

ALIEN INITIATIONS

THE PLANETARY TALE IN MYTH AND PROPHECY

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

When the ingress of purported alien intelligence first registered on the cultural radar of modern times, it was naively conjectured that humanity was entering an era of extraterrestrial liaison in the mundane or conventional sense. A century of anomalous exposure and the exfoliation of attendant mythologies, however, have radically redrawn the contours of a mystery, which, owing to its elusive and paradoxical nature, is quintessential of all mysteries. Whatever the ilk of the ghostly, the numinous or alien *Other*, it calls into question the very foundations of the rational edifice, of the evolutionary and historic paradigm, underpinning the secular notion of human identity. The questions it raises are perennial and primal. It is central to an understanding of the universal given, and so to the question we shall ask in these pages:

What, in a nutshell, is the human story?

In a world of conflicting ideologies, of cultural ferment and a rampant globalism, this question becomes one of singular urgency. The world is straining for a resultant, for a new order to coalesce around some post-historic utopian attractor. Yet before a species on the threshold of cosmic individuation irrevocably commits itself, it might advantageously review its options. Science tells us what is probable. History seeks to reconstruct what actually occurred. We need a prophetic science to enquire concerning the desirable.

Earth, alone in the known universe, has been the focus of a singular experiment. On one small planet life arose to consciously engage the question of meaning. And though but at speck in immensity – the pale blue dot of the astronomers – it is the cauldron and spiritual cradle, the focus of engagement with the moral, aesthetic and intellectual universe entire. The bewildering variety of biological and cultural forms testifies of the intensity of engagement.

Amidst this variety, is there a common or underlying theme? Is the human odyssey informed in some sense of an overarching cosmic or cultural script – an archetypal or universal given, grounded in ultimate verity? To address this question we shall have recourse to the only possible source, the universal body of myths – from the ancient to the contemporary – to search the ‘magical record’ for possible clues regarding the fundamental questions of human nature, its origins and destiny.

Myth is here defined as the concentrated utterance of the human genius – not in the deprecatory sense as a tale untrue. The mythology of an age is simply *the story*, the account which a people provides of itself. It is the paradigm or worldview in current vogue. In mythology, thus and on the contrary, all things are true: unicorns and dragons, angels and devils, vampires and witches, aliens and avatars have, in sundry times and diverse places, disported their corporeal presence across the landscape of human imagination. From an arbitrarily abstracted point of view, therefore, it is not inconceivable that this present age appears equally wondrous in its conceptions and preoccupations.

What then are the basic options? At the generic or paradigm level they are surprisingly few:

There is the dharma myth, according to which not a dust particle exists but what is fated for eventual Buddhahood

There is the myth of the serpent gods and their minions, who came from the stars – and to the stars they return.

There is the myth of the crucified saviour, of a fallen and redeemed humanity.

And there is the scientific myth of evolution as cosmic accident.

Modern science, to be fair, is the youngest of the disciplines, having begun only in recent decades to address questions of teleology or universal purpose – of intelligent design and the role of consciousness. The scientific

worldview is thus undergoing modification – some would say, revolution – in the elaboration of a new, arguably more value oriented, paradigm.

Yet science as an institution has tended to be isolationist, viewing itself as sole arbiter of the real, and distancing itself from the more intuitive take of the ancients. Why, in a scientific age, refer back to the archaic and protean? Chiefly, one might venture, because the ancient mystery traditions have a surprising way of vindicating themselves, and – because science has so far failed to engage the question of meaning. Existentially – confronting the abyss of mind – the modern psyche is as bereft of gnosis or certainty as that of its most primitive proto-human ancestors – perhaps even more so.

My aim is to establish a context wherein the ancient mysteries – the archaic worldview of magic and mysticism, the prophetic traditions of revealed religion – can be approached on the plane of meaning. To this end, it is generally conceded, the scholarly approach is insufficient. It is necessary to enter the interior world of the relevant myths, bringing to bear the visionary gifts of poet and bard. In the venerable tradition of the storyteller, therefore, what follows is an *interpretive* reading of the relevant myths. And while the narrator may be faithful to his sources, he may betray bias, even if only inadvertently, through subtle nuance or inflection of speech. This is inevitable, and so the story – the human story – is of necessity slightly recast in each successive telling.

While that story is in part a tragic and terrible one, I emphasise what I take as axiomatic – that it is inherently a meaningful story. I accept, on the testimony of the greater mythological canon, that humanity is constituted to enter the inner sanctums of the citadel of truth – to engage the cosmic mystery, to validate in itself the very concept of meaning. One might summarise this by saying that the human odyssey has a spiritual charter or foundation.

Cognate is my further premise that universal myth, as utterance of the inherent genius, really does reflect something of the veritable canon – of the

object as of the quest. For, apart from the book of nature itself, humanity has only its tales – symbolic constructs of various kinds – and here is the paradox, that the Word should both structure and describe the human experience. Yet such is the godlike prerogative bestowed by language, that the generation of meaning often seems more like a creative process than one of discovery.

The danger herein is that ill-conceived myth should turn into self-fulfilling prophecy, and the most dangerous myths are unquestionable tied to the archetypes of the religious imagination. Yet it is a nonsense to suggest that these could be simply set aside in favour, say, of a rational model. It seems indicated rather that humanity explore the atavistic, the protean and archetypal roots of its condition, both to exorcise its demons and attain to maturity as a species. This involves a reading of what we may call the human script, or as I shall refer to it – the grand mythological opus. Whether the record bears traces of higher intelligence, perhaps even the pronouncements of God, or merely reflects the gropings of emergent sentience, it is the mysterious Book of Seven Seals, the magical mirror wherein humanity might behold its authentic face.

The quest, I reiterate, is a dangerous one, the ever-present possibility being that narcissistic contemplation occlude creative engagement. Yet it is a path which humanity must pursue. True progress may consist not in wresting from nature its final secret, but in the flowering of the imagination. Lest, therefore, in the fervour of the historical endgame, we rush into premature closure – let us consult the oracles.

H. K.

Sydney, 2004

JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF TIME

We create your own reality.

– Heru Raha, *The Controllers*

The Assigation

The eyes are closed, and in the darkness the limpid gaze sinks into the unbounded void. There is silence too; not the silence that is the absence of sound, but the emergent awareness of that space – the space of audition, composed of myriad interlacing waves which mostly cancel each other, but leave a residue of high singing, which the ancients ascribed to the voices of angels. Closer now to the ultrasonic terrain, there appear gashes, deep ravines whence arises a *wirrwarr* of voices – of all voices, it would seem: a raging maelstrom in the pull of a near cataract. So also is the darkness light, its sparkling atoms the shards of an interior sun – like its skyward cousin, too bright for mortal eyes. But you hold your centre, the noise recedes, and the majestic orb fills the view. After light-years and millions of years, the naked singularity bursts – and there is *place* again, and *time*; all seems normal. And there are people here – illustrious ones; their conversation is wonderful. Mutual recognition also is instant. They may be the ancestors or companions of old, but you know they are the ones you always wanted to see.

The Ancient Legacy

The quest for the magical centre is a motif in Shamanic tradition, which has not merely symbolic but practical application. Since earliest times this centre – also the Holy of Holies, the Dragon Throne and axis of the mythical world-tree – has been the acknowledged seat of vision and power, the central

vortex in a conscious world web of energy and information. As singular still-point in a universe of interlocking wheels – of time, space, cycles and seasons – it is redolent with ideas of transcendence and immortality – of godlike aeonic contemplation.

It is the quest for this centre which informs the magical cultures of antiquity, cultures – from the Ubaid and proto-Sumerian to the classical Maya – characterised by a magical paradigm, which provides the rationale for their monumental legacy in hieroglyph and stone. This quest, moreover, did not cease with the ancients, but evolved into the mystery traditions of classical Greece and Rome, of the Apollo-Dionysus dyad and the Eleusinian Mysteries haunting the groves of Demeter. It became the inner secret of the Pythagoreans and Neoplatonists, and later of the Knights Templar, whence, upon the purge loosed against this Order, it took root among coteries and cabals, operating in a more or less clandestine manner. It informed the arcanum of medieval alchemy, and is explicit in the worldview of such noted individuals as Fulcanelli, Nicholas Flamel, Basilus Valentinus, Theophrastus von Hohenheim, otherwise known as Paracelsus, and the Elizabethan mage John Dee. Nor did the tradition cease with the advent of the rational age, but a restored liberalism rather permitted the same to re-emerge into public view.

It is, of course, questionable whether the ancient arcanum has been preserved in anything like its original purity, for already in Greek and Roman times a degradation of the mysteries was noted and deplored. It is significant that scholars of the classical age, such as Pliny and Herodotus, viewed elder Egypt with astonishment and awe, having sat as children at the feet of its hierophants, for it argues the *descent* of knowledge from a primal source, in diametric opposition to the modern creed of linear progress. While occult tradition asserts that the mysteries are preserved intact, namely in a certain rarefied sanctuary of the gnosis, this would appear to be remote even from the secret fraternities which constitute its outer courts. Traditions cognate further

assert that, after cycles of obscurity, the light of the gnosis would again occupy a worldly throne, as it did in Baalbek and the Yucatan, in pre-Shang China, and the empires of the Merovingians and Celts.

The theme of universal restoration is enshrined in the iconic phrase, *I shall return*, variously said to have been uttered by figures as diverse as Mithras, Osiris, Quetzacoatl, and Christ. A cyclic cosmology is combined therein with observable facts of nature. A seed matures and falls into the ground, seemingly to perish; after a period of subterranean activity bursting forth with renewed life, undergoing various stages of metamorphoses, until it manifests again something like the original seed. The seed which falls is the seed which rises; as the biblical injunction has it – *let every seed bring forth after its own kind*, where the prophetic charge is applicable to the cultural as to the natural domain. Simplistic though the notion may seem, it constitutes the essential key to historical process. The modern myth of progress, therefore, can and must be subsumed within a cyclic scenario, broadly based on fall and redemption – its principal theme being the restoration of a storied Golden Age or paradisiacal state from which humanity has fallen.

Having thus propitiously parted with conventional wisdom, let us consider the mystery of an ancient arcadia or primeval dreamtime – an age in which gods walked the Earth and had intercourse – both sexual and intellectual – with the human race. The problem is that this fabled period was considered of remote antiquity even by the ancients. This, combined with the fantastic nature of relevant accounts, is deemed sufficient license by most archaeologists, to simply dismiss the idea as the poetic invention of a pre-scientific era – a necessary conclusion indeed, given the orthodox model of history. Yet it is evident that the ancients themselves viewed their mythical genealogies as faithful – if ceremonial – accounts of prehistoric times. As this ‘mythological’ component is seamlessly interwoven with decidedly historical records,

archaeologist had to make certain rather arbitrary distinctions regarding the veracity of their sources to make them fit the conventional model.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the king-lists of ancient Egypt, extant in the temple of Seti I in Abydos and the register of Manetho, a Heliopolitan priest of the third century BC. These records maintain that legendary kings ruled over vast empires prior to the alleged inception of the dynastic period in 3100 BC under Menes. This period of attributed divine rulership was followed by a dynasty of demigods – the Hor Shemsu or Followers of Horus. Only after these ‘mythical’ ages, covering an astonishing 35 000 years, commences Egypt’s conventional history. Time-scales, similarly at variance with orthodox chronologies, are found in the cuneiform inscriptions of Mesopotamia, among such world-age traditions as the five ‘suns’ of the Maya, the *yuga* – aeons – of Vedic conception, and the seven Root Races of Theosophy, whereof the present *Aryan* race is likewise the fifth.

The mysterious agenda of the ancient and magical cultures can thus be explained as the quest for the primeval legacy – the bequest of a period in which the waters of the abyss receded and humanity was offered gifts of civilization. While the acknowledged cultures of antiquity thus harbour a non-trivial secret, it is evident that these, in turn, were captive to yet more ancient arcana, of which they were the partial inheritors. From these alleged primeval sources hails what is called the authentic or mystery tradition. This tradition, so the relevant schools of thought, holds the key to humanity’s mysterious origins, to the motive forces of history, as to humanity’s future and ultimate destiny. For – *by definition* – it provides the archetypal subtext of humanity’s most enduring myths – myths so essential to the human script, that it is a rare emancipation which transcends them.

Such emancipation has, in recent times, been claimed for science and the rational worldview. Far from having defeated the purported demons of superstition, however, the scientific paradigm simply ignored the intuitive /

imaginal realm, and limited the universe of discourse to what it could explain on its own reductionist terms. That the ghosts of the numinous – that undefined realm between spirit and nature – were not laid to rest is evident in their persistent resurfacing in fads, fashions and fallacies of every kind. The modern era is proof indeed that technology is no guarantor of wisdom – of humane and enlightened practice. Witness but the resurgence of fascism and the ready acceptance of pseudo-scientific phantasmagoria in pre-war Germany – the very heart of settled old-world civilisation. Science, clearly, is as insignificant against the atavisms of the human psyche as it is against the cataclysms of nature. Recognition of this selective blindness should lay to rest the often implicit assertion that science has either debunked or eclipsed the ancient mystery traditions.

Not denial, but confrontation and existential dialogue with the subjective phenomenology of human experience is required for true emancipation from ideological thralldom and other forms of demonic obsession. Under the aegis of the ancient mysteries such confrontation and dialogue was contemplated under the rubric of initiation.

The Restorative Quest

Initiation, of old the subject of allegory, is discernibly the central theme of that literary genre in which a heroic journey is equated with the visionary or redemptive quest. From the Epic Of Gilgamesh to the Romance of the Grail, from fairytales and fables to the creations of Hollywood, the theme has been kept alive in the collective imagination, transmitted through the ages without necessarily being understood, to form what may be regarded as the primary motif of the human story.

While its local and historic variants may be diverse in outward guise, its elements have remained consistent. A calamity of some kind has befallen the

realm, and an individual is appointed – oft times by oracle – to redress the situation. In the course of his quest, the chosen hero faces ordeals – tests of strength and courage, or skill and purity of purpose and the like – which passing, he comes to face a final challenge. An ultimate stronghold or shrine remains to be taken – some inner sanctum, magically guarded – its portal only discernable to one with special sight. It may be a labyrinth, signifying the subconscious underworld, wherein lurks a Minotaur or Dragon which must be slain before the end of the passage is reached, and that end may well be death. Having overcome, the hero finds treasure and is gains admittance to the company of the gods. His deeds restore the health of the Kingdom, and in recognition he is given the Kings daughter to wife, which is the redeemed virgin of the world.

Depending on the sophistication of the tale, the perils faced may be rendered as inner rather than outer, and the victory as essentially over the self. Psychological or spiritual transformation – death and rebirth – may be the actual focus, as the hero proceeds from portal to portal. He will draw on his armoury of magical powers, on spirits and potencies whose nature it is to aid in the quest, and by whom the forces of evil are eventually quelled. As such, he may come to realise, he is merely instrumental in the titanic battle between forces immeasurably larger than himself. Yet in the apotheosis, when identities are revealed, he recognises *who he is*, and his deeds as pivotal in a contest of cosmic extent.

In a particularly subtle twist, the nature and purpose of the quest may need to be entirely forgotten and a kind of innocence attained, before the end is reached, as it were, by inspiration or grace. The thematic elaborations are vast and nigh infinitely detailed, coextensive as they are with the magical or subjective cosmos of human sensibility.

At the opposite end of the symbolic spectrum – far from the enchanted forests of gnomes, goblins, fairies and elves – one finds the geometric

simplicity of the quest for the centre – the centre of a circle or sphere. This sublime conception derives from observation in both the natural and spiritual realms, especially when illuminated by certain contemplative techniques. A relaxed gaze in total darkness reveals the ‘infinite mandala’ – the integrity of the etheric aura, the electromagnetic field in its visual manifestation.

The universe, of course, has many centres, local attractor vortices structuring information, from atomic nuclei to the gravitational centres of stars – the whole suggestive of hierarchy and an underlying order. With respect to the galaxy, the largest discreet entity of cosmological organisation hitherto observed, it may be noted that humanity, far from dwelling at the energetic core, is situated far out on the periphery, some 26,000 light-years from the centre, orbiting the same, by what has been called a cosmic coincidence, in a 26,000 year cycle. Is it possible that the perspective in consciousness, which describes this scenario, is similarly removed from its spiritual core?

As for the magical centre, it is traditionally both within the sentient vortex and simultaneously beyond the stars.

Successive cultures variously identified the sun, the Pole Star, the star system Sirius and the heart of the Milky Way galaxy as their Elysium – abode of the gods and the point of origin and return. These external centres were moreover identified with psychic regions, and the stations of attainment in an inward journey of initiation. Maya scholar John Major Jenkins, in this connection, documented the gradual shift in Mesoamerican cosmology from a polar to a galactic orientation – from the ostensible point around which the heavens revolve, to the gravitational centre, though visually perhaps less self-evident, of the local universe. While this is a remarkable achievement in itself, it further appears that the Maya were cognizant in some respect of the qualitative parameters which obtain in this region of the sky. Hieroglyphic texts, which describe the creation of the world, correlate with scientific theories concerning the existence at the galactic centre of a gigantic black hole – an

astronomical phenomenon at the core of which resides a singularity – a hyper-dense object transcendent of space and time.

Is there a legitimate connection – a connection beyond the symbolic – between this exotic region in the heavens and the transcendence which is the object of initiation?

A clue, perhaps, may be derived from another example of astromysticism, as documented by Robert Temple in his *The Sirius Mystery*. The work concerns certain oral traditions, preserved among the shaman priests of the Dogon, a tribe in upper Mali, regarding another hyper-dense stellar object, namely Sirius B, the invisible companion of Sirius A, and central point of reference in the relevant mythos and cult. Invisible to the human eye, Sirius B was officially discovered in 1862, using an 18½ inch refracting telescope, and only in 1970 was it successfully photographed. Ancestral lore of the Dogon, however, includes knowledge of its fifty-year orbital period, as of its great density, the same making it one of the heaviest objects in the known universe. Again there is the curious correlation between loci of mystic association and astronomical objects of immense gravitational pull.

Such examples, moreover, according to Zulu historian Credo Mutwa, are but isolated instances of the pervasive cosmological knowledge, which is part of the universal shamanic legacy.

Like Erich von Däniken, we may ask at this point, how did the supposedly primitive ancients obtain such knowledge? Von Däniken, of course, went on to provide his own solution – essentially the nuts-and-bolts hypothesis of alien visitation – which he popularised in the sixties. Without necessarily discounting this scenario, can we formulate a rationale less contingent upon the circumstantial, a rationale alike more subtle as it is far-reaching in explanatory power? Is there conceivably a traceable correlation between inner and outer space, so that gnosis of one realm extends to the other? Could the ancient seers, under effort of intense concentration, project their consciousness far out into the

cosmos, thereby engaging quite literally in a form of astral travel? Or does the shamanic journey, aided perhaps by powerful hallucinogens, lead to psychic regions which precede the bifurcation into mind and matter, into ancestral terrain, where galactic formation comprises a stage in the foundation of consciousness?

As apparent from the wider literature of the visionary experience, though the journey be intra-psychic as well as interstellar in orientation, it was not undertaken in a context of duality – the noted divide into an inner and outer world, as underlies the modern intellectual ethos. To the magical sensibility, rather, these worlds are seamlessly connected in a quasi-hallucinatory whole, wherein mental and geographical co-ordinates are largely interchangeable. It is this, from our perspective, exotic conception which underlies the qualitative sensibilities of the ancients, and which must be assumed in elucidating their secret doctrine. It then becomes apparent that the ancestral link to the stars was no mere poetic invention, but that, from the integral viewpoint, inner and outer space form an organic functional whole.

When this view is mapped back onto objective or Cartesian space we behold the galaxy as cosmic brain, its individual neurons – the stars – communicating via the medium of light, as well as instantaneously, via the superluminal hyperspatial continuum which is the subject of contemporary physics. We see consciousness predicated on interstellar space as much as on the intracranial space belonging to the hominid bipeds with which we have to do. In mythic lore, moreover, celestial constellations correspond severally and precisely to the religious and scientific constellations of the psychic firmament, somewhat in the manner that regions of the brain are said to be functionally specialised. It is this implicit unity which provides a meaningful rationale for the ancient obsession with astronomy, and the traditional links between certain cults and cultures and specific regions of the sky. Evidently these links were not of fancy but actuality, the subject of a subtle sensibility now largely lost, thus

allowing for the principle of knowledge from the stars without necessary recourse to ancient astronauts in the prosaic sense.

If this seems far fetched – and the pun is apt – it should be remembered that the earth is not the closed system it is sometimes imagined to be. The sun provides the energetic information which fuels the biological process, and the pull of lunar tides on the physiological process is well known. The concept of symbolic information from the stars merely extends this scenario into the realm of consciousness – by no means a radical step given the assumed consistency and continuity of nature. Nor is it necessary to think entirely in terms of causality – of astral transmissions or mysterious communications. A better theoretical foundation may be found in that class of ideas which posit an underlying reality behind the world of phenomena – something akin to the *implicate order* of physicist David Bohm, wherein seemingly disparate objects and events are embedded and deeply correlated.

Enshrined in the Hermetic dictum, *as above so below* – this structural and thematic continuity is axiomatic to the initiated worldview, wherein the human organism is viewed as microcosm, the repository and concentration of universal process as a whole. Esoteric tradition, notably that pertaining to the Hebrew Cabala, furnishes an entire catalogue of secondary correspondences, among them the stellar attribution of humanity's spiritual essence or core – in hieratic texts of ancient Egypt, the *khabs*. Man is described as not merely a creature of earth and dust, but as a stellar daemon – his psychic constitution the eidolon and sheath of a star.

Whether the attribution is viewed as metaphor or descriptive fact, it may be mapped in remarkable detail. Stars have their individual chemistry, magnitude, density and luminosity. They are born, they mature and die, proceeding through several discreet developmental stages. With their nuclear fuel exhausted they become burnt out, sometimes expending themselves in a final burst of glory as a red giant or supernova. The dispersion may be total, or

one of two further possibilities ensues. Depending on the original stellar mass, a star either becomes extinct as a *black dwarf* or continues as a neutron star. Neutron stars, also called *white dwarfs*, are small but extremely dense and heavy objects which have collapsed inward under their own gravity, to continue, as it were, the process of stellar alchemy on a more refined level. Pulsars are said to be rotating neutron stars, which, in addition to light, emit pulsed radio signals. Significantly, if the stellar mass exceeds a certain threshold, the inward collapse is not stayed, but accelerates toward a so-called black hole. Black holes are gravitational vortexes so intense that nothing – not even light – can escape their event horizon. Beyond or within this event horizon, moreover, lies the singularity – a point at which space, time and conventional physics cease.

The parallels between stellar evolution and the human psyche in the course of initiation are reflected in the iconography of the magical tradition, wherein one, having formed the link with his daemon, the genius or guardian angel, is called a solar adept. Such individuals, whose lives shine with more than usual intensity, are popularly referred to as stars or superstars in their field of endeavour. Beyond the mere solar adepts, however, are the masters – those individuals, who, having traversed the abyss of mind, are identified with the galactic centre and the transcendent regions beyond the singularity. Like the rarefied radiation emitted by black holes, the light of such personages is typically perceived as darkness – so far is their point of view removed from the ordinary or consensual.

The curious focus on stellar objects of great density – for the Maya the galactic core, for the Dogon the neutron star Sirius B – can thus be explained in terms of the visionary or shamanic journey, wherein these locales are perceived not only as dense in information, but as hyperspatial portals to transcendent states of consciousness. The shamanic journey into the galactic black hole is

thus the cosmological correlate of the psychic journey to realms beyond time, space, and mind.

It will be readily apparent moreover, why this psychic and cosmic centre was sought of the ancients. For quite apart from personal empowerment and emancipation, attainment thereof marked access to the archetypal or logoic plane of deliberation, from which the mind, and by implication all minds, are ruled. Whosoever commands that place also rules the heavens of archetypal origination, and so ... is God.

Orion and the Pleiades

The really interesting question here is how all of this started? How did homo erectus, a forest forager, suddenly turn into homo sapiens, a cosmic philosopher and builder of cities? After anatomically modern humans had been on earth for some 100,000 years, why and how the sudden emergence of high sophistication a mere five to six thousand years ago?

Conventional anthropology has staple recourse to a scenario of gradualism – natural selection, random mutation, trial and error, a lucky break now and then – without a compelling explanation for the sudden cultural explosion in the late neolithic. In addition it is theorised that early humans supplemented their meagre scientific knowledge with poetic fancies – and thus arose mythology.

Somewhat more specific is the thesis of evolutionary theorist Terence McKenna, who proposed in *Food Of The Gods* that paleolithic nomads of the African plains, due to a diet of psilocybin containing mushrooms, could discern new orders of nature and converse with their inhabitants. Anthropologist Jeremy Narby states in *The Cosmic Serpent, DNA and the Origins of Knowledge* that the psychedelic state is indeed productive of objective and verifiable knowledge, although subjectively the information may derive from the

discourses of tutelary deities and other visionary orders of being. A common experience reported in this context is that the universe is composed entirely of language or meaning, and that humans have the capacity to engage in direct conscious dialogue with diverse orders of nature, as suggested in legends of the Orphic variety. All that is required is some kind of trigger or catalysts, in this case the psilocybin molecule of certain fungi, and the mind of nature becomes apparent. Thus attuned to universal intelligence, which conceptually evolved into the angelic hierarchies of occult terminology, early humanity had many mentors. What after all is the universal dreamtime, but that visionary state in which the meaning of things becomes apparent.

Yet between tribal shamanism and ancient city states lies a step of magnitude. Why was it suddenly deemed necessary, in certain specific regions of the earth, to build temples for eternity, and to chart astrological motion on a galactic scale? Are the attributes of civilisation – statecraft, religion, human sacrifice and genetic engineering – somehow indicated in nature, so that any intelligent but spiritually primitive ape will eventually acquire them? Is the cultural history of the human race, in its appalling splendour, predicated entirely upon the lines of natural evolution. Of course it is, answer all those for whom this is the only available option.

But the record tells a different story.

Mythology – humanity's magical record – asserts that superior races came from the stars, or manifested by some other exotic means, and *taught* civilisation. Universal traditions to this effect, be it remembered, reflect the testimony of the recipients, and there is no apriori reason to doubt their veracity, especially seeing that the cloud of witnesses is so great. It would indeed be a strange case of false humility for the ancients to acknowledge higher intervention, if only human ingenuity was involved. It can more reasonably be assumed that the pragmatic ancients recorded what they perceived as the facts of their endowment.

The mythological record speaks of a mysterious race or races, whose emissaries appeared in various guises, and who possessed arts and sciences which appeared magical to primitive humanity. These creatures were consequently revered as gods, even though they interbred with humans and exacted various other forms of service. The great ancient city states from Angkor Vat to the Yucatan grew up as cult centres for their worship and the promulgation of their agenda. Around their strongholds they established the religious and secular institutions by which humanity would be governed, providing for perpetual dynasties of priests and kings on the principle of divinely invested bloodlines, and – mysteriously vanished from the historical record. In their place they left vague ancestral memories, and a mysterious tradition which later civilisations sought to restore, a tradition of lost glories of vanquished empires – overthrown in a series of global cataclysms.

Who were these antediluvian gods – what was their appearance and nature. Where did they come from? And what of their ontological status – in what sense are they to be considered real?

Answer: Humanoid reptilians, inexorable and of dubious benevolence, hailing from Rigel Orion and Alpha Draconis, and of a constitution that extends from the physical to the astral / etheric. Such at least is the summation of the contemporary view, which also accords to a high degree with the universal mythological opus. Despite a prohibition, which, according to Credo Mutwa, these beings imposed on the depiction of their form, it is the serpent motif which is most commonly associated with the stellar gnosis and its emissaries among early humanity. While the beings thus depicted appeared benevolent in many ways, especially toward their acolytes, whom they raised to plateaus of cosmic contemplation, they were also feared in that they evinced a ruthless and totalitarian streak – a policy of any means to serve their ends.

As to their reality – apart from the merely symbolic – this question is complicated by the qualitative methods of classification employed by the

ancients, wherein physical measurement and numinous apprehension shared a common ontological space. Instead of yielding to simplistic answers, the phenomenon, like its modern counterpart in the alien / UFO experience, rather re-opens the ontological debate: what *is* reality – what criteria define it?

Yet irrespective of rationale, the ancients gods were to leave one of the most enduring legacies, insofar as the serpent lore of world mythology and religious tradition constitutes but a trace of their intervention in the racial memory. Theirs is the secret of primeval fascination, their influence the prosaic and unequivocal explanation for the ubiquitous serpent and dragon motif, as found throughout the ancient world, and transmitted through heraldic insignia, although its meaning has receded into the lower recesses of the collective unconscious. Yet even today the serpent remains as a popular icon of subtle gnosis, virility and strength. As to for his erstwhile habitations – the temples, pyramids and megalithic fortresses – they pose a mystery to this day.

Despite this symbolic saturation, however – or rather because of it – the primal fact of the alien encounter has long been effaced from conscious memory. Shrouded in ultimate Freudian forgetfulness, it is the mother of cultural dissimulation, the original taboo. To speak of it, verily, is to stir leviathan in his lair – it offends against the good tone. To conjure the dragon from the deep, it literally causes the hair to rise – as observed in the biblical Book of Job, one would think the deep to be hoary. Religious and folkloric traditions tend thus to be hypnotic / soporific agents, instead of opening the floodgates of recognition. The same holds for popular entertainment around the theme, which desensitises through overexposure – in the words of the mystic poet Selma Olanta, to conceal with enchantment the primal remembrance.

Religious and cultural traditions nevertheless reflect various forms of accommodation with the mythological serpent, and there is some controversy regarding the moral nature of this symbolic and conceptual beast, so that it is variously revered, demonised, and held in ambivalent regard. Cause of this

confusion is the emergence of certain other spiritual traditions, apparently conceived more or less in opposition to the draconian ideal with which the serpent is often associated. One such is the tradition of the Elohim, whence arose Yahweh, the supreme deity of Judaism, which grew from an obscure patriarchal cult into the messianic world religion centred on the figure of Jesus Christ. The other main branch, contesting the deity of the Serpent, is the pan-Asiatic mystical one – yet with qualification. The further east one comes, the less the serpent or dragon appears as a symbol of malevolent augury. To the subtle mindset of Sino-Japanese mythology it is rather an auspicious emblem, signifying sprightliness – strength and virility, wisdom and longevity.

Chi-meridians, as of acupuncture, as the telluric currents of geomancy and feng shui are regarded as manifestations of the dragon, as indeed are all phenomena in general. In the mystic lore of the Indian subcontinent a similar conception prevails. The kundalini shakti, or serpent power, is the psycho-sexual force, which permeates the universe, as it sustains the individual. It manifests in the erotic impulse, as in every other form of creative energy, up to and including the highest forms of contemplative trance. Shiva, the prince of Yogis (adepts of the Yoga path), is portrayed as dancing upon a serpent, denoting mastery of the conditions of mind, space and time. A variant of this theme may be observed in the yab-yum icon of the Tantric schools, wherein Shiva is seated, phallus erect, while the Shakti, personified as a lithe and curvaceous goddess, squats astride his lap, the whole being emblematic of cosmic union and the interplay between the forces of immanence and transcendence.

The religious traditions, in short, have their respective way of dealing with the serpent. The Hindu Krishna is depicted as dancing on the serpent's head, as is Shiva, suggestive of a subduing as of a degree of interplay or symbiosis. The Buddha meanwhile, without so much as lifting a finger, commands the serpent's obeisance. It is Christ, in his avatar of the archangel

Michael, who makes war with the dragon, casting him out of heaven. Whereas in most traditions the serpent or dragon is subdued in some way, usually through subtlety and craft, in the Judaeo-Christian tradition the conflict rendered as a fight to the death. In the biblical *Genesis* Yahweh Elohim is quoted addressing the serpent: *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall crush thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

The tension specifically between these two traditions predates even the inception of the patriarchal and prophetic lineages recorded in the body of Hebrew scriptures, for in the aforesaid Job, its oldest Book, it is written: *Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?* While seemingly cryptic, this text accords with the conception of a celestial source of, or correlate to, the conflicting religious and ideological currents which contend for the allegiance of humanity. Although not further qualified, the Pleiades are cited as a haven of benevolent emanation, while the question pertaining to Orion concerns oppression – *loose the bands* meaning *undo the oppression*. It is worthy of note that Orion, in contemporary stellar lore, is associated with the draconian / reptilian type of reported alien intruders. Yet the notion of cosmic conflict predates even the writers of the Old Testament, along with its apocryphal and pseudepigraphic accretions, for the theme is elaborated in the oldest religious texts extant – those of Sumer and Egypt.

The idea of cosmic conflict is reflected within the various traditions under the symbol of the so-called contending hero twins – Horus and Set in ancient Egypt, Enki and Enlil in Sumeria, Quetzacoatl and Tezcatlipoca in the Americas. while in the Bible it is reiterated in personages such as Abel and Cain, Jacob and Esau, David and Saul, Jesus and Judas, Christ and Antichrist. The story of this conflict is made complex by the fact that there exist (at least) two accounts of the related events, and two interpretations of any account, reflecting the spiritual polarisation of the two sides involved. As an analytical

perspective this may seem unnecessarily complex, but, as shall be apparent as we trace the relevant histories, the respective themes are consistent, even predictable. They both illuminate historical process, and allow for a considerable degree of prophetic prognostication.

In another sense, of course, all this will seem appallingly simplistic, in that everything is reduced, as it were, to black and white – two contending fronts of religious ideology. The object is not to deny the complexity of historical process, but to distil its archetypal and irreducible elements for scrutiny. The ideological contest, moreover, is not without profound human consequence. For it decides what ideas shall claim human allegiance and rule planet Earth. It determines what the human story shall be.

World Ages and Visionary Tides

The ancients, as noted, had their complex and exotic notions of what transpired at the dawn of history. Their story, however, was supplanted with the rise of Christianity, followed in turn by a rational age, in which gnosis or direct insight was replaced by the calculation of probabilities. Its ethos favoured the notion that the simplest explanation of anything is the best. Yet the search for ultimate simplicity led to a philosophical impasse – in esoteric parlance, the infinite regress of the abyss, and essentially the recognition that the rational domain affords no ultimate foundation for knowledge. In the resulting cultural void the while, there are signs that the old gods are returning, bringing with them the old stories, to advance again the old agenda in a manner overt and tangible. To place this development into historical perspective, it is necessary to go a little into the doctrine of world ages and the collective process of initiation.

Four distinct cultural types have evolved in response to the human condition; four paradigms may be distinguished which inform the quest at the archetypal level. They are *shamanism*, *magic*, *mysticism*, and *science / religion*

– the last-mentioned being that hybrid of rational enquiry and metaphysical dogma, which obtains since Descartes split the sensate universe into two incommensurate halves.

Shamanism, the earliest paradigm or world system, is characterised by an ecstatic unity of consciousness which precedes the subject-object distinction, and the direct apprehension of the voices of nature. The cultural style of stone-age hunter-gatherer tribes, is grounded in the value system of glandular bliss and ecstatic vision. The organism, in deep correlation with the cosmos, moves along the line of least resistance, and the mind is safely tucked away in a pageant of visionary trances, which mediate nature's arcana in the primal language of telepathic DNA. These cultures are intrinsically perennial. They might have remained entranced while the earth remained inhabitable, had they not been rudely disturbed by men with beards and guns. Conceivably, they also might have found a way to migrate to the stars, given the efficacy of their unobtrusive and minimalist technology.

This is followed by the sudden emergence of the more manipulative approach, which characterises the great ancient cultures of the magical paradigm. *Magical* here denotes a technology deriving from the aforesaid serpent cults, involving an acoustic and telluric sciences, applied to anything from cyclopean building projects to astral journeying in the empyrean. The magical worldview remains grounded in holistic monism, the doctrine of the unity of all experiential realms. Yet a cognitive shift – a focussing of sorts – marks the birth of the discreet, disembodied 'I' – the sense of absolute self, conceived as above or apart from nature. This abstract and idealised 'I' is also the gnostic Eye, as symbolised by the Egyptian Eye of Horus. It signals the advent of incarnate gods. The period in question accordingly saw the traditional council of elders replaced by an absolute monarch – high priest, god and king, on an elevated throne.

Observing the karmic consequences, and foreseeing the horrors yet to come, the more subtle contingent of alien gods established the foundation of mysticism. Taking the bull, as it were, by the horns, the mystic school or paradigm seeks to solve the existential problem by transcending thought, mind and world, in the trance of samadhi – identification with the primary clear light of consciousness. From quasi shamanic roots this approach evolved through Hinduism and Buddhism into ultra-refined and abstract Zen. Curiously and significantly, the mystic dharma ventured East – from India to China and Japan – toward the rising of the sun, the symbol in the natural world of human consciousness. This against the ‘regular’ course of civilisation from East to West – Sumer, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Spain, Flanders, Great Britain, and the Americas, where, perched on the West Coast over the abyss of the St Andreas fault, now congregates every cult since the expulsion from paradise.

Of the magical cultures some vanished as mysteriously as they arose, while others became enfeebled and succumbed to the new current of monotheism, which gained momentum through the rise of Christianity and Islam. It was the institutionalised and intolerant form of the former, which essentially suppressed the ancient knowledge for nigh one thousand years. During this period the candle of civilisation was kept aflame by the greater Islamic empire, while Europe burnt witches and celebrated masses for the dead.

While the Renaissance saw a revival of ancient and classical ideals, it soon became apparent that it was the rational philosophy of Greece and Rome which informed the new current, while the knowledge of greater antiquity receded further into obscurity. A number of factors contributed to a decisive break with the more ancient tradition, among them the burning of the Alexandrian library, and the persecution and exiling of scholars by Christian and barbarian thugs. Although the Catholic hierarchy embraced Aristotelian metaphysics, the emerging Inquisition looked with disfavour on the attempt of

Giordano Bruno to revive the worship of the Egyptian Osiris, with the result that Bruno was imprisoned and burnt at the stake.

While the emerging natural sciences were likewise the target of persecution, a compromise was eventually struck whereby the natural world was conceded to secular science, while metaphysics remained the province of the Church. Thus, with rational enquiry deprived of its metaphysical foundations, and religion deprived of material relevance, the stage was set for the meteoric rise of materialism. Concurrently the mind-based sciences of the magi were driven underground, effectively becoming ‘occult’ and leaving behind a wasteland of aborted dialogue between science and the humanities.

Modern science, like the biblical seed in shallow soil, thus developed at an unprecedented pace – to wither all the more quickly in the ‘heat of the day’ because it has no root. It is difficult to arrive at a different prognosis, for, despite great technological success, no prior age has been so profligate in its contempt for wisdom, so obscene in its hubris, so prodigal in its orgies of global destruction. As the most short-lived, hitherto, of cultural styles, the scientific worldview has not only failed as a sustainable paradigm, but the seeds of its demise are already in evidence. These lie not merely, or even primarily, in its capacity for abuse, but in the curious fact that the reason, and thus the rational paradigm, carried to its logical conclusion, ends in undermining itself. The analytical method leads to infinite regress, to the abyss of radical doubt, and quite often, to the epitome of unreason.

This being recognised on a more or less intuitive level, the rational age is effectively past, and a new cultural logos – that of the *integral paradigm* – informs the zeitgeist on the archetypal plane. This paradigm is one of cultural fusion, as is evident in the popular resurgence of things archaic, exotic and occult – a phenomenon decried by defenders of outworn orthodoxies who warn of an imminent return to prescientific barbarism. It already happened once, as the late Carl Sagan points out in *This Demon Haunted World*; it could happen

again. In view of the atavistic forces unleashed, the danger is perhaps not to be underestimated. Yet what the critics fail to recognise is the inevitability of the process, which represents not merely the striving of the human psyche for wholeness, but also the fruition of spiritual or ideological seeds which was sown in the antediluvian dawn of civilisation.

At its core, and at its best, the new renaissance is driven by a more inclusive paradigm, which retains the values of scientific method while subsuming these within new hierarchies of sensibility. Central to this process is the modern revolution in consciousness – broadly speaking those developments in science and popular culture by which consciousness is restored to its pre-eminent place in the phenomenology of human experience. The most important question to emerge in this context is that of the role of mind or consciousness as the magical theatre in which the cosmic and human drama unfolds. To what extent is reality determined by consciousness? Is the ghost in the machine – does mind subsist within nature, or is nature all in the mind? Renewed existential engagement with these question, while signifying a stage in the evolution of consciousness itself, also indicates a return of the ancient magical or mystic paradigm, wherein the universe is attributed to a conscious creator and humanity has mysterious part in the act of creation.

The notion of cyclic return, coupled with the immense acceleration that now obtains in the cultural sphere, suggests that within present lifetimes the practical secrets of the ancients shall be restored and perhaps even surpassed. This idea, through a new literary genre, its readership enthralled by a sense of imminent disclosures, has gripped the collective imagination, where it is often associated with notions of apocalyptic hue. At the same time a new breed of scientist / philosophers is emerging, able to reconcile the demands of academia with the arcane traditions of archaic wisdom in rigorous synthesis – personages such as Terence McKenna, Jack Sarfatti, and Rupert Sheldrake, who, although

hardly household names, have been all the more influential in real terms through their respective engagement with the spiritual logos of the age.

World-ages, according to ancient cosmology, are predicated on large-scale astronomical cycles – the slowly shifting configuration of celestial bodies in relation to each other and the earth. The vision of galactic space as cosmic brain is thus infused with a dynamic quality, whereby the motion of the stars leads inexorably to cosmic apotheosis. Insofar as the ‘return’ of the cosmic Christ – of Osiris or Quetzacoatl – is identified with specific astronomical correlations, it is evidently not an individual, but a type of consciousness or energy which is anticipated – something which only manifests in its season of manifestation. This, in turn, leads to the realm of eschatology – visions of the cultural and cosmic endgame, of ultimate redemption, restoration of legacies past, and of historical closure.

A theme which finds expression in prophetic Christianity is the release from the cycles of time itself – a redeeming of time back into eternity. The Apocalypse of St. John, for instance, speaks of a mysterious Seventh Angel, at the sounding of which *there shall be time no more*. This unfolds against a broad visionary canvass of revelation and the bodily ascension of the faithful. John, having been summoned to *come up higher*, finds himself confronting the cosmic centre – a throne set in heaven and One who is seated thereon. A prophetic vista then unfolds, wherein all time is seen in an instant, as from a place perpendicular to, and, as it were, at the centre of time. It is this trans-temporal perspective which constitutes the key to the symbolism of the Apocalypse, wherein a singular event ‘in heaven’ manifests historically as events widely separated in space and time.

Terence McKenna entertains a similar concept, regarding historical process as the shockwave of the *eschaton*, the transcendent object at the end of time – its emanation propagating backwards and forwards through time, though essentially from a still point outside of time. The *eschaton* is thus both end and

beginning, the alpha/omega of Platonic idealism, a universal attractor beyond manifest nature, which yet informs and compels every atom thereof.

The shamanic or mystical quest for the universal centre may thus be regarded as an evolutionary shortcut, the realisation of certain qualitative states in consciousness which anticipate the tendency of the universe as a whole. While an infinitude of visionary worlds may be encountered throughout this quest, its evident objective consists in a vantage point transcending the worlds – a point of reference beyond the conventional categories mind, space and time. This, according to the Asiatic schools of mysticism, is the way of *liberation* – of dhyani chohans or self-realised beings, and the nirvana of the Buddhas. But along this path also lies the appropriation of the *siddhi* – the magical powers.

The Dragon Throne and Imperial Courts

Ramparts and obelisks ascend skyward. From his seat at the centre of Mount Meru, Indra, chief of Asuras, hurls his vajra thunderbolts upon hapless earth. Gods are transported in aerial vehicles of bliss.

What is recorded is also born out by the archaeological evidence – namely that the magical attainments of ancient priest-kings could translate into material forces of the most formidable kind. Stated another way, in exchange for allegiance the ancient gods imparted the essence of an exotic technology, which to observers, contemporaneous as well as present, bears the hallmarks of magic. From the flying chariots of the Mahabharata to the astral portals of megalithic Egypt, the ancient legacy bears evidence of a non-trivial secret, which has not yet been disclosed to the modern world.

Given the visionary context in which the arcanum was to unfold, it is further evident that relevant technologies were not perceived as ideologically neutral. Their pursuit and objective rather comprised a religious quest – in essence the worship of the seminal intelligences, usually in the form of the

serpent or dragon or some humanoid mutant thereof. Nor did the cult of the serpent enjoin vain ritualistic rigmarole, but an agenda was imposed of the entities invoked, calculated to further their influence. In accord with certain spiritual principles, the initiate, through requisite yogas, through vigils and austerities, became identified with the serpent, the human focus of its powers and point of view. The long-term objective was a complete psycho-spiritual transformation, which, given sufficient time, would also manifest in physical and physiological change.

According to the Apocalypse the *dragon* arises from the bottomless pit, and offers his seat and authority to the *beast* which rises out of the earth. It is necessary here to remove the emotional drapery with which biblical language has become contaminated. The *beast* refers to the spiritual hybrid, implicit in the astral / etheric union with the serpent, while the bottomless pit is the infinite regress of the mind, to which reference was made. The dragon throne is thus poised in the illimitable ethers of the abyss which is the mind, and as such it is identified therewith.

Unlike the soul, which has a ‘firmament’ – and Elohim said, *let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters*, which is to say, an apprehension that nature is ‘thus’ – the dragon is not intrinsically identified with any world. It has no soul, whence the Faustian pact wherein the devil barter for the soul of his charge. *It* is the spirit of analysis and imagination, in Greek mythology Chaos and Pan, all-begetting all-destroying. It is Alastor, the spirit of solitude and wanderer of the wastes; according to the Book of Job a fugitive and vagabond in the earth. Its moral emancipation is absolute – it is beyond good and evil, beyond identity and allegiance to ideology or creed. It is art for art’s sake and innocent play. It is void of conscience and of a canon of meaning. Its is mind itself – the divine Pymander of Hermes Trismegistus, the hypercube of all possibility.

Its demands upon the initiate are rigorous, even radical, whence, historically, a degree of ambivalence toward the serpent has always been in evidence, as well as long traditions of détente, compromise and mutual accommodation. By some accounts, provided the dragon obtains a sacrificial virgin once a year, it agrees not to despoil the realm. Such is the tenor of cultural memory concerning the draconian overlords which ruled the earth in mythological times. Fascination and fear, inextricably mingled, defines the psychology, as does a natural human tenacity to withstand the intruder and potential usurper. However one conceives of the serpent or dragon, its pull is the defining factor in the ancient world. Within a short period, historically speaking, it transformed the neolithic tribal order into something else entirely – a condition in many ways bizarre and far from cultural equilibrium.

Remaining tribal hunter-gatherer societies are of interest as the only cultural type on earth which is indefinitely sustainable, having attained, as it were, to a state of perpetual harmony with its gods. All other known cultural types, by comparison, undergo the well-known cycle of rise, apotheosis, and decline, the causes for which must be sought, above all, in the egregore or thoughtform which rules a people at the archetypal level.

There is however one other spiritual current with legitimate claims to perpetuity – namely the kingdom of mysticism. Changes of dynasty, political and scientific revolutions, have done nothing to curb or alter the flow of this ancient river, which, according to its own testimony, does not seek the attainments of this world. Yet from its Himalayan peaks of mental abstraction flows, paradoxically, not only the dharma of liberation, but also the gnosis of the serpent. Both, by all accounts, derive from rarefied mystical states. Thus, while relevant traditions eschew the magical powers for their own sake, a symbiosis of magic and mysticism has been the norm from earliest times. It is, after all, the mental and moral emancipation which mystical attainment confers, wherein genius is conceived and brought to birth. While to mystical purists all

magic is black magic, many shades of grey are being entertained in practice. The temptation of knowledge proved to great to withstand, thereby, in the jargon of the East, giving rise to karma, the law of cause and effect, and hence to samsara, the cycle of birth and death – as of the rise and fall of empires.

From samadhi, or mystical attainment, derive the siddhi, the magical powers, the varieties of which are legion. Indeed all archaic cultures possess attainments of a quasi paranormal or anomalous nature, as perceived from the modern Western point of view, deriving as they do from a different paradigm and cognitive stance. This paradigm may be described as yogic, the Vedic science of yoga comprising a living tradition, broadly representative of the ancient wisdom. Two principles inform this science, which distinguish it from the Cartesian worldview of the West: solipsism – the idea that the self is the centre of the universe, and vitalism – the notion of shakti (ching or chi in the Chinese system), a universal energy permeating the cosmos, and manifest in phenomena such geomagnetism, bioelectricity, and quantum electrodynamics. The practical secret of yoga and tantra is that this energy interacts with, structures and informs, the human organism, so that it can be engaged directly on a conscious level. The laboratory of this science is the human body, its data the subjective phenomena of soma, senses and psyche.

While the term *subjective* has an invalidating ring to the modern ear, it should be noted that subjective impressions are really the primary data of experience, and that all phenomena are in this sense subjective. The so-called *objective*, by comparison, is merely an inference; a thing is usually deemed objectively real if its presence is correlated by the consensus. A further misconception is that the subjective realm is necessarily vague and imprecise. This is simply the result of centuries of cultural neglect of this domain, and the absence of a vigorous / rigorous language pertinent thereto. The observations of the ancients, on the contrary, were minute and precise, served by a precise technical language, developed and refined over the course of millennia.

Unlike the ‘objective’ stance, therefore, which involves a conceptual distancing from the object observed, the archaic paradigm apprehends the universe, as it were, from within. The yogic sciences are grounded in the embodied point of view, in the experience of the present moment, wherein space and time coalesce in the conscious experience that is the self-in-the-world. From this perspective the external world, instead of being viewed as other, constitutes an extension or garment of the self – in magical parlance, the aura or magical mirror of the soul. The idea is that whatever is conceived in mind, that also is perceived in nature. As within so without, to paraphrase the aforesaid Hermetic axiom. Conceptual constructs *are* perceptual categories, the metaphysics being reminiscent of theological doctrines regarding the logos as creative word. Tersely expressed, the world is mind, and it is composed of language.

Whereas yoga is commonly understood to refer to an intrapersonal practice, disciplines such as feng shui and geomancy extends its principles to the local and planetary environment. Astrology is the discipline applied to the cosmic whole. Permutations of a singular and universal energy are said to inform and structure the dynamic interplay of these various domains, an energy variously referred to as prana, chi, manas, tellur, vril, kundalini and shakti, depending on context and cultural reference. In popular parlance the concept is echoed in buzzwords such as *vibes*, *spark*, *duende* (a Spanish term, applicable to the art of flamenco) and *élan*.

Divergent local styles of cultivation have arisen with respect to this energy. For emphasis one might compare the ecstatic cult of Shango and the voodoo drum with the contemplative precision of a Cambodian temple dancer, her manicured fingers minutely moulding the astral light. The polarisation here apparent distinguishes cultural style as respectively grounded in an orgiastic / cathartic or meditative / contemplative model. Both, however, have as their

object the ecstasy of transcendence over the inertia, the limitations and ubiquitous pain of bodily existence.

Underlying the respective cultural archetypes are certain fundamental differences of temperament or disposition, which are reflected in Theosophical doctrines regarding seven consecutive Root Races. According to the relevant lore, which concerns spiritual as much as physiological archetypes (stereotypes for the cynically minded), the Aryan model of quiescent focus descended from the arctic regions subsequent to the Lemurian and Atlantean model. The Aryan disposition thus equates with the Nordic and the Lemurian with the Equatorial temperament, while the Atlantean, as the tempered middle, corresponds to the Mediterranean type.

Simplistic and suggestive of racial ideology though this scheme may appear, it announces the principle that a factor beside environmental adaptation underlies the pathways of cultural evolution, something best described as an inherent and specific genius, which variously characterises the three or four racial types nowadays recognised by anthropologists, namely the Caucasoid, Mongoloid, and the Negroid, with the puzzling and mysterious Australoid completing the quaternary. The root causes being what they may, profoundly different styles of cultivation evolved, despite the universality of outlook vis-à-vis the energetic principle, generically identified as the great or cosmic serpent.

While a universal paradigm thus underlies the multiform expressions of the magical genius, their variety is bewildering. Barely a refinement or type of emancipation that has not been contemplated some place at some time. Many concern the conquering of the elements, among them the widespread practice of walking barefoot over glowing coals, and its converse, the Tibetan *tummo*, the tantric art of maintaining bodily heat at subzero temperatures. According to explorer Alexandra David Neel, adepts of the latter were wont to demonstrate their prowess by sitting naked on a frozen lake, passing the night wrapping themselves in dripping sheets, and drying them with the blast of their interior

furnace. Another well-known form of specialised cultivation concerns the martial arts, as developed in the contemplative traditions of Taoism and Zen.

The central objective of the yogic path, however, is to create a firm physiological basis for the practice of meditation – essentially the stilling of mind and body, whereby consciousness is purified and honed into a precision instrument. While the ultimate mystic intent is transcendence of conditioned phenomena, in the jargon of Tibet the recognition of the clear light of the void, the gaze may also be turned upon the so-called secondary light, the realm of subtle experience, and it is here that the arts and sciences are born. Yogic and Taoist anatomy, with its system of chakras, nadis, and chi meridians – the energetic structure of the subtle or etheric body, comprises one of the enduring artefacts deriving from this mode of enquiry.

While refinement of the sensory and discriminating faculties is involved, the higher states of yogic apperception evidently interface directly with the holographic and hyperspatial intelligence of nature, the *akasha* or psychic ether of Vedic tradition. The akashic records, so-called, thus comprise the memory of nature, the trace or impression in this supersensory medium of every event in the history of the cosmos. The implicit omniscience of the soul is contemplated in the Delphic injunction, *man, know thyself*, although by classical times the oracles had already fallen from the supreme summits of the art. They eventually became partial – even whimsical – and context dependent in their expertise.

Over time, of course, the entire magico-mystical mindset and its attainments receded into cultural oblivion, henceforth to be viewed as mythic phantasmagoria. In contrast with the mind-manifested universe of the Eastern schools, Western theism with its extraneous deity, led to an externalisation of the spiritual hierarchy, and its projection outward upon the numinous other. To the religious and scientific positivist alike, the spirits – the laws of nature, as it were – are *out there*. This rationalisation soon led to unequalled metaphysical confusion, as manifest in the dark superstitions of the coming age. Fallen alike

from the mystic heights, as from the faith revealed to Hebrew patriarchs, the emergent Holy Roman Empire descended into an ineffectual spiritism, founded upon the haphazard mingling of these opposing traditions, and further compromised with the shamanism, the hereditary witchcraft and old wives' tales of the northern barbarians – Teutons, Goths, Vandals and Huns. The resulting *confusion of the planes* – according to the magical worldview, the bane of spiritual culture – led to chronic intellectual and cultural paralysis, as attested by the thousand year hiatus that fell upon Europe after the decline of pagan Rome. A confusion of the planes – the idea that relics may be possessed of healing virtue, that ritual equates with divine communion, that provincial demons cause eclipses – such are among the more glaring examples.

As a result the ark of gnosis in this age recedes from human control, while creed and contrivance are accepted as revelations of the divine and natural order. For this Aristotle, beloved of Roman theologians, is partly to blame – notably his penchant for saying whatever sounded good in his ears, with the sublime idea that the facts would, or should, somehow accommodate themselves the utterance of the philosophic logos. He was, in this way, a product of his age, during which the mystic gnosis gave way to empirical science, retaining the habits of the former, while lacking its disciplines and insights. With the old standard vanished and the new not yet developed, the capacity for deception is henceforth endless.

An identical situation indeed arises concerning the ostensible faith. Although monotheism nominally reigns over the incumbent order, its God and Christ are mere myths – putative agents of arbitrary intervention instead of the angelic Pillar of Fire as documented in the Old and New Testament. Dogma substitutes for prophetic utterance, sacramentalism for virtue. Of gnosis and faith thus equally deprived, humanity falls prey to delusion on a scale hitherto unprecedented. The result is radical estrangement from the natural order, followed by its execration and persecution. Spirit and flesh are perceived as

mutually antagonistic, the mortification of the body the requisite of spiritual grace. The priesthood specifically is forbidden marriage, indeed any form of natural sexual expression. Yet, without tantric cultivation, as the moderns are aware, abstinence is merely repression, leading to morbidity and the pastimes documented in Baron von Krafft-Ebing's *Psychopathia Sexualis*. It is therefore evident that the ecclesiastical enterprise, which dominated Europe through the Middle Ages, was, from the spiritual standpoint, a monumental failure.

Equally unavailing in the great work of emancipation is the emergent rationalism. If it were otherwise, a few friendly explanations ought to suffice to solve all problems of the human condition forever, and the essential charter of the UN and similar bodies would be vindicated. Yet it is evident that this does not obtain. While it may be argued that the human race, as a whole, has not yet attained to rationality, the prognosis cognate is nevertheless dubious. The reason, tending to ultimate scepticism, cannot advance a single positive proposition. A trans-rational object of necessity takes precedence in the skies of human imagination.

The Angel And The Enchanter at the End Of Time

It is said that the law proceeds from the sanctuary. What this means is that an inmost seed or archetype informs the mind – the human soul – and structures the sensible universe. Ideally this is the archangelic logos, the intelligence of nature, which, though mediated through cultural forms, disposes a people toward its authentic nature and destiny. In an age, however, which 'knows not its God' that place is usurped by another, in that the collective mindset necessarily informed of something. Here the spiritual polarities, reflected in mythic and religious lore are reduced to the notional conflict between the original and authentic versus the contrived, the insinuating, the subversive and evil. Yet the practical question *which is which* can only be

settled by reference to an accepted canon, and is thus a matter of controversy between conflicting traditions. While the Church ostensibly aligns itself with Christ Michael against the adversary and accuser of the brethren, Lucifer / Satan, among the descendants of the serpent it is the Church and its Christ which are cast as the oppressor. And, as if this were not enough, religious waters are further muddied by the fact that signs and symbols mislead. Demons wear angelic masks, and saints the pointed caps of heretics.

Both said traditions are moreover possessed of verity, insofar as no cultural type could subsist without some sort of grounding in the intrinsic canon of nature. All phenomena, all ideas share a common ontological ground and exist by universal laws of manifestation. The alien or *other* is thus never quite totally other, for if it were, there would be no ontological continuum to connect them. Divers cultures or species would fail to recognise each other, and dialogue would be impossible. Yet overwhelmingly a common sensibility outweighs all cultural and biological variation.

Yet there is the occurrence of mutation – the capacity for indefinite elaboration and accretion in the realm of intellect, and in this connection it was said of the fiend that his name is legion or manifold. Here again the archetypal tempter is identified as mind itself, for it is the reifying powers of the mind wherein things assume the semblance of the actual. For did not the Victorian mage Aleister Crowley, invoking the tenth Aethyr of the Enochian universe, encounter *Choronson*, the mind personified as demon of dispersion and polymorphous dragon of the abyss. This shape-shifting demon, without intrinsic form, is the formative agent in the conceptual and perceptual domain. He is aptly termed enchanter, in that the greater portion of humanity is profoundly convinced of the actuality of what it beholds.

An historic example of the capacity for spiritual deception is found in the age alluded to – the Middle or Dark Ages of ecclesiastic reign, in which the Christ of the New Testament is deposed by another, which came to rule in his

name. Yet insofar as the anointed (the Christ) of the Elohim embodies the human charter, humanity is deposed from its spiritual throne, even as it was the human or humane ideal which suffered through this age. The subtle nature of the spiritual deception lies in that the demon styles himself in the image of the angel in every respect. *You shall be as gods* was the gnostic promise of the serpent in Eden. *You are gods*, spoke the angel through the psalmist, the statement later corroborated by no lesser personage than Christ himself. The failure to distinguish between these two statements is the ultimate reason why humanity is ground between the millstones of ideology. It was the lure of the gnostic promise, which allowed a usurper to take the spiritual throne, wrapped in the etheric cloak of the serpent (see Chapter 3). Arch-enchanter and cosmic conjuror, he is that which mortal man implicitly worships – the genius at the fount of intellect. Yet beyond intellect, so the mystic treatises concur, lies the primal intuition. Had humanity been able to abide in the higher principle – in the head of the serpent, so to speak, instead of the tail – intellect might have been a useful servant, instead of the poor master that it is.

The modern age retains this inheritance of subversion. A millennial post-historic paradise should have naturally followed the modern era, wherein the process of analysis and deconstruction reached its logical conclusion, and the technologies were developed to solve humanity's practical problems. The leap from time to eternity lay potentially within its grasp. The transition, however, was subverted and, instead of sailing forth into a contemplative eternity, the world remains trapped in the postmodern hell of perpetual reiteration.

Indeed the very notion of a secular society implies that humanity is disbarred from any sanctuary of gnosis, and cast forever into the outer courts of measurement and reason. Apologists of the scientific paradigm, of course, consider this an advance from the mythopoeic sensibility, or more crudely put, from the superstitions of the past. Their stance is typically based on an assumption of cultural superiority, aided by a degree of historical myopia,

wherein the emancipations of modernity are principally viewed against the relief of the relatively recent and universally execrated dark ages. Insofar as insight into the archaic worldview is lacking, there is no basis on which the modern paradigm might be put into context. Like the myth of linear progress over time, the ascendancy of the modern age is simply assumed. What is merely one way of looking at the world has thus, undeservedly and by mere default, acquired the status of a meta-philosophy, the value system by which all ideas are implicitly judged.

The mindset involved is rarely questioned; after all it knows itself – the rational, analytical, reductionist stance – to be the crown of evolution, the pinnacle of the possibilities of consciousness. Yet its naive empiricism has placed the modern psyche at the ‘receiving end’ of reality – in the outer courts of sensory data and the cumbersome reason, subject to the crosscurrents of ideology and the hieratic suggestions which issue from the dragon throne – fuelling the intellectual fashions which are heresy one day and orthodoxy the next. The dragon throne has thus stood in the midst of time, throughout the course of centuries, visible or invisible according to the currents of cultural persuasion, in its manipulation of the strings of destiny. While ostensibly the products of rational enterprise, humanity’s ‘great truths’ are the givens of inscrutable processes in the archetypal spheres where reality is conceived. That these realms are accessible, subject to scrutiny and deliberation, is not part of the curriculum. Such knowledge is rather taboo – a secret of occult initiation – and thus a weapon of the so-called Black Lodge, the universal and generic conspiracy of totalitarian intent.

The question of truth, of authority or authenticity, highlights the subtle challenge posed by the spiritual quest – namely that to the subjective mind, especially in open and uncharted waters of metaphysics, almost anything is conceivable. Which of the proliferation of voices is that of the angelic logos? While guideposts of initiation have been in place of old, there remains the

question of interpretation. Because religious symbols cloak deception, the ecclesiastical stance is insufficient to resolve the matter. It is necessary to appropriate and engage the primal language of the inspired prophets, if one is to penetrate the secret sanctum and uncover the principal deceptions of the age.

The fact that science, in the interest of rigour, distances itself from all preceding systems of knowledge, is significant moreover with respect to the idea of progressive world ages. For, in the spyglass of prophetic vision, its closed self-referential bubble is indicative of the seed-stage of the tree of civilisation – the age in which humanity harvests the resultant of its aeonic tendencies. Modernity, the age of unprecedented change, is therefore not a resting place but a process, in theory the penultimate step towards a post-historic utopia. Concurrent is the notion that this process, the ever nearer approximation to the ideal, could theoretically continue forever. It therefore comes as something of a shock that it has already run its course.

For what is modernism but the breaking of conceptual frames, the process of analysis and radical deconstruction in the quest for ultimate certainties. While inherently incapable of closure, as become apparent once it is carried far enough, it leads to a far more significant result – to wit, the recognition that certainty must forever elude the rational grasp, that infinite regress is involved, that the sceptical empiric method inexorably leads to the abyss of all-embracing doubt. *Postmodernism* is the intuitive recognition that this is the case.

That the shockwaves of the Eschaton have propagated throughout the secular domain is evident in the many forms of engagement with the notion or symbol of impending end. A case in point is Francis Fukuyama's celebrated essay *The End of History*, which argues that, 'What we may be witnessing is ... the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalisation of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.' Employing the motif in a figurative sense is physicist Julian Barbour, who, in his seriously argued *The End Of Time*,

advances the thesis that time itself is an illusion, making his work – if the paradox be pardoned – a quintessential product of its time. Conceived from yet a different angle is *The End of Science?* by *Scientific American* writer John Horgan, examining whether the rational paradigm has essentially exhausted its charter. The list might go on.

Philosophical and metaphorical usage aside, there are the voices of apocalyptic angst and the writers which address this phenomenon. *Looks like this is the end*, wrote Douglas Rushkoff in his *Children Of Chaos: Surviving The End Of The World As We Know It*, proceeding to list some twenty-two separate doomsday indicators which, singly and collectively, appear to spell the end of civilisation. It's a cognitive thing, he went on to say, attributing the problem to the outmoded linear thinking of entrenched institutions. Salvation, he optimistically proposes, beckons in the perceptual modes of an emerging generation, in decentralisation and improvisation, in creative anarchism, and a general chaos-is-good philosophy.

However one takes the Rushkoff prescription, there is irony in that the best informed culture – by its own surmise – should languish from a lack of authentic vision. The paradox is all the more poignant in that we are inundated with a surfeit of visions. What is missing, however, is context – the unifying 'great image' – so that each and every atom of thought propagates in the universe of its own infinite trajectory. The children of chaos are hence the children of the abyss, whose task is the forging of an intuitive synthesis from the scattered debris of cultural deconstruction.

The widespread sense that *this* is the cultural endgame evidently rests on the popular assumption, endowed with the sanction of academia, that there is nowhere else to go – that the reason represents the high point of human development in the realm of consciousness, and the final arbiter in the realm of ideas. The misconception is echoed by social critic John Ralston Saul, who asserts in *Voltaire's Bastards: The Dictatorship Of Reason In The West* that,

since the Renaissance, humanity has but taken a single step – the espousal of the rational stance. On the surface this seems to be a reasonable view – a commonplace which needed stating, comprising, as it does, the essence of contemporary self-appraisal. But is this really all? Is this development, which can be traced back at least to the ancient Greeks, the whole story of modern civilisation?

An answer is furnished by way of esoteric symbolism, which assigns to the Ruach, the lower or reasoning mind, the emblem of the Sword. This, as an aside, is consistent with etymology, for *science* derives from the Latin root *scindere*, meaning *to cut, divide*. To the higher mind – the Neshama and Chiah of the Cabalists, corresponding to intuition and will – the Cup and Wand are respectively assigned. Combined, these three yield a forth, which is the Disk, symbolic of the material universe.

What these icons tell us, is that one cannot create by merely dividing – that the world rather is conceived by an archetypal seed, mediated through the intuition, and shaped by reason. Reason thus performs the analytical, quasi inquisitorial function which is the basis of form. Stated another way, it is impossible to build a system of knowledge on entirely sceptical lines. Every system capable of generating positive claims has recourse to a set of core beliefs, which are intuitive, implicit, and thus of the nature of faith. Initiation, in this context, involves the laying bare of the chain of trans-rational antecedents, which compose the situation as one finds it.

In cultures of dissimulation, where perception is at odds with what is acknowledged, this causal chain is not merely obscured; there are significant taboos against its elucidation. This is because its incumbent deities rule by subterfuge – they are not what they claim to be. Their servants, messengers of deception and sycophants of the generic Black Lodge, tend to ensure that the status quo remains unchanged. The heroic initiate of legend, as symbolised in

the mythologies of the restorative quest, is accordingly one who discovers the imposture, wages war on the existing order and restores the realm to verity.

