

THE DEEP DWELLERS

Subsurface Inhabitants in Folklore, Myth, and Literature

By Wm. Michael Mott

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PREFACE

The legends, myths, and literature of mankind have always been filled with fanciful or terrifying accounts of underground lands and races, hidden from surface sight. Rumors of a largely-unseen reality, of cavern-worlds, hidden tunnel systems which criss-cross the globe, and the occasional accidental discovery of a larger, geode-structure within the Earth have migrated from the realms of folklore and early scientific speculation, and into literature--and perhaps back into folklore again.

When reading and studying the available fiction which touches upon the topic of a subterranean world, many similarities come to light, which is interesting insofar as the various writers were not necessarily familiar with one another's works. It is obvious that many of them drew upon folktales and mythology, as well as the latest scientific findings and theories of the day, drawing indeed upon a huge matrix of archetypes and forms with which to work. Religious traditions have also been a major influence on the development of fiction about subterranean worlds and inhabitants, and some brave souls have shared accounts of what they have believed to be their own encounters with the denizens that dwell within the Earth's crust. In this work all of these aspects of underworld studies, and more, will come under careful examination, but this is not so much an examination of the underworlds as it is of their inhabitants.

SECTION 1: MYTHICAL (ANCIENT RELIGIOUS) ACCOUNTS



A reptilian humanoid in the underworld.

1. The East

One of the earliest examples of subterranean stories is to be found in the Gilgamesh cycle of stories, which some would say is not so much fictitious as it is a distorted account of actual ancient events. Gilgamesh was an actual king who ruled Uruk (also called Unug) about 2600 B.C., and he was supposedly of half-divine origin. Like other heroes of ancient mythic cycles who were demigods, or semi-divine, Gilgamesh longed for an immortality which he saw as his birthright, much the same as Heracles of the Greeks. In one tale from his cycle, he befriends a physically powerful, hairy, subhuman character named Enkidu, and teaches him the customs of humanity. In a later tale, on behalf of his friend and king, Enkidu agrees to venture into the underworld of ancient Mesopotamia, to search for someone who has the secret of immortality. Other Sumerian accounts leave little doubt that the KUR, or KI-GAL (the "Great Below") was a place of immense size and great terror. This realm was ruled by the goddess Ereshkigal and her consort Nergal, a warlike god who had entered her queendom with plans of conquest, only to be seduced by the enemy, who became his wife. The KI-GAL was said to be filled with a wide range of beings, including the spirits and undead, reanimated bodies of human beings, and also savage guardians called "scorpion men." Other residents were described as sexless and robotic "artificial" beings called GALATUR or Gala, who were used by the rulers of the underworld for missions of kidnapping human beings from the surface world, or for other errands. Also present in the underworld were the UTUKKU, "eagle-headed" reptilian humanoids, which are probably the original djinn and ifrits of the ancient middle east. The latter beings are usually depicted with wings, representing their ability to fly when dispatched on the errands of the rulers of the underworld. Another strange race is the PAZUZU, a canine-faced, humanoid monstrosity with reptilian scales and tail. All of these are motifs which are found to permeate nearly every ancient underworld tradition, in one form or another, and have also found their way into folklore and literature.



**A hero fighting a scaled,
humanoid creature, similar
to a Greek Gorgon.**

Note the "third eye" of the creature.

Asia, particularly the Indian subcontinent, Tibet, Nepal, China, and Japan, have very similar traditions about subterranean inhabitants. In India there is a strong belief in the reality of the Nagas, a race of serpent-people or lizard-men who make their homes in two major underground cities (or civilizations), Patala and Bhogavati. The latter is said to be under the Himalayas, and from there the Nagas wage war on other, human, subterraneans, from the subsurface kingdoms of Agharta and Shambala. To this day, Patala is believed by millions of Hindus to have an entrance in the Well of Sheshna, in Benares. According to herpetologist and author Sherman A. Minton, as stated in his book "Venomous Reptiles," this entrance is very real, with forty steps which descend into a circular depression, to terminate at a closed stone door which is covered in bas-relief cobras. In Tibet, there is a major mystical shrine also called "Patala," which is said by the people there to sit atop an ancient cavern and tunnel system, which reaches throughout the Asian continent and possibly beyond. The Nagas also have an affinity with water, and the entrances to their underground palaces are often said to be hidden at the bottom of wells, deep lakes, and rivers.



**Two examples of UTUKKU (djinn or genii),
dispatched from the KI-GAL to the surface world.**

The Nagas are described as a very advanced race or species, with a highly-developed technology. They also harbor a disdain for human beings, whom they are said to abduct, torture, interbreed with, and even to eat. The interbreeding has supposedly led to a wide variety of forms, ranging from completely reptilian to nearly-human in appearance. Among their many devices are "death rays" and "vimana," or flying, disk-shaped aerial craft. These craft are described at length in many ancient Vedic texts, including the Bhagivad-gita and the Ramayana. The Naga race is related to another underworld race, the Hindu demons, or Rakshasas. They also possess, as individuals, "magical stones," or a "third eye" in the middle of their brows, known to many students of eastern mysticism today as a focal point for one of the higher chakras, or energy channel-points, of the human(oid) nervous system--the chakra associated with "inner visions," intuition, and other esoteric concepts.

In China, the Lung Wang (Dragon Kings) closely resemble the Nagas in many respects. The Lung are said to dwell either in the "celestial realm," that is, the stars and planets, or beneath the surface of the Earth. . They, too, possess a "magical pearl" in their foreheads, a "mystical" or divine eye or source of power. Like the Nagas, some of the entrances to their palaces or kingdoms could be found beneath lakes and rivers, or behind waterfalls. Almost always, such entrances are well-hidden from the intrusive eyes--or feet--of mortal men and women.

One such entrance to the Chinese underworld was said to be in the "Eastern Mountain" of Taishan, near Qufu province. This entrance to the Chinese Hell was guarded by savage demons called Men Shen, often depicted as warriors wearing fierce, animalistic masks or faces.

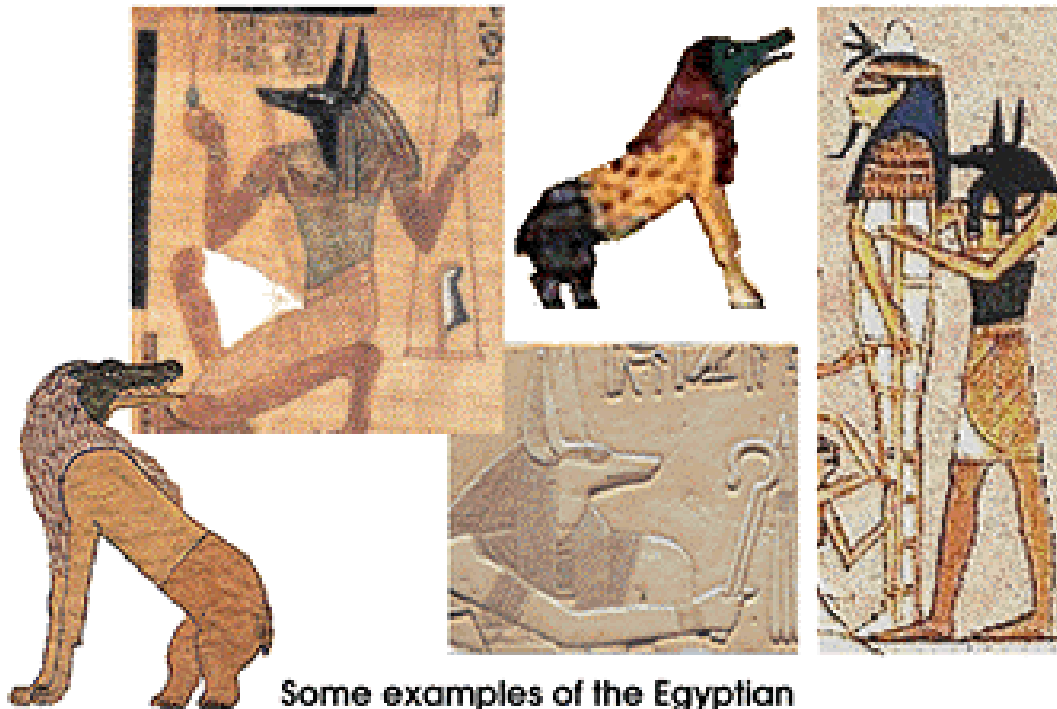
There was also interaction between the Lords of Hell, as they were known, and the Dragon Kings. The four Hell-Kings, called Yan Luo or Yen Wang (possibly derived from the Hindu death-god, Yama), rule over a vast region which consists of eighteen levels or locales. In one tale, a Dragon King is robbed by an extremely clever and human-like "monkey," who is similar in many respects to the Hindu Hanuman (who in turn came into conflict with the Rakshasas of the underworld, in the Ramayana). Enkidu also comes to mind in this tale. The Dragon King calls on the help of the Yan Luo, who are in turn bested by "Monkey" as well.

The eighteen regions of the Chinese netherworld are bureaucratic, tedious systems or civilizations, an apparent mixture of Taoist and Buddhist ideas, with a strong influence from the latter.



Tengu, Japanese bird-headed (reptilian) humanoids.

Japanese hell is even more of an amalgam of different traditions, as it incorporates Chinese and Hindu Buddhist characteristics into an older, animistic Shinto system. Emma-Hoo (perhaps from Yama-Raja) is the king of Jigoku, an eight-leveled region of fire and ice. Jigoku is filled with "Oni," or demons, which have the heads of oxen or horses, but humanoid bodies. Japan also has other cavern-dwellers who come out upon occasion, such as the bird-headed, reptilian goblins called Tengu, who dwell in mountainous regions, mostly come out by night, and are experts in the use of the weapons which are in modern times associated with ninjitsu. According to legend, the tengu trained Minamoto Yoshitsune, a famed samurai swordsman of the late 12th century, when he was an exiled boy on the run from his enemies. The Tengu are almost identical in description to the Utukku of Sumerian myth. Other beings are the kappa, a semi-aquatic and totally reptilian-looking humanoid dwarf, the "ugly girls of hell," and sundry other shape-shifting entities which dwell underground, or under houses. The Fox People are among the latter, often taking human form, and delighting in abduction and seduction of mortals.



Some examples of the Egyptian underworld deities, Anubis and Ammut.

