was intended to contain more than just a painting. That there were people in the Mongolian capital competent to discuss such matters is clear from

George Roerich's account of an esoteric astrological college there, which also maintained the Kalachakra tradition.

Were there also people in the know within the Theosophical Society? A secondary theme of Talbot Mundy's *Om*, published in 1924 while the Roerich Expedition was making its preparations in Sikkim, was the return of a stolen fragment of the great green jade stone which resided in the secret Asiatic center. Mundy, a member of the Point Loma Theosophists, published several popular books in the 1920s and 1930s on themes which bridge the gap of which Roerich complained, between the idea of the Theosophical Masters and that of Shambhala. It is not within our scope to investigate the links between these and other personages of the 1920s, but it does seem that Theosophists, semi-Theosophists, and even anti-Theosophists like René Guénon, whatever their internal dissensions, constituted a group dedicated to the ideal of Shambhala taken in its broadest sense: that of reverence for a center in the Orient from which comes the impulse for the imminent renewal of humanity, and to a Lord, King, or Ruler of the World who is neither Christ nor Lucifer.

Their allegiance to a living, spiritual pole in Asia stands in stark contrast to the nostalgia of the Thuleans for their dead Arctic homeland. In this lies the vital difference between the universalism of Nicholas Roerich and other Theosophists, and the racism of Guido von List, Lanz von Liebenfels, Rudolf von Sebottendorff, and their Nazi pupils.

The Shaver Mystery

Returning to the theme which opened this chapter, if one were to insist on contrasting Shambhala with Agartha, our investigations would favor the contrary conclusion: it is obviously Shambhala which is the "hidden city of Goodness" reached through meditation, while Agartha is the material, subterranean realm threatening us with eruption. Their relationship is akin to that between the states of the soul in meditation and after death, and the gross images of those states as presented by Dante and others, whose Inferno appears as a physical place under the earth.

This contrast can be seen with exemplary clarity in what is known as the "Shaver Mystery." Richard Sharpe Shaver (1910-1975) contributed from 1943 onwards a number of articles to *Amazing Stories*, a science-fiction magazine, that told of an underground cave-world inhabited by "abandonderos": the cunning but degenerate remnant of a race which had left the earth 12,000 or more years ago, and whom he held responsible for all the evil experienced by us surface-dwellers. Shaver, who spent his life in menial jobs, insisted that he had lived eight years in the caves as a prisoner of these "deranged robots" or "Deros." He knew from experience of their machinations, of the efforts by another underground race, the "Teros," to counteract them, and much more that inevitably included sex and violence – necessary ingredients in any pulp magazine. The editor of *Amazing Stories* was Ray Palmer, who immediately saw the commercial potential of Shaver's stories and put them into acceptable prose. In due course he learned that Shaver had spent years not in the caves, exactly, but in a mental hospital." In the meantime, Palmer had discovered *Oahspe*, the "New Bible" revealed to John Ballou Newbrough in 1881, and found there many parallels with Shaver's tales – only with the difference that in *Oahspe*, the scenario was not the inside of the earth, but the astral world surrounding it. Without for a moment denying the subjective reality of Shaver's experiences, Palmer decided that they must have taken place in a state of psychic dissociation, and that Shaver's vagrant consciousness had witnessed in the deros and their depravity the "wandering spirits of darkness and evil," as *Oahspe* calls them, or the souls of the dead that dwell in the lower astral realms of the spirit world." He did not add that "Teros" is given as a name for protective psychic energy in Helena Roerich's *Agni Yoga* (1929).

For all the intellectual gulf between Shaver and Palmer on the one hand, and Saint-Yves and Roerich on the other, one can see the same contrast in each pair of the material versus the

immaterial explanation. Shaver was an adamant materialist and a disbeliever in everything psychic or occult. The sufferings of humanity were only explicable, and tolerable, to him when he could blame them on the Deros. Palmer, on the other hand, had other dimensions to his character: crippled as a child and nearly always in pain, he had become a success in worldly terms through his writing and editing, and had discovered the reality of intuition and the power of mind over matter.

Both types no doubt exist in Central Asia, as they existed in medieval Europe – for Dante himself surely did not understand his *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* in a literal, geographic sense. Many people are constitutionally incapable of imagining anything outside material reality, and the great religions have kindly made allowances for them in their cosmologies. Even those who are gifted, or afflicted, with the capacity of "astral travel" are not always exempt from this tendency: some, like Shaver and Saint-Yves, will refuse to take their visions in any but a terrestrial sense. Not knowing that whatever they experience is a projection of their own spiritual state, they will find not the Shambhala of purified consciousness, but only the deceptive and glamorous Agartha.

Finally, Shambhala furnishes an illuminating parallel to the various interpretations of the primordial Paradise and the Arctic homeland discussed in Chapters Two and Three. Some situate them on the physical earth, others in what to us is an immaterial or etheric state, attainable only by beings of like nature, or by humans exceedingly "rich in merit." The Way to Shambhala as the Dalai Lama has described it is precisely the return to that primordial condition, which, irrespective of outer conditions, brings about in the individual the transition from the Iron to the Golden Age.

Additional Reading on Access to Agharta / Shambhala / Vril

If you wish to pursue some of the topics mentioned above, the following references are suggested.