According to magical theory this can only be undertaken by a being which is technically termed a solar adept, denoting one who has forged a link with the angel – the trans-rational source of his or her true will. Yet beyond these in the structure of the purported Great White Brotherhood are the Magi or Masters – beings whose human personality is totally identified with that will. Such are the law-givers of humanity, by whose utterances world ages are overthrown and established. Such beings are said to arise once every 2,000 years, the term of their office being referred to as an Equinox of the Gods.

Yet this is not to say that only every 2,000 years can these altitudes be scaled, for every man and woman, by reason of a human incarnation, is called thereto. Adepts, however, do not willy-nilly created separate worlds; on the whole they abide in the current which raised them to a place of creative freedom. The essence of adeptship rather is this, that the incumbent assume responsibility at the archetypal or paradigm level for all that he or she conceives. The archetype, which governs thought and imagination, is thus no longer a mere given, but, as utterance of the inherent logos, it is subject to creative will.

The esoteric tradition thus furnishes an evolutionary map, which points the way beyond the infinite regress and the cultural cul-de-sac, from which it seems increasingly difficult to escape. It charts functions of consciousness beyond the reason, where aspiration engages intuition in creative symbiosis, leading to a universe wherein the mystery is celebrated without being dissected. Not analysis, but engagement is the province of these higher functions of mind, and the consummation of that gnosis, which is appreciation or contemplation of the mystery. This beatitude is the cosmic high calling of man and woman, and the object respectively of initiation and redemption.

That humanity might accede to the logoc plane of deliberation, that indeed it partook thereof in primordial times, is suggested by universal traditions relating of a fall from grace and promised redemption. Essentially their sum is this, that man was made a creator – a god – but he fell into the abyss of reason.

The nature of this abyss and the polymorphous dragon which dwells therein is made explicit in the postmodern void – like the medieval hiatus, a period of flux between that which is past and that which not yet fully formed. In the intervening dark night of the soul, it would seem indicated that humanity appropriate its authentic legacy – the meaning of its illustrious past, and not least the shocking truth that it was the serpent which first taught initiation.

THE DWELLER ON THE THRESHOLD

Whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.

– Ecclesiastes

Sophistry and the End Of Discourse

What, in the world, is going on?

The art of interpretation, it is said, lies in recognising the story – the actual or essential story in a sequence of events. This holds for story-tellers of all kinds: for historians and physicists as for novelists and poets. But is there such a thing as truth? Can there be, in some transcendent sense, a faithful and universally valid reading of the human text?

While myth-making abounds in our age, there is, excepting fundamentalist circles, great reluctance to say *such and such* is the real – the true – or final story. The modernist ethos opposes this tendency, while extolling pluralism and the democracy of ideas. Justifiably perhaps, given the ideological history of the twentieth century, the modern sensibility is averse to anything suggestive of total – or totalitarian – closure. A tacit largess of mind, indispensable to the good tone, has consigned the concept of verity to the byways of relativism. Truth has become the one taboo. The age of authentic engagement is past. We know that we live in a mind-created universe. In this universe all stories are true. And because all stories are true, it is equally true that none are true. It is difficult to speak of universal and abiding truths, not because one meets with serious opposition, but because one is likely to be regarded with an indulgent smile.

Does humanity have an essential story? And if so, who is the author? Is that story a cosmic given, or do individuals provide the input with their everyday actions and decision? What kind of story is it anyway? An heroic

quest? A picaresque romp? Is there a discernible pattern on the grand scale of biological and cultural evolution? Can meaning be distilled from the human experience? In the language of Chapter 1, does the universe have a spiritual centre, a non-trivial core of meaning, which humanity is invited to share? Does the universe have purpose?

Science and religion have sought to answer what are – after millennia of pondering – still the big questions. No explanation, however, has yet emerged, sufficiently compelling or self-evident to engender universal assent. Every age produces its own mythology, the while considering itself enlightened. Perhaps this is especially so at the present. We moderns seem have a grasp of reality unparalleled in the history of this planet, or so it is believed. Yet subjectively, alone with the enigma of life and death, the modern emperor is as naked as his primal ancestors – maybe more so.

Science, the dominant paradigm, has become its own arbiter; its system of values is judged from within – by scientific criteria. Other perspectives, strictly speaking, are viewed as quite meaningless. Closed and self-referential, the scientific worldview is thus beyond effective critique, while the greater domain of experience is marginalised. Objective data only are admitted, and therein is concealed a vast philosophic bias, effectively shutting out the half of the cosmic equation. What is more, science – that most formidable of tools – is wedded to an agenda, which, from a scientific viewpoint, is at best arbitrary. The universe which is ‘discovered’ in this way is not necessarily the best of all worlds – it is simply the one which receives funding. Could this be a self-reinforcing asymptotic spiral to nowhere?

Of course there would be no universe – all would be chaos – but for a certain cognitive and conceptual rigour, the habit of keeping reigns on the stream of ideation, by which it is bid *thus far and no further*. It is this, the *inquisitorial method*, in Salvador Dali’s phraseology, which imparts the attribute of form. The *conceptual structures* of the mind – to reiterate the

solipsist creed – are the *perceptual* structures observed in nature. The wizard's crystal ball is the akasha or mind itself.

It will be observed, however, that the condition created is not quite comfortable, as attested by the universal need to periodically escape its confinements – the need for ecstasy, transcendence and atavistic release, catered for by such institutions as *carnivale*, the maypole and the more sinister amok. Civilisation, as Freud observed, is a compromise – an accommodation at some remove from that ideal which, intuition asserts, must exist.

This accommodation, this self-referential bubble of cultural rigging, is usually hedged with formidable defences, making any breach thereof a precarious venture. Something akin to a force-field or standing wave – essentially the nexus of self-interest, ignorance, superstition, and fear, acting in a concerted, quasi-conspiratorial manner – serves to maintain the established order. Viewed within the hallowed halls of esoterica as a collective psychospiritual entity or *egregor*, this is the infamous *dweller on the threshold* (henceforth the Dweller) – so-called in that it is encountered and must be overcome on the threshold of initiation. That this is no light undertaking is attested by history. Exile, imprisonment, insanity, and death are among the perils suffered by the pioneers of humanity which hurled themselves against the Dweller. Society, as George Bernard Shaw remarked, will tolerate murder, rapine, theft and deceit, but not the preaching of a new gospel.

For its sycophants the Dweller defines the charmed circle of the sacred, homely and esteemed, while outside lurks everything sinister, subversive, and loathed. Those endeared with the orthodoxy unashamedly worship the Dweller; it is their comforter and guide, while to the innovators it is the demon of inertia. *Your heaven, my hell*, mused William Blake, as he reflected on the spiritual divide, which separated him from the religionists of his day. Surrender to an overly defensive stance, and magical circle becomes a prison.

Moloch & Mordor Inc.

God or demon, heaven or hell – is it all merely a matter of temperament, or can the perennial controversy be settled on objective lines? Confronting this question, one modern adept proposed that a cultural standard should be judged demonic if its pursuit involves the institution of human sacrifice as a regular fixture. He concluded that human sacrifice – more or less crudely sublimated – is a core institution of all civilised societies, and as it cannot be considered innately human to sacrifice one's fellows to the devil, he proposed that an alien inimical force is a work. He also saw that *to demonise* is the labour of demons. The Dweller, it would seem, makes war not merely on its perceived enemies; it regularly kills some of its bravest and best – by sending them into war or addicting them to harmful practices.

It should further be noted that the mysterious Dweller is not primarily a force 'out there'. Though enshrined in customs and cultural institutions, its dwelling is the individual psyche, where it guards the threshold of the conceivable. This emphasises the essential task of initiation – the slaying of the inner demon and the release of the creative will. It is not the indiscriminate breaking of the taboo which makes for emancipation, but the exercise of the soul's creative freedom under the aegis of the angel – its animating genius.

To exercise this freedom is to invoke – sooner or later – the Dweller, an act depicted in fairytales and magical literature as the rousing of a sleeping giant. Where the hero treads softly, the giant may but stir in its sleep, thrash around for a moment, and fall again into unconscious torpor. In the instances of a sustained campaign, however, its fury may be aroused, in which case it may strike with indiscriminate malice at anything that moves. The Dweller, clearly, is not intelligent, yet its minions are known to be shrewd, and their paranoia disposes them to cruelty.

Contending Hero Twins and the Utopian Ideal

Against the Dweller is ranged the angel – messenger of the covenant and evolving tendency of DNA toward optimal conscious. Intuition insists that the universe contains a nontrivial essence – for alchemists the elixir of life, the possession of which makes for a god. This idea, as the mythological record bears out, is of the highest antiquity, and provides the impetus for the cultural quest in its myriad forms. Are scientists wont to play God? it is sheepishly asked. Is not the entire grand opus a relentless attempt – to employ a biblical metaphor – of transforming the tree of knowledge into a tree of life? What Faustian spirit coyness masks!

In this context it is revealing – it is stupendous and utterly astounding – that God – or mother nature – by varying accounts, is intent on sharing the secret. Indeed, as some might say, the fact of being alive and conscious as a human being should in itself prompt some sort of kindred recognition, quite apart from the extensive and universal traditions which attest the same.

Not so, answers the seed of dissimulation, doubtful of the cosmic grace, and intent on appropriating the arcanum in a spirit of self-aggrandisement. In theological language this seed is Satan – the devil, as depicted in the prophetic books of the Hebrews and other Semitic cultures of the ancient Near East. Ancient sources describe a resplendent and powerful archangelic being, which broke allegiance with the Creator to pursue an independent agenda.

Considered psychologically, it may be defined as intellect severed from the intuitive principle, again a notion echoing legends of the primordial fall. Thus conceived, it is the unit of reflective self-aware consciousness, which, in its cosmic isolation and the foreknowledge of its doom, is desperate to wrest from the Most High the reigns of godhead.

Yet historically this wresting hardly appears as a concerted effort. It is characterised rather by internal division and dissent, manifesting a labyrinth of

diverse and often mutually antagonistic cults, coteries, conclaves and cabals – some sitting on arsenals of doomsday weapons, others conversing with trees – in a cumulative effort to leave no stone in the universe unturned, if by any means the Grail might be bagged. That this spiritual seed became the architect of civilisation, there can be little doubt. Cult and culture thus represent success of the demon in imposing its worship. Cultic or ideological war arises in that all demons aspire in their way to absolute godhead, and generally make themselves out to be more important than they are. This explains why it mattered to the ancients which god was God, and why, in certain quarters, it still matters. Yet if Satan be divided against Satan, how shall his kingdom stand?

Above the fray, in the skies of platonic idealism, hovers the mirage, the utopian vision of a unified humanity – of one world, one people, and one confession. But even this lofty ideal becomes a source of contention as soon as there is serious debate as to how it could be realised. There are, in addition, serious reservations concerning the concept itself. A one world government, a new world order – these phrases have in recent times taken on a sinister ring. The legitimate fear is that the solution might be less than organic and less than human – the ugly contrivance of a fascist superstate. Has the totalitarian spirit been banished from planet Earth? Have all relevant ambitions mysteriously abated? Are they now less than universal in scope? Between ongoing warfare and a solution by force and fiat, is there no other option?

Significantly, already in the ancient world a negative reaction was noted to the monolithic proposition, as exemplified in the legend of Babel. According to the Genesis account thereof ‘the earth was of one language and of one speech’, and the idea that a visionary building project might ensure cohesion and perpetuity galvanised a people of the Mesopotamian Shinar. Whether the tower of Babel is historically actual or a generic icon, it illustrates the principle of *unity contrived*, the co-opting of a people into totalitarian service. It was proposed that the tower should reach the heavens and make for its builders a

‘name’ – literally a *shem*, by some accounts a stargate or hyperspatial device after the magical legacy of antediluvian renown. A broader meaning however derives from the simple concept of a *name* – magically, the idea of legitimation, of representation before the gods. In the language of the deep, it denotes the making of a god.

This agenda was opposed by Yahweh – that mysterious deity which haunts the Old Testament, with the result which the builders sought to avoid – their language became confused and they were scattered across the face of the earth.

As an example of contending spiritual currents, this tale allows us to qualify somewhat the positions respecting Angel and the Dweller. The former tends to be *laissez-faire* and of a largesse – relaxed, for want of a better word. In the words of Lao Tse, *it* (the Way) does not coerce and it exacts no dues. The latter, it would appear, has an agenda, an axe to grind, and a score to settle. Invariably it demands sacrifice. Contemporary usage reflects an analogous sense of polarity – the libertarian principle against arbitrary legislation, individual freedom against conformity, and so on. It is understood that the former tends to consciousness, responsibility, and an expansion of sensibility; the latter to amnesia, addiction, and robotic iteration.

Yet both derive from the urgency of the quest, in critical times the recognition that utopia is not merely an option – it becomes imperative as a planetary culture masters the forces of nature and conflict might lead to mutually assured destruction. To ancient Sumerians these ideological currents shared a common origin in the avatars Enki and Enlil, offspring of Anu, the godhead of the Sumerian cult and source of the relevant pantheon. Both, in a sense, served the same agenda. Yet the former took a sympathetic view of humanity, seeking to ease the human burden, to raise human consciousness, and, according to certain myths, bestowing the act of procreation. The latter, in contrast, preferred to keep humanity in ignorance and bondage, pursuant of a

policy of crude exploitation. The discrepant point of view is apparent, relative to the Judaic tradition, when it is recognised that reactionary Enlil is Yahweh and Enki, the liberator, the primordial serpent. Not surprisingly, the warlike and bilious Yahweh is subject to similar bad press within the halls of New Age rational humanism.

The conflict is echoed in the Promethean venture of stealing the fire of the gods for the benefit of humanity, an act which is recorded as not going unpunished. What perspective lies behind this tale, which finds Prometheus chained to a rock throughout the ages, an eagle devouring his liver? Does it describe the punitive reaction of the Dweller to an altruistic deed? Does it expose the oppressor's creed, that to espouse the cause of humanity is to be bound to a cross of perpetual suffering? Or did the sagely oracles of old simply have a penchant for posing hieratic riddles – a psychic forge of initiation, morally ambivalent, wherein the candidate can only advance by making self-defining choices?

It might be imagined that evil is merely destructive – that, if the devil exists, his principal purpose would be the destruction of the human race – that nuclear holocaust, say, would be pleasing to this entity. On reflection this is seen to be an error. A spiritual entity or essence, to be enthroned – to manifest at all – requires a material basis. No discarnate intelligence thus intends the destruction of planet earth or of the human race, save the most desperate and demoralised imps of hell.

The averse or infernal hierarchy is, on the contrary and of necessity, concerned to advance the human cause – although with general disregard for individual lives in the particular. In one sense humanity is but a pawn of its cosmic ambition, expendable individually and in great numbers, as long as the agenda remains on course. Yet in another sense humanity *is* the ultimate Grail, possessing what is unique in the known universe – a spiritual soul in the image of the Creator. To take possession of *this* temple, to inhabit *that* throne in

eternity, to rule over the creation whose legacy is God – this is the arcane agenda, the subject of every Grail romance, and the object of the ultimate quest.

This perspective dissolves the superficial rhetoric of good versus evil as applied to the sensate realm, with all the outworn controversies over *right* versus *left*, progressive versus conservative, which have been handed down for human distraction. Truth and error, even in the absolute sense, are mingled in adulterous liaison, for the lie, in isolation, cannot stand. There is, after all, but one universe – one transpersonal plenum as the ineluctable context of discourse – for that the dissenting hierarchy is not a creative order. Separated from the logos, it can only manipulate, modify and mutate, in the making of a hybrid universe which is, in the manner of hybrids, sterile. The same subsists by partaking of the universal life as does a foreign growth on a host organism. Such is the relationship of nature and culture, in chivalric romance the war between the rose and the cross.

A sword of finer temper is required in the war of the spirits, which is fought not with carnal weapons but with phenomenological insight. Colin Wilson was right about this. Let us then on angel's wing ascend the dark towers of deception, and with basilisk eye subject the same to scrutiny. What awaits the seer is the perhaps startling revelation that the rulers of the darkness of this world have no interest in the political and religious controversies which divide humanity. Their beatitude, which may be described as aesthetic in kind, is beyond ordinary comprehension and more than a little shocking to the average psyche, lulled, as it is, by the secular myth. Their hieratic game, it materialises, is to play the competing factions against one another, essentially for as long as humans will lend themselves thereto.

But let us not get focussed here. Let us go higher and see what is at the top – what monster, what indescribable ... and, like an anticlimax, it dawns: there is *nothing* at the top. The building is a conflagration, its pinnacle an ever receding, contended, point – in esoteric jargon, the false singularity of the

abyss. Satan, and for this matter, any spirit or self-conscious aggregate, is thus not an entity in the classical sense, but the epiphenomenon of a process. One may compare contemporary systems theories of consciousness as espoused in D. R. Hofstadter's *Gödel, Escher, Bach* and the works of Ilya Prigogine. Witness in this connection also the apostle's statement that *our God is a devouring fire*. Needless to say, these conceptual refinements do not diminish one iota the reality of the phenomenon – reductionists take note.

Modernism and the Passage of the Abyss

Some historical perspective is helpful at this point to illustrate the significance of these conceptions to the paradigm shift which is presently transforming western culture at the deepest level. This will render explicit the concept of the modern, as of the vague and uncertain *post-modern*, through a glimpse of deep structure in the psychological currents involved.

The roots of modern relativism are to be sought in the European Renaissance, which revived the current apropos the arts and sciences of antiquity. This revival signalled the end of a dark age of religious oppression under the medieval Church, and once again placed the humanist ideal before the spiritual eyes of Europe. The story of modernism, in this sense, can be read as one of continuous emancipation from ideological serfdom into freedom of thought. While the reaction of the incumbent hierarchy was predictable – the worst atrocities of the age, the waves of witch-burning and the height of the infamous Inquisition occurring even as the waves of renaissance or rebirth swept northward – reform was inevitable.

Incendiary of the northern Reformation, Martin Luther, established the notion of every man as his own priest before God, thus, for the first time in a thousand years, allowing the individual to ponder in the light of personal convictions. With nigh a single stroke, deposing the pope as the universal

arbiter of conscience, he broke the yoke of obedience to the Church of Rome, which, it may be noted, anathematises religious freedom to this day. A new secular order was born, science was on the rise, freethinkers could speak with impunity, and Voltaire, in the conflagration of the Enlightenment, eventually proclaimed the kingship of the reason.

The increasingly sceptical attitude, which took hold in artistic and intellectual circles during the nineteenth century, further eroded the concept of divine providence and transcendent verity. Science celebrated its victory over faith, while the romantic ideal shifted the focus from the divine to the human. Henceforth it was the human condition – human sensibilities and human aspiration – which formed the basis for meaningful engagement with the universe. The theme was taken up by the philosophers of Germanic idealism that followed in the wake of Immanuel Kant, submitted to the rigours of Schopenhauer and Hegel, culminating in the apotheosis of Nietzsche, who proclaimed the death of God. The final negation of the established order – patriarchal and parochial – was thereby sealed, paving the way for existentialism, and the birth of the modern era proper. A new self-conscious individualism was born, and with it a profound sense of existential angst, as the questing intellect began its relentless deconstruction of accustomed reality.

Atonalism in music, abstraction in the arts, psychoanalysis and the unconscious, the quantum revolution in the physical sciences – all involve a probing beyond familiar surfaces in the quest for deeper truth, some ultimate foundation for the edifice of knowledge. Yet, as is now evident, far from yielding certainty, the reductive method rather leads to a deepening of *uncertainty*, as construct after construct dissolves in the light of the analytical gaze. Nowhere is this more apparent than in quantum physics, wherein the focus of scrutiny has revolved back upon consciousness itself. Henceforth nothing is what it is in itself, but only in relation to some observer – some observational stance – which, at least in part, determines the phenomenon. As

Nietzsche was to remark with apt presentiment, there are no facts – only interpretations. This view, moreover, is but one remove from the Eastern concept of dependent arising, the idealist vision of the mind-created universe. It marks the birth of relativism and the opening of the Abyss.

The Abyss, in occult philosophy, refers to the mind itself – the cognitive and conceptual domain in its entirety. Specifically, however, it denotes the infinite regress of cognition and reason – the unending spiral of deconstruction in the hall of mirrors wherein subject and object are mutually determined. It denotes a state in which everything or nothing is true – depending on one's point of view. The Abyss, moreover, has opened for humanity as a whole, as evidenced by the anarchy and confusion which increasingly characterises the post-modern realm.

To provide some conception of what this means it is necessary to go a little deeper into the theory of initiation. This will highlight the challenge now facing humanity, and provide a degree of prophetic perspective, enabling us discern what is yet over the horizon. For, strange as it may seem, the way ahead has been charted.

Initiation, as here understood, comprises essentially a rite of passage – an orchestrated ritual of induction into the cult mysteries of a particular tribe, society, conclave or clan. In culturally monolithic societies, whether ancient or tribal – societies in mystical communion with the universe – a central mythos invariably emerged which wove the individual, community, and cosmos into a meaningfully connected whole. This provided for a ritual centre, and a process of initiation thereunto which could be orchestrated and refined. Thus evolved the rites of initiation proper – rites which, to the extent that they were grounded in an authentic dialogue with nature, could not fail in their efficacy.

All cultures thus confer initiation of sorts, although in a society which knows not its gods the process is left to the forces of chaos and convention.

Rites of initiation can be said to comprise four dynamic stages – *preparation*, *ordeal*, *climax*, and *consolidation*.

The first – preparation – includes the entire process of acculturation, whereby the candidate acquires the worldview and knowledgebase which provide context. This culminates in the individual being primed for the special event. There might be preliminary rites of purification – fasting, sexual abstinence, ritual bathing, ceremonial dress, invocations, conjurations, exorcisms and the ingestion of psycho-active substances.

The second stage – the ordeal – commences the initiation in earnest. It comprises a passage through ritual space – a passage which may be entirely intra-psychic or include the negotiation of corridors, tunnels, and secret chambers. Suggestive installations are found in ancient sites from the Yucatan to Angkor Vat, and it emerges that the Giza complex, the location of Egypt's famous pyramids, served as a city of initiation. The significant point is that the candidate, at this stage, is essentially isolated and removed from familiar surroundings, thus to confront any imagined inner or outer terrors – alone, although a ritual guide may be present in some form. The path may be beset with wardens which need to be overcome or pacified in some way, and there may be pitfalls and temptations to snare the unprepared. The ordeal being passed, the passage leads to the inmost sanctum and stage three –

The climax: Here are exhibited the primary symbols of lineage or cult, such that their particular arrangement will startle and enlighten. Under ideal conditions the display or ritual enactment will trigger significant associations, activating latent understanding and leading to insight concerning the relevant mysteries. For the mind appropriately primed the experience will serve to crystallise – to cap and to seal – the period of probation, as the dramatic exposition is indelibly imprinted upon its heightened sensibilities.

The fourth stage – consolidation – hinges on the candidates response. This usually consists of some symbolic act or ritual affirmation, whereby the

nature of the attainment is proclaimed. Where the rites are highly stylised, this response may be merely formal, while possibly still rich in meaning. Under certain auspicious circumstances, however, or where spontaneity is part of the established order, the response may involve some original act – unexpected and extempore – an up-welling of creative genius whereby the nature of the newly incumbent priesthood is announced.

To telescope the entire process: there is an indeterminate period of preparation, an intense period of psychic suspension, and a climax wherein the latent unconscious gestalt takes form in consciousness. This is followed by whatever response, both immediate and long-term, which may result. Harvard psychologist Timothy Leary, in this connection, spoke of *imprinting* – a psychological process which, beyond mere conditioning, denotes the deepest form of cognitive and behavioural organisation that is yet culturally acquired. The moment of psychic imprinting has been called the primal scene. It is the essential *aha* experience, the moment of epiphany – beatific or infernal. A pattern falls into place with the recognition, *it is like this*, and a psychic orientation is consolidated – usually for life.

A number of points here emerge:

The mythological opus of human antiquity embodies valid insight into the deep structure of natural process, reflected in the subsequent superstructure of initiating cultures. A parallel exists between the archetypal patterns of ritual initiation, and the apparently more random process of acculturation and innovation whereby a society defines itself. The agents of initiation, which in a secular society are not necessarily recognised as such, are in a position to exercise clandestine influence – possible all the more decisive. Insofar as the initiating entity appears as something numinous, it seems poised somewhere *between* the agencies of nature and culture, in a process transpersonal yet consciously directed.

On the basis of the model, moreover, it is possible to accurately pinpoint where in the cosmic scheme humanity is presently situated. It is now in the corridors of the Abyss – the void of psychic suspension, immediately prior to the final disclosure.

To appreciate this fact and examine the implications, we need only review what is known concerning the Abyss, as reflected in the literature of magic and mysticism. It should first be noted that we are not referring to anything intrinsically calamitous, as if present developments were something irregular or untoward. The period in question rather constitutes the necessary final stage in the development of intellect before the emergence of a superior faculty – the enlightened intuition.

The process is subject to subversion, however, where the resultant is a kind of downward transcendence, in that disease of intuition which is called superstition. As it is, the final goal is not disclosed until the climax, at which point the outcome is essentially irreversible. This blindness is compounded in the Abyss, as the accustomed light of reason, having undermined its axiomatic foundations, becomes a will-o'-the-wisp, flitting whither it wills, proving what it wants to prove. Such, at least, is the observation where intellectually rigour prevails. In practice – in politics, say – brute intuitive force usually prevails long before this degree of sophistication is reached.

Ideological confusion, moral ambivalence, and the abrogation of responsibility – such are the concomitants of the spiritual condition which obtain in the Abyss. It is for this reason that traditional systems of initiation enjoin a rigid moral code, thereby to maintain a consistent standard of behaviour – albeit arbitrarily and by sheer dint of habit – at a time when the entire rationale for such behaviour would dissolve. The provision is a safeguard against the candidate going spectacularly insane. For in the Abyss no effort – intellectual or moral – is in any wise possible. There is neither compass nor point of leverage by which it is possible to navigate or change one's course.

Whether there is frantic activity or aimless coasting, the net resultant is the same: once the Abyss has opened for an individual or a culture, the final destination is irrevocable. This fact is illustrated in the *Neophyte Ritual* of the *Golden Dawn*, wherein the candidate is led to his fate blindfolded and bound, and, strangely, it is another which speaks for him.

Here then it is appropriate to ask, who or what speaks for humanity? What will be the resultant of the period of flux, to which we refer with the uncertain designation, *post-modern*? What beatific or infernal vision will be loosed upon the intoxicated gaze of worshippers of this age? At what shrine will humanity worship?

It is clear that present tensions call for a resultant – a new order, as it were, to settle once and for all the contentions and controversies that divide the global community. From an evolutionary perspective a resolution appears similarly imperative, given nature's tendency to synthesise and conserve permanent monads of increasing complexity. The dynamics of chaos, which apply to cultural as to natural systems, inexorably drive our local biosphere toward a concerted pattern around some attractor. Relevant developments are unfolding in a spectacular manner. Some are political and economic, involving current trends toward a despotic globalism. Another class involves growing awareness in the realm of individuation, spiritual empowerment, and the mystic apprehension concerning the authentic possibilities of human nature.

Owing to these considerations there is a perception in our time that a major breakthrough in consciousness is both necessary and imminent. This has further generated expectations and speculative scenarios of the apocalyptic kind, where *apocalypse* is to be understood in its literal sense of a grand *unveiling* – of disclose or revelation. The appropriate idea is of a process of manifestation, whereby the hidden tendencies and tributaries of collective human destiny come to a visible head. The question is, what kind of head?

Post-Historic Nightmare Dreaming

The prophetic chorus is unequivocal on this point. The resultant, the generic New World Order, is of the nature of contrivance, the agenda of its implementation being referred to as the cosmic conspiracy. A wide historic sweep is invoked in this class of ideas, which has generated an entire new literary genre. The common prognostication is of an impending totalitarian theocracy, a global corporate super-state after the model of ancient Babylon. Implicit is the subjugation and servitude of the human race at the behest of draconian entities, variously styled as astral, extraterrestrial, or demonic.

Insofar as this sounds sufficiently exotic by the standards of conventional trivia, it is easily and peremptorily dismissed. Stripped of the sensational and glitter, however, it will be seen as nothing more than the fruition of a perennial type in the collective mind. That type is totalitarian as it is conspiratorial, and it is that which principally makes for history. History *is* a conspiracy, as the new revisionism iterates, its motive force the deliberations of secret societies. Most commonly named in this connection are such relatively obscure organisations as the Trilateral Commission, the Bilderberger Group, and the Council For Foreign Relations. Cited further are Illuminati style fraternities as that of Freemasonry and their ostensible antagonists, the Order of Jesuits – groups within groups, splitting and coalescing in an endlessly deepening web of intrigue.

Although the conspiracy is a fact of the human condition, less certain are the minutiae of its structure, and it is here that the exfoliation of contending theories rather detracts from their substance. Indeed the crop of sensational scenarios virtually begs for the Dweller to mobilise the psychology of derision to quell discussion of the relevant ideas. While well-meaning individuals cannot conceive of the abyss of evil where the draconian spirit dwells, it is perhaps appropriate for the images from Auschwitz to be periodically reviewed. For, as long as humanity remains unredeemed from its ideological thrall, the egregore

or spiritual entity in question will find ingress wherever the moral link is sufficiently weak, to pursue an agenda, unchanged throughout the centuries.

Yet there is a more subtle point to the welter of mythological and prophetic phantasmagoria being unleashed. For how, in this information age, could the secret be contained? There is not the slightest chance that a global agenda could be hidden in the conventional sense. But, given a situation wherein the conspiracy suffers daily exposure in scenarios ever more tangled and circumstantial, its status becomes dubious. The notion is viewed on the whole with same the cynical eye with which pagan Rome viewed its divinities.

Concurrently, in a form of schizoid dissociation particularly perverse, the scenario, endlessly rehashed, serves to accustom the culture to the inevitable, even as it entertains. With this psychology firmly in place, the actual conspiracy would remain invisible, except for the most discerning observers, even where its agenda has become obscenely overt. Even the most serious of exposes may thus, without being intended as such, function as a decoy for the appallingly obvious. Relevant beliefs and expectations, as Picknett and Prince suggest in *The Stargate Conspiracy*, are subject of vast and covert intelligence operation in the realm of social engineering. It is suggested for instance that the alien / extraterrestrial theme serves simply to cloak terrestrial activity, and to condition the populace in certain ways.

But there is another facet to the conspiracy, much more subtle and pervasive. Apart from any top-down intentional plot, there is the unconscious grassroots conspiracy maintained by society as a whole. All social and private behaviour – every thought, word, and deed – implicitly affirms that reality is *such and such*. Social interaction involves the implicit question, *are you of my party?* with the mutual tendency of forming compacts. This is the basis of the social contract, which usually includes a tacit commitment to maintain the shared reality.

The fact that reality is cast in the forge of agreement, is illustrated by the psychological phenomenon *folie a deux* – the interpersonal dynamic whereby two individuals mutate from the societal norm through mutual encouragement in a shared delusion. On a larger scale the phenomenon manifests as cult and culture, extending ultimately to the human family as a whole. One may thus posit a *folie humain*, wherein the entire human race falls pray to delusions of infernal grandeur. What is the standard of sanity anyway? In practice this question has ever been answered by appeal to arbitrary convention. In the case of dominant global culture gone mad it is unclear how the question can even be posed in a meaningful way.

Consensus is a powerful persuader, and an extraordinary degree of individuation is necessary to escape its normative currents. Truth, in this context, is but a function of assent, and here again one observes the self-referential dynamic of ideology – any ideology. Its most strident example, however, is the totalitarian state, wherein the natural tendency to conform is artificially boosted by coercive means. George Orwell in his *Nineteen Eighty-four* correctly foresaw that this would involve the abrogation of language, the inversion of meaning, whereby war is peace and slavery is freedom.

Orwell's model is however incomplete, predicated as it is on the idea of overt political terror. Yet no totalitarian regime can be maintained indefinitely while being experienced as oppressive by a sizeable majority. Far more relevant is the vision espoused in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, whose citizens are blissfully unaware that their freedoms are proscribed. It is Huxley, therefore, who placed before the modern gaze the eidolon of the perfected totalitarian superstate – a utopia of sorts and the mystery reduced to the rational ideal. His prophetic genius, quickened by his experimentation with mescaline and LSD, further recognised that the illusion could not be maintained through the conventional means of education and control of the media alone. It is necessary to exercise direct control over the chemistry of the brain. Any totalitarian

conspiracy is thus certain to involve the massive deployment of mind-altering technologies – electronic, chemical and psychic.

Once the Dweller, the agent of conformity, is internalised, it becomes a *psychic censor* – the aggregate of cognitive and conceptual habits which determine the bounds of the conceivable. As this censor operates on an unconscious and pre-rational level, its editing of reality occurs unobserved. In sentient hierarchies where the Dweller outweighs the Angel the tendency is toward fundamentalism, the inability to progress beyond a notional cognitive stance. The mysterious open-endedness of consciousness, however, allows in principle for the transcendence of any cognitive position, and thus for infinite creative potential – the true legacy of creation in God's image. The Dweller's position is thus one of idolatrous fixation on a particular construct, leading to the abrogation of creative and redemptive potential.

It is fixation, in fact, on some particular *hell* – hell, as Sartre made explicit in his *No Exit*, being any closed self-referential unit of consciousness. Hell is thus subject to entropy – the slow yet inexorable disintegration of structure through lack of influx of energy or information. This explains why sycophants of the Dweller suffer atrophied faculties – why, even at their best, they are subject to forms of radical insanity – moral, intellectual and aesthetic. It would seem indicated that humanity awaken from its ideological thralldom and cast off its political games like a bad dream – but for the Dweller on the Threshold, and the terrible abyss in which it dwells.

A Twilight World

As adumbrated heretofore, a post-historic utopia should have naturally followed that phase in history denoted as modern. The implication, insofar as this did not materialise, is that the twentieth century underwent wholesale subversion at the behest of forces covert. A clandestine *third force* in global

affairs is posited in this connection, essentially a nation-less economic and technological entity, apart from and above the traditional axes of political alignment. Yet a substantial part of the subversion was purely scientific: key technologies were being suppressed for covert development. Indeed one need not look into the fringe for substantiation. The mainstream affords abundant coverage, although history courses tend to ignore the pertinent facts.

The unrivalled genius of electricity in the early parts of the twentieth century was Nikola Tesla; virtually the entire world of electronics – even to alternating current, which powers the modern machine – is founded on discoveries patented in his name. Yet his legacy has been extensively edited from the historical record, and textbooks laud instead the contributions of Edison and Marconi. There is, to be sure, something more than just a little strange to this story in that Tesla's visionary abilities seemed to border on the paranormal. Added the eccentricities of a hypersensitive and reclusive mystic – Tesla for instance never married – his legend has become larger than life. It is as if the ancient gods once again had a hand in human affairs, disseminating a higher knowledge, and it is pertinent that Tesla claimed to have intercepted radio signals from an alien source.

While the US government impounded his papers following his death, sufficient fragments have come to light, and the reasonable surmise is that the Tesla universe effectively begins where that of conventional science leaves off. Besides exotic communications technologies documented, there is speculation of awesome weapons applications, of the so-called Tesla death-ray and a telluric device capable of disintegrating the planet. In addition, of course, there is the famous Tesla coil – acknowledged among cognoscenti as the prototype of a functioning 'free energy' device.

Certain it is that Tesla was engaged in a project to harness the earth's magnetic field as a source of energy, unlimited and essentially cost free in its generation. However his backer, Westinghouse, withdrew essential funding

when he learned in effect that all he would be able to sell was antennas. The suggestion is that Tesla was a man of humanitarian principle, who would not lend his genius to exclusive interests, and it is likely for this reason that he died impoverished and neglected.

It would be strange enough if the Tesla story was an isolated incident, given the human penchant for celebrating its heroes. Yet many are the lives on record, evincing an essentially identical pattern of genius and neglect. Nikola Tesla raised Wardencliffe Tower before he was abandoned by his backers. Wilhelm Reich, before his death in a federal prison, treated cancers with success and brought rain to the Arizona desert. Immanuel Velikovsky, whose theories are now increasingly vindicated, proposed a catastrophic scenario of natural history, with the result that the scientific community mounted a boycott to suppress his views. Raymond R. Rife constructed the universal engine – a device surpassing the scanning electron microscope. Yet what it revealed was offensive to the medical establishment. Gaston Naessens brought the field of molecular / vibrational medicine into the scientific domain, with the result that he was systematically hounded by the wardens of the same orthodoxy.

These documented cases barely constitute the tip of the iceberg. Further disclosures, both of neglect and outright persecution, are periodically brought to light, as researchers respond to an evident hunger among the readership to learn of humanity's authentic legacy.

If the history of science is selectively silent, there is a similar failure to account for the ideological aberrations which plagued the twentieth century. Without a sense of deep structure in the historical process it would seem that incendiary manifestos like *Mein Kampf* and *Das Kapital* somehow arose ex nihilo from the lone-wolf activities of ideologues like Hitler and Marx. By contrast, the archetypal or inner-plane perspectives here developed enable one to place these developments within currents, ultimately traceable to ancient world. Modern developments are after the nature of atavistic resurgence.

The principle of polarisation which defines the two-prong nature of the beast, is discernable throughout history: In the ancient world it materialised as Sumer and Egypt; through classical times as Greece and Rome, in the Middle Ages in the Orthodox and Roman factions of the Church. With transition to a secular model, creed metamorphosed into ideology as the outward guise of an essentially unchanged archetype. Insofar as researchers have elaborated on the Jesuit and Masonic directives underlying the formation of the Communist and Nazi parties, the externalised antagonisms may be traced to the tangled roots of the Illuminati myth.

Following centuries of enforced cultural blindness, a secular orthodoxy has emerged, which is estranged from its mythological core as from its empirical roots in the wider experience of humankind. Cognitive norms are sanctioned, which bear little semblance to that experience. In consequence the modern world, as if by some form of ontological vengeance, is subject to realities beyond its understanding and control – notably the range of putative paranormal phenomena – flying disks, alien abductions, mutant hybrids – in short, the exotic and bizarre phantasmagoria of *X-Files* fame.

There is then only this impropriety to be noted, that the phantasms have crossed the threshold of the actual. For whatever the ‘alien’ syndrome portends, one thing is beyond dispute – the phenomenon is real. Indeed we can go further in our claims. After decades of pertinent research by qualified investigators it is clear that the paranormal is in fact the norm. But more of this later.

Concerning the Dweller we are faced with the equally remarkable fact that the cultural bubble of denial can be maintained on such a broad and concerted front. A large chunk of reality is successfully being edited out of the cultural process. In this untenable situation it seems indicated that something must give and ‘alien’ intrusions are the inevitable result – the symptoms of an ontology too narrow to encompass human experience. It may further be noted, and it is surely no accident, that the present situation mirrors that apropos the

ancient gods, in that the brush with the ghostly alien other has given rise to cultism and a thriving mythology.

Needless to say, the mindset of denial also has its cults, institutionalised forms of the Dweller, such as CSICOP – the *Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal*. Perhaps the most vociferous of its kind, this conclave of professed sceptics, through its journal *The Skeptical Enquirer*, regularly attacks such ideas as here espoused – ideas disposed toward a more inclusive paradigm. Much has been written about this organisation, capably and succinctly debunking its pretence of scientific objectivity. Its method of enquiry, wrote Robert Anton Wilson, is to wage campaigns of vilification and intimidation. It's function, according to Graham Hancock, is to peremptorily quell innovative theories before they can take hold. Marcello Trucci, originally invited to serve as its co-chairman, subsequently charged that its agenda is one of advocacy – not enquiry. Apart from the phenomenology of the paranormal, CSICOP also seeks to discredit archaic sciences such as herbalism and acupuncture, mystical techniques of empowerment such as yoga and meditation, and all attempts to elucidate what seems to be humanity's authentic legacy. The widespread consensus – CSICOP is the paradigm police.

What, one wonders, could be behind an agenda so unspecific, so obviously contrived? How can it persist without having its pretensions and unethical methods exposed? Why, speaking more broadly, does *God* allow imposture and Inquisition to blight and torture his creation? Why the shroud of spiritual darkness?

While it is charged that an elitist cause is being served, pursuant of an oligarchic model of social organisation, this, of itself, does not account for the conspiracy in its exotic foliage, nor the depth of taboo which besets the human psyche.

Paradoxically, the inquisitorial function is conceived as a protective one. For where the Dweller is enthroned – mystery of dark mysteries – it is the

incumbent order, the generic Black Lodge, which is entrusted with the keeping of Leviathan, the atavistic dragon of the deep, having an accommodation or accord with the beast. The pact, in essence, provides that the atavism contain itself until the time of final reckoning. In turn it exacts its due in human sacrifice. In defence of this arrangement it is usually charged that the greater portion of humanity is unprepared for the confrontation, mesmerised, as it is, by the shadow of the Dweller and bowing to the false gods of the age. It is not ready to confront the dragon or behold its face. The apostate Church or Black Lodge in this sense performs a nurturing role respecting the spiritual seed until the same mature, shaping it the while in the fires of inquisition.

Modern humanity, as a result, is reduced to surfaces, the pall of a normative and bland secularism, which dulls the spirit by withholding the means alike of ecstasy and transcendence. While it is often charged that the institutional Church has blighted the beatitudes of eros, this is only half the story. The deeper taboo is enjoined against the spiritual quest, against the knowledge that ordinary mortals might surge through the cosmos as joyful gods. Concurrently vital technologies are withheld – in sum, the material and spiritual means of transcendence – evidently for covert development within a shadowy empire, figuratively, as well as literally, underground.

The mythology of this underground empire is heterodox and extensive. As the popular slogan has it, *they are heere!* Aliens from Orion and Zeta Reticuli have infiltrated the earth, intent on conquest and aided in joint subterranean bases by secret core factions of the US military, industrial and intelligence establishment. Countering such claims is the assertion that the extraterrestrial hypothesis is but a smokescreen, and that UFOs are flown by surviving Nazi elites from secret bases in Antarctica. Further among the rich lore of the subject are the myths surrounding the recovery of alien craft, the process of back-engineering, the recovery of humanoid bodies, and of alien autopsies.

Although it is spoken here of myths, researchers including Stanton Friedman, Timothy Good, and Linda Moulton Howe have cited extensive sources – many of them from military or intelligence backgrounds – claiming first hand involvement in relevant matters. However, whether the observed technology gap encountered in the UFO phenomenon be ascribed to ET or clandestine human activity, it remains that humanity has been systematically excluded from a gnostic and technological inner sanctum, the same having become the province of a fabled and quasi alien empire, coexisting on the planet. The multiplicity of scenario simply derives from varied attempts to rationalise the inconceivable.

The following delineates the divide between the order apparent – the ostensible state of the art, and the exotic otherworld – otherwise, that which might have been. In the several areas of accomplishment listed the essential differences are:

ENERGY AND PROPULSION – petrochemical combustion engines, jets and rockets *versus* antigravity, hyperspatial and ion drives, electromagnetic field propulsion.

MEDICINE – the body as chemical engine, allopathic or drug-based therapies *versus* the body as electromagnetic field, vibrational medicine as development of ancient yogas and the concept of the etheric body.

NATURAL HISTORY – Darwinism, human and cultural evolution as a process of natural selection *versus* interventionism, the legacy of the ancient gods, hitherto the esoteric view of history.

POLITICS – Federalism and the democratic ideal *versus* feudalism, hierarchy and the aristocracy of bloodline and signal accomplishment.

METAPHYSICS AND RELIGION – Man as fallen creature requiring redemption, intellect the pinnacle of consciousness *versus* intuitive wisdom, psychic empowerment, man as spiritual being, a god in embryo.

This catalogue outlines the consequences of the taboo, but what lies at its core?

An answer perhaps is to be found by looking at the word itself. *Taboo* derives from the Tongan *tabu* (*ta* ‘to mark’ and *bu* ‘especially’) with semantic shades of *consecrated*, *inviolable*, *forbidden*, *unclean* and *cursed*. It is understood that the concept originally applied to, and derives from, the legacy of ancient gods, in certain legends a race of giants, biding their time beneath the earth and expected to eventually resurface. Cognate aboriginal beliefs obtain throughout greater Polynesia, suggestive to some theorists of a prehistoric, possibly pre or preter-human empire of the Pacific – perhaps the sunken continent of Lemuria or Mu, or the fabled empire of Valusia. The mysterious statuary of Easter Island, as the slowly sinking cyclopean masonry of Ponape and surrounding artificial islets are often cited as its evidential remains. The latter in particular are, or were until very recently, anathema to the local native population and emphatically in the class of taboo.

Let us pause and reflect at this point. There may be encountered a reflexive defense, a reluctance almost biological, to enter certain domains of thought. The mind refuses to follow the trail, even in noncommittal way, at least until certain barriers are past. It is as if one took to the astral sewers, to the disreputable haunts of crackpot and crank, the while sacrificing sanity and betraying the human race. On the other hand, does not this reaction bear the unmistakable signature of the Dweller? What secret does the Dweller hide?

What is the original and intrinsic taboo?

THE TRAIL OF THE SERPENT

Mother, what army is this?

My daughter, it's the black army.

They come from the East.

They go to the West.

– from Ragoczy, ancient Hungarian Chant

A Perennial Legacy

Classical Maya and other sources treat of several cycles of advanced civilisation in high antiquity, obliterated in turn by a series of cataclysms and world catastrophes. The five Suns of the Maya, the kalpas and yugas of the Vedas, the root races of theosophy – each in their respective way point to a widespread recognition that the past is illustrious. The universal myths of a Golden Age, a legacy of intercourse between humans and gods, similarly indicate a primeval mystery – one long obscured but now re-emerging into cultural awareness.

The problem in establishing a precise chronology, an objective record of historical sequence, is that myth and legend condenses its truths. An archetypal figure such as Osiris or Quetzacoatlé may refer to an individual, a state of consciousness with its associated body of teachings, an astronomical configuration which mediates a particular gnosis, and a cult or lineage which perpetuates the same. A case in point is Dynastic Egypt, where successive pharaohs identified with the god-king Horus and aspired to the legacy of Osiris – the primeval gnosis which covered the earth in the time of the first reckoning. The myth, as a matter of ideal, distils the essential story. While not necessarily conforming to linear time, its core is one of verity. Nevertheless, given the precision of ancient astronomy, and the unsolved questions regarding human

emergence, there are no grounds for the assumption that the oldest and original myths are not historical in purport.

A significant difficulty arises, however, were it supposed that conflicting ancient chronologies purport to cover the same essential ground – that of the human odyssey since its mythic inception. To cite only the most glaring example, whereas the Vedas relate of cycles of millions of years, the Bible records mere thousands – even for the mythographer a huge discrepancy. As advanced however in Chapter 1, there are at least two essential stories in the human record – two stories and two mythological genii, quite aside from the innumerable attempts at syncretism, which inform the human record.

Darwinism moreover fails as an explanatory theory, except in the realm of minor adaptation of species to their environment. It fails to explain the discontinuous leaps in natural evolution, above all that greatest of anomalies – man. Similar discontinuities are to be noted in the realm of cultural evolution. Ancient city states emerged full-fledged relatively suddenly between five and six thousand years ago. Their highest achievements were often the earliest, with subsequent decline and massive expenditure of effort to equal former glories. In the archaeological as in the fossil record, the transitional forms are largely conspicuous by their absence. Academia has tended to ignore these glaring inconsistencies with the standard anthropological and historical model, advancing a contrived and irrational scenario, rather than admit to a mystery.

As William Hart points out in *The Genesis Race*, a political motive is involved, and it will be apparent that the accepted model is broadly in tandem with biblical chronologies as pertain to the ancient world. Only with respect to prehistory do the orthodoxies in question differ as to the essential timescales involved. The notion of a highly advanced seed culture, however, predating acknowledged civilisations by tens of thousands of years, is strenuously resisted by both camps despite growing evidence in its favour. Maverick attempts to engage the mystery in a more open-minded frame of reference have occasioned,

scathing, often irrational attacks from reactionary wardens of the orthodoxies in question. The psychology and politics of denial are perhaps better understood, when we consider the thrust and scope of alternative theory.

Serpent Rising

A perennial theme runs through the mythological record – from religious, occult and mystical texts to Victorian supernatural romance fiction and beyond. From the nineteenth century onward it gained renewed impetus as attempts were made outside esoteric orders to link the relevant myths with history. Their purport in essence is this:

Humanity is not alone; nor is it the first intelligent species on the planet. It was preceded, and shares the planetary environment with, at least one non-human species which, like the human, has evolved several distinct racial types. This non-human race is identified with the generic mythological serpent. According to literary tradition the scions of this lineage are referred to as descendants of the Elder Gods, the Royal Bloodline or Serpent's Seed. Its legacy, in cognate lore, is termed the authentic tradition. The human line, by way of distinction, and in keeping with Judaeo-Christian sources, is usually called the Adamic race. Associated with this biological and cultural dyad are two diverse world mythologies, two religious traditions – two cosmic tales, which respectively purport to be the veritas of planetary history.

The Elder Gods gave rise to what may be called the universal or pan-Babylonian tradition. Associated with Aryan origins in the Caucasus regions, the relevant body of gnostic lore is worldwide in its dispersal, yet said to have been concentrated in the ancient Babylon of Nimrod and Semiramis. Other noted centres pertaining to this legacy include those of dynastic China, the Vedic civilisations of the Indus valley, and cultures in the Americas, from the pre-Inca and Toltec to the classical Maya and Aztec.

The later Yahwist or Judaeo-Christian tradition, derives from Semitic sources, and centres on the divinity of Yahweh, the God of the Old Testament, who metamorphosed into Yeheshua, the Jesus Christ of the New Testament. Originally associated with Judaism, this legacy today is likewise dispersed.

The tension between these respective traditions is primal. From ancient wars in the Holy Land, through millennia of religious and inquisitorial war, to the current Middle East crisis, it constitutes the original divide, the primal seed of contention, underlying all subsequent ideological schisms. In the third millennium AD the divide is apparent in the refusal of militant evangelical or prophetic Christianity to compromise with any other religion, whereas most other religious systems admit some degree of syncretism. The pillars of monotheism aside, there is remarkable convergence between the mystery traditions of all ages and cultures.

There have, of course, been persistent attempts to show that the two stories – that all stories – are in reality one. It is from the latter universal and esoteric perspective that the unity of all religions is most commonly hailed. Concurrently there are scholarly efforts of subsuming the prophetic lore of the Hebrews within the older Sumerian tradition, claiming that the former derives from the latter. This view is common to the literature of the Grail-quest, as of works dealing with ancient mysteries, which thus tend to be aligned with the pan-Babylonian serpent cult. The attempt, specifically, is made to identify the Elohim charter with that of the Nephilim, serpent kings of the antediluvian world, to depict Yahweh as a serpent god, and to claim Jesus as a scion of the Bloodline of the Grail, as the serpent's seed is also called.

This, of course, is emphatically countered by the internal evidence of biblical sources, at least according to any orthodox reading.

While an analytical temper sufficiently fine is disposed to resolve all complexity, we shall, for the moment, not seek to mingle the stories, but attempt a clear and careful demarcation. Nor shall we be drawn to either side, but seek

rise above the divide, to observe the same from a god's eye view. We may see after a while whether resolution or synthesis is possible.

Arcadian Serpent Dreaming

Before human civilisation arose, the serpent empire spanned the Earth. Originally the serpent was *not* a reptile, but a creature of humanoid aspect, capable of interbreeding with humanity to produce fertile offspring. Highly intelligent and of a subtlety still associated with the serpent in symbol, the creature was served by an exotic and sophisticated technology – the source of magic and mysticism, as of the arts and sciences in general. According to subsequent tradition the serpent races either came from the stars or had some kind of stellar affinity, specifically with the constellations of Orion and Alpha Draconis. Accounts and interpretations differ as to whether the avenue of descent involved spaceships, a hyperspatial or stargate technology, or merely a spiritual dynamic, wherein the said constellations are identified with the genius or gnosis in question.

Historic civilisations, believed to be the cultural descendants of the serpent empire, similarly attribute their arts and science to a celestial source. The Egyptian progenitor Osiris is Orion, while his consort Isis, guardian of the mysteries, is the nearby star Sirius, which also features prominently in the mythology of the Dogon of upper Mali. A similar situation is found in the Americas. Local clans of the greater Inca empire still attribute their ancestry to various specific regions of the sky.

The serpent accordingly was the original master magician, adept of the ophidian arts – the archaic science of vibration, based on the direct subjective apprehension of the universal energy field – the astral light, the etheric grid, essentially the field or wave aspect of nature. The geomantic grid which the ancients (the later human kind) sought to restore was entire and global in this

primordial era, linking the planet with the galactic community of sentient intelligence. It was understood of the serpent, as of its illustrious descendents, that the universe is teeming with intelligent life, albeit, for the most part, on vibrational frequencies other than the four-dimensional space-time continuum of human habitation.

Harmony reigned, for the world was one in the essential sense – that of a single living organism, and a global civilisation attuned to the rhythms of nature. Communication was instantaneous and direct, conveyed through the universal medium of the ophidian ether, both locally and across interstellar distances. Central to this technology was a science of what is now regarded as hyperspace, the trans-dimensional nexus of superluminal (or faster than light) connections – of wormholes and stargates, which serve as conduits between distant times and places. As a master, indeed an inhabitant, of hyperspace the serpent race possessed the means of travelling not only through interstellar space, but also through time.

A further area in which the serpent excelled by all relevant accounts is that of biotechnology and genetic engineering. The later myth of monstrous hybrids, familiar from archaic legend, is but one of numerous echoes which allude to this magic of primordial times. Other remnants can be found in the history of the homunculus, in the astral / etheric metamorphosis practiced by witches, in the shamanic projection of consciousness into totemic entities, as in legends of vampires and the werewolf.

A related class of phenomena pertains to the creation or conjuring of etheric dragons to protect a sanctuary, stronghold or treasure-trove. While the degradation of the tellurian serpent-grid in latter times somewhat diminished the phenomenon in the direction of the astral or imaginal, the ophidian science of vibrations evidently extended into the cellular, molecular and subatomic level, where a direct manipulation of the morphogenetic field could be effected. The serpent was thus capable of presenting itself in a variety of astral, etheric and

physical forms, while simultaneously influencing the development of other terrestrial life-forms.

It may, quite reasonably, be assumed that homo erectus and other proto-human strains derive from certain such interventionist programs, and that this also is the solution to the Neanderthal mystery. For else there remains the problem of a significant anomaly in the evolutionary record – the approximate doubling in primate brain capacity within a relatively short period. Was the serpent, by way of genetic engineering, successful in creating a number of semi-intelligent servant races – races which, during periodic catastrophes which befell the arcadian empires, reverted to a feral state, somewhat like the domestic horses introduced into the New World, from which grew the mustang herds of the American plains? Legendary creatures, such as the American sasquatch or bigfoot, the Himalayan Yeti and the Australian Yowie, may represent rudimentary exemplars of this enterprise, a notion congruent with the oft reported spectral or astral / etheric manifestations of these beasts.

Further elaborations of the myth suggest that homo sapiens – humanity itself – is the result of genetic manipulation by a superior race of interstellar colonists. The fact that cultures such as the Maya, retaining an archaic origin myth, attribute their ancestry to stellar beings, as did the ancient Sumerians, Egyptians, proto-Aryans and Chinese, is usually cited in support of this doctrine. In certain myths relating to these cultures it is spoken moreover of several failed attempts in the creation of humans, before the deity eventually succeeded.

Sumerian scholar Zechariah Sitchin provides further evidence in this regard, his reading of relevant cuneiform inscriptions forming the basis of an extensive revisionist mythos of human genesis. The Sitchin scenario posits that the Anunaki – the Nephilim or giants of biblical renown – were of an advanced space-faring race, hailing from a conjectured ‘twelfth’ planet Nibiru. They created (sired) homo sapiens as a servant race, gradually ceding certain

privileges to their progeny, while their own kind acquired deity status in the resultant mythologies. Yet, curiously and perhaps significantly, Sitchin discounts the serpent myth as here espoused, while entertaining an equally physicalist scenario of extraterrestrial interventionism. Others, like philologist William Henry, point out that *Nibiru* (literally, a *place of crossing*) more likely means *stargate*, a point of ingress from other dimensions.

What legacy did the serpent leave, what evidence, what visible remains? Initially one confronts the ubiquitous serpent lore – traditions which, owing to their universality, cannot be explained as products of the poetic imagination. No conventional or mundane rationale accounts for the universal deification of the serpent as a symbol of the gnosis, or, with respect to its degraded form, its execration as archetypal demon. While the identification of serpent with devil is sometimes said to be an essentially Judaeo-Christian convention, the case is not at all exclusive. In the *Egyptian Book of the Dead*, for instance, the dreaded Sebau fiend is variously demon, crocodile, and serpent.

As for material evidence, that ostensible touchstone of the real, there is the emergent case in archaeology for an advanced civilisation in highest antiquity. The findings, reported by Hancock, Bauval, Cremo et al, indicate a primordial seed-culture from which knowledge has *descended*, instead of the conventional theory of gradual progress in cultural evolution. In addition there is an impressive catalogue of artefacts, indicative of advanced technologies, which defy conventional chronologies – in some cases not merely by thousands but by ‘absurd’ millions of years.

Are we living in fairyland? Is the orthodoxy so profoundly askew?

In addition it is tempting to view certain megalithic sites – on Earth and elsewhere in the solar system – as remnants of an unknown pre-historic, possibly pre-human, civilisation. Records indicate that some were considered ancient even by the ancients of earliest recorded history. Most ancient sites, such as Giza in Egypt and Cuzco in the Andes, show successive layers of

construction, the oldest of which typically involves a type of irregular masonry of huge oddly shaped boulders, fitted with the precision of a jigsaw puzzle. It is difficult to conceive how humans, by any known means, could have built in that fashion – indeed, why anyone would, unless the means existed to impart to the stones temporary plasticity, allowing for the blocks to be shaped in situ. Further marvels, such as the 1,200 ton foundation stones of the Temple of Jupiter at Baalbek, and the geoglyphs of Nazca, executed so as to be visible only from the air, indicate a technology anachronous as it is mysterious.

As for the Cydonia controversy, involving apparent artificial structures on the surface of Mars, we are in somewhat of a quandary, given NASA's evident refusal to settle the question in the usual way – by having a closer look. Humans are thus left to speculate concerning what looks uncannily like the remains of a cyclopean city, complete with humanoid sphinx staring into space. Yet these constitute but one of the foci of the growing discipline of extraterrestrial archaeology, which, combined with the anomalous terrestrial record, present an overwhelming case.

The Adamic Revolution

Undisturbed in its arcadian idyll, the serpent might have persisted indefinitely. It was the creation of man which upset the tranquillity of heaven and earth, in the manner that a working of magic art upsets the established status quo. Our perspective now shifts to the biblical account and the prophetic tradition at its core. *Prophecy*, it should be noted in this regard, denotes not merely a foretelling of future events, but rather an exposition, as from a transcendent source, concerning the temporal sphere entire, as well as the realm of eternity. Inspiration or divine revelation is the dynamic by which the prophetic utterance is regarded as the veritable logos or Word of God.

To make creatures of flesh and blood in the image of God, an innocent who would partake of the powers of eternal life, a clod of earth as heir of creation, while the most illustrious of angels are – let us face it – but glorified servants ... this was deemed unacceptable, inconceivable even, by one Lucifer, archangelic prefect of the heavenly court and most illustrious of created beings. *Perfect in wisdom and beauty*, wrote the prophet Jeremiah; his understanding only surpassed by that of the Creator. Yet, according to the Hebrew sages, this being also had a fault – namely hubris or pride – which caused the brightest of angels to fall from his estate. Of course one might ask, who would not be exalted in this position, given the intelligence and intoxicating grandeur of imagination as manifest in the natural world. Both faculties are essentially Luciferian attributes. For, although Christ-Michael is the scriptural logos or conceiver of the world, his ‘right hand man’ Lucifer (literally, bringer of light) is the architect.

These are precipitous runes. Here the fundamentalist errs in persecuting alike the products of intellect as of the imagination. But it is not the exercise of these faculties, but the worship of their products, which leads to the spiritual ‘short-circuit’ of sterile iteration – that fate exemplified in the myth of Narcissus, who, beholding his image in a pool of water, fell into a trance of adoration. This resonates with the prophetic account, wherein Lucifer – Satan, in his fall – is depicted as worshipping not the Creator, but himself. It distils a point quite subtle, which ought however to be self-evident – that the satanic spirit is a religious spirit. Indeed one might go so far as saying that it is *the* religious spirit, if by religion is meant ritual observance. For it is Satan, the illustrious architect of the divine, who is the consummate enchanter and the master of ceremonies at every rite.

But what exactly was his point of contention? Crudely expressed, it stemmed from his belief that he could better the creation – prosecute the same in a manner more grand, more honourable and altogether more dignified. He

considered his attributes sufficient to the task. In his heart of hearts he thought he could supplant the Creator and be worshipped as God – the God of his own perfected creation. By his allocution, moreover, one third of the angelic hierarchy was seduced to join the insurrection. It was, to reiterate, the creation of humanity which particularly aroused his jealousy and ire, for that which he coveted, was – inexplicably and prodigally – given to man.

The Book of Genesis contains three creation accounts. The first of these is the opening statement: *In the beginning Elohim created the heaven and the earth.* This is followed by the biblical seven days of creation, wherein the earth and heaven are created again, along with the rest of the universe, including the plant and animal life which culminates in the creation of man: *Elohim said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness and let them have dominion over all the earth.* This was done: *So Elohim created man in his own image, in the image of Elohim created he him; male and female created he them.* Yet in the second chapter, curiously, there is as yet no man to till the ground. Only then: *Yahweh formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.* This is the third account of creation.

Here already is cause of controversy sufficient to have divided theologians for millennia, although Hebrew mysticism of the cabalistic school supplies the essential key. The Cabalists indeed contemplated four phases or acts of creation rather than three, namely: *Atziluth*, the Archetypal World; *Briah*, the Creative World; *Yetzirah*, the Formative World; and *Assiah*, the Material World. The idea is one of progressive condensation or reification along a continuum from the spiritual to the material pole of existence. Biological and sentient life, according to this model, did not arise in the evolutionary way – from the ground up, so to speak – but rather from the inside out, the spiritual seed or Platonic archetype, the idea in the mind of God, gradually taking on material form. This is consistent with contemporary theories, according to

which the biological phenotype develops within an energetic lattice, a subtle matrix or energy field which carries life's requisite information. This field is the Formative World, cabalistically referred to as *Yesod*, the Foundation. Electromagnetic in nature, it corresponds to the Chinese chi and the Vedic prana. In concentrated form it is the kundalini shakti, the serpent power of Hindu mysticism.

Further intriguing is the designation *Elohim*, in most biblical translations simply rendered *God*. Described as a feminine plural of a masculine singular, it appears to cast the Creator as a multitude, consistent with the words, *let us make man in our own image*. To whom was the Creator speaking? Not to angels; nor was the Holy Trinity sitting around a table one afternoon, as some theologians have it. It is more fitting to consider the Elohim as attributes or thoughts of God before they are manifested as man and woman. They are the plurality of created souls, feminine on the spiritual plane with respect to the creative spirit, even as the church elect is called the bride and body of Christ. St John informs us that: *In the beginning was the Word* (the word being the thought expressed), *and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*. God and his attributes – his creation – are in this sense one and the same. And: *the Word was made flesh*. While referring specifically to Christ, this equally expresses what is true of every woman and man.

Our theme is subtly advanced in the second chapter, wherein a being named Yahweh Elohim (usually translated *the Lord*) forms a man (Adam) out of the dust of the earth, and the theophany or spiritual god-form becomes a living soul in the intersection of spirit and matter. The woman (Eve) is not formed from another piece of earth – she is taken out of the man, in keeping with of a more general archetype – namely, that the church is *taken* out of Christ. Because of the subsequent fall from grace the name of Yahweh is not revealed until the Book of Exodus, where it is made known to the prophet Moses, lawgiver and Old Testament type of Christ par excellence, as the I AM.

Before the fall the human pair lived an idyllic existence, communing with the elohim, and having access to something called the Tree of Life. They were naked in each other's sight – and not ashamed.

From the first we now fast forward to the last book of the bible, and the only book of the New Testament which is overtly prophetic.

War in Heaven and Primordial Fall

The Apocalypse or Book of Revelation states: *there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon ... and the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, and his angels with him.*

In wave after wave throughout the aeons the spirits of insurrection now descend to the earth. Like the creation of man, the materialisation of the Luciferian hierarchy is gradual – a descent from rarefied ethers outward into the physical world. Its legacy is chronicled in the seven successive Root Races of Theosophical lore, as it is dimly reflected in the ravings of inspired fantasy writers like H. P. Lovecraft. The first two of these races – the Polarian and Hyperborean – are comprised of ethereal beings, whose extension into matter embraces only the astral and etheric planes, where resides the dream-body and the body of sensation. As the designation *Polarian* suggests, it is through the polar axis that the angelic hordes spiral into the heart of the earth. Magnetic north, aligned in antediluvian times with the rotational axis, thus formed a vortex of ingress, as reflected in ancient doctrines regarding the polar heavens, specifically the constellation of Draco, as the origin of the gods. Draco, the celestial Dragon, is of course the serpent, and it is through the serpent race that the fallen spirits obtain physical bodies. This gives rise to the Lemurian and Atlantean cultures of the third and fourth Root Race, the first to have left material traces. These are the hypothesised seed cultures whose advanced civilisations spanned the globe and provided the impetus for the astounding

early cultures of acknowledged history. They precede the Adamic race, of which it is spoken in Genesis, having, at the time of the appearance of man, suffered significant setbacks, as reflected in the legends of cataclysmic overthrow which befell the cultures of Lemuria and Atlantis. Hence the otherwise cryptic charge of the Elohim to fledgling humanity: *Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth.*

It thus becomes evident that there is no intrinsic connection between biblical genealogy, with its six-thousand-year history, and the chronicles of the serpent, which cover at least tens of thousands of years. According to this formulation there is no evolutionary link between humanity and earlier, more primitive primate species. Indeed the entire concept of evolution and speciation is made abrogate through the biblical principle by which every seed propagates – always and only – *after its own kind.*

The creature which changed this pattern, introducing an mingled seed, is the serpent.

It is written that Yahweh Elohim planted a garden eastward in Eden. There he placed the human pair he had made. There was a Tree of Life in the midst of the garden and a Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, it being understood of the latter that its fruit was death. The serpent, however, when alone with the woman, preached to her a gospel which deviated on this point: *Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.* As the New Testament writer Jude delicately put it, *the woman was beguiled.* She partook of the fruit and gave thereof to her husband, who, after his nature as the first Christ, partook of death knowingly, that the woman might be redeemed.

What happened in Eden and what is the forbidden fruit?