Transitioning back to the west of Sumer, the underworld of Ancient Egypt had many things in common with its Mesopotamian counterpart. Called the Tuat or Duat, it was ruled by the God of the Dead, Osiris, the counterpart of Sumer's Nergal. It is the servants of Osiris, however, that are of concern here. One was the jackal-headed god Khentimentiu, and also Anubis, both gods of arcane knowledge, embalming, and other sciences. The god of knowledge, Thoth, was also a regular in the Tuat, and he had a humanoid form but the head of a baboon (which is in many respects very canine in appearance). All three of these deities bear a strong resemblance to the Sumerian Pazuzu. Another parallel exists in the Ushabtiu, originally conceived as artificial, animated and robotic servants which were very similar to the Gala, or GALATUR, of the Sumerian underworld. Like the Gala, the Ushabtiu could be dispatched to punish or abduct an ordinary mortal, or even the Pharaoh himself. These beings were represented in burials by the Egyptians, with small statues of the same name, mimicking the supernatural servants of Osiris and hopefully providing a retinue of retainers and slaves for the deceased. Another being with familiar characteristics was the Ammut, a blend of crocodile, lion, and dog; but the most-feared being to haunt the underworld was possibly the god of chaos and strife, Set or Seth, who attempted to mount a coup d'état against his brother Osiris. Set is often considered to be the Egyptian counterpart to the Judeo-Christian personality known as Satan, his appearance both canine and reptilian, with a human form but animalistic head, long-snouted or muzzled. The hugest dragon of the Tuat, however, was the gigantic serpent Apophis, very similar to Nidhoggr or Jormungand from the Norse underworlds, a monstrous serpent which brought fear even to the Gods.

2. The West

Moving into Europe, the mythical subterraneans became less distant and more immediate, interacting with the common-folk on a much more regular basis. Scandinavians had their trolls/jotuns, also called etins (giants), which were great, granitic beings, sometimes hairy of form, and of immense physical power. More mysterious were the dwarves, a race (or races) of stunted, powerful craftsmen and weapons-smiths.

One race of dwarves was from Svartalfheim, the land of the Dark Elves, which was a cavern-world in its own right. Some of the Svartalf/Dwarf kind lived in Niflheim as well, which was the land of the dead. Along with the savage and man-eating trolls, the dwarves would turn to stone, into toads, or otherwise die if struck by the direct rays of the sun. More often than not the entrances to their homes were hidden in inaccessible mountain sides and other remote locations.

The Scandinavian and Germanic peoples also believed in the huldre or hidden folk, also called the Elves. Their domain was a luminous cavern-realm called Alfheim. From Alfheim they would venture forth to cajole, abduct, or seduce human beings. Other beings were the kobolds, or mine-dwarves, perhaps a variant of the Norse Svartalf. Another type was the Tusse, a variant of elf which lived close to humans, usually beneath a farmstead, or close to one. The primary interest of the huldre/elf-folk, which could be said to include all of the Germanic types, seems to have been procreation with human beings for purposes of maintaining genetic diversity. Like the trolls and dwarves, the elves seemed to dislike bright sunlight, but may have had more tolerance than their troll and dwarf cousins, as they were sometimes seen at dawn, twilight, or dusk, or by day in deeply-shadowed valleys or mountain chasms. Huldre/elves in particular were said to dwell beneath mounds and hills which were in closer proximity to human habitations, as trolls did more rarely. The elves took a regular interest in human affairs--weddings, births, and deaths, (bloodlines?) the success of crops and livestock, and so forth--but only for their own selfish interests. They seemed to be overly-concerned with genetic and biological diversity, and they pilfered livestock, crops, and human genes via theft or cross-species liaison whenever they saw fit to do so. The elves are generally depicted as extremely fair-haired and fair-skinned.

Dragons were also said to live deep in the Earth, as recounted in the Anglo-Saxon (Germanic) saga of Beowulf; and the monster Grendel was a hairy, scaled fiend, a naga-troll which later British traditions would have called a goblin (and modern cryptozoologists would term a "hairy humanoid"). For Grendel, the term "Pazuzu" would probably have been just as appropriate. Dragons were the special guardians of "buried treasure," i.e., buried knowledge or technology, much of it often made by the powers of the subterranean dwarves. The European dragon had a nastier disposition than his oriental counterpart, or perhaps he came into conflict with a group of people who entertained different philosophical ideals when it came to living in fear of man-eating entities; whatever the case, like his eastern cousins, he had a relationship with both underground caverns, and deep bodies of water.

England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland each have a rich tradition of under-earth dwellers, with many similarities or even common origins between them. Like the Norse/Germanic variants, the "fairies--" goblins, trows, knockers, brownies, leprechauns, sidhe (shee), tylwyth teg (terlooeth teig), and numerous other categories of humanoid beings--were fair or foul, malevolent or kind (actually, indifferent), making their homes almost without exception, beneath the ground. Mounds, hills, ruins, ancient raths or hill-forts, mountains, cliffs, and even cities of great age were said to serve as the rooftops of their palaces. Like the nagas and dragons, some had the entrances to their subterranean homes at the bottom of lakes. To remove all doubt as to their relationship with Norse hidden-folk and Indian nagas alike, they shunned the sunlight, and often seemed interested in crossbreeding their own bloodlines with those of human beings, or even in crossbreeding their "livestock" or fairy cattle, horses, hounds and so forth with the surface species which were most compatible. The goblin-dwarf Rumpelstiltskin, in his lust to have the human baby and its genetic bounty, is just one example of this in folklore.

Of particular interest are the Tuatha de Danaan of Ireland, the "people of the Goddess Danu," also called the Sidhe. Originally an aristocratic, warrior race of heroic proportion, they dwindled in size after retreating underground, to become the Daoine Sidhe (theena shee) or diminutive faeries of Irish folklore. Most of the "gentry," or aristocratic, trooping faeries, are said to be of this type. Like the Scandinavian elves, they are depicted as particularly fair of complexion and hair. According to Lady Wilde, in "Ancient Legends of Ireland (Ward & Downey, London, 1887)," they are categorized as "cave fairies." In addition to their now-familiar practice of abduction of and hybridization with surface humans, their name, "Tuatha (tribe or people) de Danaan" holds a strong resemblance to the Egyptian name for the underworld, the Tuat. It is generally thought that the term "fairy" or "faerie" has its origin in the earlier French term "fay," or the Latin "fatae," but the possibility of an older origin, as hinted at by the Tuat/Tuatha connection, may in fact bear

further examination; for did not the "PHARAOHS" believe that they would journey through the TUAT on the way to their places in eternity?

The hills and glens of Ireland are also said to hide the remnants of at least three vanquished races: the Firbolgs, the Fomorians, and the Nemedians. All are ancient enemies of the Tuatha de Danaan, and were driven underground by the latter in the distant past, where they then dwindled in size (genetic diversity?) at an even earlier time than did their conquerors. The Fomors and the Firbolgs are probably the origin-race of many of the "bogeys" and pookas (bucas), goblins and hobgoblins, Scottish trows, and other malevolent, sometimes shapeshifting beings which seem to bear strong resemblance to the Scandinavian trolls, being perhaps a smaller variant. The etymological connection between "trows" and "trolls" is obvious, and reflects the sequence of both legendary and historical migrations to the British Isles, as well as the wars between each newcomer group with the currently ensconced one. Each group of faeries and goblins can be viewed, of course, as the dethroned, exiled gods of an earlier, defeated human culture. The question is, what were these "gods," which still exist in the popular imagination today? Were they symbolic pantheons or archetypes, or living beings which predated man on this planet?

3. The New World

Native American cultures had similar beliefs in an extensive layered realm of caverns which was hidden beneath their feet. This murky world was believed to be inhabited by both human and humanoid beings, and by a variety of monsters and demons. Most tribes or nations had their own traditions of subterranean "little people," as well as other motifs, including reptilian or serpent-like humanoid beings. In addition to this, many tribes believed that they had themselves emerged from a mythical underworld, ages before.

The Mescalero Apache have many of these beliefs. One of their oldest sacred traditions states that they came from the "Old Red Fire Land," before the "Great Flood." This land was said to be in the distant eastern (Atlantic) sea, and was destroyed by a combination of deluge and volcanic cataclysms. Escaping through "great caverns" and tunnel-systems, the ancestors of the Apache came to high mountain lands far to the south, where they built new cities. A series of misfortunes there, however, eventually drove them northward. This is nearly identical to the origin story as related in the Mayan Chilam Bilaam, and brings to mind both Mayan and Aztec origin myths. The Aztecs said that they had originated in a land called "Aztlan," obviously synonymous with Atlan or Atlantis, the destruction of which they also escaped. After this, they ended up in a cavern-world called "Chicomoztoc," or the Seven Cavern Cities of Gold," where they lived for some time before emerging again into the surface world.

In addition to believing in a vast, nine-layered underworld filled with strange beings, the chief god of the Maya, called Itzamna (meaning "iguana house"), was depicted as an anthropomorphic lizard, snake, cayman, or dragon. The underworld dwellers were a mixture of human, reptilian, and other animal characteristics, and the rain-god Chac was a long-nosed, fanged humanoid creature very similar to the Egyptian Set. The underworld, called Xibalba, is the location of most of the action in the Popol Vuh, a priestly epic of the Maya. In the Popol Vuh, two semi-divine brothers, Hunapuh and Xbalanque, have to journey into a realm of horrors beneath the Earth in order to defeat those who are enemies of their father and his family, and to their own ascendance to power. In Xibalba, they come into conflict with Zipacna, a crocodile-headed monster, Seven Macaw (who is bird-headed) the maker of earthquakes, and other familiar forms. An interesting event occurs when, seeking vengeance by destroying the lords of the underworld, the brothers devise a way to pick out the twelve lords of Xibalba from identical "mannikins," or robot/ushabti-like figures. The twins eventually defeat their underworld rivals, and take over the rulership themselves, bringing an end to human sacrifice as part of the deal. These events preceded and made possible the "modern" epoch of time.

The Hopi of the desert southwest, descendants of the mysterious Anasazi people, have an equally strange tradition. They believe that as a people, they migrated from a series of previously-extant "worlds," usually interpreted as "ages" or "epochs;" but these are also seen as subsequent cavern-worlds, each one lower than the next, each one eventually abandoned and destroyed in turn. While still in the murky

"third world," the Hopi ancestors came into contact with the mysterious "Ant People," an ectomorphic race or species which greatly resemble the gods of Sumerian myth. At some point they also came into conflict with the "Serpent People," and like other tribes, their underworld mythos is filled with cataclysms and floods. At least one of their previous worlds was said to have been "in the east," and combined with the flood element, is very similar to Apache and Aztec traditions.

The Choctaw (Cha'ta) people of Mississippi also have a myth of underground origins. They believe that their ancestors emerged from the Nanih Waiya Cave Mound, a fifty-foot-tall natural geological formation which is hidden in a swampy forest area, approximately a mile and a half east of a better-known, artificial mound and tourist site. The hill has several natural openings, some of which have been "sealed up" (the Park Service seems to have no good explanation for this), and it is said by the Choctaw to be the entrance to a vast underground realm. One legend has it that, in ancient times, the Choctaw were invaded by a race of red- and blond-haired, white-skinned giants, who bore "sharp clubs," (swords?) and axes, and wore an extra, thick skin (chain or leather mail?) which made them impervious to arrow, spear, and warclub. Add the touch that some of these Nahullo, or giants, "had horns," and these white invaders sound suspiciously like wandering Norsemen.

