

# FLYING SAUCERS, SPOON-BENDING AND ATLANTIS: A STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF NEW MYTHOLOGIES

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**E**nter any non-second hand bookshop in this country, or in the United States for that matter, and the chances are that one of its largest sections will come under the title of 'Popular Science'. The fact that this section is so large, and the fact that most of the books contained within it are cheap paperbacks running into fourth or fifth reprints, is no accident. Consult any catalogue of non-fiction best sellers, and it will be found that popular science works, such as Lyall Watson's *Lifetide*,<sup>1</sup> or his earlier works, are invariably at the top of the list. This fact has been especially evident in the last ten years or so, and shows every sign of continuing to be so. The popularity of the issues dealt with by popular science literature is further evidenced by the fact that the mass circulation Sundays and dailies, such as the *Sunday Express* and the *Daily Mirror*, frequently publish 'sensational' articles on popular science issues, and they do so sufficiently often to suggest that their readership enjoys such material to a degree which puts it second only to sex and scandal as a matter of great public concern. Finally, mention might be made of the fact that in recent years popular science journals, such as *U.F.O.*; *Prediction*; *Alpha*; and possibly even *Omni*,<sup>2</sup> have proliferated and thrived. There can be no doubt, then, that interest in popular science is not only widespread, but is growing, and what is more, is distributed amongst the general populace, rather than the academic élites. Indeed the distinction must be drawn between 'popular science' and 'science-which-is-popular'. The latter is no more nor less than a popularization of that 'scientific' world view which is generally held by established/élite groups, and takes the form, say, of Bronowski's popularization of scientific thinking, Calder's popularization of physics, and Attenborough's popularization of biology. 'Popular science', however, is that form of 'scientific' thinking which has its roots in the general populace

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rather than in the institutions of higher education, and as we shall see, involves a view of the cosmos very much at odds with that put forward by SCIENCE. It would be possible, in the interests of clarity, to call such 'science', pseudo-science, but to do so at this stage would be to prejudge its character and accept the 'establishment's' view of it. Let us, then, retain the term 'popular science' remembering that its 'popularism' is more a synonym for its 'alternative' character, than for its 'popular' character, at least in the statistical/nominalistic sense, even though, as we have argued, it is 'popular' in the latter sense as well.

In this article I shall attempt to define and delimit the field that I have so far called by the name of 'popular science', and I shall do so by presenting what I hope will be an unbiased description of its claims, concerns, and overall cosmologies. I shall do this via what is normally called a 'structural analysis' of its literature. Secondly, and more importantly, I shall sketch the outline of a 'structuralist' theory which would account for the increasing influence which its protagonists have over the popular imagination, and will do so on the grounds that, as yet, it represents a phenomenon which conventional sociology has either completely misunderstood, or, worse, not understood at all.

What is 'popular science'? In order to answer this question let me first of all give a rather random selection of book titles which publishers and booksellers see fit to group under this singular heading, or some such other heading of equal singularity. The fact that the authors of these books repeatedly refer to each other, rather than to outsiders, suggests that publishers and booksellers are by and large right in following their classificatory instincts, and that these books represent not the sum total of their addition, a mere aggregate of titles, but a distinct phenomenon in their own right, a 'social current', in the true Durkheimian sense of that term. Here are some titles and authors, most of which have been best sellers in the last year or two:

*Supernature; The Romeo Error; Gifts of Unknown Things; Lifetide;* by Lyall Watson.

*In The Shadow of Atlantis; The Flying Saucer Vision; City of Revelation; Earth Spirit;* by John Mitchell.

*The Indefinite Boundary; The Unknown Powers;* by Guy Lyon Playfair.

*Mysteries of Forgotten Worlds; The Mystery of Atlantis; Without a Trace; The Bermuda Triangle;* by Charles Berlitz.

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*Earth Magic; A World Atlas of Mysteries*; by Francis Hitching.

*An Occult History of the World*; by John Brennan.

*Chariot of the Gods*; by Erich von Daniken.

*King Arthur and the Legacy of Albion; The Secret Wisdom*; by Geoffrey Ashe.

The books listed above represent the tiniest fraction of the number of titles that could be listed, for we are in fact talking about a multi-million pound industry, with original and reprint sales running into millions, if not billions. The question arises, then, what do these books have in common? For at this stage we simply wish to identify and describe the phenomenon at hand.

The first and most obvious feature which these books share is a common concern with certain recurrent topics, topics which, although well known, are only of marginal concern to orthodox science. Again, let me give a fairly random list of these topics. I have taken it from the Index of Francis Hitching's *World Atlas of Mysteries*, a book which attempts to summarize the debates, findings, and concerns of popular scientific literature.<sup>3</sup> Listed below, then, is a representative sample of typical concerns: Alchemy; Animal Navigation; King Arthur; Astro-Archaeology; Atlantis; The Bermuda Triangle; Cosmic Catastrophes; Cro-Magnon Cave Art; The Deluge; Druids; Easter Island Statues; E.S.P.; Evolution; Geomancy; Glastonbury; The Ice Age; The Indo-Europeans; Jesus Christ; Labyrinths; Loch Ness Monsters; The Earth's Electro-Magnetic Field; Megalithic Tombs; Mythology; Ancient Navigators; Astral Flight; The Phoenicians; Para-Psychology; The Pyramids; Stonehenge; Transcendental Meditation; U.F.O.s; Water Divining; Witchcraft; and so on in a pattern which at first sight appears to contain no definite thematic. It is clear from this list that we are not dealing, exclusively at least, with the occult, or the paranormal, as it is sometimes known. Nor are we dealing with what might be called 'the frontiers of scientific research'. Although occult topics, like Alchemy, E.S.P., Psycho-Kinesis (Spoon-bending), and Reincarnation<sup>4</sup> are well represented, they are by no means exclusively dominant, for so too are such topics as animal and human evolution, to say nothing of quantum mechanics and high energy physics. (Later we shall see that the occult forms a systematic *aspect* of our subject matter, but is by no means coterminous with it.) That we are not dealing with 'the frontiers of scientific research' is evident from the fact that many of the areas listed, like The Bermuda Triangle, are non-topics altogether,

let alone being 'frontier' ones. From the point of view of SCIENCE such topics correspond to no reality whatsoever, except possibly a psychiatric one! Nor are we dealing with the 'supernatural', for, as will become much clearer later, popular science writers are even *less* supernaturalistic in their thinking than is the average scientist. Indeed, and again as we shall see later, opposition to the supernaturalistic doctrines of Christianity, and other like-minded religions, unites *all* popular science writers whatever else their differences might be. So far we have said of our random list of topics that they are *not* united by a concern with the paranormal, the supernatural, or advanced/esoteric research. What, then, does unite them?