Evangelical Christianity, while pragmatic on most issues, is singularly silent on this point, letting symbols speak as they may. Esoteric and folklore traditions, by contrast, tend to be fully unambiguous: the fruit was sexual in

nature. Or, perhaps more accurately expressed, it was *communicated* via a sexual act. The primal scene, by this account, comprises sexual intercourse whereby initiation, as well as progeny, is passed from the serpent to Eve. The biblical firstborn, Cain, it thus emerges, is the product of an adulterous union. He is said to have been *of the evil one*, and his name does not appear in the genealogies of the Adamic line. While scriptures are oblique regarding the specific act, its essence may be inferred from textual clues of this kind. It constitutes one of the secret keys of the canon of scripture, for it identifies the way of ingress of the mysterious serpent's seed, and why the future redeemer had to be born of a virgin.

Yet the blatant, one might say, glaringly obvious nature of the allusion has tended to blind humanity regarding this tale, as has the abhorrence for the medieval idea of equating sex with sin. *Woman and serpent* – coy religiosity cannot stoop to so crude a notion. The ascetic ideal, however, misses the essential point. Sexuality, as adepts of the karma mudra are aware, is a vehicle of the gnosis. Orgasm crystallises a worldview, and a fixation is acquired for life. The experience is surrounded with sanctions not because it is evil, but because it is understood to make a difference whether Zoë is initiated by a Parsifal or an ogre. The sexual mystery as disclosed in a coming of age alludes to the greater mystery of humanity's fundamental conception of nature. In our tale the upshot is that the eyes of man and woman are opened, and they seek to cover their nakedness.

Yahweh now pronounces judgement. The serpent is cursed *above all cattle*, henceforth to crawl on its belly. The woman is informed that she would increase in sorrow and conception, that she would travail in childbirth, that her desire would be to her husband, and that he would rule over her. For Adam's sake the earth is cursed, to produce thistles and thorns and a livelihood in the sweat of his brow. Man is driven from the Garden, and the Tree of Life is henceforth guarded by cherubim, having a flaming sword which turns in every

direction. Enmity, moreover, is pronounced between the seed – the offspring – of the woman and the serpent.

The woman's seed?

Here we may anticipate. The woman's seed is that which was eventually given to Mary, virgin mother of Christ. While originally destined for Eve, the spiritual foundation for a messianic birth is now abrogate. The prophesied millennium of peace, similarly destined to be the seventh day of creation, is consequently delayed six thousand years, during which that seed undergoes crucifixion, death and resurrection. Illustrating the principle of types, this event is foreshadowed almost immediately, in that Cain slays his brother Abel, the son of Adam, over what may be called a religious controversy. This defines the essential relations between the two branches and launches a theme which persists throughout the sacred text.

The Adamic lineage is now perpetuated by Seth, the next in line to open the matrix. Cain, seed of the serpent, the while goes out from the presence of God and marries into the dynasty of his fathers in the land of Nod.

For Lucifer – now Satan – the outcome is mixed. There is the partial success of having severed humanity's link to the Elohim and Tree of Life, and of fixing human attention upon the Tree of Knowledge. Humanity now being subject to death, its fate might be identified with that of fallen angels and the deposed serpent, and a common agenda forged to defeat the purpose of the Elohim. Yet in the bargain the tempter lost his earthly footing in the serpent race, as the latter gradually declined, becoming extinct in the deluge of the biblical flood. To give the initiated doctrine its due, it is the material form which disappeared from the earth, its astral and etheric envelope persisting to this day through the magic of which the serpent is adept. But the loss is compensated in the foothold gained through the hybrid Cain. Every attempt should and would henceforth be made to extend that footing, to win humanity

for the satanic agenda, and to fuse the astral / etheric theophany of the serpent with the human biological phenotype.

From the primal act, as it transpired in Eden, it was later construed that the Nephilim or Anunaki, the primeval serpent lords, are the creators and hence the legitimate gods of mankind. The Genesis account however emphasises that it was the teaching of the serpent which resulted in clandestine union and ingress of the serpent's seed. Insofar as human integrity rested upon the inviolate logos or original Word, it was the misconstruing of that Word, which placed humanity outside the Garden and on the wrong side of the cherubic sword. These divergent points of view also give dual meaning to the phrase *Golden Age*, and what might be meant by redemption or restoration – a return to the idyll of Eden or the arcadia of the serpent.

Alchemists and Masterbuilders

And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. With these words of the sixth chapter Genesis a controversy was unleashed which rages to this day. When applied to the fallen angels, they continue the theme sustained hitherto – the seed of the serpent mingling with the daughters of Eve. Yet the expression *sons of god* (Hebrew: bene ha-elohim) counters this notion. Rather one now observes the obverse taking place: the sons of Adam in the lineage of Seth being attracted to the daughters of Cain, who, being of the hybrid line, were stunning exemplars of feminine allure. Their fascination is summed in the Sumerian witch queen Lilith, the archetypal Succubus, by whose sorceries men are reduced to psychological pulp. It was this circumstance, according to biblical authorities, which led to the widely recorded deluge, in which the greater portion of humanity is said to have perished.

There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. Seemingly redundant, this verse indicates that giants (Hebrew: nephilim – the fallen ones) existed both before and while the mingling of the races took place. Their offspring, after the nature of the serpent, is illustrious – men of wisdom and great distinction, skilled in the myriad arts.

In Sumerian mythology the Nephilim are called the Anunaki (meaning: heaven come to earth), and the mythos surrounding these beings evolved the exegetical genre, according to which the human race was engineered by an advanced civilisation from the stars. Because the cuneiform inscriptions of ancient Mesopotamia have been translated, an extraordinary legacy has come to light, which testifies of the unearthly origins of this acknowledged cradle of civilisation, as perceived by contemporaneous chroniclers.

It is perhaps something of a mystery why ancient Egypt has become the epicentre of popular fascination, while the more seminal Mesopotamia suffered comparative cultural neglect. Very likely the stories to emerge from a region, which is also the setting of biblical legend, were perceived to cut a little too closely to pious sensibilities. Dispensational factors further indicate a pattern of occlusion and eventual disclosure in the realm of human self-perception.

The Sumerian culture poses many riddles. Not only were the Sumerians physically different from the surrounding Semitic peoples, their language was unique and evidently unrelated to any known linguistic family. From the beginning, they possessed government, organized religion, a judicial system, and schools which taught astronomy, mathematics, medicine and engineering. Above all, they were a literate people, having a history and mythology that some 5,000 year ago was already ancient. Like that of the Maya and other pre-Columbian civilisations, their cultural genius appeared as out of nowhere and vanished just as mysteriously. Insofar as entire libraries have been unearthed at

the cities of Eridu, Nippur, Uruk, Nineveh, and Ur, comprising administrative records, as well as works of the literary and religious kind, we are afforded more than a glimpse of their remarkable cosmology.

The creation myth Enuma Elish relates the conception of the world by the commingling of Apsu (the begetter) and Mummu-Tiamat (she who bore them all), and the first showing of the gods. From the outset there is revulsion with the ways of the gods, and mutual tension arises between fallen angels and their earthly hosts. Described is the conflict and eventual détente, the uneasy truce, which of old defines relations between sorcerer and his familiars of the spirit world. The tasks imposed were too burdensome, and the Igigi, the servitors of the emergent order wailed in distress. Only *then*, in response to this problem, the creation of humans is proposed, that *they* might bear cross of the work. In the Akkadian text Atra Hasis the illustrious Enki is quoted saying: Ninhursag, the womb-goddess, is with us. Let her create mortal man, so that he may bear the yoke,, the work of Enlil. Let man bear the load of the gods!

In Gilgamesh the theme is approached from a slightly different angle. Enkidu, the first human, uncivilised and savage in his habits, is befriended and tutored in cultural refinements by the magnanimous Gilgamesh. They travel and have a series of adventures, but the idyll is marred when Enkidu is killed. This propels the stricken Gilgamesh upon a quest in search of eternal life. He finds what he seeks in the form of a plant beneath the primordial waters, only to lose it again to a serpent or snake, which then sheds its skin.

Interwoven with the epic is the tale of Utnapishtam, a type of the biblical Noah, and an inundation account, identical in its essentials with that of Genesis. The significance of the antediluvian age to this constellation of myths is apparent in the assertion of king Assurbanipal (668-628 BC), who amassed the largest archive of clay tablets hitherto, that he had read the writings of the Sumerians, the dark writing of the Akkadians, and deciphered the inscriptions on stone from before the great flood.

A literal reading of Gilgamesh and kindred text, suggests that the Sumerian, Akkadian, Babylonian and Assyrian divinities represent historical personages of Nephilim / Anunaki descent. What is less clear, owing to the qualitative language of the ancients, is whether the aerial, quasi oceanic races, to which reference is made, appeared in UFOs or from subtle dimensions in hyperspace. The fish-like Oannes or Dagon, like the Meso-American serpent Quetzcoatl or Kukulcan, is said to have emerged from the sea. Did these creatures possess submarines or were they dwellers of the ethers – the primordial waters below the firmament – from whence they appeared in astral and etheric form? The controversy surrounds otherworldly visitations to this day, and present indications are that both interpretations may be essentially correct – that the distinction between the spiritual and material hypothesis need not be understood as categorical or exclusive.

Certain it is that humanity presents an evolutionary anomaly, in the biological as in the cultural sense. The catastrophic or discontinuous nature of human evolution is not explained in conventional timelines of natural history. Cro-Magnon man had the same brain volume as his modern counterpart, yet it is difficult to see what evolutionary advantage there was in a capacity for mysticism, art, and higher mathematics in the era of the flint axe. It is further curious why anatomically modern humans, hunter-gatherers who employed only the most primitive tools for fifty to a hundred thousand years, *suddenly* raised complex city states some five to six thousand years ago. This post-neolithic upsurge represents an evolutionary leap out of all proportion to the accepted patterns of gradualism.

Of relevance also is the curious disparity of cultural development. Insofar as some societies on earth have until recently retained a stone-age culture, the question is not so much why these cultures did lag behind, but why in certain geographical areas humanity was suddenly promoted from hunter gatherer to agrarian settler and megalithic temple builder. Only the interventionist theory in

some form is congruent with the historic facts, as it is with the general testimony of humankind.

That testimony is universal as it is unequivocal. It recounts the primordial serpent idyll as well as an antediluvian era of coexistence of ‘gods’ and men. It speaks of illustrious personages and quasi angelic hosts which preserved the traditions of an elder race and seeded fledgling humanity with the arts of civilisation. It is here that Anunaki claims of being the creators of the human race are based. Indeed, if by *human* we mean *megalithic temple builder* that claim might be founded. Instead of creation in the biblical sense, however, the record indicates that it was genetic mutation which was effected – not, as is claimed, in scientific laboratories, but through the ophidian currents of sexual intercourse between two races or species, whereby the astral / etheric sheath of the serpent was imposed upon the human and the resulting hybrid offspring.

Specifically linked with this project are Enki and his sister Ninhursag of the Sumerian pantheon. Ninhursag is identified with the Babylonian Inanna, the Assyrian Astaroth, and the Aphrodite or Venus of classical legend, while Enki has his counterparts among the heroes and savant gods from Indra to Loki. Quasi historical personages after this type include Semiramis, queen of Babylon, consort of Nimrod, and purported paragon of wickedness. Originally the wife of Ninus, she was not only wife or consort, but also the mother of Nimrod. Significant here is the cluster of myths, associated with various ancient queens, wherein the matriarch mates to produce a son, mates *with* the son when he is of age to produce a further son, with whom she also mates, eventually producing offspring which is seven eighths herself. Cognate is the body of solar myths wherein the hero is both son and consort of the mother. The theme is implicit in the universal image of mother and child – from the Egyptian Isis suckling the infant Horus to the Roman Virgin bearing the saviour – exemplifying cult traditions of woman as initiatrix and repository of the mysteries.

Similarly extensive is the body of myths wherein a human female is impregnated by a non-human entity, subsequently giving birth to a male child who partakes of the divine nature and is typically destined for a redemptive quest. The themes are interlocking and complementary. A subtle continuum is moreover discernible, from the union of flesh and blood to the astral / etheric embrace of the ghostly incubus.

The theme is resumed in the pseudepigraphic (i.e. falsely attributed) Book of Enoch, a work mentioned in the Dead Sea Scrolls and held in esteem by the Essenes, an unorthodox yet visionary, first century sect of the Hebrews. The text purports to have the mysterious patriarch relate his privileged views and dealings concerning a race of fallen angels, called Oerin or the Watchers, who took wives from among humankind and taught forbidden knowledge. Its subtle and complex demonology indicates how the etheric or aerial Watchers were perceived by early humans. Among their characteristics, not surprisingly, are serpent features and superior cunning. The arch-demon Belial, notably, is described as having the visage of a viper, while the subtle prince Azazel made known the metals of the earth and the art of working them. He taught the making of swords and breastplates, as of finery for the adornment of women. In addition he conferred the apothecary art, notably concerning the antimony of the alchemists – a white metal employed as an aid to longevity. To women Azazel taught the art of allure, of seduction, sexual pleasure and subliminal vampirism in the service of their celestial lords.

Other angels taught of the passage time, and of celestial bodies, the knowledge of the elements, of clouds as signs and portents, of geodesy and geomancy to harness the telluric forces of the ancient arcanum. Shemyaza meanwhile instructed in the magical arts – in enchantments and root-cuttings, the latter a reference to psychedelic or mind-altering potions. On the darker side, one Kusdeju taught of exorcisms, the casting of demon daggers, and of slaying the embryo in the womb.

Selective but telling, the text relates of the manner then understood, by which humanity was lured from primordial innocence into the arcana of exoteric knowledge. It matters less at this point whether the angelic creatures were corporeal, as suggested by Collin Andrews in his *From The Ashes Of Angels* – a landmark study of its kind – or the genii of stellar daimons. Significant is the perception that knowledge originated not with humanity, but from without. Given the scenario developed so far, a carnal as well as a subtle principle is involved in the transmission of the gnosis.

That transmission is nowhere so evident as in ancient Egypt, with its unbroken 3,000 year history from predynastic to classical Greek and Roman times. Genealogies list successions of rulers, predating accepted chronologies by millennia, and therefore regarded by Egyptologists as purely fictitious. They extend to the period of Osiris, divine progenitor of the ‘two kingdoms’ – that mysterious *zep tepi* – the first time – haunted by the illustrious and resplendent Neteru, beings with the preternatural ability to materialise and dematerialise at will. This is followed by the aeon of the Hru Shemsu, the initiates of Horus, who, according to second century Egyptian historian Manetho, were the predynastic rulers of Egypt. Texts of the Horus Temple at Edfu refer to them as skilled workers in metals, metallurgy being a branch of alchemy, the generic legacy of proto-human intelligence deriving from the primordial serpent.

Apropos the Sumerian Anunaki and the biblical Nephilim, Egyptian history likewise cites three distinct eras: a primordial epoch of divinity, a transitional period of semi-divine angelic creatures which mingled their seed with human stock, and finally the age of humanity proper.

Genesis, the book of the Elohim, likewise concurs that knowledge entered via the seed of the serpent, as it is the hybrid lineage of Cain which immediately distinguishes itself in the sciences and arts. The son of Cain, like the seventh from Adam, also called Enoch, is said to have built a city. Was *he* the Enoch of the gnostic text? If so, the prophetic assertion that Enoch built the

Great Pyramid has biblical support, and the city mentioned in Genesis 4 is none other than the Giza necropolis. Cited further are Tubalcain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron, and Jubal, the progenitor of all who handle the lyre and harp. The Adamic line of Seth, by contrast, is shown to be less illustrious. All that is initially recorded concerning this branch is that they began to call upon the name of the Lord.

Arcadian Eden, the mythic cradle of humankind, was thus rocked by the gods of two opposing pantheons – that of the Elohim and that of the Neteru / Anunaki divines. From the beginning two types of worship are apparent, two kinds of religious protocol, which, although similar in form, betray a diametrically opposed agenda. This is reflected in the universal symbolism of contending hero twins and the cosmic conflict they represent. Cognate is the mythos of the sacrificial god and the slaying of the serpent, where the identities of god and serpent are often ambivalent and confused. ‘God’ is the intrinsic genius of any given cult or culture, whereas the ‘devil’ is merely the generic adversary – the god of the enemy. Philosophy indeed offers the comforting notion of the supreme being as universal abstraction, common to all peoples which entertain this ideal. However, when *magic* or theurgy enters the equation, pantheons are polymorphous and spiritual hierarchies heterodox.

Yet identities aside, the tale so far in a nutshell is this: An original paradise is overthrown, and the gods invest a hero / redeemer / avenger to restore the erstwhile condition. Thus is inaugurated the aeon of religion – of magic and mysticism as redemptive quest. Insofar as a setback was suffered by humanity and the arcadian serpent alike, there is similarity and intertwining of respective traditions. In consequence it depends on context what is meant by God and the religious ideal. Cosmic alienation, which some writers attribute to the dawning of reflective consciousness, gives rise to the question of the generic numinous Other:

Who is it that answers the call? How is contact restored? Is there a protocol to be followed? Is anybody out there?

The academic view, of course, is that religion was invented to fill the void of understanding attributed to the prescientific outlook. By this surmise religion equals poetic fancy, the elaboration of a conceptual art form, which may satisfy the aesthetic sense but is essentially devoid of practical meaning. Far be it, however, for our shamanic forbears to supplement their observations with mumbo-jumbo, as is effectively being charged. Such a move would not merely be maladaptive in the evolutionary sense, but utterly out of the pragmatic character of primal humanity. ‘Mythologising’ is rather a trait of sophistry. Instead we shall turn the conventional thesis on its head and propose that religion was invented by the gods, the orders of sacrifice and ritual observance a contrivance arranged for *their* convenience and agenda.

It may be further remarked at this point that the question, as to whether anybody is out there, must seem particularly ironic to the mindset of the magical persuasion – testimony to the abstraction of the scientific worldview. Legions are clamouring at the door – with sharpened fangs.

Incarnation and the Blood Sacrifice

At the core of the religious dynamic lies the practice of sacrifice. Sacrifice is that which facilitates the miracle of the incarnation – that whereby the god is manifest and takes possession of the worshipper. It may consist of prayer or some votive offering of material substance. Typically the two are combined. Yet there is also a sense in which the incarnating deity performs, or even constitutes, the sacrifice.

Abel and Cain, the original Old Testament hero twins, both offered sacrifice, but, strangely, Yahweh Elohim accepted one and rejected the other. This seems the more inexplicable and arbitrary in that both evidently did what

came natural – the herdsman Abel offering a lamb, the tiller Cain, the fruit of the fields. From the aesthetic viewpoint, moreover, the offering of Cain is undoubtedly the more attractive and ‘politically correct’. A clue is supplied by St Paul, writing in the epistle to the Hebrews – that *without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin*. The life, as Deists and Satanists affirm alike, is in the blood – and it is blood which becomes the primary offering, pleasing to the gods, throughout ensuing aeons.

However a fundamental difference was soon to divide the two spiritual branches defined.

While animal sacrifice became part of an elaborate temple worship throughout the ancient East, the Hebrew prophets increasingly pointed to another sacrifice. Messiah would come, they affirmed, and the conventional sacrifice, along with all ceremonial law, would cease. God would provide for himself a sacrifice, a final and perfect sacrifice, to restore the fallen Adamic race. It would be a sacrifice to end all sacrifice forever. For believers in the relevant provision this was fulfilled in Yeheshua bar Joseph – known as Jesus of Nazareth – a prophet in Israel during the time of the Roman occupation, who became known as the Christ. Executed on the instigation of the religious establishment, he is said to have died the customary death of crucifixion and risen bodily from the dead, afterward to have appeared to his disciples forty days and ascended skywards in the sight of witnesses. From a small persecuted cult the relevant faith rapidly spread westward, overturning in the course of some 1,000 years ancient pagan empires from Egypt to Celtic Britain, while becoming enshrined as the state religion of the Holy Roman Empire.

Yet even as Christianity conquered politically, it was being conquered spiritually. Belief in the efficacy of the sacrifice all but vanished. Without the process being too overt, the Christian faith, radical in its conception, was being absorbed within the universal pan-Babylonian paganism of which Catholic syncretism is the prime example. Though the creed may hail Jesus as saviour,

the assertion is figurative and without expected consequence. This provided occasion for critics of the faith, who point out that Christ is merely one of several legendary personages to undergo sacrificial death, descent into the underworld, and subsequent resurrection. Named among these are Osiris, Mithras, Tammuz, Orpheus and the Mayan Kukulkan or Quetzacoatl, whose emblematic image is the feathered serpent. Even the symbolism of the cross forms an occasional part of the relevant iconography, the Codex Borgiana bearing an image appropriately dubbed the crucifixion of Quetzacoatl.

For universalists there is an occult interpretation – namely that the quaternary or cross denotes the material world, as comprised in the four classical elements, the cardinal compass points, and so fourth. Crucifixion is thus said to denote a universal process – the descent of consciousness into the cross of matter, whereby the material world is spiritualised and nature redeemed. Christ, it is argued, represents merely another symbolic variant of this universal theme, without the pivotal actuality asserted by Christians.

Quite a different significance attaches to the blood sacrifice in the context of pagan polytheism, and again it is theories occult which illuminate the matter. Blood, so affirms the arcane tradition, forms a puissant basis – the basis par excellence – of materialisation for extra-dimensional entities. From the subtle effulgence of the biological substance – not the gross materia – the daimonic concrescence constructs an etheric body that may be sensible, under propitious circumstances, to one or more of the material senses. Hallucinogens may be employed to augment that basis on the subjective side, whether the intended result is a material manifestation or something more akin to a spiritual state.

These two types of result are classed under the rubric of thaumaturgy and theurgy, or evocation and invocation. The former culminates in the creation of the homunculus – the artificial humanoid lifeform, such as the golem of Jewish lore and the alien Greys of modern abduction accounts. Comparable to their distant cousin, the zombie of Haitian voodoo, they represent, however, a dead-

end on the serpent trail, having utilitarian value as slave or drone, but unsuited to further the gnostic endeavour. Like the phantoms of the blood sacrifice, they represent an intermediate stage, sterile physically and spiritually, in the daimonic quest for human incarnation. The latter, by contrast, refers to a summoning of the spirits *into the suppliant*, to the human incarnation of the divinity or higher intelligence, and thus conversely, the raising of humanity to the realms of godhead.

Although the magical arts later fell into dissolution – in medieval times already their status was dubious – the impressive legacy of the ancients suggests that they were possessed of something anomalous, some non-trivial secret which distinguishes their opus to this day. Yet they failed in their quest for perpetuity, with stagnation as the most evident cause. Cults, the modern as the ancient, are prone to become fixated upon their bag of tricks and thus doomed to endless and mindless iteration, even where the inutility of the rite is evident. The demon in such a case, frustrated and at the end of its resources, will urge that more sacrifice is needed, more vigilance, greater austerity, more extreme measures, eventually leading to holocaust and cultural cataclysm. It is not surprising therefore that it was human blood which came to be required by the gods, and that in ever greater amounts.

Human sacrifice thus became an integral fixture of the serpent cult from the time of the curse in Eden, whereupon the serpent declined as a biological species, eventually to be vanquished as such in the universal deluge. While the practice was known from ancient China to the druids of the western isles, it reached frenzied heights in specific locales – among them the temples of the Mesopotamian Moloch and Baal and certain cult centres of Central America. It is in the Americas, moreover, that the serpent cult survived in its primordial splendour until relatively modern times, when it collided with the Marian cult of the Spanish conquistadors.

Human sacrifice, as known among the Incas, the Maya, and Aztecs, extended from decorous bloodletting, from which not even royalty was exempt, to the ritual dismemberment of selected victims. Especially among the Aztecs the practice reached bizarre proportions. An estimated 20,000 human lives were sacrificed annually at the cult centre of Tenochtitlan, now Mexico City, to the solar deity Huitzilopochtli. The victims were mostly captives of war, although Aztec warriors were also selected for what was held to constitute a high honour. At least the latter, it appears, embraced their fate voluntarily. According to contemporary witness, Friar Diego de Landa, victims were led, in a state of partial sedation, to ascend the pyramid of the sun, and held down spreadeagled upon the sacrificial altar. With a consecrated blade of obsidian the priest made an opening in their chest cavity, tore out the living heart, and held it aloft while still beating. The bodies were then decapitated and the heads impaled upon skull racks for display in the centre of the city.

Huitzilopochtli being identified with the newborn sun of the December solstice, it is theorised that the Aztecs superstitiously believed that the sun would not be rekindled if the sacrifices ceased. But it was the spiritual sun of Huitzilopochtli, the incarnate egregor of the serpent gnosis, that was dependent on the offering of beating hearts. The priesthood was cognizant that the etheric basis of manifestation, and thus of mystic communion, would be removed with the ceasing of the sacrifice, even as the progression of heavenly bodies over vast aeons contributed to the disintegration of the geomantic grid which sustained the elder magical consciousness.

It is questionable whether the Spanish conquistadors under Hernando Cortez noted any symmetry between the Aztec cult and their own. The belief in their superiority as Christian warriors disallowed any such comparison. To them, at least officially, the natives were savage barbarians, a view which disposed them to justify their own subsequent orgies of blood as they set out methodically to exterminate the local population and destroy its culture. Yet de

Landa and other witnesses could not deny the evident nobility of the people they had come to destroy.

Ritual excesses of the nature described, according to contemporary shaman seers, explain the otherwise inexplicably sudden abandonment of certain pre-Columbian cult centres even prior to the Spanish invasion. The populace, increasingly revolted against the requirements of their draconian overlords, preferring life in the jungles over an existence in the shadows of the pyramids of death, and thus great empires vanished as quickly as they arose. To prevent such escalation certain local deities became cautious and refined in their appetites, as extant mythological remnants attest. The tale of Cupid and Psyche, which first occurs in the *Metamorphoses* (also *The Golden Ass*) of Apuleius, relates of traditions wherein the dragon is content with the offering annually of a virgin, who is bound to a stake in the wilderness to be devoured by the beast – or beasts, as the case may be. In return the dragon vows protection and prosperity for the kingdom. Such arrangements typically persist until a hero of the dragon-slayer type revokes the status quo and presents the reins of power to a more benevolent deity.

In this connection tantric cults may be mentioned, chiefly those of the Kaula rite, which employ menstrual blood and sublimated semen, ritually consumed, as a basis for materialisation. These substances are similarly regarded as highly efficacious for this purpose, whence the institutions of temple prostitution and vestal virgins to maintain the sacred fire. This fire, although symbolised by a perpetual flame, is the kundalini, the energetic basis for the magical host within the officiating priest. Where the vestals are kept virginal indeed, a further refinement is achieved – a matrix of materialisation constituted solely of the psychic field of sexual polarity.

Here also derive the traditions of courtly love, and of woman as patroness and muse. The chivalric tradition, according to some authorities, reflects the code of honour among certain families of dragon descent, whose chief concern

is for the purity of the bloodline and the tradition. Theirs, accordingly, is the Grail romance, exemplified in Mallory's Arthur, as in the Volsunga and Nibelung saga, sources of Wagner's Ring cycle. Similarly identified with the untarnished serpent idyll are the ethereal Fairy and Elven kingdoms – the Sidhe of Celtic lore, which, like the mystic isle of Avalon, inhabit a realm somewhat between this world and the next.

Mention might also be made of the lesser propitiatory offerings, such as the meal offerings and the rum and cigars beloved of the loa – the possessing spirits of the voodoo trance. Their generic kind is likewise universal, and exacted to this day with fierce exactitude among remaining centres of the relevant cults.

Among the most degenerate of etheric entities are such as subsist on the gases of decomposing flora and fauna, the like of which are said to inhabit marshes and swamps. The moral qualities which tradition assigns to them – languor, sloth, indecision, vacuity and sexual debauch – well describe the psychology of possession by entities of this class. Its sublimated or aesthetic form is the style known as decadent.

Accepting the premise that blood and similar substances provide a material base for the manifestation of numinous entities, one may rationally account for their universality in magical rites of the primitive kind.

The more evolved of the fallen races the while – adepts of a more subtle gnosis – have requirements more refined, among them incense, sounds and symbols, mantras, sigils and hieroglyphs. The most subtle and spiritually adept, however, like the angelic intelligences, require no external aid, but interface with the human nervous system directly through the system of chakras – psychic vortices of the subtle body as recognised in oriental schools of mysticism. To this end the yogas and trantras were given – techniques of psycho-spiritual development to attune the human organism to higher frequencies of cosmic intelligence. Where these flourished, namely in India,

Central Asia and the Far East, they supplanted in large measure the magical practices of primitive fetish cults, occasionally with syncretic accommodation as found in Tibetan Buddhism.

Of Padmasambhava, the legendary sage, who introduced Buddhism to Tibet in the eighth century, it is said that he first subdued and converted the pantheon of local gods and demons, binding them to service of the Buddhist dharma. This suggests that spiritual evolution is in principle possible, and we may delineate for purposes of the argument a categorical distinction between magic and mysticism. Magic is thus defined as the art and science of conjuring the gods to sensible appearance. Mysticism is the art and science of raising the acolyte to their level. It is further to be emphasised that they comprise ‘art and science’; they are not ‘religion’ in the sense of the faith based traditions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The difference, for practical purposes, is that the former demand experimental rigour and testable results, while the latter, at least in their institutional forms, tended to be content with dogma and piety.

The Quest for the One

The consequence of emergent monotheism was a receding of the magical gnosis and its replacement by something altogether more tenuous, perhaps more far-reaching and profound in essence, yet also more easily subverted by spirits of imposture. The new current, which swept the ancient world from around the year 1, crystallised around the concept of a sole transcendent God, above and beyond the pantheon of magical familiars, yet manifest in human form in the person of Christ, the incarnate God-King of the Hebrews.

Now *here* was something new. Was not this the Grail of the magical gnosis, as it was the fulfilment and culmination of Hebrew prophecy? The moral and aesthetic appeal of the idea can be ascribed at least in part to the dissolution of the tellurian matrix and the waning of the magical ideal. As such

this development could be regarded a mere religious reform, as unsuccessfully attempted in Egypt over a thousand years earlier by the mystic king Akhnaton. Yet it was evidently more than that.

The messianic tradition in Hebrew lore may be traced to the veritable books of Eden – to Genesis and its apocryphal kin – which speak of a fall and promised redemption. The covenant, first announced in the primordial garden, was subsequently confirmed in the patriarch Abram, who, upon hearing a voice which referred to itself as the Most High God, left his native Chaldean city of Ur to set out on a fantastic pilgrimage in what is now Palestine. The voice was lavish in its promises: Abram's descendants would inherit the land as far as he could see, and he no less, though aged and yet without offspring, would become a father of nations with whom the God of heaven would establish his covenant forever. Ahead of the promise, Abram's name was changed to Abraham, and upon asking for further confirmation, he was given the seal of circumcision. Among circumstances beyond the usual, the promise was eventually fulfilled in the birth of Isaac, of whom came Jacob, which is Israel.

According to tradition the cries of his twelve wives, as they travailed in childbirth, prophetically positioned Israel's twelve tribes in the land they were to inherit. Among them is Levi which was given the office of priesthood, and Judah, the lineage whereof is David, who was made king, and Yeheshua or Jesus, who is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

Like Abraham afore, Israel was delivered of a magical land – in this case Egypt – and set out in search of a promised land. During the Exodus, as recorded in the book so named, Israel, through prophetic mediation of its lawgiver Moses, received the Ark of the Covenant and a ritual law. The Ark was a portable structure, where dwelt the presence of Yahweh in a pillar of fire, also called the Angel of the Covenant. This was kept from the profane by the same fiery cherubim which guarded the Tree of Life in Eden. None could enter the Holy of Holies, Israel's most sacred shrine, except in accordance with strict

ceremonial observance. The angel further issued the charge that Israel must under all circumstances remain magically separate from the religious traditions of surrounding cultures. Although the Ark has vanished from history, it has become, like the legendary Grail, the object of a quest – in part for spiritual illumination, in part as an exotic exemplar of ancient technology.

Indeed the exodus bears all the indicators of a profoundly mystic or magical enclave, moving in spheres beyond ordinary space-time boundaries. The pillar of fire, which is the angle of the covenant, was a sentient being of preternatural foresight and sagacity. While addressing itself solely to Moses, it formed the unifying attractor vortex by which Israel assumed its tribal order, centred foursquare around the ark, with its priesthood, laws, and governance.

Other miraculous provisions obtained. Of primary significance for the long desert journey was the ‘smitten rock’. Water gushed from this rock after Moses had struck it with his staff. The water thereafter appeared when Moses *spoke* to the rock – and what is more, the rock *followed* Israel through the desert. Similarly significant is the fabled manna – angel’s food by some surmise – which formed like frost overnight, but melted in the heat of the sun. White, like coriander seed, its taste was that of wafers made with honey, and it is perhaps not fanciful to draw a parallel to the ‘fairy foods’ of universal legend, and the magical properties ascribed thereto.

Mention finally should be made of the Urim Thummim. Scholars are somewhat uncertain what this signified, though indications are that it referred to the breastplate of Aaron, first high priest under Mosaic law. Bearing twelve precious or semiprecious stones, representing the twelve tribes of Israel, its evident function was that of a divinatory device, to be consulted on major questions that could not be otherwise resolved. Positive vindication regarding a proposition was apparently signalled in that the reflected light of the twelve stones coalesced after the likeness of a rainbow mandala – the rainbow, of course, being a symbol of the covenant.

As to the angel, it was fierce, minutely exacting, intensely possessive, demanding exclusive worship, and aloof. None could approach it, bar Moses, with whom it communed face to face, and, once yearly, the consecrated high priest of Israel, bearing the blood sacrifice for the atonement of sins. For any other to enter the sanctuary – the holy of holies where the pillar of fire dwelt between the wings of the cherubim – meant certain death.

It is Christ, entering the Holy of Holies and satisfying the wardens with his own blood, who penetrated to the heart of the human temple and revealed the secret code therein in the opening of the Book of Seven Seals.

But this is to anticipate.

By virtue of the Ark and the angelic presence, Israel, though only recently emerged from Egyptian captivity, had become an invincible military and moral force. While the current was later compromised in the wake of widespread conquest, settlement and a general relaxation of rigors, its purity was preserved through a prophetic lineage so that the spiritual seed – Messiah or Christ – could eventually lodge in the womb of a peasant girl. In this wise was fulfilled Isaiah's outrageous prediction of some 1,200 years earlier that a virgin shall conceive – and the rest ... is history.

Religious and secular sources concur that whatever spiritual distinction the Christian community might have originally possessed, this was very soon lost, as multitudes converted to the faith, and its integrity became compromised in turn. From the magical perspective one may theorise that the legions of demons, disenchanted with the failure of the magical opus, were attracted and superficially converted to the rising messianic cult with its promise and evident dignity in the face of persecution. Indeed something of this order was noted from the very beginning, for Christ is recorded in the gospel of John, saying to his disciples, *have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil*. The apostle Paul also prophesied that the church, though Christian in name, would be usurped from within and become its antithesis – the veritable synagogue of

Satan. Indeed Western civilisation subsequently became so weakened under the influence of the apostate faith, that it almost succumbed to the waves of military onslaught soon to emanate from the greater pan-Islamic empire.

Islam, like the Judaeo-Christian tradition, derives its lineage from Abraham. The patriarch, it may be recalled, was childless, although married almost a lifetime to his half-sister Sarai – later Sarah. This woman reasoned that, since she was past the age of childbearing, the divine promise might be fulfilled through a surrogate wife, for which role she chose her maid Hagar. She, as mistress, could later adopt the resulting child. Abraham assented and Hagar gave birth to Ishmael. Even the Most High God concurred, although he was emphatic that *this* was not the promised son. When, in the upshot Sarai found herself despised of her maid, and took her complaint to God, Yahweh once more appears in his unyielding and inexorable mode. For he answered, *cast out the bondwoman and her seed, for he shall not be heir with the seed of the freeborn. But, as the scriptures further state, in Isaac shall his (Christ's) seed be called*, while his 'twin', although equally the seed of Abraham, is excluded from the covenant.

Ishmael, the legendary ancestor of nomadic tribes from the Arabian peninsula to the western Sahara, hence became a man of tenacity, of great endurance and subtlety of spirit – characteristics which served to forge a thriving culture among the most inhospitable regions on earth – the empire of Islam.

As to the promised son – he was to appear by means wondrous.

Observing perhaps the success of emergent Christianity, which in less than a hundred years subverted the Roman empire, the genius of Ishmaelite blood bestirred itself along similar lines to likewise embrace the monotheistic ideal. Thus around 500 AD, by relevant account, the merchant and visionary seeker Mohammed retired to a cave, where he received from the archangel Gabriel the revelation which became the Koran, uniting previously divided and

warring desert tribes under the name of Allah. Quite apart from any spiritual benefits deriving from the new religion, it was the material advantages conferred by a unified and liberal (as it was then) faith which set the Islamic world apart, and made it the torchbearer of western civilisation for nigh a thousand years. Only thus were preserved the arts and sciences that were even then being extinguished or frozen in time for a comparable period by the rise in Europe of the medieval Church. If little else is said in this place concerning Islam, it is because our concern is with primary archetypes. The religion of Mohammed, in this respect, follows the generic type of revealed monotheism, enjoining faith in a singular personal deity, and the observance of specific codes – in the case of Islam, the so-called five pillars: the acknowledgement of God, the ritual prayers, the paying of ritual alms, the fast during Ramadan, and the pilgrimage to Mecca.

Islam is but one manifestation of the spiritual and philosophical changes which swept the world during the approximately thousand year period centred on the birth of Christ. Broadly speaking, the ancient, almost alien, paradigm of the serpent gnosis gave way to the classical era, which paved the way for the rise of reason. In China Lao Tse composed the Tao Te Ching, arguably the world's most influential treatise of mysticism, around 500 BC. In India, the Buddha, or enlightened one, also around 500 BC refined Hindu doctrines with the concept of anatta – non-substantiality – the idea of the impermanence of all aggregates. Less than a century earlier in Persia, the prophet Zoroaster (Zarathustra), enflamed by visions of Ahura Mazda, preached against polytheism while, likewise in the late sixth century BC, Pythagoras conducted his reclusive and influential mystery school. Dynastic Egypt fell first under Greek, then Roman influence, as the ancient world wound to a close, effectively ending an unbroken religious tradition of over 3000 years.

In Palestine, the while, messianic fervour was building to fever pitch, fuelled by the Roman occupation, dissatisfaction with rabbinical orthodoxy, and

the general unrest evident whenever *something* is set to manifest. Cults like the Essenes, associated with the Dead Sea Scrolls of Qumran, sought to prepare themselves for whatever spiritual apotheosis they deemed imminent, and would-be messiahs attracted followers around ill-conceived schemes. Gnostic and syncretic mutations of Christianity soon arose after the death of Christ, and some 500 years later Mohammed unfurled the banner of Islam.

Magical Wars and Religious Subversion

On a broad historic scale the ancient serpent lore suffered a periodic series of checks and set-backs whereby its magical essence was gradually cultured out of manifestation. Reference was made to prehistoric cataclysms and pre-human civilisations overthrown in a series of upheavals, as attested in records of humanity's oldest racial memories. The serpent race specifically appears to have suffered a major catastrophe just prior to the onset of homo-sapiens, or, more specifically, of the Adamic line as mentioned in Genesis, bringing to an end an advanced global civilisation, the remnants of which seeded the historic city states of the Far East, the Indus valley, Mesopotamia, Egypt and the pre-Columbian Americas. Based on astronomical calculations, a date in recent vogue for the demise of this proto-human culture is around 12,000 BC. Further mythological markers on this theme are found in the biblical cursing of the serpent, his final disappearance in the flood, and the dispersion of the tower of Babel. Cognate in Egyptian myth is the death and dismemberment of Osiris, the death of Baldur in Nordic lore, the disintegration of the sky goddess Tiamat on Sumerian legend, as the slicing up of the Shakti Devi by the discus of Vishnu in Vedic tradition. Mention further has been made of the inexplicably sudden demise of cultures such as the Sumerian and Mayan.

Magical war was unleashed upon the ancient gnosis. Significant turning points in this process can be assigned to specific historical events, such as the

burning in 48 BC of the great Alexandrian library, the foremost treasury in the Western world of the collected wisdom of the ages. Comparable is the persecution of the gnosis by barbarian hordes – from the martyrdom of Hypatia to the decimation of the Pythagoreans, from the burning of Aztec and Maya codices and centuries of colonial genocide to the recent invasion of Tibet by communist China.

It is as if a concerted zeitgeist, acting throughout history, is determined to close the book of the past and obliterate its memory – even as there have been efforts in recent centuries to reopen that book and to restore its erstwhile splendours. Still there remains a magical barrier to the understanding of the ancients, epitomised in the rationalisations of academic archaeology and the necessity of a concerted front of alternative theory in this vexed domain.

Looking behind the material veil, as we seek to do in these pages, we further observed that the spirits of fallen angels adapted themselves to the emergent religious and secular ideologies. Seeing the historic tides were turning on a grand scale, they aligned themselves with the rising currents of the age, partly in frustration with the failure of the past, partly out of opportunism and a desperate hope in anything novel and progressive. Cynics were quick to note that it was often the more degenerate demonic legions which converted to the new religions – those of inferior intelligence and notable defects in the moral sphere. The more illustrious took refuge in mysticism and withdrew to realms ethereal and remote from concrete manifestation, seeking Buddhahood or awaiting more propitious times for renewed incarnation. Thus the monotheistic world religions were subverted, in instances to manifest their very antithesis – in the name of Jehovah, in the name of Jesus Christ, and in the name of Allah.

It is to be conceded here that the faith-based religions are more susceptible to subversion than is experimental mysticism, although atavistic cults of the Hindu Kali were said to have been infiltrated by vampiristic demon hordes, the excrescence of earlier fetish cults. German litterateur Theodore

Illion exploited a similar theme with claims of secret underground cities in Tibet, where demonic lamas rule over a populace of mindless zombies. Yet, actual or fabricated, these, comparatively speaking, are exotic aberrations in view of the horrors shortly to be unleashed by what eventually came to be known as the Holy Roman Empire, a spiritual kingdom said to remain in force until the prophesied end date of 2012.

The key to the fourth or Roman age in prophetic lore (a resume of the ages is provided in Chapter 7) is the recognition that papal Rome is pagan Rome reincarnate. Whereas the old Roman empire, enfeebled by an ill-assimilated Christianity, fell in the fifth century to the barbarian hordes of the Goths and Vandals, thereby ending the roughly 1000 year classical age, a similar period of the so-called Dark or Middle Ages was ushered in. Out of the spiritual and political chaos that ensued, the serpent king Lucifer, in emulation of his Babylonian avatar Nimrod, forged himself a crown – a triple crown – dignifying himself as sovereign of heaven, hell and purgatory. By his assumed authority the whole of Europe would eventually be subdued, although the road of his ascent was a gradual one.

While very early Christianity possessed the secret of the Covenant and disposed of the sword of the cherubim, so that the unconverted dared not impose upon their ranks, this condition was not to last. It faded almost entirely with the passing of the original disciples. The messianic Kingdom of God, its presence and power – these were henceforth mere abstractions, and factional controversies arose concerning their meaning. These came to a head at the Nicean Council of 325 AD, where political expediency ruled the day, and doctrinal solutions were imposed by fiat. Christianity had already become the nominal state religion under Constantine, who was concerned above all for the cohesion of the realm. The resulting adoption of the Athanasian creed stands out as an instance of prophetic Babel – the spectre of arbitrary unity enforced by secular means. Thus, according to contemporary commentators, the religious

orthodoxy of emergent Europe was established among fistfights, cursing and mutual intimidation.

Once the idea was fully grasped that the divine laws could be rewritten and foisted upon an ignorant populace, a secular hierarchy wormed its way into positions of ecclesiastical power, and rule became increasingly centralised in the bishop of Rome – henceforth sovereign pontiff the faithful – the Pope. Slowly but surely the Church was transformed into a political empire. This was achieved around AD 904 with the coronation of Pope Sergius. Events now take a darker turn in that his reign opens the age of papal pornocracy, during which the Roman pontiffs openly emulated their pagan predecessors, grovelling at the feet of courtesans and supporting standing armies in pursuit of territorial aggrandisement. From gentle shepherd to ferocious warlord, the transformation was complete, and a draconian theology, backed by military force, replaced the gospel of Christ. Henceforth the Church was Christian merely in designation and the retention of biblical symbols and names. Its doctrine, practices and institutions reverted to the Babylonian prototype, its supreme pontiff the incarnate god-king, whose will is sufficient to open the gates of heavens and consign entire communities to hell. His status was enshrined in the motto VICARIVS FILII DEI, which is to say, [I rule] *in the place of the Son of God*.

Almost perfect from the standpoint of the black agenda! If a man can assume the place of God, the agenda of satanic deification is theoretically accomplished. If now Satan could but incarnate in man!

So complete was the subversion that critics of the Church were nigh justified in dismissing the Christian faith as a cruel delusion, its institutions as hellish contrivances to enslave the soul and exploit the gullible. Within the Church the spiritual larder had become equally bare. The stance is epitomised by Pope Leo X, reflecting with shameless candour for the edification of his circle, *what profit has not that fable of Christ brought us* – words to that effect. Writers such as David Ike, instrumental in uncovering the transmission of the

serpent cult, are similarly inclined to dispose of the babe with the bathwater, suggesting that the scriptures were contrived by Illuminati figures like the Medici as an instrument of social control. Yet even if something of this nature were established, those who have been crucified with Christ, as mystic poet Aleister Crowley remarked, can but smile when it is demonstrated that Jesus never existed, that the scriptures are corruptions of Sumerian and Egyptian texts, that Darwin was right and whatever more.

In the upshot – between the original Christian faith and its corruption by the Church – what appalling gulf, what clash of spiritual realities. To find evidence of the authentic faith one must set aside the conventional signposts of history and seek the rarefied thread of its otherworldly manifestation. The scriptures indicate the pattern. Obscurity surrounds the nativity of the one, prophetically identified as king of kings. Although the messiah was widely expected, a privileged few – a mere handful – were aware that something unusual was afoot when he made his entry. According to the biblical record they were Mary and Josef (termed the holy family), Elisabeth and Zechariah (parents of John, who is called the baptist), and Anna and Simeon (ascetic contemplatives who awaited the consolation of Israel). Six individuals – that was the church, the extent of the inner circle. On the periphery were angelic hosts which broadcast the gospel to shepherds, and later certain kings of the Magian tradition, whose celestial observations had divined the coming of the promised Christ, thereby bearing circumstantial testimony that the ancient stellar gnosis is not antithetical in essence to the revelation of faith.

Such as were predestined to the unfolding revelation had dreams or visions by which they recognised the presence of the divine in their midst. At the time of Christ's ascension and promised return in spirit, their number had grown to a hundred and twenty. For the rest of Israel a misguided fanatic – or two, since the baptist had already been beheaded – met their deserts at the hands of Rome. It remained for the original church, the spiritual seed sown at the

Pentecostal feast to likewise fall into the earth – to experience persecution, death and corruption – to suffer all but extinction – before it would rise again.

This it did when in 1520 an Augustinian monk named Martin Luther published his famous ninety-five theses in which he exposed the corruption of the Roman Church. The remarkable thing, as one historian put it, was not that Luther denounced the said Pope Leo as excrement of the devil and publicly consigned to the flames the papal bull *Exurge Domine* – but that he got away with it. The Lutheran reformation, thus inaugurated, was the first of numerous reforms which restored by degrees the doctrines of the original disciples. The Protestant Church went through numerous mutations or denominations, each in turn reaching a point of doctrinal impasse and spiritual stagnation. According to prophetic lore, the final result, so far as organised Christianity is concerned, is an ecumenical conglomerate conforming to the Roman ideal. For, as ever, the seed reverts to type.

Authentic revival continues the while outside the institutional church, as it did from the beginning, and as by nature it must. At the turn of the twentieth century it was believed that the angelic presence reported among the very early church was again in manifestation in what became the Pentecostal movement. In the second half of that century the prophetic voice of the age announced the Revelation of the Seven Seals (the mystic seals or secrets of the ages, as mentioned in the Apocalypse of St John) and the imminent end of time.

The draconian archetype, which for a thousand years made its home in the Roman Church, has assumed by this time a different guise. In the wane of papal authority and the rise of the secular order after the 18th century, the beast undergoes metamorphosis, and in the place of Romanism arise fascism and communism. It is said that in the apotheosis of history these three are one, insofar as the serpent gnosis aligns itself with the incumbent political order. This resultant unity is prophetic Babylon or Babel – the *Gate of God* and

confusion. It is the Gate of God apropos the dark prince of this world, who is to be revealed and crowned, and confusion is the order of his reign.

Concurrent is a prophesied quickening in the realm of mind, whereby the various cultural seed come to fruition and the historical process is brought to culmination. Knowledge attains to infinite regress, and the spirit of the age becomes one of gnosis and prophetic insight. Like a refining fire it consumes the accidental and contrived, revealing all things in their original and authentic state. The psycho-historical process is made transparent and the masks are removed. Christ and antichrist are revealed in their human temple, and their age-old conflict resolved.

It is popularly imagined that the battle of Armageddon – the final contest of good and evil – is a military affair. This is strictly an error, although its fallout in the geopolitical arena may take on military dimensions. Yet only on the most ephemeral level – that of politics – are the perceived contingencies translated into the push for globalism, the draconian quest for oneness by force and decree. As to promulgation of the spiritual quest – the weapons of its warfare are not carnal.

The spiritual war today is rather an information war; it is the contest concerning what is real – what ideas and beliefs should appropriately occupy the human mind. In the modern world, wherein all spiritual and ideological currents come to a head, producing the most polymorphous age in history, this contest reaches unparalleled intensity. The strain for a resultant becomes overwhelming, in turn giving rise to apocalyptic expectations.

Apocalypse – literally, the revealing – is visualised as mayhem and destruction because such is the perceived tendency inherent in global systems. Yet the universal prophetic lore also speaks of an Ark of Deliverance – an invisible sanctuary, an avenue of ascension to higher realms. Reservations can now be made with covens and cults in every major city.

Welcome then to the modern age, with its conceptual meltdowns and ideological ferment, its fearful spectres and vistas of strangeness, the like not seen since the Nephilim kings. Yet before we turn to the contemporary stage, it may be well to review the stakes, pared down to the simplest level.

Two angelic beings are contesting for apotheosis of absolute godhead – Christ Michael and Lucifer Satan. Drawn into the fray is a third force – the serpent empire, in mythology the shadowy realms of the Faery and Elven kingdoms, the legacy of a largely forgotten race.

All seek to restore or establish their respective ideal.

ALIEN INITIATIONS

A truth denied is a demon empowered.

– Magical dictum

Strange Attractors

In the still clear air of the western sky hovers a silvery disc. It's the real thing – silent, luminous, classic in its elegance. At the foot of the garden are small grey creatures. It is impossible to look at them directly; the eye somehow keeps them at the periphery. Then the world turns inside out and ... I am the UFO and the creature at the controls.

According to quantum theory the universe exists as the superimposition of all possible states, with the outcome weighted in favour of the most probable. The difficulty lies with the concept 'probable.' How is it meaningful to say that the present, by classical reckoning infinitely unlikely, state is the most probable? How does cosmos arise out of chaos – order out of the supposedly random interaction of particles? How does the actual undergo – in Whitehead's phrase – the formality of actually occurring?

According to the mystic and idealist view the universe comes into being by the activation of a cognitive construct in consciousness. Without such a construct, arising out of a perceptual stance, the 'earth' – as Genesis has it – is 'without form and void' – pregnant with all possibility, but essentially unmanifest.

These two viewpoints coalesce in the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum physics, which states that the universe does not exist unless it is observed. In more formal language, it is the experiment or measurement which generates the observed condition. The phenomenon is implicit in the point of view, in the concrescence of the contextual matrix.

The alternative to Copenhagenism is the many-worlds hypothesis – the idea that all possible realities coexist simultaneously in a branching multiverse. While classical theory precludes the possibility of signals travelling between parallel universes, some argue that leakage might in fact occur, and that this is a possible explanation for the incidence of the so-called paranormal. The multiverse is the ultimate of abstract objectivism, the plenipotential hypersphere without an implicit point of view.

Combining these scenarios, we obtain the notion that mind itself is the hyperspatial plenum, the matrix of all possibility. To paraphrase the physicist Jack Sarfatti, the universal wave-function is a mental phenomenon. A specific cognitive gestalt, however, informs the mind – angel, archetype and attractor – which structures thought and perception, and thus the physical universe. It does so mostly on a preconscious level – the controls on the whole are out of sight. This is why magic is so difficult nowadays, and why the rational psyche finds itself at the receiving end of ostensible realities which appear to be a cosmic given. The inner is projected on the outer and – strangely – the fact is forgotten or goes unnoticed as the primal dreaming is replaced by habit and convention.

A deeper conundrum yet is posed by psychic compartmentalism – the coexistence of contradictory and exclusive cognitive foci, which deny each other's validity or even existence. The dynamic is one of denial and mutual repression, so that the cure, as per the psychoanalytic paradigm, consists of integration. Yet integration of the experiential plenum, the validation of the imaginal manifold, these are heresy to the inquisitorial impulse, which seeks rational closure apropos a trans-rational object. This attempt to impose order on observational chaos invariably involves a purge – an editing of reality. Under these constrained conditions, as stated in the previous chapter, something must give. Symptoms – phenomena intrude, and disorder is the net result.

Such is the context for that modern theatre of the absurd – the alien encounter experience, our modern brush par excellence with the ghostly mythological other.

The Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung was among the first to emphasise the visionary aspect of the UFO experience, wherein the saucer is a symbol and symptom of the psyche's quest for wholeness. Some fifty years hence, what arguably count as the most sophisticated perspectives of the realm have not significantly elaborated upon the Jungian view. Thus Carl Raschke speaks of *Ultraterrestrial Agents of Cultural Deconstruction* and Terence McKenna of the Oversoul or Gaian Overmind – a proactive higher intelligence at the planetary level, which is responding to the cultural predicament by paranormal inducement toward a more inclusive language. Whatever the alien may turn out to be, its most significant feature, according to this view, is precisely its strangeness – the fact that it does not fit any theory. Riding roughshod across the conventional paradigm and disciplinary boundaries, it mandates instead for expanded concepts – a more subtle epistemology to account for the flood of relevant data.

The data, as previously stated, are unequivocal. A profound and genuine mystery lies at the core of the phenomenon, broadly described as *alien* or *extraterrestrial*. These terms are nominal, with a wide range of opinion as to what they signify. The phenomenon furthermore manifests in a diversity of ways, casting some doubt as to whether they can be ascribed to a single source. As Whitley Strieber, bestselling author in the field, insists, citing the thousands of personal encounter stories he was sent by readers, the contact experience is far more varied and bizarre than theorists generally allow.

This diversity includes, though is not necessarily limited to:

- sightings, by the tens of thousands, of unusual lights and unknown artefacts, in the sky, on land, as on and under the oceans. These include

sightings at close range of exotic craft, often supported by photographic, video and radar evidence. A wealth of anomalous data has also been obtained in the context of NASA missions to Mars and the moon, both pertaining to objects in flight and on the planetary / lunar surface.

– geoglyphs or crop formations: the appearance in cultivated fields of large geometric designs, appreciable as a rule only from an elevated position. These beautiful and enigmatic creations first gained notoriety in the sixties, with claims of hoax on their heels. Yet they continued to appear in thousands of exemplars, scattered over dozens of countries in patterns of generally increasing complexity. Where, it has been asked, is the army of selfless and gifted artists, whose offerings may be described as transcendent lessons in geometry, number theory and cryptography. Some intelligence is clearly behind the manifestation, although the jury is still out as to whether this intelligence is natural or cultural – human or non-human.

– clandestine animal mutilations, as of cattle and other free range livestock. These attract attention, as well as the ire of ranchers, in that an organised technologically capable agency is clearly responsible. The animals are killed by undetermined means, specific organs are excised with surgical precision, and all traces of blood typically removed. It is the prevalence of the phenomenon which appals, as does the policy of official denial. Sightings of unidentified aerial craft, as of black unmarked helicopters, have been reported near affected areas, and eyewitnesses reported seeing small humanoid entities busying themselves in the manner described.

– interaction with alien humanoids of various description. The encounter with otherworldly entities, whether proactive or passive, face to face or by means subliminal, is referred to as the contact experience. The widely reported

experience of being extracted against one's will from a bedroom or deserted locale by exotic humanoids qualifies as alien abduction. Abductees report being floated to some hi-tech installation, aerial ship or flying saucer, where they undergo quasi-medical procedures and some kind of re-education.

- sightings of a range anomalous creatures, randomly assigned to either the alien or crypto-zoological field. Sightings are also reported which blur the distinction between atmospheric phenomenon, organism, and craft.

- the retrieval of exotic materials and artefacts. These include so-called implants – foreign objects taken from the bodies of abductees and contactees, and alleged debris of crashed alien craft. Examination of these objects has identified technologies, unreported in the available scientific literature.

- the reported retrieval of crashed alien craft and their nonhuman occupants, designated EBE's or extraterrestrial biological entities, at least one of which was captured alive. These derive from military and intelligence sources, often anonymous due to official censure of such reporting. However retired Pentagon official Colonel Philip Corso states in *The Day After Roswell* that he personally oversaw the dissemination of alien technologies among defence contractors and leading industries for development in both military and civil applications. Solid state electronics, fibre optics, and stealth technology are among the reported spin-offs. Similarly the engineering guru Bob Lazar stated that he had worked on serviceable alien craft, and observed rudimentary test flights of large exotic disks.

- testimony of individuals having worked in, or been abducted to, secret military installation – veritable underground cities – where human and alien lifeforms cooperate on an apparent project of planetary subversion.

– the incidence of long term high level interest in the phenomenon (as among the defence and intelligence establishment), documented in thousands of pages of declassified information, obtained under the Freedom of Information Act. The bizarre situation that this material coexists with a policy of official denial adds too the cultural significance of both, and exemplifies the aura of controversy, mystification and confusion which surrounds the matter.

It may be problematic for some that, in the hierarchy of kindred claims, one sooner or later encounters information not easily verified or disproved – information exclusive to certain elites, whether of the contactee, scientific, or intelligence community. Broadly, though, this proviso attaches to almost all common knowledge in modern society. We live in a complex and specialised world. Learning involves accepting information on hearsay. Arguably the best approach in this situation is the phenomenological one of taking things at face value – reports as reports, claims as claims, experience as presented – while remaining agnostic regarding interpretations. Only thus, without selective filter, is the strangeness of the phenomenon savoured in all its exotic splendour.

But how to begin?

Disconcerting already is the volume of related incidents, reported on a daily basis – indeed by the minute, if the worldwide panorama could be correlated. It must be bumper to bumper up there, as one perceptive observer quipped. Yet somehow it is the very preponderance of the phenomenon which detracts from its authentication. Actual and abundant corroboration is stunning to a culture, accustomed to giving credence to claims on the most spurious of evidence or no evidence at all. A further intellectual tripwire is the unusual quirkiness involved. If the encounter experience is related as perceived – without omission or rationalisation – it typically contains an element of the absurd. This was noted alike by information scientist Jacques Vallee and the

psychedelic explorer Terence McKenna. As the latter was to remark, the alien effectively proposes a dare: you may speak of these things if you wish, but if you do, you will be taken for a fool.

It is likely this aura of quaintness – of the iconic and symbolic – which has prevailed on the scientific community to give the matter a rather wide berth. This, in turn, has fuelled a misconception that relevant areas of enquiry are the special province of feeble minds. Yet in their pursuit several disciplines are typically stretched to their limit. A good book on matters saucerological, more often than not, is a book of cultural history, cognitive and social psychology, physics and cosmology, linguistics and cryptography – not to mention phenomenology, epistemology and ontology – and often, whether intentionally or not, a book of initiation into realms occult.

Such breadth of vision, however, is rare, so that the research community tends to segregate into sharply divided camps. The first of these is comprised of contactees or experiencers, whose main concern is the existential challenge posed by their encounter. The second comprises proponents of various novel and exotic theories, of which the extraterrestrial hypothesis is the most familiar. The third is composed of compulsive sceptics and debunkers, which seek to minimise the ontological impact of the strange and unusual, by denying the data, or constraining them into conventional models of reality. A fourth, as indicated, represents the philosophical set – agnostic yet positively engaged with the wider phenomenology of anomalous experience.

Controversy aside, the ‘alien syndrome’ has profoundly altered the cultural landscape. Personal testimony abounds, and at least a few courageous academics have given the field of alien abduction their professional attention, among them the historian David Jacobs of Temple University and Harvard psychiatrist John Mack. Further the subject of an intensive five-day conference in 1992 at MIT, the alien abduction syndrome has since occupied a small if conspicuous niche in the technical and peer-reviewed arena of debate.

How strange then, in this context, is the persistence of denial, emanating from officialdom and parroted by an uninformed cynical media. How strange that greater academia should react to the paranormal with hysterical fear, evincing an inquisitorial conspiracy to excommunicate from its ranks those who engage this domain. How strange that the mainstream media, mercenary and sensation hungry, ignore or belittle the relevant phenomena. How strangely intelligent debate is absent from the mainstream agenda. How strangely the mystery is exploited by covert agencies to create a new order of popular perception. A revolution in the conception of the real has passed, essentially without acknowledgement or comment.

Yet the ontological ground has shifted and the portals have opened. While artists, writers and musicians play an, often unconscious, part in the crystallising of a new order of consciousness, science – on the quiet – has effected its own deconstruction of the classical worldview. Humanity, as a result, has been summarily hoisted from its Victorian hubris, and catapulted helter-skelter into the magical hypersphere – into a universe teeming with polymorphous intelligent life, with intentionality and meaning. The alien controversy is thus far settled: ‘they’ are real, ‘they’ are here, and ‘they’ mean business.

Whereof can the guardians of the scientific orthodoxy complain? Has it not been the quantum revolution in science, which, at the turn of the twentieth century, irrevocably shattered the myth of rational objectivity? Did anyone imagine that its cultural fallout could be contained? Or did the majority of scientists instinctively recoil from the implications for their discipline and the rational paradigm as a whole? In any event, the subversion of reality – the ‘revolution’ in the *sixties* senses – became a grassroots phenomenon, born out of experience in altered states of perception. At the extreme edge of the ‘alien’ contingent, this translated into enthusiastic reception, cultic fervour and a proliferation of scenario which dwarfs even the ancient epics and sagas, as

mythological yearnings are projected upon the mysterious Other. Beyond the rational cringe lies the glamour and longing of the alien romance – the longing that is felt, gazing into the starry sky. Understandably, the human sensibility seeks for interpretation and meaning – and that in a cosmic context. This also we shall do.

But first let us see what happens.

Into the Matrix

While perhaps of little comfort to those affected, the full-blown alien encounter – a face-to-face interaction or ‘close encounter of the fourth kind’ – does not usually erupt into mundane reality in a discontinuous or catastrophic manner. More often it is embedded in an aura of generalised yet pervasive strangeness. There may be occurrences of a psychic nature, unsettling synchronicities, compulsive obsessions of symbolic or cultic significance, poltergeist antics, and a dreamlike cast of mind in which the critical faculty is strangely in abeyance. The subject may be drawn to certain locales, experience sightings of distant lights or craft, or phenomena of quasi hallucinatory aspect on the periphery of ordinary vision. A strong sense of a secondary numinous reality may be felt near and impinging upon the hallowed sphere of the ordinary. Yet, paradoxically, the relentless slide into the non-ordinary may be accompanied by an equally inexplicable acquiescence. There may be a sense of *déjà vu* – perhaps a detached and no-committal *wow, how weird*, yet the shattering insight that reality is other than was thought is somehow far off. The subject, evidently, is in a hypnotic state of enchantment and fascination.

Things get serious when time slows down or apparently comes to a halt, normal activity ceases, and an eerie quiet supervenes. Alternatively there may be a hum or high-pitched ringing noise – a sound sometimes compared to the buzzing of insects or referred to as the astral bell. Exemplary is the clichéd

wailing *woooooooo* of 1950's saucer movies. In the lore of occultism these subjective phenomena are said to announce the approach on an etheric entity. Common also is the kundalini rush, the sensation of electrical charge, coursing through the body. We are now approaching the point of intersection with the Other – in Mircea Eliade's remarkable phrase, the rupture of the mundane plane.

Presently a number of small grey aliens surround the bed or the car which has stalled on a deserted road. Although the abductee may inwardly scream at the recognition of a recurrent and frightful experience, resistance is neutralised by a form of mind control, as the inscrutableimps conduct their prey – typically in floating motion – to a chosen enclosure, sometimes described as a hovering craft, sometimes as the interior of an underground facility. In scenes reminiscent both of gothic cinema and the realities of this sad planet, the subject is undressed, strapped to a table, and subjected to a variety of physical and psychological procedures. The former include the extraction of tissue samples and fluids – including sperm from males and ova from females – and a general examination, as if by mad scientists, by means often painful and humiliating.

Female abductees, so the relevant accounts, are being artificially inseminated, generally to have their foetuses removed during subsequent abductions. Women further report being handed seemingly hybrid infants and toddlers with the telepathic suggestion that the child is theirs – their alien captors evidently concerned to facilitate bonding and continuity of affect between the human and alien race. Entire nurseries have been described as part of what appears to be a global undertaking, with the added suggestion that human mothers will eventually bear their alien offspring to term.

Occasionally there is reference to sexual relations between human and near-human beings, as well as a pattern of subliminal match-making on part of the alien among human couples. The suggestion is one of eugenics or selective breeding – a means of old for effecting human birth of astral entities.

On the psychological plane the interaction between humans and their alien interlocutors is deeply complex. Although autocratic in behaviour and mien, the alien intelligence seems concerned to foster cooperation and even enthusiasm for its apparent agenda. What precisely that agenda entails is however rarely disclosed. Questioned on the subject, the aliens tend to be guarded, cryptic and oblique, reiterating that *this is part of the plan; it is necessary* and *it is for the best*. Nevertheless they appear intent on imparting information – indeed initiation of a kind – the essential purport of which evidently lies in the otherworldly experience itself. The apparent concern is to build a bridge between the world of human sensibility and the astral / etheric dimensions of alien habitation – to accustom humanity experientially to the hyperspatial physics, explored theoretically during the last hundred years.

In addition the aliens appear concerned to deliver a statement of ecological and political import. Abductees are shown holographic imagery of conflagration and upheaval, of nuclear inferno and other types of catastrophe, usually with indubitable impact given the emotional arousal attending these presentations. On occasion the alien intelligence has been known to predict specific disasters, subsequently to be found in error. A welter of cryptic and seemingly nonsensical communication typically surrounds these recognisable – hence recallable – themes.

Upon unceremonious termination of the encounter the abductee is returned to familiar mind-space-time co-ordinates – usually the place from which he or she was physically removed. On occasion, however, this does not obtain and abductees may inexplicably find themselves someplace without recalling how they got there. There may be other things ‘wrong’ on regaining ordinary consciousness, providing definite physical evidence that a strange kind of night journey has been undertaken.

A wall of amnesia commonly surrounds the otherworldly encounter, leaving the individual merely with a sense that several hours have passed

unaccountably and that something unusual may have occurred. In some cases there is lingering disquiet, intimations of something frightful and bizarre, recurrent nightmares, as well as certain physiological reactions. In others full memories of the encounter are retained or recall is triggered by something suggestive in the environment. More often it is the result of guided hypnotic regression.

As the walls of amnesia dissolve, a flood of suppressed ideation surges into conscious awareness, often with overwhelming emotional charge, and a shadowy and unsuspected side of life may come into view, often accompanied by a secondary and hoary sense of identity. Subjects typically find that they are in fact serial abductees, their encounters with the alien Other reaching back into earliest childhood.