Whatever their origin or identity might have been, these invaders drove the Choctaw into hiding, and the Indians went into the cave mound for several generations. The world beneath the mound was a large series of caverns, through which a river or rivers ran (the Nanih Waiya cave mound sits squarely at the headwaters of the Pearl River). Some traditions indicate that it went on to connect to other "worlds," or underground places. Staying underground for many generations, the Choctaw emerged to wage a form of guerilla warfare on their enemies, eventually winning, by using darts coated with a poison made from mushrooms found in the caverns. Victorious, they emerged again into the sunlit world.

One tradition holds that this emergence of a generation of people who had been born underground is the basis for the mound origin myth, and that in fact the Choctaw had arrived centuries earlier, after leaving a "sunken land" which had foundered in a distant western ocean. After many wanderings and travails, they arrived in the southeast, where they found the natural cavern mound which would later serve as a place of refuge. But other Choctaw beliefs dispute this, claiming that not just the Choctaw but the Muskogee, Cherokee, and Chickasaw peoples emerged from the mound as well, having all been one people in the underworld.



Photo Image © 2000, Wm. Michael Mott

Today the Choctaw still believe that a variety of strange supernatural beings either inhabit the cave-mound, or dwell in the wooded hills that surround it. One of these is the Shampe, a hair-covered, manlike giant who has a terrible odor, and who stays underground during the day. The Shampe is a sort of Sasquatch, but the underworld connection is there. Also present are the Kawana-kasha, (Kowi

Anukasha), also called Bohpoli (stone-thrower), a type of supernatural and mercurial dwarf; these live within not just the woods of Mississippi, but within the cave-mound itself. Like the Norse dwarves, they are the hoarders of vast knowledge. The mound is also the home of "giant serpents," and perhaps a host of other beings. Among the latter is the Nalusa Falaya, or "Long Black Being," who is humanoid yet slides on his stomach "like a snake." His pointed ears only accentuate his reptilian appearance. Another variant is the Nalusa Chito, "Big Black Being," who emerges from underground dens to capture women and children, presumably for supper. But this abduction scenario is by now a familiar one, and is very similar to the abduction and changeling accounts of Celtic and Scandinavian traditions, which were often for purposes of maintaining genetic diversity. The goblin "Ho'koklonote' she" is a shapeshifting creature believed to haunt the region, and is very similar to the Pooka or Buca of the British Isles. So are the "Nalusa" twins, for that matter.

As has been demonstrated, many similarities, or perhaps identical descriptions, exist for the underworld inhabitants of myth and folklore. This underlying cohesion may have resulted from an "archetypal stew" which long-simmered in the imaginations of men and women; and as will be demonstrated in the next section, this has resulted in some very interesting and imaginative works of fiction.

SECTION TWO: LITERARY EXCURSIONS AND REVELATIONS

Part One: European

FOUNDATIONAL FORMS

1. Wagner

In Richard Wagner's operatic re-telling of the *Volsunga Saga*, he takes the audience on a tour of the German version of the Norse underworld. In the *Nibelunglied*, he tells the story of the theft of the Gold of the Nibelungs, a race of Dwarves from Nibelheim, which is the Norse Niflheim, complete with its hidden knowledge/technology and imprisoned Powers of death and darkness. The dwarf Alberich (a variant of the older Norse/Icelandic Andvari) and his kin are miserable underlings and errand-boys for deeper, more mysterious beings. They are the same type of transitional beings which the underworld gods of other cultures sent to the surface world on dark errands, and as such remind us of the Sumerian and Egyptian "artificial" (genetically-engineered) forms, and of the same beings as created by the Hebrew "Nefilim," or "Fallen Ones," which were rebellious angels/titans/jotun-trolls. The similarity between the Hebrew plural noun Nefilim and the Norse Niflheim is perhaps more than coincidental. Knowledge and power in the Wagnerian opera take the form of a magically wonderful "ring" of dwarf or faerie gold, "*Das Rheingold*."

Addition obvious similarities include "giants (jotuns/trolls)," and semi-reptilian beings like Fafner (Norse Fafnir), who begins as a humanoid titan and is transformed fully over time into a cave-dwelling dragon. Wagner's opera-cycle is essentially a re-telling of the *Volsunga Saga*, with other elements borrowed from Norse traditions as well. The value of examining Wagner's work lies in the fact that it provides a bridge between ancient Nordic mythical traditions, and later literature which used similar motifs. These will be examined at length very soon.



Bartolomeo's view of Dante's Inferno.

2. Dante Alighieri

Of equal interest is the earlier work of Dante Alighieri, in particular that part of his *Divine Comedy* called the *Inferno* (The Project Gutenberg Etext of Dante's *Inferno*, August 1997, Translated by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow). In this tale, Dante is taken on a personal tour of the netherworld by the ghost of the Roman poet Virgil, and it is revealed that, like most mythic traditions, Hell is multi-layered, in this case with ten levels arranged in a conical fashion which diminishes in diameter as it descends. These concentricities are designated areas of imprisonment and punishment for specific types of sinners, and are the abodes of giants, harpies (another pseudo-bird/reptile form), horned demons, and so forth. The similarities between these forms, those of Greek Erebus and Tartarus, the Sumerian tradition, and even the of the Oni of Japanese Jigoku, are readily apparent. The deeper the descent, the colder the conditions become, so that sulphurous and hot, rainy, misted, and frozen conditions are all presented, as in the Norse, Greco-Roman, and Hebrew (Apocryphal) traditions. At the ultimate, frozen bottom of this happy land is Satan himself, frozen solid in a lake of ice, awaiting the day of judgement. This is reminiscent of the Norse and Greek cavern worlds, with regions and rivers of fire and ice near or adjacent to one another, where the Jotuns and Titans lay imprisoned in chains of darkness and entropy, only able to send out their underlings to work their will upon the Earth.



Illustration for Dante's Inferno, by Donn P. Crane

3. Jules Verne

Verne's *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, apparently based upon hollow-earth theories, rumors of underground tunnel systems, and the latest scientific thought of his time, was also filled with levels of increasing complexity and diversity, fire and ice, and was inhabited by the "latest twist" on ages-old underworld reptilian themes--the dinosaurs. These creatures, for Verne's purposes, replaced dragons, nagas, trolls and goblins as the denizens of the depths. While this did not do justice to the rich heritage of traditions available to draw upon for such a work, *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, may well be the first truly modern novel to take on the subject of inner or hollow-earth mysteries, an inhabitants. It was the first to utilize both scientific principles and the latest scientific theories and discoveries as fundamental elements of the plot and storytelling. It still fell far short of the scope of later works on the subject, however.

FAERIE LANDS REVISITED

4. George MacDonald

In the 1880s, George MacDonald published *The Princess and the Goblin* in Britain. Drawing mostly from "faerie" and "goblin" traditions of the British Isles, he spun a magical tale of a mysterious and secret underworld, inhabited by inbred, deformed dwarves called "goblins." Dwelling in a veritable maze of tunnels which seemingly underlay the countryside, these beings shunned the daylight like their Scandinavian and British Isles counterparts. They also shared their folkloric cousins' interest in abducting and interbreeding with surface humans, as in the case of Princess Irene, who attracted the attention of the King and Queen of Goblin Land as a suitable match for their "reptilian-" appearing son. This "goblin prince" was himself the result of a liaison between his underworld father, and a surface woman whom he had kidnapped, and who had eventually perished. Undertones of this sort run throughout the book, as in the Goblin-Queen's hiding of her shameful "deformity," a very human set of toes on each of her feet which spoke of human genetics somewhere in the mix. Like the kobolds of Germany and the knockers of Britain, the goblins were heard to tap and knock deep in the mines by human miners, when they would dig too close to their homes. Like the Nefilim, like the faeries, and like the underworld gods of the middle and far east, MacDonald's goblins had also bred an army of genetically-mixed, deformed animal creatures, which combined the traits of mammals and reptiles, much like the Pazuzu, or the Egyptian Ammut.

5. J.R.R. Tolkien

Another British author whose work contains "cavern-world" themes is J.R.R. Tolkien. Like MacDonald, he drew on Norse, Germanic, and Celtic folk and mythic traditions for much of his cosmology. His "orcs," or goblins, are essentially the "dark elves" and trolls of Scandinavian myth, and he also took his version of the dwarves from the same folk traditions. In Norse myth, there seem to be two camps of dwarves, one dark, swarthy, and hostile (like Andvardi / Alberich), the other reclusive, but not so nasty. Tolkien's "dwerrows" or dwarves fall into the latter category. His "elves" are similar to the Scandinavian variety, but actually more closely resemble "the gentry" of Ireland, the aristocratic Tuatha de Danaan. Like the Danaan, they also exhibit idealized "Aryan" or "Nordic" attributes. Deep mountain tunnels and hidden cavern palaces are the haunts of orcs, elves, and dwarves alike.

He also made reference to the "mound folk," in this case the undead (similar to Scandinavian "draugs" or revenants), and to "trolls," who, like their Norse counterparts, cannot stand the light of day. His hill-burrowing hobbits were modeled in some respects after both the "trooping faeries" of the British Isles, and the "solitary faeries" such as leprechauns and cluricauns (see the in-depth works of Lady Gregory, Lady Wilde, and Katherine Briggs, on the "faerie" or fairy topic), and the brownies (who also have hairy feet like hobbits--and hairy hides in general).

His orcs in particular are generally reptilian in appearance, yet humanoid, and "Gollum," a hobbit who has been horribly mutated by the "radiation" of the One Ring, is definitely amphibian or reptilian in aspect. Here is an echo of Alberich again, in Gollum's lust for the ring, and here also is the hint of "technology," i.e., ancient and mysterious magic, which can genetically alter living beings for evil or unknown purposes. One side-effect of the ring is the extreme prolongation of Gollum's lifespan (another underworld "secret," that of immortality, as in the story of Gilgamesh and Enkidu). Throw in cavern-dwelling dragons guarding "treasure," (i.e., secret knowledge), and the archetypal symbolism is complete and in fact predictable. He uses all of the aforementioned underworld themes in his books *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings Trilogy*, and *The Silmarillion* (all published in the U.S. by Houghton Mifflin Co.).

Part Two: North American

The twentieth century brought a host of new writers, each mixing fantasy, science, and myth to some degree, all drawing on the wealth of lore and folktales which had come before. Most of those whose works reached a wide audience were American writers, working for the "pulp" (so-named for the low quality of paper they were printed on) magazines like *Weird Tales*, *Amazing*, *Argosy*, and many others. After publication in these periodicals, a select few, like Edgar Rice Burroughs, went on to successful book publication of their serialized "pulp" features. The writers to be examined here were more or less divided into two camps: those who wrote about hidden cavern-worlds and tunnel-systems and their inhabitants, and those who dreamt of grander concavities in the form of hollow moons and planets.

