**PART THREE**

**THE MYSTERY OF THE TUNNELS OF SOUTH AMERICA**   
**Atlantis Rising Forum**   
  
Recently, **Erick von Daniken** reported that he'd had been in a network of tunnels that run for thousands of miles beneath the South American continent.

Von Daniken said in the [Gold of the Gods](http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/arqueologia/gold_gods/gold_gods.htm) that he had been in the tunnels, accompanied by their discoverer, **Juan Moricz**, a Hungarian immigrant who is now a citizen of Argentina.

Entrance to the subterranean labyrinth is somewhere in the province of Morona-Santiago, Ecuador. According to von Daniken, he saw immense rooms filled with metallic plaques. They constitute a possible record of the ancient world, according to the Swiss writer.   
  
The first knowledge about these immense underground tunnels came when the Conquistadores invaded ancient South America. The ex-swineherd, Francisco Pizarro, kidnapped the emperor of the Incas and held him for ransom.

Francisco drew a red line around the prisoner's room, nine feet above the floor of the seventeen by twenty-foot room. The Inca stated he would fill the room with gold in return for his freedom. From his cell in Cajamarca, emperor Atahualapa ordered his subjects to gather up gold for his ransom.   
  
Before the emperor could be freed, he was killed by Pizarro's soldiers. Learning of the assassination, the Incas hid their gold. Thousands of llamas loaded with treasure were diverted away from Cajamarca. It is believed by some treasure hunters that the llama loads of gold were hidden in these ancient tunnels. Indian legends say the gold was secreted "in such a place that even we do not know the location."   
  
Among the artifacts that vanished were the mummified bodies of thirteen Inca emperors.

They had sat on golden chairs in the Temple of the Sun at Cuzco, the chairs resting on a huge slab of gold. Realizing the Spaniards were interested only in riches, the Indians hastened to hide their sacred objects. **Polo de Ondegardo**, another of the king's Conquistadores, stumbled across three mummies of the ancient kings' twenty-six years later. The mummies were stripped of their jewelry; the bodies were broken into pieces.   
  
The remainder of the mummies have not been found. They are believed to have been hidden in the tunnels beneath Cuzco and the fortress of Sacsahuaman. The old chroniclers say the tunnels were connected with the Coricancha, a name given to the sacred area of old Cuzco.

In addition to the Temple of the Sun, this area contained temples dedicated to the moon, lightening, thunder, Venus, the rainbow and the Pleiades. The area was considered to be sacred to the Incas because of the riches in this "enclosure of gold."

Around the Temple of the Sun was a yard-wide strip of gold embedded into the stone.

The temple contained an immense sun disc cast from pure gold. The golden disc was attached to the altar wall of the temple in such a way that the morning sun reflected against the great orb. On each side of the large disc were two smaller plates. Finally, another large sun disc was situated in the temple so that it reflected back the rays of the setting sun.   
  
The mummified remains of Inca rulers were placed around the temple decorated with golden jewelry and precious stones. Near the mummies were large gold plates engraved with a picture of the Inca as they appeared during life. These were the treasures that eluded the rapacious Spaniards.   
  
The *Garden of the Sun* was another fantastic hoard that has been lost.

**Sarmiento** (1532-1589) reported this subterranean garden was located near the Temple of the Sun.

"They had a garden in which the lumps of earth were pieces of fine gold," he reported. "These were cleverly sown with maize - the stalks, leaves and ears of which were all pure gold.

They were so well planted that nothing would disturb them. Besides all this, they had more than twenty sheep with their young. The shepherds who guarded the sheep were armed with slings and staves made of gold and silver. Pots, vases and every kind of vessel were cast from fine gold."

The important buildings in the Coricancha were connected by underground tunnels with the fortress of Sacsahuaman.

Entrances to these tunnels started at the Chincana, "the place where one gets lost." As we mention in another chapter of this book, all of the entrances have been sealed. Too many adventurous treasure hunters were going in to the caverns and disappearing.   
  
After they conquered Peru, the Spaniards destroyed the temples in Cuzco and the church of Santo Domingo was erected on the site. There is an old legend in Cuzco that a treasure hunter slipped into the tunnels. In his search for riches, the man became lost and wandered through the maze of tunnels for several days. One morning, about a week after the adventurer had vanished, a priest was conducting mass in the church of Santo Domingo.   
  
The priest and his congregation were suddenly astonished to hear sharp rapping on the stone floor of the church. Several worshippers crossed themselves and murmured about the devil's demons. The priest quieted his congregation and directed that a large stone slab be removed form the ancient floor. The group was astonished to see the treasure hunter come up out of the tunnels carrying a gold bar in each hand.   
  
