



Nonpeople From Nowhere

Strange Lands Examined

by Scott Corrales

The concept of parallel universes—worlds somehow superimposed over our own—is not new. It has normally been relegated to the realm of the fantastic: the madcap world on the other side of the looking glass in *Alice in Wonderland*, the fanciful realm of Narnia in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, or the many supercharged, high-adventure parallel realms that can be found in science fiction and heroic fantasy. From a literary standpoint, the creation of a parallel universe allows the author to explore possibilities that cannot be found in our own linear reality. Therefore, we find artistic works in which the protagonists encounter their “doubles,” worlds in which the outcome of a war ended differently than in the protagonists’ prime reality, or completely different levels of existence ranging from the heavenly to the horrific.

These authors would perhaps be surprised—even dismayed—to learn that

truth is stranger than fiction (to abuse the hackneyed expression), and that reality offers stories no less strange than the product of their imaginations.

Beyond the Circles of the World

In the fifth century B.C., Anaxagoras, a Greek philosopher of the Ionian School, posited a theory by which he hoped to explain the origin of all things, a daunting task even from antiquity’s perception of reality. Anaxagoras stated that matter had originally existed as atoms, thus paving the way for the philosopher Democritus’ own atomic theory. While only fragments of this Greek genius’s work survive to our times, some of them are of great interest.

Anaxagoras believed that “other men and other living species” lived in a sort of anti-Earth, bathed in the light of a sun and moon, and whose inhabitants “like ourselves, possess cities and build clever ob-

jects.” The philosopher placed his anti-Earth on what we might wittily call the “flip-side” of his flat, discoidal earth.

The surviving fragments of his treatise, *On Nature*, do not tell us if Anaxagoras believed that there could be contact between the sentient beings of both worlds, but another group of thinkers thousands of miles away had developed a similar cosmology and made it part of their religion.

The *Puranas*, a summary of Hindu mythology, philosophy, and ritual, speak of the *dwipas* as part of their cosmological beliefs. These levels of existence, for want of a better description, consist of seven continents—Jambu, Plaksha, Shalmali, Kusha, Krauncha, Shaka, and Pushkara—with their respective oceans, mountain ranges, and inhabitants.

It is hard to separate the clearly metaphorical, such as the oceans of “sugarcane juice and clarified butter” that surround some of these metaphysical lands, from

those which are more firmly grounded in reality. Some of the provinces into which the Jambu *dwipa* is subdivided, for example, appear to correspond to the physical subcontinent of India, bordered by the Himadri Mountains (Himalayas) on the north and the Salt Water Ocean (Indian) on the south. Beyond these confines, the rest seem to merge into the unreality we have come to associate in the West with mythical lands like Lyonesse, Tirn-Na-Og, the Isle of Avalon, and St. Brendan's Isle.

The concept of the *dwipas* became known in the West during the late 19th century through the work of the Theosophical Society, fueled by the general interest in Eastern matters that characterized that period of history.

"It is the opinion of many at the present day," states Charles Johnson, F.T.S., in the April 1889 issue of *The Path*, "that the almost grotesque myths and fantastic geographical and astronomical descriptions contained in the religious writings...are really deliberately contrived and constructed allegories by which the ancient sages sought to veil...the sacred truths which could only be declared in the secret recesses of the temples."

In the 1960s, French scientist-turned-occultist Jacques Bergier took an interest in the metaphysical Hindu realms, believing that there could be some truth to them according to the principles of modern mathematics. Bergier noted that "Riemman surfaces" are composed by a given number of layers that are neither on top of each other nor beneath one another—the layers simply coexist. Bergier was almost certainly simplifying matters for the layman reader, but the mathematical conclusion was that space could be far more complex than it initially appeared to be.

"If Earth is one of these [Riemman] surfaces," writes Bergier, "fantastic though it may seem, it is possible that there are unknown regions which are normally inaccessible and do not appear in a map or globe of the world, but which nonetheless exist indeed. We did not suspect their existence any more than we suspected the existence of germs, or the invisible radiation

of the spectrum, prior to their discovery." (*Viséé pour autre terre*, Albin Michel, 1974).