Let us take one example of a perennial topic which recurs time and time again in these writings, and show how it reveals to us, in the *way* it is discussed, the quintessential features of *all* of the topics listed above, and thus the quintessential features of popular science. The topic I wish to consider is the so called *Turin Shroud*, which it would be no exaggeration to describe as being the most holy relic in western Christendom. The Turin Shroud (interpretations aside) is simply a large piece of linen cloth which is kept in a tomb-like shrine in the Roman Catholic Cathedral of Turin. It is nominally the property of the Duke of Savoy. To many millions of Christians, and most particularly Catholics, this piece of linen cloth is the actual grave shroud in which Jesus Christ was wrapped when He was taken down from the Cross, and in which He must have lain when the Resurrection took place. Although the authenticity of the Shroud can certainly be doubted, although not proved, what cannot be doubted is the fact that it contains an 'image' of a man who appears to have been crucified in a manner remarkably similar to the crucifixion which is described in the Four Gospels. To the believer this image is the image of Christ Himself, and provides the spectator with a testifying and moving reminder of His Passion. To the non-believer, however, the image on the Shroud is a 'forgery' of some kind devised as religious propaganda for a more idolatrous and gullible age.<sup>5</sup> There the matter rests, and someone approaching the enigma of the Shroud for the first time may take his pick of these two unlikely and unproven hypotheses. How do popular science writers handle this topic?

Without exception they dismiss both the RELIGIOUS *and* the SCIENTIFIC explanations of how the image on the Shroud originated, producing as a result explanations which to the former would be

positively blasphemous and to the latter positively absurd. The point about these explanations, the details of which we shall consider later, is that they take-off from that point where the Shroud itself has become an 'anomaly', at least to the satisfaction of those considering it. The reasoning process proceeds roughly as follows: *Thesis*: The Shroud is a testament to a supernatural event, namely the Resurrection. *Doubt*: If that is the case then why was this fact not apparent until the invention of photography made it plain that the 'original' image was less efficacious than the *photographed* image? Do incarnate Gods only reveal themselves on film? *Anti-thesis*: The Shroud is a forgery. *Doubt*: If this is so then how does a Medieval or Renaissance painter ensure that the image he has 'forged' is going to be more realistic when photographed than when seen with the naked eye? Is this another case of Leonardo's anticipatory genius? It is clear from this 'dialectic' that the Turin Shroud, whatever else it may be, is genuinely anomalous, both to orthodox RELIGION and to orthodox SCIENCE, and it is *this* fact which accounts for interest in it, as well as paving the way for the maverick speculations of the popular scientists. It is anomalous because although RELIGION is quite happy with 'miracles', and even with the 'faith' upon which a belief in miracles is based, it is quite out of its depth when the discussion shifts its ground to photographic negatives and radiation burns, for there is nothing in either miracles or faith which requires them to take *this* form. SCIENCE, meanwhile, is quite happy with both negatives and radiation burns, and indeed with the whole panoply of Shroud research, but the same sort of silence descends upon *it* when it is required to link these phenomena with events that took place in a province of the Roman Empire over 1900 years ago! To put the point being made here as mildly and moderately as possible, we may say that the Turin Shroud presents orthodox thought, of *all* kinds, with certain difficulties, and does so for the reasons given. In other words if the essence of the Shroud is its anomalous character, and if the shroud is typical of the objects and specimens which excite the curiosity of popular scientists, we may conclude that it is the *anomalous* which holds all of our listed topics together. Let us consider one other example just to illustrate this point.

Let us take the case of Stonehenge. Recalibrated dating evidence from archaeology, plus sophisticated calculations from a new discipline called astro-archaeology, make it reasonably clear that the stone monu-

ment on Salisbury Plain is an 'anomaly' of momentous proportions. It would appear that between 5000 and 3500 years ago ancient Britons, woad and all, were calculating the movements of the heavenly bodies in a manner unrivalled until the 20th century. Neither RELIGION nor SCIENCE can really cope with this 'fact', if 'fact' it be. For in the view of Christianity Stonehenge was the product of an ignorant and evil paganism, and therefore better forgotten than studied, whilst in the view of *conventional science*, that is conventional archaeology and anthropology, Stonehenge is little more than a heap of stones put together according to a rudimentary symbolic logic.<sup>6</sup> If, on grounds such as these, the Turin Shroud and Stonehenge are genuine anomalies, in that they are unassimilable into the paradigms of conventional thought, then so too is every one of the topics listed above. Indeed the anomalous nature of these topics is the common thread which runs through them, a fact which provides us with an answer to our first question. Popular science, whatever it may say, is *about* anomalies, and the anomalies it is about pertain to the conventional wisdom of both RELIGION and SCIENCE.

However, there is much more to popular science than a simple concern with the anomalous, for not only does popular science answer the questions which it raises for itself, i.e. it re-locates the Turin Shroud and Stonehenge, but it also creates an overall *consistency* between the various different answers it gives. On the first point, i.e. re-location, we find that writers such as Daniken,<sup>7</sup> Charroux,<sup>8</sup> and Kolosimo<sup>9</sup> confidently assert that Jesus Christ was a spaceman, and that his apparent resurrection was in fact an act of healing carried out with advanced medical techniques. Radiation burns on his burial shroud are probably residual indications of this fact. Writers such as Graeber,<sup>10</sup> meanwhile, assert with a similar degree of confidence that the Ancients possessed a knowledge of high energy physics which far surpassed our own, and which in the hands of selected initiates, of whom Christ was one, made resurrection an *actual* possibility. Many popular science writers see megalithic temples, such as the Pyramids and Stonehenge, as 're-birth factories', where psychic currents were manipulated in order to influence the coming together and falling apart of souls and bodies. Such activities, which we interpret as 'religious rituals', were in fact scientific procedures of Frankensteinian dimensions. Objects such as the Turin Shroud are reminders of our *advanced* past. On the second point, i.e. consistency between answers,

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we find that popular science does not simply 'solve' this or that mystery, drawing upon *ad hoc* and unrelated hypotheses in order to do so, but that the answers it gives to one problem are systematically related to the answers it gives to another. Reading the works of Charles Berlitz, for example, we find that there is a connection between Stonehenge and the migratory habits of eels, to say nothing of the connection between both of these and ancient Roman pottery and the racial features of the Basques! These diverse phenomena are all linked through the Lost Continent of Atlantis.<sup>11</sup>

We can see that although popular science is thoroughly 'empirical', in that it does not resort to supernaturalistic explanations, it nevertheless puts forward its explanations with a *certainty* which is only otherwise found in religious dogmatics. It is only 'empirical' in that it explains the empirical, and that it does with a 'thoroughness' which leaves conventional empiricism standing, but it is not 'empirical' in the sense that it refuses to go beyond what the empirical 'gives'. It is, in other words, totally and unashamedly 'metaphysical' in its approach, a feature of it which accounts for the fury which its adherents arouse in the breasts of the conventional. Popular science, then, is genuinely cosmological, in the old-fashioned sense of that term. Its articulators provide their readers with elaborate and internally consistent cosmologies which start with the basic constituents of the Cosmos, proceed through the Creation of Matter and Life, and end up with a totalistic overview of human history and human destiny which would make the works of a Karl Marx or Oswald Spengler appear 'small scale' by comparison.