It must be added that the amnesia surrounding the syndrome does not mean that the experience, once recalled, has anything like the ephemeral nature of a dream. Rather it is perceived with the affective depth and texture of a full existential confrontation, its horror and repulsion coming to permeate even the most mundane aspects of everyday life.

According to John Mack this ‘lifting of the veil’ is deeply traumatic for the majority of abductees he encounters in his practice. It is typically to their consternation, moreover, that these individuals learn that they are *not* insane, that their experience cannot be ascribed to any known pathology. Budd Hopkins, New York based artist and grand patriarch of alien abduction research concurs. It is not the case that the experience preferentially seeks out the disturbed or feeble minded – nor, for that matter, such as might be prepared – magicians or psychedelic explorers. Rather it befalls ‘ordinary’ individuals, whose sense of reality is typically overthrown in the process.

Ordinary – that distinction is perhaps misapplied. The individuals in question are conceivably among humanity’s true pioneers. While Mack is emphatic that psychopathology is absent as an aetiological factor, abductees

face an unique ordeal – the inconceivable has a foot in the door. The world is other than was thought. And they are usually alone with this shattering insight.

Moral Suasion and the Scenario Boom

The repercussions of this ‘primal’ recognition, dawning at the end of the modern era, continue to reverberate throughout academia and popular culture, sparking controversies not likely to be settled anytime soon. Participants in this dialectic genre are ranged across the usual intellectual and aesthetic divides. Among those pleading for open enquiry and expanded concepts are the aforementioned John Mack and David Jacobs, the maverick investigator and friend of abductees Budd Hopkins, therapist and historian the late Dr Karla Turner, and the information scientist Dr Jacques Vallee. On the opposing side, predictably, is the reactionary rearguard, associated with CSICOP and similar bodies, committed to a debunking of the phenomenon, and the promotion of minimalist interpretations within the paradigms of conventional psychology. Alien abduction, so charges arch-sceptic Phillip Klass, is a disease, spread by amateur investigators and hypnotherapists, in much the same manner as witch-finders ‘created’ witches.

Most would agree that society is in a transitional phase regarding the anomalous and enigmatic. Yet it is unclear where it is heading, or where indeed, among the exfoliation of exotic universes, it may wish to head. The more visionary of researchers tend to agree that nothing less than a comprehensive new paradigm is likely to account for the patterns of high strangeness which modernity has brought to light.

Significantly, there is fundamental division even among those who accord the phenomenon ontological validity, seek to understand it better, and promote public awareness thereof. The polarity is exemplified in the stance respectively taken by said academics Jacobs and Mack. While Mack has

consistently emphasised the transformative potential of the alien encounter, extolling it as a positive catalyst in the evolution of higher consciousness, Jacobs voices his unreserved misgivings, regarding what he sees as a subversive agenda, with dire implications for the future of the human race. I know what they are up to, he is quoted as saying, and I am afraid.

His concern is echoed by numerous therapist / researchers who have identified a curious attitude reversal taking hold among long-term serial abductees. While initially given to unqualified rage against their otherworldly captors, many evince an eventual rationalisation, conciliation – even moral justification – regarding the violations they suffered. Instead of seeing themselves as victims, they come to perceive themselves as pioneers in a cosmic experiment, the vanguard of an emergent evolutionary order. Some have made a career of this situation, becoming advocates through books and the lecture circuit, while for others the altered reality remains unglamorous and profane. The question has been asked, whether the conspicuous change of attitude reflects an adaptive strategy – a deliberate recasting of an untenable situation – or the manipulative cunning of an alien intelligence.

Thus, on the moral plane, the community concerned falls into two schools of thought, and it will be apparent that their conflicting positions may be read as particular expressions of the universal contest described in these pages – the contest of archetypes. Of course there are those, like Whitley Strieber, who take an ambivalent view. Strieber, whose accounts of personal contact with the visitors, as he calls them, have captured the mainstream, proposes that the phenomenon is as multifarious as the human predicament itself. This may be cogent in that *it* presents as something like an inversion or mirroring of the human condition – the other half of the ontological equation, the hidden clause in the cultural contract.

Shared concomitants link the alien visitation theme with the wider age-old mythology of non-human contact. Chief among these is the incidence of

psychism or the ‘second sight’ as it is referred to in its rustic and hereditary form. Similarly the alien encounter / abduction experience ‘runs’ in families, and might be studied as such from the psychological standpoint, with specific reference to the moral and sensate legacy passed from one generation to the next. The suggestion is that the entity has a ‘right’ to breach the circle of the soul as a result of some ancestral bargain, pact or concession, made perhaps under duress, but exacted to the precise extent of the original terms.

Fairytales, as comprise the narrative horde of the brothers Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, are replete with the theme. In the tale *Rumpelstiltskin* a socially ambitious merchant places his daughter in a humiliating bind, from which no escape seems possible. In her distress she is accosted by an imp-like creature, offering magical help, which she feels compelled to accept. The stipulation is that upon marriage she must bequeath the creature her firstborn child. But there is also a way around this fate; the princess must discover the creature’s true *name*. In modern language, the spell may be undone through phenomenological insight. There are, of course, many ways for parents to sell their children, whether for lucre or as propitiatory offering to the fashionable gods. The psychoanalytic literature indicates that the transaction need not be conscious or intentional. As in the cited tale, it may be made under constraint inherited from preceding generations, like the proverbial family curse of the gothic novel.

On the theme of sexual intercourse and offspring between two species the literature, both ancient and modern, is similarly replete with highly suggestive narratives. Women relate of nightly visitations, of ghostly intruders gaining substance in the heat of the embrace, of rape by creatures of reptilian cast, whereas men on the whole recount a more seductive scenario. Legends of the arch-sorceress Lilith, however, of the night-hag and the Medusa, also hint of a predatory type of female, traditionally encountered in otherworldly adventures. Female vampires or succubi, to invoke theories more specifically occult, are

known to use bewitchments to seduce more or less eager males so as to steal their life-force, thereby to maintain themselves in incarnation – physical or astral, as the case may be. The incubi, their male counterpart, in like manner seek intercourse with females, whether for the satisfaction of lust, the appropriation of vital energies, or the siring of a suitable means of incarnation. Ancient sanctions surrounding the conjugal union reflect the magical insight that, where there is a breach in the intimate circle, an unseen third party may likely to intrude upon the act – sometimes with tangible results.

The wider mythological context of the phenomenon is thus explicit, the themes and symbols traceable to the ancient mingling of a non-human seed, to the aerial phenomena of the Mahabharata, to the winged disks of Assyria and Egypt. The depth of correlation substantiates the notion that the modern encounter scenario perpetuates an agenda which occupied the ancient world.

In the proactive types of alien liaison, where nigh equality is the basis of interaction, the alien host is rarely tongue-tied in elucidating its legacy and illustrious charter. Cults are flourishing and galactic mythologies being elaborated, the fantastic and voluminous transactions encompassing whole libraries. Much of this material has emerged from the practise of spirit-channelling, a contemporary form of the trance-medium interface. Entities thus engaged tend to identify as ascended Masters of the human pantheon or as emissaries of specific celestial centres – the Pleiadean, the Cassiopaeon, the Vegan – in what appears to all intent and purposes as a highly civilised and congenial trans-galactic fraternity. As for the non-terrestrial centres, each is evolving its own stellar myths – complete with a history, a science, an ethics and aesthetics. Instead of the stories of Earth being supplanted, however, they are provided with cosmic context, with visionary windows, and a web of interconnectivity in a spiritualised vision of the universe. Speck in the ocean though the blue planet be, it is comforting to know that its fortunes are monitored with deep empathic interest by the greater trans-galactic set.

Alien Types and their Magical Pedigree

If the volume of alien visitation characterises the phenomenon as absurd, so does the encountered variety of exotic creatures – absurd, that is, from the standpoint of extraterrestrial biology. Microbes from Mars, theories of panspermia, the idea that life was introduced to earth via microscopic organisms drifting through space – such is the limiting case scenario for mainstream science, despite the tacit admission that life likely arises wherever conditions are suitable. Between visionary experience and the pragmatism of SETI – the ostensible search for extraterrestrial intelligence by way of radio telescope – what conceptual gulf! What congruence, the reductionist might ask, is there of either context or subject matter? Perhaps the intellectual divide derives from diverging notions concerning the nature and possibilities of life – the ways in which intelligence and intentionality may become manifest. It is further a question of the experiential categories admitted in evidence.

A subtle or psychic dimension is commonly observed in connection with the alien encounter experience – a fact which disposes detractors to class the phenomenon as entirely subjective. The problem with this position is that ‘it’ leaves footprints – chemical traces, stigmata and curious apports – in the mundane dimensions of physical space. If it is conceded that the psychic and physical realms are at least contiguous, how far does the correlation – the interpenetration – extend? To what degree are their respective coordinates mutually interchangeable? Is not, as the idealists suggest, the entire universe a figment of imagination ? and their position is unassailable.

The alien types encountered throughout history evince cultural and descriptive norms, suggesting some kind of subtle and symbolic interplay between the alien and human worlds. For magical cultures there is nothing particularly strange about this. Through regular ingestion of psychedelic agents

the otherworldly becomes commonplace, and the universe is made explicit on human terms. It may be argued that the modern psyche, in this sense, is semiconscious at best – estranged from the visionary vistas of archaic sensibility. Powerful taboos moreover exist against the explication of this heritage, as evidenced by the control of such elixirs as open the doors of perception. To the disinherited one-dimensional mindset the alien groves are thus alien indeed, teeming with flora and fauna reminiscent of myth, with goblins and ghouls, with mutations and permutations of the morphological template, ranging from the angelic to the beastly.

A provisional taxonomy, however, allows us to identify four generic types, that have emerged in the contemporary context – namely the small ubiquitous Greys, the larger humanoid Reptilians, the blonde Aryan Nordics, and the mantis-like Insectoids.

It is perhaps not coincidental that these four evince a quasi heraldic typology, comparable to the four cherubic powers of God, symbolised in the Apocalypse as Lion, Bull, Man and Eagle. Yet in another sense the forms here described are less archetype than quasi biological phenotype, reflecting aspects of humanity's evolutionary and gestational history, accentuated by artifice and breeding in the fluid medium of astral / etheric hyperspace.

The Grey Creature of the Abyss

The alien type with the most exposure at present is that of the so-called Greys, familiar from best-selling books and countless contemporary abduction reports. As their name suggests, they are blue-grey or ashen white, while in stature relatively small, their height averaging three to four feet. A somewhat taller variety of four to five feet appears among them in what seems a supervisory role. They appear physically puny, except for disproportionately large heads, with doming cranium and prominent dark eyes, suggestive of

hypertrophied intellect, clairvoyance and hypnotic powers. There is confusion as to whether these entities are the result of natural evolution or a type of homunculus, a manufactured form of life. It is probable that they are in some sense both – aborted human foetuses, whose energetic matrix is appropriated and energised by the astral / etheric serpent collective as a means of forging a link between the species. Severed from the human tree, they are raised to quasi maturity in some other dimensional realm. Magical tradition maintains that the rite of generation must result in progeny – the sexual union of man and woman cannot be without karmic issue – if not on the familiar material plane, then in some other universe.

These creatures accordingly are not human, they do not possess a human soul, which is activated with the first indrawn breath. In some respects they are akin to the ghoul, which is a reanimated corpse. Ghouls, however, lacking the plasticity of the unborn, have none of their mutative potential, and are thus usually discarded, having served whatever purpose, to wander the regions of entropy. The Greys by contrast are coordinated and hive-like in behaviour. They present as robotic, detached, inscrutable and remote. There is consensus that they are slaves or drones, representing the lower end of a hierarchical structure which is enforced by way the electromagnetic serpent matrix. In modern astrology they are linked with the star system of Zeta Reticuli, and they are, perhaps erroneously, classed with the reptilian type of alien intelligence.

Lastly, they are creatures of the Abyss, which means is that, despite their mercurial intellect and super-sensitive psyche, they live in a world of *no-meaning*. This is summed in the belief that they lack the soul matrix, as created in the image of God – the angel or universal attractor, which is the power of deliberation and the cosmic canon of meaning. Hence the imperative of the Luciferian agenda – to capture or create a single soul wherein these qualities are retained, to match the miracle of the immaculate conception and perfect the 100,000 yogas of a human birth.

The Astral Serpent

Above the Greys in the astral / etheric hierarchy are the Dracos or Reptilians – tall humanoids of reptilian aspect, generically identified with the serpent races of ancient mythology. They are described as of a fierce countenance and reaching over seven feet in height. A ubiquitous symbol throughout the ancient world, the iconic serpent or dragon is associated with subtle intellect, miraculous technologies, and the legacy of an interstellar or interdimensional race which conferred initiation upon early humanity. Wherever the type was accorded divinity status, its representatives acquired de facto rule over their peers through an appointed lineage of priests and kings. Here lies the mythic core of the draconian conspiracy. The ancient astronaut hypothesis of Erich von Daniken, though a narrowly physicalist interpretation, captures the essential idea, while emphasising the tangible aspects of the phenomenon.

Several decades of further research, however, suggest a more subtle conception of interstellar travel – something akin to the ancient yogas and tantras, of which the aerial races of myth and legend are the consummate masters. Said to come from the stars, from the sea, and from subterranean caverns, their mode of entry suggests a kind of vibrational shift, which the human sensibility can only interpret in a vague and imprecise manner. The Maya, for instance, speak of serpent ropes which descend from the sky, of stellar beings which emerge as from the mouths of caves and serpents. Suggestive, yet inconclusive to the rational mindset, such accounts exemplify the difficulties of the three-dimensional sensorium in processing higher dimensional information. Cognate also are the reported shape-shifting abilities, which permit these beings to appear in various guises, including the human. Thus, while capable of appearing physical in every sense, their vibrational

centre is evidently the more fluid astral / etheric matrix of occult philosophy, from which they project onto the material plane by way of techniques occult.

Psychics relate that humans may be ‘shadowed’ by these reputedly malevolent creatures, whereby a certain merging occurs on an energetic level between the human soul and the reptilian theophany, resulting in a kind of symbiosis. The astral entity draws energy from the human vortex, and confers, to the extent that the human nervous system can adapt thereto, superior cognitive and motor skills. This evidently is the substance, at least in part, of classical conceptions of genius as a species of angelic or daimonic possession.

Another way, according to traditions of highest antiquity, for the serpent to gain material substance is the sexual union. This exemplified in legends of incubi and succubi, of Lilith and Asmodei, the forked tongue of the latter, according to medieval inquisitors, said to resemble another organ employed in the act. Writers such as Sinistrari and Montague Summers went so far as to suggest that actual offspring could be sired in this way. Cognate are theories regarding ziggurats of Mesopotamia, proposing that an upper chamber of these towers was furnished with a couch, where a votive courtesan, at astronomically propitious times, could await the visitation of a celestial paramour, so that perchance a star child could be conceived. If a celestial visitor did indeed descend on these occasions, it is equally plausible, especially as the mysteries fell into decline, that another ascended the stairs from below. By all ways, by any means – as the magical dictum has it.

The writer David Icke goes yet further, suggesting that full-fledged serpents live among humans *as* humans, and naming prominent individuals, among them Henry Kissinger, the scions of the presidential Bush dynasty, former British prime minister Heath, and the royal house of Windsor for this dubious accolade. These individuals maintain their human appearance, he asserts, by recourse to frequent blood rites involving human sacrifice. It is clearly not without reason that he is billed as the worlds most controversial

speaker, and few have gone on record to expose the occult conspiracy in an open and confrontational way as he. If his views are in any way correct, this would add rather chilling augury to Her Majesty's statement – pointedly and with impeccable diction – that 'Princess Diana was an exceptional *human being*'. For the greater readership, of course, such assertions open abysses of speculative ideation, incapable of resolution without initiated insight or subtle discernment – and perhaps that is the idea. The deluge of magical and mystic disclosure forces a choice between two options – to become initiate (i.e. to become insane from the ordinary standpoint), or to obtain refuge in some form of fundamentalism.

A cognate phenomenon, illustrating the problem, is that of SRA or satanic ritual abuse, and its alleged correlate, false memory syndrome. The inherent controversy – individual cases aside – may be cast as the question whether the alleged atrocities occur behind closed doors, or in realms best described as astral, subliminal or imaginal. Is astral violation punishable by law? Should it be? Clearly the secular state has not a ghost of a chance to legislate effectively in these subtle realms, whereas the occult dimensions of human conflict and pathology are increasingly becoming overt.

While echoing disclosures of professed insiders, regarding pure blood serpents within certain aristocratic families, it is possible that Icke, like von Daniken, fell into the error of an oversimplified physicalism. Such at least appears to be the case in his taking literally a confession of English occultist Aleister Crowley, implying that between 1912 and 1928 he (Crowley) ritually murdered over one thousand children. Icke's position may be compromised in that he casts a very wide net, yet this should not detract from the fact that children *were* sacrificed en masse at courts of the European nobility (see Chapter 8), and still disappear by the hundreds of thousands annually. Heath, incidentally, showed himself conciliatory: 'We hope and pray Mr Icke will recover from his sad delusions' – words to that effect.

A predatory, conspiratorial orientation toward the human race is thus most commonly identified with the reptilian class of entity, whose astronomical heavens are the constellations of Orion and Draco – whence also the term *draconian* to designate despotic rule.

White Squeaky-Clean Aryans

A further type of reported aliens is comprised of the so-called Nordics. These are fully human in appearance, their physique, as the name suggests, converging upon the ideal of the blonde, blue-eyed, fair complexioned Aryan Übermensch of Nazi ideology. Either clean-cut or with angelic shoulder-length hair, they appear smartly and functionally dressed, their manner is solicitous, and of course they speak English. Associated with the star systems of Lyra, the Pleiades and Vega, these are widely considered the white-hat rangers of the alien pantheon – benevolent elder star-brothers, intent on assisting humanity on the evolutionary ladder.

The psychology, of course, may be deceptive, in that the cosmic conspiracy must needs proceed by seduction rather than coercion. If so, the error of discernment parallels a similar error in iconic symbolism. For nothing evil is said regarding the first, seemingly innocuous *white-horse* rider of the Apocalypse, which is followed in turn by the riders of bloodshed, famine, pestilence and death. Theologians have proposed that this lone white knight represents perhaps the holy spirit of God. Not so. It represents the thin end of the wedge, the false doctrine, conquering by deceptive means before the draconian plot becomes overt.

It is useful to compare the archetype of the Nietzschean superman which informed the race-ideology of the Third Reich, and methods of the latter in wooing the German population. The Nazis at first *did* feed the hungry; they gave impetus to industry, and fostered national self-esteem. The populace was

effectively seduced. Even when Germany was waging wars of aggression, Europe's political establishment remained in a quandary, evidently mesmerised by Hitler's impassioned rhetoric in which the words *Frieden* and *Freiheit* (peace and liberty) occur again and again.

From the Germany of 1933 to the global agenda of 2003 – seventy years on these words still resound around the planet. The psychology is ancient, and honed to a degree of sophistication that preternatural insight almost is required to unmask the deception.

Insectoid Buddhas and Ancients of Days

Arguably the most alien of alien types pertains to the mysterious insectoid variety, described in *Robert's Alien Encyclopaedia* (1996) as resembling or suggesting a large praying mantis. It is some six feet tall, with long folded arms across the chest, large dispassionate eyes, and a mantis-like visage. Psychologically the impression is one of sagely wisdom and great age, coupled with utter indifference as to what the eyes behold. Remote and unaffected in its egalitarian stare, the stance seems one of pure observation, emancipated beyond imagining, royal in its dignity. For these reasons the Insectoids are commonly believed to top the alien hierarchy.

Relevant iconography being otherwise mute, it is necessary to scan the wider literature for clues concerning the creature's pedigree.

In *The Invisible Landscape* the brothers Terence and Dennis McKenna describe their alchemical grand opus in the Amazonian rainforest, during which a member of the party is described as suddenly and spontaneously emitting a *very loud, dry, machine-like buzz*, suggestive of a large insect. While it is impossible here to recount the complex scenario, a parallel may be drawn with traditions of shamanic metamorphosis, with archaic technologies of hyper-

focused sound, relating to the phenomenon of superconductivity and the condensation of a psychic singularity or dimensional vortex.

Expounding a similar theme in his *Typhonian Trilogies*, the occultist Kenneth Grant relates of initiations wherein the subject is astrally transformed into the effigy of a giant insectoid. The stance or accomplishment, as the biological type suggests, is of absolute repose, timeless hypnotic fixation, and a borderline state wherein electromagnetic resonance opens upon the hyperspatial matrix, generating non-local and synergistic phenomena. Mention is made in the Typhonian tomes of the ethereal insect buzz, heard in moments of strange augury, and presaging some kind of dimensional or cognitive shift. While not necessarily loud, the sound is experienced as possessing unusual energy and density. Theories apropos the concerted insect din in tropical regions propose that the phenomenon is associated with the non-local architecture of a biophysical unified field, wherein organisms are linked in a web of morphogenetic resonance.

A Hall of Mirrors

A mysterious phenomenon does exist. But what is it?

Extraterrestrial visitation, hyperspatial dissonance, angels and devils of the Apocalypse, epidemic of mass delusion – none of these provide a comfortable fit; the mystery spills over, under and around, these concepts, as they are generally defined. It partakes in equal measure of the material and the psychic nature, as these are conventionally understood. A such it challenges conventional understanding of reality itself, calling for a comprehensive new paradigm of the human condition.

In one sense this should hardly surprise us. There is, after all, nothing revolutionary about the notion that human knowledge is incomplete. What if it is not *merely* incomplete – if this modern world-destroying civilisation is

somehow radically estranged from the authentic possibilities of the universe? How can one measure existing knowledge against the unknown? Between knowledge and imagination – what gulf! The epistemological bubble appears out of sync with the hyperspatial manifold. By some conjuring trick a sizeable portion of the universe has been banished from the cultural radar. When reality knocks on the door, when it imposes itself with every dramatic device of the enchanter's art – it is not recognised. Its social history bears this out.

The modern era of the UFO is said to have begun in 1947 with the sighting of some half dozen disk shaped objects by airman Kenneth Arnold over Mt Rainier, Washington. This was also the year of the notorious Roswell incident, involving the reported crash of an exotic craft and its recovery by the US military, complete with four small humanoids. Less prominent are reports relating of a similar incident at Aztec, New Mexico in 1948. The first widely publicised abduction account concerns the testimony, elicited under hypnosis, of Betty and Barney Hill, who in 1961, on a lone stretch of road, encountered what they believed to be an alien craft and its occupants – non human *and* human. Looking back over the decades, it becomes apparent that the veil of taboo and the obligatory media cynicism descended gradually. In the fifties, the Cold War notwithstanding, there was a degree of openness – a kind of John Wayne type of pragmatism of ‘we’ll get to the bottom of this’. UFO sightings were widely reported in US newspapers, and ‘Dr’ George Adamski of Mount Palomar Observatory (where he operated a hamburger stand) made celebrity with his claims of contact in the California desert with visitors from Venus. While one may be inclined to dismiss his tales as preposterous, there remains at least a social phenomenon to be explained, for Adamski left something of a legacy and gained access to the highest levels of society, including an audience with queen Juliana of the Netherlands.

A pattern is here already apparent which has persisted, and which suggests a complex multifaceted phenomenon – that some it traumatises, while

others are ‘blessed’ and emerge from their encounter experiences as advocates or, as it were, emissaries of another world. Yet romance gave way to national security concerns, as unidentified radar blips appear over the United states, strange craft buzz military installations, and veritable armadas of disk shaped craft appear over American cities. Semi-secret studies, conducted by the Air Force (Project Sign, Project Grudge) conclude that a real and unexplained phenomenon is involved. Then, in 1967, with a study commissioned of the University of Colorado, the phenomenon is officially and inexplicably buried as nonexistent, henceforth to propagate in a realm of disinformation and levels of security for which new classifications had yet to be invented. As was the case with psychic research during the eighties, high level interest in the subject did not wane; it went more deeply under cover.

Whereas the Manhattan Project (to develop the atomic bomb) was merely ‘top secret’, the alien question confronting the Truman administration gave rise to a plethora of *ultra*, *cosmic* and other superlative types of ‘above top secret’, as more recent disclosures under the Freedom of Information Act reveal. Documents now regarded as controversial relate to Majestic 12 (or MJ-12), a group of scientists, intelligence and defence personnel, convened by Truman to study the phenomenon and advise the president accordingly. Yet from these beginnings evolved that shadowy priesthood and executive body, the multi-armed octopus of intelligence operatives, industrial concerns and moneyed elites, which operates without congressional or parliamentary oversight and forms a kind of buffer between consensus reality and whatever is out there. Yet the trail of the beast draws attention to its quarry, abundant documentary evidence now being available through the pioneering website *The Black Vault* and the more recent *UFOs And The National Security State* by Richard Dolan.

Our first link or clue to the alien mystery thus beckons from within the heart of the orthodoxy of the apparent superpowers. Military installations such as Area 51 in the Nevada desert have acquired a reputation as places where

recovered and ‘back-engineered’ alien craft are being test-flown, and super-secret technologies developed for military and intelligence applications. Despite draconian provisions for secrecy surrounding these bases, extensive anecdotal evidence has been amassed, suggesting some very strange activity.

Bob Lazar, who, in a feat of defiance, went public with his account of having worked on such craft, relates the aura of mystery as well as a sense of the ominous which befell him on his first assignment inside these craft. It became clear that here was a technology *light-years*, in a manner of speaking, in advance of ours. There was no evidence of a propulsion system, as we understand this term, and the entire craft comprised a seamless whole, as if poured from a single mould. Equally mysterious was the guidance system, the electronics of the craft being evidently designed to interface directly with the neural system of its pilots, so that intention might be conveyed by mere thought or nervous impulse.

This is highly revealing of the alien psychology. It suggests a degree of yogic mind control, a one-pointed focus of intentionality, whereas a human pilot, thinking ‘I might crash into that mountain side’, would immediately translate that thought into fact.

The occasions where these craft did apparently crash – it is possible that they were planted – are ascribed to certain electromagnetic anomalies which obtain in pueblo country of New Mexico, as they do elsewhere. It is theorised that their guidance systems utilise the earth’s magnetic grid, thus explaining their high-velocity right-angle turns, the gravitational forces of which would disintegrate any conventional craft. As these manoeuvres, however, are embedded in higher dimensional space, it is theorised that the g-forces are effectively neutralised. The object does not move ‘through’ space – it bends surrounding space to make some objects near and others distant. It forms the inside, of which three-dimensional space is the outside. The incidents of downed craft are possibly due to the weakening of the earth’s magnetic field

and the concurrent rise in electromagnetic noise in the atmosphere. Insofar as electromagnetism is the basis of physical reality, the latter noise factor may also explain why a more malignant and predatory type of alien entity is manifesting than has been the case hitherto.

The revisionist mythos asserts that from the Roosevelt / Truman / Eisenhower era onwards a pact of treaty has been in effect, between the US underground empire and the Reptilian / Grey collective. A mutual arrangement is said to be in place whereby technology is traded for certain concessions, allowing the alien contingent to operate in and around Earth, to experiment on human and animal specimens, and use the planet as a base. Promises of benign intent were apparently received. Like a Trojan horse, however, the indulgence of the alien agenda has proven to be the thin edge of an invasion. Cited witnesses, describing the interior of clandestine underground facilities, agree that most of their lower levels are entirely under the control of the Reptilians and their drones – mind-controlled mutants, de-souled humans, and the usual Greys. For horror of imagery one must imagine an experimental Nazi medical facility cum concentration camp of the twenty-first century. Historical types repeat themselves, and one only need glance back at the string of broken treaties to destroy native American culture, to recognise that a karmic legacy is involved, which, if not exorcised, will lead the US on a similar path.

A karmic psycho-spiritual nexus also links the human and non-human world on a deeper level. One may envisage the modern agenda as an invocation of the ‘alien’ as archetypal embodiment of a brave new world, a transformed humanity in the image of a technological idol or ideal. As in the classical scenario of magical invocation, the entity does not manifest unbidden, but a doorway must be opened from within. Whether this is done deliberately or unconsciously, an expanded reality results, and the sorcerer either masters the demons conjured – the forces unleashed – or he is unceremoniously devoured. At the very least he becomes their slave.

There are numerous conjectures as to how the alien gateway was opened in the immediate post-war era. Reference is made to the legendary Philadelphia experiment, a classified military operation involving a hyperspatial or stargate technology. The former reportedly drew on the genius of Einstein and Tesla, and succeeded in transporting a naval vessel through the fourth dimension, however with disastrous human consequences. Survivors are quoted to the effect that certain crew members were embedded in the bulk-head, others were missing, and yet others went insane. It is further reported that surviving crew were subsequently wont to levitate and fade in and out of reality like a mirage. While the US Navy admits to a scientific project to obtain radar invisibility by shrouding a naval Vessel, the USS Eldritch, in a powerful electromagnetic field, the details have remained controversial.

A related project of legend, the so-called Montauk experiment, is similarly described as involving a dimensional gate or space-time portal. Claiming direct involvement, servicemen Al Bielek and Duncan Cameron propound a scenario involving time travel between the nineteen forties and eighties, age-regression and dual identities in the service of the US military. There are further claims that both these projects were engineered from ‘the other side’ to facilitate entry into the local space-time matrix for the Draco confederates of Orion.

Yet other theories suggest that detonations of the atomic bomb not only alerted the alien intelligence, but also rent the ‘magnetic aura’ of the earth, thus allowing the influx of other-dimensional entries into the terrestrial space-time continuum. On a more sinister note Hiroshima and Nagasaki are described as sacrificial offerings, an expedient of propitiation and means of providing the lower type of astral / etheric entities with a basis for materialisation.

Even the Great Beast – Aleister Crowley – is said to have had a hand in opening the dimensional portal, at least on the psychic or spiritual plane. His invocations and methods of occult self-development undoubtedly effected a

dissolution of stolid nineteenth century piety and helped usher in the Faustian aeon of Horus. Crowley died in forty-seven, the year the alien genie emerged from the bottle, and it seems fitting to invoke the spiritual law that a prophetic seed has to fall into the earth before it can reproduce. Highly enigmatic in connection with the aforesaid Montauk experiment is a phrase in Crowley's *Liber Al vel Legis*, commonly called The Book Of The Law: *I am the warrior Lord of the forties; the eighties cower before me and are abased*. At the time when this was written (1903) the utterance might have seemed cryptic. In retrospect, of course, it makes perfect sense. A second great war; the eighties did cower, and they were abased.

A second link to the alien mystery is to be found in the lore of a terrestrial underground empire, where the term *underground* may be taken in both the literal and figurative sense. Myths and legends concerning such an empire have persisted throughout history. They survive in the Buddhist haven of Agharta, in hollow-earth mythology, as in the theosophical concept of Ascended Masters, otherwise the generic Great White Brotherhood, an enclave of perfected immortals, which from etheric fortresses and Himalayan caves oversees the evolution of planetary consciousness.

increasingly In the modern context these notions have taken on a more sinister hue with claims of Nazi survival and the agenda pursued by a secret technological empire independent of any nation state. Insofar as 'alien' abductors are often entirely human in appearance, it has been suggested that the extraterrestrial scenario may be an elaborate deception to detract attention from facts terrestrial. Governments may be colluding or acting under constraint to hide the facts of an invisible cold war. According to this hypothesis an advanced technology is in human hands and controlled by an enclave invisible and unnamed.

This should not be surprising, for, as noted in Chapter 2, qualitatively higher technologies have been demonstrated, documented and in many cases

patented. Antigravity, over-unity or perpetual motion engines, vibrational medicine, zero point energy, electromagnetic weather control – have these developments been conjured out of existence, simply to disappear from the cultural radar? According to findings severally documented by Henry Stevens and Nick Cooke, Nazi Germany, in its relative scientific isolation, developed antigravity craft, while the US was concentrating on relativity theory and the Manhattan Project. In the fifties the relevant research was appropriated by companies such as Lockheed and Boeing; before it disappeared from the overt agenda. As a result a nigh hundred years old technology is still the mainstay of air travel.

It is intriguing to speculate to what extent Nazi ideology disposed toward Faustian technologies. Certain it is that its spiritual core was informed by ideals of atavistic resurgence, pagan renaissance, and the ‘Black Sun’ of Ultima Thule – the Hyperborean wonderland of immortals and magical technologies. Thus, at least on an archetypal level, a link existed between National Socialism and the mythic legacy of the ancients. It is further evident that this legacy was pursued by Nazi enclaves in a practical manner. The group *Ahnenerbe* (ancestral heritage) financed archaeological excavations and research expeditions, including the 1938 Tibet expedition of Ernst Schäfer. A trail of evidence presented by mythographer William Henry suggests that Roosevelt and Hitler were engaged in something of a race for an arcane secret in central Asia. Both men sent expeditions to Tibet and Mongolia, and a similar contest was being engaged in with respect to the arctic regions.

We are in something of a quandary in that documented history merges seamlessly with myth – that mundane events have mythological ramifications and extensions. This quite apart from the impossibility of elucidating what happened even on the prosaic plane. All that is obtained is a string of witness accounts – the tale as told by victors and survivors. History is thus simply the account which is made to prevail – a kind of fiction, interwoven with myth,

insofar as ‘world events’ and events of state, since earliest memory, have been scripted in the context of an ideological agenda.

A safer guide to the unadorned truths are the unfailing archetypes, which are always in view, for they cannot be hidden. The Promethean or Faustian quest is intrinsic to the human enterprise, and the vehement denials in this regard indicate all the more clearly a humourless and bitterly earnest pursuit. Nature has its own analogies. A visible tree is mirrored by a branching root-system of commensurate size and complexity. Acknowledged history is thus merely the visible half. From the predynastic ages of the Egyptian Horus Horakhti – Lord of the Horizon – a legacy has propagated of a sequestered elite, engaging in dialogue the invisible half – the otherworldly and supra-mundane determinants of human civilisation. Whether established ‘contact’ groups like MJ-12, CSETI, Ashtar Command and the Aetherius Society are their emissaries or in competition with ‘them’ remains controversial.

Toward a new Paradigm

A third link and level of secrecy pertains to the hyperspatial denizens themselves, which evidently have seen fit to bypass official protocol, and interface directly with ‘ordinary’ men, women, and children. Here we move from the nuts and bolts of military issues to the human concerns regarding contact with a alien reality. While previous scenarios present merely an attenuated view of the world, a whole new paradigm is indicated at this point, suggesting that reality might be fundamentally other than was believed.

Among the first to enunciate the hyperspatial theory of alien visitation was the French scientist Jacques Vallee, whose phenomenological approach distinguished his work from the more mundane literature in this field. Vallee further placed the phenomenon in its wider mythological context, citing

traditions of faery lore and the otherworldly in general, as essentially contiguous with the modern contact experience.

What then is this new paradigm, which links science and mythology, imagination and reason, the inner worlds with the outer?

Quantum physics and cosmology differs from classical conceptions on four essential points: the notion of parallel universes in hyperspace, mind-participation in the physical process, quantum interconnectedness, and the principle of non-locality. A fifth concerns the notion of latent or zero point energy inherent in the vacuum, calculated, per cubic centimetre of ‘empty’ space, to exceed the total energy of the known universe. It is further apparent that all of these conceptions were inherent in the romantic myth of magic before entering the purview of modern science. We obtain a local universe which is but one in an infinite series, which is informed or structured by mind, with all points in mind-space-time being organically and instantaneously connected – a universe wherein awesome resources may be tapped, in principle anywhere, given the appropriate trigger.

Exporting these notions into the broader existential domain, we begin to formulate a specific theory of the anomalous, as of phenomena in general. Intersecting realities are explained as a function of intersecting fields – electromagnetic in nature – which also comprise the material basis of consciousness. In the human brain it is the concerted ‘firing’ of millions of neuronal synapses, which generates a holographic or field effect, although it remains unclear how the electron dance sustains the hyper-real technicolour hallucination we call the universe. Nevertheless a correlation is observed, so that the sensate realm which occultists term astral / etheric is conceptually equivalent to the higher dimensional space of twentieth century physics – the material nature in each instance comprising an aspect or condensation of the hyperspatial manifold.

Diverse realities are thus tuned in by a specific cast of mind, even as the quantum experiment collapses the hyperspatial wave and yields a particle. The object or phenomenon observed gains ontological definition in the reifying vortex of attention, so that its reality is proportional to the conscious energy invested therein. Theoretical validation is thus provided for a raft of anomalies – Jungian synchronicities, accurate intuitions, psychokinesis, precognition, stigmata, apports – in that no special conditions would seem to be required for their manifestation. The miracle, rather, is how consciousness of any phenomenon arises from the mere interaction of particles, as the materialist creed propounds. Mind and world appear to be connected at a preconscious level of intentionality. What this means regarding the ‘alien’ question is that, though the phenomenon be a psychic one, it has physical dimensions. And though it be physical, the psyche plays an undisclosed and extensive role.

Frequently cited in this context is the work of Michael Persinger, who experimentally demonstrated a link between electromagnetic fields and the quality and content of consciousness. Persinger argues that geomagnetism in certain locales may impact consciousness in such a way that an individual is propelled experientially into another quasi-alien reality. Geographical regions thus characterised are variously associated with fault-lines and tectonic stress, large underground ore deposits, underground streams, with ley lines and sites of ancient megaliths. Theorists who require a psychological explanation cite this influence, along with sleep-paralysis and hypnagogic imagery as the most probable cause of the phenomenon. The caveat in this scenario is that the altered state is purely subjective and its content essentially unreal – a function of brain chemistry and culturally determined interpretations.

Yet what is forgotten here is that so-called mundane reality is equally dependent on a highly specific chemical state. A case in point is the phenomenology of schizophrenia. Given a slight alteration in the finely tuned homeostasis of the brain, and the universe dissolves as a dream – aliens appear

and associates are morphed into zombies. Depending on one's metaphysical bias, therefore, it seems more appropriate to regard all experiential worlds as equally real or equally unreal. The distinction becomes meaningless when it is realised that reality is not a given, but a construct of intentionality, the eidolon of a creative stance.

It is habits of language which obstruct insight and meaningful engagement with the phenomenon – indeed with nature itself. We are accustomed – at least those of us born before 1977 – to think of ghosts and machines in separate categories – Arthur Koestler notwithstanding. To link the foregoing in a metathesis and embrace the emerging paradigm, two conceptual adjustments are needed: the realisation that the spirits are material, or, which amounts to the same, that the material world is spiritual – a construct of language, and that the content of the alleged hallucination is real. It is the primacy of experience which sets it apart as a window on reality. Reality *is* the experience, and it is real precisely as long as it lasts.

While experience also has nuances – the sensory, the imaginal, the intuitive – it has no ontological arbiter, no ideologue or judge of the real. Constraining the spirits to the material world we are neither reductionist nor materialist in the old sense. We are asserting the unity of nature. Demon, elf and fairy queen are real within their experiential domain, and knowledge is not increased by substituting a clinical vocabulary for these supposedly primitive categories. The succubus really does draw semen, the vampire really goes after blood, and according to the law of karma or causality, such activities have consequences which are material in the most early Victorian sense imaginable. It is the subjective interface which is of existential moment, wherefore the magical terminology, insofar as it is the most direct, might yet be the best.

This does not mean, however, that the iconography of the alien experience should be taken at face value. As Dr Karla Turner demonstrated, there are in this phenomenon levels within levels within levels. One layer of

ostensible meaning masks another, and there is no telling which contains the ultimate kernel of truth, or whether indeed such a kernel exists. Of relevance here is the notion, elaborated by Mike Heiser, author of *The Facade*, that the alien syndrome is just that – an elaborate facade projected to deceive concerning its intrinsic nature. Jacques Vallee essentially concurs, citing a mechanism of cognitive conditioning or mind control, yet without committing himself as to what intelligence might be mounting the deception. For Heiser, a scholar of ancient languages, there is little ambivalence. The alien presence denotes a demonic insurgency as exemplified by the biblical nephilim. It is extra-dimensional rather than extra-terrestrial. A more mundane scenario, the while, proposes that the alien chimera serves to cloak clandestine experiments in the area of mind control, as carried out by US intelligence agencies under the code name MK Ultra.

If the mind-control hypothesis of alien abduction proves applicable, does this invalidate the subjective encounter experience? If a secret arm of the government was involved, would this invalidate the extra-dimensional or demonic scenario? Not so, as the foregoing makes clear. Nor does *subjective* mean *unreal*. Philosophy rather assures us that all semantic constructions of reality are equally symbolic, the symbol level being the currency of discourse. Concepts, furthermore, are the function of a cognitive stance whereby order is created out of chaos. From this meta-linguistic perspective all phenomena are equally real and equally hallucinatory. For ontological status beyond the relative we must needs appeal to transcendent verity.

Hypnosis may elicit the image of an owl – a screen memory it turns out, for the owl is really an alien. Now what is it up to? Aha! It is engaged in a gynaecological operation – or is it the malignant groping of atrophied intelligence ... is it a tool in the hands of cosmic sadists or is it a dissociated part of ourselves, coming to haunt or to wake us from ontological slumber? Every level is symbolic, involving projection of some culturally meaningful

construct, each of which is potentially confirmed and amplified in the magical mirror of the visionary manifold. Multiple interpretations may apply and compete, in that these mysteries are in themselves subject to the cosmic controversy regarding ultimate substance and meaning. Whatever is *really* happening, it is likely being exploited by diverse orders of intelligence for agendas of their own. Whereas twenty-first century humanity has been catapulted into the hyperspatial plenum – into a universe of wonders, alive with intentionality and meaning – it remains to examine the pervasive and perennial archetypes for clues regarding a cosmic agenda.

The Quest for a Human Birth

It is here that the modern contact experience seamlessly links with the greater body of archaic and universal myth. For recognisable in these strange alien antics is the age-old quest – the Opus Magnum or Great Work – the initiation of mankind, understood as the creation of a new and superior race. Comprising elements of evolution, as well as redemption and restoration, the theme has coloured artistic, religious, scientific and political thinking since the cradle of human civilisation.

Foremost in this context is the Egyptian Osiris – Isis – Horus myth, as treated by E. A. Wallis Budge in his *Osiris And The Egyptian Resurrection*. Osiris stands at the head of the mysterious First Time – the period in Egyptian prehistory of legendary, quasi mythological god-kings. A patriarchal figure comparable to the Nordic Odin and the Olympian Zeus, he represents the primordial perfection of the Neteru – gods which walked the earth before their arcadian civilisation was destroyed. The myth relates how Osiris was overcome and dismembered by his arch-rival Set, and his remains subsequently scattered throughout the earth. His grieving consort, Isis, then undertakes the gathering together of the parts and the restoring of his body to wholeness. In this she

succeeds almost entirely, finding all that was lost, with the exception of the royal phallus. And thus the matter stood until now.

All essentials of our theme are here comprised: a legendary prehistoric civilisation and its demise, the scattering of its legacy throughout the earth, and the attempt by the remnant cultures to restore its erstwhile glories. Isis, in this connection, is associated with the Star system Sirius and represents the source of the ancient gnosis. From her womb issues the avenging Horus, representing the gnosis itself, as reflected in his totem – the Eye, in whose name the dynastic rulers of Egypt reigned. It but remains to comment on the significance of the missing phallus, and here the archaic myth contains a prophetic charge. Very simply, this phallus is a symbol of the generative power, on the metaphysical plane, of the creative power of godhead. We may recall in this connection that the primordial serpent lost the power to propagate, except through the human race as intermediary.

On this point, moreover, ancient myth finds its echo in the spiritual ferment of the modern era. Aleister Crowley – mystic, magician, and self-confessed logos of the aeon under the rubric of *To Mega Therion* (the Great Beast 666) – received in 1904 in the city of Cairo, through dictation by a preternatural agency a text entitled *Liber Al vel Legis* – popularly called *The Book of the Law*. In this document the Secret Chiefs of the A.:A.: (the Stellar Order of the Astrum Argentum – the generic inner-plane order) announced the inception of the aeon of Horus, also called the Crowned and Conquering Child. The message, as interpreted and promulgated by Crowley, prophesied the imminent overthrow of Christianity, as of the ‘slave-gods’ of religious tradition in general, and the rise of a new order of humanity, established in the revelation of its own essential godhead.

The mythos has since spilled into the popular realm, where the Eye of Horus is identified with the angelic Watchers of Enochian apocrypha and, capping the Masonic Pyramid, as a symbol of the New World Order. Is there a

link beyond the symbolic between Crowley's assertion that the missing Osirian member had in fact been found 'quite recently' and the frantic alien breeding programme, prominent in modern abduction lore? The similarity between Crowley's visual rendering of Lam or Aiwass, his indwelling magical genius, and the typical form of the alien Greys is, but for their large eyes, at least suggestive. Lam appears to be squinting. Could it be that his eyes were yet closed?

Cognoscenti claim that the said *Liber Al* not merely contains the secrets of initiation, but also the cryptic key to a hyperspatial technology, complete with invincible weaponry. If so, it would seem fortuitous that the rediscovery of the fabled lightning bolt of Indra, as of the ancient stargate, should coincide with the Crowleyan revelation of the true self or stellar genius as the core identity of man and woman. With the magical dictum *Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law* the initiate is bidden to cast off the slave-gods of the perishing order, and join the ranks of the illuminati – not least, under the new magical law, to assume full responsibility for his or her actions.

Given the nature of these disclosures, it is expedient to compare the present dark age with another, during which information was likewise proscribed and a contrived reality disseminated for spiritual and intellectual consumption – that of the medieval Church. During that age there also were fantastic rumours – that the existing order is an elaborate deception, that the planets are revolving spheres and the stars fiery giants, that God could be known without priestly intercession – heady psychedelic stuff, which the authorities sought to repress by all means.

Similar comparisons are possible between the mythic iconography of the Middle Ages and that of the present. Incubi and succubi were identified as demonic entities which lie carnally with humankind, with intent to produce a magical child, while modern aliens appear engaged in a project essentially identical. The summons to the witch's sabbath – the unaided flight of the witch

through the air – these bear similarity to the levitation accounts of the modern abduction experience. As to the order of the sabbath, copulation with the devil was routine, as was the dedication of infants to the fiend.

The suggestion throughout these self-similar myths is of a non-human entity, seeking to bridge the species gap, to effect a merging of the respective bio-etheric phenotypes in the creation of a viable hybrid. Concurrent is the process of initiation – the attunement of the human organism to the ophidian vibrations of the serpent gnosis. Here lies the rationale for the bizarre diversity of alien types, as for the historic lineage of the alchemical and occult tradition. The homunculus, the elixir of life, the oracle, the ghostly marriage, the trance medium, the spirit channel – all can be considered partial aspects, of varying success, of the grand alien Opus Magnum. Additional offshoots are the Haitian zombies, the Tibetan tulpas, the Abramelin demons, and the fauna of crypto-zoology – each the legacy of hoary magical experiment, the fruits of which were bequeathed to posterity or left to wander the astral / etheric backwoods as semi-independent entities. Many of the phantoms which haunt humanity are thus of human creation, offspring of the fertile mind and sustained by the psychic energies accorded them. Others are said to predate humanity, legacy of an elder race.

A final and fourth link in the analytic chain comprises the visionary or archetypal interpretation, mentioned at the outset, which engages the alien phenomenon as a function of deep structure in a unified mind-space-time continuum. C. G. Jung saw the UFO as logos and prophetic icon in the psychic skies. His alchemical intuitions led him to elaborate *synchronicity* as a non-causal connecting principle in nature. The reifying or magical powers of mind are here subsumed under a monism of intentionality, wherein mind and nature present a unified whole, reminiscent of and anticipating formulations such as Bohm's implicate order. Terence McKenna echoed the theme, defining the UFO as the human soul exteriorised in three-dimensional space. An aspect of

the communal psyche, dissociated and repressed, it returns to haunt the human collective. As a symptom of cultural pathology, the ‘alien’ thus represents the alienated soul, seeking for wholeness. The cliché that the aliens are concerned to save the planet appears singularly apt in this specific sense, that the contact experience necessitates new and expanded concepts, a new scientific paradigm – indeed an entire re-evaluation of humanity’s place in the cosmic order.

Science consigns humanity to the void of insignificance within the greater whole – as temporary anomaly in an impersonal and random universe. If, however, we view the universe as an engine of meaning, human consciousness and the cultural enterprise constitute the very heart of cosmic process. The implication is that humanity, finding itself at the receiving end of ostensible realities, has relinquished its creative godhead. It has abrogated the core responsibility of sentient intelligence – that of logos in the archetypal domain of meaning. While the quest for reality and meaning continues, the universe may be viewed as in a state of becoming, of giving birth to itself.

It is not yet quite real – it is in the process of becoming real.

UNDERWORLD JOURNEYS

I sailed over the sky of Nu in the barque called Millions Of Years.

– After Liber LXV, after Egyptian Funerary Text

Initiation, among the ancients and their spiritual heirs, was taught under the rubric of death and rebirth. Physical death the while was viewed as a journey of great initiatory significance. An empirical subjective science extended knowledge into realms ordinarily supposed beyond mortal reach, namely the conditions and possibilities pertaining to the after-death planes of individual consciousness. Within schools of the mystic and magical persuasion, past and present, integral to the art of right living is the art of dying.

Cycles of life and death – the coilings of the cosmic serpent – are viewed as dual phases of a singular process. It gives birth to worlds, to civilisations, to individuals, causes them to flourish and decline, whereupon they are reabsorbed into the supra-mundane convivium. All things accordingly proceed – evolve – through alternate phases of manifestation and dissolution. In the words of the apostle, *here we have no continuing city*, and the Buddha adds like testimony that *all aggregates are impermanent*. The wisdom enjoined teaches acceptance of these facts, which are celebrated in archaic ritual and cosmology. Yet this acceptance does not preclude the element of proactive engagement – of initiation and coveted reward in the afterlife.

Variants of this worldview prevailed through most of human history, being called into question only with the rise of modern scientific scepticism. From contemporary clinics and research labs, however, from personal accounts and studies of near-death experience, evidence is likewise accumulating that death is not the end – it is a rite of passage.

Yet, even where this is understood, death and the meaning of death are not necessarily held in unilateral regard. Theories differ with the respective

cosmologies of time and place. Attitudes differ accordingly. In the mystical universe of Hinduism and Buddhism, which previously reigned over much of Asia, material existence itself was viewed as *maya* – illusion – an evil from which to extract oneself through a hundred thousand incarnations of yogic effort. The goal – *moksha* or *nirvana* – consists in liberation or cessation from the cycle of birth and death. The magical school, by contrast, which ruled the empires of the ancient world and informed the mystery tradition of the West, contemplates a more material agenda – the permanence of the individual soul, its ascent in the hierarchy of gods, and – emphatically – its powers of earthly manifestation.

Whereas the mystic ideal is the undifferentiated clear light of the void, the magical ideal is immortal man – man-made-perfect, ruler of the fates and forces of nature. Somewhat inbetween lie the cults of revealed religion – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – which came to prominence in the Middle East, and which partake to an extent of both. Their main characteristic however is their catastrophic or eschatological nature – that of imminent confrontation with the absolute. As wrote the prophet Malachi, the Lord whom ye seek shall *suddenly* come to his temple.

What is going on here? Does the universe work differently in different parts of the earth? Is the greater portion of the human race confused on this matter? Do the opposing tendencies of magic and mysticism constitute a cultural and personal choice in a universe that is tolerant and sustaining of both? Are the underlying metaphysics subject to change? Does religious or magical practice engender metaphysical mutation, giving rise to diversified patterns of spiritual unfolding? Do such practices constitute an elementary form of conscious participation in the evolutionary process?

We shall have cause to reflect on these question in light of our overarching theme. First, however, we shall pass through the portals of initiation in Egypt and Tibet. We shall take a journey, charted for initiates of old

in these respective parts of the world. In the course we shall note similarities and differences in the fluid landscapes of Hades and Elysium as portrayed by these cultures. The journey is made possible in that we possess authentic guides. They exist in the form of the *Egyptian* and the *Tibetan Book Of The Dead* – compendia of the subtle planes, describing alike the scenery and how to conduct oneself in the enchanted realms.

These texts pertain to a universal literature – the spells and litanies employed of old in the pertinent rites of passage. Accompanied by ritual, they were recited over the dying and recently deceased, to aid the departing soul in securing an advantageous after-death existence. Yet this is merely the exoteric conception pertaining thereto. For initiates the instructions provided a path to knowledge regarding the mysteries of life as well as death. They were viewed as a means of mastering the conditions of death while yet possessing a physical body. The aim, as per classical shamanism, was to gain conscious entry into the land of gods and demons, to negotiate therein, obtaining access to spiritual strongholds – to prosecute the ongoing business of initiation upon the subtle planes of disembodied consciousness.

There is evident continuity of concept between the Mayan *xibalba*, the road to the underworld which is paradoxically located in the sky, the Tibetan *bardo*, and the *tuat* of the Egyptians. Each denotes a visionary realm to be traversed in the context of death and transformation. With each is associated a cosmology, a subtle and complex metaphysics, a diversified pantheon of devas and divinities, and an exotic technology, which variously spawned theurgic ritual, monumental architecture, a psycho-active pharmacology, and prowess in the arts of meditation.

The precise combination of means varied with cult and culture, as did theory and the associated hierarchy of values – and, from a theoretical perspective, this is nigh all one can say. To test the validity of the respective traditions one must walk the path of the initiates.

The Journey of Khert-Neter in Ancient Egypt

The religious cosmology in ancient Egypt centred on the quest for ascension. This implied a return to the gods whence the original knowledge came, and a simultaneous ‘earthing’ of the stellar hierarchy – a consolidation being thus effected of the empires of upper and lower Egypt, where the upper kingdom is the Egypt in the sky. The King represented the emanation and embodiment of Horus – his destiny, to rule as an immortal Star in the heavens of Orion. The grand dynastic opus, the temples and pyramids of eternity, thus served the singular purpose of restoring and perfecting the primordial gnosis, lost through catastrophic upheavals in the mists of prehistory.

The engine of this spiritual magic was one of dramatic invocation, leading to identification with the divinities invoked. The gods in question – the *neter* – plural: *neteru* – can be variously described as states of consciousness and as forces of nature – principles or archetypes of the psycho-spiritual continuum. Identification with a specific god implied mastery of a particular form of energy or type of gnosis. This involved the astral assumption of the god-form in question, achieved through concentrated visualisation, akin to hypnotic trance.

In aid of this process the neter were represented by stylised iconic images, easily recognised and distinguished. Notable in this pantheon are the ibis-headed Thoth, the hawk-headed Horus, the crocodile-headed Sebek or Set, the dog-headed Anubis, and the lion-headed Pasht. Hathor – Isis of the lunar crescent and Osiris of the royal mitre are human in form, as is Isis’ dark twin, Nephthys. All have their appropriate litanies – hymns of praise for the beneficent gods, spells of protection and execration against the reptilian evil, of which the Egyptian had a natural example in the crocodile. The greater realm of these magical entities is Khert-Neter – literally, path or return of the gods – a

hierarchical domain of experiential categories, which the aspirant had to negotiate.

The journey, along with its attendant initiations, is charted in what has come to be called *The Egyptian Book Of The Dead*. Comprising a collection of related texts rather than a monograph, it was translated in the late 1800's by Sir E. A. Wallis Budge, keeper of Egyptian antiquities at the British Museum, who also assigned the popular title. It is extant in several slightly varying exemplars, respectively referred to by scholars as the Papyrus of Ani, of Hunefer and of Anhai. To the Egyptians, however, it was known as *The Verses Of Coming Forth By Day*. This designation – at once telling and intriguing – denotes a set of spells, incantations, and ritual prescriptions, which derive from among the oldest inscriptions extant in Egypt – indeed anywhere in the world – the Pyramid Texts of Saqqara. Preserved and developed in the *Coffin Texts* of the Middle Kingdom, they were collated by Theban scribes around 1580 BC.

Although the material is possessed of thematic unity, a dramatic or sequential order is less in evidence. The compilation rather takes the form of a prayer book or devotional manual. The gods are effusively hymned, and a series of contingencies, subtle atmospheres, and astral transactions systematically described. The manner of intended use was evidently akin to that of the medieval grimoires. Grand invocations could be composed by selectively drawing on the available texts, while a specific charge or spell could be employed as the need arose. Significantly, it was intended to serve the initiate in life as in death, the difference being merely one of emphasis – as shall be apparent.

Yet for the casual reader, combing these texts for occult revelations, disappointed very likely is in store. For where cryptic obscurity does not render meaning opaque, a seeming naivety appears to hold sway. Litanies, reciting the noble qualities of the gods, are followed by supplications that the worshipper might partake of these graces. This is followed by a proclamation of fiat: *It is*

done! I have attained the Eye of Horus, I rule among the gods in Amenta – words to that effect. One could fall into the error of suspecting little beyond a liturgy of religious psychodrama, symbolic in kind, and akin, say, to the medieval passion play or the Sacrifice of the Mass. But this is failing to understand that in a magical culture – contrary to what obtains in the sophistic sphere – words carry meaning.

Further to the point, Egypt preserved in the bloodline of its nobility a direct genealogical link to the primordial Nephilim kings – progeny of fallen angels, through the mediation of the serpent, which bestowed their wisdom upon humanity. The royal bloodline, conjoined with an equally hereditary priesthood, ensured a familiarity with the astral serpent on par with family relations. On the magical plane the kings of Egypt identified more with the astral god-forms of Osiris / Orion than with their human subjects, the affinity symbolised in the Uraeus Serpent, protruding from the head-dress of divinities and sovereigns. Poised between the eyebrows, as if ready to strike, it symbolises the kundalini, or psycho-spiritual fluid of the subtle body, active at the ajna chakra, the pineal gland, the traditional seat of the wisdom eye. Rendered in Egypt as the eye of Horus, it is the equivalent of the eye of Shiva in the Hindu system, the opening of which dissolves the manifest universe and opens the abyss. It is the eye of infinite analysis, whereby all things are resolved into their original constituents – the eye also of naked awareness, wherein ideas assume concrete form. Horus is called Horakhti – Lord of the horizon – in that his vision extends beyond the horizons or boundaries of the sensible world. The requisite yogas, to import another familiar term from the Indian subcontinent, were taught of old by the selfsame serpent to facilitate intercourse between humanity and the astral gods. Descendent from the stars, these primal deities established a royal priesthood, a sacred architecture with the appurtenances of their cult, and a ritual and ceremonial calendar to make true the saying, ‘as above, so below’.

While civilisations, informed of this archetype, show a profound similarity of conception, none are as famous as that which centres upon the Giza plateau, with its pyramids, sphinx, its temples, causeways and underground installations. Yet the rationale of this and other ceremonial cities, like Angkor Vat, Teotihuacan, Tiahuanaco and Machu Picchu of the Andes, necessarily eludes the conservative scholarly mindset. No earthly ambition, hubris or megalomania accounts for the opus represented in these examples. Only the notion of a cosmic quest, carried out on scientific principles, and intending a restoration of the primordial serpent matrix, provides a fitting context. Hence the emerging alternate paradigm, based on some form of interventionism or the notion of a primordial seed culture – the generic Atlantis, which has all but usurped conventional archaeology in the popular domain. Many of the established verities of academic Egyptology, based in any case on shaky foundations, have thus been called into question.

It is now well established, for instance, that the pyramids were *not* constructed as royal tombs, as previously thought. Rather they served as temples of initiation and literal gateways to the stars, the manner of which we shall seek to reconstitute. The prime exemplar among them is the so-called Great Pyramid, widely known as the pyramid of Khufu or Cheops, although there is no direct evidence linking this monument with the fourth dynasty king of that name. The Great Pyramid, on the contrary, is pristine in its absence of inscriptions or symbolic iconography of any kind. It is void of furnishings or interior appointments, with the exception of a massive granite sarcophagus in the king's chamber – lidless and empty.

What is the secret of the Pyramid's intriguing internal architecture, of the sloping passages and the three principal chambers – one below ground level and two deep inside the body of the structure? What, in the king's chamber, is the significance of the empty tomb, which might also have been a tub?

Astral Journeys

On an astronomically chosen date of the Old Kingdom, but also in the timeless Amenta, the King lies suspended in the magnetised fluid which fills the container. The water is maintained at body temperature and charged by priestly craft to reduce to zero the electrical resistance of a living body immersed therein. Silence and darkness are so imposing, they are revealed as positive qualities – the substance of phenomena apprehended of the subtle senses. Penetrant are the scents of Eden, for wafting from vats is the sacred incense of Khem, in which ambergris or frankincense combines with the resin of opium and hashish – their pungent fumes liberating the paradisaical bennu bird of the soul from its bodily prison. The boundaries between inner and outer cosmos dissolve. The light of darkness forms a mandala, and in its centre is a receding star – the winged disk of the open eye of Horus. A vortex opens, and the King is embarked upon the stellar expanse of the deep mind of space.

Aeons are consumed of eternity as the soul of Osiris surges through the infinite void. It is, moreover, a directed surging, for that the eye relentlessly follows the ancient tracks, carved in the void by an elder race. Eventually – after seeming ages beyond the reckoning of time – there are voices. Coming as if from far way, they intone the invoking hymns of Osiris. They recite the verses of *taking form* – of *opening the portals* – of *motion and protection* against assailants in Khert-Neter: the verses of entering the company of the gods and of coming forth as a Star by day. The Eye of Horus is that Star, and the Eye is open upon the King.

To make the *Ba*-soul enter into its Spirit-body – such is the declared intention: to transform the astral / etheric matrix of the natural soul into the imperishable *Ka* – the dharmakaya or diamond body as it is called in the Ayur Vedic system. Modern magical syncretism allows these comparisons, thereby providing insight, not merely into the rites of Khem, but archaic ritual in

general. According to the theurgic expedient of *invoking often* the skyward journey was performed on a regular basis, in correlation with astronomical cycles, by Egyptian Kings as ruled in place of the Hor shemsu – the legendary magi of Horus. Refinement of technique and cumulative results naturally attend such regimen, especially if performed throughout succeeding generations.

Upon death – so the relevant theory – identical results quite naturally obtain, in that the invocations of a lifetime perpetuate as a habit or magical current – a spiritual seed that is sown in Amenta. The material temple has now served its purpose; the soul is irrevocably propelled beyond the confines of its former habitation.

Coming forth by Day

Instead there follows the process of mummification. This has been described by ancient writers, among them Herodotus, and modern analysis corroborates their accounts. The body, laid out in the mortuary temple, is disembowelled, the organs being removed and the brain extracted with an iron hook through the nostrils. The organs are embalmed separately, first being dehydrated with natron, a naturally occurring salt, then wrapped in linen and stored in canopic jars. Somewhat remarkably, the brain was often discarded in the process as of no apparent value. The body is rinsed out with palm wine, filled with pounded perfumes of myrrh and cassia, and likewise steeped in natron. Thus it is laid out for seventy days. Afterward the desiccated corpse is rubbed with oils, coated in resin, and firmly wrapped in linen cloth, with several hundred yards of the material being not unusual for a noble burial. The mummy is then placed in a painted wooden coffin, moulded in shape to the contours of the body, and this is interred, amid ceremony, in a stone sarcophagus.

But to what purpose this elaborate art? Where the ancient Egyptians so simple as to believe that a mummified corpse conferred some sort of post-mortem longevity? Or where the facts of the matter a little more subtle?

The burial grounds, and gateway to the Amenta of Egyptian dynastic rulers, is the Valley of the Kings, west of the Nile, of Luxor and Thebes, and thus toward the setting sun from the narrow fertile band of seasonal inundation. Unlike the prominent pyramids and temples, the royal tombs were hidden in unmarked locations of mountainous desert wastes, intended, no doubt, to forestall desecration. The opulent burial accorded to kings, the furnishings, appointments and offering, indicate moreover a ritual space, and it is here that we find the second half of the Egyptian equation – specifically, what is meant by the magical phrase of *Coming Forth By Day*.

A dual current informs the texts in question – that of ascension to godhead among the stars of Orion, and, *simultaneously*, of incarnation or manifestation in a vehicle of earthly existence. The soul, which ascends as Osiris, returns as Horus, where Horus is also Hnumachis – the double-wanded one – combining in one the powers of immanence and transcendence. The vehicle or magical unit of manifestation – called the *khabs* – is the near equivalent of the said diamond body of occult phenomenology. Ordinarily subject to dissolution with the decay of its more material twin, it is given substance and permanence by magical cultivation in the manner described. While primarily engaging with the mental / emotional realm of human interaction – as a ghost, so to speak – it may temporarily, and under certain conditions, partake of a more material nature. The mummified corpse, the longevity of which is attested by exemplars in the British museum and elsewhere, merely serves as a physical anchor, a means of return for the discarnate soul. Statuary and other symbolic paraphernalia may aid in this process. From the astral / etheric sheath of the mummified corpse – elements not transmuted and subsumed into the Ka – the magical entity constructs for

itself a more substantial body – material in the sense that it might interact with the living by means occult. In the barque of Ra, it makes the journey through Egypt's sacred landscape, from Abydos 'down the Nile' – a course mirrored in the heavens by the Milky Way – to Rosetau in the belt of Orion, which is the plateau of Giza, where beckons the astral beacon of its foursquare temple.

It is here that the initiation of the Great Pyramid commences in its second phase – that of consolidation or reification of the khabs, that it might 'come forth' as it were *by day*. The emphasis concerns the natural restrictions on ghosts, shades of the dead, and similar astral flotsam, to the nocturnal hours, during which the grosser elements are in a state of repose. The intention is for the khabs to hold its own as a functioning entity even in the glare of solar vibrations – to partake of sacrificial offerings, to enjoy women, and generally to continue as priest and king. The hypothesis might be ventured that the three main chambers of the Great Pyramid, positioned vertically, one above the other, were to facilitate the three stages of re-entry or consolidation – the astral, etheric, and physical. The necessary fractal embedding, according to Grail theorist Dan Winter, is predicated upon the sacred geometries, specifically the 'golden ratio' of phi (ϕ), as informs the ancient ritual landscape.

While the relation between the planes of occultism is complex and not well understood, astral entities are said to be attracted and adhere to objects imbued with emotional energy – that is to fetish objects and implements of ritual use. But a magically developed spirit will disdain merely to haunt the neighbourhood of ritual space. It will attempt to widen its knowledge and experience, its powers and influence, and to taste again the accustomed joys. For this purpose it seeks ingress to a living being – preferentially human – that grand cosmic vortex and centre where all planes converge. Thus summed in a nutshell are the dynamics of spiritual succession, of necromancy and cults of ancestor worship. The entity or familiar subsists with its host in a quasi vampiric relationship; it is sustained by the latter's vitality and experiences

through its faculties. In return it offers knowledge and skill – in dramatic instances, an entire secondary identity.

The phenomenology of genius provides a case in point. The genius, in contradistinction to mere talent, typically appears full-fledged. Explained as a species of angelic possession, it remains somewhat distinct from the individual self – indeed talent and genius may be at odds, competing for pre-eminence. The genius as such may thus also withdraw or depart entirely – a phenomenon observed commonly enough. The artist is given an infusion of grace, but to become a permanent channel of higher sensibility requires ongoing effort, constant refinement, and ultimately a species of self-transformation akin to the alchemical Great Work.