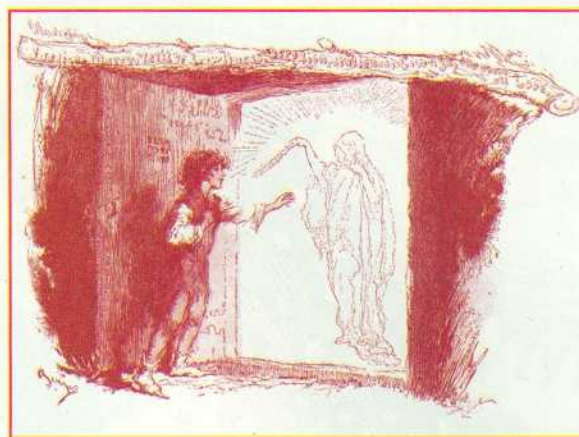
Did the iconoclastic Bergier find a way of justifying the beliefs of both Anaxagoras and the Hindu scribes who composed the Puranas? Are there indeed "spaces within our space" that developed separately from our own, perhaps accessible only through what we might term dimensional doorways, wrinkles in space/time, and other descriptions? As unlikely as the possibility may appear, it would account for the widespread belief in worldwide folklore that there are places which humans can enter and never leave, or which can only be entered, Brigadoon-style, at certain times of the year or every so many years. Could the phantom cities often visible in the Arctic (such as Alaska's Muir Glacier) be mirages—not of our own cities, but of those cities whose inhabitants "build clever objects," as Anaxagoras said long ago?

The Man from Tuared

But we aren't done with Bergier just yet.

In 1954, in the wake of violent protests in Japan, which was then just emerging from the "proconsulship" of Gen. McArthur, Japanese authorities believed that the riots were being instigated by foreign agitators and mandated that the passports of foreign visitors to the country at that time be scrutinized for irregularities—tell-tale signs of forgery by terrorists or anti-government forces. Bergier tells us that officials came across a guest at a Tokyo hotel whose papers seemed to be in order, but there was a slight problem: The government issuing the passport did not exist.

The document showed no signs of having been tampered with. The bearer's photograph was clear, as were the fingerprints. Yet Japanese officials were at a loss to find a Republic of Tuared anywhere in their atlases, despite the bearer's strident protests that his country occupied most of the Sa-



A boy opens a dimensional doorway to another reality

hara Desert, stretching from Mauritania on the west to the Sudan on the East. True, the man had come to Japan on a shadowy mission—to purchase weapons to aid in emancipating all Arab countries from foreign oppression.

According to Bergier, the nameless Tuaredian hastily summoned a press conference to make his case, and the press corps tried in vain to find his country, even after entreaties to the United Nations and the Arab League. The man from Tuared was committed to a Japanese psychiatric hospital, where he presumably remains to this day—a stranger in a strange land.

Granted, the entire event could have been a hoax—an effort by some Saharan nationalists at establishing their own country and deceiving customs officials. Certainly a similar situation could have occurred only a few years ago, when the Puerto Rican Independence Party started issuing its own "Republic of Puerto Rico" passports for those who wished to renounce their U.S. citizenship. According to the party sources, the passports issued by the nonexistent republic were accepted by customs officials in a number of foreign countries. Nonetheless, could some strange phenomenon have deposited a citizen of a major North African country from another *dwipa* within our own world?

Something similar had occurred a century earlier and thousands of miles away. In 1850, a man was found stumbling in a daze down the cobbled streets of a German village. When authorities brought him in for questioning, he stated that his name



Medieval woodcut depicting unsuspected new lands beyond our own

was Josef Vorin, “a citizen of Laxaria in Sakria.” German officials tore their hair out trying to find these places to no avail. Herr Vorin’s fate is also unknown.

In the 1970s, renowned Spanish UFO researcher Antonio Ribera looked into a possible “intrusion” of a nonexistent world into our own. But rather than involving a republic with dark designs on its own world or this one, it concerned a small archipelago in the Pacific Ocean.