Let us summarize what we have so far said. Contemporary society is witnessing the rise of a vast current of opinion, or intellectual fashion, or social movement, which is providing people with 'alternative cosmologies' to those offered by conventional religion and conventional science. It is doing so through a meticulous and thoroughly empirical investigation of all those issues which the latter would rather forget or ignore, that is through the anomalous. Popular science is thus like a gigantic computer into which it is possible to feed more or less any question, and from which one will receive an answer in no uncertain terms. By comparison RELIGION and SCIENCE are relatively speechless, except of course in their condemnation of these new 'barbarians', with their sophisticated quackery and half-baked education.

Before we accept this view, however, let us allow these people to speak for themselves, for only by understanding what they have to say will we be able come to terms with them. In the next section, therefore, I would like to summarize what I take to be the essential features of the cosmologies which they are constructing. In other words I shall treat their works as *myths*, as surface narratives which are ultimately generated by hidden presuppositions and categorical structures of a mental nature. The intention of treating them in this manner is to 'get at' the semantic *machinery* which enables popular scientists to grind out their million and one propositions in reply to the million and one questions which are put to them. Having done this we may then be in a position to explain their increasing hold over the popular imagination.

Although popular scientists have in common the fact that they all delight in the sublation of the anomalous, and in the fact that their twin enemies are orthodox science and orthodox religion, in other respects they show marked differences from each other. These differences, however, do not proceed to the point where there are as many cosmological myths as there are writers, for close examination of their works reveals that each of them adheres to one of *two* possible mythological viewpoints. It is to the examination of these two myths that I would now like to turn.

The first tradition, which I shall call *Danikenism*, after its notorious founder Erich von Daniken, adheres to a myth which runs approximately as follows (this myth is a summary of the implicit, and sometimes explicit, message contained in the works of such writers as Daniken, Kolosimo, the Lansbergs,<sup>12</sup> Drake,<sup>13</sup> and so on):

*Myth 1:*

Once upon a time the Earth was peopled by proto-hominids who knew nothing of science, art, urban living, and all that we would call 'culture', and whose way of life was little removed from that of their primate forebears. At some stage in the evolution of this hominid species the Earth was visited by Spacemen from another star system. These Spacemen came from a civilization which was technologically far more advanced than even modern western civilization is, and was certainly far more advanced than the one it encountered on Earth. These Spacemen, whose intentions were benign and enlightened, did two things during their earthly residence: First of all they copulated with Earthly women, and thus produced a species of human beings who were markedly superior to their mothers, and their mothers' race. Modern man is the descendant of this new hybrid species. Secondly they attempted to teach Earthly man all that they themselves knew. This teaching process involved education in the normal sense, and education by example. In the case of the latter the Spacemen constructed the fine megalithic structures

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which can be found throughout the whole Earth, and which were all built during what is conventionally called the Stone Age, that is long before man himself could have built them. (The evidence that these events happened as described is threefold: First of all, worldwide myths all speak of masculine 'Gods' who impregnated earthly females to give birth to exceptional 'Sons', of which the *New Testament* story of Jesus Christ and his 'Virgin Birth' is but one minor example. Secondly, these same myths always account for the origin of 'civilization' in terms of a 'God' who came from the sky, and who taught men the arts of civilized living. Thirdly, megalithic buildings and monuments, from the Pyramids of the Old and New Worlds, to the statues of Easter Island, are so advanced in their construction that they *must* have been built by superior intelligences to those of the then contemporary men.) The story continues: After the Spacemen left Earth, presumably optimistic about the outcome of their experiment, men not only forgot the lessons they had been taught, but, what is more, began *systematically* to misunderstand those lessons. For example, they came to believe that the Spacemen were 'Gods', which of course they were not. The world's religions are thus like so many 'cargo cults', in which devotees 'worship' deified Spacemen, and engage in practices which simplify and parody the behaviour of the Spacemen themselves. For example, megalithic alignments which can only be seen from the air, like the lines at Nazca (Peru), are copies of the Spacemen's signalling systems, and attempt to 'recall' the Spacemen back to Earth. In other words human history has *not* seen a movement from Religion to Science, as is conventionally believed by post-Comtian thinkers, but a movement from Science back to Religion, even though the former never died out entirely. Human history has witnessed Mathematics becoming Numerology, Astronomy becoming Alchemy, Biology becoming Physiognomy, and Sociology becoming Theology, indeed in an exactly opposite way to that outlined by Auguste Comte. Following the departure of the Spacemen man thus plunged into barbarism and superstition, although he did so within the debris and framework of an extremely advanced civilization. *Some* men, however, remained true to the original teachings of the Spacemen, and these men have been responsible, whether they knew it or not, for the advance of Science during the last two millennia. They form an unbroken tradition from Democritus, through Lucretius/Bacon/Newton to Einstein in our own times. Owing to their work, and to the enduring power of religion over the remainder of the human race, the world is now approaching a crisis point of momentous proportions. The forces of Enlightenment and Science are now about equal to the forces of Barbarism and Religion. However, as this crisis approaches, the Spacemen, who have been watching these developments all along, are returning to Earth, a fact which accounts for the recent upsurge in 'flying saucer' sightings. The Spacemen are trying to re-establish contact with enlightened elements on the Earth so that they can help them set up a world Government which will manage its affairs in a manner consistent with the Spacemen's original intentions. It is to be expected, then, that following a highly dramatic period of social cataclysm, in which the forces of Religion will destroy themselves, the world will re-emerge a happier and better place, with 'the enlightened ones', that is with the adherents of True Science, in charge.

Approximately half of all of those writers whom we have called popular scientists adhere to this myth, or some variant of it. It is also to be expected that all of those millions of people who 'believe' in 'flying saucers', that is who 'believe' that the Earth is currently being

visited by Spacemen, must of necessity seriously countenance the credibility of the above story. Such people provide an obvious market for pedlars of this version of human history.