CAVERNS, GROTTOS, AND ELDRITCH HORRORS

1. A. Merritt

In 1923, A. Merritt first published his excellent work *The Face in the Abyss*, which was reprinted in the October 1940 issue of *Famous Fantastic Mysteries* (the source here). In this fast-paced adventure tale, a group of American treasure-hunters search for a lost treasure in the Peruvian Andes, and find a "lost race" instead, the survivors of "Yu Atlanchi," an ancient Aryan/Atlantean colony which has retreated into caverns and chasms beneath the Andes. In addition to the lost treasure of the Incan king Atahualpa, the hidden people have another secret or two: they are worshippers of a subterranean entity called the

"Snake Mother," and are guardians of a bottomless cavern abyss which is overlooked by a cliff-face of solid gold, which has been formed into the likeness of a gigantic and Satanic face, reminiscent of the frozen Satan of Dante. Add to all of this some remnant dinosaurs, flying, intelligent "serpents," and a half-snake, half-woman entity, and the age-old reptilian-underworld connection is complete.

2. H. P. Lovecraft

Another well-known writer of pulp fiction who has not only stood the test of time, but has amassed huge legions of readers and fans, is Howard Phillips Lovecraft of Providence, Rhode Island. Writing mainly for *Weird Tales*, Lovecraft created a somber and terrifying universe of eldritch horrors, ancient and alien intelligences masquerading as demons or dark gods, most of them locked away or imprisoned beneath the earth or under the sea (like the Nefilim, Titans, Jotuns, and so forth). From their deep prisons they supposedly still haunt mankind, sending forth genetically-altered underlings and unhuman fiends they have created, to work their will upon the surface world. All of this is of course very, very familiar. There is a direct parallel here with the Hebrew's imprisoned Nefilim, and their partially-human or partially-animal, genetically-engineered offspring, as described in the Apocryphal books of Enoch, and of the Sumerian underworld rulers, with their robotic, reptilian, or otherwise genetically-altered humanoid slaves.

Lovecraft described a variety of underworld fiends and horrors, such as dog-headed humanoid ghouls from the depths of the Earth (*Pickman's Model*, Arkham House, 1939, 1945), and eons-old invertebrate horrors lurking in a forgotten cavern world beneath Antarctica (*At the Mountains of Madness*, Arkham House, 1963), and many others. In *The Call of Cthulhu*, Lovecraft introduces the arch-fiend of his cosmology, a buried horror of humanoid yet squid-headed configuration, of titanic size, who sits buried in a sunken city in the depths of the Pacific ocean and directs all manners of horror by means of telepathy and messengers sent to the surface world. The parallels to Anubis, Thoth, the Ammut, the Pazuzu, the Greek Gorgon (an underworld creature), and so forth are apparent.

There has been some speculation that Lovecraft believed what he wrote to be true on some level, due to his descriptive dreams of "abductions" by beings he referred to as "night-gaunts," winged, reptilian humanoids without facial features who sound suspiciously similar to the Galatur or Gala of the Sumerian KI-GAL. His fiction, he believed, was in some way influenced by "revelations" he received during these "dream-abductions," which is a very familiar story to those who study the modern "UFO Abduction" phenomenon. But perhaps more prolific on the theme of subterranean races and horrors was Lovecraft's friend and contemporary, Robert E. Howard.

3. Robert E. Howard

Robert Ervin Howard was born in Peaster, Texas, in 1906, and grew up to live in the oil-field town of Cross Plains. He only lived a scant thirty years, dying by his own hand in 1936. But during his thirty years he was one of the most prolific short-story and novella writers of his day, filling the pulps with characters which have long-since passed into popular culture as icons or stereotypes. His most-famous creation, Conan the Cimmerian, has been redefined and over-simplified for the world as Conan the Barbarian; but despite the distortions and over-simplifications of non-prose media (not to mention the input of other writers who missed the character entirely), the mighty Conan is still popular today. Howard is largely credited with the invention of the genre of "sword and sorcery" adventure fiction (even though Fritz Leiber coined the term), a claim which seems to be accurate. Although Conan met and dispatched his share of subterranean horrors, it was Howard's other fiction which seemed to concentrate on those themes so common to the underworld tradition.

Dog-headed humanoids, reptilian "toad" gods, unspeakable monstrosities from wells, pits, and endless catacombs, all of these and more flowed from his mind with a raw, emotive power. In *Worms of the Earth* (*Weird Tales*, Nov. 1932), is seen one of his favorite themes, which deals with a "lost race" which has lived for ages underground, mutating into something no longer human, yet longing for human genes, and the destruction of humanity. Other stories, like *People of the Dark* (*Strange Tales*, June 1932) and *The*

Children of the Night (*Weird Tales*, April-May 1931), deal with the "racial memory" of ancient races of stunted subhumans who have retreated underground, to evolve into serpentine form. In *The Valley of the Worm* (*Weird Tales*, Feb. 1934), the story is that of Niord, a wandering "Aryan" tribesman of eons past, who comes face to face with an ancient, underworld horror which must be destroyed, in the form of a massive, sentient worm-like being from the depths of the Earth (a dragon or serpent god), and its hair-covered, faceless, humanoid servant, reminiscent of both satyr and sasquatch. Tellingly, the latter plays the pipes of a Pan or other cave-dwelling satyr.

Perhaps Howard's greatest "underworld" tale, however, came from his "King Kull" or "Kull of Atlantis" series of stories. In *The Shadow Kingdom* (*Weird Tales*, 1929), Kull, usurper-king of Valusia, becomes aware of the fact that most of his councilors and government officials have been "replaced" by imposters, which are revealed to be agents of "the-snake-that-speaks," or serpent-men. These are reptilian humanoids from a cavern/tunnel underworld, who have the power to assume the appearance, and the place, of any man or woman in the daylight, human world. They were identified by their inability to speak a specific series of syllables, a "code phrase" which human beings could use to weed them out and kill them. All of these themes go back to the most ancient underworld traditions, the "abductor-changeling-reptilian" servants of evil all rolled into one. This exact theme has also become prevalent in the conspiracy and UFO literature of the 1990s, where some would have us believe that not only is it true, but it's "newly revealed" or discovered; but the archetypal roots for the idea stretch back for millennia, and even pulp fiction has used it with great effectiveness.

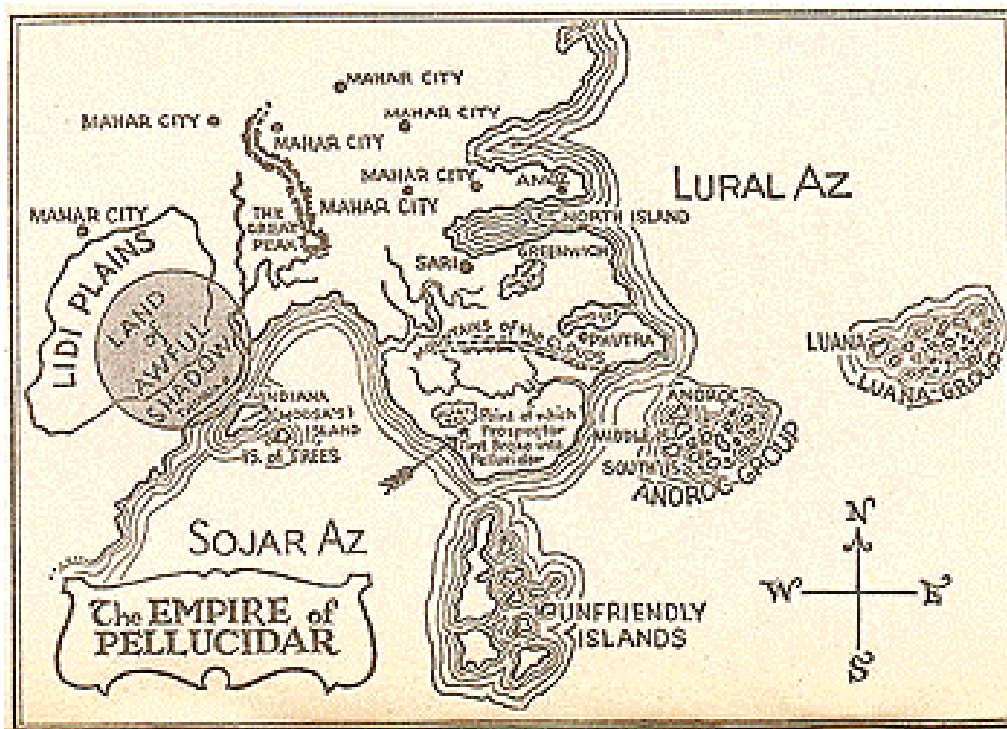
HOLLOW MOONS, HOLLOW WORLDS

4. Edgar Rice Burroughs

Perhaps the most well-known of American fiction writers to approach the Hollow Earth or underworld topic was Edgar Rice Burroughs (September 1, 1875 - March 19, 1950). The creator of Tarzan of the Apes, Burroughs was highly-prolific, writing on a myriad of topics, and of a myriad of worlds. His straightforward, slightly Victorian adventure-writing style made him the undisputed favorite writer of fantastic fiction in his day. His first novel was set on Mars, and from there he ranged from the jungles and lost cities of Africa, Asia, to Central America, and the back-alleys of Brooklyn, to the planet Venus and "Beyond the Farthest Star." However, his hollow earth endeavors began with "*At the Earth's Core*," written in 1914.



Burroughs begins by taking a pair of adventurers--Abner Perry, inventor, and David Innes, business partner, on a "maiden voyage" of the tunneling transport, "The Iron Mole." However, something goes wrong with the contraption, and after a near-death experience miles beneath the crust due to extremes of heat, they eventually find conditions in the machine returning to normal, and they break out into an unknown world. This is "Pellucidar," as they name it, the interior of the hollow earth. Obviously inspired by the non-fiction books of John Symmes, William Reed, and Marshall Gardner, Pellucidar is a land of eternal sunshine, with a small central sun ever at high noon. It has openings at both poles, and a lush, tropical terrain, with a land extent far beyond that of the outer world--for it is a world inversed, with landmasses which roughly correspond to our ocean areas, and vice-versa. Other interesting touches to the series (in *Tarzan at the Earth's Core*, 1929) include an expedition by dirigible, through the north polar opening, probably inspired by the real-world journey of the dirigible ZR-1 in 1924 (*Popular Science*, December 1923), which was mounted by the U.S. Government in order to discover the myth or reality of the "polar continent" (or "opening?"). The results on the real expedition however, were never made public. There is also an interesting "pendant world," a moon which revolves around the central sun in perfect synchronous motion with the rotation of the Earth itself, thus casting its shadow continually over one dismal region, the "Land of Awful Shadow" (*Land of Terror*, 1944). Another strange side-effect of Pellucidar is that its inhabitants do not age, much like those of fairyland, or the Sumerian underworld of the gods. This is either due to the fooling of the "biological clock" of the body (it's always set at noon), or to protection from cosmic radiation which reaches the surface world.



Burroughs wrote five books (one of them a group of four novellas), mainly telling of the adventures of stalwart Americans and Europeans in a world which is not only in the stone age, but is in fact inhabited by dinosaurs, gigantic mammals, and strange unhuman races. Humans are indigenous as well, and some are soon taught the ways of the "wiser" surface men, and under Innes, form a benevolent empire. Before raising cries of "white colonial oppression!" however, the reader must understand the inspiration for forming allegiances and empires in the land of the eternal sun: There are enemies to vanquish, enemies which fragmented stone-age tribes cannot defeat unless they combine their forces and their determination.