Under the Southern Cross

The coordinates couldn’t have been more specific: 47.9°S, 118.15°W. And if the information was correct, somewhere in the immensity of the Pacific was a group of islands that no one could seem to find, but whose government was busy issuing postage stamps.

It all started when Antonio Ribera received a call from a fellow researcher, an enthusiast of Antarctica and all of its outlying islands, asking him if he had ever heard of an archipelago known as the “Hesperides Islands.”

Ribera’s friend died shortly after raising the question. His heirs provided the ufologist with all of their father’s notes and information regarding the Hesperides. It was thus that Ribera momentarily put aside

his UFO inquiries to chase after this improbable archipelago located at the coordinates mentioned earlier.

In order to spare the reader a trip to the atlas, be assured that a scan of a number of atlases shows nothing except deep blue sea at the coordinates in question. The nearest land masses are Easter Island and Juan Fernández. Yet among the papers given to Ribera was a curious booklet entitled *A Study of the Hesperides Islands*, written in English by one John Callender and published in Great Britain in 1962. The 20-page booklet included some interesting maps with geographic features identified in Spanish and French along with some photographs of the remote islands. The booklet’s prologue suggested that the islands were unknown to the point “that they were no longer depicted in the immense majority of maps and cartographical works.”

Unlike an island depicted on a child’s pirate treasure map, we have hard “facts” on the Hesperides: The archipelago consists of Great Hesperides, Lake Island, and the islet of Rap, followed by five atolls covering a total surface area of 100 square kilometers. The geographic features on the larger islands are well marked: Mt. Franklin, the Merced River, and a large lake at the center of “Lake Island” in a mixture of Eng-

lish, Spanish, and Polynesian names. Their location makes them a sort of antipodean paradise, watered by brief rain showers and basking in a temperate climate. The vegetation is characteristic of the Polynesian islands, and its volcanic geology reveals the presence of basalt, rhyolite, trachite, and other minerals.

According to the papers inherited by Ribera, the islands were discovered in 1850 by “a Scottish whaler named McNall” and claimed as his personal property. Even more intriguing was a memorandum to the Spanish Naval Command stating that the archipelago had been purchased by a Madrid-based syndicate. At this point we begin to fall down the proverbial rabbit’s hole that leads us to places like Bergier’s Tuared.

Apparently, the Madrid-based syndicate had also re-christened the Hesperides as the “Dougherty Islands,” and had further proclaimed an “independent state” whose application for membership in the United Nations was rejected. Colonel Antonio Baeza, the original compiler of the information, formally requested that the Spanish Navy send an expedition to the Dougherties and seize them, but his request was turned down. The Navy was understandably unwilling to waste fuel to reach an empty patch of ocean.

The government of the Dougherty/Hesperides Islands issued interesting postage stamps in Esperanto and drafted a constitution in the same language. Ribera notes that more than a constitution, the document is a formal Instrument of Occupation of the islands by the “Stato Hespero” (State of the Hesperides, in Esperanto), dated June 15, 1965, and declaring the “total occupation of the Dougherty and Hesperides Archipelago with the intent to capture, colonize, and establish a presence, and thereby establish a new state to be known as the Confederation of the Dougherty and Hesperides Islands.” Signatories to this instrument were one Dr. Denewakara, one General Mayer, and one Professor Bellavini.

As if things weren’t odd enough, the Dougherties had a national anthem (“Under the Southern Cross”), a capital in

the village of Starpol, and ministries of the interior, treasury, and culture.

The three rectangular postage stamps issued by this nonexistent republic commemorated freedom of religion, space travel, and the rights of mankind. The stamps came in denominations of 50 and 75 unknown monetary units.