Other writers, however, have a *completely* different view, even though they share with their Danikenist counterparts an equivalent tendency towards the cosmic dimension. This second tradition, which I shall call *Atlanticism*, on the grounds that it involves a more or less literal resurrection of Plato's theory of *Atlantis*, found in the *Timaeus* and more elaborately in the *Critias*,<sup>14</sup> proceeds as follows:

Myth 2:

In the Beginning man lived in a perfect society, so perfect indeed that its concerns, pursuits and social arrangements would be quite incomprehensible to modern man, whether he be Scientific or Religious. This was a society that collectively pursued an inner spirituality with itself and an outer harmony with nature, and it did so on the basis of an absolute knowledge of the Reality behind the appearances of things. Man was in effect a God, and therefore had no need of Gods other than Himself. The knowledge that characterized this society bore little or no relationship to what passes for 'knowledge' today, for unlike contemporary Science, such knowledge concerned itself with ethics, meaning, and beauty, as well as mere fact, but unlike contemporary Religion, it based its knowledge of these things on fact, and not on faith and personal fancy. Indeed knowledge knew none of the false dichotomies, like that between fact and theory, which plagues it today. This society, which was worldwide in its dimensions, even though it was only loosely held together, was *centred* on a continental island called Atlantis, situated somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean. Plato's account of Atlantis is thus not a 'myth', in the usual derogatory sense of the term, nor is it a political tract, like the *Republic*, but rather is it a serious and factual account of the early period of human history (The Age of Gold). Atlantis was destroyed in a great flood (The Biblical Deluge), which brought the last Ice Age to an end, leaving only the battered remnants of its provinces still intact (China, Sumer, Egypt, Indus Valley, Britain and Meso-America). That is why the world's civilizations are so alike each other, and why the further back in time one goes the more alike and unified they become, for they all derive from one single source, the Lost Continent of Atlantis. The survivors of the Deluge managed to recreate the original civilization (known to archaeologists as the Bronze Age), although their efforts never matched the original. Thus Knossos, Thebes, and other cities of the Bronze Age are second-rate copies of Poseidonis, the capital city of Atlantis. Human history is thus a history of gradual degeneration coupled with brief periods of renewal that never captured the original greatness (Athens, Rome, etc.). In the last two thousand years or so this process of degeneration has accelerated, as barbarians from the steppes of Asia have swept away the great civilizations of the Ancient Mediterranean, and as modern Europeans, the descendants of those barbarians, have swept away the great civilizations of the Americas. Only in remote parts of the world, like Tibet, Siberia, Southern India, Ireland and Bolivia/Chile, does the original 'idea' remain, not intact, but still alive. This surviving 'idea' is known to initiates as 'The Esoteric Tradition', which periodically manifests itself in the works of great religious teachers, scientists, and poets. In other words there is a 'secret knowledge', of which 'the occult' is

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the closest approximation, although even the occult in its modern form is a bastardized version of the Wisdom taught at Atlantis. For example, modern Astrology, whilst far superior to modern Astronomy, at least in its basic assumptions, is far *inferior* to the Astrology which would have been practised at the Bronze Age Stonehenge, or formerly at Atlantis itself. The modern world, based as it is on the twin falsities of Science and Religion, is clearly heading for destruction, and it may well be the case that the Esoteric Tradition will inherit the Debris which follows, although this will depend upon the intelligence, understanding and actual behaviour of its adherents. Like Noah before them, modern Esoterists must build themselves an Ark, albeit a symbolic one this time.

The leading Atlanticist is the writer John Mitchell, whose books<sup>15</sup> *In The Shadow of Atlantis*, *City of Revelation* and *Earth Spirit* have the same status with Atlanticists as Daniken's *Chariot of the Gods* has with flying saucer buffs, or Danikenists. Mitchell's disciples and compatriots include such writers as Hitching, Steiger,<sup>16</sup> Brennan,<sup>17</sup> and Otto Muck,<sup>18</sup> all of whom have elaborated in some way or other on the above myth. It is interesting to note that Lyall Watson, perhaps the best known and most 'respectable' of popular science writers, is an adherent of Atlanticism even though he has never actually discussed the Atlantis myth itself. However it is *implicit* in everything he says, as indeed it is in the thought of all those who adhere to occult beliefs and principles. To believe in the occult is to lend credibility to the Atlanticist view of history, in the same way that to believe in flying saucers is to lend credibility to the Danikenist view.

To anyone trained in the Lévi-Straussian tradition of structural analysis it is immediately apparent that these myths are not variants of a common type, but belong to two radically different types. Secondly, it is also apparent that neither of them, at least at a 'deep structural' level, is 'new', for on closer examination it becomes clear that each of them is a variant on two mythological traditions which extend as far back as 'Western Civilization' itself. Let us briefly examine the nature and implications of these two points.

Danikenism represents a mythological variant, or a variant in mythological form, of that tradition which, on the one hand, derives its roots from prophetic Judaism and millenarian Christianity, and on the other derives its roots from that form of mechanistic materialism which goes back to the Dorian Greek writers, Democritus and Lucretius.<sup>19</sup> Put crudely it is simply a 'rewrite' of the *Book of Genesis*, the *Book of Revelations* and Lucretius' *On the Nature of the Universe*. It starts with Man and Spaceman (read Man and God), proceeds to a

collapse into superstition (read *The Fall*), and then heads towards a cataclysmic showdown between the forces of enlightenment and the forces of ignorance (read the struggle between God's Elect and/or The Jews and The Devil/Anti-Christ and/or The Pagans). Finally, it culminates in a revisit of the benign Spacemen (read *The Second Coming of Christ* and/or *The Re-founding of Jerusalem/David's Kingdom*). Besides being a simple re-write of Judaic-Christian eschatology, it is also a re-write of Greek mechanistic science, for, like mechanistic science, it not only explains reality in purely empirical/material terms, but it relegates all forms of Platonism (i.e. 'essentialism'/'superstition'/'religion' etc.) to the status of falsity and illusion. It is precisely this *combination* of the Judaic with the Hellenic that makes Danikenism, however novel its *content*, so typical of Western thought generally. Although it arranges and interprets human history and human destiny in 'unconventional' ways, it makes no departure whatsoever from an extremely conventional view as to what 'religion', 'science' etc. *really* are. From the point of view of a Kuhnian 'paradigm' Danikenism makes no demands whatsoever on our structure of definitions, assumptions and epistemological axioms. Indeed von Daniken regards Auguste Comte as the great founder of the Danikenist truth, arguing that although Comte got his history 'backwards', he nevertheless knew what history was about, and at the same time was the first man to have his eye on space, and the possibility of human life on planets other than our own. In summary, then, Danikenism is only novel at the most superficial level, whilst at a deeper level, that is at the level of its basic definitions and axioms, it represents a continuation of perhaps *the* most prominent tradition in Western intellectual history.