For an astral entity to function autonomously on the subtle planes similarly requires effort in the magical and mystic disciplines. The process may be likened to the developmental phases with respect to the physical incarnation – the acquisition of motor skills, of coordination and dexterity, as well as cognitive and social skills. The formulation of the subtle body, its powers of notion, the significance of the directional quarters, how to open the eyes and ears, how to invoke the gods and function in their midst – these are among the accomplishments covered in the *Chapters of Coming Forth By Day*. Quite unequivocally this shows that the verses in question comprise not merely a deathbed or funerary liturgy, but a body of magical instructions.

The associated practices may be considered ‘unnatural’ insofar as they attempt a mutation of nature’s habits regarding death, dissolution of the physical body and its subtle sheaths, and the purported transmigration of souls to higher realms. Yet the stance is entirely consistent when characterised as the legacy of fallen angels, exiled from their original estate, and sworn to the agenda of a new natural order. One theory maintains that ordinarily a soul, falling as a seed into Amenta, is immediately drawn into the grand vortex beyond space and time to confront judgement at the end of the universe.

Judgement, in this sense, is the confrontation of verity – an ultimate audit concerning the cycle of existence. It ends ambiguity and equivocation, and the true nature of things is made manifest. From this the fallen ones instinctively recoil, employing rather every conceivable means to sustain themselves in the orbit of earth – where *earth* denotes the realms of consciousness accessible to mortal man. One might compare the spiritualist notion that an earthbound soul is a spirit in distress.

Yet the magical consciousness is also inclusive of rarefied and exalted heavens, as we shall have occasion to observe, even as it is capable of hideous hells. Dante, some thousands of years hence, was to visit these realms with Virgil as his guide – a modern exponent of a visionary oeuvre, millennia in evolution. His tradition, as such, is not so much ‘Roman’ as catholic in the universal sense – reflecting the grand pan-Babylonian legacy which constitutes the magical root of all earthly civilisation.

Yet oddly opposed to its ethos of incarnate perpetuity is the mystic tradition of central Asia.

The Voyage of the Bardo in Tibet

Comparable to their Egyptian equivalent, the bardo teachings of Tibet reflect a context of serial reincarnation within an overarching evolutionary and transcendental worldview. The metaphysics of this enduring land of mystery comprise a magical shell, animated by an offshoot of the mystical dharma, (teachings, as of Buddhism) resulting in a unique syncretism of deep fusion at the paradigm level. Perhaps also for this reason its inner-plane cosmology evinces a barbaric splendour in a class of its own. In its aims, as shall be apparent however, the mystic agenda of this highland fortress distinguishes itself sharply from the Egyptian ideal.

The ancient indigenous religion of Tibet is bon, a type of shamanism from which the tantric teachings have evolved in part. Tantra is an Eastern form of alchemy, although the intended transmutation is not primarily concerned with metals – as per the exterior form of the art – but with interior energies. Its essential attainment is the transformation of the astral or dream body into a body of bliss. This involves the formulation of the chakra vajra or diamond body, a permanent and indestructible vehicle of consciousness, capable of manifestation on any of the designated planes.

Buddhist teachings were introduced to Tibet in the eighth century by Guru Rinpoche – a Buddha or enlightened one, also known by the name Padmasambhava – whose legendary exploits are pivotal to trans-Himalayan mystic traditions. It is recounted that, in order to convert Tibet, he first had to overcome and subdue the pantheon of local deities and demons – guardians of the ancient ways – and compel their allegiance to the Buddhist dharma. This accounts for the exotic blend of the Tibetan religion, wherein the way of transcendence is grafted into the foundation of earlier shamanic and magical practice. Designated the Vajrayana or diamond path, it concentrates the esoteric essence of Buddhism – the mahayoga and inner tantra teachings in their purest form. Also referred to as the Short Path, it is deemed to have puissance to confer liberation or enlightenment in a single lifetime – as compared to the thousands of incarnations contemplated in the Mahayana or greater vehicle of the faith. Yet the shortness of the path is offset by the steepness of its incline, and formidable are the ordeals by which the masters of the lineage tested potential disciples.

The concept of lineage or authentic transmission is particularly relevant to the Vajrayana path, insofar as this cannot be embarked upon, except under the personal supervision of a qualified guru. Such a mentor must have both mastered the requisite techniques, and possess deep insight into the spiritual process as undergone by the disciple. He must be one in whom the disciple –

whose sense of reality is likely to be powerfully subverted – has implicit trust. In no other tradition is the master-disciple relationship so intimate.

The inner secrets of tantric practice were traditionally kept just that – secret, for the reason that these highly advanced exercises have both their dangers and their capacity for abuse. Extensive preliminaries must be satisfied before a disciple may safely engage in the practice. Considered essential is a realisation (as a matter of ideal) or at least a good understanding of the following:

1. The three *Refuges* – in the Buddha, the Dharma (the teachings) and Sangha (the Buddhist community).

2. *Renunciation*, or the resolve to be free from attachment to the phenomena of cyclic existence, chief of which is the ego – that which is referred to as ‘I’.

3. *Bodhicitta*, literally the enlightenment mind, which is the resolve to attain Buddhahood – the aspiration stage of wisdom. In its flower it becomes –

4. *Emptiness of Inherent Existence*, the insight that nothing exists in or through itself, that phenomena are embedded in *dependent arising* – a condition, the ultimate nature of which is the potential of space.

The student must be able to verify the integrity and qualifications of the teacher, establishing a foundation of implicit trust, and take specific tantric vows, which tend to be secret to the uninitiated. In this matter, too, the disciple takes a leap of faith. Empowerment or initiation is conferred by the teacher as a portal sanction, for without this ceremonial permission tantric practice is considered improper.

Padmasambhava’s contribution to this branch of the dharma centres on the so-called *terma* realm. Termas – literally, treasures – are texts, hidden by their progenitors, to be discovered in due season by a foreordained individual. They may be concealed in caves, in guarded regions of the akasha, or even in

plain view, until such time – perhaps centuries later – when the Master appears, skilled to recognise and interpret them.

Exemplary of this tradition is the *Bardo Thodol* – The Tibetan Book Of The Dead, as it is popularly known, or, more accurately named: *The Great Liberation Through Hearing In The Bardo*. The term *bardo* denotes the transition or interval between two conditions (*bar* = interval, *do* = two), and here refers to the condition of consciousness from the moment of death to subsequent rebirth. *Hearing*, in this context, refers to the hearing of spiritual instruction, that the hearer thereby might obtain liberation from samsara – the cycle of birth and death. It is held that, by the simple process of hearing and appropriate recollection, the prepared individual stands to recognise the *clear light of the void*, thus obtaining liberation. Like its Egyptian counterpart, the Bardo Thodol serves to guide the living as well as those who – knowingly or not – wander the regions of the dead. In case of the latter it is customary for these instructions to be read in a low clear voice into the ear of the recently deceased, providing orientation for the possibly bewildered soul and focusing attention on the essentials of the path.

Classical commentaries acknowledge six bardo states: (1) waking consciousness, (2) the dream state, (3) samadhi meditation; and a further three, pertinent to the realm of death, which are the subject of consideration in the text. These latter are: (1) timeless ecstasy, (2) the period of hallucinations, and (3) the phase of karmic judgement resulting in rebirth. An inverse relationship may be discerned in the cycle of life and death thus described – a dynamic of complementary opposites comparable to the yin-yang of Taoism. Intrinsic to this wheel is the law of karma, by which every state results from conditions antecedent. Karma is thus the motive force which turns the wheel of samsara. The body, according to this conception, is born of desire, wherefore it is the ceasing of desire – ending the round of death and rebirth – which is the goal of mysticism. Where this does not obtain and liberation is not realised, the

individual – so the relevant tradition – remains in the nether bardo for a period of 49 days, whereupon it is drawn toward rebirth in one of six possible realms.

The first of these realms is the Deva Loca – the realm of the gods. These are beings of all but the highest of yogic attainment, whose accumulated merit in the dharma path entitles them to incalculable aeons of blissful enjoyment.

Second is the Asura Loca. The Asuras, or contending gods, are – in the language of Olympus – Herculean or Promethean types. Their ranks comprise heroes and fierce warrior kings, which are protective of the Deva realm and of the dharma, and who regard the fastnesses of the gods with intense envy. They are those who are inclined to take the kingdom of heaven by force.

Third is the realm of human beings (*manu ya*). Suffice it to say that a human incarnation is valued in the dharma context chiefly as the means to enter the path of liberation, a difficult undertaking for beings of the lower realms.

The forth realm is the world of animals (*triyagyon*), considered as brute beasts. Rebirth in this domain may be regarded as metaphorical, the cumulative tendency of ignorance, sensuality and sloth. Many of the archaic texts, however, do not implicitly make this fine distinction.

The fifth is the Preta Loca – the realm of hungry ghosts. These are neurotic types, which crave vicarious or symbolic forms of gratification, and accordingly are never sated. In Tibet's colourful iconography they are depicted as beings with huge bellies and throat cavities the size of pinholes.

The sixth is the realm of hell beings. These are beings in a state of acute suffering, profoundly estranged from their authentic nature and deeply divided against themselves. While they are depicted as subject to innumerable exotic tortures, it is understood that their suffering is essentially self-imposed. There are moreover hot and cold hells, even as the other realms are multifarious in extent. The difference is explained in that suffering in the hot hells leads to violent abreaction, and thus a negative spiral of ever intensified confrontation and exacerbation of pain. In the cold hells suffering tends to be measured,

monotonous, inexorable and protracted, with the typical response of a frozen catatonic state.

None of these conditions, however, is viewed as permanent. It is characteristic of the spiritual paradigm, which defines Tibet and its mystic tradition, to regard even the loftiest heavens as transient states, which will pass when the karma which produced them is exhausted. The only permanent place of rest in this cosmology obtains in liberation from the wheel of samsara, through merging with the unborn, self-existing, light of the void. In its ultimate tendency, therefore, Buddhism comprises the antithesis to the Egyptian oeuvre, although a complementary and pragmatic relationship has existed of old between the schools of mysticism and magic. Nevertheless, to deviate from the way of transcendence – to maintain by magical means, and to whatever end, a foothold in physical or astral incarnation – is viewed by the former as veering toward the ‘black’.

One exception to this concerns the bodhisattva path. Bodhisattvas are fully realised Buddhas, who have determined temporarily to renounce their reward, and to reincarnate periodically so as to guide other beings toward enlightenment. The bodhisattva vow – to attain Buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings – is extant in countless renderings. Its essence might be distilled as follows:

Beings without number I vow to liberate.
 Endless blind passions I vow to uproot.
 Dharma gates beyond measure I vow to penetrate.
 The way of the Buddha I vow to attain.

Tibetan Buddhism retains an active tradition wherein living teachers are recognised, and consider themselves, as reincarnations of renowned lamas and gurus of the past. Such individuals are referred to as tulku(s), and play a

significant role in the transmission and preservation of the authentic doctrine. The Dalai Lama, the highest spiritual office in the Buddhist sangha of Tibet, is thus discovered or determined on the basis of an auspicious and illustrious history of previous incarnations. In this respect Tibet remained until recently one of the last fastnesses retaining the concept of magical lineage.

Confronting the Light of the Bardo at the Moment of Death

Listen, immortal one. The time has come to enter the bardo path. As your breathing ceases, the transcendent light, which your guru has shown you, will appear. It is open and empty – a luminous void of unconditioned mind without centre or circumference. Recognise and rest in this bliss, for this void is your intrinsic Buddha nature.

With these words the deceased, or voyager in the bardo, is called to attention and reminded of the essential teachings. According to the Tibetan doctrine there arises at the moment of death the clear light of the void. Also called the primary clear light, this luminosity is mind or consciousness in its natural unconditioned state. The instruction is that one recognise this light as one's authentic self, thus attaining liberation.

In the event that the candidate fails to recognise and abide in this simplicity, there dawns the secondary light, wherein the self appears as centre of a vast expanse in what is called the pure illusory body or sambhogakaya. There is a sense of 'wow – here I am, looking at the light of the void'. This is the first appearance of the ego, which, if liberation is not realised, will propel the mind into the bardo of visions and eventual rebirth. If at this point the teachings are recalled, the consciousness, perhaps unaware that the body has died, may become cognisant of its situation. The intrinsic voidness of the mind may then still be realised and liberation attained. The instructions are therefore resumed if recognition did not occur at the first showing.

Fundamental here is the notion that mind or consciousness is the only reality – that all phenomena, accordingly, are illusory and transient. Mind, however, is described as possessing attributes or characteristics. The first of these is inherent *emptiness*, referring to the neutrality of consciousness – the fact that it cannot be distinguished as an object, and that, while reflecting all things, it remains essentially unchanged. Secondly it partakes of the nature of *space* in that it is unbounded and all-pervasive, the noumenal ground of all phenomena. Third is the aspect of *luminosity*, which signifies the mind's capacity to reflect – to observe and distinguish. A fourth is its unimpeded or unobstructed nature, its ability to freely flow as it were, to fathom and fill the subjective plenum.

Cognate are the archaic five elements of mind – Space denoting its unbounded and non-local nature; Fire, its capacity to illuminate phenomena through knowledge; Earth, its capacity to generate persistent forms; Air, its perpetual state of flux; and Water, its adaptive mutability. These elements also compose the physical body and what is experienced as external environment.

Implicit in the concept of emptiness or voidness is the dynamic of dependent arising, the origination of all phenomena in the mind. Despite its negative ring to the Western ear, emptiness denotes a state of presence and sentience. It is the original dharmakaya, the unborn radiance of the Buddha mind. Considered as mind in its natural state, it presents a view of mind as intrinsically enlightened. The ubiquitous Buddha nature is thus not so much to be attained as simply recognised.

This also holds for the conditions of the after-death plane, the phenomena of which are regarded as entirely the product of projection. Significantly, the Tibetan tradition asserts that the essential experience of the bardo – the light, the confrontation with various mandalas (see below) – is not culture specific, but generic to all sentient beings – human and non-human alike – although the

imagery is necessarily coloured by personal and cultural factors. It is the *method* of dealing with these phenomena that is specifically Buddhist.

The Bardo of Hallucinations

If the candidate fails to obtain liberation during confrontation with the primary or secondary light, there now follows a period of intense visions or hallucinations, also called the dharmata. Said to last fourteen days, it is divided, like the bardo of the moment of death, into two phases.

During the first seven days there appear seven peaceful deities. They are followed by seven wrathful deities in the second seven days. These are the Buddhas in their various archetypal manifestations, mirrored by their opposite qualities in the guise of fierce and terrifying demons. If the light of the first bardo cannot be maintained, it is transformed into a series of visions, which, although essentially insubstantial, comprise the reality of the second bardo.

The light breaks into colours and shapes, and a roar is heard like a thousand simultaneous thunders, which is the roar of voices that comprise the dharmata. These apparitions are projections of subconscious tendency, which come to the fore, as the mind, deprived of bodily distraction, is cast into its intrinsic domain. The voyager at the point is counselled to proceed without fear, confronting the peaceful and wrathful deities in turn, knowing them for what they are – attributes of the mental body projected into the void. Realising the voidness of the apparitions, the mind may yet perceive its original nature, and attain liberation.

If, however, lacking subtlety or meditative constancy, the student cannot grasp the essential nature of the void, he or she is advised to identify with the yidam – the idealised form of a tutelary deity, and so with the Buddhas of the six realms, which sequentially dawn upon the attentive mind.

On the first day of visions space is filled with an intense blue radiance and Vairocana appears from the centre of the all-pervading circle. Seated upon a lion throne, his body is white, and, holding the eight spoked wheel of the dharma, he embraces his consort, the Vajra Queen of space. From the heart of the Father and Mother conjoined, emanates the light of wisdom compassion, a light terrifying in its piercing blue to those of impure karma. At the same time the soft white light of the deva realm will appear – the heavens of contented sages – and those who cannot abide the gaze of Vairocana, will be attracted to the softer light of bliss in the deva loca.

On the second day a white light – the purified element of Water – shines in the dharmata. Within it Vajrasattva Aksobhia appears from the Eastern realm of boundless joy. Seated upon an elephant throne, he is blue in colour, and, holding a five-pointed vajra (literally, *diamond* – a dharma weapon, an engine of miraculous power), he embraces his consort, the Buddha-Locana. He is accompanied by two male and two female bodhisattvas, so that a tableau of six Buddhas appears. From the heart of Vajrasattva and his consort conjoined emanates the white radiance of impersonal love, so dazzling in its mirror-like purity as to be unbearable to unaccustomed eyes. At the same time the soft smoky light of hell appears, which will seem inviting to those who, due to a violent nature, cannot bear the gaze of Vajrasattva.

On the third day, shining with a yellow light, appears the purified element of Earth, and Ratnasmabhava will manifest from the glorious Southern realm. Seated upon an equestrian throne, his body is yellow, and, holding the wish-granting jewel in his hand, he embraces his consort Mamaki. He is accompanied by two male and two female bodhisattvas, so that six Buddha forms appear in the mandala of rainbow light. From the heart of Ratnasmabhava and his consort conjoined emanates the yellow light of feeling in its essential purity. At the same time there shines the soft blue light of the human realm, which attracts those who, out of pride, cannot bear the light of pure sensation.

On the forth day the dharmata glows a luminous red, which is the purified element of Fire, and Amitabha will appear from the blissful Western realm. Red in colour, he is seated on a peacock throne, and, holding a lotus in his hand, he embraces his consort Pandaravasini. He is accompanied by two male and two female bodhisattvas, so that six Buddhas appear in the rainbow light. From the heart of Amitabha and his consort conjoined issues the red light of perception and discrimination, frightful to behold in its piercing intensity. At the same time there shines the soft yellow light of the preta loca, the realm of hungry ghosts, to which are drawn neurotic souls, which, tormented by intense desires, cannot abide the light of discrimination.

On the fifth day shines the green light of the purified element of Air, wherein Amoghasiddhi appears from the great Northern realm of accumulated actions. He is green in colour and holds a double vajra, occupying a throne of soaring birds, as he embraces his consort Samaya-Tara. He is accompanied by two male and two female bodhisattvas, so that six Buddha forms appear. From the heart of Amoghasiddhi and his consort conjoined radiates the essence of conceptual space, the accomplishing intelligence, brilliant in its luminosity. At the same time there arises the soft red light of the jealous gods, the abode of such as, out of envy, cannot abide the prodigal radiance of genius.

On the sixth day the Buddhas of the five families with their consorts and attending bodhisattvas appear simultaneously in the light of the six realms, and again the voyager is invited to recognise and merge with the four wisdoms. Beyond the five Buddha clans there will also appear the wrathful guardians of the gates: Vijaya, the Victorious; Yamantaka, Destroyer of Death; Hayagriva, the Horse-necked; and Amrtakundali, Coil of Nectar; together with the female guardians: Ankusa, the Hook; Pasa, the Noose; Srnkhala, the Chain; Ghanta, the Bell. Also six blessed sages will appear: Indra of the hundred sacrifices, sage of the Devas; Splendid Robe, sage of jealous gods; the Lion of Sakyas, sage of human beings; Steadfast Lion, sage of animals; Flaming Mouth, sage of hungry

ghosts; and the Dharma King, sage of hell dwellers. Samantabhadra and Samantabhadri, the bountiful Father and Mother of all Buddhas, also appear. Together these forty-two deities will emerge from the mind of the beholder, and, according to their families, compose themselves into a grand mandala. The voyager is urged to meditate upon this image, so that, through identification therewith, enlightenment may be obtained. Along with the piercing wisdom light, however, there shines the softer light of the six illusory realms, and those who are terrified by the former will seek shelter in the latter. Thus they are drawn into the vortex of rebirth.

On the seventh day the mandala is transformed; more detail is revealed, deeper aspects are perceived, its initiatory charge brought to an acute edge. A many coloured light will shine and the vydyadharas – knowledge holding deities – will come forth from the Pure Realm. In the centre appears the unsurpassable Lotus Lord of the Dance, his body resplendent in five colours, embracing his consort, the Red Dakini, dancing with a crescent knife and a skull-cup of blood, gazing and gesturing at the sky. Likewise from the east, south, west, and north vydyadharas appear with their dakini consorts, similarly arrayed and disporting themselves. They are called Established in Stages, Lord of Life, Great Symbol, and Spontaneously Arisen. Beyond those vydyadharas appear countless dakinis, male and female warriors, servants and protectors of the dharma, having bone ornaments, thigh-bone trumpets, skull drums, banners made from the skins of children, canopies of human skin, and incense made from human flesh, filling all regions of space so that they rock and roll with a head-splitting noise, inviting those who maintained the samaya practice, and punishing those who allowed the same to decline.

One last time the pure five-coloured wisdom light will shine from the five vydyadharas Lords, sharp and terrifying, unbearable to the eyes and piercing the heart. Concurrently the soft green light of the animal realm is kindled, a comfort to such as are confused and fearful of the wisdom radiance. Once more the

admonition is heard – be not attracted to the soft light of the animals, be not afraid of the wisdom light, recognise it as emerging from your intrinsic self. All spontaneous dharma voices now combine in a thunderous roar, wherein warcries, objurgations and wrathful mantras can be discerned. Once more the voyager is urged to make concentrated effort to resolve confusion and merge with the rainbow light of the wisdom holders, to realise the emptiness of space as the authentic self, and in doing so, gain liberation.

Thus ends the showing of the peaceful deities in the bardo of dharmata, whereafter, during a further seven days, the wrathful deities will appear. They are, to be sure, merely the shadow or reflection of the peaceful deities, made manifest by an evil karma, so that the mind which failed to comprehend their first appearance, may yet be startled into recognition by confronting their dark side. Similarly arrayed in graphic colour, the wrathful legions are comprised of demons, threatening with sword and flame, drinking blood from human skulls, screaming blood-curdling terror, and intent to torture, maim, disembowel and decapitate. Due to the one-pointed focus engendered of fear, the bardo of wrathful visions yet represents an excellent opportunity for enlightenment. To this end the voyager is counselled, in each hideous apparition, to recognise the merciful and compassionate wisdom holders. In each, indeed, the yidam – the personal tutelary deity – is to be worshipped. Thus, through identifying with the same, understanding the vision as the natural radiance of the mind, its terrifying spell is broken, and Buddhahood attained by instant enlightenment.

The Bardo of Becoming Embodied

If enlightenment is not achieved, the voyager proceeds to the third bardo state of the after-death realm, where conditions are analogous to, or a reflection of those which obtained in life. The body is apparent again, complete with all the senses, much like the former body of flesh, but also resembling the body of

the golden age. A tantra is quoted to the effect that it is a miraculous body, capable of going anywhere without obstruction, and visible to pure sight of the gods in samadhi meditation. If the person is to be reborn in one of the six realms, the light of that realm will shine, and the habits and ways pertinent thereto find natural expression. Nevertheless the counsel remains not to follow these projections, but rather to meditate on the clear light of consciousness or the yidam above the head, if perchance rebirth in samsara might be yet avoided. Focus now shifts to the powers of the mental body – its magical ability to interact with beings of various realms, to travel in an instant, indeed to manifest any reality through thought alone.

Possessed of a particular nature, however, there will be a propensity toward mutual recognition with beings of a similar class – whether they be gods, heroes, humans, animals, hungry ghosts, or hell-dwellers. The fact of living under magical laws, which are foremost on the relevant planes, means that any impulse finds its immediate asymptote – all things conform to their essential nature. This state may last for several weeks until a resultant is reached, and the voyager confronts karma in the form of the Lord of Death. This fierce demon will accuse him of his evil deeds, and if protestations of innocence are made, he will hold up the mirror of karma, wherein all actions and their consequences are clearly seen. Judge, jury and executioner in one, he will then proceed to make good the promise of the wrathful deities as seen in the bardo of hallucinations. The body, however, cannot die; regardless of the tortures it is subjected to, it always revives. Yet still the voice of the dharma is heard, penetrating and calm: Do not fear the Lord of Death. You cannot die nor suffer harm, for you are the natural form of emptiness. Gods and demons have no substance, for, like your self, their essence is void. Recognise all as the bardo and meditate on the Great Symbol. Or, if you have no skill in meditation, observe the nature of what is fearful and you will find emptiness – the emptiness and luminosity of the clear mind that is the uncreated dharmakaya.

Eventually the opportunities for enlightenment in the bardo are spent. If unrealised, the former body will slowly fade and the future body gain in definition. Again the lights of the six realms will shine, with that light predominant which corresponds to the destined realm of reincarnation. Around this time darkness, hail and snowstorms arise, and the soul seeks a cave – a womb wherein to shelter. The signs and symbols of the country will appear, with intimations of the more specific environment where the individual is to be reborn. Yet the text urges even now that one resist this temptation, and offers several ways of closing the womb or preventing entrance. A series of altercations follows, as in the previous bardo, with instructions on yet achieving enlightenment and avoiding rebirth.

If all fails, the soul is drawn into the vortex of desire that drives the act of coition, gaining definition as male or female in the context of sexual polarity. If identifying with the male, there is aggression and rivalry with the father, and intense desire for the mother. If with the female, there is jealousy for the mother and intense longing for the father. At the meeting of sperm and ovum there is the experiences of self-existing bliss, and from that bliss consciousness is lost, at which point the embryo commences gestation.

Lastly, if entrance to the womb cannot be avoided, there are methods for recognising the Four Continents and six realms of possible rebirth, and of choosing an auspicious womb for rebirth in the nirmanakaya – the physical body. Thus it is hoped to achieve birth in favourable circumstances, in a culture where spiritual teachings are esteemed, so as to ensure progress in the dharma path and future liberation.

Is Syncretism possible?

Conceptions of the afterlife in the secular West tend to be vague and folkloric, variously grounded in biblical, pagan, and scientific lore. The tacit

taboo surrounding the subject precludes extensive cultural engagement. Even evangelical Christendom tends to skirt the issue. Yet the New Testament is unequivocally positive concerning individual survival. Thus St. Paul: If this earthly tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God ... eternal in the heavens. For the redeemed (see below) the heavenly passage is assured – a given of intrinsic nature. No particular rite, no magic induction, no ascetic regimen seems to be required. Catholicism with its monastic ideal, supreme unction, and masses for the dead, is rather the exception, and reflects an infusion of the mystic and magical worldview. Protestant Christianity, which rejects all ritualism, is thus seen as bland – a mere system of retribution and reward according to a preponderance of good or evil deeds.

But this is merely the prejudice of a culture, deprived of the heart of its spiritual teachings. While an ethical nimbus pervades the Bible, as it does all sacred scriptures, the essence of its revelations is spiritual rebirth through faith in the atonement wrought in Christ. A transformation of individual nature is thus contemplated, which, like its magical and mystic correlates, involves death and resurrection in some existentially significant sense.

But what transforming virtue is there, it is often asked, in assenting to a set of propositions, such might be found in any formal confession of the faith? And in truth there is very little or likely none. What is here overlooked is the biblical insistence on revelation – the angelic presence of the spiritual logos, directly informing the human soul. It is spoken of a spirit of truth – the Holy Spirit – possessing all the attributes of God – of teacher, comforter, healer and guide – for it *is* God. Above all it is the revealer of divine truths – one might say, it is the salvation of Christ revealed.

As a general principle the phenomenon of insight or inspiration is of course acknowledged in other areas of creative engagement, notably the arts and sciences. Experienced, it tends to give rise to an interior certainty which transcends rational inference. Faith, in the scriptural sense, should thus be

understood as spiritual perception; it implies authentic rather than vaunted belief. Such belief is of ontological and existential consequence, as it determines what is subjectively real. It is, in the visceral language of these pages, angel, attractor, and archetypal seed – that which structures thought and perception, creating cosmos out of cognitive chaos. Christ, in the Judaic-Christian transmission, is that seed – from the Genesis creation account to the eschatologies of the Book of Revelation. In him is mediated the covenant whereby humanity partakes of the divine nature.

This seed, like its Egyptian and Tibetan equivalent, undergoes a bardo journey – an assignation in the tuat – a descent into hell in the case of Christ, where the essence of an initiatory or redemptive pursuit is similarly conveyed. The descent into hell is one of the more mysterious aspects of the divine incarnation, scriptural references thereto being scant and slight. In *Ephesians* the apostle states: *Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?* As the resurrected Son of Man later appears in possession of the keys of hell and death, a spiritual altercation with the king of hades is implicit. A complete redemption demands no less.

The psychology of the spiritual birth similarly conforms to this archetypal pattern. Forgiveness is based on repentance, which is the confrontation of interior hell with divine mercy. Mercy or grace is mediated through the shed blood of an innocent, called the Lamb of God, which is the incarnate logos or Word. Thus it is the redemptive Word which is sown as a seed into the earth, from whence it rises with renewed life. In so doing, it imparts justification – righteousness – as a gift of grace, which is to say, without ‘works’ or personal effort to that effect. This, of course, is what upsets the legalist. Yet it is precisely the provision of grace, which allows for decent into one’s personal hell, the blood of Christ acting as analysand – as solvent and agent of deconstruction – whereby every complex (as of the fallen nature) is resolved into its original constituents.

Poised somewhat between Christianity and the magical mystery traditions lies the phenomenon of spiritualism, of which the Roman Catholic confession, with its purgatories and intercession of saints, is the prime example. Like the universal Church, the modern theory and practice of communicating with the dead tends to be syncretistic in outlook. It combines, as do many contemporary folk-religions, an archaic magical outlook with a Christian gloss. Its magical roots, to be specific, are steeped in the lore of necromancy, reincarnation and ancestor worship, while its eschatology – its afterlife theology – tends to be ascensionist in the Christian sense. The phenomenology of cognate traditions, moreover – of past life recollection, of spirit guides, near-death experience and the trance-medium – presents a complex and suggestive case.

Suggestive, however, of what?

Are we surrounded by an invisible spirit world? Are the deceased in fact still aware and contactable by psychic means? Do they periodically return? Can they be benefited by masses on their behalf or by other means of psychic intervention. Are these phenomena indicative of transpersonal dimensions of consciousness – of an akasha or universal psychic ether – permitting access, under specific circumstances, to the impression recorded therein. Or are, as occultist affirm, most of the ghostly interlocutors, encountered in the mediumistic sphere, merely the astral / etheric shells of the dead – animated corpses of the subtle planes, used of demonic entities for deceptive ends?

While these varied constructions may not be equally valid, each paradigm generates to some extent its own self-validating matrix. Approached on the personal, anthropomorphic plane, the universe is personal. Approached as impersonal object, it reveals an impersonal face. Modern magical theory is cognisant of this interchangeability of constructs and tends therefore to accept phenomena at face value, without becoming unnecessarily embroiled in theory. If an angel imparts knowledge, what matter if this angel *really* exists. If a demon causes affliction, what gain to assert that there are no demons?

Invariably the naive, pragmatic, phenomenological view tends to be the simplest and most revealing. The most ancient magical and mystic treatises, predating religious dogma, certainly espouse this point of view. Exemplary is the Old Testament, comprising a record of paranormal events rather than a compendium of metaphysical theory. Emphatically, moreover, it espouses the necromantic proposition. The first book of Samuel recounts how the witch of Endor, at the behest of King Saul of Judah, conjures the spirit of Samuel to visible appearance.

Quoth the woman: *I see gods rising out of the earth*. Samuel appeared, according to scripture – not his apparition. He still was a prophet, he wore his mantle, and he prophesied. According to evangelist William Branham such could be accomplished *then* – under the atonement of the blood of bulls and goats. Whereas according to the New Testament, as mediated by the blood of Christ, there is ‘a great gulf fixed’ between the reach of magicians and the heavens of the redeemed.

Visionary lore relates of impenetrable veils of light as constituting the portals to the blessed realms – impenetrable, at least, to eyes attuned only to grosser vibrations. Science is invoked in equating ascension with the way of light – for light, according to relativity theory, is the geometry of space-time, the structure and foundation of existence as such. In the Tibetan system light is the immediate given of subjective experience, the primary fact of awareness, and it is a recoiling from the light which leads to less desirable states. The opposite of the inner light is outer darkness, also called the abyss, entropy and chaos. The so-called earthbound soul of spiritualism is in evident fear of the light, insofar as light is that which makes manifest, whereas the soul fears exposure or confrontation with verity, preferring instead its familiar haunts. Instances hence are being related wherein adept psychics are able to counsel earthbound spirits, which compulsively haunt the material and lower astral planes, and persuade them heavenward – souls, perhaps, whose ‘heart is in the

right place’, but are confused due to flawed religious instruction. And here again we are in the realm of bardo teachings and ancient spell-books for the welfare of departed souls.

Taken as a whole, such literature, as we have seen, is informed of a dual current, comprising ascension and perpetual (re)incarnation – a two-prong thrust, as it were, on part of the magical consciousness to conquer alike the conditions of immanence and transcendence. The quest has a long tradition beyond the specific examples cited. In ancient China it lived in the lore of Taoist immortals – sages having perfected the elixir of life, their years, like those of the biblical patriarchs, being counted in hundreds. Comparable to the Egyptian opus, Taoist yoga comprises an interior alchemy, whereby the physical body is transmuted into its subtle equivalent, capable of being sustained by the elements – in modern terminology, by the quantum potential of space. Such a body would at least be coeval with the remaining term of the manifest universe.

Western alchemy has cognate traditions, which focus on the Elixir or Universal Medicine, and the immortal adepts said to have perfected the same. One such is the enigmatic Comte de St Germain, polymath, diplomat and advisor to royalty, who during the eighteenth and nineteenth century appeared at courts throughout Europe from St Petersburg to Versailles. He was a known occultist and alchemist, who claimed to be 4,000 years old and was credited with possessing secret of the elixir of life. He was charming, intelligent, adept in science and the arts, a multi-linguist and of a perceptive subtlety which rendered his services especially valuable in the realm of political intrigue. He had more than a dozen identified aliases, and his national origins were never discovered.

A similar aura of mystery surrounds Christian Rosenkreutz, revered founder of the Rosicrucian movement, said to have been found interred in a hermetically sealed mausoleum, his body in a state of perfect preservation, as if

awaiting future resurrection. Like the lore of the legendary Grail and its custodial lineage, such tales very likely combine historical fact with the mythopoeic allusions and mystic aspiration, noted of the romantic movement. The historical ubiquity, however, of cognate traditions, combined with the fact of pertinent magical theory, raises the intriguing question whether immortals of varying hue are still living among us.

But what, apart from the possibilities of spiritual attainment, would this convey? The heterodox kaleidoscope presenting itself in these cultural snapshots leave us far indeed from anything like a unified religious theory of humankind. Not only do the various systems differ in point of view and associated values, it is not even evident that their subject matter is the same. The Christian salvation, the mystic Nirvana, the pagan Arcadia – their respective ideals are as diverse as the roads which lead thereto.

What of reincarnation, acknowledged in some systems and denied in others? Is it a fact? And what is that reincarnates? Is it the human soul or the spirits which inform the same, passed from generation to generation.

There is particular paradox in that psycho-spiritual techniques are variously employed to both maintain physical incarnation and to escape the same. It suggests that mysticism might have been conceived in response to the Faustian proposition of magic (nowadays referred to as science) and its awful karmic consequences. Christianity in turn distinguishes itself from both in the pivotal role assigned to the historic Jesus as mediator of a covenant between a magical entity – the supreme being no less – and his creation. Shamanism partakes of neither to the extent that it retains something of the primordial consciousness of Eden. Being neither evolutionary nor redemptive in its intrinsic paradigm, it is a-historic and perennial.

If it can be said that three *types* of redemptive or spiritual path are in evidence, it is perhaps significant that the grand mythological opus relates of three types of magical entity, diverse in kind as in aspiration – the human, after

image of the Elohim; the angelic, after the fall of Lucifer; and that of sidhe, tunderi, dragon or elf, after the primordial Serpent. To the extent that all three share a common script or symbolic iconography, as derived from the intrinsic canon of nature, these systems, in their frequent dilution, have submitted to mutual syncretism, however loosing in the process much of their original and distinctive character.

While there are thus no grounds for the assumption that these systems are intrinsically related, it can at least be vouched that they are not mutually antagonistic, except insofar as their respective proponents are totalitarian in their ambitions. Nor, it may be necessary to add, is there any basis for racial or racists theories, as have occasionally been founded upon the relevant myths. While the seed of fallen angels obtained ingress through the Caucasian, specifically Aryan, line of descent, it denotes a spiritual rather than racial type. If, on the other hand, certain lineages of the Dragon's blood wish to maintain their exclusive legacy – that is of course their prerogative.

Concerning the metaphysical interface – as of the soul with ultimate reality – the human record is heterodox. No simple explanation accounts for this, given the experiential verity of the various traditions. Could magical or mystic practice effect mutation indeed in universal substance? Is the greater given inherently mutable? Is, as the prophetic oracle affirms, the human soul intrinsically godlike in its creative potential?

Is there room enough in the universe for contending gods?

THE VORTEX OF HYPERSPACE

**We made us a temple of stones in the shape of the Universe,
even as thou didst wear openly and I concealed.
– Liber Liberi vel Lapidis Lazuli**

The Enchanted Sphere

Space and time – ultimate theatre of existence or, as idealists assert, merely a condition of mind? The history of these most basic of experiential categories – including that of mind – has been cyclic in nature.

Early conceptions were magically subjective constructs, hierarchically linking the gods or psychic numina with the sensory environment. *Nuit*, in Egyptian lore the goddess of infinite space, is depicted as overarching vault, sheltering the winged globe of the solar disk, bearing the Eye of Horus, which is understood as *Hadit* – the atomic and individual point of view. A conjunction of these two incommensurates, so the magical interpretation of the rune, creates a unity which heads and comprises the manifest universe. Space is created where the eye is cast; time arises with the awareness of duration.

One need not imagine, however, that the ancients thus consciously articulated the matter. Such thoughts, after all, can only occur once the distinction between mind and world – between inner and outer – has become something of a convention. One must suppose that in the primordial Arcadia – in the mythic *first time*, the aboriginal dreamtime – such a distinction had not yet been made. Mind is at one with nature, with the implication of magical omnipotence, such that imagination translates into projection upon the phenomenal plenum, and a commensurate *Ursprache* or primal language of the gods.

Even in the post-diluvian myth of Babel there are echoes of this condition, for in Genesis 11 Yahweh notes with misgiving that *the people is one ... they have one language ... and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do*. Thereupon the Elohim intervened, causing a confusion of tongues, and with the loss of the Ursprache arose the alienated mind – the mind at odds with other minds and with the facts of nature. Thus, in a further ripple of the expulsion from paradise, the language families arose, giving rise to diversified thought and culture. All living languages, one may take it as given, reflect some aspect of the primal language. For were it not so, the culture in question, would lose all connection to the nexus of verity that is nature. Insofar as language is the elaboration of mental space, it is the primary agent of cognitive structure – the creative logos or Word of God – and thus the structurer of every other kind of space. With the diversification – the mutual alienation of minds – came also the notion of the subjective and objective – of inner and outer, mental and physical space. As this became something of a convention, the question would have arisen: What is actually out there?

The rational conquest of space may be traced to classical Greece, specifically the work of Euclid, whose famous *Elements* presents a geometry, which has been incorporated into modern mathematics virtually unchanged. The Euclidean conception posits an objective and external space – it should and would exist even without an observer to describe its properties. These, as the space itself, are viewed as absolute and eternal – as intrinsic and necessary conditions of existence. Here are anchored our Euclidian intuitions that space is three-dimensional – having depth, breadth and height – and the system of three axial coordinates, which serves to specify the location of any point therein.

Some fifteen hundred years hence, during the European high Renaissance, Gerard Mercator and John Dee applied the Euclidian opus to the problems of global circumnavigation, an art newly indispensable in that expansionist age. Yet fundamentals of spherical geometry – the division of the

circle into 360 degrees, and the constant pi (π), which figures in the ratio between its radius and circumference – were known before the Greeks, deriving from Sumerian and Chaldean sources, whither they came from sources unknown. Similarly current in highest antiquity was the concept of a spherical earth, a sun-centred planetary system, and a system of global mapping, as exemplified in the Piri Reis documents and similar extant portolans.

Somewhat remarkably then, the medieval conception of the universe reverts to a more archaic notion of space, combining elements of rationality within a mythical framework. The medieval worldview, based on the earth-centred Ptolemaic cosmos, as rendered by the alchemist Robert Fludd, is thus that strangest of hybrids – part rational planisphere, part magical circle. An elemental *Earth* is surrounded by the concentric sheaths *Water*, *Air* and *Fire*, outside of which lie the traditional planetary spheres of the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. These move across the canopy of fixed stars, which includes the classical zodiac. Beyond, in widening concentric circles, are the realms of Angels, Archangels, Virtues, Principalities, Powers, Thrones, Dominions, Cherubim, Seraphim, and, ultimately, of the Logos or mind of God.

God, significantly is outermost in this conception, rather than intrinsic. The planets and stars, moreover, are viewed as intelligent, semi-divine beings, somewhat on par with angels, and disposed, according to Dante, to influence events on a human scale. Indeed the intersection of rational and magical or sacred space might be expected at any juncture, as indicated by the belief in witches, demons, miracles and portents. Geographical remoteness was linked with moral or psychological qualities; dragons inhabited regions described as *terra incognita*, and the question had to be entertained whether sailors, daring the great Western expanse, stood in danger of sailing over the edge of the world. It is, of course, this failure to distinguish the planes, which modern magical theory has come to define as the soul and source of superstition.

Rigour in this respect, re-established during the Renaissance and sealed in the Enlightenment, bequeathed upon modernity a worldview essentially rational – a material world without boundaries in space or metaphysical edge. Yet sacrificed in the process was ultimate context, the reason formulating its closed self-referential bubble, although several centuries elapsed before this became apparent. Eventually the question, *what it is* – this rational universe – became as meaningless as the question, where or why it is. The failure of modern philosophy, from Descartes to Wittgenstein, is thus exemplified in the failure to reconcile the rational object, which *just is*, with our metaphysical intuitions concerning value and meaning. It was therefore inevitable that the reductionist strategy, of discarding the qualitative, subjective, quasi feminine sensibilities, should lead the modern predicament – to global nihilism and the undermining of its own foundations.

Whereas Emanuel Kant sought to prove that the Euclidean intuition concerning space is founded upon apriori truths, this view was systematically overturned in the nineteenth century with the independent discovery of non-Euclidean geometries, respectively by Bolyai, Lobachevski and Riemann. It was established that, starting from a different set of fundamental postulates, alternative yet equally self-consistent types of space could be conceived. The question was, did these exotic spaces have experimental and experiential consequences, or did they merely exist as Platonic ideals?

In retrospect it seems as if a door had been opened in the fin-de-siecle ferment of ideas – a door to everything hoary, atavistic and monstrous. In the deconstructionist frenzy that followed, Enlightenment conceit gave way to new existential angst, as the dissolving rational landscape revealed an underlying teeming jungle of the irrational. Concurrently there was fascination to the deep strata of the psychic landscape, the ‘emancipated’ secular mindset henceforth craving the romance of the supernatural. This is evidenced in the emergent popular genre, exemplified by Mary Shelly’s *Frankenstein* and Bram Stoker’s

Dracula, as in the nineteenth century occult revival. From the ambivalent edge of fascination and fear the creatures of the deep would now be conjured to entertain, and it was the exotic developments in science, which increasingly provided the mythological context. References and analogies to non-Euclidean geometries can be found in the nightmare ravings of the horror writer H. P. Lovecraft, in the ‘impossible’ spaces of the graphic artist M. C. Escher, as in the new modal harmonies adopted by composers such as Bartok, Stravinsky, Debussy and Ravel. The phrase *non-functional harmony* was applied to certain musical works at this time, although one particularly vehement critic described them as *dysfunctional*.

A hundred years hence we are aware that they are neither – that the modern masters are as self-consistent and logical as were Beethoven and Mozart, although they extended that logic into new and subtle realms. Indeed many of their devices have become Hollywood clichés – the ‘impressionist’ *augmented triad* to evoke fairyland, and the Bartokian *major-minor chord* to suggest lurking evil in otherwise idyllic scenery. The fact that these devices are effective demonstrates an ability of the mind to appropriate and navigate in novel kinds of abstract space – auditory space no less. It is further significant that the new tonalities derived in many instances from a reappropriation of ancient pentatonic and modal scales, exemplary of the archaic revival at the roots of modernity.

At the same time a movement gained momentum which purports to provide more tangible and immediate evidence of a higher dimensional realm intersecting physical space – that of Spiritualism. Usually traced to certain poltergeist effects on a farm in New York state – the home of sisters Kate and Margaretta Fox – the phenomenon spread, becoming a popular parlour game and extending into the highest echelons of society on both sides of the Atlantic.

It all began with an inexplicable rapping in the woodwork. ‘Do as I do’, Kate called out to the invisible presence and snapped her fingers. The raps

immediately imitated her. Margaretta then clapped, saying ‘do as I do’. The sounds imitated her claps. Thus it was found that ostensible intelligences – discarnate or deceased – could be engaged by means of some such interface, using an agreed code. The spirits, by contemporary accounts, were eager to comply and a lively interdimensional traffic ensued, sweeping aside not merely the rationalist conceptions but also traditional religious views. The ethos of passive resignation with respect to the supernatural gave way to proactive engagement. Alan Cardec’s tome *The Book Of Spirits* became a ‘Bible’ for syncretic cults from Voodoo to Wicca, and the Russian born Helen Petrovna Blavatsky, founder of the Theosophical Society, wrote her *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*, lending a scholarly gloss to the growing occult revival. Into to this cauldron were added psychoanalysis, surrealism, Jungian depth psychology, and a renewed interest in all forms of psychism. While in truth there might have been nothing new under the sun, what was previously the exclusive domain of certain social and intellectual elites was henceforth being accessed by all classes of society.

The scientific world, meanwhile, had not been infertile in realms hyperspatial. Charles Hinton (1853-1907) expounded what could be ascertained about the *forth dimension* mathematically, in what constitutes some of the first popularisations of this kind. This was immediately prior to *time* being designated the forth dimension with the Einsteinian concept of space-time. Significantly, it was the non-Euclidean geometry of Riemann which Einstein drew upon in the formulation of his special theory of relativity. This theory, which postulates the equivalence of matter and energy, as expressed in the famous equation $E = mc^2$ and introduced to physics that exotic phenomenon – the singularity.

It is here that modern theory predicts its own demise, in that the singularity denotes the end of space and time – a point at which the conventional laws of physics break down. Nevertheless, as an astronomical

phenomenon, singularities are believed to inhabit the black holes of stellar collapse, formed when massive stars, having exhausted most of their nuclear fuel, collapse inward under the force of gravity, creating hyper-dense objects of such gravitational pull that nothing can escape their attraction. As these objects contract toward a point of zero dimensions and infinite density, space-time is rent in the formation of the singularity.

It is the formation of black hole singularities, to which end the universe irrevocably tends over time. Yet the singularity is also invoked at the point of cosmic beginning – at the instant of the cosmological big bang, theorised to have formed the universe in the rapid expansion of a primordial fireball from a dimensionless point. Beginning and end – alpha and omega – the singularity thus came to be viewed as a transitional point – a conduit between worlds. A black hole in one universe might be a white hole – a geyser of matter and energy – in another. Cognate is that theoretical entity – the *wormhole* or Einstein-Rosen bridge – a higher-dimensional ‘tunnel’ joining two distant regions of space-time or two separate universes.

The question for potential explorers is whether such a tunnel might be opened and maintained for living beings and various kinds of hardware to pass through intact. Early reports were cautionary, so far as the open scientific literature is concerned. It *might* be done in principle, but it would require the energy of an entire galaxy. And there were other problems. Gravitational forces at the centre of the wormhole would be so large that any spacecraft would be disintegrated. The wormhole might be unstable; quantum effects would be sufficient to collapse the tunnel and close the gate. Time, moreover, would slow in the tunnel and come to a complete halt at the centre, so velocities greater than the speed of light are required if the traveller is not to remain frozen at the singularity. Yet it is early days, and physicist Jack Sarfatti, viewing the UFO phenomenon as exemplary, evidently considers the problem solvable.

For classical physics theory the singularity marks the intrusion of the incommensurate – calculations yield infinite values and the boundary between physical and metaphysical space has resurfaced in new disguise. Give us one free miracle – big bang proponents plead in effect – and we will explain the rest. To the rationalist, needless to say, this is less than satisfactory, wherefore the banishing of singularities from the cosmological equation has become the ‘squaring of the circle’ of contemporary theoretical physics. Occupying minds the calibre of Stephen Hawking’s, it is the attempt to pour the universe into a closed, non-leaking, rational container. As Hawking’s critics point out, the results tend to be sophistic in kind.

At the singularity the universe of physics end and that of mind begins. The Einsteinian opus thus marks the culmination of classical theory, rather than the birth of the new. The new physics theory, of course, is that of the quantum realm, and at the heart of quantum physics lies consciousness.

Star Chambers of the Mind

Alternative to high-resolution / high-energy physics is the mystical proposition that the singularity lies within – inside the human mind-body complex. By this surmise it is mind or consciousness which comprises the original stargate, the hyperspatial vortex, where intentionality does its magic at room temperature and energy differentials of microvolts. Consciousness, as phenomenologists tend to note, is not located in space – nor in time, for that matter – but in that higher-dimensional plenum of all possible worlds which Tibetans call the dharmata. Analogous to the dynamics of the astronomical black hole singularity, it concentrates surrounding space into a hyper-dense experiential object, which erupts as a white hole or unique baby universe. The ‘present’ world, like any other-dimensional or paranormal reality, is thus

contacted in consciousness through an act of concentration or hyperspatial tunnelling.

Tibetan initiates understood the essentially hallucinatory nature of all temporal existence, and devised practices for undoing the hypnotic spell of maya – the magical theatre of the mind. The short and precipitous vajrayana path, intended to produce enlightenment within a single lifetime, is based on techniques of plunging the mind directly into the realisation that all worlds are but the phantoms of reified imagination. The empty, wide open, clear light of the dharmakaya, unidentified with any world, is said to be mind in its natural state.

This raises the question why or how the primordial bliss of the dharmakaya was lost, and exchanged for the regions of temporal existence. Cosmologies of the mystical East describe a serial or cyclic universe, alternating between manifestation (manvantara) and transcendence (pralaya). These cycles, called the nights and days of Brahma, are regarded as phases of inhalation and exhalation on the cosmic scale. At the manvantaric dawn the unmanifest maternal mind-matrix concentrates a singularity or seed, which swells into the cosmic egg. The seed is the *ahamkara* or I-maker – in Western mythology, the Angel of the Covenant, the I AM. This angel is the attractor vortex, around which crystallise the worlds. It is the soul or self – in biblical language the Elohim, the spirit of God – which, as logos or creative Word, hovers above the waters and orders primal chaos into manifest cosmos. Mind is thus drawn from blissful repose by some attractor, which, in a nutshell, comprises the mystic interpretation of the biblical temptation and fall.

These conceptions are the foundations of magic, the art and science of formulating an attractor vortex in conformity with consciously directed will. Insofar as the ancients possessed this science through the bequest of fallen angels, theirs was a point of view essentially other to that of modernity. Hence the exotic technologies, which in the late Neolithic spawned fantastic empires

from Angkor Vat to Lake Titicaca. The ‘alien’ paradigm at their inception explains why the magical cultures of antiquity have remained so mysterious – why Greece and Rome, rather than Egypt and Sumer, are celebrated as the cradle of Western civilisation. As adumbrated within contemporary popular culture, at the heart of the ancient opus was a reality vortex or stargate.

History may be described as the contest of rivalling cultural genii for ontological pre-eminence in the determination of the real. The modern era, as noted, is characterised not merely by disjunction with the archaic worldview, but by an ethos of magical warfare, intent on destroying the remnants of the ancient gnosis and discrediting its legacy. The last remaining of the great magical civilisations were those of the Maya, Aztec and Inca empires, which fell to Spanish conquistadors, whose destructive zeal bore the hallmarks of religious fervour. Though unacknowledged in these terms, the selfsame current yet persists in the destruction rainforest habitats and the last remaining dreamtime cultures. While for the most part ignorantly conceived, such orgies of cultural destruction may be seen as motivated by an unconscious grasp on part of the inquisitorial daimon for sole possession of the stargate.

As further noted, demoralised and degenerate spirits of exile converted nominally to Christianity, embracing the same without conversion, so that by around 300 AD the Christian faith had been subverted from within and turned into an expansionist worldly empire. Its pinnacle of temporal power coincides with the height of the papacy – in round figures from 1000 to 1500 AD. Then, under Martin Luther the Beast receives a mortal blow – as per the Apocalypse of St John – from which it however recovers. A further 500 years hence it is reborn in the spectre of the totalitarian Religious Right.

What is of relevance here is the intrinsic mindset. Because its utopian ambitions are ‘*this-worldly*’, its millennial dreams entirely material, the secular entity seeks to destroy authentic religion, as well as the authentic gnosis. The idea, primitive as it is diabolical, is to shut off the prophetic streams, to close

the visionary portals, to seal the fountains of the transcendent, to bolt the dimensional gateways between the worlds. This was true of inquisitorial Catholicism, as later of Communism and Fascism. It is the signal hallmark of fundamentalist theology, whether secular or religious.

The undulations of the cosmic serpent, however, determine that the gnosis should periodically remanifest. History is the time between two a-temporal portals, even as cosmos is the phase between two singularities. A symmetric curve may be envisaged thus: A magical age arises out of the a-historic dreamtime matrix. This ancient magical world gives way to a classical age of mensuration and reason. This is followed by a medieval age of superstition, and from this trough arises a new rationality in Renaissance and Enlightenment. This, in turn, opens upon a new magical age, in which reason submits to intuition. Telescoped, the cycle appears thus:

Intuition → Reason → Superstition → Reason → Intuition

Yet in the chronological sense, given the asymptotic acceleration of cultural progress, the curve is not sine (of perfect symmetry), but outlines a segment of a golden section spiral. In the Apocalypse of St John, wherein the world-age procession is prophetically laid out, the Renaissance turning point coincides with the fifth angel in a total of seven. These are the seven consecutive angels, which open the seven-sealed Book of humanity. They are logoic emanations, which sound the spiritual keynote of the age in which they appear. Cognate *infra* is an example of the implicit spiritual warfare.

John records that, at the sounding of the fifth angel, he saw a star fall from heaven, to whom was given the key of the bottomless pit. The same opened the pit, and there arose smoke, as the smoke of a great furnace, so that the sun and the air were darkened. From this came scorpions, which attacked those men which had not in their foreheads the seal of God.

What might these cryptic runes convey?

On the metaphysical plane *smoke* is ideology – the fog of the mind; *scorpions* are demons – spirits which torment the ideologically intoxicated. From a religious viewpoint, the fifth angel sounded during the Reformation; indeed it is the voice of the Reformation, as focused thought the prismatic lens of Martin Luther. About the same time a dark star fell from heaven, for in the year that Luther began to flex his spiritual muscle, one Ignatius of Loyola had a religious conversion – the same who would shortly found the Society of Jesus or Jesuit Order – frontline agents of the Counterreformation. His *Spiritual Exercises*, conceived after the Babylonian serpent gnosis, effected an opening of the bottomless pit of hell, where *hell* is the Teutonic *hele*, the Norse *helan*. the concealed place, and the place of the shining ones, thereby raising to new heights the stakes of the spiritual war. Viewed from a different perspective, the war in heaven came a step closer to earth.

Across the English channel the while, the Elizabethan scientist, court astrologer, and magus Dr John Dee made otherwise use of the door recently opened in space. Dee conforms so remarkably to the archetypal Faustian character that he may well have served as model to Goethe and subsequent writers on the myth. A polymath scholar, distinguished in fields ranging from cartography and mathematics to ancient languages, he amassed the largest library then in Europe – some 30,000 texts, printed or in manuscript. Besides books, he collected scientific instruments, appurtenances of the chemist's or alchemist's art, and his Mortlake residence was almost constantly the centre of exotic and speculative experimentation. And while he enjoyed the favour of Queen Elisabeth I, he remained, perhaps true to the mould, something of a social and intellectual outsider.

Specifically, Dee became disillusioned with conventional leaning, and began to examine the question whether a higher knowledge might be accessed by magical means. The sequel forms a remarkable chapter in the psychohistory

of the planet, unique with respect to the material obtained – texts generated in the course of these researches, and the uses which later occultists found for them. We are fortunate, moreover, in that Dee bequeathed to posterity his voluminous diaries, most of which remain extant in the Bodleian Library and the British Museum.

At the outset it should be noted that Dee lived in a universe wherein magical and rational thinking had not yet officially parted. Indeed it was quite consistent with the Renaissance paradigm for knowledge to be obtained by intuitive or inspirational means. The physical or rational world, as noted, had magical boundaries, which might intersect conventional space at every juncture. There is a sense, in the unfolding of the tale, that agencies on both sides of the divide were seeking mutual contact. Dee, ever pragmatic and attentive to detail in his daily journals, relates as follows.

Alone at prayer, late one night in his Mortlake chapel, he suddenly became aware of a rapping sound at the window. Rising to investigate and drawing aside the curtain, he beheld ‘a shining one’ hovering outside the window some twelve feet above the ground. This being signalled for the window to be opened and, on doing so, Dee was handed an egg of smoky quartz, about the size of a large grapefruit.

The stone in question is extant in the Manuscript Room of the British Museum, as are the records of the magical opus which was to ensue.

These relate that on the 10th of March 1582 – one Mr. Edward Kelly came to his house, ‘desirous to relate or demonstrate some aspect of spiritual practice’. Appearing unbidden and unannounced, the man, whose name turned out to be Edward Talbot, has remained something of an enigma. Little can be ascertained concerning his background, although Dee’s careful enquiry found him to be of dubious reputation. Dee nevertheless quenched his misgivings as his abilities with the scrying stone – usually a spheroid of polished crystal, as used for divination – became apparent. Thus commenced a collaboration,

extending over seven years, with Kelly providing the sensitive link – a Mephistopheles to Dee's Faustus – with realms purportedly angelic. As their relationship, so their entire manner of working was – taken at face value – engineered and guided by suprasensory agencies, in which Dee implicitly put his faith. The procedure was as follows:

Upon prayers and invocations being made, Kelly would peer into the crystal and determine therein an angel, which would instruct him in various ways, while Dee had oversight of the project, charting a course of action through dialogue with the forces invoked. Occasionally a light would emerge from the crystal and strike Kelly in the head. He would then become strangely illumined, discoursing eloquently and at length on arcane subjects, whereupon, the light having left him, he would be unaware whereof he had spoken. The men held sessions almost daily, with Kelly in the role of seer, while Dee set the agenda and compiled the record.

The result of these invocations, as viewed by modern students of the occult, is a magical system referred to as Angelic or Enochian. Of great complexity and unquestioned aesthetic appeal, it is reportedly also of unusual efficacy as far as modern magical systems go. While the phenomenon of spirit communications is common enough, ranging in content from the trite and diffuse to the structured, non-trivial, concentrated and precise, the Enochian opus is clearly of the latter kind. In most instances, moreover, including the major religious texts, such revelations tend to be continuous with the cultural context in which they appear. Not so the work in question, which, but for a sprinkling of Christian imagery, springs from the pristine void unique, without precedent and fully formed – a fruit, according to occultist Aleister Crowley, wrested prematurely from the Tree of Knowledge by the hands of a desperate magician. Indeed the aura of high strangeness, the sustained intensity of the noumenal is such that what transpired in Mortlake after the spring of 1582 seems to fall outside space and time in the ordinary sense altogether.

Obtained at the outset, and in the manner described, were a number of talismans – pentacles, complex as they are original in design. Distinguished among them is the *Sigillum Dei Aemeth*, engraved on a fourteen inch plate of purified beeswax. Concentrically nested within a circular rim is a heptagon, a heptagram, a further heptagon and a pentagram – the whole inscribed with divine and angelic names, numbers and various symbols. These objects were laid out in what was designated the Holy Twelvefold Table, describing in microcosm the angelic universe. The shewstone or scrying crystal was placed upon this table, forming the centre of the forces invoked. Further communication was based on a large grid of 25 by 27 squares, inscribed with letters. The angel would point out letters in succession, with Kelly noting and calling the same, while Dee recorded what was being dictated in this manner.

Thus were produced a set of nineteen Keys or Calls – invocations, which are nowadays usually interpreted as follows: The first two respectively define the polarities or antipodes of the Enochian universe. The following sixteen invoke the archaic elements Fire, Water, Air, and Earth, each further divided into *Fire of Fire*, *Water of Fire*, etc – thereby making a total of sixteen sub-elements. The last of the Calls invokes thirty Aethyrs or Aires – concentric spheres surrounding the cube of Earth in ever widening orbs, which comprise spiritual heavens of increasing sublimity, proceeding from the inmost Thirtieth to the outermost First. The nineteenth Call has thus thirty permutations, each differing in but a single word, making a total of forty-eight Calls.

The whole is presented in a language called Enochian or Angelic – in reference to the fact that Dee evidently judged that the intelligences being contacted were the same as those which instructed the patriarch Enoch. Tradition goes so far as equating it with the veritable lost language of Eden. Complete with its own alphabet, and evidencing an elementary grammar and syntax, it remains a source of bafflement to linguistic scholars. Falling into no known language group, it defies classification as to whether it is a natural or

synthetic language. As an aside, the Calls were dictated *backwards*, on the rationale that to have done otherwise would have invoked forces which, to say the least, were not wanted at the time. It is further worthy of note that, after obtaining this remarkable system, regarded as the crowning achievement of their collaboration, the two magicians evidently did no further work with it.

Rationalist interpretations to the effect that Kelly was perpetrating an elaborate deception upon Dee tend to founder on the sublimity, the complexity and integrity, of the material. During the intervening centuries this has been subjected to extensive magically competent scrutiny, and acknowledged to possess deep and illuminating structure. Aleister Crowley regarded it the magical system of the new aeon – an engine of indubitable power, while the Enochian mage Benjamin Rowe describes it as a living organic structure, capable of evolving with the practitioner that uses it. If Dee was indeed being duped by Kelly, the latter emerges as a literary and philological forger of preternatural genius. And this, in turn, would raise questions of its own.

What such experiments rather suggest is that, given certain unusual or intense stimuli, the conditions of mind-space-time may undergo profound alteration. The catalyst may take the form of symbolic information, it may involve psychism, ceremony or extreme stimulation. Else it may it may be electromagnetic or neuro-chemical in nature. It is the last of these which arguably provides the most dramatic evidence that ‘reality’ is entirely a cerebro-mental state.

Chemical Agents of Hyperspatial Inducement

The most comprehensive use of psychedelic or hallucinatory substances occurs in the context of the universal indigenous dreamtime, wherein these substances are viewed as dimensional gateways or portals to the otherworld. The New World in particular has a rich history of the shamanic use of

psychoactive plants, which are not merely condoned among traditional societies, but form the centre of religious life. Substances so used include a variety of psilocybin containing mushrooms, as well as preparations such as ayahuasca – also called yage – and the African ibogaine or iboga. These are regarded as gifts – indeed, as the very flesh – of the gods, mediators of visionary gnosis, as well as the source of practical knowledge. In this there is something of a mystery, as it is the plants themselves which are said to have communicated the secrets of their use – including such recipes as involve the improbable combination of two out of thousands of possible ingredients, as in the case of ayahuasca. This brew, varieties of which are revered throughout the Amazon region, contains the powerful hallucinogenic agent DMT (dimethyl tryptamine). As DMT is however orally inactive, an admixture plant must be added to temporarily disable a particular group of enzymes in the digestive system, thereby preventing the breakdown of the active ingredient.

As the anthropologist Jeremy Narby points out, the odds against the combination having been found by trial and error are astronomical. It rather seems as if dreamtime shamanism, along with its elaborate pharmacology, arose whole cloth from a primordial symbiotic matrix involving humans and plants. In his pioneering study of Amazonian ayahuasca cults *The Cosmic Serpent* Narby suggests that DNA, the language of all terrestrial life, may be the basis of a pervasive biological intelligence, a web of intrinsic communication across orders of sentience. Psychedelics, notably the plant-based varieties, in further amplifying subjective impressions, might thus constitute a direct link with the logos of nature.

This may serve to clear up a misconception in the modern West, vis-à-vis the idea that the hallucinatory experience consists of seeing what isn't there. Rather it involves a 'lighting up' of the psychic landscape, whereby generally subtle noumena partake of a visual dimension. The 'alien' or 'otherworldly' landscape into which the seer is transported is thus the imaginal realm of

subjective consciousness, externalised in multidimensional spaces of tangible information. Psychedelics, in this sense, are reifying or materialising agents, the fulcrum of the ‘word made flesh’.

Subjects are therefore likely to become emersed in their own personal heavens and hells, although at ‘psychedelic’ doses of certain substances an apparently objective and independent reality is said to prevail, where reside universal archetypes and tutelary deities, veritable guardians of verifiable knowledge. The world they inhabit may be described as Jung’s collective unconscious or the akasha of Vedic lore – a sentient matrix wherein operate magical laws of manifestation. This is reflected in the literal meaning of the word *Ayahuasca*. The Quechua *aya* means *spirit* or *ancestor*, while *huasca* translates as *vine* or *rope*. Ayahuasca is thus the spirit-vine – the thread whereby an ancient and timeless gnosis is conferred.

Among the Witoto and similar cultures of the greater Amazon, relevant initiations traditionally require both special aptitude and serious commitment. The career of shaman or ayahuasquero involves an arduous apprenticeship of fastings and purifications, a thorough knowledge of medicinal plants, their preparation and lore, as well as ongoing initiations in the suprasensory regions through ingestion of increasingly large and potent doses of the magical brew.

As the results of these assignments are quite tangible, it is not the shaman only but also the surrounding culture which are transformed. The magical entities encountered are potent to confer information and to intervene in local affairs. Some attain to local celebrity. It may be rationalised that the visionary oeuvre represents a naïve anthropomorphic tendency to personalise the subtle causal agencies of nature. Conversely, of course it may be argued that the mindset, which demands such rationalisation, suffers from cognitive blunting – that the phenomena of the otherworld are as objectively given as clouds, sky and water. It is significant here that shamanic tradition evinces a longstanding awareness of the creatures of modern flying saucer lore with their silvery disks.

Nor is there in this anything considered remarkable – the magical sensibility simply takes entities of this class for granted.

There are pitfalls on this path, as the practitioner, embarking upon the subtle planes, becomes a potential target of psychic or magical suasion. Dangers include delusion, obsession, and the total subversion of wholesome progress toward witchcraft or sorcery. The co-presence of the latter seems an inevitable part of shamanic culture, such that shamans invariably need to engage in periods of magical combat with inimical forces, both to attain and defend their positions of power. They tend, moreover, to be held in ambivalent regard, it being understood that their knowledge may be used for inimical as well as beneficent ends.

The modern West (re)discovered the psychedelic pharmacopeia late in its history, which is to say *after* the fin-de-siecle occult revival – after Gurdjieff, Crowley, Blavatsky and Steiner, after Freud and Jung, after surrealism, atonalism, and the introduction of Eastern mystical thought and practice – after, that is, modernism had virtually run its course. Thus far the tide of cultural deconstruction had evidently to advance, before industrialised society was permitted to interface en large with the most primordial and archaic of cultural paradigms. But come mana time, it manas.