Taking a deep breath, Antonio Ribera launched his investigation. One of his colleagues, the late Andreas Faber-Kaiser, secured highly detailed maps of the South Pacific from NORAD, showing beyond any doubt that there was little beyond great quantities of saltwater to be found at 47.9°S, 118.15°W. Another researcher, José Luis Barcelo, managed to connect with the shadowy "Madrid-based syndicate" and confirmed its existence, but not its connection to the Dougherties. Having reached a dead end, Ribera set the matter aside.

At this point, a number of rational explanations parade before us: the creation of a bogus tax haven for European millionaires and billionaires; a fictional target created for a military exercise, similar to the nonexistent countries used in U.S. Army and Navy war games; an intelligence exercise conducted by Spain's CESID for its own inscrutable purposes; or simply an elaborate fiction similar to our modern role-playing games, but on a grand scale.

On the other hand, could the phantom archipelago be a real bone of contention between the great powers of another world that coexists within our own, and from which information and living beings sometimes leak out? Perhaps the man from Tuared, still locked up in his padded cell in Tokyo, can tell us all we need to know about these islands.

Rogues' Gallery

Scores of books dealing with the subject of mysterious disappearances have been written over the past five decades. Some of these are concerned with disappearances in our planet's oceans (such as the so-called Bermuda Triangle and Japan's Devil's Triangle), others deal with human disappearances near geographic features such as Vermont's Mt. Glastonbury, Puerto Rico's El Yunque, and Africa's Mt. Inyan-



Strange lands and their correspondingly strange inhabitants

gani, while still others retell the stories—mostly apocryphal—of 19th century characters disappearing from street corners and empty fields.

If we are willing to admit that humans and animals often do disappear in a way that baffles our best police investigators, we must also be willing to accept the possibility of people appearing out of nowhere under equally baffling circumstances. But in order to narrow the focus of this article, the monstrous entities that often appear out of thin air (the Mothman, the Chupacabras, Bigfoot, etc.) will be excluded. One does not even wish to imagine the kind of *dwipa* they must hail from.

These strange citizens from elsewhere, like the man from Tuared, may have no idea that they have somehow entered into a new reality until the subtle terror of being in unknown circumstances dawns upon them. On the other hand, some of them may come deliberately.

In the year 1293, an unknown man who spoke no known language appeared out of the blue during the wedding of King Alexander of Scotland. His apparition was considered an omen, but his subsequent fate did not go down in history. A more ominous character was supposedly seen by thousands in the year 1125. Again, he spoke an unknown language and reportedly shot balls of flame powerful enough to set trees ablaze. More recently, author Richard Pop-

kin's *The Second Oswald* mentioned the appearance of an identical double for President Kennedy's assassin, who showed up at a public shooting range and fired off a strange weapon that produced balls of flame—a curious similarity.

In the late '60s, two enigmatic individuals checked into a Miami hotel for an extended stay and befriended the chambermaid in the process. When the woman asked her where they were from, the men replied that they hailed from "the north of the continent," stressing that they did not mean the lands north of the United States. The chambermaid and her husband detailed their experiences to paranormal researcher Salvador Freixedo. One of the men was tall and blond, with a command of many languages and telepathic abilities. His sidekick was short in stature, Asian-looking, and wore an orange-colored uniform. He gave the impression of being a retainer or bodyguard to the other man.

According to the chambermaid, the blond produced what appeared to be a ball and stuck it to the wall in defiance of gravity. He then asked the woman to address it, which she did, noticing swirling waves of light within the device, which would follow her in the air every time she made a move. The chambermaid and her husband witnessed the activities of the tall blond and his companion on the beach during stormy weather, pointing what appeared

to be cameras and other devices at the rough seas. While cleaning their rooms (the pair refused to leave their rooms while she cleaned), the chambermaid noticed a suitcase filled with "billiard balls" pulsating with light, as if filled with electricity. The two strangers disappeared as suddenly as they had come.

What did the strangers mean by "the north of the continent"? Due to the curvature of the Earth, is it reasonable to assume that they might have meant the lands to the north of the Americas—the polar ice pack and Asia? Freixedo supports the view that the strange men referred to other-dimensional planes of existence accessible through certain materialization-dematerialization points.