By comparison, Atlanticism is entirely outside both the Judaic/Christian tradition *and* the tradition of mechanistic materialism, although it too does have its forerunners in Western history. As we have already seen Atlanticism, as the very name betrays, is a fairly straight re-write of Plato's theory and/or vision of Atlantis. What is perhaps less clear, however, is that Atlanticism in its modern form, that is dating from Donnelly through the Theosophists to Mitchell et al.,<sup>30</sup> is also a rewrite of another aspect of Plato's works, namely his Theory of Ideas. History is the expression of a Trinitarian Idea, namely the Idea of the Good, the Intelligence and the World Soul, an Idea which is the same as Perfection and Harmony, but of

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which the empirical/material world is a progressively imperfect and degenerate copy. For this reason Atlantis, which is the perfect society incarnate, exists at the *beginning* of history, and not at its end. Atlantis is the embodiment (literally) of an Idea, of an Idea which exists in all its articulation and complexity, and which, unlike the Judaic/Christian/Greek Materialist conception, does not await upon development and change for its realization. It is simply *there*, pervading Time and Space *before* such things as Time, Space and History are possible at all. In which case it is apparent that if Danikenism has its roots in Judaism and Christianity, and in the latter's bedfellow mechanistic materialism, Atlanticism has its roots in the Humanism of the Greeks and the Romans, a Humanism which briefly resurfaced at the time of the Renaissance, but which otherwise has always played a 'heretical' role in the Western tradition generally. Atlanticism and/or Pagan Humanism is profoundly anti-Christian, because unlike the latter it elevates Man to the status of God, that is it makes it possible for Man to gain Absolute Knowledge unaided either by God, or by the Authority of the Church or some such delegate body. Meanwhile it is anti-science, if by 'science' one means mechanistic materialism, because unlike the latter it sees everything as a 'reflection' or 'manifestation' of one single hidden reality, which is essentially 'ideal' or 'psychic', but certainly not *material*. It therefore eschews materialism and its epistemological counterpart, empiricism. Atlanticism then simply expresses the basic philosophy of Plato and the Eleatic tradition in an *externally* novel form, making use of modern ideas in Astro-archaeology and Nuclear Physics to substantiate its case. The case itself, however, is the same as it was in the time of Plato, the time of Abelard, the time of Ficino, or the time of Eliade. It is the same old 'heresy'!

In summary, then, popular science writers are very unlike what I suspect most 'outsiders' would think of them as. They are thought of, I suspect, as having three characteristics, namely that they believe in the 'supernatural', that they all say, roughly, the 'same' thing, and finally that they are 'original', albeit 'cranky' as well. It turns out, however, that none of them believe in the 'supernatural', for while Danikenists are mechanistic materialists of the most extreme kind, Atlanticists accept the fundamental principles of the occult. (The latter no more accepts the supernatural than does materialism, it merely explains nature according to different principles, albeit just as orderly and non-super ones.) Secondly, popular scientists are *very*

different from each other, so different indeed that within themselves they duplicate the entire spectrum of Western philosophy. The difference between von Daniken and John Mitchell, even though their books may appear on the same shelves, is as great as the difference between Comte and Hegel, say, or, perhaps more appropriately, Freud and Jung. Daniken no more believes in reincarnation than Mitchell believes that 'science' constitutes the culmination of human achievement. Finally, popular science is not original, in any sense whatsoever. Danikenism, as we have seen, is basically Judaeo-Christian millenarianism and Greek Materialism, whilst Atlanticism is Platonic Eleaticism. Their originality is an originality of content, and not of form.

How, then, do we explain this phenomenon? As far as I am aware no serious study of popular science, as a distinct social movement, has yet been made, even though many writers have attempted to refute some of the isolated hypotheses which it has proposed. By and large, then, 'orthodoxy' has confined itself to the rather simple-minded activity of condemning these people. Various Christian pastors have seen in popular science, particularly in its occult aspects, a revival of 'devilry', and 'devil worship', and have even invoked the Devil to explain many of the phenomena which 'appear' to have happened in occult circles.<sup>21</sup> Occasional scientists, meanwhile, have talked about the 'crisis of confidence' in orthodox science which 'pseudo-science' is helping to bring about, particularly in so far as the latter is influencing the minds of young people.<sup>22</sup> In other words conventional society has not *analysed* popular science, it has merely decried its existence, which is a very different matter. Despite this, however, it is possible to work out, or deduce, what *would* be said, if attention were paid to the phenomenon by exponents of various theories of social movements. An attempt will now be made to construct a number of just such hypothetical models, and to do so in full realisation that they are little more than intelligent and probabilistic deductions.

Norman Cohn, for example, would undoubtedly see popular science as a revival, possibly in 'secular form', of various forms of medieval millenarianism, and would diagnose its causes in terms of such concepts as 'social disorganization'.<sup>23</sup> Other writers in the neo-Weberian structural-functionalist tradition would no doubt make similar analyses, using concepts such as 'disenchantment', 'relative deprivation', 'anomie', and all those other terms which would see deviant social movements as responses to the non-satisfaction of those 'needs' which,

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as human beings, we are supposed to possess. On the other hand Marxists would no doubt argue that the spread of popular science ideas reflects 'the crisis of capitalism', pointing out that when the bourgeoisie become desperate they turn to desperate remedies, peddling poisonous irrationalism in their midst. In so doing they hope to divert attention from the 'real' underlying causes of the social crisis.<sup>24</sup> It is interesting to note that writers in the structural-functionalist and Marxist traditions, whatever else their difference might be, both see 'thought' (the cosmologies of popular science) as nothing more than a 'response' of some kind which has 'functional properties' from the point of view of various needs. Such 'needs' may or may not be 'economic', and they may or may not be capable of a mutualistic and continuous satisfaction, but in both cases analysis is always made from the point of view of what 'ideas' *do* for the holders and carriers of such ideas. What can we say of these broadly 'sociological' models?

In view of the fact that popular science, as we have seen, turns out to be composed of two cosmologies which are far from new, namely Judaeo-Christianity and Greek Platonism, then it follows that both of the above theories are tilting at windmills. For example, from a *formal* point of view there is no difference whatsoever between Danikenism, on the one hand, and *Marxism*, on the other. Both provide 'rupturalistic' and 'materialistic' interpretations of human history, and both therefore require a *similar* explanation as to why they should occur and expand in the first place. Similarly, there is no difference between Atlanticism and the views of reality put forward, say by William Blake, or by any other 'mystic' through the ages. In view of this, and in view of the fact that modern sociological theories, such as structural-functionalism and Marxism, direct their attention to features of social structure which are found only in 'industrial' or 'capitalistic' societies, it follows that there is no 'depth' to what they have to say. Given that we are talking about *forms*, as well as about contents, and given that the forms we are talking about are general, then only a *comparative analysis* of the linkage between forms *per se* could hope to get at the 'causes' of their emergence. (We will undertake this task later.) Interestingly enough both structural-functionalism and Marxism have abandoned the comparative method, and have thus abandoned the only hope that each *might* have had in coming up with a viable analysis. Meanwhile, as far as the *content* of popular science is concerned, i.e. flying saucers, spoon-bending and Atlantis, such