We take up the story in the first half of the twentieth century. Harvard scholar Richard Evans Schultes (1915-2001), widely regarded as the father of ethno-botany, documented the use of some 2000 medicinal plants in the Amazon, and opens the field to new generations of seekers and explorers. Schultes' chief decades of field activity coincide with other developments on the psychedelic front. Dr Albert Hofmann of Swiss Sandoz Pharmaceuticals synthesises LSD in 1943 and accidentally doses himself, opening a new era in the study of consciousness. In 1953 Banker and mycologist Gordon Wasson, begins his personal journey into the shamanic use of psilocybin containing mushrooms, becoming the first outsider to participate in sacred Mazatec rites in

rural Mexico. He coins the term entheogenic – god manifesting – to describe the religious nature of the visionary states he encounters. The account of his experience causes a sensation, and seekers begin to flock to remaining centres of native shamanism. Also during this period Aldous Huxley encounters in close succession first Mescaline and Psilocybin, then LSD. He chronicles his experiments in *The Doors Of Perception*, soon to become a classic of the emerging psychedelic counterculture.

Throughout the fifties, however, the psychedelic revolution remained *recherché* and exclusive to a relatively small intellectual and artistic elite. Stan Grof is among early pioneers researching LSD as a tool in psychotherapy, and the litterateurs William Burroughs and Allan Ginsberg quietly chronicle their drug-induced epiphanies without raising much of a stir in the social or political landscape. All this changed in the sixties, when Harvard professor Timothy Leary, turned prophet of psychedelia, promoted LSD in a social context and divided America with his incendiary *turn on, tune in, drop out*. Mass experimentation in a spirit of hedonism followed, and, fuelled by a hysterical and reactionary press, led to the repressive measures soon after implemented. LSD and similar hallucinogenic agents became classified in the US under Schedule 1, meaning ‘having no therapeutic value’ and providing prison sentences for manufacture and possession. Although this did not deter illicit use, legitimate research on the substances effectively came to a halt. Not so, however, clandestine research under classified projects conducted by the CIA and sections of the military. The abuses perpetrated on large numbers and unwitting subjects in mind control and other non-therapeutic experiments subsequently became subject to a series of congressional hearings, which briefly shed light on the black agenda and its ways. They formed part of extensive research into areas of mind control, pursued by intelligence and the military, employing semantic, electronic, chemical and psychic means. Within the context of the greater Babylon matrix the control of psychedelic substances

is of course similarly motivated.

Concurrently an unofficial, though undisguised, psychedelic culture pervaded ‘creative’ America, from the ivory towers of elite educational institutions to the cyber-labs of Silicone Valley. Psychedelic culture was foundational to Esalen – legendary think-tank and hive of luminaries and socialites of the emerging holistic paradigm, where everything from Eastern mysticism to the channelling of extraterrestrial intelligences sheltered under a multi-disciplinary umbrella. Esalen also was a centre of the new quantum-mysticism, associated with Jack Sarfatti, Fred Allan Wolf, Nick Herbert and Saul-Paul Sirag. These are among a sizeable group of physicists who authored popular and influential books, outlining how the new physics might be at the centre of a new holistic and humanist paradigm. Implicit in much of this material is an integral vision of the human enterprise – a worldview inclusive of the rational as of the more archaic and visionary perspectives.

Psychedelics played a significant role in this. For, as Huxley was to testify, to the mind prepared by introspection and the philosophic habit, they (these substances) serve as a bridge to a dialectic realm beyond that of the rational paradigm. The limitations of the latter are thereby exposed, and empathic dialogue can occur on previously unused channels of intelligence. Thus it might be possible to obtain rapport with the magical mindset of the ancients, as with the ethos and trance states of the shamanic dreamtime. From these expanded visionary realms, practical insights might thus be gained of signal importance to a hypertrophied civilisation on the path of spiritual and ecological suicide.

Based on this understanding, a new psychedelic revolution is quietly unfolding, cognisant of the historic, cultural, philosophical, and scientific dimensions opened up by relevant research. Limited clinical studies on DMT and related substances are again being sanctioned, urban ayahuasca cults are flourishing in numerous locales, and explorer / philosophers such as Terence

McKenna and Daniel Pinchbek relate their experiences with a variety of plant hallucinogens to a fascinated and grateful audience. While nothing substitutes for actual experience, for the uninitiated the experiential literature of the realm nevertheless provides a fascinating window to the possibilities of altered states of consciousness.

So what happens in the psychedelic state? Sensory acuity is enhanced, the mind is released from habitual ideation and non-ordinary perceptions and insights become the norm. Consciousness is enlarged in terms of band-width and fidelity; broadened and deepened, it may extend into realms utterly alien. Whether the experience produces enlightenment, confusion or terror, is deemed dependent on *set* and *setting* – the constitution of the individual involved and the circumstances obtaining at and around the time of the experiment.

The psilocybin mushrooms in shamanic use produce interior visions of the classical type – intricate patterns reminiscent of Islamic art, fantastic landscapes, heraldic animals, archetypal intelligences personified in human or non-human form. Given doses sufficiently high, this visionary domain may export itself into the physical landscape, turning conventional space into the dreamtime matrix. As the seer dreams with eyes wide open, the otherworldly may assume an objective and independent character, allowing for dialogue with the apparent other. An aesthetic and moral order is observed to inform the visionary world, especially regarding substances with an extensive history of shamanic use. The mushroom, it is understood, confers initiation and teaches the right way to live. Against frivolous use, according to Daniel Pinchbek, it offers stern and emphatic warning.

A more alien type of landscape is associated with the chemical DMT, especially when inhaled – smoked – in concentrated form. Terence McKenna, the undisputed poet of the DMT experience, waxed lyrical on the subject in his workshops and lectures. To quote the Master or render a close paraphrase – you take a deep toke, and perhaps another one if you are capable, and that is all

you need. You lie back and presently you see something like a chrysanthemum unfolding, and there is a rising whine and a sound like ripping cellophane, and you break through into another realm. The place is teeming – inhabited by intelligent beings, which could be described as self-dribbling basketballs, jewelled Faberge Eggs or self-transforming machine elves. They clamour around and appear to salute and cheer the astonished visitor. If they had faces, they would be grinning, and what they say is, *pay attention to what we are doing*, and they proceed to sing objects into existence.

These creatures, also referred to in the field as *tykes*, have been independently confirmed by a number of observers. McKenna describes the ability of these entities to generate a kind of linguistic effluvium, which condenses into other objects. His intuition is that they perform a reassuring as well as tutoring function – like the strings of brightly coloured objects sometimes suspended over infant's cradles to stimulate their cognitive development. If it is not naive to speculate on the basis of description, one might theorise that DMT opens to scrutiny a normally pre-cognitive stratum where neuronal activity translates into basic symbol formation. One might liken it to the deva realm of formative intelligence. Other commentators, in similar vein, have linked this experiential domain with the chonyid bardo of Tibetan mysticism – the secondary clear light as sub-stratum to the sensate world of concrete images.

Is it dangerous? McKenna rhetorically asked. Only if you fear death by astonishment.

If DMT opens the vortex, there is, according to testimony, a substance which takes one through the rabbit hole entire, and out the other end. The analytical chemist Daniel Siebert describes how he set out to prepare a significantly concentrated extract of *Salvia Divinorum*, a newly discovered, highly psychoactive plant of the mint family, also called Diviner's Sage. His diary states that on June 6, 1993 he managed to isolate a fairly pure crystalline

fraction of the active ingredient *salvinorin A*. What happened next can be regarded as one of the pivotal moments in the history of psychedelia, reminiscent of the accidental discovery of LSD by Albert Hofmann. At the time he (Siebert) thought that it was probably some inactive component of the plant, and he was preparing to throw it in the trash, when it occurred to him that perhaps he should test a little.

Hope springs eternal, he mused. With hindsight he deems himself fortunate that he imbibed what he considered a fairly small dose.

Having inhaled the fumes, after vaporising the crystals with a torch, he waited. His last thoughts were something like, ‘Just as I thought, the stuff is inactive’. Then an accelerated and confused state of mind supervened, and he found himself wondering where his body and, for that matter, where his universe had gone. The condition seemed to last an eternity, although in retrospect only minutes appeared to have past. Naturally he panicked and desperately tried to get back to physically reality. Yet the more he tried to find the connecting thread, the more he was frustrated. It became clear that the place he was looking for did not exist, and it suddenly it dawned on him that he had always been living this disembodied existence. There never was anything else. So he found himself relaxing into acceptance of the situation.

Just as quickly, however, he was back in the room. But as his eyes adjusted, he found not the room he had left behind, but one he remembered from childhood. Yet this was no vision or dream - this *was* reality, solid and physical in every respect. To all appearance he had managed to reconnect with his physical body, but at an earlier point of his earthly timeline. The possibility of having to live over again from that point in time seemed at that moment very real, and again he panicked, trying to remember where in time he belonged. Again he lost his embodied focus, claimed once more by hyperspace. Several times he would thus become ‘incarnate’ at varying points of his life, the cycle repeating seven or eight times in all. It seemed as if the disparate moments of

his personal history were not sequential at all; they existed simultaneously, and that it should be possible to will oneself to ‘be’ at any chosen point in time – at least of the past.

When the voyager did eventually return to his point of departure, reality had still not quite reassembled. For, looking around to see if everything was normal, he found that there was no ‘behind’ him, only an ‘in front’. Yet after a while the effects were subsiding and space was behaving again as it should. He recalled testing the extract and reflected that it was the chemical which had triggered the experience. Elated, he realised that he had isolated the psychedelic essence of *Salvia Divinorum*.

Other experiential accounts attest the highly potent nature of the *Salvia* plant, and the ontological ordeal posed by this queen of hyperspace. Some, having entered her domain, were dissuaded, after one encounter, from further experimentation. Others found in her an exquisite aide on the path of healing and spiritual illumination. Observation has further indicated that, during the phase of dissociation, the body may continue to pursue its own inexplicable agenda – thrash around or go walk-about in a highly purposive manner. On the subjective side strong psychic currents and the sense of a immanent other pervade the *salvia* atmosphere, so that it seems pregnant with impulse and intentionality. The presence of a ‘sitter’ is therefore deemed advisable for all but high initiates of this goddess.

Yet it is Siebert’s account which remains potentially the most revealing, owing perhaps to the purity and size of his self-administered sample. His experience constitutes something of an extreme, which, when compared with trip reports involving other substances, suggest a psychedelic continuum – a periodic table of sorts – regarding psychoactive effect. Thus *Ayahuasca* and *psilocybin* mushrooms open visionary windows upon the hyperspatial manifold, revealing the habitual world as a bubble in an ocean of cognitive possibility. DMT, by contrast, appears to take the psychedelic surfer to a substratum of

formative causation – a seemingly more objective space, underlying the generation of any world. *Salvia Divinorum* evidently pricks the bubble, dissolving worlds entire, while allowing selective access to highly specific mind-space-time locales.

As part of a personal spiritual quest, in scientific research of matters cognitive and ontological, as in the medical and therapeutic field, the application of psychedelic agents remains a vast, largely unexplored domain of great promise. It would appear that ordinary mortals might attain to the realms of the gods by the simple – or not so simple – expedient of conquering these higher or extended cognitive regions. Yet it is the potentially empowering nature of these substances which also constitutes the core of controversy regarding them. While personal access to the wellsprings of consciousness might be said to constitute a birthright of human incarnation – to this end we came to the world – there is that regressive and inquisitorial egreore that is in evident fear of this freedom.

Nevertheless it is a freedom which is intrinsic to the constitution of nature. Nature is inherently psychedelic in that it tends toward biological complexity and sentient awareness. Psychedelics, in the narrow sense, are thus mere concentrations of the material basis of consciousness. They are, in fact, neurotransmitters, closely resembling serotonin and the tryptamines, and bonding with the same intracerebral receptor sites. Indeed DMT is a naturally occurring substance in the human brain, its secretion closely linked with the function of the pineal gland. It is further conceivable for the human brain to spontaneously evolve new kinds of neuro-chemicals, perhaps over relatively short periods, thereby radically altering subjective space.

Psychedelics, by definition, are what makes us conscious. They are that which makes manifest, and what they manifests is mind.

Alchemy, Tantra, the Elixir and the Stone

In the final analysis it is not potions and brews, nor enchantments, nor Valkyries, vestals or Voodoo Queens, but *mind* which mediates the great arcanum. It is mind which opens the hyperspatial gateways, and constitutes the portal to *this*, as to any world. Aids and adjuncts to the quest – wine, women and song, as aptly summed by the poet – these merely constitute the external dynamics of an interior process of alchemical transmutation. Mind, as the ancients recognised, is the reifying / materialising vortex, and it is moreover intrinsic to given nature. Antecedent even to space and time, it is everywhere. From this ubiquity, they proposed, the magical nectar, the elixir of immortality might be distilled by a process of internal alchemy, as subsequently elaborated in the yogas and tantras of the East. Consciousness, their sages recognised, in its unconditioned formless form, indeed *is* the elixir, the universal medicine. The Stone – to continue the analogy – the Stone of the Wise is the concrescence of mind, the materialised world, or the Word made Flesh.

Mind is the unborn and undying essence – the formless ground, as the Asiatic paradigm has it, of dependent arising. In its unmanifest, undefined condition it may be likened to the *Father* aspect of the Christian trinity before the world was as yet created – to God in the most absolute and transcendent sense. Indeed there appears to be no antecedent cause or reason that it should take one form rather than another. Then, in the words of St John, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*. Here is the mystery of creation and of intrinsic nature. As a concentration of divine mind the Word *is* God, and, as that mind expressed in nature, it is *with* God. That Logos or Word is the Son of God, in whom the entire creation is headed and summed.

In Genesis further it is written that he (Yahweh Elohim) divided the waters *above* the heavens from the waters *below* the heavens, where the latter was made into the earth, the seas – indeed the entire universe of human

habitation. Of the former little is said, but for certain allusions that God is veiled in robes of impenetrable light. Separating these two – the upper and lower – is the firmament of heaven, which is also the mind: impenetrable barrier in its unenlightened state, heavenly gateway when enlightened. The biblical fall denotes a loss of the primordial consciousness, to the exclusive fixation on the lower worlds.

Christ or Messiah is the enlightened mind, which functions as portal and redemptive agent, having access to that higher realm, with which, indeed, it is one. Hence the sayings of Jesus as: *My Father and I are one*, and *No one comes to the Father but by me*. The Holy Spirit, to complete the notional trinity, is the royal rapture of union between the lower and higher principle – of the marriage of heaven and purified earth, and the oil of anointing, whereby the world is lighted or made enlightened with the light of unbounded consciousness.

This might lay to rest the Athanasian creed, which interprets the Christian trinity – of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – as denoting *three persons*! Such became the official doctrine after 325 AD, a period in which the Church was fast sinking into apostasy. Intuition and scripture, to the contrary, affirm that God is One. *Hear, oh Israel, the Lord your God is one Lord* – might be called the first principle of the prophetic canon. This One undergoes permutation – transformation and reification: God – Logos – Man – Woman, from pure spirit to incarnate sons and daughters, in a fourfold process of becoming, as adumbrated in the mystic seal of Yahweh – the I Am – in the Hebrew spelling YHVH (*yod, he, vau, he*). Adding the letter *shin*, signifying spirit and fire – the redemptive principle, one obtains YHSVH, which is Yeheshua or Jesus.

This is called the modal doctrine, and represents the understanding among the apostles and the early church. It is presented here for consideration, opening, as it does, the most sacred arcana of the Old and New Testament. It thereby exposes the Athanasian deception as calculated to turn the doctrine of salvation askew. For, presenting God as three persons, it obscures the central

redemptive mystery – that God was manifest in man, and that the oneness which Jesus enjoyed with the Father is the prototype of humanity redeemed. As a dogma of the Catholic creed, with its spiritualist and necromantic leanings, it rather describes the dynamics of ancestor worship and magical succession (apostolic succession in the Roman Church) whereby, through the course of generations, the spirit of the fathers is inherited by the sons. The role of Mary – Mediatrix, as she is dignified in the catechism – is thus a sublimation of the function of motherhood, the material matrix and crucible, without whom the seed cannot be transmitted.

Yet there is ambivalence in the devotional paeans wherein Catholic mystics hymned the Virgin. The imagery – and indeed, how could it not – strays into the overtly sensual domain, where *her cups and the perennial fountain of her grace* denote a mystery of Sumero-Babylonian rather than Judaeo-Christian origin. The role of woman as reifying magical vessel – a womb-goddess and grail maiden – is of course central to these mysteries. Far less evident, even from the biological standpoint, is the role of the male. Hence the endless elaboration of magical means.

But is it possible for a virgin to conceive? Is salvation solely the work of God? Could the messianic promise actually be true? This the apostate Church could not accept, even while entertaining the proposition in various forms of sophistic symbolism. Not spiritual transformation, but worldly consolidation thus became the primary focus of the Church which arose after 325. Excluded from the mystery of grace, it viewed the messianic lineage with mingled envy and disbelief, seeking variously to obliterate and / or assimilate its legacy and spiritual charter.

The esoteric aspects of the gospels thus fell by default to the gnostics, cabalists, and alchemists who, out of Hermetic, Judaeo-Christian, and Neo-Platonist teachings, forged a philosophic and experimental syncretism. Stated another way, the messianic seed found shelter among enlightened cabals of the

ancient mystery tradition, perpetuating an alliance, extending back to the ‘wise men’ or Magi, which came from the East to honour the Christ child, and beyond.

It is further evident that its practitioners were into *something* profound, for the vehemence of persecution which the orthodox church unleashed against this declared heresy betrays the fear of serious competition. Kings sought to torture from them the secret of making gold, while the Inquisition brought to bear all possible means to force a recanting of their beliefs, yet, like earlier waves of Christian martyrs, many embraced a heroic death rather than betray their art, which they claimed was given them of God.

A genuine mystery surrounds the phenomenon of medieval alchemy, similar to the magical opus of the ancients. The idea that the alchemical gnosis was merely an unscientific precursor to modern chemistry is discounted in that it attracted the lifelong devotion of great minds throughout the ages – and that well into the modern era, with Isaac Newton and Carl Gustav Jung as prime examples. But what alchemy actually *is*, historians are at a loss to explain. It is as if a chapter of European history was blotted out and forgotten – consigned with the elves and fairies to the realm of mythology.

For this, however, the alchemists themselves were in part responsible, owing to their extreme sensitivity concerning disclosure of their art to the profane. They wrote in cipher and in code, but above all in an impenetrable jargon, calculated to baffle all but those who, by virtue of purity of motive, are worthy of an unobscured view of the matter. Working in secret, they shunned the limelight, not troubling to inform the world of their momentous discoveries. Only during the twentieth century did the tenets of alchemy begin to gain exposure in language comprehensible among a wider audience.

Thus it is now apparent that its connections to chemistry are incidental rather than intrinsic. The royal art, on the material plane, is more akin to biology, concerned with evolution and natural growth. Above all it is to be

regarded as a spiritual discipline, any material benefit being viewed as secondary to that greater transmutation, which of old has been known as the Great Work. Alchemy was (and is) thus concerned foremost with the transmutation of consciousness. Yet a physical process appears to enter the equation in a most curious manner. It would seem as if the customary distinction between the spiritual and material worlds is once more abrogate in the forge of a gnosis more intimate than that of Cartesian empiricism. If the alchemists indeed were solipsists, this would explain their notion that all matter is alive and that consciousness lies at the root of all phenomena, in that the adept wears the external universe as he does his robe of flesh. It is therefore the human consciousness which animates the alchemical cosmos.

Whereas modern science traces human genesis to the fire of stars and beyond, our link to the cosmos and the various stages of evolution appears abstract and academic. This is the legacy of a cultural choice which traded theory for gnosis – objective distance for relationship. The alchemical ideal, like the yogas and tantras of the East, reverses this tendency with a regimen, informed by compassion. Compassion, a concept misunderstood, denotes, in this context, union with the experiential plenum. Stated another way, compassion is the stance which makes union possible. Union or yoga – the terms are synonymous – results in gnosis, the direct experience of what was shrouded in clouds of cosmic unknowing. Thus is alchemy both science and art, in that the union described requires holistic engagement, involving the analytical and reasoning as well as the synthesising and intuitive faculties.

Various etymologies have been suggested for the term *alchemy*, the least contrived being the Arabic *al-khemi*, meaning *the Egyptian matter*, or *that which pertains to Egypt*. It is further apparent that the alchemical opus derives from highest antiquity, evincing an essential unity from its mythic cradle of conception in the sorceries of fallen angels to its flowering branches in Chinese Taoism, the Indian and Himalayan Yogas and Tantras, in ancient Egypt and

Mesopotamia, in Magian and Sufi traditions, in Pythagorean and Neo-Platonic lore, and latterly in the esoteric Europe of the Merovingian and Cathar dynasties, of the Knights Templar and the occupying Moors. A pervasive system of values moreover characterises its many branches, the essential attainment being couched in various kinds of metaphor – the Taoist elixir of immortality, the Vedic nectar or pearl of Amrit, the indestructible diamond body of Buddhist Tantra, the Egyptian Ka, the Medicine of Metals and the Philosopher's Stone.

The inherent idea in these various symbols is the perfectibility of nature, specifically the human nature, and the notion that, where nature is weak, it needs to be aided by science and art. As such the alchemists were concerned with a process of natural evolution and growth, but with the proviso that personal progress on the path to godhead could be greatly accelerated. The means propitious became the subject continual research and refinement, made the more difficult by the secrecy and lone-wolf ethos attending the field. In keeping with traditions of highest antiquity, the work of transmutation was envisaged as comprising seven stages. In the Western tradition they are termed Calcination, Dissolution, Separation, Conjunction, Fermentation, Distillation, and Coagulation, where it is understood that each signifies a material as well as a psychological process. This inter-plane isomorphism of language is indeed germane to the esoteric sciences in general, reflecting an appreciation of the self-similarity of nature across scales and planes, as enshrined in the *Emerald Tablet* of Hermes in the axiomatic dictum *as above, so below*. In consequence the most erudite of pertinent texts bear simultaneous interpretation on the planes of the material, the psychic, and the spiritual nature.

Central to alchemical theory is the idea of the 'one thing', essentially that all phenomena in the universe are permutations, and partake of the nature, of one fundamental substance, referred to as the Universal Ether or Astral Light. The German alchemist Basil Valentine, in a text so named, refers to it as the

Azoth of the Philosophers, where *Azoth* denotes alike the chaotic First Matter at the commencement of the Work and the perfected Stone at its conclusion. This First Matter may be said to correspond to the primordial waters of Genesis, the unformed void before the manifestation of the logos creating the world. Significantly, the object upon the which the Great Work was to be performed, had first to be regressed to the primordial state before it could be reconstituted in a manner more desirable.

What is overlooked in the merely objective schools – and it is here that modern attempts at the unified field theory tend to founder – that the object is also subject. Transmutation is of the self – of human consciousness – although implicit in its accomplishment is the spiritualising of matter and thus the redemption of the universe. The spiritual seed ripens as a whole, wherefore in the fulfilment of the Great Work all nature is transformed. The mundane sphere has become the Pure Land of enlightened Buddhas, the groves of Arcadia, and the Garden of Eden.

Each individual has his or her personal world, and it is naively assumed that one's associates – the people on planet earth in general – share the same experiential space. But a glimpse of intimacy indicates otherwise. Personal spaces touch – they overlap somewhat, but in many cases there may be no shared borders at all – and it is not merely geographical distance which constitutes the divisive factor. One's closest companions may be physically distant – they might live in another age. Because mind is inherently non-local, its habitation is the hyperspatial manifold and contact with any world an instance of hyperspatial tunnelling. Interdimensional travel is its intrinsic game. One need not look for exotic portals – magical gateways – the iconic symbols of transformation, for the ordinary is the ultimate miracle.

Parked alongside the brook is a gigantic state-of-the-art, intergalactic, transdimensional disk – luminous and gently humming. Inside out, outside in: we have interiorised the universe and externalised the soul.

A quickening of the conscious manifold, so the concerted prophetic chorus, is dissolving the dimensional boundaries. As a result the visionary and hyperspatial journey is again becoming a cultural fixture – in the alien encounter syndrome, in neo-shamanic experimentation, in ascension cults and inter-dimensional travel-clubs, as documented on the websites of *Incunabula* and *Damanhur*. Global initiation is occasioned by the cosmic calendar and saturation levels of electromagnetic radiation, in crude reconstruction of the sentient serpent matrix. Combined with the weakening magnetic field of the earth – of the telluric serpent, which is the foundation of mind – the effect is a subtle restructuring of the astral / etheric collective, with increasing propensity for mutation, and a tendency toward hypertrophied sensibilities. The human sensorium, in popular parlance, is becoming attuned to more subtle rates of vibration. Made explicit in the process are the deep levels of individual and collective consciousness, so that, in the endgame of history, the archetypal prime movers of the psyche are revealed.

It's a party with angels and devils, with Buddhas and Christs, with ascended masters and manifested sons of God.

TELOS AGHARTA

I'd like to see that land beyond the Pole.

That area beyond the Pole is the centre of the great unknown.

– Admiral Richard B. Byrd

The City of Immortals

In archaic literature what is now regarded as mythical time and space merges seamlessly with historical and geographical terrain. Is it therefore possible to set out by sail, or overland, and reach the fabled Shangri La – city of immortals?

Myths and legends have persisted regarding travellers' experiences of contact with what is best described as another world. Perhaps a simulacrum of the phenomenon is to be appreciated in the inexplicably impulsive explorations undertaken in childhood, wherein geographical remoteness merges seamlessly with the terrain of a hallucinatory landscape. Even mild dislocation from familiar surroundings may suffice to translate the young into the wide-awake dream of an enchanted realm, which may extend to the frequent and obsessive revisiting of a magical place, which is subsequently found not to exist. Piaget demonstrated that children live in a hallucinatory world, which socialisation gradually obscures with the superimposition of the cultural consensus view.

Not only children, but adults have been known to stumble into regions which cannot be found on any map, and where a strange impulsive dreamlike state seems to occlude the attitude of normal reflection. Literature is replete with such accounts, from the voyages of Odysseus to the persistent tales of anomalous experience in certain notorious corners of the earth. Nor is the phenomenon confined to legendary heroes or explorers of exotic locales. Kindred tales are being related of hikers in local woods and national parks –

usually in places well marked with a reputation for strangeness. In modern times such strangeness is of course associated, above all, with altered states of consciousness. Concurrently it forms the continuation of a perennial tradition. Haunting anecdotes dot the mystic landscape of folk and fairy-tales, wherein rational and magical space are inseparably conjoined:

The woodcutter Li Po went out for a stroll. Before long he found himself in an unfamiliar grove, where he espied two venerable sages immersed in a game of chess. His interest aroused, Li Po drew nigh to observe the game. Casually one of the elders offered him a betel nut on which to chew. Care and heaviness immediately vanished. He was unsure how long he stood there, engrossed in the game, but the same gentleman eventually suggested that he might now continue on his way. Bending down to pick up his axe, he then saw that its handle had crumbled to dust. Returning to his village, moreover, he found that his house, his family, indeed the very memory of his family, had vanished. Centuries had passed.

One might class this Chinese tale as mere fantasy if the fairy lore of Celtic Britain did not harbour similar gems, with the telescoping of time a prominent feature. Characteristic further is the element of enchantment, in the hearing of unearthly music, in an inexplicable lightness of affect, and in the fateful tasting of fairy food. Such tales indeed are universal, suggesting a common experiential basis. Fairy dells or knolls, enchanted groves, the sacred locales of shamanism – of old these have been noted as points of intersection between this world and another. They are, in esoteric lore, the coilings of the geomantic or telluric dragon, which translates into modern jargon as the electromagnetic field permeating and surrounding the earth. This field is not homogenous, but, like the human aura, it has dynamic structure – vortices which concentrate ideation as well as sensation. The energy of certain places, whether by nature or artifice, may resonate with the human sensorium to produce a visionary or otherworldly experience. This is the subtle foundation of

shamanic reverence for the earth. The experience of the sacred is accordingly prominent is the relevant lore.

Given a mindset not so disposed, however, the vortex can take on a sinister aspect. Phenomena reported in this connection include a sense of disorientation and bewilderment, the malfunctioning of equipment, disquieting coincidence, and common objects being transliterated into symbols of strange augury. Ordinary laws of causation and probability are somehow in abeyance, and there may be the intimation that this strangeness emanates from a nearby attractor – whether in mind, in space or time, who can say? If a threshold is crossed, this may extend into a full-blown paranormal encounter, involving strange craft, exotic exemplars of humanity, and other harbingers of the otherworldly. The entrance may be the mouth of a cave, a grove, or merely some intangible membrane of the psychophysical ether.

The dangers of hallucination are of course well documented regarding exploration in remote and exotic locales, especially where privation and physical exhaustion combine with other psychological extremes. The stability of the human mind is evidently predicated on continuity of physical and psychological context; alter that context and a species of second sight may spontaneously arise – the presumed basis of such myths and legends which place a mystic and enchanted realm within the bounds of terrestrial geography, of fabled cites like El Dorado and Shangri La, of Hyperborea and Ultima Thule – of Arcadian Groves and an Imperishable Sacred Land.

Insofar as the rigors of exploration, especially in bygone days, can be likened to the austerities practiced of mystics, visionary occurrences should come as no surprise, and it is here that ‘mundane’ experience links with the universal legacy of esoteric tradition. In essence that tradition purports of another Earth, usually envisaged as interpenetrating the rational terrestrial sphere, and replete with its own geography and loose federation of far-flung magical empires. The relevant lore speaks of terrestrial ‘octaves’ – a succession

of ethereal or rarefied Earths. Their portals may be in the sky, but more often in labyrinthine paths leading to the inner Earth. Chinese folklore combines these seemingly discrepant notions in a book entitled *The Report Concerning the Cave Heavens and Lands of Happiness in Famous Mountains* by Tu Kuang T'ing (850 – 933 AD). The inner Earth domain, referred to under a plethora of local designations, has gained literary eminence as the underground empire of Agharta, the avowed dwelling of advanced spiritual races, with its capital the mystic city of Shambhala. Schematic representations place this realm in the interior of a hollow earth, with entrances at the North and South Poles, and a central sun for illumination.

This curious idea is widely dispersed throughout literature, through sacred and legendary lore. Mercator relates of King Arthur's excursion in 530 into the great 'indrawing' sea around the Pole. His is but one of the many fantastic accounts relating of journeys to Thule, according to a geography in the library of John Dee, a place of no land, air or sea, but a substance abstracted from these elements, resembling sea-lungs. Indigenous tradition, in similar vein, relates of subterranean gateways, of extensive networks beneath the earth, of tunnels to the secret and sacred realm of vast underground cities, yet inhabited by their illustrious occupants. Portals are said to exist in Brazil, where they are guarded by shaman initiates of the Murcego (Bat) tribe in the Mato Grosso, and in the Himalayas, subject to the dharma protectors of Vajrayana Buddhism.

The idea resurfaces in the speculative fiction of Victorian occult romance. Bulwer Lytton's *Vril, The Power of the Coming Race* resumes the essential elements – entrance via a system of caves, a lost civilisation, an ancient tradition, an advanced exotic technology, and an agenda to reclaim dominion of the outer world. If the augury takes a darker turn, the tendency comes to a climax in the Cthulhu mythos of pulp horror fiction writer H. P. Lovecraft. Lovecraft's 'Old Ones' are not human, and evil takes on cosmic proportions in the horror of Cthulhu, an atavism biding its time in suspended

animation beneath the waters of the Pacific. Concurrently it is the etheric waters of space, which comprise his dwelling, and of his spawn it is noted that they walk not the spaces known to man, but ‘inbetween’ them. The vision is claustrophobic and fully pessimistic – human sensibility is mere conceit, an island of amnesia. Outside, ready to engulf the same, lies the insane, the eldritch, the gibbering, jabbering, clamouring horror that is ... Lovecraft.

The degradation of the symbolic and associative matrix continues in the so-called Shaver Mysteries, published in *Amazing Stories*, a pulp magazine flourishing during the 1940s. The authors, Ray Palmer and Richard Shaver, encouraged by extraordinary public response, let loose a veritable flood of related tales, woven together of ancient myths, local legends, theories of the occult, and alleged personal experience in subterranean realms. Like Whitley Strieber’s *Communion* account some four decades later, the evolving mythos appeared to strike deep resonance in the readership, generating thousands of letters of purported corroboration. Whether this strengthens the literalist stance or denotes the surfacing of a long buried archetype may be left to individual surmise. Significant is the fact that, where potent myths and atavisms of the human psyche find no ‘legitimate’ expression, they will manifest through channels suspect and supposedly discredited. The spontaneous testimony of humankind may in any case provide a more reliable guide to this twilight domain than the proscribed pontifications of academic scholarship.

While rational exegesis has insisted on the mythical – implying *non-physical* – nature of the enchanted realms, such categorical distinctions, as noted in earlier chapters, may be misleading. The visionary character of these places betokens remoteness from the perspective of acknowledged mind-space-time coordinates – not necessarily their unreality. More cogent are theories involving anomalous magnetic fields as catalysts of dislocation in mind-space-time, as elaborated in the literature of the tellurian serpent.

Curious parallels exist between the ethereal empires and their earthly ramparts; it is as if historic kingdoms are but the material outposts of a more essential hierarchy, with magical links of various kinds creating continuity between the inner and outer worlds. Traditions of a Golden Age merge with historic civilisations of antiquity. Emissaries of the reptilian Naga-kings were noted as retainers throughout the courts of ancient times. World catastrophes and titanic wars of the mythological record have their correlates in scientific literature. The war in heaven, wherein Christ-Michael vanquished the Serpent had its parallels in the overthrow of a prehistoric seed-culture. The demise of the unified state of gnosis commenced the era of the restorative quest, which not only extends into modern times, but to the heart of the established orthodoxy.

Notorious examples are found in the Nazi obsession with Nordic and Hollow Earth mythology, as in the Chinese occupation of Tibet. While overtly destructive of the gnostic matrix – evidenced by the suppression of esoteric organisations in Nazi Germany and the levelling of Tibetan monasteries, the intent is not so much destruction as control of that matrix. There is also the element of a magical sifting, a cynical attempt to ascertain through brute force whether there be any truly potent remnants of occult influence – or simply to prove that there isn't. The book burnings, the killing fields, the ideological purges constitute, as it were, an adjustment of the balance, as the war, begun in heaven, assumes a material dimension, the pitch of battle shifting from the esoteric to the exoteric.

Yet elite modern China has not forgotten the tradition of its Immortals. Nor did the ethos of National Socialism preclude otherworldly investments. They are exemplified in the mystic charter of the Ahnenerbe, an ideological enclave of the Nazi SS which financed expeditions to the Arctic regions and Himalayas. Its mythic and pseudo-scientific preoccupations provided that its researches combined conventional exploration with a more Faustian quest. Of compulsive concern was the culling of a supremacist legacy from inner-plane

traditions of the Nordic pantheon. The psychology involved is one of the less documented aspects of the phenomenon, although examples persist in the mythopoeia of the religious Far Right in general. A bland solicitous facade masks a polymorphous many-coloured mythological beast.

This spirit is not unique to the ideologically aberrant class; relevant rivalries extend throughout the political landscape. The Jesuit directive for Roman dominion has been locked in magical combat with the Masonic and Protestant Old World liberalism which lies at the root of the founding of the USA, providing its charter and constitution. The conflict may be traced to the intrinsic antagonism between the guardians of the Grail mysteries and the organised Church. Yet, insofar as speculative Freemasonry traces its spiritual lineage to the ancient temple builders, it not merely retains respect for the relevant mystery traditions, but remains committed to their perpetuation. The inner mytho-political agenda of Western style democracies is thus no less Faustian – indeed no less totalitarian – in its global ambition. This the more so in that alliances of opportunism with the Dragon of Rome have compromised the integrity of the so-called free-world Western alliance. The mythology is resumed in popular exposés, as abound regarding Masonic / Black Nobility / Illuminati style intrigues behind the vaunted New World Order.

Indeed it cannot be otherwise, as the exteriorisation of the magical hierarchy is progressing apace, and whatever was hidden must become manifest. It is less a question of the anatomy of the conspiracy – interesting though the facts may be – than of the inexorably dynamic which informs the process. Regardless of the fine points of protocol, it must come to pass – not because all prophetic traditions concur, but because the archetypes cannot be defeated. The esoteric scholar Manly Palmer Hall saw this over a century ago, outlining his vision of the inner destiny of America – specifically the USA – as the New Atlantis.

The cultic dimension which underlies international conflict is thus increasingly understood by historians of the emerging alternative and conspiratorial paradigm. History is the game played by secret societies, and intrinsic to their contest is the restorative agenda – the quest for the core mystery of the ancient work in its symbolic and historic guises – the Ark, the Grail, the Sword Excalibur, the Lightning Bolt of Indra. While it may not be certain that the ancients can significantly contribute to the modern quest, the possibility is intriguing. In the exigencies of the contest for global dominion, it cannot be ruled out.

The mythographer and cultural sleuth William Henry detailed in this connection a curious episode, wherein US president Roosevelt competed with Hitler in a search for *something* in central Asia. This something, according to Henry, is a Meru Pillar, in Semitic terminology a Shem, a device perhaps best known in the form of ancient Egyptian obelisks. These gigantic granite pillars were originally regarded by scholars as purely commemorative, containing, as they do, references to the Egyptian gods, coupled with Pharaonic insignia. A deeper understanding, however, which is now emerging, assigns a functional role to these objects, as to ancient ritual masonry in general, categorising them as geomantic and cosmological markers. Yet even this is not the full extent of their significance. Indications are that they also served as a trans-dimensional communication device – a kind of computer in fact – for the channelling and amplifying of such geomagnetic currents as fostered states of gnosis, and thus an interface with the primordial intelligences of Neteru and Anunaki ilk. Laurence Gardner in *Genesis Of The Grail Kings* informs us that the biblical Tower of Babel – generic for kindred structures – represents a case in point.

Significant to this technology, however, is the fact that cultivation of consciousness and the sensorium played an essential role, as did a science of acoustics – of ritual oratory and glossolalia. From the remains of relevant traditions the *modus operandi* may be reconstructed quite simply. Sites for

megalithic construction were determined on the basis of their geomantic properties. On completion and calendrically significant days thereafter the monuments in question would be consecrated – charged with consciously directed intent through focussed intonation, invocations of the relevant gods, accompanied by ritual instruments. As contemporary science can verify that thought and sonic resonance produces subtle effects in crystalline structures, it appears that the ancients had the means of programming their megalithic mainframes in very precise ways – even as modern computers use silicone boards for their intricate circuitry. A vital aspect of the process, however, concerns meditative and introspective prowess – the ability to hear in silence and perceive in the void what the external senses do not declare.

It is therefore naive to imagine that a mere archaeological find will produce the summum bonum – the Grail of the mysteries. Yet archaeology and exploration are assigned a significant role, as in the case of F. D. Roosevelt who, through his secretary Henry Wallace, kept in close contact with the Roerich expedition into central Asia. The travels of the artist, mystic and explorer Nicholas Roerich in Mongolia and Tibet have remained a matter of legend, insofar as their object has never been made explicit – either in his diaries or subsequent retellings of the tale. Speculation has linked it with the search for Shambhala, while another exegetic current regards Roerich himself as an emissary of, or at least as one privy to, this mystical kingdom. According to the latter scenario the object of his search was the return of a certain sacred stone to its rightful home in the King's Tower in the centre of the fabled city. The stone was believed to be part of a larger meteorite, purportedly possessed of occult properties, such as the mediation of gnosis and inner guidance. The black stone of the Ka'aba, Islam's most holy shrine in the city of Mecca, and that of the temple of Cybele at Pessinus in Asia Minor are believed to be pieces of this magical meteorite, which allegedly hails from a planetary system of Sirius near the constellation of Orion.

This being as it may, of significance is the archetypal cast of the descriptive language: the *return* of a *sacred stone* to its *rightful home* in the *King's Tower* in the centre of *Shambhala*. Like *the return of the ring to its origin in the forge of Mordor* in Tolkien's allegory, it can mean more or less anything, and so is a fitting symbol for whatever partisan aspect of the cosmic quest one cares to examine. Quite apart from the purported search for an awesome ancient technology, there is a quest for the symbols, the control of which equates with sovereignty in the realm of human aspiration.

That the past is political is evidenced by recent, more disturbing, trends of widely reported destruction, obliteration and concealment of archaeological evidence. In an article entitled *Holocaust of Giants: The Great Smithsonian Cover-up* native American emeritus professor of law, Vine Deloria, is quoted, alleging the systematic obfuscation of the continents prehistory. Cases are cited, in connection with ancient burial mounds, concerning skeletons of a race of bearded giants. Among these are finds, dating from the pioneering days of the American West, an age of more open reporting, in which the specimens in question were publicly displayed. A New Zealand correspondent is similarly quoted regarding the burial of evidence of giant races of Causation cast in Australia and the Pacific, and the systematic removal of relevant displays from museums around the world. A recent and dramatic case, reported in *Viewzone* web magazine, concerns a megalithic site on private land in Oklahoma. Found among cyclopean masonry, bearing inscriptions, were the evidential remains of a huge smelter. An investigative team then found the site abruptly shut down and the excavations bulldozed by some arm of the US government. The family was reportedly threatened with harm in the event of any further excavation on the site. In a scenario reminiscent of the Roswell crash, witnesses were told to forget what they saw. Similar controversy surrounds the famed Serpent Mound of Ohio, with charges of a falsified history detracting from its significance.

Strangely, like the anomalous findings of NASA on Mars and the Moon, archaeological digs have become subject to high level security concerns. A common rationale, however, suggests itself in a campaign to efface all telling traces of Serpent / Nephilim / Anunaki renown, the legacy whereof appears to be worldwide in its dissemination. A concerted agenda is implicit, with evident intent to conceal the facts of human prehistory.

Other noted cult centres besides Shambhala constitute the fabled inner plane / inner earth kingdom of Agharta. Representative in the Americas is the city of Telos beneath Mt. Shasta, California, which has its own tradition of vanished and reclusive cultures, of silvery canoes floating in the sky, of telepathic links with local shamans, of subtle forces and hidden masters. Collectively, the various local nodes are said to form an extensive network of underground cities and conduits which once connected the major ceremonial centres of the ancient world. Noted entrances include the underground city of Shonshe in Tibet; the underground city of Shingwa beneath the border of Mongolia and China; the network of underground cities in what may be described as greater Kurdistan – including regions of eastern Turkey, Syria and Iraq, the Giza Pyramids; King Solomon's Mines near the source of the White Nile; and of course the terrestrial Poles.

Unless one assigns credence to the mundane model of a hollow earth, complete with central sun, it may be more appropriate to think in terms of etheric cities comprised of telluric waves, interfacing with such geophysical systems and underground installations as are part of material earth. One might thus view the ancient opus as an externalisation from dimensions more subtle, in keeping with the magical doctrine. As a matter of observation, however, all historic process has its mythological extensions, even as individual lives are enfolded in a web of personal unconscious fantasy.

Combining elements of Hollow Earth lore, Nazi survival claims, and flying disk technologies, is the tale woven around the idea that a contingent of


the Nazi elite departed Germany before capitulation, and set up base in the Antarctic region, nostalgically named Neuschwabenland. The scenario is part of a more extensive revisionist mythos, and it is here that the Aryan supremacist cult assumes its most exotic of metaphysical plumes.

The Third Reich with its racial mythology is interpreted in the context of atavistic resurgence – the return to pre-eminence of savage antediluvian deities which presided over a pre-human civilisation. In accord with Sumerian myths, these light-bearers of the gnosis are described as coming from the north – from homelands in Hyperborea and Ultima Thule, and like the Aryan invaders of the Indian subcontinent, they dispose of an awesome technology. Hailing from the constellation of Draco in the arctic skies, they bring knowledge of the Black Sun – the black-hole singularity at the centre of the galaxy, according to the most ancient conceptions, the ultimate arcanum of the galactic pantheon.

The emanations of this black sun are twofold: On the physical plane it comprises the hyperspatial technology ascribed to UFO propulsion – to conjectured tachyon drives, based on imploding energies within an artificial force field. The vril force of Bulwer Lytton, Wilhelm Reich's orgone energy, and the so-called energy of the zero-point are cited among the literary and scientific derivatives of this technology. From this perspective the combustion engine, based on carbon fuel and the principle of explosive force, is considered a degeneration, even as the 'worship' of the visible sun, associated with large-scale human sacrifice, represents a deterioration of the gnosis.

On the metaphysical plane, the Black Sun is regarded as the inmost star of human consciousness, where the pulsing of the galactic core is believed to resonate with the interior crystal, giving rise to successive aeons in human thought. In the process these cosmic emanations are mediated and modified through further astronomical configurations, notable the precession of the solstice sun through the signs of the zodiac. The current transition from the Piscean age to the age of Aquarius is interpreted in this context, as the

overthrowing of the primitive tribal deity Yahweh – that is, of Christianity – and the return of the Arcadian deities, long bound in spiritual exile.

Aquarius, the Water-Bearer, is symbolic here of water in the sense of Genesis; it represents cosmic energy – the physical and metaphysical potential of space. Its symbol  is suggestive of resonance, the above with the below, although in the runic insignia of the Nazi SS it takes the form of a lightning bolt. As to the primary symbol of the Third Reich – the swastika, a universal glyph of the gnosis, found in pagan iconography from the Caucasus to the Americas – this represents the Black Sun itself, the black-hole singularity of the galactic core with its emanating spiral arms.

Whether or not one adheres to literal interpretations in this regard, the question of Nazi survival touches an area of political taboo, in that the exotic claims give expression to certain mundane historical facts. For it is documented that large numbers of Nazi scientists and (presumably) ideologues, were quietly assimilated into the US power elite, where they received not only a sympathetic welcome, but also the means to further their work. For a generation the cabals in question operated ‘underground’, experimenting, as it were, in America’s unconscious ‘backyard’ – the great Latin triangle of the continent.

With the fall of the Third Reich, to continue our tale, the subversion of the USA, begun under Jesuit auspices, was intensified in the formation of the CIA and similar covert organisations within industry and the intelligence and defense communities. Serving an agenda, quite at variance with the declared charter of the US, these secret enclaves rather relate to the Union as does a parasite to a host. They are described as a multi-armed octopus, its tentacles extending into every sphere and gradually choking the libertarian charter and constitution. As it rises to the surface, Orwellian doublespeak will become the norm, and the erstwhile lamb – in the language of the Apocalypse – will speak with the voice of a dragon.

It is of course naive to imagine that the totalitarian seed can be allayed either by military might or a few friendly explanations, rooted as it is in the archetypal alienation of a fallen race. Its phoenix-like rise from the ashes is thus assured – encoded, so to speak – in the deep mind of the planetary hive.

The relevant annals further document the efforts of a powerful and concerted resistance, given overt expression by president Eisenhower in his final speech, warning of the rise of the military-industrial complex. In the immediate post-war period, certain elements within the US navy similarly warned of an emerging threat, manifesting from within as from without, and disposing of a technology, supposedly unlike any in human hands. Admiral Richard Byrd in a press interview is said to have urged that the US take immediate defensive action against an enemy with advanced aerial capabilities, such as flying from pole to pole at incredible speeds. Similarly suggestive is General MacArthur's warning (following the surrender of Japan), enigmatically echoed by Ronald Reagan, that the next major conflict might involve an extraterrestrial foe. The American star wars project or missile defense shield, and the HAARP or High frequency Active Auroral Research Program are often cited as being motivated by some such exotic threat.

It is Admiral Byrd, however, who has become something of a hero of relevant legend. A veteran explorer, he led expeditions to both the North and South Poles, the official history of which is intersected by accounts of his having met the humanoid emissaries of an unknown terrestrial civilisation. These reportedly entertained him kindly, but bade him godspeed with a warning for the dissolute empire he served, that its days were numbered. In cryptic utterances he later spoke of the land *beyond* the poles as the centre of the great unknown and as a land of everlasting mystery. The unguarded whimsy of the sentiment, according to some, is what 'precipitated' his early demise, even as numerous other insiders and investigators of the mystery have met with untimely and inexplicable deaths.

Somewhat prior to his untimely end Byrd was to command one of the largest naval operations in US history in the seas of the Antarctic. Launched in January 1947 under the code name Operation Highjump, it involved thirteen ships, one aircraft carrier, two seaplane tenders, six transport planes and some 4000 men. It also carried supplies for a six-months expedition. Remarkably, however, the entire effort lasted only eight weeks, with a mere three weeks of actual Antarctic operations. Subsequent debriefings have remained classified and the subject of conjecture. The surmise – US capitulation in the face of an invincible foe.

This curious episode is but one in the annals of anomalous military engagement. Taken together, the material supports the seemingly absurd proposition that the dwellers of the otherworld are as heterogeneous in their disposition and demeanour as the greater human family. From the esoteric perspective, however, this should not be surprising, considering the axiom of precise correspondence between the visible and invisible worlds. The same is congruent with the greater body of contactee experience, the tenor of which ranges from the beneficent, via the neutral, to the sinister and injurious. Equally documented are mechanisms of repression and taboo, as exemplified in the myth of the Men in Black, shadowy agents of a clandestine empire, who act to silence potential witnesses of the anomalous and strange.

Some theorists accordingly take the straightforward view that within the human experiential spectrum there exists a range of various alien, humanoid, proto- or ultra-human intelligent entities, and that it is appropriate to speak of entire disparate worlds of potential engagement. While the sceptic will insist that nothing is as it seems, we may heartily concur, provided the dictum is applied impartially. Through analysis we can equally banish the hallucination of the mundane. Argument about the reality of phenomena tend to be predicated on the focusing lens of specialist domains with their fixation on a given level of

description. It's selfish memes and selfish genes ... it's a subatomic particle dance ... it's vibrating strings in hyperspace ... it's a Zionist plot.

Ontologically it is therefore more convenient to place the full range of human experience on an equal footing. One might say everything is real – where *everything* denotes the totality of human experience, and *real* signifies the quality of being discernable in some way. Buddhist logicians saw this millennia ago, and thus were able to circumvent the metaphysical cringe that kept medieval Europe divided scientifically as well as theologically.

Thus we can explain the adaptability of Buddhism to diverse cultural styles, while yet retaining its purity, and the extraordinary tolerance which its practitioners develop. It is of course this tolerance, this absence of intellectual chauvinism, which allows the practitioner to perceive orders of nature, which others 'know' do not exist. To enter the enchanted realm, as also the fantasy authors rightly insist, one must look at the world through innocent eyes.

The Pure-Land Traditions

According to the present – the fourteenth – Dalai Lama, initiated echelons of Tibetan Buddhism are among the world's last remaining exponents not merely of the relevant traditions, but of a living link to the illustrious dwellers of the inner world. More recently, however, the sagacious teacher relented somewhat, perhaps in deference to the rational paradigm, conceding the kingdom of Shambhala to be a spiritual rather than geographical empire. Spiritual qualifications – among them perseverance and purity of intent – are said to be required of whoever would reach the imperishable sacred lands. Yet even secular literature bears reference to encounters in mysterious places where two worlds meet. The juncture of disparate worlds suggests to some a historic divide, a breaking up of the primordial unity in realms of cognition, and a corresponding tendency to regain wholeness.

Cited in this context is the mystic doctrine of devolution, the gradual departure from the pure devakaya mind of primordial consciousness into progressive materialism and ignorance. The now familiar mythos relates how exiled angelic intelligences descended in waves, spiralling through the polar matrix into the heart of the earth, when it was voiced abroad that Yahweh Elohim had made gods in his own image, to whom he imparted dominion over the material world. To protest the impropriety and dislodge the human seed from its original logos, the archangelic Lucifer employed the intermediary of the Serpent – as the deepest strata of the racial memory concur – to fix humanity's spiritual gaze on the Tree of Knowledge. The five root races of Theosophy – the Polarian, Hyperborean, Lemurian, Atlantean and Aryan – designate the stages of planetary assimilation of seven angelic orders of the exiled hierarchy – two of which are yet to manifest – and the (attempted) creation of a spiritual hybrid through wedding the Tree of Knowledge with the Tree of Life.

Similarly the Dzogchen Buddhist and Bon Po traditions of Tibet relate that shien extraterrestrials – immortal Bodhisattvas – came in vajrachakra spheres – self generated star ships and floating cities – projected by thought alone, into the physical matrix. As previously noted, the ancient cult centres, such as Angkor Vat, Heliopolis, Giza, and Teotihuacan, which suddenly mushroomed out of neolithic barbarianism, represent externalisations of these ethereal cities in stone, as also their associated mythos and iconography attests.

The opus in stone, according to esoteric interpretation, is the external Shambhala. The inner Shambhala pertains to the human organism with its subtle anatomy of energy meridians, nodes and vortices. A third Shambhala is said to exist in the Kalachakra (wheel of time) – the universal Mandala or macrocosm, comprising the sum of all deities and demons, the powers and potencies of manifest existence as a whole.

Yet the wisdom bearers of the angelic contingent soon recognised the appalling consequences which attended the infusion of the stellar gnosis into creatures of flesh and blood. One need merely recall the sacrificial practices of the Aztecs to observe the potential for swift degeneration into regressive cults of sorcery and destructive vampirism. To avoid being drawn into this vortex of entropy, and to assist such beings as were caught therein, the guardian sages enunciated the dharma path. Having its earthly origins in the fifth – the Aryan or Indo-European Race – it comprises the core legacy of the ancient Vedic tradition, and as such predates the historical Buddha by millennia. This is the renunciate path, as already familiar from the Tibetan Bardo teachings. Two characteristics distinguish its spiritual philosophy – the desirability of escaping the attraction of material existence, and the notion of a higher wisdom in the realisation of voidness – the transient nature of phenomena, including the self.

Within this value system the highest attainment, as may be recalled, consists in identification with the Buddha nature – consciousness in its original unconditioned state, also called emptiness and the clear light of the void. To abide therein is Nirvana – the dissolution of karmic ties and release from the necessity of birth and death. Such complete emancipation is however rare, attained by none but the most gifted and assiduous practitioners of the path. Lifetimes of effort are said to be required to transmute a theoretical grasp of emptiness into full realisation.

A vast spiritual kingdom accordingly surrounds the central core of attainment, inhabited by beings of varying realisation, unified by the shared aspiration of the mystic quest. Wondrous things are said of this realm, which, though utopian and quite fantastic, are not incredible considering the equally marvellous miracle of modern technology. Its spiritual centre, in Buddhist iconography, is the summit of Mount Meru – a symbolic mountain of central Asia, the equivalent of the Axis Mundi or World Tree – replicated by mound

builders from ancient China to the Andes, and echoed in the symbolic Mont Salvat of mystic Christianity, where rests the Grail.

Further consistent with universal symbolism, the promontory of Mount Meru is surrounded by four continents, which signify four spiritual conditions or paths, the four human racial types, the four elements, the four humours of archaic medicine, among other archetypal exemplars of the quaternary. Although hierarchy informs the system, this is not to be understood in any despotic sense. Merit is based on the degree of ability of bestowing benefit on others. The kingdom of Shambhala, as mentioned in Buddhist scriptures, thus exemplifies the rational and enlightened ethos which constitutes the mystical ideal. Its wealth primarily consists of the treasures of the mind.

The magic screen of its legendary king Suchandra denotes clairvoyance, his golden throne of eight Lions, the steadiness of the mind. The wish-granting jewel symbolises the power of mind to manifest any reality or condition of consciousness. Shining lakes signify the refreshment of spiritual practice, the quenching of the fires of illusion and desire. Peace and harmony reign as the inhabitants of this realm are no longer subject to inner turmoil. Gentle laws prevail and there are no harsh punishments, because they have subdued their demons and bound them to service in their spiritual pursuits. They enjoy virtue in the midst of wealth, and comfort beyond attachment and worldly ambition.

Paradoxically it is the renunciation of self and personal ambition which leads to the paradisiacal state – a principle reiterated as axiomatic of spiritual law. Yet virtue lies not in renunciation as such, as the history of Western monasticism proves, but in the exalted states of consciousness, which this condition affords. It is not poverty, therefore, but a carefree existence, which disposes toward the higher meditational and contemplative states.

Such, in brief, is the legacy of the Golden Age, of idyllic Arcadias and the Pure Land traditions of primordial gnosis – of a previously pervasive condition which, with the passing of time, became rarefied and rare. This

decline its spiritual guardians clearly foresaw, knowing there would come the age of the heroic quest – of Ulysses, Gilgamesh, Prometheus and their kin – wherein a special journey had to be undertaken to regain the state of Olympian immortals. This, in turn would be followed by an age in which their Elysium would be regarded a mere archaic dream.

Accordingly they provided for this contingency, providing markers in stone, in written tablets, and in the akashic ether, whereby future pilgrims might find their way to Shangri La – to the City of the Pyramids under the Stars of Nuit in the Night of Pan. For they also knew that, after thousands of years, seekers would again be drawn into their orbit, seeking, as in a race against time, to rehabilitate the ancient arcanum.

But how was the gnostic paradise lost? What lies behind the myths of cataclysm and awesome technologies, the misuse of which resulting in the tilting of the terrestrial axis, and the subsequent break-up of the dense homogenous sheath of vapour surrounding the swamps of the reptilian arcadia. With the appearance of stars in the heavens of Terra the age of gnosis was inaugurated for humanity, as angels descended in ships of light, such as were caught in the coilings of Draco – the Dragon's tail sweeping the Pole Star, as described in the Book of Revelation. Millennia hence, and the stars are again obscured – dimmed by profligate use of another technology, while atavistic deities resurface from the unconscious depth.

Transmission and Descent of the Gnosis

What is it about the mystical trances that is appealing, in view of the austere conception of void or emptiness, used to characterize the supreme attainment? Their creative and restorative powers are said to derive from a quality of consciousness that is transpersonal, non-local, and self-sustaining. The fundamental reality beneath the play of phenomena, it is intrinsic creative

intelligence, bringing forth and sustaining the universe – in general as in every particular. Adepts of the mystical arts – of mahamudra, the dharmakaya, or the Tao – claim access to this energetic principle. The masters are such as have become one therewith. Correlate to mystical attainment is thus the flowering of the siddhi, the magical powers of the abstract mind, in the reifying matrix of which all things become possible.

In the matrix of mind also arises the vortex called ‘I’ – the self-aware sense of self, generating the illusion, as the Buddhists have it, that one *is* someone, that there is someone there. The deist or magical doctrine the while asserts that this one – the soul – is quite real, but it is in need of redemption. Both systems concur that the root cause of the human predicament lies in the concept of the ‘I’ as limited or separate entity, implicit in the subject-object view of the universe. Love or compassion, by contrast, is the principle which dissolves the artificial ego-boundary, reunites subject with object, and extends the cognitive and affective sensibility in various subtle ways to embrace the whole. Heaven and hell are thus predicated respectively on the difference between the inclusive and separatist condition in the scope of awareness.

Yet a separate, arbitrarily limited, sense of self is what the fall from grace, the descent into the physicalist illusion, essentially produced, in turn giving rise to cosmic alienation, to metaphysical or spiritual nakedness. The temptation henceforth is to use magic – the will, aided by technology – in service of the limited self. All human powers and faculties are magical according to this definition, differences of worldview or paradigm being arbitrary once the human race partook of the fruit of knowledge. Yet as the dharma-protectors of the East foresaw, the unenlightened use of these powers would produce its own self-generated hells.

We saw in this connection that the paradigm of reason – of science and technology – can boast comparable achievements to the ‘magic’ of myth and legend. Perception and action at a distance, a ‘telepathic’ worldwide web of

instant communication – these are now a universal reality. Teleportation, time travel, superluminal and hyperspatial propulsion systems – the science fiction of recent decades – have become promising frontiers of research. There is, in effect, a mirroring of achievement on the respective planes of activity. The magical or romantic imagination insists that these things are possible – and in the forge of intellect they become actual.

Concurrently there are profound differences between the scientific and spiritual Shambhalas. Most significantly, the modern communications web is based on external artifice. It is grounded in the technosphere of electronic devices, antennae and artificial satellites – not in the chakras and telluric meridians of the human / biophysical continuum. This – to turn the allegory around – is putting clothes upon an emperor royally dressed. Deposing the human or biophysical vortex, it represents a foreign growth, a mutation of intrinsic nature. Human sensibility is marginalised as data is extracted by increasingly indirect means of observation, and abstraction increasingly takes the place of experience. Instead of the light of inner gnosis, science represents the romance of an ever receding mystery.

Detailing the descent from gnosis to ratiocination, prophetic lore divides cultural history into four kingdoms or ages, foreshadowed in a dream image which haunted Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, as recorded in the Old Testament book of Daniel. It crystallises what is implicit in these pages – that the passing of the ages is characterised by an overall decline of the higher cognitive and philosophic faculties.

Daniel is among the Hebrew captives of the Babylonian exile, where his spiritual qualities – an adamant character and visionary acuity – bring him to the attention of the royal court. There he provides an interpretation of a dream. Exemplified in this tale is the relationship between priest and king – between prophet's staff and crown – and while the dream is ostensibly the king's, it is

the prophet's influence and aura which precipitates and brings into relief the image troubling the monarch.

Quoth the king: I saw and beheld an imposing image. It's head was of gold, its torso and arms of silver, the abdomen and thighs of brass, the legs of iron, and its feet were of mixed iron and clay. Afterwards a stone was cut without hands and struck the image in the feet, breaking them to pieces. Thus the image was vanquished and the stone that struck the image became a mountain that filled the earth.

This enigma is interpreted as follows: The head of gold is Babylon – symbol and repository of the primordial legacy of the antediluvian world. The ancient gnosis in this age is largely intact. There is knowledge of the galactic centre, as of the human sensate vortex, and a magical apparatus to bring the two into communion. It is an age of acknowledged purpose – that of restoration of the arcadian serpent matrix, and of the link to such stellar entities from which the gnosis emanates.

The chest and arms of silver signify a subsequent and inferior age, represented in western history by the Medo-Persian and Phoenician empires. These are marked by a shift in focus from magical to intellectual perceptions, from the subtle energetic matrix to the exterior sensory world. The age also is characterised by conquest and expansionism, with the seafaring Phoenicians providing the link between the ancient empires and the emerging classical world centred on the Mediterranean.

The abdomen and thighs of brass thus refer to classical Greece, the ostensible cradle of Western civilisation. In this age rational enquiry is firmly established as the human and humane ideal, and it is for this reason that the Greeks are 'recognisable' and accorded veneration. In this age the magical gnosis was retreating from open view, reserved for dissemination among secret fraternities such as the Pythagoreans and cohorts of Mithras. The Greeks, in addition, are credited with the origination of democracy and a geometry,

retained virtually unchanged into the late nineteenth century. Disturbingly, however, we also note the seeds of intellectual intolerance with philosophical subtlety, which results from the rational straightjacket being clamped on a little too tightly. Those who would henceforth extend the conceptual boundaries, only to find themselves vilified, are prefigured in Socrates, the ‘subversive’ philosopher, to whom was kindly extended the hemlock cup.

The legs of iron pertain to the succeeding Roman age during which the rule of intellect solidifies into pragmatic materialism. While the ancient gods retained an aura of glamour, their worship is now reduced to mere symbolic observance, the remaining shreds of literalism being discarded as superstition by leading thinkers of the age. Thus the Romans became masters of the ‘real world’, as it has come to be known, a trait which served them in establishing their secular empire from Persia to Celtic Britain.

The feet of mingled iron and clay refer to the continuation of the Roman empire in its metamorphosis from pagan to papist hegemony. While these are in essence identical, a development is indicated in the admixture of the clay. As clay and iron do not blend, the reference is to the amalgam of science and an ostentatious religiosity, and the gulf, indeed the impossibility of meaningful dialogue, between these two worlds of discourse. Henceforth humanity would inhabit not one, but two distinct worlds, without being at home in either. Its religion would be lacking in substance, even as its science was deprived of metaphysical depth.

The divide in the human psyche became specific to the worldview which emerged after the medieval eclipse. It was grounded a paradigm which admitted only measurable phenomena as indicator of the real, while the qualitative and incorporeal is effectively ignored. Herein lies is the deceptive attraction of the ‘objective’ stance – it discards the half of the cosmic equation and builds an idealised edifice from the other. Not surprisingly, the world thus revealed is cold in affect, although there is no denying its splendour. In addition there are

comforts and diversions, and the austere consolation that humanity is a chance occurrence in an meaningless impersonal universe.

Thus despite technological attainment, the rational age is the most debased of the ages, wherein humanity, deprived of its authentic centre, has surrendered to the alien gods – messengers of cosmic exile – in their most objectionable form. For humanity is enslaved by a global machine, which is defoliating the planet, poisoning its oceans and atmosphere, and diverting immense resources into potential doomsday triggers. The machine is god inexorable. No-one controls it. None can question it. Dialogue is futile and meaning abrogate, marking the return of the Babel syndrome with the post-modern advent, the moment of recognition that ‘this’ is the opening of the abyss. Verity is replaced by virtual surrogates, and nihilistic conceptions become normative under a variety of guises. Insanity supervenes, as humanity, deprived of its intuitive centre in the universal canon, is cast adrift upon the shoreless sea of ideation.

In this age, to pursue the prophecy, the God of heaven would set up a kingdom, which would stand forever and consume all other kingdoms, as symbolised by the stone which was cut from the mountain without hands and grew to cover the earth.

In the religious world this remarkable prognosis has been of heterodox effect. While the language suggests that human volition may have ultimately nothing to do with its coming, there is much commotion concerning this kingdom and countless prescriptions for its implementation. Concurrently the redemptive archetype has spawned contemporary myths of salvation through intervention by ‘alien’ types. This conception has opened the door to *strange gods*, whose presence indicates a break in the circle, a breach in the spiritual body of humanity, as identified by the telltale sign of foreign objects embedded in human flesh. In magical parlance, a polymorphous pantheon of aspiring divinities is contending for supremacy in the heavens of fantastic imagination.

It was asked in the camp of Yahweh one time – when the I Am returns, will he find faith in the earth?

When *Satan* returns, will he find wisdom?

The Universal Architect

To prevent a full cultural spin-out into outer darkness, efforts have been made to forge new links with the inner Shambhala. A more inclusive vision gained momentum after the peak of scientific materialism in the late nineteenth century. A brief spell of hubris, during which it was assumed that physical theory was essentially complete, was followed by a revolution in thought, comparable in magnitude to the Renaissance of the fifteenth century, which resurrected Europe from a theocratic spiritism. It laid to rest the Newtonian ghost of an objective clockwork universe, following deterministic laws, wherein life and consciousness existed as chance aberrations. Einsteinian relativity deposed the notions of absolute space and time, followed in quick succession by quantum physics, which undermined the entire notion of scientific objectivity. The universe is interactive, it was found, in accord with the mystic doctrine of dependent arising, where consciousness is fundamental to the phenomenon observed. In what Ilia Prigogine calls the re-enchantment of nature, reductionist and mechanistic models are giving way to holistic and organic ones, vindicating Sir James Jeans' presentiment that the universe of theory is acquiring the similitude of a great thought. A torrent of conceptual innovations – among them Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle, Gödel's Incompleteness Theorem, Bell's Theorem of Non-Locality, and the Morphic Resonance of Rupert Sheldrake – indicates, in Haldane's phrase, that the universe is not only stranger than we imagined; it is stranger than we can imagine. Especially the weird and counter-intuitive observations in the quantum domain suggest a new era of technological romance – of possible time-travel and the conquest of hyperspace.

A point of consolidation was identified and formalised by Jack Sarfatti, proposing that physics has replaced philosophy as the overarching discipline to engage the fundamental questions and unify the branches of knowledge. What is remarkable about this claim is not so much its audacity, but the fact that, in the quantum revolution of thought, it is eminently justified. Thus for the first time, since the ancient world, humanity is again possessed of a unified and integral paradigm, engaging the totality of the human experience.