These enemies include the Mahars, a race of "rhamphorhynchus," or intelligent pterandon bipeds, which feed on human flesh. These creatures, not only telepathic, are capable of mesmerizing nearly any human being into submission before having him or her for lunch. They are all female, and reproduce by means of something called "The Great Secret," a form of cloning or other reproductive technology. Here we see another incarnation of the nagas and the utukku, complete with an emphasis on reproduction. These reptilian overlords--er, ladies--have in their employ another group, a bunch of sub-human louts called Sagoths, hairy and barbaric, who raid human villages to supply victims for their scaly mistresses. Here of course is Enkidu again, or Sasquatch, or Grendel.... Other interesting races in Pellucidar include the Horibs, reptilian humanoids who also feast on humans, "little men," and the Gorbuses, who live in underground caves. Throw in a load of dinosaurs of every description, along with human-animal hybrids, and Burroughs has created an archetypal paradise of adventure and terror, fun for young and old alike. The books in the series are:

1. *At the Earth's Core (All-Story, 1914)*
2. *Pellucidar (All-Story Caval, 1915)*
3. *Tanar of Pellucidar (Blue Book, 1929)*
4. *Tarzan at the Earth's Core (Blue Book, 1929)*
5. *Back to the Stone Age (1937)*
6. *Land of Terror (1944)*
7. *Savage Pellucidar (Amazing Stories, 1963)*

Burroughs also wrote three additional novellas along similar lines, *The Moon Maid* (*Argosy Weekly*, 1923), *The Moon Men*, (*All-Story*, 1925) and *The Red Hawk* (*All-Story*, 1925). These are set in the hollow interior of the moon, and are a fun read, but are somewhat more fanciful than the Pellucidar series. The Pellucidar books are amazing in that they are the first works of fiction to fully integrate modern ideas and theories about the Hollow Earth--i.e., the Earth as a geode-like structure--with the reptilian archetypes which have haunted the underworlds of the human mind throughout the centuries.

Other notable mentions of Hollow Moon stories are those of H.G. Wells (*The First Men in the Moon*, London, 1901, and McFarland & Co., 1998.) and Everil Worrell (*The Hollow Moon*, *Weird Tales*, May, 1939). Additional books of interest which touch on "amphibian (reptilian-galatur) humanoid" and "Aryan/Ascended Master" themes are *Etidorpha* (John Uri Lloyd, Dodd, Mead, & Co., 1901) and *The Coming Race* (Edward Bulwer Lytton, Routledge & Sons, 1871). Another book, *The Smokey God* (Willis George Emerson, Forbes & Co., 1908), purports to be a true account of a father and son who were sucked into the polar opening at the top of the Earth, and were the unwilling guests of a race of "Nordic" or "Aryan" giants, who more closely resemble descriptions of the Norse Gods and their Jotun enemies than anything else.

PERSPECTIVES

So what do we have so far, if we combine folk traditions, mythological and religious traditions, and literary constructions? At first glance, it might seem disparate at best, but the inhabitants of the various underworlds remain surprisingly consistent in their general forms and dispositions, when examined more closely. We can start with a basic look at their physical and other attributes:

1. They are more or less reptilian, sometimes mostly human, sometimes very scaly indeed. Others, perhaps the result of liaison or gene-mixing with surface humans, are described as "fair," "nordic," or "Aryan." The true origins or identity of the latter are generally betrayed by some inherent flaw of form or behavior.
2. They are telepathic, hypnotic, or possessed of other "superior" mental powers.
3. They can create "glamour" or illusion, either as faeries, or as shapeshifters.
4. They possess superior technologies, including cloning and genetic engineering, in some instances manufacturing artificial lifeforms to do their bidding. Some of their servants are often humanoid and hairy, others are scaled or even winged, most are bipedal and anthropomorphic. They possess the secret of immortality, or the formula for extreme longevity. Some possess the power of flight as well, via either aircraft or by self-propelled means.
5. They are interested in human reproduction and interbreeding, or in reproduction in general. Reproductive survival seems to be essential to their agenda in nearly any given scenario. They need human flesh, or blood, or reproductive materials.
6. They are more often than not the enemies of mankind.
7. They do not like the light of the exterior sun (Sol). As a general rule, they cannot survive for long, or sometimes at all, in the surface world.
8. They are banished, exiled, imprisoned, lost, or in hiding from the surface world, or from the sun.
9. They are secretive about their entrances and their treasures or knowledge, as well as their true nature or identity.
10. They influence human events or circumstances whenever it suits their purpose, or appeals to their whims.
11. They have surface humans in their employ, through priesthoods, cults, or secret societies.
12. And not touched upon thus far, but prevalent in most underworld traditions, is the strange fact that they are often accompanied by unpleasant or noxious odors, described as "sulphur and brimstone," "sulphurous," or "like rotten eggs." This is the smell of hydrogen sulfide, a very real chemical compound which is found in great quantities deep within the Earth. This will be explored further as well.

With all of these things in mind, we must now move to a region somewhere in the twilight of folklore, in a gray area which overlaps myth, fiction, and reality, in order to gain a clearer understanding of the inspiration for, or result of, the archetypes which have been clarified to this point.

SECTION THREE: MODERN FORTEAN AND CRYPTO-ZOOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS

With the advent of the "scientific century," i.e., the twentieth, occurrences which would have in earlier times been deemed "magical," demonic, or the work of faeries, gods, or witches, were given descriptions or names which downplayed their inexplicable nature and sought to somehow fit them into a comprehensible, "modern" worldview. The problem was then, and continues at present to be, that such anomalous phenomena have defied the most rational, skeptical, and "scientific" explanations. Also termed "Fortean" events, after anomaly researcher and writer, Charles Fort, these occurrences have continually thrown a philosophical monkey-wrench into the cherished machinery of scientific dogma. In other words, science has no explanation for these events or discoveries, so it largely ignores, ridicules, or dismisses them out of hand.

There is no doubt that many of these phenomena are genuine, and are for now beyond the ability of the currently dominant belief-system, Science, to explain. This brings to the fore the first category of research which may tie in very closely with "what has gone before."

PART ONE: CRYPTIDS AND MYSTERY CREATURES

"Cryptozoology" is a term which was coined by Belgian biologist Bernard Heuvelmans, in order to designate a field of study which is concerned with unknown creatures or animals, which are also referred to as "Cryptids" ("hidden" animals). For the purposes of this study, the term cryptid will not be used to designate known or suspected known animals which are simply "out of place" or out of their customary environment. It will be reserved for those creatures which are truly "unknown."

The comings and goings of such creatures, their sudden appearances in remote, rural, or densely-populated areas, and their equally-sudden disappearances with scarcely a trace left behind, have long befuddled researchers in the field of cryptozoology. With a careful examination of specific unknown animals or entities and their habitats, interesting connections to the ancient traditions are revealed.

1. Lake Monsters and Serpents

Many freshwater lakes around the world have long-standing traditions of "lake monsters" of various types, ranging from humped to sinuous, scaled or plated, to sporting "elephant-like" hide and "horselike" manes of hair. Most such creatures appear sporadically, often in high mountain lakes or large isolated lakes of great depth, with little or no access to the sea. Questions which have yet to be answered include:

1. How do such creatures maintain a breeding population of sufficient numbers to provide genetic diversity in relatively closed environments?
2. How do these populations manage to both feed themselves and maintain a high core temperature, their bodies being of immense size, and in usually cold waters with limited food resources?
3. What is the relationship of "lake monsters" to "sea serpents?"
4. If migratory, how do large populations of such creatures travel from lake to lake, or from lake to ocean, and ocean to lake?

Without a doubt, the most well-known of such beasts is the "monster" of Loch Ness, a large, deep lake in the Highlands of Scotland. Loch Ness is connected to the sea by the River Ness, yet sightings have only very rarely taken place in or at the river. The loch itself, like many in Scotland, Ireland, Scandinavia, and North America, has a long-standing tradition and reputation for being haunted by "kelpies," or shape-shifting, horse-headed, serpentine entities. These creatures are often described as having horse-like heads and manes, long serpentine necks, and huge, humped bodies with four flippers. Given the frigid water conditions at the loch (42 degrees Fahrenheit, on average), and the mammalian characteristics of the creatures, it stands to reason that they are either mammals, or some sort of endothermic (warm-blooded) plesiosaur descendants, or dinosaur descendants (many of the theropod dinosaurs were endothermic, as are their descendants, the birds). Given the additional fact that they sometimes sport horns or "ossicorns" like those of a giraffe, the mammalian hypothesis (descendants of zeuglodon, which were "primitive whales?") may be the best bet.

The questions of where they originate, where they go when they vanish, and how they maintain a stable diet, still remain. A look at the structure of Loch Ness provides some clues.

It has been determined that at some point in the distant past, Loch Ness was an arm of the sea. Now, it is seldom less than 300 feet deep, and routinely surpasses 400 feet in depth. The bottom of the lake runs up in many instances to meet underwater cliffs, and the submerged sides of the mountains which surround the loch. Sonar has indicated that the bases of these cliffs are honeycombed in places with very large caverns, which are of undetermined depth or extent. Could these lead to even more vast underground caverns under the mountains, some containing air and eventually linking to other lakes and to the sea? It would certainly provide a feasible explanation for the mysterious movements and disappearances of these creatures, and perhaps to the question of their diet, which may be also that of an ocean-going animal, or "sea-serpent." Perhaps the lakes and lochs which boast of such creatures, around the world, are simply places to breed and spawn in relative safety from the large predators of the oceans. When it is taken into account that many other "vortex-haunted" lakes around the world have been found to have deep caverns which account for their "vortices" (created by the suction of even larger, water-filled caverns, and the movement of huge volumes of water), the whole matter shifts into perspective. Such vortex-sporting, cavern-hiding lakes include Lake St. Jean and Blue Sea Lake in Canada (the latter home to Misiganebic, a "horse-headed" dragon), as well as Pohenegamook, Massawippa, Memphremagog, and on and on. Loch Ness and the Walchensee in Bavaria, among others, are said to connect to the sea in similar fashion. Given the distance of some of these bodies of water from the ocean, it is not unreasonable to assume that many deep aquifers are actually tributaries or parts of vast, subterranean oceans of freshwater, which may now be in danger of depletion by human usage from the surface.

Is there a connection between the reptilian-yet-mammalian "dragons" of large cold lakes, and vast cavern systems that may lie beneath them? The evidence would seem to indicate that this is the case. The cryptid dragon, with his underground lairs and underwater entrances to them, is apparently as active and secretive as the Chinese and Japanese versions ever were.

2. Hairy Humanoids

Many eyewitness accounts of hair-covered humanoids have been reported and documented over the years, by people from a wide range of backgrounds and professions. While Bigfoot or Sasquatch is the type whose description is known to most people, perhaps equalled by the Yeti of the Himalayas (the "Abominable Snowman"), the literature would indicate that not only are these living, flesh-and-blood creatures, but they come in a wide variety of physical configurations. Yet like the lake monsters, they seem to "pop in and out" of our surface world reality, and are amazingly difficult to track for creatures so large.