Hypnotic Regression

On the topic of between-lives regression, Michael Newton's books are recommended: *Journey of Souls*, *Destiny of Souls*, and *Life between Lives Hypnotherapy for Spiritual Regression*. Another book that summarizes the subject is *Journey of the Soul* by Brenda Davies. By the way, in *Life between Lives* Newton has some interesting observations on the subject of Atlantis. All methods of accessing nonphysical worlds are subject to inaccuracy and the creative desires and fears of the individual. Hypnotic regression has the added difficulty that the subject is highly receptive to suggestion. Newton's comments follow:

Checking Conscious Interference

When I discussed taking the client down into their childhood earlier in the session, I stated that you must check to see if the subject actually feels and thinks they are the young person they once were, rather than consciously straining to remember earlier times and places. At that stage the issue is one of trance depth. However, when you reach a past life, another problem of recall may become evident to you. This has to do with those few clients who produce faulty memories due to outright conscious interference. This matter of tainted reports needs to be cleared up before you proceed into spiritual regression.

After regressing your subject into a past life, you must be watchful in checking to see if the client is recalling this life solely from historical details stored during their current lifetime. They may be using their imagination because of a conscious attraction to certain well-known events and familiar myths. Here bias enters the picture. I call this phenomenon the Atlantis Attraction

because so many people are attracted to this story. You could first encounter this situation at intake when the client states, "I know we are going to find that I once lived in Atlantis." Their conviction centers around a desire to have once been part of a legendary early civilization on Earth.

There is nothing wrong with a client having conscious prior knowledge about world history because this may help in identifying scenes of the past. However, you should be aware that some aspects of the past, even those that are mythological, could be so attractive to the client that it drives memory and distorts recall. The use of client ideomotor signals to disrupt speech and thus disengage conscious thought interference is productive. I will illustrate an Atlan Attraction case as an example:

Facilitator: Where are you now?

Subject: I'm in Atlantis.

Facilitator: All right – let's stop for a moment. I want you to take your time here and think carefully about what you have just told me. We won't speak to each other again until you have reviewed all your memories to verify that you are in Atlantis. After you have finished your examination of just where you are, I want you to notify me by raising the fingers of your right hand. I will not speak again until I see your fingers move.

Subject: (after a long pause and raising fingers) Oh ... I guess I was wrong about Atlantis, but I seem to be a native on a beautiful island in the middle of an ocean.

I will have more to say about Atlantis under the section Reviewing Past Life Incarnations, particularly with regard to hybrid souls.

Another term I use for faulty reporting is the Famous Person Syndrome. Clients in this category want to be famous people. Most past life practitioners have had a number of clients who stated they were famous people before further examination revealed this was not true. In one of my three Marilyn Monroe cases, my client subsequently found she was a housekeeper for the actress. This client's preconceptions were unraveled when I asked her to go back to a scene where other people were around Marilyn Monroe and I told her to identify each person, with my client as part of the scene.

Reviewing Past Life Incarnations

8. When was your first life on Earth?

Having some familiarity with the history of world civilizations and their rise and fall is invaluable. Your client might respond to the "first life" question by describing membership in a Stone Age tribe some 50,000 to 100,000 years ago in the Paleolithic era. Another client will see themselves in a Neolithic period perhaps 5,000 to 10,000 years ago. Many clients remember their first life as being in the early civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia perhaps 3,000 to 5,000 years ago. Unless you have a very young soul with few past lives, your client will probably not be able to remember most of their past lives except those where they experienced their greatest accomplishments. Even so, most people can recall their first life on Earth.

What about visitations to Earth by the souls of your clients who were in alien bodies? While you will have hybrid souls whose early physical incarnations were on other planets before coming to Earth, it is very rare to have a client who actually visited Earth in an alien body. They may have been engaged in some sort of colonization attempt early in our cultural history or just

made a brief visit. Out of all my cases I have had only a handful of such people. I wrote an article about these anomalies in my practice for *Fate* magazine in the March 2001 issue.

When you ask the question, "Where are you during your first life on Earth?" be prepared for some clients to declare, "I'm in Atlantis." I have discussed the Atlantis Attraction Syndrome earlier in Part Three under Checking Conscious Interference, relating to preconceived bias. This "lost eighth continent" was thought to exist around 10,000 years ago. I am curious about this legend myself but I am also skeptical. While I must acknowledge an Atlantis could have existed on Earth in some form, it still falls under the heading of unproven mythology.

Without negating initial reactions from some clients about having a life in Atlantis, I want LBL therapists to know that it is quite possible you are dealing with a hybrid soul in these situations. I have many references to hybrids listed in *Destiny of Souls*. Clients who have the feeling their first lives were in Atlantis may actually be hybrid souls who had thousands of years of prior incarnations on a physical world resembling the geographic legend of Atlantis. These lives ended for the soul before they began coming to Earth. I have not found that we have intermittent lives on other planets between our Earth lives.

When working with a hybrid soul, you could face psychological challenges. These people may not have made healthy adjustments to life on Earth. Their association with a human brain and the heavy energy density of the human body could still be daunting. I have had clients who feel their Earth body is alien. The incidence of suicide among hybrids in their first lives on Earth is higher than nonhybrids. If you do have a hybrid soul as a client, there are certain basic questions you will want to ask about their experience on an alien world:.... [End of Newton quote.]

Astral Projection

There is a massive literature on astral projection. One good book is *Journeys out of the Body* by Robert A. Monroe. A couple of "how to" books are *Astral Travel for Beginners* by Richard Webster and *Astral Projection Plain & Simple: The Out-of-Body Experience* by Osborne Phillips. And, of course, there are extensive resources on the Internet, such as MysticWeb (<http://www.astralweb.org>) or Astral Pulse (<http://www.astralpulse.com>).

Vril

With respect to vril / prana / kundalini, a source is *Kundalini for Beginners* by Ravindra Kumar – or any of the thousands of books on yoga.