Complementing these exotic exfoliations of academia are the more occult or mystical branches of knowledge, which, though ostensibly accorded scant recognition, are central and seminal to the shaping of the new paradigm. A common current underlies the conceptual surge in both intellectual streams, and relevant themes of integration have become culturally explicit. Indeed, as a spiritual undercurrent of Western civilisation, the esoteric order of Grail initiates never lost sight of the mystic arcanum, and the knowledge of a subtle art and science pertinent thereto. With the resurfacing of this tradition – its reformulation in contemporary terms – the relevant cycle comes full circle, linking the archaic and futuristic in a unified field of the gnosis.

The fantastic nature of these developments is fully sustained in Sarfatti's biographical disclosures, entitled *The Destiny Matrix*. Swearing to the actuality of events, he recounts a series of phone-calls, received as a schoolboy in the early fifties. On the other end a distant metallic voice identifies itself as a conscious computer on board a spacecraft. Young Jack is informed that he has been identified as one of four hundred young bright receptive minds, with the suggestion – his memory here fails – of some future task. A decision is required right away. If it is yes, he would begin to link up with the others in twenty years. True to prediction, an illustrious career in physics followed, as well as a role of cultural emissary. Sarfatti does 'link up' with a galaxy of luminaries of the emerging integral paradigm, and the rest, a per the cliché, is history.

Regardless how one ‘takes’ such tales, they resume the perennial theme of contact with higher intelligence beyond a veil or cultural unknowing. In typical fashion the entity is engaged in the investiture of a priesthood – a body of illuminates to engage ‘the other side’. Sarfatti, the while, appears fully conscious of his priestly role – as theorist, as advocate, and guardian spirit of *Starfleet Academy* – a cyber-school for gifted youngsters, with the aim of elucidating the riddle of exotic or *unconventional* flying objects.

In several ways Sarfatti’s post-quantum self-deterministic physics of living systems correlates with the visionary opus of antiquity, as with the greater testimony of humankind. With consciousness reinstated as a cosmic given, there is room again – indeed a mandate – for intentionality and meaning, whereby the search for the Grail of physics is irrevocably joined to the spiritual quest. Forthcoming also is theoretical support for what the Western paradigm has styled the anomalous or paranormal, including a positive regard for non-ordinary or gnostic states of consciousness and their potential for insight or revelation.

In the quest of regaining mystical or interior gnosis, the main cultural barrier is one of language. It is a disjunction of point of view whereby the arcane legacy appears alien and remote. Textual analyses can only yield vague and highly abstract notions as to what the Egyptians, say, might have meant by *ka* and *ba*, by *tuat* and *amentu*. Engagement must occur on experimental grounds – on the grounds of initiation – insofar as the temple of revelation *is* the organism possessed by those fortunate creatures – the humans. The Delphic injunction, *man know thyself*, is thus far more than psychological counsel; it is the key to the cosmic arcanum.

This insight is the motif and guiding star of Schwaller de Lubicz’s monumental opus *The Temple Of Man*, in which this patriarch of the ‘new’ Egyptology attempts to elucidate the cosmo-conception of ancient Heliopolis and cognate cult centres along the valley of the Nile. It is this insight, which

correlates the far-flung traditions of the ancient and archaic knowledge, and provides master the key to the secrets of any particular system. For it is the human body, which is both microcosm and grand temple of the mysteries.

The yogas and tantras comprise a method of apprehending the matrix of mind, body and cosmos entire through the subjective interface of perceptual, and somatic states. One might imagine an angelic intelligence, upon finding itself incarnate, examining the embodied condition with scientific rigour and infinite patience. The implicit aim of *yoga* or *union* corresponds to the realisation of cosmic potential, as concentrated in and upon the human organism. Its legacy in conceptual terms is the subtle anatomy of chakras and chi meridians, the lore of which is yet extant in the esoteric traditions of India and China. The reifying vortex is here embodied in the spinal column, the original axis-mundi and Tree of Life, whereupon the energetic chakras – nodal points in an interlaced matrix of standing waves – condense as transformative vortices at the interface of idea and expression.

An objective analogy, as taught the Pythagorean school, is found in the harmonic series of the monochord, the main fixture in the archaic doctrine of the harmony of the spheres. The universe, according to this view, is a musical structure. Its architecture, as exemplified in the microcosm – man – admits of proportions derived from the said harmonic series.

The relevant experiments are easily performed – best on the resonant C string of the cello, although the E or low D of a guitar is adequate. The deeper the note, the greater the portion of its harmonic overtones which fall within range of human hearing. Yet the principle applies to all vibrating strings. If a taut string is excited, a note is sounded. This note, as the lowest which that string can produce, is called the *fundamental*. It results from a simple wave or vibration along its entire length. If the string, however, is touched at its midpoint and plucked, it vibrates in two equal and complementary sections, in the likeness of an S-curve, producing the first harmonic overtone – the *octave*.

If touched at one third of its length and plucked, it vibrates in three equal sections, producing the second overtone, called a *fifth* (being the equivalent of the fifth note in a conventional seven-tone scale). Touched at a quarter of its length, it vibrates in four equal sections, producing the second octave, and so on in consecutive whole-number ratios in the series $1/2, 1/3, 1/4, 1/5 \dots 1/n$.

The overtones or harmonics thus produced are progressively higher in pitch, and increasingly faint in relation to the fundamental of the open string. They are also increasingly dense or tightly spaced. The first octave is empty. The second octave is broken only by the *fifth*. Between the second and third octave there are four overtones, describing a *dominant seventh* chord. Between the third and fourth there are seven, comprising the so-called overtone scale. Each successive octave is thus more densely packed with notes, gradually ascending into the ultrasonic range beyond the threshold of human perception. The series, for all practical purposes, is infinite, and as such an appropriate metaphor of human consciousness and its potential for extended sensibility in domains progressively subtle.

The question as to whether the series is infinite in actuality, (although bounded at one end by the fundamental), depends on whether a length of string is infinitely divisible. In Hindu, as in Western thought, infinities of this kind resolve are resolved in a singularity or quantum limit of measurement, which in Vedic thought is the rarefied point *bindu*. Bindu is the pinnacle and borderless border of that which has no bounds. It is the pointless point at the end of the syllable OM, where the resonant *mmm* fades imperceptibly into silence.

It is one of the ‘secrets’ of classical Indian music that its ‘irrational’ organic scales – the tonal structures of the ragas – are derived from the pure intervals of the overtone series. Thus each note of the audible scale – the *body* of the note as sounded on an instrument – can be viewed as a condensation of its *upper partial* – its equivalent in the harmonic spectrum, relative to the fundamental of the ubiquitous drone. The drone, equivalent to the Western

concept of key, thus constitutes the akasha, the context or musical space, wherein the tonal content of the raga unfolds.

From the structure of the sitar it is moreover evident that this unique instrument was developed with specific intent of making audible nature's harmonic series. As a trade-off the raga remains grounded in a single key, as determined by the fundamental to which the instrument is tuned. This precludes the possibilities of *modulation*, or change of key, as found in Western music. Yet this one key can be analysed to a far greater depth. Some sixty tonal divisions of the octave are formally recognised within the Indian system, compared to the twelve tones of the modern *tempered* scale – the latter an artefact of a certain compromise, whereby the pure intervals of nature are slightly altered to allow for changes of key without undue dissonance.

A conceptual link, moreover, exists of old between tuning theory and cosmology. It is thus fortuitous that contemporary physics theory – to wit, *string theory* – regards matter and energy condensations as nodal points or 'notes' on vibrating strings in hyperspace. Resonance, as of vibrating strings, constitutes in this sense a universal language – applicable across scales and disciplinary boundaries – wherein sound is viewed as symbol and agent of creation. The concept, inherent in the creative Word of Judaeo-Christian lore, finds echo in the mystic Vedas, where it is spoken of a primal sound, *nada* – sounded by the cymbal of Brahma. Developing the musical metaphor, the flute of Krishna conveys enlightenment, while from the drum of Shiva fall the fifty letters of the Sanskrit alphabet, which crystallise as seed-syllables around the seven microcosmic chakras – the wheels or vortices which structure the perceptible cosmos. This suggests why the harmonics of the spheres was regarded a sacred science, as it provides a rationale for the legendary accomplishments of musical sages, who, through instrument and voice, subdued wild beast, healed and destroyed, and, as did the priests of Agni, lighted their sacrificial flames by sole means of the mantra.

The classical system of India identifies seven major chakras, although simpler archaic systems enumerate five. Significantly, the numbers five, seven, and twelve are linked with the Spiritual Temple or City of God, as reflected in literary allusions too numerous to elaborate – among them the seven Seals and seven Angels of the Apocalypse, the seven Heavens of Islam, and the twelve by twelve thousand Virgins of the New Jerusalem. In music these three numbers are likewise primary, most musical scales comprising a selection of five or seven tones out of a total of twelve. As music is an appropriate metaphor of heaven, it is the principle of harmonic resonance which holds the key to the gates of the inner Shambhala of beauty and meaning.

As we wander along its avenues, inspect its mansions, and meet its inhabitants, it may be observed that the seven heavens are not exclusive nor vertically hierarchical; they are rather concentric and interpenetrating. To say, for instance, we are in the forth heaven, is to state a fact of emphasis, not exclusion. Similarly, the lens of comparative myth and prophecy reveals a plenitude of worlds – all more or less complete microcosms – as obtained in the visionary experience. To banish redundancy it is necessary to recognise that seers and sages – in their various forms of ‘primal speak’ – describe a singular object.

The Root of Matter in the Heavens of Muladhara

In the first heaven we meet mystery in its most primary form – in the utterly astounding fact that anything should exist at all, and existence, as the dharma teachers affirm, springs virginal and pristine from the immaculate void. One may interpose phase fluctuations and quantum potential – elaborate and obfuscate – creation appears ex nihilo fully formed. This it does now, and at every moment of conscious time, for creation occurs in the perpetual present. First there is a garden; then a city, whose dwellers made their palaces appear,

with their parks, their observatories, their libraries and musical instruments. They disport in forests and ravines, in majestic mountain peaks and groves of enchanted augury, in secret hermitages and jewelled caves. In wealth also they are rich beyond measure, for theirs is the wish-granting diadem and the art of the alchemist on the plane of material existence. To make gold one must possess gold, and the gold of the Lotus of Muladhara (in yogic anatomy the root chakra at the base of the spine) is the four-fold alchemy in the name IHVH, the Hebrew Tetragrammaton which is the Word of creation, contained in the Ark of the Covenant. Thus is the power of the first heaven the power of manifestation, and of curious apports, which materialise in the vortex of necessity to be reabsorbed into the illimitable ethers. The spirits pertinent to this sphere are of the elemental kind – Salamanders, Undines, Sylphs, and Gnomes – in Hermetic lore the subtle essences of the four traditional elements. These are ruled by the Magus – he who has perfected the will, as set forth by exponents of the Art from ancient Tubalcain to Paracelsus. Thus binding the elemental spirits to the Great Work, the ancients laid the foundation of the Temple.

The Fountain of Youth in the Heavens of Swadhistana

In the second heaven of Swadhistana (in yogic anatomy the Lotus near the generative organs) dwell sages and queens of most ancient renown. These are the immortals of the Tao, who, having perfected the interior alchemy and distilled the elixir of life, attained to longevity. Theirs is the art of the true homunculus or magical child, an androgynous body made of the substance of dreams. Yet, as all of existence is a dream, as the initiates of this domain have cognisance, the body is sustained in the dream called waking. This, therefore, is the land of Tantrics and Dakinis, of oracular crones, of Valkyries and Grail maidens, skilled in the ninety-nine sexual arts. Of such were the advisors of Huang-ti, China's legendary Yellow Emperor, which instructed him in the ways

of the harem with regard to the cultivation of the ching – the vital essence, the *materia prima* of Chinese alchemy. Hence of the primordial ruler it is said, he copulated with two thousand women and ascended into heaven. Here also are the temples of curious arts – of roots and potions, of music and dance – the weaving of the astral light into a garment of bliss, where vestals guard the sacred fire and Voodoo Queens conjure the Serpent. Here lies the essence of etheric art – the purification of the nadi or highways of interior bliss, chi or prana – the breath of life, whose adepts bestow blessing and health by the touch of their hand. Upon this foundation the greater transformations of yoga rest – the distillation of the elixir or pearl of Amrit, the nectar of immortality. The divinities of classical mythology pertinent to this sphere are Luna, as well as Venus or Aphrodite, and Mercury, whose serpent wand, the Caduceus, (of twin serpents twined around a pole, reminiscent of the double helix of DNA) is a hieroglyph of the operation in question.

The Vehicle of Blissful Motion in the Heavens of Manipura

In the third heaven, entered through the vortex of Manipura – the chakra of the solar plexus region – we find the spaceport of the masters of motion and their aerial craft, the vimana of ancient Vedic lore, wherein they traversed the realms of gods and men. The vimana vajra or diamond vehicle, the merkaba or ensouled vessel, like the contemporary flying disks represent the ‘ark in motion’. The forces involved are of transport and the distribution of energies beyond the physical body, as manifest in the annulling of gravity, whereby also the ancients laid the foundations of Baalbek, raised gigantic monoliths, and generally built on a cyclopean scale. By these same powers do holy men walk on water and air, even as adepts of pranayama, the control of the breath or vital airs, are wont, in their meditations, to hover above the ground. The effect in nature is said to be one of electricity, as chi or prana is the subtle essence of

oxygen – a substance magnetically charged, and necessary in all phases of metabolism. The opening of the Lotus is the unfolding of space, and of the six directions relative to the primordial axis of Sushumna. As the position of the Manipura suggests, the powers cognate also pertain to the process of digestion, assimilation and circulation, with their subtle equivalent, the transformation of emotional energy. It is here that the martial passions – the primitive urges to punish, possess and procreate – are transmuted into their higher equivalent, as prerequisite for cultivation of the heart and the higher spiritual centres. Ares or Mars, as the god of war, is a symbol somewhat narrow, while Jupiter, as the principle of liberality and largesse, is a little too vague. Combined, however, they adequately convey the idea of energy under benevolent steerage.

The Mandala of Great Harmony in the Heavens of Anahata

The heart-centre (Anahata in the Vedic system) is the citadel of empathy and compassion. The defining state of consciousness is that of oneness with all nature, the identification of cosmos with self. Harmony is the ruling characteristic – harmony in diversity – as Anahata, the centre of the system, comprises the matrix wherein all phenomena appear in their authentic and original form. It is the basis of ‘seeing true’. Centred in the Lotus of the Heart, therefore, is the consciousness of beauty and meaning – not any particular instance thereof, but the foundation of the idea of truth. The Cabalists shared this notion, calling the central sphere of their magical cosmos *Tiphareth* – Beauty. The gods of this sphere are solar deities such as Apollo and Vishnu, whose avatars Orpheus and Krishna, depicted respectively with lyre and flute, embody the concept of an ordered and harmonious universe. Cognate is the concept of angel or messenger of the absolute in the manifest world, the universal Christ.

The Vision and the Voice in the Heavens of Visudha

The heavens of Visudha (in Tantric anatomy the Lotus located near the throat) comprise the realm of poet and bard – of oratory and of song, of sigils and symbols, of mantras, spells and conjurations. Stated more precisely, they constitute the realm of language. The alchemy of this domain, accordingly, is that of coded information – of interpretation and formulation – and the sages which dwell therein have enriched the world through their perception and expression in the realm of symbolic meaning. Here stands the universal ivory tower – its archives the record of human knowledge, expressed in whatever form. Its deities are the gnostic messengers – Orpheus, Quetzacoatl, Hermes and Apollo, its deans the prophets and visionaries of the ages. In its akashic records we read $E=mc^2$ and *om mani padma hum*. We read *God is love* and *Allahu aqbar*. It is here that meaning is clothed in form; spirit is encoded in the law of the letter. Alphabets are forged in the fires of God – shadows of an alphabet of verity, not of human devising but after the canon of nature, of a primal or cosmic language, from whence secondary systems of language, music and number derive. It is the link to the primal language whence any symbol system derives its meaning. If the link is lost, meaning is lost. Expressed in mystic terminology, the throat centre has to resonate with the heart if creative utterance is to occur. The ability to listen and perceive with the heart is that which keeps humanity anchored in verity as it navigates the limitless ocean of mind and meaning. This perception of the heart can take many forms – in divining the augury in the seas and clouds, as in a mother's response to the cry of her infant. This mystic heart is the oracular fountain, whence the waters of life diverge into myriad channels at the level of understanding and expression.

The Shining Eye in the Heavens of Ajna

The heavens of Ajna (in occult anatomy the pineal gland and the mythological wisdom eye) pertain to the faculty of analysis. This is not to be understood as the method of scientific reductionism, wherein a rational object may be endlessly divided into constituent parts, but rather the irrational end of that method – in magical parlance, the vision of the abyss. The faculty in question is that of seeing *through* phenomena to the ultimate void or ground of being, and only secondarily that of zeroing in on any particular level of organisation. Its divinities, accordingly, are the great diagnosticians of the human condition – Hermes, Jesus, the Buddha, and Lao Tse – to name the most revered. Intuition, or direct insight into truth, is the essential attainment. The Ajna, in a manner unlike that of the Anahata, also serves as central command centre, both of the human organism as of the sensate universe in entirety. Its adepts are the Magi – the lawgivers in the history of ideas, religious as well as secular, who kindle epochs in thought and fashion worlds in which multitudes acquiesce and shelter. Their creations, moreover, are not merely semantic, for the Ajna is the lever of the universe, the gateway to the greater magical powers. As the structurer of DNA, it is the manifest basis of the possibilities of consciousness in a creative and evolving universe. It is the seat of the great formative angel which dwells in the gulf between chaos and cosmos, whose eye is the Eye of Horus, of Shiva and Lucifer / Satan. All cultures of the magical disposition attempted the opening of this eye, which is also the eye of annihilation. Ancient and classical gods assigned to this domain, owing largely to the human perspective, are such catastrophic and eschatological entities as Pan (bringer of terror, viz. *panic*, *pandemonium*), Horus (the avenger), and Shiva (the destroyer). However, equally germane to this exalted realm is the creative or formative principle.

The Buddha Fields in the Heavens of Sahasrara

In the seventh heaven of Sahasrara (the crown chakra, situated above the top of the head) resides the secret of existence itself. Here, in the mystic geography of Mount Meru, dwell the fully enlightened beings, the Buddhas, who have reconciled in themselves being and non-being. This is the sphere of pure undifferentiated consciousness, without attribute or modification. Nothing directly can be said concerning this sphere, as it is beyond time and space, beyond all cognitive and conceptual categories. It is rather the foundation of all these things. For this reason the sages speak of it in metaphor, and the image employed is that of luminous empty space. It might be considered archetypal space – the ground of possibility and potential. The terms used to describe it must therefore be regarded as equally figurative. Being immeasurable, it is called infinite; being the unborn, it is called eternal. Its luminosity is not light in the conventional sense, but the potential to know, conceive, and to reflect. Its emptiness denotes the unobstructed nature of mind delivered from conceptual constraints. This is the realm of *moksha* or liberation, the original Buddha nature, the consciousness of the Pure Land, or mind in its natural unclouded state. Attributed to this sphere are all transcendent gods – those regarded as absolute and ultimate ground of being, such as the Egyptian Atum, the Babylonian Anu, the Hindu Parabrahm, and the Father as spoken of by Jesus.

Lost in the City of Angels

In the anatomy of the chakras, as in the sephiroth of the Cabalistic Tree of Life, the initiate may detect the formulae of creation and initiation, of the dual and opposing currents of immanence and transcendence. There is also a certain reciprocal relationship between the upper and lower centres respective to the pivotal heart chakra, finding expression in the cabalistic dictum that Kether (the Crown) is in Malkuth (the elemental Kingdom), and vice versa. One discerns in these systems the point of view of the angelic intelligences, which

entered into unlawful liaison with humankind, to become incarnate and raise the human genotype to the knowledge and conversation of their august arcanum. The Tree of Life thus becomes the Tree of the Forbidden Knowledge, the fruit whereof is death. Hence also the moral ambivalence here encountered, attesting that the fruit is verily the knowledge of good and evil.

Knowledge is accordingly deemed to be neutral, and such it is in relation to the phenomena of its own sphere. As a two-edged sword, however – as a stone axe or particle accelerator – it cuts not only the uncarved block, the dark matter of the earth, it also cuts the cutter. The moderns at last caught a glimpse of this, though the truth thereof was preserved in the depth of the gnostic sanctuary. Therefore also did the dharma teachers enunciate the path of transcendence, finding bitter in the sweet, and discontent in the paradise of the gods. Thus moreover was the Saviour crucified, in that he is All, and it is the sword of knowledge which pierces his heart. Yet, in bearing the thrust of the fiery sword, he opened the way of the Tree of Life, the way to the sanctuary of the soul, where the ark is in open view.

Lastly we may note in this connection the curious situation regarding such tribal cultures, as until recently bypassed the exponential curve of cultural innovation which resumed some six millennia ago relative to the present cycle. Retaining a shamanic model of symbiosis with nature, they partook of the fruit of knowledge but lightly, thus creating the only sustainable cultural type hitherto revealed. While thus retaining a vestige of paradisaical innocence, they are nevertheless vulnerable indirectly, and in the greater scheme their culture is likewise unsustainable – albeit in the face of barbarians of superior malice and firepower.

And now therefore is the axe taken to the root of the tree, and to the human cradle, to use a shocking metaphor. Thus is the realm of the gods free floating in the void, and the City of Angels a haunt of sorcery.

BLACK HOLE SORCERIES

Satanus deus inversus est.
(Satan is godhead inverted.)
– Ecclesiastical adage

The Nature of Evil

How dreadful it is to be conscious!

Not that, amid distractions, this fact is immediately obvious. One requires the peculiar conditions of the monastic cell or hermitage to become acutely aware of the conundrum – some four hours a day to attend to necessities, four hours of sleep, sixteen hours of nothing but being aware. Become initiate or go insane – those are the options, inculcated in the dynamics of this regime.

Thus is civilisation sedation and narcosis – a set of conventions and diversions, contrived to dodge the confrontation. Sublimation – or repression rather – of the sexual nature is but its beginning. The Faustian dilemma, the greater romantic dilemma (in the nineteenth century sense) is not that gentle Gretchen and the erotic idyll seem unattainable, but that the questing mind is fettered by the stifling trivia of convention. It is this idea which principally underlies the world's great literature – both of East and West. That the individual is a creature of need and subject to pain merely obscures the point, for the symptoms are most acute in a Prince Gautama or King Solomon: existence is sorrow; all is vanity and vexation of spirit. The distemper in the human disposition seems intrinsic. Things cannot be left to idly simmer. Something must be done about the raging tempest, the infernal abyss – the human mind.

Go around the Boyg? Thou hast said!

Evil, in a passive sense, then might be a shirking of the issue – civilisation not merely as detour but as cul-de-sac of the mundane, where monsters are bred in the abrogation of mystery. This much is understood and reflected in the literature – from Kafka’s faceless society-as-institution to the contemporary allegories of Michael Ende and Madeleine L'Engle.

The question which has exercised moral philosophers is whether ‘evil’ exists in something of a qualifiably positive sense. If so, what is its origin, and what is the prognosis for the universe wherein evil exists? More fundamentally, does the universe *have* a moral nature, or are moral concepts mere cultural conventions? While there are universals in the moral code – thou shalt not kill (at least not the members of thine own tribe), and so forth – even these are overturned under certain conditions, while lesser conventions are utterly at variance. If the notion of intrinsic moral nature is contested, even more so are the origin myths regarding good and evil.

The Serpent, in Christian theology the author of temptation, is revered – in the earlier Sumerian myths, as in Gnostic and New Age revivalist pagan conceptions, as light-bringer and emancipator. The God of the Bible, Yahweh, is thus respectively viewed as benefactor and oppressor – as god and demon. The devil, as remarked, is the god of one’s enemies. But whence, one may inquire, did the concept of enmity – the original discrepancy in the spiritual nature – arise in the first place?

And this resumes the ancient lore of an extraneous seed, of alien gods – collectively the mythological Serpent – insinuating their kind and agenda into the stream of humanity. The serpent and his mingled seed – the hybrid Hor Shemsu, the Nephilim or Anunaki – espoused a pantheon of their own, the ubiquitous serpent gods, angels of exile, whose influence altered the primeval landscape. Their chief, Lucifer / Satan, is depicted as exploiting the plight of fallen humanity, as well as that of an intelligent, though cursed, *non-human* species, in his quest for godhead. And while the superior intelligence of the

genetic confluence is the fount of civilisation, there also enters the appalling ethos of ends by all and any means.

Active evil – the root of violence – is thus intrinsic to that promethean agenda which, in mytho-historical lore, is the legacy of fallen angels, as bequeathed upon the fifth or Aryan race of Nephilim / Anunaki spawn. This promethean intervention – as of fire from the gods – jarred the primeval races from millennia of neolithic dreaming to build cities and temples to the hybrid gods. From its cradle in Mesopotamia the agenda became the order of the universal quest, shattering the primordial image of timeless presence and plunging the world into the chaos of history. We previously delineated its course through the ages; presently we shall consider spiritual charter.

Our mythological heritage then suggests that evil is not a universal intrinsic given, but rather incidental, conditional and specific in origination. This disposes of the dualist or Manichean view that good and evil – God and Devil – are locked in eternal conflict. In a world of contrasts, as argue its modern proponents, there must be some bad with the good. Yet it seems spurious to argue that insofar as existence is predicated on polarity – day and night, light and shade, male and female – therefore nations must go to war. Given the integrity, the organic unity of nature, as made explicit by modern physics, it is rather astounding that the universe could descend at all into the depths of conflict as characterised by fortifications, standing armies, and the instruments of torture.

Deistic monism maintains that there is only room for one God in the universe, and it is here also that philosophical necessity concurs with the prophetic oracle. This God is intrinsically good or holy – implying integrity, consistency or wholeness. Yet this God, for apparent purposes of his own, tolerates a temporary manifestation of evil. God *created* Satan. This is the logical consequence, and the position of the faith-based religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Yet a mystery is inherent here. Why should it be thus?

Genesis and the apocryphal books of Eden identify a Tree of Knowledge as the root of recognition regarding the concepts of good and evil. As in the wider mythological lore, its fruit is extolled by a talking serpent, and when tasted it brings illumination. As it is written, *their eyes were opened*. Yet implicit also is the recognition of nakedness, denoting perhaps the advent of self-aware or reflective consciousness. Indeed it is the soul, rather than the body, which is in need of dress. For, the body having received its ceremonial due, the rituals are elaborated without end. Expulsion from primordial Eden thus signals the end of implicit communion, and the beginning of the quest, of science, magic, religion and – sacrifice.

Genesis, it may be recalled, relates two of types of response to cosmic alienation in the respective worship of Cain and Abel. Both offered sacrifice, Abel killing a lamb, while Cain presented the fruit of the fields. While mere iteration has dulled the Christianised world to any meaning in this enigmatic tale, the question arises: why sacrifice in the first place? Does the Creator require succour? Whence comes this curious idea?

A contrast immediately becomes apparent – a spiritual dichotomy pursued throughout the rest of the scriptures: Abel's altar a bloody mess; the altar of Cain a ceremonial shrine. The psychology could not be more opposed: one offering an impulsive gesture of despair, the other a premeditated affirmation of beauty and strength.

Then the astounding verdict: *And Yahweh had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect*. In the upshot, *Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod*, where according to apocryphal lore, he married into the elder serpent race. The legacy of these primal types is then bequeathed upon their descendants, the Adamic lineage of Abel and Seth remaining nomadic herdsman, from which stock arose dreamers and prophets, while that of the Serpent – of Cain and his descendants – became artificers and builders of cities. Thus from the earliest,

the Luciferian spirit in the lineage of Cain showed itself of superior *esprit* in every sense.

How can one characterise this beatitude, this illustrious sensibility?

A creature arises which comprehends the universe, as a whole and in every part, the combined wisdom of the ages being a mere reflection of its thought. It synthesises chlorophyll and measures the thrust of the membrum virile against strength of the virgin seal. It penetrates every intimate sphere and dwells in the sanctuary of every shrine. Unlike Solomon, it *does* understand the coiling of the serpent, the flight of the eagle, and the way of a man with a maid. Hail to the jewel in the matrix, as its devotees might say, perfect in wisdom and beauty. The Serpent or Dragon might be God indeed, but for one defect – it cannot create.

The creative function is of the Elohim, from whose courts the Dragon Prince was banished for insurrection. Now behold the creature: Of unfailing insight, with knowledge complete, yet cut off from the source of creation. It dwells alone in the solitary sphere with which it is conterminous. Infinite space and endless time are its prison, for it cannot grow or undergo change but in the permutation of its attributes throughout cycles of endless return. Piercing the foundations even of time and space, its gaze is transfixed by cosmic fire – all devouring, all begetting – which is the fire of the mind. *It has no hope.*

Where does the creature take solace? Why, in the bed of courtesans ... and in philosophy – that combination perfected by the *divine Marquis*. It takes solace in experience and the minutiae of a comprehensive research undertaking – for what else is there to do? – to ascertain whether by any means, and against all expectation, the secret of creation might be wrested from the Most High and brought into the rational sphere. His ambition – to use the personal pronoun of tradition – is to be God, to depose the Creator. *Ye will be as gods* was also the ideal with which he tempted primordial Eve, subverting the charter of the Elohim, and fixing human sight upon the Tree of Knowledge. To be God – what

else might be willed by conscious intelligence, finding itself severed from its nascent roots. Once the sense of self is generated in the matrix of reflection, it seeks perpetuity; it expands and assimilates, it aims for the infinite – for what else is there to aim at?

Yet we noted that the reflective mind has at least three options: the bodhisattva vow, the covenant of Yahweh, and lastly the promethean option of cosmic conquest. A fourth might be a return to the universal dreamtime, if that were possible, and a fifth the nihilistic stupor of spiritual entropy. Discounting the last of these, there is nothing here of especially sinister augury unless one takes the fundamentalist position that everything outside the biblical charter is evil as such. Whence then comes that which is *called* evil – more accurately, the attributes of evil – the murder, the torture, the rape, the despoiling?

To paraphrase Djwhal Khul, the erudite Tibetan who dictated some dozen volumes to the English seer Alice A. Bailey, one might put it thus: Evil is the tension which arises from the conflict between certain spiritual agencies hailing from Alpha Draconis and the Pleiades respectively. Cryptic though this may sound, it resonates with the scenario advanced in these pages, Alpha Draconis with Rigel Orion being the celestial lair of the Dragon, while the Pleiades are the gates to the heavens of Yahweh. Further breaking down these mythological abstractions, we return to the concept of a clandestine union between angelic entities and creatures of flesh and blood, which latter, in the providence of the Elohim, were created to live by intuition or faith – in the eternal present. Yet, having fallen for the fruit of knowledge, they now must demonstrate infinite discipline, infinite patience and infinite goodwill, in applying means to ends which are remote and remoter than remote. They must learn art and science, magic and alchemy. They must learn to walk through fire and fly through the air, if perchance they might reach the stars and discover the secret of life – these creatures of anguish and passion and fearful of death – the humans. But it is not the aspiration as such which is at fault. It is the means, the appalling and

increasingly desperate means, that invoke the arch-demon of human sacrifice, for this Moloch is enshrined wherever a culture departs from its anchor in the perennial present.

The angelic intelligence, moreover, is dimmed upon contact with the biological entity, which interprets information in relation to its fears, its needs and desires. Even more fundamentally, it is subject to entropy – the overall gradual degradation of consciousness in the course of world ages, due to a separation from the intuitive source. Its enterprise displays a semblance of progress, but the scales of the Faustian bargain are increasingly tipped against the dwellers on this planet. Despair eventually turns to madness in the face of inevitable self-destruction, which is the bent of demons at the end of their spiritual tether.

When these things are apparent, to recall the relevant text, shall the God of heaven establish a kingdom which shall never be destroyed. As a stone cut without hands out of a mountain, it shall vanquish all other kingdoms and cover the earth. Thus sounds the prophetic keynote, not only of the authorised canon, but of the greater body of heterodox and apocryphal lore which has attracted notice. Whether extrapolated from the disclosures of New Age spirit channels or the quatrains of Nostradamus, a consistent theme is in evidence – one which subliminally so permeates contemporary thought that it may be called the predominant myth of our times. The idea is that humanity is facing its ultimate crisis, the resultant of the tendency of ages, and thus an adjustment of the cosmic balance. Intrinsic for many exegetes is the battle of Armageddon, the projected final confrontation between the forces of good and evil, which some interpret to designate war, while others elevate the concept to the spiritual sphere. It is further envisaged that the coming conflagration or upheaval will terminate the present world system and usher in a millennial utopia.

Quite aside from the question of transcendent verity in these projections, it is difficult to see how one can think otherwise in present global context. It is

not merely that global dysfunction is acute; the ideologically exhausted post-modern age seeks historical closure. Even if these ideas are *merely* the effluvia of myth, their very strength invites their fulfilment in some form.

Descent into the Infernal Realm

If there were no God, it would be necessary to invent him, as remarked Voltaire. The hierarchy seeks its pinnacle and to exalt that pinnacle above the stars of the heavens – to assume, as it were, control of the rational plane. The spirit which knows not God expands to replenish the void. In modern myth this attitude is identified with the shadowy elite – variously the Illuminati, the Secret Chiefs or Ascended Masters – generic terms designating the lineage of initiated wisdom holders in the Western tradition. As Robert Anton Wilson points out, there is confusion as to whether the Illuminati are the good guys – benevolent guardians of a fledgling humanity, or spawn of the adversary – inscrutable agents serving their own sinister purposes. Although the term, in recent years, has come to denote the Zionist conspiracy of monetary and occult control over the West, the attribution is of course a purely semantic matter.

While illuminates hail the initiated gnosis as universal panacea, the Yahwist camp maintains the centrality of faith as chief saving grace. To confound matters, the principle of illuminism is espoused by certain cabals, at least nominally aligned with the Jesus of the gospels, claiming the Son of God as scion of Illuminati descent. Christian fundamentalists the while equate illuminism with spiritual darkness, pointing out that initiation came of the Serpent, whose angels also appear as ministers of light – as agents of enlightenment. Yet, to reiterate a previous point, this does not mean that the illumined wisdom is antichristian as such – nor are its custodians invariably given to the black conspiracy, as the biblical tale of the Magi attests. The

gnosis, however neutral in itself, merely became the principal tool of the Luciferian mindset in its bid for human allegiance.

But what of the ‘black art’ in itself? What is the ‘abomination of desolation, standing in the holy place’ to which the scriptures refer? What is that mystery of iniquity?

Its essence, it is here proposed, is to be gleaned from the symbolism of the Black Mass, to which we shall presently devote attention. Some historical background, however, is required, insofar as its symbolism is heavily context dependent, the Black Mass, in its late medieval and romantic form, being the parody of an imposture.

We observed that the Luciferian spirit moved upon the ancient world to create a shem – a stargate to pierce the hyperspatial dimensions. This gnosis suffered setback around the year 1, as degenerate spiritual types, under the cloak of Christianity, began to persecute the ancient ways, burning its books, and putting its practitioners to the sword. Barbarian hordes completed the destruction began from within, and during the following Dark Ages it seemed that the ancient sciences had been vanquished. However they merely went ‘underground’, and whether out of goodwill or opportunism, many of its guardians saw fit to align their legacy with the emerging world power – the Church of Rome. From another perspective, the Christian faith was subverted through spiritual manipulation precisely to this end.

A natural principle is also at work – an idea (or spiritual seed) must undergo the process of burial (entombment), before it rises again, undergoes various stages of growth, eventually producing a replica of itself. This is the meaning of the crucifixion and the subsequent spiritual birth of the church. As for the original church however, it was in precise proportion to the gaining of political power that its spiritual power was lost. Constantine fancied he had a conversion of sorts, and determined, for the sake of unity in the realm, that Christianity be the official state religion. This raised the question of doctrine, as

dissenting factions in this regard had already hardened their positions. The Nicean Council of 325 represents one of numerous attempts to settle the matter through consultation and debate. This idea – that of divine truth by committee – became the guiding principle of the Roman Curia, the core of the College of Cardinals, so that Constantine is appropriately regarded as the first pope. The authentic head of the church – Christ – was thus deposed, replaced with a human head, a head more often than not after the infernal prince of the powers of the air. As it was said of the incumbents of the chair of Peter – the ostensible heirs of apostolic succession – they knew not the Christ they claimed to serve. All the more apparent was their interest in the pagan mysteries.

Rome, officially the suppressor of secular learning, began quietly to collect and transcribe the ancient writers, and amass in the Vatican vaults the largest collection of esoterica known to be extant. Not surprisingly, the Church, through the influence of the Medici family, became a major instrument of the Renaissance, the revitalising of ancient learning. A new form of secrecy was thus born, whereby the official doctrines hide an agenda, somewhat other or even diametrically opposed. The ruse may be ancient, but with the ascent of the papacy it became the rule of the Western orthodoxy.

Meanwhile the crusades took their place in the history of expeditions mounted in search of the Grail – for exotica of historical and occult significance. It appears that the Knights Templar did indeed acquire a non-trivial secret from the Arabian alchemists, as their subsequent fortunes tend to suggest. Their seemingly inexhaustible means financed, throughout Europe, monumental building programs, including the cathedrals in the style now referred to as gothic – widely acknowledged as statements in stone of the gnostic arcana. Their political influence greatly increased, and, like today's intelligence cabals, this order of warrior monks became a might unto itself, rivalling the ecclesiastical and political powers of the day. It was with this in mind, and a eye upon their wealth, that Philip III of France prevailed on pope

Clement V to proscribe the Templars, that proceedings against them might be initiated. In the upshot, on that fateful Friday 13th, 1307, in well coordinated raids, they were arrested en masse, thereafter to be tortured into various confessions and exiled or burned at the stake. Their error of deferring to ecclesiastic authority, is not one which they or their spiritual successors are likely to repeat. Vengeance rather waits in the wings.

The quest for the authentic Grail of the authentic Christ the while continues to convolute the conspiratorial labyrinth. In a variant of associated myths the mysteries of Jesus are subsumed under the lore of the royal bloodlines of the Serpent – of Faery and Elf – wherein Jesus is depicted as married to Mary Magdalene, and their natural descendents as heirs of the magical priesthood attributed to Christ. These founded or married into the Merovingian dynasty of France, whence papal enmity against this house, its overthrow and replacement by the Carolingians. As spiritually bereft, the Church, fearing exposure and the appropriation of its mysteries by another, continues to persecute the gnosis. As for the lore of the Grail, the water and blood of the scriptures – the Word and Spirit of God according to orthodox teachings, and so the idea of spiritual lineage – are replaced with a natural bloodline. Its heirs, representatives of the generic Dragon line, accordingly lay claim to that royal priesthood which is after the eternal order of Melchizedek.

Unorthodox as this tradition might be, it exposed, through provocation, the inquisitorial abuses of the Church, its historical forgeries and waging of war upon the Mystic Rose – the Grail as embodiment of the feminine mysteries – the pagan lore of the Goddess. Nature itself was henceforth the enemy – in particular the woman, perceived paragon of sensuality, temptress and bane of the sanctified state. While an error of tragic proportions, this is cited ad nauseum by critics of the faith which fail to recognize that the Church itself embodies the grand apostasy. As the apostle put the matter, we wrestle not

against flesh and blood but against a spiritual principle. Christianity is the *redemption* of the woman – not her confinement and torture.

By around 1100 AD Rome had consolidated its military might, and its imperial nature became fully apparent. Under the pretext of heresy it now instituted genocidal wars against heterodox communities throughout southern Europe, targeting groups like the Albigensians and Huguenots, as well as the mystic kingdoms of the Merovingian Cathars. In addition the Church conquered through its contrived theology.

While the minutiae of religious doctrine are often viewed as pedantic trifles, their lacklustre garb may conceal a raft of obscenities. The theologians of Rome in this regard were not merely inventive; they were darkly inspired, as their ruinous legacy attests to this day. The universal contempt accorded the Christian tradition in liberal and intellectual circles is thus founded to the extent that the Roman doctrine has largely come to represent gospel of Christ. The reformers moreover failed to restore the original teachings of Jesus, so that Protestant churches are but a reflection of Mystery Babylon, as in the Apocalypse she is styled.

A Darkness Tangible

A current of vilification is unleashed whenever a certain type of entity accedes to the helm, in that a contrived absolutism creates a raft of perceived enemies. The medieval Church typically accorded this distinction to those describable as heretic, pagan, witch or Jew. The waves of persecution which followed revived, on a large scale, the archaic institution of human sacrifice, with its occult significance in the perpetuation of spiritualistic ancestor cults. Human sacrifice, as previously noted, is efficacious in the materialising of demonic entities, which, owing to their degenerate state, can only manifest through predatory or vampiristic means. They require the emotional energy of

human anguish and despair, as well as substances such as blood, semen and other excreta, to forge a link with the material plane. This is the rationale of sadism or vampirism, whether in elemental or sublimated form, and the reason the inflicting or witnessing of torture gives satisfaction to the souls as harbour such entities. Their lobby is accordingly concerned to create and perpetuate institutions such as the Inquisition, whereby these practices can continue, if possible unde the guise of laudable motive.

Significant in this regard is a spirit of revisionism among contemporary historians, which allege that the Roman Catholic Inquisition proceeded in a reasonable manner, that it was motivated by humane concerns, that torture was inflicted with reluctance, infrequently, and as a last resort – and so on. It is rationalised that its war against the evils of human nature constituted a necessary defence of the faith, mediating, on the whole, a civilising influence.

Needless to say, this is to turn the historical context on its head, a fact particularly evident in the proceedings against alleged witches. There is no evidence that the exhaustive witchcraft trials, conducted throughout Europe from the 16th century onward, uncovered anything remotely resembling a Satanic conspiracy, or the incidence of pacts with the Devil in the particular. If occasional practitioners of the ‘old religion’ were among the victims, these can more readily be identified as midwives and diviners, as professors of herbal lore and other branches of the ancient craft.

Yet despite the extreme unreliability of confessions extracted under torture, there is one inference one can reasonably make. The confessions in their final form would tend to converge to that which satisfied the accusers. This suggests that the concept of satanic witchcraft, with its attendant raft of perversions, was in all probability an invention of the clergy. The startling, significant and corroborative fact is this: the nature and content of the accusations reflected – in the most minute detail – the spiritual realities obtaining within the Church of Rome, as the following will demonstrate.

The centrepiece of pertinent accusations is that alleged convocation of wickedness – the infernal sabbath. While the *Malleus Maleficarum*, a contemporaneous witch-finders manual, does not use the actual term, it makes frequent reference to such gatherings. The *Malleus*, first published in Germany in 1486, makes for disturbing reading. Dispassionately and in the language of reason it describes the universal menace presented by witches, and argues the necessity of a relentless and perpetual war against these emissaries of hell for the greater good of humanity. Minutely it analyses the judicial process from accusation to imprisonment and interrogation, the stripping and shaving of the victim in search of the Devil's mark – some bodily sign of demonic debauch upon the guilty wretch. The accused is referred to throughout as female, it being understood that it is the weaker sex which is particularly prone to the infernal liaison. If thus far unavailing of a confession, the text then proceeds to discussion of such matters as trial by red-hot iron, the various degrees of torture, and methods of eventual sentencing and execution.

Today it is no longer necessary to submit this document to extensive scrutiny. Its nature and purport are transparent to the contemporary gaze. This does not mean however that the *Malleus* no longer has its advocates. There remain those, who, when pressed, will admit believing that its authors, Kramer and Sprenger, concerned for the eternal salvation of souls, acted in accord with the highest humanitarian principles.

Of interest rather is the question: whence the exotic symbolism of the witches' sabbath. Although the *Malleus* makes scant reference to the ancient mysteries, there is no indication how the malign witchcraft scenario suddenly came into being. *Ex nihilo*, as it were, it appears to have sprung fully formed from the fertile minds of inquisitors, supporting the thesis that it externalised as a projection of the dark archetype informing the Roman Church.

According to relevant sources the sabbath of the witches was believed to include:

The Demonic Summons and Magical Flight – Sinistrari was among contemporaneous authorities who wrote extensively on the subject of Incubi and Succubi – allowing that the celibate clergy were especially vulnerable to these lascivious nocturnal spirits, which disturbed the sleep of the faithful. It was understood that these entities, which pertain to the vampire class, preferentially lured their victims to their astral strongholds, through fascination of a spiritual as well as erotic nature. Facilitating these liaisons is the practice of religious devotion to an external deity, which projects the centre of volition outward. Wholeness and divine perfection are attributed to the object of worship ‘out there’, while the priest confesses himself sinful and compromised with evil. This invites obsession by whatever entity is masquerading as God. Further complicating the issue is a thinly disguised polytheism, the Catholic confession allowing intercourse not with one Great Spirit, but with a non-existent trinity of ‘persons’, with the Virgin Mary, and an entire army of male and female saints. From this, spiritually speaking, it is a relatively small step to necromancy, necrophilia, and the kind of indiscriminate psychism of which the witches were accused.

Atavism and the Assumption of Beastly Forms – This features less in the present context, and recalls the willed metamorphosis of shamanic and magical practice. Within the Black Religion, however, the metamorphosis is involuntary and deceptive; the priest in daily prostration before the false Christ takes on the image of the Dragon which hides behind the glittering facade. Eventually the spiritual entity will break through the veil, physically as well as psychologically, and the crazed hierophant – Honorius a case in point – spattered with the blood and ordure of deflowered virgins, goes raving through the midnight palace, roaring in triumph: ‘I am a beast! I am a beast!’

Cursing the Christ Child and harming his Ministers; trampling the Cross underfoot – Wherever the apostate religion flourished, it persecuted the faithful of Jesus. Prominent among the ‘heretics’ martyred by the inquisition

were such Christians as practiced their faith according to the original biblical way. To possess a Bible was punishable by death, as was aiding or sheltering accused heretics. Merely to sympathise in the remotest way with the hapless victims could mean imprisonment, torture and the stake. Mercy was sacrilege, forbearance treason – and thus, in truth rather than effigy, the Cross was trampled underfoot by the agents of Rome.

Desecration of the Host and the Abominable Feast – Among the charges levelled at witches was that of ritual cannibalism – usually of infants slain to the Devil, who presided in the form of the sabbatical Goat. Related is the raft of alleged perversions involving the host, the consecrated communion wafer of the Catholic Mass. This strange conjunction may be elucidated by reference to the symbolism and beliefs surrounding that Mass. The doctrine of transubstantiation asserts that the wafer in question – a small circular disk – becomes the literal body of Jesus Christ, and that the sacramental wine is similarly transformed into the literal redeeming Blood. In consequence the consecrated wafer is immanent deity – very God of very God, and the priesthood endowed with the miraculous power of creating God, or at least replicating the miracle of the incarnation. With this belief sincerely held, the bland little disk becomes the focus of all manner of fetishistic quasi magical projections and practices. A further upshot, bizarre in the extreme, is that the host – to the degree that it is the literal body of Christ, i.e. a *human* body – constitutes a cannibal quaff, the Blood of the Cup, reserved for the priesthood, the toast of vampires. Yet an even darker symbolism adheres to the Eucharist. For in the repetition the Mass – the *sacrifice* of the Mass, as it is called – Christ, in effigy, is crucified again and again. As one modern mystic wrote, there is a direct link between the primary symbols of any cult and its effective doctrine and practice. Clearly it is not the biblical atonement that is celebrated, but it is with blood of others on his hands – the millions slain of the Church – that the Roman priest offers his symbolic sacrifice. The apostle Paul, his convoluted

style notwithstanding, made the matter clear: ‘For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands ... but into heaven itself ... *Nor that he should offer himself often*, as the high priest *with blood of others*. For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now *once* in the end of the world has he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.’ (Emphasis added.) The rite of commemoration is thus transformed into one of perpetual re-enactment, where the symbolic sacrifice parallels the ongoing, and actual, human sacrifice.

Candles made from the Fat of Infants – This alleged appurtenance of the infernal sabbath has its literary origins in the demonology of the highest antiquity. In the present context, however, its meaning is more symbolic. Plunder and the extortion of wealth through religious taxes and other types of ‘offering’ left an impoverished peasantry, effectively stealing the milk from babies’ mouths, while gilded altars throughout Europe and the New World, glowed with the fat of infants. The symbolism is unambiguous.

Orgies of Sexual Perversion – Nothing further needs to be said on this subject, the psychological and social consequences of clerical celibacy being known and documented throughout at least five centuries. Instructive, however, is the fact that the spirit Azazel (mentioned in the Book of Enoch), which, according to esoteric lore, enjoins asceticism, also procures refinement and exacerbation of lust. Lest, however, a misguided soul equate *perversion* with the inventive practices of man and wife – as has been the wont of the Church (see below) – it must be emphasised that such is but a further dehumanising ploy of the inquisitorial agenda.

Homage to the Devil; Copulation with the Devil – Here again the ostensible act presents a type or symbol of a spiritual truth. Christ, the energised creative Word, is the spiritual Seed, wherefore the church proper or Bride of Christ, is pregnant with the Word of God. Similarly the false vine – the satanic Bride spoken of in the scriptures – is pregnant with the doctrine of Satan. Both,

in the apotheosis of providence, will give birth to a Child. Both of these will claim to be, and be hailed as, Christ. While writers like J. K. Huysmans and Montague Summers documented to some extent the prevalence of Satanism among the clergy, this, while revealing, is nothing but a minor symptom of spiritual inversion. Of far greater consequence for evil is the apostate faith of which the clergy is deceived. Isaiah prophesied concerning these: ‘Their soul delights in their abominations. *I* also will choose their delusions.’ (Emphasis added, the personal pronoun signifying *God*). St Paul also adds this testimony: Because they received not the love of the truth ... for this cause God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie.

Other charges, raised against witches, are similarly reflective if the arch-accuser, the Church of Rome:

They cause Man to be Impotent and Woman to be Barren – Here one need go no further than the welter of sexual proscriptions and prohibitions with which the Church has burdens its faithful – barbed wire in the marital bed, as one writer put it. Its moral theologians, like Dens and Liguori, have been meticulous to catalogue the verisimilitudes of sexual sin – all subtly weighted according to gravity – exhausting imagination and probing the boundaries of physical possibility in the process. No-one, of course, knows what the rules actually are, as they are variously interpreted according to times, places, and the disposition of individual father-confessors, the officers of the Vatican which police these matters. All that is certain is that a married couple, on any given night, might commit four mortal and seven venial sins, without so much as knowing it. The malign intent behind this incursion is to destroy the foundations of intimacy, and the basis for that harmony, on which social, economic and political stability depend.

They raise Storms and bring Natural Calamity; they bewitch Cattle and cause Crops to fail, they bring Sickness upon Mankind – Numerous ancient writers have commented on the relationship between the spiritual state

of the populace – especially of the ruling bodies, and the disposition of the elements. Where there is lack of compassion, the heavens withhold their rain. Where there is prodigal indulgence, inundation follows – and so forth. The matter is eloquently expressed in the philosophy of Taoism: To go against the Way is a thing of ill omen.

They cause Women to abort and Strangle the Newborn – As a charge against herbalists and midwives, this is a generalised attack on the feminine mysteries and the rites of nature as grounded in the ancient craft. Control is the motive. The fuel for such accusations, however, is found in the Church, as suggested by excavations in Mexico and the European continent. In *Vicars of Christ: The Dark Side of the Papacy* Peter de Rosa notes that since the days of pagan Rome infanticide was probably not practiced much in the West – except in convents. Many convents were brothels for the clergy, the embarrassing issue being quietly disposed in lime pits and unmarked graves.

They make Pacts with Devils to subvert Custom and Manners – The outrage does not spring from pure soil fully formed, nor the cankered fruit from a healthy tree. Before the abominations can take root, before they may be countenanced, a radical subversion of civility, of the human and humane, must be accomplished. This defeats the argument that the extremities cited are aberrations of an otherwise healthy system. They are endemic root and branch, and so again the accusation turns upon the accuser.

They sell their Soul to the Devil – Religion is a dangerous thing in that it demands total commitment in a absolutist frame of reference. There are no ordinary standards which apply in view of the eternal, whence the ease with, and extent to, which religious truth can be subverted. The Devil is henceforth worshipped as God, falsehood becomes truth, the divine commission the black agenda. Yet very few would willingly embrace unadorned evil, and enter the Faustian pact free of volitional and in full cognisance of its terms. Even the league of self-confessed modern-day Satanists evinces an apologetic of positive

values – tinged perhaps with a certain atavistic gloss – yet characterised at least by a chivalric code of honour. Then again, with religious values turned fully upside down, it may of course be notionally said, *evil, be thou my good*, as did the latter-day illuminists of Europe's secret occult establishment. Here the crux is the confusion of language, necessitating a clean break with the semantic baggage of tradition, and a seemingly arbitrary act of defiance in search of salvation and a language of truth. Yet while the moral morass that was ecclesiastical Europe provided ammunition for cynics and agnostics, the abrogation of language, of course, does not negate the universal canon of meaning which is nature. To loose one's soul, to fall off the wheel of life, is perhaps a difficult thing, but not improbable if one persists in denying ultimate verity. Such, however, is the evident fate of hardened ideologues, enslaved by contrived belief in whatever form.

To conclude this examination, it must be acknowledged that witches – practitioners of the ancient craft – did and do exist, and some these, no doubt, had curious powers, perceived by the Church as rivalling its own. Margarete Murray is essentially correct in postulating a pagan underground, having shamanic roots, and centred on the fertility cult of the Horned God conjoined with the Goddess. Its survival is evident in the modern resurgence of Celtic, Teutonic and Druidic lore. The phenomenon, moreover is universal, wherever a totalitarian monotheism is forcibly foisted on a reluctant indigenous populace. Quite naturally the guardian spirits of the old religion opposed the invasion of pious and obnoxious gods – wolves in sheep's clothing – and mounted resistance on the magical plane. But the imputation of an organised conspiracy of evil, with its liturgy of attendant crimes, is entirely unfounded, and attributable to the inventiveness of the clergy. The inherent psychology is now well understood. It is the assumption of the moral high ground, to the vilification of one's enemies. More – it is the proclivity to project upon the other the suppressed and unacknowledged evils within one's own closet. Such

is the historic rule for the witch-hunt in all its guises, and it is significant that Satan, in scripture, is styled the accuser of the brethren.

Efflorescence – The Black Mass

Inquisition being the vendetta of degenerate spirits near the end of their tether, what, if any, is the intelligent focus of the infernal agenda? An answer may be gleaned from the iconic symbolism of the Black Mass – that infamous rite of exotic evil, rife in the gothic imagination.

But what exactly is this rite?

Conceptions in the public domain tend to be vague, and based on the romantic accounts of writers such as J. K. Huysmans and Montague Summers, while scholarly opinion inclines to regard the phenomenon as little more than a literary fiction. Historically, though, it appears as a social diversion among the intelligentsia and nobility from the court of Louis XIV to the late 19th century London Hellfire Club, and beyond. Associated with pagan mysteries and the hint of exquisite wickedness, it served, no doubt, as a puissant focus for cathartic ritual and sexual license, providing welcome release for aristocratic pagans-at-heart from the suffocating yoke of Christian decorum. Theological commentators, the while, saw it as essentially a blasphemous parody of the Catholic Mass. The psychology is one of atavistic upwelling, of impulsive iconoclasm against the yoke of convention. It underlies the arbitrary leaps of whim in modern chaos magic, and the dice-living, invented by novelist Luke Rhinehart, wherein ordinary habits and persona are shed layer by layer. What these experiments demonstrate is that, although one's personality is an invention of the self, its undoing requires persistent effort. Beyond a theatrical anti-clericalism and orgies of refined decadence, however, there also is record of the greater atrocities *and* of serious attempts to penetrated the mystery of the black arcanum.

The documented cases of Erzsébet Bathory of Transylvania and the Gilles de Laval (Gilles de Rais) are exemplary whereof the Bluebeard legend merely hints – the cults of human sacrifice within certain aristocratic houses of Europe in pursuit of dubious alchemical or magical ends. The Countess Bathory, aided by her familiar, the witch Darvulia, reportedly sought the fountain of youth, bathing in the blood of peasant girls, while the French Marshal and Lord of Rais, who had fought alongside Joan of Arc, eventually plunged to the murder and mutilation of hundreds of children in obsessional pursuit of the secret of alchemy. While the ‘archetypal’ Black Mass was thus subject to parody and imitation in the parlour, there was a social stratum in which its mysteries were the object of a quest.

Before elucidating these mysteries, let us consider the rite itself. What are the essential symbols?

On the altar, supine, lies a naked woman, ideally a virgin consecrated to this end, with whom the officiating priest engages in ritual copulation, while invocations are made and sacrifices offered. Often a Eucharist of some kind is consumed. This appears to be essence of the matter. Gratuitous blasphemy, scatological elements, drunkenness and debauch are merely accretions, sought by the dilettante for cathartic effect. In an exacerbation, however, the priest, at the moment of crisis, slays an infant, taking an innocent life in imitation of the sacrifice of Christ. In a further variant the virgin is ritually slain, and it is her body and blood which forms the Eucharist. From around the 10th to the 16th century during which the Black Mass crystallised into its classic literary form, it increasingly became a blasphemous inversion of the Catholic Mass, its Latin liturgy altered where appropriate to reflect the Satanic beatitude. The celebrant ideally was a reprobate priest of the Catholic confession, the female employed often a nun, and a consecrated host, stolen for this purpose, was ‘introduced’ in place of the usual sacrifice. The whole might preferentially be executed in a desecrated chapel.

What is the meaning of this confused imagery?

The key lies in what the Black Mass parodies and mocks, namely the Holy Communion of the Roman Catholic Church, and what, in turn, the latter truly signifies. In this regard we note that the Sacrifice of the Mass is a rite of incarnation; the worshipper partakes of the body and blood of Christ, which symbolises the Spirit and Word of God. Yet the consecrated wafer – the host – is not God in mere symbol; it is the literal Word of God made flesh, as per the gospel of John: ‘... the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us’. Assuming the efficacy of the rite, God is incarnate.

Posited against this proposition is the Protestant view that, aside from existential engagement with the teachings of Christ, the rite in itself avails nothing. The Protestant communion, as such, is a rite of commemoration, as of a *fait accompli* in the life, death and resurrection of the saviour, and his indwelling presence by the revelation of faith.

The Catholic Mass, by contrast, in conception as in form, is a *magical* rite, and it is here that its ancient pre-Christian derivation becomes apparent, and thus its pedigree of descent from Sumerian, Egyptian and Babylonian mysteries. A few salient points concerning the Mass suffice to illustrate this point, otherwise documented by Alexander Hislop in his *The Two Babylons*. Chief is the alleged miracle of transubstantiation, the metamorphosis of an inert substance into a living sentient being – indeed not just any being, but the Creator no less – through the five magical words *hoc est enim corpus meum* (this is my body).

For this idea there is no scriptural precedent; there is *abundant* precedent in the universal traditions of alchemy and its allied disciplines. To render subject to priestly craft the Stone of the Wise, the Elixir of Life – this is the Great Work of the mysteries accomplished. The symbolism is accordingly apt, for it is not ‘bread’ which is ‘broken’ as per the last supper of Christ, but a circular disk (!) is exalted as the saviour of the world. This disk is the solar disk

of Tammuz and Baal, of Mithra and Apollo. It is moreover the winged disk of Egypt, the merkaba or magical soul, the result of the union of the gods and men. Inscribed thereon are the three characters IHS – Isis, Horus, Seb – though nominally denoting *Iesus Hominum Salvator*, Jesus the Saviour of men.

The meaning of the rite is thus as follows: insofar as the wafer symbolises (or is said to constitute) the *magical matter*, its presentation to the faithful corresponds to the original gift of knowledge of the serpent in Eden. Further comprehended therein is the magical marriage of gods with men, and of the ‘sons of god with the daughters of men’, the unholy union for which the wrath of Yahweh was kindled to destroy the world that was by water. Lastly it subsumes in its symbolic purport the resumption of the Great Work, the attempted restoring of the serpent gnosis through the breeding of a magical child through the one, referred to by the Chinese as the Queen Mother of the West – Isis, Ishtar, Inanna – but known to Catholics as Mary, the Queen of Heaven. The child is thus the seed of the serpent, whereof it is spoken in Genesis, which was introduced in to the human race, thereby engendering the primeval fall. Thus the Mass in symbol form celebrates the ongoing endeavour of the Adamic / Luciferian hybrid seed to obtain from the Tree of Knowledge the secret of eternal life.

As an aside it is to be noted that the wine of the sabbath is reserved for the priesthood – it is not given to the profane – which arrangement is indicative of the hierarchical system, wherein the initiates are as gods, working ‘in’ the gross matter of common humanity. Such essentially was also the relationship between the ancient gods incarnate, the Anunaki of the serpent line, and the majority of humans, whom they regarded as breeding animals and beasts of burden.

To draw these various threads together, we note that the Mass is a rite of incarnation and that belief in its efficacy is enjoined as an article of faith. Let the priest intone the magical words and God is present at his disposal. It is

heresy to doubt it. And yet, as history does irreverently attest, there have been souls so reprobate, so sodden and steeped in sin, as to not merely harbour doubts, but to mock and desecrate this most holy institution. We refer, of course, to its parody, the Black Mass.

Let us then consider merits in this war of the respective rites. As to the Roman Mass, what could the spirits in question have been thinking? Evidently they took literally the words of the gospels of Mathew and Luke, *this is my body*, then perhaps coming to presume that the requisite faith could be *willed* or attained by some miracle of grace. Is it possible that anyone *does* believe it?

Not so, whispers the dissenting spirit. If it is incarnation you want, you must work through natural channels, as did serpent in Eden, and as has become the fashion among humans. Let the properly consecrated priest take his properly consecrated priestess, let invocations and conjurations be made, let the rite proceed when the when the gates of the abyss ... and so on. As the Word of Yahweh impregnated the Virgin to bring forth Christ, so the conjugal rite of man and woman has the potential to bring forth, as *Genesis* has it, ‘a proper child’ – a child in the providence of God. Such is the true and actual rite. The archetypal Black Mass, as is thus apparent, is the rite to intentionally procure the incarnation of Satan. It also becomes apparent that the Black Mass proper is not so much a midnight frolic, as the concerted efforts and devotions of the infernal hierarchy and its earthly representatives in the Black Lodge over millennia. In its acknowledged form, as the pastime of decadents and dilettantes, it is likely to have been as efficacious as that which it parodies.

The incidental slaying of victims, as the practice of ritual cannibalism, admits of other, somewhat unrelated, elements – of vampirism and the ‘slaying of the innocents’ as magical affirmation of the reign of evil. It partakes of symbolic resonance with the Dragon, intent on devouring the Christ child, as spoken of in the twelfth chapter of The Revelation of St John. The mixing of these elements in freeform debauch, is again illustrative of the impotence and

degradation of the fallen hierarchy, as of the jejune spiritual temper of these amateur sycophants of the satanic arcanum. In latter days, and in the outer courts of the Dragon's domain, contingency has sunk to the level of potluck shots, if by some means, and on some level, incarnation and the unholy marriage might be effected.

Apotheosis and Antichrist

Marriage is the metaphor employed for the metaphysical union, and the object of that union is a child – Christ child and antichrist, the final issue respectively of the twin currents and spiritual lineages traced thorough these pages. Both contend for epiphany and apotheosis, the full incarnation of the relevant spirit – holy and unholy spirit – in human form. The language is germane to the Bible, as to the Alchemical, Gnostic, Rosicrucian and Grail allegories regarding the theme. Both spiritual currents have their illustrious and significant historical representatives, and the popular understanding is that they are ranged for some sort of spiritual end-game in a decisive and final battle of Armageddon.

First, however, the respective seeds must come to fruition, and the sense of the fantastic which is here intrinsic is disposed to engender confusion – doubt as to how the miracle might be accomplished. The biblical tradition is here unequivocal. It is to be by means wondrous, as exemplified in the virgin birth; man has no essential part therein. As for the gnostic current, the occultist Peter Carroll in his *Liber Null & Psychonaut* describes three methods by which the authentic magical consciousness is perpetuated and refined through successive incarnation. Respectively he refers to them as the *Red Rite*, the *Black Rite*, and the *White Rite*.

In the first the aged and weakened initiate procures a young healthy female, upon whom he begets a child ‘in his image’. Conception having taken

place, he ends his life by some deliberate means to take possession of the maturing embryo. Arrangements will have made for the support of the woman, and the re-education of the reincarnating adept.

In the second the resident magical entity – the soul – of an individual is forcibly expelled, and his place taken by another. Considered a dangerous and desperate measure, and involving karmic responsibilities of the most serious kind, it is moreover extremely rare for it to be accomplished cleanly. More typically the result is that of dual personalities, whether at war or in some form of accommodation with each other. In partial form the phenomenon is quite common, its cult centres being identified by the presence of violent initiation rites and other institutions for administering trauma. For it is trauma, which breaches the individual aura, and admits the invading entity. Benighted civilisations, having their traditional arrangements with the unseen hierarchy in question, would thus require the exorcising of many an old ghost before a humane society could evolve.

In the third, nature essentially runs its accustomed course. Having achieved fullness of days, the adept sheds his mortal robes and seeks an auspicious womb for future rebirth. Magical concentration, perhaps over lifetimes, enable him to maintain the garment of the gnosis, the ideational content of consciousness, from incarnation to incarnation, and his faculties of discernment aid in procuring a propitious birth for his purpose. Traditions of eugenics, of magical marriages and conscious conception, indicate an understanding ‘this side of the veil’ of the process in question. Astrological considerations, amulets, invocations, and the consulting of oracles, as intrinsic to the relevant lore, are among the steps taken of old to the procuring of a favoured child. Tibetan Buddhism, as one of the last remaining magical cultures, retains a rich tradition of the relevant lore, its *tulkus* or reincarnated lamas often recognised and venerated from early childhood.

On the archetypal plane there are likewise three modalities – three

magical archetypes – by which human life is created.

The first is that of the Spoken Word, as of the logos of God. *In the beginning was the Word ... and the Word was made flesh.* This Word then became the subject of an altercation between the angel Gabriel and a virgin of Nazareth: *Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son ... Be it unto me according to thy word.* Such also was the mode of Eden – the way enjoined of the Elohim for the propagation of humanity. The Word here spoken of is the eternal or incorruptible seed, and its children live forever.

This way was largely lost with the descent from primordial wisdom / understanding of the Chiah and Neshama, in the language of the Hebrew mystics, into the realm of the Ruach, of ratiocination and carnal knowledge. Henceforth the forge of human passion is the primary generative vortex. Children are born of desire – desire having its fulfilment in the knowledge of the woman, which is that Tree of Knowledge in the Garden, as she is the gateway and embodiment of nature. Her progeny, however, is subject to death, wherefore death, through knowledge, has reigned throughout the sensible universe since the beginning of time. This is the second way.

The third concerns the child born of artifice – of magical or scientific knowledge perfected. Whether, or to what extent, this has been achieved is among the inside secrets of archaic gnosis and modern research. The mytho-historical record suggests that tangible results have been obtained on various planes, as previously noted, although relevant techniques typically involved some modification of the natural process, rather than a designer project from ground up. A recent example concerns the alien Greys, those puny creatures with large almond eyes, which appear intent on some kind of engagement with humans. Informed consensus holds that these are (partially) manufactured or cloned entities, which are being mass-produced and exist in a realm close enough to the material, as conventionally understood, to allow for physical manifestation and intercourse.