The decidedly non-tourist activities of this bizarre twosome inevitably leads us to the notorious Men-in-Black, whose activities have become a staple of ufology. While MIB activity is usually attached to UFO sightings and occupant encounters, some instances of MIB apparitions are totally unrelated to the phenomenon.

These cases involve such MIB statements that indicate their provenance as being "The Nation of the Third Eye," cited in John Keel's *Our Haunted Planet* (Fawcett, 1971; reprinted 1999 by Galde Press, Inc.). Although Keel attaches an occult meaning to the statement, could we suspect that they make reference to a physical country located "elsewhere"?

A Pittsburgh MIB case examined by researcher Mike Lonzo in 1995 involved an elderly woman who witnessed the fall of "a strange black stone" into her backyard, an event that was almost immediately followed by a visit from a pair of tuxedo-clad MIBs who demanded the return of the black stone, claiming that its loss would "bring about the destruction of their universe."

Even earlier, in November 1973, a young woman working for an employment agency in San Juan, Puerto Rico, was visited by man clad in an immaculately black suit with a shirt that seemed to be woven "of a texture unknown on Earth," in her words. The man had extremely long, tapering fingers and a smooth complexion.

The woman found herself mesmerized by his conversation, which ranged from the ecology to war, along with statements such as "there were other worlds than this one."

Once we suppress the hair-trigger urge to associate the MIB to UFOs, we see that their motives in these cases were other than silencing saucer witnesses. Could the MIB be able to come and go at will between our world and theirs? That would certainly explain cases in which the sudden disappearance of MIB or their shiny black vehicles has been reported.

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Paranormal researcher Brad Steiger, who has written a fair share of books on the subject of out-of-place objects and people, cites an interesting epistolary exchange with a man supposedly able to enter these other level of existence at will in *Strange Disappearances* (Magnum, 1972). Missourian Al Kiessig wrote the author at length about his experiences with dimensional doorways or "points of access" into other realities.

Kiessig informs Steiger that one of our "neighboring universes" is a soundless environment lacking wind or sun, although its sky is bright enough to suggest the existence of one, and that he himself entered into it while taking his dog for a walk in Arkansas in December 1965. This silent world appeared to mimic our own countryside, down to the wood-frame houses Kiessig encountered along his walk, but the silence and lack of animals or humans was distressing. There appeared to be a con-

siderable time difference between dimensions as well.

Steiger's correspondent went on to mention an unnamed region of the Ozarks in which he could clearly see into the other dimension and watch its inhabitants effortlessly coming into our own. Kiessig stated his belief that this parallel dimension was "the Hell on Earth where Jesus went to preach for three days before he ascended to heaven." According to Kiessig, other dimensional doorways "open into a land of no life. Some take you back into the past, and some take you into the future on this world."

Was the correspondent a teller of tall tales having a laugh at Steiger's expense? A lunatic? Or was he truly gifted with ability to enter and return from these *dwipas*?

The Lesser Triangle of Forces

Metaphysical anthropology—a contradiction in terms, another bit of New Age claptrap designed to make skeptics' eyeballs ache.

Not so, according to the many thousands of South Americans who have expressed a belief in the theories set forth many decades ago by the late Prof. Guillermo Terrera, a man who appears to have lived his life in a middle realm between harsh reality and the possibility that other realms of existence coexist within our own.

"The enigma has been before us for a very long time," writes Terrera in his book *El Valle de Los Espíritus*, "and both hermetic science and metaphysics make reference to cosmic lights or forces manipulated by the higher intelligences which have plowed Planet Earth's skies for millennia, or else find shelter in subterranean locations, or else moving about in dimensions completely unknown to the ancestral mind of the human species."

Terra posited the existence of a number of interdimensional and/or subterranean realms having a physical "double" in our prime reality. Thus Thule in the North would have a double in the Antarctic realm, although not necessarily in this dimension. The oft-mentioned Shambalah of Asian tradition would also have a physical counterpart in our world. Most

important of all these cities is Erks, located within "the Lesser Triangle of Forces," a triangle formed by the hills of Calaguala, the village of Serrezuela, and the Cerro Colorado, all of which are found in Argentina's Cordoba province. Basing himself upon the legends of tribes native to the area, the metaphysicist claims that the regents of Erks may allow certain individuals from our reality to find their way there, after achieving a higher intellectual capacity.