In addition to the towering, hirsute bigfoot form, witnesses have reported stunted, clawed versions with savage dispositions; black, "winged" varieties (the "ixals" of Mexico); screeching horrors with shaggy, hair-covered faces; gigantic varieties which would dwarf Sasquatch (like the Yeren of China), and more.

addition to the "rotten egg" or "skunk-like" odor which often accompanies most of these forms (as it does both Bigfoot and the Shampe of the Choctaw Indians, or the Florida "skunk ape"), many sightings and encounters have taken place in or near caves or cavernous regions, and abandoned mines and other man-made tunnels or potential entrances to unknown, underground areas. Consider the underworld-exploring Enkidu, the hell-plumbing Chinese "Monkey," hairy Scandinavian trolls, and the fanged, baboon- or dog-headed monsters of Sumer, Egypt and other cultures, and a connection again becomes clear. These creatures come out into our world, usually by night, and then retreat into an "invisible" cavern or subterranean world about which only they know, vanishing "without a trace." This does not have a connotation of the supernatural, but has the connotation of a natural phenomenon, and is a logical conclusion. Not only does this indicate an underworld connection, but it also indicates an intelligent "covering of tracks" and of evidence which is beyond that of ordinary animals, and can only be equated to the premeditated and well-planned actions of human beings--or of something at least as clever. It also begs the question of, at some level, possible human involvement of a covert nature, in not only "hairy humanoid" matters, but in other, more bizarre, cryptid accounts. And disinformation--in the form of ridicule, evidence-tampering, or intentional hoaxing--may also come into play at times. If this does occur, it does not automatically disqualify the phenomenon as a genuine one. It only complicates matters by introducing what may be the intended element into the equation, that element being obfuscation.

3. El Chupacabras and Other "Hybrid" Beings

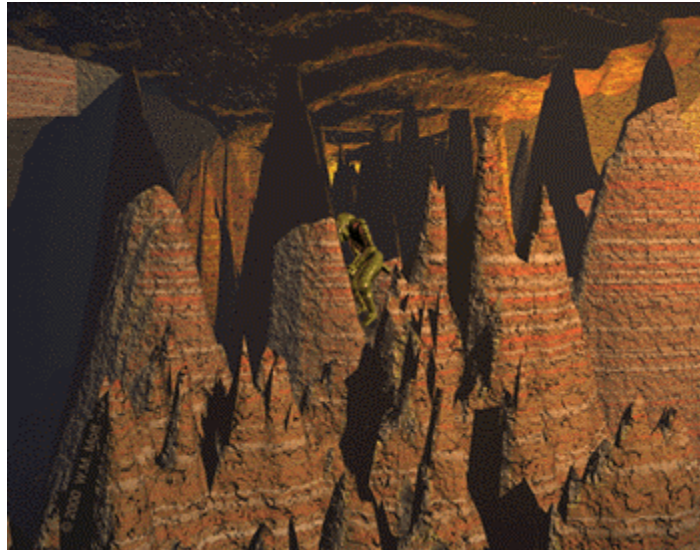
Puerto Rico is a small island, only about 150 miles long by 45 miles wide; yet it has experienced enough paranormal and cryptid activity in its history to be a continent. The native Taino, an Arawak tribe of the West Indies, feared creatures like the Araidai (jungle goblin) and Konokokuyuha, a type of evil dwarf. The island has long been a haunt of hairy humanoids, mysterious winged creatures (some described as "pterodactyls"), and Unidentified Flying Objects, with the entire human populations in some areas at times living in terror.

During 1975, Puerto Rico was stricken by a mysterious wave of livestock mutilations, accompanied by UFO sightings. Many times animals were drained of blood and left like emptied wine-skins for investigators to puzzle over. Twenty years later, in 1995, things turned really weird.

The mutilations and blood-drainings returned with a vengeance, and over a two-year period, the "culprit" was seen or encountered first-hand by dozens of witnesses. Termed "El Chupacabras," or "The Goat-Sucker," the creature seemed like something out of a cartoonist's nightmare: Described as four to five feet tall, generally reptilian in appearance, with a kangaroo-like hip- or haunch-structure, spines along a back-ridge, and a humanoid head with protruding, incandescent eyes reminiscent of descriptions of the "gray aliens" of UFOlogy. Sometimes the creatures would be gray-green and hairless, sometimes they would have flat black or gray fur. With folding flaps of skin under their arms which connected to their ribcages, they could purportedly glide like flying squirrels, or fly outright, and they had three-pronged, retractable mouth-organs used for slicing, dicing, and sucking blood and fluids. At first it was thought that the sightings were surely an elaborate hoax, or simply hysteria, until the sheer number of incidents and reports reached overwhelming proportions. Hair was obtained from one mutilation site, and analyzed by a Japanese lab; while deemed to be "similar to the hair of a wolf," it was labeled as coming from an animal which was "unknown."

The creature was a typical cryptid in some respects, seemingly popping in and out of existence at a moment's notice, and generating fear and confusion all over the island. From Puerto Rico, the Chupacabras events quickly spread to the rest of Latin America, including Mexico, South Florida, and the desert southwest of the United States. This marked it as a distinctly cultural phenomenon (Hispanic), but that by no means indicates that it was not genuinely taking place. A connection was soon suspected in Puerto Rico between El Chupacabras and the mountainous, rainforested region of El Yunque, which is honey-combed with mostly-unexplored cavern systems. In fact, caverns underlie much of the island. Several witnesses reported seeing the creature or creatures fleeing to the El Yunque region, when discovered or pursued. Soon, other parts of the Spanish-speaking world were reaching similar

conclusions. And, like the demons of old, an acrid, debilitating foul odor often accompanied the visits of the beast.



One brave soul, Jesus Sanchez, was victimized repeatedly, his rabbits being drained of blood. Finally, at four in the morning, he surprised the invader by blinding it with a bright light. When it rushed to escape, he struck it with a machete, only to discover that "the blow sounded as if it had hit a drum." The creature, unscathed, made its disappearance as usual.

What is to be made of a report like this? How can a creature both "have hair," yet "sound like a drum" when struck (or shot, for that matter), and escape unharmed? Why the almost methodical and indeed selective nature of the animal mutilations? Sometimes only blood was taken; other times, specific organs like livers would be missing. It should be noted that blood and the "meaty organs" were the very items offered to the dark gods of antiquity, in the ancient Middle East and even in Pre-Columbian America. The description of El Chupacabras is very reminiscent of that of the Sumerian Utukku, or even of the Gala, and of the Egyptian Ushabtiu, designated as "artificial" lifeforms (yet no less alive) created to do the bidding of the lords of the underworld. Maybe times are tough in the subterranean realms, and the "gods" have taken to stealing the substances which are no longer offered to them; or could it be that the Nagas are coming out to play?

The Utukku are reptilian in aspect, vaguely humanoid, and slightly "winged," just like El Chupacabras. Again we are reminded of the chimerical, genetic hybrids mentioned in the books of Enoch, which were created by the Nefilim (the Sumerian Annunaki and Igigi) before the deluge, when they "sinned against birds, wild animals, reptiles, and fish," creating hybrid creatures to serve them. These monstrosities also terrorized mankind--as the people of Puerto Rico might verify! Perhaps, instead of "looking skyward" for "alien invaders," we should start looking downward, for ancient parasites which are more or less native to our planet.

4. Other Forms

Creature similar to El Chupacabras have been seen around the world, ranging in description from reptilian humanoids (the "Loveland Frog," "Lizard Man," etc.); "little people" of a wide variety of descriptions; bulbous-headed and bug-eyed, stick-thin gray humanoids; and winged anthropomorphic forms. Such appearances, or periods of intense "cryptid" or "alien" activity, are often hallmarked by animal mutilations which involve precise (even surgically-precise), selective organ removals and blood-draining--or else mass disappearances of pets and livestock. These sightings cannot all be dismissed as

hallucinations or hoaxes, particularly the sighting reports which consist of several witnesses' testimony. The sheer number of sightings is too great to be so easily dismissed, and the number of unexplained animal mutilations and disappearances which correspond with these "flaps" would seem to support this. Sometimes these creatures are confronted with violent force, yet almost always they resound "as if hollow," and are otherwise impervious to human weaponry, as in the case of the "Hopkinsville Goblins" of Kentucky, which were shot by the witnesses. "Mothman" of West Virginia, a tall, winged humanoid who haunted the region of Point Pleasant, particularly an old military storage area which had "underground bunkers," made mechanical, whirring sounds as it flew, and did not flap its wings at all. The now-ubiquitous "gray aliens" have been described as "mechanical" in their motions, moving "stiffly" or "jerkily." This will be examined again shortly, but all of these beg an obvious question.

Are all of these "creatures" simply different makes and models of "utukku" or "galatur?" Are they the "golems" and the "ushabtiu" of old, and are they completely mechanical and artificially-intelligent--or are they a melding of living genetics and non-living technology? Human beings are only now starting to create such technologies, but they do exist. What technology might be amassed through a simple cumulative process by an earlier, prehuman civilized species, with hundreds of thousands, or even millions of years of history behind it?

The entity known as Mothman, whose reign of terror lasted for thirteen months during 1967 and 1968 (as chronicled so well by John A. Keel, in *The Mothman Prophecies*), made his visits to West Virginia, which it should be noted is one of the most densely-cavernous areas of North America. So is Kentucky, for that matter, where the Hopkinsville "UFO" entities were encountered. The same can be said of many areas of New England, which as a region has been the haunt of "the Dover Demon, (a term coined by cryptozoologist Loren Coleman)," "lizard men," hairy humanoids, "mad gassers" of reptilian aspect, and a host of other creepy visitors. The New England region is also the location of the "Morehedmoodus" area, near East Haddam, Connecticut; in this area the ground shakes and roars within, as if with "underground tempests," or as if titanic subterranean machinery is at work. This noisy and disconcerting phenomenon is known as "the Moodus Noises," and it has yet to be explained by mainstream science, government, or anyone else with a room-full of Ph.Ds. And of course, neither West Virginia nor New England are excessively far removed from another region which is famed for a distinctive "cryptid," "demon," or "creature:" between both is the Pine Barrens region of New Jersey, home of the infamous "Jersey Devil." This creature not only shares some of the physical characteristics of El Chupacabras and Mothman, but in many accounts resembles the winged reptilian forms of the Sumerian utukku, a dragon, or a medieval cockatrice or basilisk.

With their elusive dispositions, similar characteristics (among their "group," as well as with ancient forms), and nasty habit of collecting organs, blood, or genetic material--not to mention a general aversion to bright daylight or other bright lights, more often than not--the cryptid and "monster" scenario is brought into sharper focus. This multitude of beings is not from "elsewhere;" the odds for that are simply too great, given the variety of forms encountered, and taking into account the already-considerable genetic diversity that we know about which has sprung from the biosphere of the Earth. The scientific principle known as "Occam's Razor" would indicate that, given the choice between a staggering variety of beings from a staggering variety of worlds lost in interstellar space, or a naturally (or even artificially) diverse variety of lifeforms which have sprung from one ecological system, (hence, for instance, the mostly-bipedal, two-handed, two-legged, two-winged, four-flipped configurations, all variations on the earthly vertebrate template), the latter would have to be the most rational and logical choice for a theory of origin. No, they are coming and going at will from some place very near at hand, and the circumstantial evidence would seem to indicate that place to be the hidden bowels of our own planet.