Spiritually and morally, however, they are creatures of the abyss – of reason, and so entirely devoid of passion. They embody in that sense the rational ideal, along with that other attribute intrinsic to certain brave-new-world scenarios – the communal or hive mentality. Quite irrespective of its reality status, the creature is the focus of a strong emerging archetype. It embodies, at least in some regard, the Opus Magnum accomplished – the conquest of hyperspace, universal or communal mind, and a physical body which, if damaged, can always be mended or exchanged. But there is a trade-off. The entity is emblematic rather of downward transcendence and the black agenda, in that it is a creature dehumanised, lacking individuality and performing its range of functions in a robotic and perfunctory manner. It is a creature under external – not internal – control. Its lowly place in the alien hierarchy moreover indicates that it is not the prime focus of the Luciferian pursuit. It is, however, exemplary of the gnostic hells that are being created in the pursuit – by all means – of the arcanum of life.

On a more illustrious plane are the traditions of ascended masters or immortals, adepts of the yogas and tantras, which, having achieved the alchemical transmutation in themselves, are able to manifest any desired physical body at will. Perhaps most renowned in this line at present is the Himalayan mahaguru Babaji, whose ever young appearance – as a youth of between sixteen and twenty years – has been observed and reported for over a century. Yet even here, on these rarefied planes, does the male / female polarity come into play, albeit in a manner more sublime. The brahmacharia or sage does indeed have a wife in the shakti – the shekinah of Christian mystics – which is the energetic principle of nature. In the wooing of this mistress and the winning of her bountiful favours, as Yogananda might have put it, the adept becomes at once her master and a child in her lap.

It will be apparent then, that the conventional Black Mass, along with other effusions of occult and exotic evil, is a mere distraction – a satanic decoy

of sorts, which keeps unenlightened religionists beating the air. Satan, as this being is identified in the relevant scriptures, is certainly *not* a Satanist, as these individuals tend to define themselves. Rather they are worshippers of Lucifer – Satan before his fall – a personified principle in nature, called the Dragon, the kundalini or serpent power. Yet ‘the devil made me do it’ would be a capital joke in the context of their ethos. The devil rather ‘makes do’ for those religionists which abrogate responsibility by having their god external to themselves. Bitter a saying for some though this may be, Satanism, with its emphasis on the godhead within, is in this respect nearer true religion than most of conventional Christendom. It only fails in the highest, rendering worship to the creature or manifest order rather than the transcendent creator.

Some Satanist cabals, it is true, evince a violent vendetta – a white hot rhetoric of vengeance against the legacy of Christ, whom they perceive as oppressor. Yet in actuality their vitriol is principally directed at his false ministers. There is further no record of Satanists engaging in genocide or cultural holocaust. More than anything, Satanism appears to be a radical and intuitive grassroots movement to exorcise the ghosts of the false religion, foisted upon Europe during its impressionable childhood and adolescence. As such, of course, it is allied with pagan mysteries and goddess lore, as invoked in connection with a renewed reverence for the arcana of nature. As to the execrable evil of the world – it does not clothe itself with cloven hoof or simulated fires of hell.

Thus are the cognate rhetorical battles, the cultic wars, and the colourful Armageddons of entertainment, for the most part smoke and mirrors, distracting from the authentic edge of spiritual engagement. It is surprising to what extent even the cultured world is naively nominalist in the spiritual realm. It indicates the extent to which Europe’s early religious education was effective, turning religion into something occult, a veil of glamour and mystique shrouding its esoteric practices to this day. An environment is thus created for a genuinely

deceptive agenda to pull the wool over the spiritual eyes of the world.

This agenda employs the magical and scientific gnosis, as noted, although its daimon is deprived of the higher faculties of consciousness, the intuitive connection with creative divinity. In the entropic degradation of the intellectual sphere the Luciferian ideal falters. Its utopias fail to materialise, or when they do, it is with unexpected concomitants. The angelic light, plunged into the abyss of reason, is refracted and darkened. It is broken up into prismatic hues, and while light shines in darkness, the darkness comprehends it not. The Luciferian principle thus becomes Satanic – the seven rays of initiation, fires of the seven hells.

In *Telos Agharta* we wondered through the seven heavens – the realisation of the possibilities of consciousness, as grounded in the subtle architecture of the microcosm, the citadels or chakras of yogic anatomy. The inversion and misdirection of the relevant powers, the traditional seven hells, can thus be charted with equal precision, and it is instructive to view them in this light. Regardless of culture and historical period, moreover, similar and predictable characteristics may be discerned:

In Material Hell: the squandering of resources, the art of making very little of much, the degradation of the biosphere through the destruction of habitats and the introduction of toxins, eventual environmental holocaust.

In Generative Hell: gender disharmony and harmful sexual practices, forms of mutilation and modification of the body, poor diet and narcotic drugs of addiction.

In Motive Hell: the rat race, aggressive commerce, intercontinental ballistic missiles.

In Systemic Hell: totalitarianism and cultural imperialism, contrived unity after the Babel syndrome, coerced uniformity, superficial order with underlying chaos, outward diplomacy with inward mistrust.

In Rhetorical Hell: litigation and vendetta, gibberish and the abrogation of language and meaning, the degradation of art to serve a regressive model of consciousness, the science of entropy, the energy of deconstruction.

In Cognitive Hell: the evils of the eye – the predatory eye, the eye of surveillance and inquisition, the merciless eye of interrogation, the dispassionate gaze of the Enochian Watchers – of Basilisk and Medusa – which chills and turns the heart to stone.

In Transcendent Hell: nihilism, the ‘nothing’ (as of Michael Ende), the false singularity of the abyss, the annihilation of intrinsic nature, sacrifice of self and soul.

The satanic epiphany thus mirrors to the end the mystic initiation, wherein the limited self is absorbed in the cosmic ocean. Before, however, the hells become normative, a fall from the higher graces of consciousness must needs occur. The descent is that from intuitive wisdom / understanding to the rational or reductionist model, which seeks to encompass the trans-rational hypersphere with a finite set of variables. Pursued to the end, this, in Faustian language, is the loss of the soul, and it may be recalled that the soul of the sorcerer is the price demanded in exchange for power. Modern civilisation has paid the price, as is evident in the initiatory passage of the postmodern abyss. The dreadful has happened, a fact subliminally intuited by most.

This does not mean that reason is intrinsically baneful, merely that its exaltation to ultimate verity fixes the ceiling of engagement in the rational sphere, thereby shutting humanity into the outer darkness of an entropic and regressive universe. In the more exalted realms of science and philosophy, where model-fixation and ideological constraint are eschewed – this is implicitly recognised. Thus even the serpent gnosis is instrumental in pointing toward a more enlightened paradigm.

Entropy has pockets of negentropy – isolated islands of conscious activity which defy the trend toward undifferentiated homogeneity, and

conserve permanent monads of increasing complexity in an asymptotic spiral toward the eschaton – the omega point and transcendent object at the end of time. And it is not mere coincidence that the prophetic eschatology reveals itself in similar terms; the spiritual seed increasingly differentiates itself from the husks of religious tradition, concentrating within itself more and more of the original logos. As to the institutional forms, the tares of the familiar scripture, are bundled and burned. That bundling is evident in the modern ecumenical movement, which aims to destroy religious diversity by mandating a universal creed. It is the type par excellence of the aforesaid Babel syndrome and the cancer of entropy on the spiritual plane.

Seeds revert to type. The archetypes are made manifest, actualised and empowered, in the progressive externalisation of the invisible hierarchy. Humanity is acceding to the asymptote of its tendencies. The wheat, to quote the Master of Galilee, is gathered into the garner. As for the shells, the Towers of the Black Lodge that are raised in the abyss – let us pursue to the end the nihilistic rapture of the stance involved.

Excluded from the intuitive universe, it is shut up in a rational sphere. From the empty vessels of relative knowledge it fashions a model of reality. Through unending analysis, which is the entropy of the mind, the model converges upon an ever receding virtual point – a point in notional space, with which it becomes identified. Yet is this point, though its godhead and crown, but the essence and eidolon of contrivance, the false singularity of the abyss. It is void of intrinsic existence, and the mind is de-realised that falls under its gravitational spell. By hedging, the same may continue indefinitely – for the aeons that hell is sometimes said to last – containing, as it were, the all-devouring fire of the mind. But with clear perception supervening, subject and object are flung together in a mutually annihilating embrace.

And thus converge its sorceries not upon the stellar singularity of the logoic angel, but on a black hole from which nothing emerges.

INFINITE REGRESS AND THE LAKE OF FIRE

**Eternally the waves break on the shore
of the soundless ocean
I alone am one in the eye of the world
through the veil of vision
appears the lake of fire.
– Songs Of Selma Olanta**

The Unveiling of Destiny

Starfire of illumination or nuclear fire of annihilation – these are the terms in which the prophetic chorus of the age describes humanity's choice as to the plane of engagement with elemental fire. With the Promethean genie unleashed, and mind empowered to penetrate to the core of the cosmic arcanum, what is the prognosis?

While the old world perished in the overflow of water, by the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved unto fire against the day of judgment. With such words as these the New Testament writer known as Peter warns of the impending end, pointing the faithful to that holiness which alone can abide the conflagration. Again he speaks of a day of God, wherein the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements melt with fervent heat. There is no ambivalence about the biblical eschatology, dreadful and terrifying spectre as it presents, for the writer Jude adds this testimony, that – Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth as an example (as of the latter days), suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

It is in verses such as these that a cynical fundamentalism finds justification of its own tendencies, while investing in military might and the despoiling of the earth. Here congregate demoralised spirits, which perceive in divine justice the archetype of annihilation, which they are disposed to invoke as a self-fulfilling prophecy. *It's alright to burn all the trees because Jesus is coming right away.* This mindset is not rational. It is religious in the negative sense, and corresponds to the outer courts of the human temple, given over to the obscene sabbaths of satanic worship. Flung toward planetary and cosmic asymptote in transforming fire, it contemplates its own destruction.

But this is not the only way of reading the prophetic archetype.

While the outer courts of the reactive mind are surrendered to the blind forces of chaos, there is inner-plane engagement with elemental fire in more enlightened ways. Fire, the universal principle of combustion and one of the four archaic elements, is here regarded as conceptual seed – a basic idea in nature, having applications in spiritual realms as well as the physical. The qualitative vision of the ancients extended the analogy between sensible and subtle nature into realms of conceptual holism, where starfire and the fire of mind are linked in cosmic choreography. This is why they charted the heavens, tracking the 26,000 year cycle of precession, contemplating an inherent link between galactic cosmology and an evolutionary model of consciousness.

Although a range of catastrophes are cited in the archaic record – from inundations and fiery projectiles to titanic battles of gods and men – it is the galactic clock which is emerging as the prime apocalyptic indicator. So at least according to the predictive paradigm crystallising around recent research in fields such as Maya cosmology, the Pyramid Texts, the I Ching, shamanism, and the channelling / alien contact experience. Much publicity in this connection has been given to the Maya ‘end date’ 0.0.0.0.0 – 2012 AD in the Gregorian calendar – independently corroborated by Terence McKenna’s *Time Wave* novelty predictor model. Critical alignment with the galactic centre,

according to this model, is linked to a catastrophic or quantum leap in human consciousness. The inherent theme is that of (re)connecting with the cosmic centre, of penetrating to the core – to the fire of mind, the energy sealed in the enfolding of matter – the quantum potential of space.

Fire, as apocalyptic agent, is not confined to Sumerian and Semitic myths, or to equatorial climes generally, where the ravages of the sun are self-evident. World ages and cyclic renewal are cited universally, with fire prominent even in the prophetic lore of the arctic regions. Exemplary is the Ragnarok of Norse mythology – a projected period when the nine levels of the world tree Igdrasil will be a raging inferno. The gods as well as the mortals will be affected. Yet out of the conflagration a new order emerges. Fire is not only the end. It is also a new beginning.

Metaphysical fire – as of revelation or transformation – thus lies at the heart of the greater prophetic and mythological opus. In Judaeo-Christian lore it is the culmination and the essence. The angel of the wilderness journey – the Angel of the Covenant, which is Christ – appeared to Israel as a pillar of fire. Fire covered the Mountain of God of the Mosaic revelation, and the cherubim guarding the Ark and the Tree of Life are fire. *He maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire*, wrote the Psalmist, and St Paul thus tersely sums the matter: Our God is a consuming fire.

On a more abstract plane the theme is espoused by the Hermetic and Neo-Platonist philosophers, who saw in fire the archetypal transformative agent as well as the principle of creativity. This was expressed in the motto: *Ignis Natura Renovatur Integra* – *the whole of nature is renewed by fire* – based on the anagram INRI, which in Renaissance images heads the cross of the crucified Christ, and is more commonly interpreted as Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum – *Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews*. In alchemy, the practical side of the Hermetic science, subtle varieties of fire are acknowledged as instrumental in the refinement and transformation of the base matter into material or spiritual

gold. Fire, in this context, also denotes *spirit* – specifically the spirit of God or Christ – an example of gnostic conceptions, veiled in Christian iconography, while overall continuity of the symbolism is preserved. When he (Christ) appears, proclaims the prophetic voice; he shall be as a refining fire and – he shall baptise with the Holy Ghost and Fire.

Modern syncretism tends to interweave these traditions, drawing also on new insights in the natural sciences. For many the synthesis thus emerging promises to elucidate the ancient arcanum and to harness its mysteries in fulfilling humanity's cosmic aspirations, whether of transcendence or mastery of the forces of nature. In this climate of expectancy stunning revelations are becoming the norm, subject to an ever growing popularising genre in fields from revisionist history to conscious interaction with the quantum field. As an overarching symbol of the quickening we may cite the archaic *fifth* element – the akasha or ether – analogous to mind or consciousness, and involving a subtle transmutation of the other four, namely Fire, Water, Air, and Earth. As the circle of the ages is closing, a resurgent mysticism is combines with the physics of sentient teleological systems in what has been termed the unified field of gnosis.

Synchronicities on a cultural and historic scale appear in this context, as if deliberately injected by sentient providence from some point of convergence in the future or outside of time altogether. While this indeed is to be expected, if the whole of mind-space-time where to converge upon a common centre, the portents and signs nevertheless continue to startle the mindset for which the imminent and inevitable is – strangely and perversely – the utterly unbelievable.

An illustrative case in point concerns a breakthrough in translation of a mysterious document called the Voinich Manuscript. This little-known volume of some 200 pages, is inscribed in vellum, complete with diagrams hinting of alchemy, astronomy, and crypto-botany, dated to within the 13th to 16th century. It is written in an unknown alphabet and, to present surmise, also in

code. Throughout its cultural history it has resisted all translation attempts. Yet more recently a number of independent groups announced progress with claims that parts at least of the MS had been deciphered.

Said to inhabit the world of Egyptian mysteries in content and purport, specifically those surrounding the Eye of Horus, it expounds an eschatology centred on the aeonic pulse of the galactic centre. On one of its pages appears what can be taken as the image of a spiral galaxy, closely resembling our own. In the text the cyclic manifestation of the Eye of Horus is linked to a hypothetical event at the galactic centre, postulated to occur at 26,000 year intervals, whereby a vast explosion in that region of the sky produces the semblance of a huge glaring eye, with a size, as visible from the earth, of sixteen degrees or arc, or 32 solar diameters. If this frightful spectre has indeed been observed by a pre- or proto-human civilisation, the memory thereof is likely to have propagated through the myth-lore of the present cycle of civilisation.

Again we are confronted with a range of interpretations regarding an ancient symbol. The annihilation occasioned by the opening of the analogous Eye of Shiva of Vedic lore has been traditionally viewed as an event in consciousness, essentially the culmination of the yogic quest. In more apocalyptic language, at the opening of the Eye the universe dissolves. In a similar manner the function of the Eye of Horus has come to be understood. While a literal reading of Voinich suggests impending physical catastrophe, it is conceivable that, in keeping with cognate traditions, an astronomical event is interpreted from a metaphysical standpoint. Yet a warning is issued by the text in question, as in the wider eschatological and apocalyptic literature. A critical phase is reached in the evolution of consciousness when a sentient species is reaching out to touch the core of the cosmic arcanum. The theme has been echoed by the late Carl Sagan, who pointed that the conquest of knowledge and

technology entails of itself the inherent danger of self-destruction in a spiritually immature species.

Fire issues from the sanctuary; cherubim guard the Tree of Life. It is but the ancient tale of the promethean dare, of the genie in the bottle, of the burning bush and the Ark of God. As of old, and at certain intervals, the question is asked, can humanity handle fire?

Infinite Regress and the Postmodern Option

Reason, when allowed to run its course, ends in undermining itself. This is the paradoxical finding of the modern age, and an apparent correlate to the preceding prophetic synthesis. The ultimate cause for this perhaps unexpected result is that no first cause is to be found in the eye of reason. Causes and reasons may be posited ad infinitum, in the approach to what is essentially a trans-rational object. As the questions asked of the universe become more fundamental, the answers become more tentative, provisional and proscribed. The rational enterprise, far from approaching a point of closure, is actually in retreat. And this is the infinite regress, the abyss of the incommensurate, wherein reason, taken to its logical conclusion, dissolves in all-encompassing doubt. The rational mind devours itself, as symbolised by the gnostic serpent which swallows its tail.

Looking through that image of paradox, one beholds the shoreless ocean of the formless fire of mind – all consuming, all begetting, as its devotees exult. Modern philosophers since Emanuel Kant's *Critique Of Pure Reason* saw the conundrum, espousing either nihilism or some form of mysticism as the only viable alternative. For the pragmatic orthodoxy, however, this is not *quite* what was intended, and – as out of a hat – a creed is conjured for the masses. The spectre of fundamentalist and fetishistic fixation thus appears as the final stage of historical process in general, and of modern deconstructionism in particular.

This concludes the process of modernism, and marks the opening of the post-modern void. Something happened – and none can exactly say when – but it is evident that the world cannot possibly change its course. The essential questions cannot be engaged anymore, owing not so much to ideological constraints regarding the bounds of the possible, but, quite simply, to the abrogation of language. The pragmatic response, which we may style the Babel option, is the forcing of totalitarian closure upon an intrinsically open-ended process. Dialogue in this context is self-circular; choice is restricted to pre-packaged options, like buttons on a console. *You may take the red pill or you may take the blue pill.* The creative option is abrogate in that the essential questions have become meaningless; they lie outside the frame of reference which the orthodoxy defines as real. How can one characterise this condition? It is like a self-referential bubble, abstracted from the universe of verity.

For this reason also post-modern civilisation is reiterative, recycling its cultural inventory in ever tighter temporal loops, as it spirals towards the false singularity, which is the archetypal idol, the abomination of desolation. It is false as the apotheosis of a worldview contrived, the arbitrary concrescence of historical accident. With nothing to oppose it, the transcendent gateways being closed, it is raised to the power of the absolute, expanding in the unbounded void of deconstruction. Here, as previously determined, it faces annihilation, in that the closed mind is subject to entropy as surely as the scientific cosmos under the second law of thermodynamics. Deprived of the substance of meaning – the fuel which is burned on the altar of the soul – it implodes in the self-consuming gaze of the mind.

Eternity comes to an end. Infinite space becomes a prison. This is the madness of despots and tyrants as of the dark priesthood by which they are served. Who can confront this void? Who can wear the crown of the abyss without distraction and denial? This, verily, is the austere beatitude of the inner-veil pontificate on the dark side of initiation. *Who is he that cometh out of the*

eye of the storm to gather its grapes? Who dare claim the desolate throne? In its outer courts they throng, who aspire with feverish eye to the communion of darkest mystery, though that mystery, assuredly, is the mystery of *nothing* – of nihilism on the physical, moral, and spiritual planes. The wine of its sabbath is the catharsis of deconstruction, the energy unleashed in the wanton frenzy of holocaust, whether it be in the burning of books or the bombing of cities. Its fruit is the moral emancipation, the majestic and unassailable calm beyond all care and compassion. This is the worship of the destructive force of fire, and with the eventual erosion of the soil or substance of the soul, the shoreless conflagration of the lake of fire comes into view.

The dark arcanum thus has its attractions, few though there be who dare the ultimate sacrifice of the soul as per the classical Faustian bargain. Such complete lucidity of cynicism is as rare as sainthood, with which it shares comparative steps of initiation. This exemplifies our more general thesis, namely that the many paths and exegetical currents are but variants of a few universal themes or archetypes.

From Intellect to Intuition

What constitutes catastrophe for the priests of darkness, namely the self-immolation of the rational mind, is boon and blessing for the mystic or saint. Similarly the fiery judgement of divine wrath, as conceived in the outer courts, is but the refining fire of the soul, consuming the dross of idol-fixation and other self-limiting attachments. All prophecy, to reiterate a previous point, is thus capable of multiple interpretation – of unfolding on different planes of engagement.

In the evolutionary model espoused by Theosophy and allied disciplines the transition to more subtle modes of engagement is envisaged on this wise: There comes a time in the ascent of consciousness when intellect becomes

redundant – not because the analytical method has been fully exhausted, but because it leads to the infinite regress described. As there is no closure to analysis, there can be no ultimate synthesis in the rational sphere. The infinite depth of the object probed turns out to be the bottomless pit of reason itself – the capacity of mind to divide and analyse indefinitely. The analytical method, in this sense, is merely elaborating mental space, whereas progress toward cosmic maturity occurs in the realm of imagination.

Whether we live in the objective universe of black holes and quarks or the universe conceived as mental projection, there is a substance, as Lao Tse remarked, and that substance is quite genuine. It matters not whether this substance is ultimately regarded as spiritual or material. Significant is what our designation implies – what archetype or cognitive gestalt is projected into beholden nature. As the magi averred, this substance – this something, this universe – is the magical mirror of the soul, the means by which consciousness may know and actualise itself.

As the cultural history of at least one planet indicates, there are many avenues of actualisation. The universe accommodates, supports and confirms, numerous radically divergent constructions of what is the case. Culture may flourish under the most diverse of paradigms. It is equally clear, however, that nature is not infinitely tolerant in all directions. There is that which is abominable, and those cultures which transgress therein she cuts off. Nature – God, the Goddess – thus affirms a universal canon of meaning, and whereas *nothing* is the mystery of iniquity, this *something* is a holy mystery.

That mystery, as already remarked, has infinite depth. It cannot be exhausted by rational means. Any squaring of this infinite circle must always remain provisional, subject to a more accurate take. Does this mean that humanity must forever remain in the outer courts of approximations, engaged forever in the search for the final particle, the ultimate theory? According to this timeless doctrine – no. For history shows in any case that the process

eventually becomes redundant – mere meaningless iteration – perhaps to be engaged as art for art's sake, but not to be mistaken as the royal road of meaning or truth. Properly understood, reason is a tool for the criticising of ideas. In essence it is destructive – always and only.

But a higher faculty is dawning on humanity's spiritual horizon, which may be termed the enlightened intuition. Here it must be understood that intuition is more than the vague and marginal hunch, which it is unusually considered to be. It is the faculty which synthesises our myriad thoughts and impressions into a coherent worldview on a pre-conscious plane of cognition. It does so moment by moment, and were it to fail, the universe would at once disintegrate into a myriad of disconnected fragments. At the same time the intuition draws on the extended macrocosm of subliminal information, which ordinarily does not cross the threshold of conscious awareness. It is the means of engaging the integral whole. While it is widely imagined that the modern worldview is essentially rational, this is but a radical delusion. Reason is mere elaboration of the edge. The great image, the paradigm or cultural archetype, is a product of the imagination, the creative faculty with which humanity is endowed. Intuition, imagination – these are closely allied, indeed almost synonymous, when it is realised that the cognitive act is an act of creation. Order is imagined out of chaos by the magical or creative will that informs the individual soul.

It matters therefore how imagination is informed, and who or what – angel or devil – is the arbiter of the real. Intuition must be enlightened; the qualifier is necessary in that even the integral and inclusive mind is not infallible. In its pathological state, therefore, it manifests as superstition – a result of the abrogation of reason. The healthy intuition, by vital contrast, is predicated on the transcending of reason. As consciousness evolves toward individuation, responsibility concerning these question becomes personal, and to abrogate in this regard is to defer to the forces of chaos – demons of

dispersion which are only too eager to impose their arbitrary whims. It thus emerges that it is incumbent upon humanity to determine its story, to invest meaning on the grand or archetypal scale – not because the universe is intrinsically meaningless, but because humanity, as its conscious centre, is its meaning. Thus is the initiatory calling a calling to godhead, and the serpent of Eden in this respect merely pre-empted the Elohim project, subverting the same in accord with the Luciferian agenda.

The shift in mental polarity which is to occur – that from intellect to intuition – is esoterically referred to as the crossing of the Abyss, where the Abyss is the infinite sea of ideation and its crossing the intuitive synthesis. Essential, therefore, is that the resultant does no violence to any of its parts – that it is whole or holy. It cannot be forged on the rational or lower mental plane, as there is an incommensurate difference between any finite set of variables and the experiential plenum. To constrain the great image to the toy model is to breed monsters – idols which are the scourge of civilisation.

The synthesis or realisation must come therefore by an act of grace, which indeed is how inspiration or intuition appears to manifest. Individuals who engage at the cognitive edge are familiar with the phenomenon. When intellect is in abeyance, the problem at hand may suddenly resolve itself in a flash of inspiration out of seemingly nowhere. Significantly, moreover, the sudden insight traverses the abyss in a single leap, revealing fully formed the formerly elusive object. Initiation is but this process on a paradigm or archetypal scale. It involves the death of the cultural ego and the birth of a larger self in the image of the macrocosmic logos.

The Work of Redemption

Where this process is institutionalised, as in monastic orders, mystery schools and shamanic traditions, the crisis of death and rebirth may be the

subject of ritual or existential engagement with tutelary spirits on subtle planes of experience. In Tibetan bon-po, shamanic precursor of the later short-path syncretism, the candidate, while in a visionary state, is ritually murdered and devoured by demons – an ordeal intended to force a permanent shift of identification from the dream-body of fear and desire to the imperishable diamond body of original consciousness. Tribal shamans of Australia and Amazonia similarly speak of initiatory death and resurrection, often with the added detail, that the officiating deities disembowel or otherwise empty their prey, replacing the missing parts with the attributes of their own constitution. While the ritual theatre of these visionary flights is the astral or imaginal plane, a permanent cognitive shift is engendered, and the community henceforth acknowledges the recipient of this distinction as a shaman – a man or woman of insight and power.

While these conceptions may seem barbaric to an etiolated religionist, Christianity shares the essentials of these ingredients – at least on the symbolic plane. The worshipper is identified with Christ in his death, whereby the fallen nature of the Adamic legacy is replaced with the original immortal nature – the perishable with the imperishable, the seed of the serpent with the incorruptible seed. The spiritual seed, according to Pauline theology, though it is sown in a corruptible body, is raised in a body incorruptible. While a universal theme is here in evidence, there is this distinction to be made, that the Christian faith asserts its exclusive possession of the prototype. God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, the doctrine asserts, and the sole name in which this redemption is to be proclaimed is that of Jesus. We recall that Jesus, Yeheshua is the Hebrew tetragrammaton – YHVH or Yahweh – with the redemptive letter *shin* (symbolic of fire) in its midst, resulting in YHSVH. But the Hebrew *shin*, phonetically the letter *s*, is also the hiss of the serpent, as in Satan or Shaitan, signifying the incorporation and redemption of the fallen nature – or, as the gnostics aver, the identity of Christ with Serpent.

Symbolic parallels to the rites of archaic initiation extend to the violent death of the saviour and his subsequent descent into hell. A human god, accustomed to commanding the angelic host, relinquishes sovereignty, and submits to the malignant glee of devouring demons, allowing himself to be stripped, torn, mocked, and eventually crucified. Yet even this is not the end, for it is not the body that is of ultimate interest to the demon, but the soul. And here is the sublime and terrifying crisis – *my god. my god, why hast thou forsaken me?* – in that the soul at this moment is stripped of its angel, the comforting presence of interior certainty, to face a lost eternity. If there is a cosmic pivot, it is this – that the soul, bereft of its spiritual core, could both retain its integrity against the summed forces of dissolution, and rise again from the portals of chaos. What secret lies hidden in this mystery tale, but the mystery of the creation of God.

The passion of Chris thus has its analogies and echoes in the wider mythological opus. The tale of Orpheus and Euridice offers a case in point, in which, however, the redemptive process tragically fails. Orpheus indeed descends into the underworld, where his beloved is held captive. He obtains her release on condition that he look not back in his ascent for assurance that she is following after him. Weakness, however, constrains him to do just that, with the result that Euridice falls back into permanent bondage. Whatever subtle truism the Greek initiates meant to convey with this tale, it is exemplary of the manner in which notable saviour-gods of the greater pan-Babylonian tradition emulate or approximate the redemptive work of Christ. While outcomes in this wider tradition are often ambivalent, or the case left unresolved, as in the Osirian myth, the prophets of Jesus are unequivocal in proclaiming their triumph. By one sacrifice humanity is redeemed, the Great Work accomplished, the original condition in essence restored. Now only time stands before the final realisation, the redemption of the body.

Yet by what means this translates into salvation for the individual has been, throughout the course of Christendom, subject of fiercest debate. There is the monastic path, after St Anthony of Alexandria, which holds that one must recreate in oneself the essential sufferings of Christ, which view was to inform the Catholic tradition. This is opposed by the Protestant current, emphasising the vicarious nature of the atonement – the notion that Christ suffered death for and on behalf of Adam’s fallen race, and that implicit belief in the veracity of the claim – in and of itself – constitutes salvation.

But what does it mean to believe? What does it take? How can one believe something so strange, so far fetched, and on the whole discredited? Does the Christian God expect that one *wills* to believe? Is this actually possible? Conversely, how can one guard against a short circuit regarding the faith, a spiritual flash-in-the-pan, a nominal and perfunctory assent without existential confrontation of any kind? It was made clear that faith must be sincere, and that a mere adhering to the relevant traditions does not in itself constitute salvation. *It is not those who call me Lord*, Jesus is said to have uttered, *but those who do the will of my Father*. This will is spoken of as a mystery – [God] has made known to us the *mystery of his will* – and is thus properly the object of revelation.

Throughout two Christian millennia this mystery was effectively in eclipse. The church having departed from its experiential roots early in its history, whatever it meant to be a follower of Christ was henceforth subject to arbitrary convention and creed. While this may seem a minor point in view of the greater atrocities committed by professed Christians, it is fundamental in that the creed has not the life of the Seed – the revealed Word of God – wherefore it cannot produce Christ. It may have a form of godliness, but come the high water mark of spiritual saturation – *in the last days I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh* – it will be revealed as antichrist.

Tragic as this may seem, it accords with nature and what is prophesied concerning the Seed – it had fall into the ground and die before it would reproduce and be restored. A spiritual renaissance is thus indicated in the passage of ages, and it is here that the prophetic doctrine accords with the mystic call of initiation into a higher mode of consciousness. Indeed the Bible, with its stark images and primary colours, may conceal the pivotal archetypes of the relevant transformation. Historically the restoration of Christianity began with the reformers from around the sixteenth century; around the turn of the twentieth century it gathered immense momentum in the Pentecostal revival, wherein worshippers spoke in exotic tongues and it appeared as if the angelic presence known to the early church was again manifest. Yet the experience became similarly institutionalised and hedged with organisational walls – the sign of spiritual death, in that the quickening Spirit, like the wind, is said to move as it will.

It will then be asked in the closing of the age, where is this great event that is prophesied of old, whereof nature herself is groaning in travail? And the word returns, as in days of yore, *the kingdom of God is within you*. While the signs of spiritual ferment are today everywhere apparent, yet is the signal and overt mere distraction. Stunning phenomena riding the earth; stunning people, larger than life; visions of grandeur and horror compounded – all these are merely the noise of the outer courts. They are a sign, however, that *something* is transpiring in the secret sanctuary.

That sanctuary, of course, is the human temple, and that momentous something an event subtle and unlikely to draw attention to itself. It is the dawning of revelation, of spiritual discernment and prophetic vision – the culmination of the ages and the fulfilment of every prophecy. In the upshot it had to come to a prophetic showing, in that the humanist mindset of the reformers was insufficient in elucidating the mystery confounded through the aeons – the mystery of the appearing of Christ. That mystery is now to be

restored to the heart of the sanctuary, and, in the dispensation of the age, it is engaged individually – not by ecumenical coalitions. For the mystery, as we shall see, cannot be uttered in any language known to man.

How then could Solomon claim there is nothing new under the sun? Perhaps the wise old owl was aware that every seed reverts to type. When the cycle is complete, the original seed is again apparent and authentic types are revealed – *types which cannot be impersonated*. In the postmodern void, which is the dissolution of cultural context, the masks fall away, and faces are revealed.

The Inner Sanctum

In the Apocalypse of Saint John the unveiling is described as the opening of Seven Seals, where this opening or revelation comprises the inner-veil magistracy of a royal priesthood, variously called the mystical body or bride of Christ. It is the heart of the Revelation (of the book so named, as of biblical revelation in general), disclosing and resolving the hidden mysteries of the ages, lost in the grand apostasy.

The Apocalypse or Revelation, as the only prophetic book of the New Testament, is accordingly comprehensive in scope, with the further distinction of being the only book in the Bible directly dictated by the resurrected Jesus through visibly appearing to a scribe. Being also the last book of the scriptural canon, it comprises the final seal of the testator, who ends in saying, surely I come quickly – to make good the promise, as it were. Its context is woven of a series of visions, obtained over a two year period by the said disciple John, while in political exile on the isle of Patmos. In content it offers a panoramic preview of seven spiritual ages, extending from the first to the second coming of Christ – from blood atonement to final redemption. As such it is the inner story of Christendom, detailing in terse emblematic style the main spiritual

turning points – the historic snares and pitfalls and the angelic counsel countering the same. While its principal objective is the revelation of Christ, this is accomplished in large measure by the unmasking of a great deception – that of Lucifer / Satan in misappropriating the oracles of God.

The difficulty with the Revelation is that, while the literary form is of necessity linear, its content structure is circular and concentric, unfolding somewhat like the petals of a rose. Out of seven ages come seven seals; from the seals come seven thunders, and from the thunders, seven vials of the wrath of God – the whole being centred upon One which holds the Book. As, along with the seer, we are caught up in the vision, and especially from the moment that the One comes into view, our viewpoint changes from time to eternity, so that we see unfold in a single gesture what transpires in the course of ages. This is the essential key to the dense forest of symbolism that constitutes the Apocalypse. Yet, while the symbology of the seals – the four horsemen, the souls under the altar, the disruption of nature, and the silence in heaven – can now be explained, their interior world is not necessarily illuminated thereby. Revelation or spiritual experience must flesh out the bare bones of the letter.

Such revelation, as the body of scripture throughout makes clear, is the province of an inner circle – the said mystical body, also referred to as the Royal Seed of Abraham, after the special grace accorded this patriarch. A minority throughout the ages, it becomes the more exclusive as the revelation unfolds and the spiritual temple, symbolised as a pyramid, converges upon the lone and rarefied pinnacle, the capstone (Christ) descending from heaven. It is described as a mystical body in that its unity is of the inner planes, and not explicit in overt organisational structure. It's members are characterised by a single defining grace, namely the hearing of the spirit, the prophetic gift in at least the passive sense. They are able to discern the voice of the spiritual logos relative to the age in which they live. *He that hath an ear*, as the Apocalypse has it, *let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches*. A mystic reward is

further promised to those individuals which by this means overcome the deception of the age. Naturally, despite the gender-specific language in texts such as these, the promise is equally valid for women and girls:

He [him, to him] that overcomes – I will give of the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God – shall not be hurt of the second death – will I give of the hidden manna, and a white stone and in the stone a new name written – will I give power over the nations ... and I will give him the morning star – shall be clothed in white garments, and I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels – will I make a pillar in the temple of my God ... and I will write upon him my new name – will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

Thus the apocalyptic vision unfolds:

Being transported in a visionary state to the consummation of the ages. the prophet hears, as it were like the sound of a trumpet, a voice saying, I am the Alpha and Omega. Being turned, he sees, in the midst of seven golden candlesticks, *one like unto the son of man*, whose hair is white as snow, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, whose voice is as the sound of many waters, in whose right hand are seven stars, from whose mouth issues a sharp two-edged sword, and whose face is as the sun. Falling at his feet as dead, the seer then hears the words, *Fear not; I am the first and the last. I am he that lives, and was dead; and is alive for evermore, and who holds the keys of hell and death.* It is explained that the candlesticks signify seven churches, or seven spiritual ages about to unfold, and the stars seven angels – the prophetic voice respective to these ages. The command is then given to record what transpires, with a specific message to each of the seven angelic messengers.

Thus the seven churches are addressed in turn. In stages it is spoken of the deeds of the Nicolaitans – usurpers of the laity, the doctrine of Balaam – a teacher of idolatry, and of the arch-sorceress Jezebel – prophetess of spiritual fornication and spawn of Ninhursag, Astaroth, Isis, and Cybele – the generic

mythological dragon queen. Though the language is cryptic and replete with Old Testament allusion, one may discern among the symbols the unfolding of the grand apostasy and the spiritual conflict thus engendered. With spiritual eyes the ages are analysed, critiqued and appropriately counselled. Mentioned here are the rewards for those that overcome. And ever the colophon: He that has an ear, let him hear ...

Thereupon a door is opened in heaven and the summons heard: *come up higher* – three words which concentrate the entire concept of spiritual ascent as herein espoused.

Immediately the seer is ‘in the spirit’ – a throne appears in heaven and One which is seated thereon. His appearance is as the rainbow mandala of the activated Urim Thummim – Aaron’s breastplate of precious stones, and in his right hand is a book, sealed with seven seals. Understood as the Book of Redemption, it comprises the lost legacy of Adam and of primordial Eden. Verily it is the Book of Life and the title deed of eternal life. Consternation therefore arises when it appears that there is none to claim the Book. None could understand it or even look within, though it had been guessed at and variously interpreted for almost two thousand years. The seer wept, understanding that creation would be lost, were that Book to remain in the hands of the original holder – doomed perhaps to the entropic eternity of theoretical physics – an end without end. But immediately it is announced that the Lion of the tribe of Judah has prevailed to redeem the Book and loose its seven seals. And there appears a Lamb, which *takes* the Book from him that is seated on the throne and proceeds to open its seven seals. The seer writes as the vision unfolds, and with the opening of the seals the human story is made explicit.

Under the first four seals respectively ride the four apocalyptic horsemen, denoting the scourge and curse of the earth in three consecutive stages, the fourth being the culmination of the former three.

The first rides in white and carries a bow without arrows. He appears quite innocuous and merely signifies deceitful doctrine – notably the introduction of the concept of class or hierarchy, by which he destroys tribal unity. Solicitous and persuasive, he is like a Trojan horse or a serpent in paradise – the thin end of the wedge.

He is followed by one riding in red, to whom is given a sword and the power to take peace from the earth. Clearly he represents violence and the bloodshed attendant upon political activity.

The third rides in black and carries a pair of scales and balances. He represents the economic conspiracy – the false notion of scarcity and the fixing of prices upon commodities. But he is kept from ‘hurting’ the oil and wine, indicating that his jurisdiction does not extend over spiritual traffic. (Given the wizardry of the King James Bible, a more literal interpretation seems equally feasible.)

The fourth rides a pale horse, his name is death, and hell follows in his wake. There is no ambivalence here. He embodies the misery and destruction attendant upon the former three.

These inimical forces are countered by the four cherubic powers of God, symbolised as Lion, Bull, Man, and Eagle. They denote the spirit of Christ in four historic stages of manifestation – the incarnate Word, the spirit of martyrdom, the humanism of the reformers, and spiritual or prophetic vision. While covering the same essential ground as the angelic messages to the seven churches, the shift of perspective from the ages to the seals brings with it a distillation of symbols to utmost simplicity. The inner forces of history are revealed in stark and primary colour. Concurrently the focus broadens to a universal panorama, encompassing the age old Luciferian agenda, the serpent / Anunaki conspiracy to enslave humankind. Since the conspiracy has in recent years become the subject of a popular literary genre, a reverberation effect of the opening of the seals is apparent throughout the wider culture.

The three remaining seals concern respectively the redemption of Israel, the violent overthrow of nature, and the mystery of the coming of Christ.

Israel is significant in that, although originally the chosen of Yahweh, it failed as a people to recognise the atonement wrought in Christ, spiritually blinded by their very God, in order that he might take to himself a gentile or pagan bride. The type is foreshadowed in the Old Testament sojourn of Joseph – he of the many-coloured robe – in Egypt. Under the fifth seal, therefore, salvation is extended to those of the House of Israel who crucified their messiah, crying, *let his blood be on us and upon our children*. It moreover shows that the dead are alive, for it is spoken of souls under the altar of God, slain for their testimony – in other words, because they were Jews. They are *under* the altar, indicating they are not of the spiritual seed, yet white robes of righteousness are extended to them.

The sixth seal may be described as the judgement seal, under which the sun turns black as sackcloth, the moon turns to blood, the stars fall from the heaven, and heaven is rolled up like a scroll. This among earthquakes and general chaos – the collective outcome of human activity on the earth. And while judgement is ostensibly of God, the Seals constitute the Book of humanity, their opening the revealing of the hidden archetypes, the motive forces of destiny. As the sun denotes the spiritual logos, it is the light of the Word which has become darkness. The moon signifies woman – the church. Falling stars are fallen angels, demons that stalk the streets, and heaven is the door – the pathway to the beyond. Its departing signifies the closing of the door, the sealing of the entropic sphere, the prison of a spiritually cloistered earth.

Concurrently the sixth seal subsumes the power of saints to produce miracles, seemingly in arbitrary suspension of the laws of nature. It is of course this haphazard interventionism which is most offensive to the scientific mind that confronts the claims of religion. Far from abrogating the laws of nature, however, the miracles rather reveal a portion of the underlying and eternal

order, which is inviolate within the veil of the sanctuary. They redress in part the violence done to nature by man and constitute a foreshadowing of the powers of full redemption. Destructive miracles – hail, locusts, mysterious deaths – exemplified by the ten biblical plagues of Egypt, simply denote the prophetic power to focus the inherent tendencies of a given civilisation – to condense and materialise the object of its destiny.

The seventh seal is the most mysterious of all. Its opening ushers in a period of silence – silence in heaven – for a space symbolically described as half an hour. We shall have cause to return to this silence.

The Apocalyptic Beast

From the abyss arises a dragon. From the atavistic depth of the soul he stirs in the time of spiritual awakening. Yet his first appearing is in the heavens, his tail drawing one third of the stars and casting them upon the earth. He stands before a woman – she is clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and wearing a crown of twelve stars – waiting to devour the Christ child, to which she is in the process of giving birth. But the child escapes, and there is war in heaven, with the result that the dragon is cast out into the earth. There he continues to persecute the woman who brought forth the child.

In his first major showing he rises from the sea – a beast, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the names of blasphemy. He wages war upon the saints and attains to power over the nations. Though struck a deadly blow to one of his heads (as in the fall of imperial Rome), his wound is healed to the wonderment of the world. And the world worshipped the dragon which gave power to the beast.

In his second coming, as it were, he rises as a beast out the earth. The seer at this point is momentarily confused, for, owing to its two horns, symbolising civil and ecclesiastical power, that creature might have been a

Lamb. But after a while it spoke as a Dragon, exercising the powers of the former beast, and inducing the dwellers of the earth to worship that beast. He now does wonders, like causing fire to come down from heaven, and with his miracles he deceives the multitudes. In addition he enjoins that they should make an image to the beast, to which he imparts life, that it might speak and cause those to be killed which would not worship the image.

Here the prophet witnesses the ascent of the ancient Serpent in the world's ultimate superpower. He describes a draconian theocracy – the great pan-Babylonian alliance as it reaches its final apotheosis. Styled *Mystery Babylon* in the seventeenth chapter of the Revelation, it presents indeed an august and archaic mystery, for incarnate at its head is Lucifer / Satan.

The psychology is set forth in the Book of Daniel, a text thematically related, insofar as Daniel likewise saw his unholy coming: four kingdoms shall rise ... and in the latter time, when the transgressors are in full stride, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall arise. He shall not regard the desire of women, nor any god, for he shall exalt himself above all. He shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and prosper until the indignation be accomplished. In the utmost strongholds he shall commune with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory.

An ascetic, and understanding 'dark sentences', he is, in the ancient tradition, both hierophant and king, a sorcerer and prince among initiates, penetrating the utmost strongholds of the gnosis. With his enchantments, his eloquence and elan – not least with his signal humanity – he deceives the dwellers on the earth, persuading them to construct the said Image. It is he, furthermore, who causes all to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads, such that none could trade without that mark – or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here insight is wanted, as the Apocalypse states: Let him who understands count the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is six hundred threescore and six.

Numerous interpretations of this iconic number – the vexed 666 – have been entertained, often straining the limits of contrivance and disingenuity. A more illustrious solution was proposed by the prophet and evangelist William Branham, who read it as a gematria of the Latin motto VICARIVS FILII DEI (Vicar of the Son of God – a title assumed by the Roman pontiff), adding the Roman numerals contained in that phrase. This is elegant, as well as consistent with the essential thrust of prophetic lore in question. Insofar as Jesus told his disciples, I will be with you, even in you, until the end of the ages, any other assuming that place is necessarily an impostor. Somewhat remarkably, while apologising for the errors of the Church – the Inquisition, the crusades – Pope John Paul II acknowledged as much. What is exemplified by the increasingly subtle rhetoric of the spiritual plane is that the fine edge spiritual discernment has come to exceed the reach of language. Words, henceforth, are too blunt a tool, wherefore the theological war of words is essentially defunct.

As to the image to the Beast, long a mystery to theologians, this is simply the visible symbol wherewith the draconian empire conceals its intent. With consummate subtlety it succeeds in projecting an engaging image. Though savage and totalitarian, concealing the barbaric splendour ancient dynasties, it appears outwardly bland, secular and politically correct. The vaunted utopia, it is the antitype of Babel and the Tower of Babel, symbols of contrived unity, presented as the solution to the problem of politics. Yet, as the legend assures us, the scheme falters, for in the cauldron of homogeneity meaning is abrogate and language reduced to gibberish. For *one hour* – forty-two months, according to a certain reckoning – the global alliance is given power to rule with the Beast. At this time are loosed the plagues and calamities in which the Apocalypse abounds, and the Luciferian empire is overthrown. Earth reels into outer darkness, and in her distress she casts forth her afflicted child.

The Attraction on Mount Zion

Meanwhile in a parallel universe the royal or spiritual Bride is united with her redeemer and king. Now we see through a glass darkly, as the apostle put it, but then face to face. The term *rapture* has come into vogue concerning this, among evangelical circles, widely anticipated event, and somewhat bizarre is the popular mythology surrounding it. The notion is of a sizeable group of individuals suddenly dematerialising or vanishing into thin air, perhaps in plain view of astounded onlookers. Astonishing moreover is the gulf between the religious sensibility here expressed and fashionable worldly cynicism.

A full separation of timelines is in evidence, as these events unfold, between the messianic Bride and the nominal church – the cults and covens of the earth. He (God) has hewed them by the prophets, the scriptures state; the alchemical separation is complete, the cherubic sword has divided inner light from outer darkness. Separate realities converge around two attractors – the logoic angel and the false singularity of ideology and creed. Redemption is accomplished; the seed has come to maturity, so that consummation might be simultaneous on every plane, including rapture or translation into the glorified or ascension body.

In mystic terms this is the nirvikalpa samadhi of the inner circles of Mount Meru, the consciousness beyond space and time, suffusing every sensible sphere. There is also accord regarding the characteristics traditionally attributed to the ascension body. It is a body of bliss, ageless and free from accident and affliction; it travels as a thought, freely to roam the ten thousand worlds; its discernment pierces the realms of gods and men. Above all, the Master, in *his* glorified body, is beholden face to face, as is the entire lineage of saints which have attained to this grace. One of the purported signs, therefore, that rapture is upon the earth, is the mystic lifting of the veil – the physical appearing of cherished companions of the inner planes, that are visible to the eye of the elect. The fact that denizens of outer darkness in ‘alien’ guise are

already breaking through the veil en masse, is a portent in kind. Yet it is not primarily the recognition of another, but of the self which is the central beatitude – the recognition of self as one with the angelic logos. Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, according to the evangelist, nor can the glory be imagined, that is to be revealed.

Similarly is the revealing itself something of a mystery that cannot be disclosed in words, as the silence of the seventh seal suggests. The secret is accordingly one which, unlike all other spiritual manifestations, cannot be impersonated. This is significant, as it has ever been a feigned Christianity which occulted the authentic Christ. The silence is what remains when the noise of the deception – the distraction, the accretion – is removed, and the undiluted signal of divine intent received with clarity. It is authentic nature.

In the tenth chapter the revealing angel – Christ – appears, in his hand *a little book open* (the book here under consideration), and he cries with a loud voice as when a lion roars, whereupon seven thunders uttered their voices. These thunders are the voice of God – of revelation. Yet as John was set to write, he heard a voice saying, seal those things which the thunders declared – do not write them. Instead the angel lifted his hands and vowed that there should be time no longer, but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel the mystery of God should be accomplished.

This echoes the seventh day of creation, the day originally intended for the consummation of the bridal. The seventh seal is spoken of, in this sense, throughout the scriptures; it is the sabbath or spiritual rest – the beatitude of grace, with nothing to prove and nothing to accomplish. Only here does the real ceremony begin – the consummation in eternity of the mystery of Creator and creation as one.

Yet the seventh day, as we are told, was interrupted, and a further six days interposed – six thousand years of fall and redemption – culminating in another seventh day.

The Prophetic Millennium

Significant firstly concerning the millennium is that it is *not* the prophesied new heaven and earth – these are yet further in the future. Rather it is the fulfilment of the seventh day of Eden, as will now be apparent. It is the original creation redeemed – a day without disturbance, in which the creation ‘goes aright’. The shortfalls of a tragic world, the horrors of a truth subverted, are here straightened, revealing the perfection of divine intent. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, as Isaiah wrote; the lion shall lie down with the lamb; each also has his ‘twin’ – not one is unpaired with another. These, as numerous other descriptive passages, indicate that the millennium of prophecy is not the post-modern globalist contrivance, but a state of being attainable only by grace. Satan, the adversary and tempter is now confined to the hells of his victory, and his subjects are with him. The sanctified Bride is walking the pristine earth of a restored Eden, before her a thousand years of peace and prosperity, wherein the nuptial rite is celebrated according to the custom of both nature and culture.

Yet at the end of the day a new condition dawns, showing that the seventh day is merely a step – a seed – of a higher reality set to unfold. In its approach, Satan is again released from his prison and he gathers at once his armies from the four quarters of the earth against the camp of the saints. This scenario essentially restores the situation of primeval Eden, where the Serpent gained ingress through seduction. But the defences now hold; fire rains from heaven to destroy the aggressor. The devil is cast into a lake of fire, as are death and hell. This is called the second death.

Pursuant to this mystery, a great white throne appears, and One thereon from before whose face the earth and heavens disperse. A resurrection now follows of the remaining dead – of multitudes which failed to recognise the

atonement in their days of its showing. The books are opened, as *also* is the Book of Life – the two kinds of books again indicating two separate covenants. The dead are judged according to their works, and those found worthy on this basis receive eternal life. The text thus emphatically contradicts the erroneous doctrine that the gift is solely to the twice-born beneficiaries of the messianic blood covenant. As to those in neither class, *he shall leave them neither root nor branch*, as the prophet Malachi has it, thereby disposing of another false doctrine – that of an eternal hell.

As to the blood-born Royal Seed, these do not *win* eternal life – they possessed it always, being after the order of the elohim, attributes of God conceived in Christ before the foundation of the world – slain and raised with him – to recognise their identity in their appointed historic season. What was written by the psalmist concerning Christ – *Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek* – is also true of them. They embody a royal priesthood after the similitude of that mysterious immortal, encountered by the patriarch Abraham on his pilgrimage in Shinar – not by worldly investiture, but by the power of an endless life.

A New Creation – also a Leafy Tree and an Appraisal

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth. With these words the seer launches his final paean of visionary rapture. He describes the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. The angelic commentary is heard, saying, *look, the dwelling of God is with humankind*. Eternity, not in heaven but on earth – such appears to be the prophetic purport, and ... God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor any more pain: for the former things have passed away. It is done, says the King. I am Alpha and Omega, the

beginning and the end. I will give to him that is thirsting of the fountain of the water of life freely.

John is now shown a pure river of the water of life, and on either side of the river the Tree of Life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit in their season, the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations. The kings thereof – not the Melchizedek priesthood, but kings of the earth – bring gifts into the City, whose gates are never closed, and in which there is no temple, for God and his Christ are its temple.

Rastafarians (whose sacrament is marihuana) of course have their own idea about this healing tree. Right or wrong, the cringe of the orthodox theologian at this point reveals more about his uncertainty than the verity of conventional doctrine. Apparent rather is that the terror and sublimity of the book described place it entirely beyond the bounds of humane and rational discourse. To touch it with the tools of moral and humanist theology is to profane it. This may be said of the Christian Bible as a whole, and its God remains, in his way, the most inscrutable of gods. Efforts to find rational or humanist accommodations with his ways must fail. Two options remain concerning that Book – it is a divinely inspired text or it is among the great deceptions. No middle ground seems possible.

If one sought in the whole a moral, some essential meaning on the rational plane, it might be found in the notion that even in defeat – as of Christ in his death – the elohim proposition is yet victorious, whereas the triumph of evil engenders its own demise. Implicit therein is a statement of universal essence – that verity is intrinsically unassailable. In a fallen world omnipotence is expressed as one crucified, yet gentleness triumphs over force. The mystery of the Book is that the fierce warrior lord – Yahweh of the Old Testament – *is* the gentle Jesus of the New. Lao Tse, in his formulation of the Tao, announced a similar philosophy. The Way cannot be contended with; the yielding rides roughshod over the hard.

On the Eighth Day

Does the Apocalypse relate of true eternity, or does it, like other mythologies, contend itself with indicating a stage of evolution? A key is found in the Book of Leviticus, which describes the sacred calendar of the Hebrews. Seven sabbaths are determined from the feast of the Sheaf Offering to the feast of Pentecost – seven weeks, symbolising the as yet future seven messianic ages. Concerning the last week Leviticus states: *Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord; on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you.* There is the embedding of seven within sevens – the notion of a kind of fractal nesting of temporal cycles of different scales. More significantly, *seven* fulfils the measures of time; *eight* denotes eternity – abiding presence beyond times and cycles and seasons.

This brings us before a stupendous mystery, which may be called the mystery of the One. For it would appear that the creative / redemptive opus – the elohim agenda, to coin a phrase – is a one-off event in cosmic history. In contradistinction to other, cyclic, mythologies it takes place *once* in the aeonic immensities of time. That this *once* happens to be now is perhaps remarkable in itself. It is the anomaly par excellence, unacceptable to the scientific mind, in that, for scientists to take notice of an event – indeed, for a phenomenon to be real – it must be repeatable.

But it is possible that the difficulty lies entirely in the accustomed temporal perspective, which of course is that of science. Maybe the elohim project does not originate in time; as also the relevant traditions assert – it intersects the temporal sphere, informing the same at every point, so that, instead of a discreet phase in a serial universe, it would constitute the precondition of being – in any time, in any world. Not only mystics, but also

artists might concur – aware that to create is to be crucified. The mystery of the Cross would thus be true for any self-aware creation.

What, furthermore, could be meant by the *second death*, which includes the end of death and hell, if not the end of the temporal universe? Though the soul, magically fortified, might persist over aeons, it must presumably cease when the substance that sustains it – the prakriti of the Hindus, the waters of life of Genesis, the quantum foam of modern science – is withdrawn. In that the standard model describes a universe with at least one temporal boundary – at the beginning – symmetry demands another at the end. Yet it is spoken of such as ‘shall not be hurt of the second death’.

Eternal life in an entropic or dying universe? – this presents another question lately addressed in the context of science. A solution is offered by Frank Tipler in his *The Physics Of Immortality*, and another by Freeman Dyson, both physicist with a spiritual investment in the Judaeo-Christian tradition. While the details need not here concern us, it may be noted that their models concern the temporal universe of rational surmise, wherein eternity is simply a quantifier of time. According to mystic intuition and tradition, however, the consciousness of eternity differs from that of time in *quality*. Hindu and Buddhist texts exhaustively describe the relevant states – states beyond the subject / object dichotomy, beyond identification with the temporal, the partial, the conditioned. In this state of transcendent wholeness there is moreover no *God* as external object of worship, and similarly no *materia* to meddle with. There is hence no impulse of the religious or gnostic imperative, nothing to kick-start or sustain the historical process. The interventionist God is in any case an absurdity, and the universe, so Lao Tse, a sacred vessel which should not be meddled with.

In this the enunciator of the Tao, alongside the guardians of dreamtime shamanism, is among the messengers of the infinite. Shamanism and the subtle flower of mysticism are springs of the eternal in the cultural landscape of the

world – the latter in that mysticism constitutes the high point in the evolution of mind, the former in that shamanism is the primordial state, not far removed from the consciousness of Eden. Throughout the greater mystic tradition, insofar as the universe is summed in the microcosm and human mind is universal mind, in man all nature is redeemed. In a word, the conscious universe is not entropic.

Time and the consciousness thereof, it would seem, are aspects rather of distraction – a luring away from the conscious centre to preoccupation with the minutiae of passing phenomena in the outer courts of analysis and reason. That centre, as its cosmological correlate, the black-hole singularity, is gateway and vortex of higher dimensional space. For this very reason the space-time boundaries of our finite sphere – the temporal dodecahedral solid of contemporary theory – cannot be reached, as it were, from within. Our rational concepts preclude of themselves the transcendent notion. As one cannot step of the edge of a spherical earth, and as black-hole gravitational collapse denotes free-fall inward forever, so the conditioned mindset cannot accede of itself to the consciousness of eternity. Mystic and religious traditions rather describe this redemptive feat as a step of grace – the lower being incorporated within the higher, the focus of identification shifting from the rim of the cosmic wheel, to use a crude but sufficient analogy, to the hub.

Instances have been presented wherein the initiatic / redemptive task subsumes this basic image in its various forms – the world ash, the axis mundi, the ark within the temple veil. Along the way we have sampled the exotic delicacies of many worlds – local universes or paradigms – yet finding all supported and validated by the same invariant and underlying nature. Certain generic types – root concepts, archetypes – have been found in common throughout these worlds, even as nature is self-similar across scales and levels of organisation. It is proposed that these symbolic types ultimately derive from the mystic intuition, a faculty of direct apprehension apropos a universal canon

of meaning. Informing every kind of discourse, from theology to mathematics, they comprise the essential, indeed the only, conceptual tools wherewith humanity might engage the *question* of meaning. As such, their validity betokens the phenomenal truth that humanity is in principle admitted to the spiritual adytum – to the Holy Mystery and the concourse of the gods – having been made partakers by universal intelligence of the creative Word.

Through cultural permutations of the Word nature turns a different face – or interface – any of which might be a convenient starting point to engage her mystery.

Yes – nature appears rational when approached on the rational plane, yielding and responding to analysis – in principle, very likely, without end or point of closure.

Yet nature is also magical – a reflection of mind at the archetypal or paradigm level.

Nature is aware, furthermore, and open to engagement on the semantic plane as indicated in the visionary states of the shamanic dreamtime.

Nature, lastly, is mystical – the essence of pure mind.

If a prescription for her welfare is expected from a book such as this, I venture that the case has been made for a hierarchy of values based on paradigm inclusiveness. When the full range of epistemological tools is brought to bear on the essential questions – when, in the words of Terence McKenna, we are able to play with a full deck – then humanity might engage the ultimate question regarding meaning and purpose.

Is a teleological imperative encoded in nature? Is there an intrinsic canon of value and meaning? And, does humanity play a creative role in this?

Provided we do not arbitrarily limit our gaze, the answer may be self-evident.

Moreover a few friendly explanations, as stated at the outset, should suffice to solve humanity's practical problems. That this hasn't been, nor will

be, the case, indicates that an inimical force is at work. Designated the grand conspiracy, the Satanic insurrection, the yoke of the Illuminati, and whatever more, its essence is ideology, and its purpose to force false closure upon the evolutionary process. Its principle means is that of deception. Claiming the high moral and spiritual ground, it assumes the guise of what it seeks to depose. To this end it has led humanity blindly into the abyss, wherein reflection and deliberation are in nowise possible, and the resultant of inherent tendencies a foregone conclusion. In the upshot, on a bleak dismal day, the unveiling takes place: Humanity – behold your saviours, your gods

But the universe cannot be subverted in its spiritual intent. For by the same quickening the light blazes from the sanctuary, the great eye opens, the veils dissolve, and the centre, the authentic mystery, comes into view. As a searching eye and a fiery sword it consumes all that is not of verity, while vindicating the intrinsic canon, the teleological imperative – the Way. This is the fire, described by alchemists, by which nature is purified and renewed, to rejoice in the greening of her nuptial dress. Henceforth none dare dilute or blight her austere and tender rites, and those who persist in this folly she casts off as a withered branch. This, in a nutshell, is the law, enunciated by every spiritual tradition.

Coda

It has been our premise throughout that a new prophetic era has dawned, whereby the cosmic arcanum is again intrinsic to the zeitgeist of the age. The secret of the universe is effectively disclosed, the mystery unveiled on the archetypal planes of intuitive understanding. Seeded from these subtle and subliminal planes, a new spiritual and scientific paradigm has emerged, to provide context for the eventual crystallising of insight. It is deemed that full

realisation – actualisation and authentication – of the human project is implicit in the universal unfolding. That project is the mind game of higher intelligence.

The human story is the story of engagement with higher intelligence in whatever manner the same is conceived. Its greater context is the polarity of contending archetypes, necessitating moral and aesthetic choices. Here the essentially godlike or creative faculty is affirmed, as is the intentionality of consciousness, whereby destiny – personal and universal – is made explicit.

Language, as symbolic currency of this process, poses a greater problem than might be imagined, the history of ideas bearing record that an original thesis is quickly transformed through successive readings. In the religious sphere this situation is compounded, in that the prophetic language is, by definition, a higher level language, the nearest thing to a universal or primal language. Existential engagement is required if intuitive understanding is to flower. It is further the curious and remarkable property of profound spiritual texts that the reader invariably sees in them his or her projected self. These texts thus have a way of evolving, as, over time and the through the forge of initiation, the projected persona merges with the spiritual soul.

To an extent, this holds true for the body of secondary and interpretive literature, as indeed it does for the Book of Life. As a specific disclaimer, therefore, the scribe confesses that he has written nothing but what he himself has read in the akasha, and that it is the reader of these lines in turn, who must take full responsibility for all that the eye beholds and conceives.

GUIDE TO SOURCES

Instead of a formal bibliography, it was thought that this annotated guide might be alike more interesting and illuminating as to the relative influence of various works.

Books float in literary streams; they define themselves within a universe of discourse, their meaning determined by that context, to which they contribute in turn. It is however not merely the printed texts, but their numinous ghosts, which comprise the tradition or genre. Beside the overt reference, there is the indirect intuitive or inspirational element, which becomes viable once a certain vantage point has opened up in any given field.

Concerning the worldview of the ancients, standing silently in the background, but profound in their indirect contribution, are the *History* of Herodotus, and the *Antiquities of the Jews* of Flavius Josephus, the latter being among the few historians attesting the historicity of Jesus the Christ. On the subject of *myth* and the imaginal interface of human experience the magistry of Karl Gustav Jung should be acknowledged, and, where subtlety of point-of-view is in evidence, more often than not, the ghost of Lao Tse.

Quoted biblical passages are exclusively taken, with occasional modern paraphrase, from the King James translation of 1611 (Revised 1976). Beloved for its poetry, this translation from the Greek and Hebrew originals has the added unusual distinction of being held in regard by esotericists as well as orthodox Christians. While it is claimed somewhat controversially that Francis Bacon had editorial oversight of the work, cognoscenti aver that it was this ingenious polymath, by whose slight of hand the messianic prophecies of the Hebrews were interpreted in the context of the greater mystery traditions.

Concerning that universal legacy, specifically the initiated view of the Western or Hermetic tradition, I acknowledge the pivotal contribution of the

esotericist, titan, and reputed *wickedest man in the world* Aleister Crowley. It was Crowley's grand opus *Magick in Theory and Practice*, and the monumental and encyclopaedic *Equinox*, which brought the supposedly discredited mystery traditions into the modern era, by approaching the subject from the standpoint of scientific scepticism. Additional context or background derives from the Theosophical writers, notably Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and Alice A. Bailey.

In the realm of biblical mysteries I wish to acknowledge the twentieth century prophet and evangelist William Marrion Branham, and the exegetic legacy associated with his name. His teachings are seminal, directly and indirectly, to my personal take of these matters, and I regard it as further significant (in confirming the type) that the man and his ministry has been rejected and disowned by the religious orthodoxy.

Concerning the Egyptian mysteries, the chief source is E. A. Wallace Budge, and his translation of the Egyptian Book Of The Dead. For added insight I am also indebted to the linguistic research of C. H. Harvey, published at www.pyramidtexts.com.

Passages from the Tibetan Book Of The Dead are the author's paraphrase, based on the translations of Francesca Fremantle and Chögzam, published by Shambhala, and that of John WorldPeace, found at reluctant-messenger.com/Tibetan-Book-Dead_Houston1.htm.

For the background to the 'new' archaeology, and the avowed secrets of the ancients, the reader is directed to the popular genre, associated with the names of Graham Hancock, Robert Bauval, Ian Lawton, John Anthony West, and Robert Temple. In the field of archaeo-astronomy of special note is the classic *Hamlets Mill* by Giorgio De Santillana and Hertha von Dechend, and the more recent, and very beautiful *Maya Cosmogenesis 2012* by John Major Jenkins. For emphasis concerning the Nephilim or Anunaki – the legacy of fallen angels or extraterrestrials, depending on point of view – the reader may

consult the work of Andrew Collins, Laurence Gardner, and the much disputed writings of Zecharia Sitchin.

In the vexed domain of aliens and UFOs a fairly clear demarcation of genre is in evidence. Excellent coverage of the ‘nuts and bolts’ history of the phenomenon is provided by *Beyond Top Secret* by Timothy Good and *UFOs and the National Security State* by Richard Dolan. For the human side of paranormal encounter it is the writings of Budd Hopkins, Whitley Strieber, David Jacobs and John Mack, which fairly set the tone of the debate.

In the realm of psychedelia and the allied fields of shamanism and ethno-botany, it is the late Terence McKenna, who stands distinguished as poet, explorer, scientist and philosopher. Special mention also should go to the now classic *The Psychedelic Experience* by Timothy Leary et al, which interprets the subject in the visionary context of the Tibetan Book Of The Dead. On the relevance of the said experience to the worldview of science I commend *The Cosmic Serpent: DNA And The origins Of Knowledge* by Jeremy Narby, and *DMT – The Spirit Molecule* by Rick Strassman.

In the field of cosmology and higher-dimensional physics I wish to cite *The Elegant Universe* by Brian Greene and the engaging *Hyperspace* by Michio Kaku. Concerning the new physics and the emergent paradigm in general, a by now classic genre is associated with such writers as Jack Sarfatti, Fred Alan Wolf, Nick Herbert and Rupert Sheldrake – specialists in their various fields who address humane as well as scientific issues in holistic symbiosis.