The city of Erks, "whose entrances no man has discovered," according to Terrera, features three colossal mirrors constructed from a variety of materials. One of them is made of lapis lazuli, and the others of elements unknown to man. Terrera states that reports of a ghostly white light often reported in the hilltops of the region are produced by Erks and its mirrors.

While Erks thrives in its own unassailable dimension, St. Brendan's Isle seems unstable enough to stumble out of its own and into ours every so often.

Since the 1500s, sailors have reportedly seen an island that appears to fade in and out of our reality in the waters of the Canary Islands. Those who have seen it from afar, and the few lucky ones to have landed on it and managed to leave it, have described it as a mountainous, vegetation-covered island featuring a few rivers. This "eighth" island in the Canarian Archipelago has traditionally been identified as St. Brendan's Isle, after the medieval Irish monk whose adventures on the high seas first brought him to the place. While geographers balk at taking the book about St. Brendan's exploits (the *Navigation Sancti Bendani Abbatis*) as a reliable authority, it is nonetheless interesting that ancient cartographers such as Ptolemy had noted that the Canary Islands had an eighth island—Aprositus—which was "inaccessible." Did the Alexandrian astronomer mean that it was surrounded by deadly reefs, or something more elusive?

In 1570, a Spanish governor received sworn statements from over a hundred Canarian settlers they had seen St. Brendan's Isle to the north of the island of Hierro, and were "even able to see the sun setting behind the isle's peaks." Perhaps even more



St. Brendan's Isle?

compelling was the testimony of a skilled Portuguese navigator who reached the island to restock his ship's water stores. There were signs of farm animals and cultivation, and perhaps more ominously, evidence of giant footprints, twice the size of a normal man's. A sudden storm caused the navigator to raise anchor, but after the meteorological phenomenon had subsided, the island could not be found again.

A captain of the Spanish Fleet allegedly reached St. Brendan's Isle and explored it, but again, a sudden storm and the feeling that the island was "moving" caused him to return to his ship.

These may be little more than charming sea stories, but St. Brendan's Isle will not go away. Canarian author José Gregorio González reports that the island was seen by three fishermen in 1936, seen again in August 1956, and photographed in 1958. González admits that the St. Brendan sightings could be an optical illusion—the reflection of the island of La Palma seen under certain optical conditions, but he cautions: "The other theory leads us to subjects related to other dimensions and parallel universes, involving the sudden opening of 'windows' to other worlds of an uncertain nature. For many decades now, the Canary Islands have been identified as one of those special areas in which it is possible to make contact with other dimensions."

In 1983, Rosa and Eva Ledón claimed to have seen St. Brendan's Isle "rising from the sea" one afternoon from their vantage

point on Grand Canary. The new island occupied a space between the solid islands of Gomera and Hierro and remained visible for two hours. When the women checked the next morning, it was gone. Researcher Emiliano Bethencourt, who discovered the Güimar Pyramid complex on Grand Canary, interviewed an old man who allegedly saw the interdimensional island in the 1950s, describing it as "a great city with enormous buildings whose lights changed colors."

Unknown Dimensions

Scientists are beginning to suggest the possibility that such dimensions, believed to be "curled up" within our own, exist beyond space-time and can be accessed only when energy at the very high or low frequencies is aimed at them. In 1921, Theodor Kaluza presented a paper which posited the existence of a fifth dimension in addition to Einstein's three spatial and one temporal dimension; in the 1980s, John Schwartz and Michael Green's "superstring" theory proposed a universe of ten dimensions, six of which were compacted following the Big Bang. According to the researchers, these dimensions are impenetrable and completely unknown to us, but many others, and the witnesses to the events and phenomena described in this article, would beg to differ. ✕

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