Just a few of the many magazines to feature the "true" stories and commentaries of Richard S. Shaver

PART TWO: RE-INVENTION, PARANOIA, AND DECEPTION

1. THE DEGENERATES BELOW

In December, 1943, the pulp magazine *Amazing Stories* opened a can of worms that would eventually grow into a controversial storm of accusations, ridicule, denial, and resentment. An unknown welder named Richard S. Shaver told the world a story which sounded like a blend of paranoid-schizophrenic delusions, hallucinations, and bad science fiction. Working with the "assistance" of Ray Palmer, *Amazing Stories*' editor, Shaver began to tell his allegedly "true" tales of deep cavern-civilizations, genetically-degenerated, technologically-advanced troglodytes, and an ancient high-technology which gave these beings amazing powers over the unsuspecting inhabitants of the surface world.

Strangely, in addition to their "death-ray (laser or electromagnetic weapon)," "thought-ray (telepathy)," and illusion (holographic) "mech," or machines, these new incarnations of the "deep dweller" concept also had silent, flying ships which Shaver described as "disks," which were kept hangared beneath the Earth's surface, and were used regularly. This was five years before Kenneth Arnold's famous "first" sighting of nine objects over Mt. Ranier in Washington State, objects which he referred to "saucer-like," hence inadvertently helping to coin the modern term "flying saucer." Additionally, the troglodytes could produce "solid illusions" of creatures or objects, even of their disk-like craft, which were temporarily physical, then dissipated or were "turned off." How many times have UFOs just "disappeared" from radar screens around the world?

Shaver's underworld was inhabited by two ancient races which had originally been one, which he termed "dero," for "detrimental robot ("degenerate" would have been more accurate)," and "tero," for "integrative energy robot (the "good guys")." According to the welder-turned-writer, he had not only been contacted and tormented by the beams of these beings, but he had been "helped" by the tero in defeating the assaults of the dero, and had actually been in the cavern-world himself. Readers responded to his accounts in two ways: they either reviled and ridiculed him and his "underworld," which was often depicted as sexually and violently brutal; or they wrote in with letters of support and accounts of their own, in an effort to corroborate his stories! Ultimately, the "Shaver Mystery," as it was called, drove Ray Palmer from *Amazing Stories* and into business for himself, and generated an uproar (and an income) for both he and Shaver that would last, to some degree, until both of their deaths in the 1970s.

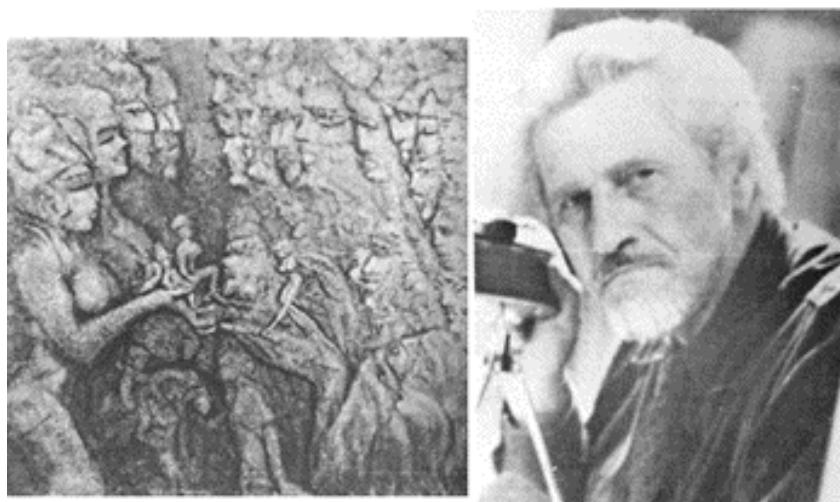
Was Richard Shaver unbalanced and delusional, or was he simply a talented and outrageous storyteller? Or was he telling stories which were half-truth, half-confabulation? In his youth he had spent some time in a mental hospital, which generated contempt and ridicule from others throughout his life; but would not actual, repeated contact by such beings as his "dero" push even a strong mind over the edge

and into partial delusion? "Confabulation" is one common reaction which the human mind uses as a defense mechanism, when it is hiding a traumatic event from full recollection.

Regardless of the proportion of truth to fantasy in his accounts, Shaver's choice of words to describe his tormentors--"robots--" is interesting. While "fleshly" and possessed of animalistic lusts, the dero and tero are nevertheless "programmed," victims to a greater or lesser degree of "harmful" or "de" (destructive, degenerate, etc., according to Shaver) thinking. He attributed the degeneration of the subterraneans to damaging solar and cosmic radiation (from which they still hide underground), and to the destructive radiations of their own "stim" (sexual and other stimulation) machines. They kidnap surface humans, particularly women, for sexual pleasure (or procreation?), eat human beings, and take great delight in causing mayhem, destruction, confusion, and terrifying apparitions (holograms) in the surface world.

As an aside and interjection, Shaver's claims of the abilities of dero machinery would explain many additional mysteries which have not been examined here so far. To touch on just one example would be to examine the case of the Bell Witch of Robertson County, Tennessee, a malevolent and violent entity which terrorized a family in the early 1800s. The "Bell Witch," so-called because "she" haunted the Bell family, went to great lengths to create the illusion that she was omnipresent and omniscient, although she was fooled and eluded upon several occasions by her victims. At first beginning with standard "poltergeist" activities, the "spirit" worked its way up to invisibly-dealt physical blows and attacks, and throughout the ordeal which spanned many years, spoke to, sang for, and reviled the Bell family. The activities of this entity were witnessed by hundreds of people, including Andrew Jackson, the seventh President of the United States. Only now, in our "modern" age, is it noticed that at first the "voice" of the "witch" was booming, hollow and metallic, only later and after considerable practice taking on a regular, well-modulated tone; and the origin of the thing was said to be in the "Bell Witch Cave," a deep and mostly uncharted cavern system that was at that time on the Bell family property. The "Witch" itself claimed that the cave was its home, and forbade anyone to enter there. Local Native Americans had shunned the cave and surrounding land as haunted or cursed, long before the first white settlers arrived. To this day, witnesses swear that the still-unplumbed cavern system is haunted and even guarded by the same evil being.

A terrible story, indeed, and sure to engender fear and foreboding--perhaps the perfect type of story to make certain that a short and direct route to some underworld lair, loaded with "special effects" equipment or "mech," is not tried or violated....Spelunkers and other brave souls have yet to seriously attempt to explore the deep cavern system called "The Bell Witch Cave." It looks like the project may have achieved its desired goal of keeping people out, after all.



Richard S. Shaver and one of his "picture rocks."

As evidence of his obsession with proving the veracity of his stories, Richard S. Shaver was one of the few "contactees" by "alien" or nonhuman forces to make an effort to produce physical evidence. He claimed that many rocks and boulders in specific regions around the world are actually great, shattered libraries of ancient crystals, containing three-dimensional images, or hologram-records. To prove this point, in later years he took to finding such "picture rocks" and cutting them open with a rock-saw, to reveal what he said were glimpses of the ancient records. He would use paint to accentuate or "bring out" these images, but only worked along the edges or strata of shapes which were pre-existing. Some of his "picture rocks" were in fact quite startling, depicting humans or human-like beings, human-animal hybrids, giants, and humans battling with creatures which look suspiciously like nagas, El Chupacabras, or something similar. In 1975, Ray Palmer featured many of these pictures, along with Shaver's commentaries, in *The Secret World*.



***One of Richard Shaver's "Picture Rocks,"
cut with a rock-saw, and revealing human
women fighting a reptilian humanoid similar
in form to "El Chupacabras."***

The forms described by Shaver should be familiar by now. The dero--dark elves, or trolls, or nagas, or utukku/ushabtiu--and the tero--the "noble faeries," Tuatha de Danaan, or "Aryan/Nordic Masters--" have simply manifested in a more contemporary, pseudo-scientific form. The naga "vimana" disk-craft are present, and the abduction and genetic rape motif of all underworld goblins/faeries/nagas is present as well. The "treasure of the Nibelungs," or the hoarded wealth of dragons, has been replaced by ancient

and super-scientific "mech," a technology which bestows godlike powers upon its owners. And like the trolls, goblins, vampires, and the rest of the ages-old underworld crew, these subterranean beings are in hiding from the sun, living in mole-like terror of its direct rays. A relationship between Shaver's underworld inhabitants, and those of the past, is hopefully not so much literal and based in some terrible reality, as it is archetypal and obvious.

2. THE MASKS MAY CHANGE, THE PLAY'S THE SAME

The final three decades of the twentieth century have been filled with rumors: conspiracy theories about alien abductions, plots for world domination shared between aliens and "secret government," illuminati cabals, and the like. Several interesting variations on age-old theories have permeated the field of UFOlogy and conspiracy literature alike, and in many places the two have overlapped and in fact become completely blurred into one. It is these latter areas which are of particular interest and significance to the study at hand.



One of the most commonly-reported manifestations of "alien invaders" are the "ebe (extraterrestrial biological entities)" type, commonly called the "grays." These beings are the variety most-often reported in abduction accounts; and they are highly ectomorphic, with scrawny, underdeveloped limbs and bodies, oversized heads, and extraordinarily-large, black eyes (some abductees have reported these to be actually "reptilian" or "birdlike" eyes with slit pupils, the "blackness" only a protective artificial film, like sunglasses). They are from three to five feet in height, averaging around four feet tall. Again, their very physiology gives away their origins, for large, protruding eyes, with large slit pupils and needing an artificial protective covering, would be hard to equate with a race which has mastered, and perhaps been genetically-prepared for, interplanetary or interstellar travel. Outer Space is an extremely bright, radiation-filled environment. The type of eyes described are those of a creature which spends most of its time in the darkness, as they are designed for optimum light-reception; and the shaded coverings, for venturing out into the surface world, are really self-explanatory. Similarly, their bodies, small and easily-maneuverable through tight spaces, with small surface area and a minimum of body-weight, are ideal for an underground environment. Their method of locomotion, generally described as "shuffling," and "hips moving strangely" or "sideways," is another indication that they have developed in a relatively cramped place, or even one where tunnels are commonplace. They are often described as smelling "musty," "like a snake," or "like rotten eggs."