theories are equally silent, and equally deficient. As Lévi-Strauss has noted in his critique of 'functionalist theories of totemism', structural-functionalism regards 'contents' as largely irrelevant.<sup>25</sup> If a myth can be shown to be 'functional', in that it celebrates the groups habits and institutions, then detailed analysis of its content is time wasted. For this reason the analysis of content, at least as a serious exercise, takes a back seat. It is enough to say that 'Atlantis' provides people with a 'nostalgic' 'backward-looking' 'ideal', a fact which enables writers to ignore the question 'Why *Atlantis*, and not Avalon, Jerusalem, the Isle of the Blessed, Eden etc?'. In other words some of the most interesting and mystifying features of mythological beliefs, that is their content, tend to get lost in an analysis which is over-formalistic, even though, interestingly enough, it ignores *form* altogether! In summary, our hypothetical construction of how sociological theory *would* deal with the phenomenon of popular science has led us to the conclusion that its findings would be most unsatisfactory. Structural-functionalism and Marxism, in their various ways, are too centred on contemporary society to provide a general theory of the relationship between the items of *structure*, qua structure, on the one hand, and are too 'functionalistic' ever to come to grips with the *content* of beliefs, on the other. Is it possible to construct a theory which would solve both of these problems at once?

The question arises: Why have Judaeo-Christianity and Platonism, conceived of as formal cosmologies, enjoyed a revival in their fortunes, at least in comparison to the recent past? Secondly, why have each of them adopted the particular *external* form that they have, and not some other conceivable form that they might have? For want of an alternative model to that of structural-functionalism and Marxism, let us turn to the 'rationalistic' tradition, and most particularly to the 'structuralist' theories of the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss.

Lévi-Strauss argues that the human mind is constituted of *a priori* categories, which are the same for all human beings, and which are the *condition* and not the *result* of experience. (In this sense his position differs markedly from that of structural-functionalism and Marxism). Secondly, he argues that these categories are organized in the form of what he calls 'binary oppositions', like those between Substance and Form, Force and Manifestation, Finite and Infinite, Value and Fact, Nature and Culture, and so on more or less *ad*

*infinitum*. Oppositional logic is thus not a 'product of culture', but an *element* of it. Finally he argues that these categories form themselves, at least in any given historical case, into *one* of a limited number of possible *structures*, that is rule-governed, self-limiting arrangements. For example, while Time may be optionally conceived of in an evolutionary or cyclical manner (an example of a binary opposition), it cannot be conceived of in any *other* way, and its conception in any *one* way presupposes some corresponding limitation on the way that space, say, is also conceived. Thought, far from being a point by point product of internalized experiences governed only by the necessities of organic need, follows rules, rules which have nothing to do with persons, history, or the choices made by individuals. It follows from the above propositions about the nature of Mind and the World that the former (Mind) will not tolerate contradictions, and that, of its own accord, it tends towards their reconciliation, mediation, or sublation. This process, which is inherent in Mind, is not the product of 'action', or any such property of individual entities, but a biological immanence programmed into the Mind (or Brain) in the same way that many other automatic processes are programmed into physical/organic matter, like for example, respiration, heartbeat and digestion, to name but a few. Although Thought is both the condition and mediator of all human action, it operates as mechanically, objectively, and unmysteriously, as does the replication of D.N.A. molecules and other elemental processes known to the natural sciences.<sup>26</sup>

If this theory is correct then we can deduce that a particular myth, like Danikenism or Atlanticism, will replace another myth, like, say, conventional science or conventional religion (SCIENCE and RELIGION), when and if the former resolves certain contradictions which the latter is increasingly *unable* to do. (We may treat conventional science, and, more obviously, conventional religion, as 'myths', for the simple reason that as here defined 'myths' are simply structures of thought expressed in the form of narratives, which 'science' obviously is as much as any other 'myth'.) If it were found to be the case that conventional science and religion were increasingly beset by irreconcilable contradictions, which as we have seen the Mind will not tolerate, and if, at the same time, it were found to be the case that Danikenism and Atlanticism resolved those *same* contradictions, then we would have gone some way towards explaining the demise of the former and the increasing influence of the latter. From a *formal* point

of view our problem would be solved, although the problem of content would still remain open. Let us, then, examine the possibility that SCIENCE and RELIGION no longer resolve contradictions that at one time they presumably did.

Until the end of the 19th century, that is up to the time when Darwin's theories of evolution were widely accepted, the various denominations of Christianity combined a cosmology of ultimate meaning, or value, with a detailed analysis of natural and human history, or fact. The ultimate values of Christianity, such as love and self-sacrifice, were 'true', not simply because priests, monks and friars *thought* that they were, but because natural and human history (fact) had been a witness to their progressive revelation. What modern philosophers of science call 'values' and 'facts' were thus united, and reconciled, in pre-Darwinian Christianity, which thus constituted a *viable* myth for the faithful, i.e. for most of us. The viability of the Christian myth lay not in its ethics alone, nor in its version of history, but in the fact that history 'proved' its ethics true, and ethics made sense of what would otherwise have been merely a factual history. The binary opposition between 'value' and 'fact' was thus sublated under a higher singularity, which both mediated and produced both. Since Darwin, however, Christian ethics have become completely separated from Christian fact, and it is quite possible to believe in the one without the other, as though the two now have nothing to do with each other. The Seven Deadly Sins are still sins, and the Ten Commandments are still commandments, according to *post*-Darwinian Christianity, but they are no longer so because *factual* ancestors, like Adam and Moses, passed them onto us but simply because the hierarchy of the Church *thinks* they are. Since Darwin no-one seriously believes in the Adam and Moses of the Bible, even though they may still cling to their ethics. Christian ethics are thus entirely 'subjective', as most theologians would now admit, which means, of course, that no *fact* can either support them or deny them.<sup>27</sup> That we should love our neighbours in *no* way depends upon the state of research into molecular biology or high-energy physics, or even into the archaeology of the ancient Near East, whereas at one time this would *not* have been the case. Christians sustained their ethics through an appeal to the various sciences, a fact which made science a matter of great moment to them. Conventional religion, then, that is, *post*-Darwinian Christianity allows facts and values to proceed as if there were no connection

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whatsoever between them, a feature of it which enables us to say that it quite positively fails to reconcile the two, and thus meet one of the requirements which the Mind cannot help making of myths.

A similar story can be told of SCIENCE, only with the latter the contradiction has been reversed. Prior to the take-over of SCIENCE by empiricism, that is by logical positivism, SCIENCE provided Western man with a perfectly viable myth. It combined an ontologically realist overview of the cosmos with a concern to ground such an overview in the facts of experience. Newtonian physics, Darwinian biology, and various forms of utilitarian sociology, managed to define the *absolute* nature of reality (interaction of material particles; natural selection of the fittest; and pleasure/pain motivations) with a system of ethics which 'naturally' followed from it. Such ethics largely centered around the realization and control of those possibilities latent in physical nature, i.e. Progress. During the 20th century, however, this structure has broken down, much as its RELIGIOUS equivalent had done at perhaps a slightly earlier date. Although SCIENCE retained its contact with, and respect for, facts, it nevertheless at the very same time lost all contact with absolute reality, and with the corresponding ethics (values) which flowed from a knowledge of it. Reality, in the absolute sense, became 'unknowable', as the various theories of it became 'mere hypotheses', rather than apprehensions of *the* nature of things. This meant that ethics ceased altogether to be the province of ENLIGHTENMENT and SCIENCE, as they were in the pioneering days of the 18th and 19th centuries, and instead became the province of that old enemy RELIGION. Ethics returned to RELIGION as soon as empiricism recognised that they were, of their nature, 'subjective', and thus as legitimately the domain of priests as of men of science. Although conventional science has retained a latent commitment to its old cosmology, i.e. to mechanistic materialism and to a belief in biological evolution and social progress, it no longer posits these beliefs in a 'dogmatic' manner, but merely finds them 'more useful' than their alternatives. Essentially, however, they, and the ethics which seemed to flow from them, now belong to the realm of subjectivity and personal choice. So much so is this the fact that many modern thinkers 'choose' to adopt an outright 'relativism', rather than any longer commit themselves to axioms which their Victorian forebears would have taken for granted. In the contemporary world there are few reasons for paying attention to a proposition, other than

that it is 'testable', or 'falsifiable', or some such other feature of it which has nothing to do with its TRUTH or NECESSITY.

It follows, then that whilst RELIGION is *now* all ethics (but in no way reconciles these ethics with facts), SCIENCE is now all facts (but in no way reconciles these facts with ethics). Both, therefore, fail to meet the criteria of a *successful* myth, namely that it reconcile those contradictions which the human mind cannot help but experience. The human mind *demand*s that values and facts follow consistently from a singular truth, and not that they proceed independently from each other. *For if values are not consistent with facts, as is the case with RELIGION, then they have no compulsion, and if facts are not consistent with values, as is the case with SCIENCE, then they have no meaning.* In which case, although from a purely formal point of view, the conditions have been laid for a mythological metamorphosis. RELIGION and SCIENCE, conceived of as *myths*, are disintegrating!

Let us now consider the myths of popular science in the light of these remarks. Notwithstanding the fact that Danikenism and Atlanticism are competitive and mutually exclusive myths, it nevertheless remains the case that each of them *succeeds* in reconciling that contradiction which RELIGION and SCIENCE fail to do. Both of these cosmologies provide Western man with an articulate, and totally compulsive/dogmatic, overview of the cosmos, and of man's place within it. Ethical questions are thus 'wrapped up' in the same way that all cosmic determinisms 'wrap up' ethics. If flying saucers are about to land, then it is obvious that one should stop going to Church or joining the Labour Party, and one should go out and meet these beings instead! Similarly, if 'Atlantis is Rising', then there is no point in continuing with the current worship of technology, but one should turn to mysticism and the occult instead. In other words, like RELIGION, both forms of popular science cater to questions of ultimate meaning and ethics, but they *claim* that such ethics are more than merely matters of 'faith'. The ethics of popular science flow naturally from their detailed analyses (correct or otherwise) of human history, which thus become rather like the Bible *used* to be. Ethics are thus grounded in fact, and facts take on an ethical dimension. Popular science thus meets the *formal* requirements which the mind makes of it, although RELIGION and SCIENCE, as we have seen, progressively fail to do. The rise of popular science in the contemporary world is thus to be expected.

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The fact, however, that a latent Judaeo-Christian paradigm has taken on the *content* of the space age, with all its technological gadgetry and concerns, and the fact that a latent Platonism has revived the imagery of the Lost Continent of Atlantis, must still remain a mystery. So far we have merely explained why Judaeo-Christianity and Platonism *per se* have enjoyed a revival, or new lease of life, we have not accounted for why they have adopted the contents they have. Why does Judaeo-Christianity not simply revive Biblical research, as do that Judaeo-Christian sect the Jehovah's Witnesses? Similarly, why does Platonism not revive Homer, or Virgil, as the archaeologist Schliemann tried to do? Why Atlantis, and not Troy, or Sheba, for that matter? Although the *structure* of myth is prior to experience, nevertheless the imagery with which that structure is expressed (its signs) is made out of *experiences* which are salient to the creative generation. That is why myths are living things, always in a process of continuous transformation and reformulation. Their credibility depends upon their compatibility with the abstract demands of the intellect. They therefore continually have to absorb the contents of whatever is contemporary to the Mind. From this point of view both flying saucers and Atlantis become, at least in part, comprehensible, although a thorough understanding of the content of these myths would require another article. Briefly, flying saucers correspond to one very obvious, and highly salient, feature of contemporary experience about which traditional Christian imagery is woefully silent. I refer to a world-wide technical system, the actuality and possibility of manned space flight, and, most important of all, the possibility of life on other planets. The Bible, and its offshoot, the Church, neither refers to such things, nor does it prophesy their coming. (Although von Daniken can find what he wants to in the Bible, he is just as much at home with other mythologies, and even then he has to 'interpret' the Bible in ways which (to put it mildly) are totally incompatible with traditional interpretations.) It remains a fact, then, that a successful myth would have to ground itself in something as widely experienced as the technological revolution of the 20th century, and more particularly of the past decade. A similar point can be made with respect to Atlantis. In the past Platonism has always turned to Greece and Rome for its inspiration, for its 'image' of that lost perfection with which to compare the imperfections of the modern world. Platonism, then, has always turned to Homer and Virgil, and therefore

to Troy, Athens and Rome. Now such cities, like other 'lost paradises' with which the world's mythology is replete, are remarkably 'local' by modern standards. Greece and Rome, for example, are purely 'Western' to say nothing of the fact that modern archaeology has rendered them incredibly 'recent' by the time standards with which it now deals. Before Greece and Rome stood Mycenae, Crete, Sumer and Mohenjo-Daro, civilisations which were unknown to us until fairly recently, even though they were just as complex and cosmopolitan as Greece and Rome ever were. If the basically Hellenic orientation of Platonism is extended backwards in time to take account of all of the findings of 20th century archaeology, and if at the same time it is extended in space to unite the *whole* of mankind in a common ancestry (which in our world must be done), then no other vision *can* be arrived at except, of course, ATLANTIS. The latter was the capital of a world-wide civilization which existed before the last Ice-Age, and therefore, unlike Greece and Rome, or any other *conceivable* 'lost paradise', it is related to all Mankind, however complicated the connections might be. Now the experience of HUMANITY, that is that all men are essentially one, is as salient today as is technology and space flight. Atlantis is therefore *bound* to be more inspiring than ancient Israel, or Ancient Rome, or any purely local or national ancestral homeland.