This type of entity allegedly abducts unfortunate human beings, conducts medical or genetic testing on them, sometime removing sperm and ova for use in "hybridization experiments," or for purposes unknown. The abductions almost always take place under cover of darkness (doubly-helpful to the molesters, since the "harmful" sun has set, and people are drowsy, or asleep). The victim is taken into a UFO (usually disk-shaped, or shaped like a child's spinning-top) for experimentation, and also for a form of indoctrination, consisting of intense three-dimensional audio-visual presentations. The primary message of these presentations seems to deal with a concern over human destruction of the Earth's biosphere and biodiversity (recall the recurrent "faerie" interest in the same thing--a steady supply of genetic materials). This becomes even more telling when it is recalled that the first underground atomic tests were concurrent with the resurgence of "witnessed activity" of UFOs on a previously unprecedented scale--Those tests may have rattled more than a few windows in the desert! During the medical aspect of the abduction, local anesthetics are seldom if ever used, and the victim is left with a type of post-traumatic stress syndrome which is at first marked by amnesia and mental distress or unease, sometimes followed by nightmares, self-imposed social isolation, and eventually a total recall of the experience, either through natural recovery of memory, or through hypnotic regression therapy.

Other common themes emerge as well. The entities are described by their victims as "drone-like," "robotic," "clinical," and so forth, and are also described as "reptilian," "lizard-like," or as having reptilian, birdlike, or amphibian skin texture. In many instances the abduction experience moves to a "cavern city," "cavern world," or "underground base."

It is in these latter, subterranean places, that "hybrid beings," having "alien," human, or other animal characteristics are reported as being seen in development, along with cannibalism and torture of human beings. One such site has been alleged by several researchers and "abductees" as being beneath Archuleta Mesa, near Dulce, New Mexico. In these prolonged episodes, other beings enter the scene, such as "hybrid" children who are frail, pale, and ectomorphic, but generally human in appearance. Some abductees have even said that these children look "like fairies!" Other entities are not so harmless, such as a tall, "human" type with an aristocratic, "Aryan" look; these are generally referred to as "Nordics" in

the UFO literature, and bear more than a slight resemblance to the "Light Elves" and "Tuatha de Danaan" of old. Are these the "fairy children," hybrids and "changelings," all grown up and hard at work? Another type of entity is more sinister in both appearance and attitude, described as a "reptilian humanoid," "lizard man," or "reptoid," and ranging from five, to eight or nine feet in height. These "reptoids" are usually characterized as being "in charge" of the other types, but upon occasion are said to report to taller, even stranger entities which resemble skeletally-thin, giant "grays," or even "giant mantids." Normal surface humans, paramilitary in nature or appearance, are also seen in these underground areas.

Another interesting factor is that all of the entities described go to great lengths to convince their captives that they have come from "far away," from distant stars, planets, and "vibrational frequencies" or dimensions. They have come all this distance because they are "worried about humanity," or some such heartfelt propaganda (as they stick a huge needle in a woman's abdomen, or up someone's nose, without even local anesthetic). Yet the biology of all the different types or castes of abductors, as horrific as it might appear to superstitious human eyes, is essentially that of animal forms which are natural to the Earth: mammalian and reptilian. Obviously, it is very important to these beings that such a logical connection not be made. If there is even a shred of truth to UFO abduction accounts, then it is more than apparent that the abductors want their victims, and humanity at large, to believe that they are from "somewhere else." While humanity looks continually upward at enigmas in the sky, what is transpiring beneath our very feet?

Additional folk and literature parallels are apparent in the accounts described. The "grays" are identical to the order-following, human-abducting, drone-like GALATUR and Ushabtiu of the Sumerian and Egyptian underworld mythologies. In Shetland Island folklore, "little men" who abducted people were sometimes referred to as the "grey neighbors," and the "grays" also bear a strong resemblance in head and torso structure to the cryptid "El Chupacabras." The methodical imps and djinn which served Satan and Shaitan come to mind as well, and of course, Richard Shaver's "dero" are similar, especially in their use of high technology. The "Nordics," sometimes seemingly the "enemies" of the gray and reptoid types, are often reported as working side-by-side with them in the underground facilities or labs, which recalls the fact that the some nagas were said to look "almost human," as well as the mercurial dispositions of the aristocratic or "Aryan" faeries, the light elves/de Danaan. Additionally, the apocryphal hybrid offspring of Nefilim and humans were described as having an extremely "nordic" or Aryan appearance, as described in *The Book of Lamech*, and the Slavonic *Book of Enoch*, and were also said to have a reptilian patch of skin ("badge of priesthood") on their chests or elsewhere. In Celtic Welsh myth, the lord of the underworld of Annwn had a "magical cauldron" which produced an endless supply of warriors for him...Was this an "earth-mother, primal-womb" archetype, or was it instead synonymous with producing offspring through gene-splicing, the "cauldron" actually a "test-tube?"



The reptoids or lizard-men are familiar, as nagas, utukku, ammut, "dragon kings," goblins, trolls, and so on. They, also, are often described as smelling "like rotten eggs" or like sulphur. Both the reptilians and the grays have in recent years passed from the UFO research realm and into "conspiracy" literature, where they are said to be involved in "controlling the Earth," or are in the process of "taking over." Several authors have published the theory that the reptilians are masters of illusion, holographic projection, or are in fact physical shapeshifters which are replacing world leaders, government officials, and public figures, as an insidious "fifth column." Here again are the "changelings" of European folklore, the hologram-utilizing dero, and the "Serpent Men," precisely as described by the fiction writer Robert E. Howard in his pulp-fiction tales of King Kull. This is by no means a "new idea," revelation, or suspicion, but is as ancient as the concept of an underworld itself.

3. INTO THE OUT OF

This treatise would not be complete without an examination of another mysterious player from the depths, the MIB or Men In Black. These cool cats figure prominently in both UFO and conspiracy literature. Thanks to the excellent work of researchers and writers John Keel and the late Jim Keith, as well as to the work of a host of others, many small and seemingly inconsequential facts have been obtained from witnesses and preserved.

"Men in Black" seem to fall into two categories: the standard men in black, whom may be actual agents of secret government or military investigative/disinformation groups; and the MIB, whom Keel indicates are somehow in league with, or originating from, the unseen forces behind the various cryptid or creature sightings, as well as the UFO phenomenon. It is the latter category, the MIB, which has bearing here.

These "mystery men" are usually described as of varying height and build, but more often than not they are on the thin side; they generally wear dark or black business-like clothing, dark hats, and sunglasses (again, the eye protection from the sun!). They are either "olive-skinned" and vaguely "oriental" or "asiatic;" or they are "nordic" or "Scandinavian" in complexion, hair color, and physique. From the basic template of these two forms, strange variations have been reported, such as total hairlessness (not even having eyebrows or eyelashes); overly-large, protruding eyes (a "non-mammalian" trait, for the most part, or perhaps due to an unaccustomed lack of atmospheric pressure); wheezing and other trouble breathing, as if unused to earthly (or surface?) air pressure (aeroembolism); unnatural joint movement and locomotion; "reptilian" or "frog-like" cast of skin texture and facial features; webbed fingers; sulphurous or "metallic" odor; and a host of additional oddities of physical configuration. Add to all of this the fact that they are often ignorant or in amazement of the most ordinary surface-world activities--trying to drink gelatin, refusing food and taking a pill instead, stealing or asking for small common objects (like writing pens) as apparently prized souvenirs--and they become even less human through their behavior. They often exhibit a strong interest in the sexuality or sexual habits of those they confront, and the longer they remain on the surface, the more erratic, disoriented, lethargic, or "drunk" they seem to become (a side-effect of rapid de-pressurization, or aeroembolism). With cryptic statements they have sometimes identified themselves to their unwilling visitants as being citizens of "the Nation of the Third Eye," an occult or secret society reference still widely utilized in symbology and ritual today by some "brotherhoods" of "enlightened" human beings, but which hearkens back to the "third eye" of the Naga, or the "skull-pearl" of Chinese dragons. Any relationship this "Nation of the Third Eye" might have to modern-day secret societies is debatable, but the parallel exists.

Another clue lies in the fact that they arrive to their victim's doorsteps in shiny, black cars which are in pristine condition--i.e., "like new." The puzzling thing is that these vehicles are almost always decades out of date, and sometimes seem to be composites of several different makes of cars (still out of date). To remain unravaged by the passage of time--oxidation, dry-rot of tires, and so forth--they would have to be warehoused and maintained in an environment of constant temperature and low humidity, away from weather, sun, and extreme changes in temperature. Add to this the manner in which both the cars and the men suddenly and inexplicably vanish, as if swallowed up by the Earth--but by now the premise is

obvious. Some caverns are damp, but many others are exceedingly dry, and all remain constant in temperature, year 'round, after a certain depth.

History and folklore both have parallels. Folklore is filled with "dark men," "men dressed in black," and "grim reapers," often identified in previous centuries as sorcerers, demons, warlocks, or other "servants of the devil," and of course the odor of sulphur and brimstone was a trademark of his from way back. During the plague years of the middle ages, entities resembling both MIB and the now-standard "gray aliens" were often seen in areas which would shortly thereafter be stricken with an outbreak of the dread disease. Throughout history, on the eve of major events, people have repeatedly seen or been harassed by such beings. As Keel points out in *Disneyland of the Gods*, and his other excellent books, Julius Caesar, Napoleon, and even Malcolm X all reported encounters with this variety of terrifying being. Hitler also was alleged to have had his share of midnight visits from a mysterious "Tibetan," and through him to have met "the New Man," a sort of super-Aryan, whom he believed came from the interior of the Earth, and of whom he was most afraid.

How much fear, confusion, and human suffering can be traced to uncanny visits from these "robotic yet human" agents provocateur? Where are they from, who do they work for, and what is their long-term agenda? Could it be that their goal is to generate confusion and divisions, to keep humanity "looking upward" for an invasion that will never come? The "invaders" may already be here, and may have been here all along. The evidence is in the folklore, religions, myths, literature, and archetypes of humankind. Perhaps they're not "extraterrestrial," but are "intraterrestrial," and there's a vast, unknown world beneath our feet, stretching down through secret, twisting tunnels and deep caverns to the Mohorovicic layer itself, which is an anomalous cavern region, deep beneath the upper crust. What if there is an unknown world beneath our feet, a world that is dependent upon the biodiversity and genetic wealth on the Earth's surface; a world which has been exploiting that wealth for thousands or millions of years, victimizing the ignorant savages who roam the face of the sunlit world? Or could all of the evidence be circumstantial and without merit, simply a misinterpreted conglomeration of coincidence and mis-identified animals, natural phenomena, and archetypes from the human collective unconscious? The critic could toss in an endless supply of over-active imaginations, down through the millennia, but the evidence--dating back as it does for thousands of years of human traditions, and continuing right up through the present day--says otherwise.

The reptilian, vampiric, robotic, and demonic are all characteristics which have been attributed to underworld beings down through the ages. They have haunted mankind's imagination and nightmares since our most remote time. These "archetypal" images speak to us of supernatural terrors and mysteries, but what if they are instead natural, just technologically-advanced to a degree that has only until recently been beyond our comprehension--and therefore considered "magical" or impossible in their level of sophistication? If the latter is the case, then we would do well as a species to become more aware of not only our own planet, but of our mythic and folkloric heritage, for it speaks not of a symbiosis, but of a nearly-invisible Parasite, dwelling in the depths.

--Wm. Michael Mott

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