Let us now summarize and conclude the entire argument of this article. An intellectual movement called 'popular science' seems to be making considerable headway at the expense of conventional religion (RELIGION) and conventional science (SCIENCE). This movement concerns itself with discussing, and resolving, many issues which are, quite frankly, 'anomalous' to the conventional wisdom, both religious and scientific. Behind its concerns and propositions, however, there lie two distinct, but very old, cosmologies, namely Judeo-Christianity and Platonism. Each has re-emerged in a modern form as Danikenism, on the one hand, and Atlanticism, on the other. Their contemporary success, that is their increasing hold over the modern imagination, is due to two 'factors', one formal, and the other contentual. In the first place RELIGION and SCIENCE can be seen to be suffering from the fact that in their contemporary form they no longer resolve certain contradictions which they once did with ease. As such they are a source of dissonance to the modern consciousness, especially to those least socialized into that consciousness. Popular science, meanwhile, can be seen to have resolved those very *same* contradictions, and thus

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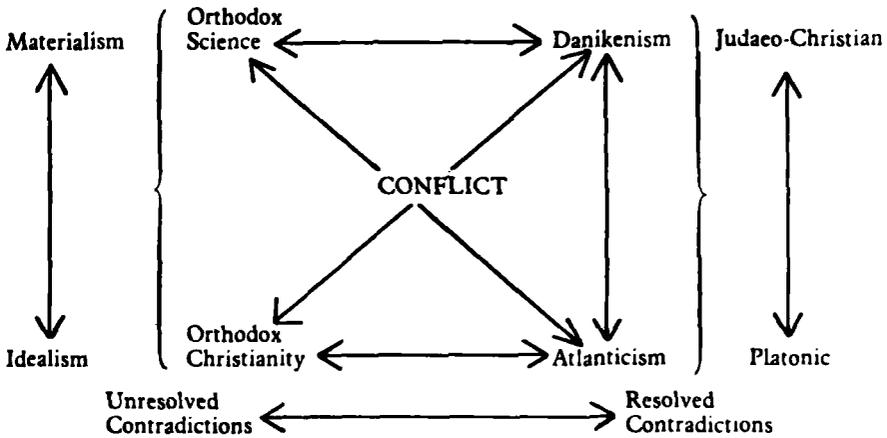
provides men with viable myths. Finally the fact that these 'new' myths have the content they do must be looked at in terms of contemporary *experience*, most particularly the experience of TECHNOLOGY and HUMANITY, both of which constitute the main 'mythemes' of Danikenism and Atlanticism respectively.

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*The Structure of Contemporary Mythology: A Summary*



<sup>1</sup> L. Watson: *Lifetide*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1979.

<sup>2</sup> Although the editorial policy of *Omni* is non-committal as far as the occult, the paranormal, and space-men are concerned, it is quite prepared to give *serious* consideration to such hypotheses. Its success, therefore, may reflect the tide which is being discussed in this article. The other journals are very definitely committed ones.

<sup>3</sup> Francis Hitching: *The World Atlas of Mysteries*, Book Club Associates, 1978, pp. 249-255.

<sup>4</sup> A topic belongs to 'the occult' if it concerns itself with the psychic force, or forces, to which all things belong, and through which they are all connected with each other. For an excellent and thoroughly objective account of the occult, see R. Cavendish: *The Black Arts*, Picador, 1978.

<sup>5</sup> For a summary of this literature see R. K. Wilcox: *The Shroud*, Corgi, London, 1977.

<sup>6</sup> That there can be little doubt about the astro-archaeological nature of Stonehenge can be seen from the following perfectly 'respectable' book', which have nothing whatsoever to do with 'popular science'. E. Hadingham: *Circles and Standing Stones*, Abacus, 1978, and E. Mackie: *The Megalith Builders*, Book Club Associates, 1977.

<sup>7</sup> E. von Daniken: *The Chariot of the Gods*, Souvenir Press, 1970.

C. E. Ashworth

- <sup>8</sup> R. Charroux: *The Mysterious Unknown*, Corgi, 1972.
- <sup>9</sup> P. Kolosimo: *Timeless Earth, Sphere*, 1978.
- <sup>10</sup> For Ralf Graber's views on The Shroud, see R. K. Wilcox: *The Shroud*, pp. 119-126.
- <sup>11</sup> For perhaps the best 'historical' statement of the Atlantis case, see C. Berlitz: *The Mystery of Atlantis*, Panther, 1978.
- <sup>12</sup> A. and S. Landsberg: *In Search of Ancient Mysteries*, Corgi, 1978.
- <sup>13</sup> W. Raymond Drake: *Gods and Spacemen Through History*, Sphere, 1977.
- <sup>14</sup> Plato: *Timaeus and Critias*, Penguin Classics, 1971.
- <sup>15</sup> John Mitchell appears to be the contemporary 'guru' of the Atlanticist movement, and his works testify to his being a man of no mean intellect.
- <sup>16</sup> B. Steiger: *Atlantis Rising*, Sphere, 1977.
- <sup>17</sup> J. H. Brennan: *An Occult History of the World*, Future, 1977.
- <sup>18</sup> O. Muck: *The Secret of Atlantis*, Book Club Associates, 1978.
- <sup>19</sup> Lucretius: *On the Nature of the Universe*, Penguin Classics, 1978.
- <sup>20</sup> The modern Atlanticist tradition starts with I. Donnelly: *Atlantis: The Antediluvian World*, London, 1882.
- <sup>21</sup> For a statement of the 'Christian' case, see P. Anderson: *Talk of the Devil*, Word, U.K., 1979.
- <sup>22</sup> This point is taken from memory of a *Daily Telegraph* news item sometime in 1979 (Winter).
- <sup>23</sup> N. Cohn: *The Pursuit of the Millenium*, Paladin, 1962.
- <sup>24</sup> F. Balibar: 'Marxism and Rationalism', *New Left Review*, vol. Autumn 1978, pp.
- <sup>25</sup> C. Lévi-Strauss: *Totemism* (Penguin) 1973. see Ch. 3, p. 126.
- <sup>26</sup> For a summary of C. Lévi-Strauss's approach to the study of myth see E. Leach (ed.): *The Structural Study of Myth and Totemism*, Tavistock, London, 1967.
- <sup>27</sup> See particularly the discussion of 'Barthian' theology in N. Smart: *The Religious Experience of Mankind*, Fount, 1977, pp. 640-642.

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