Dr. **A.M. Renwick**, dean of the Anglo-Peruvian College in Lima, tells of another temple with immense subterranean passages. Writing in *Wanderings in the Peruvian Andes*, Dr Renwick told his readers of visiting the ancient temple of Chavin in the isolated regions of the Andean mountains. The temple covers some 30,000 square yards and is fortified. The ruins are situated across a valley from a stone fortress. Dr. Renwick believed underground tunnels connected these two structures.   
  
The temple of Chavin is pyramidal in shape, consisting of four stories. The uppermost parts of the structure have been destroyed. Renwick reported that after considerable effort, his expedition located the entrance to the ancient tunnels.

While the entrance was quite narrow, the tunnels themselves were large and "commodious."

"These subterranean corridors are in almost perfect condition," Dr. Renwick explained.

"The masonry is for the most part, as solid as if built only a few years ago, and the passages are so extensive that we were able to spend the whole day exploring the recesses of this building which must have been reared three thousand years ago. No such walls are built in that region today.

The whole is liberally supplied with air. In a place where four corridors meet stands the famous idol of Chavin, a granite obelisk thirteen and a half feet in height with a diameter of over two feet at its widest. It represents a fanged monster, partly jaguar and partly human. Here for at least three thousand years must have stood this idol.   
  
The figure is most carefully engraved in high relief and is adorned with serpents and other symbolic figures."

Dr. Renwick said that other commitments prevented a complete investigation of these subterranean passages.

He felt a survey of the tunnels would require at least two years.   
  
Rumors of these massive tunnels were so persistent during the 1850's that a viceroy of Peru decided to find the entrance. An expedition was outfitted and sent to find an entrance into the subterranean passages. They were guided by a roughly sketched Inca map that had been obtained from an unknown source by a Jesuit missionary. The map led the gold hunters into the rugged terrain of the Huatanay region of Peru.

This was the area where the last of the Incas resisted the Spanish invaders for almost a hundred years. The Spaniards were under fire by savage Indians. They lost their supplies during a battle in which huge boulders were sent crashing down from high mountains by the outraged Indians. Disgusted with the savagery of the country and the hostility of the Indians, the group gave up their quest and returned to Lima.   
  
Several of the early priests in South America reported hearing deathbed confessions from converted Inca Christians. Father **Pedro del Sancho** in a *Relacion* told of a dying Quichua Indian who claimed to have been a witness to the ceremonial closing of the tunnels.

Father del Sancho wrote:

"...My informant was a subject of the Inca emperor.

He was held in high esteem by those in power at Cuzco. He had been a chieftain of his tribe and made a yearly pilgrimage to Cuzco to worship his idolistic gods. It was a custom of the Incas to conquer a tribe or nation and take their idols to Cuzco. Those who wished to worship their ancient idols were forced to travel to the Inca capital. They brought gifts to their heathen idols. They were also expected to pay homage to the Inca emperor during these journeys".   
  
"As he lay dying, the man told me that he was revealing that which no other white man had ever been told. When it became apparent that the empire was falling to the "white devils" from across the sea, the high priest of the Temple of the Sun called a meeting. The men who came together were the highest priests of the land. They met with the sorcerers and magicians from Cuzco and other outlying towns. Also in attendance were other noble consorts from the court of Atahualpa, the last emperor.   
  
"It had reached the ears of these men that my countrymen were interested in gold and silver. Their hatred for the emissaries of his majesty, the king, was beyond description. They agreed at this meeting to spirit away as much of their riches as could be handled. These treasures were placed in ancient tunnels that were in the land when the Incas arrived.   
  
"Also placed in these subterranean repositories were artifacts and statues deemed sacred to the Incas. When the hoard had been placed in the tunnels, there was a ceremony conducted by the high priest. Following these rites, the entrance to the tunnel was sealed. The opening was concealed in such a manner that one could walk within a few feet and never be aware of the entrance.   
  
"My informant said that the entrance lay in his land, the territory which he ruled. It was under his direction and with his subjects that the openings were sealed. All who were in attendance were sworn to silence under the penalty of death. Although I requested more information on the exact location of the entrance, my informant refused to divulge more than what has been written down here."

The Russian-born mystic and occultist, Madame **Helene H.P. Blavatsky**, was traveling in Peru in 1848 when she heard rumors of these ancient tunnels.

The founder of *Theosophy*, Madame Blavatsky was always interested in unusual events. After leaving Lima, where she heard about the tunnels, Madame Blavatsky went on to Arica on the frontier between Chile and Peru. She questioned everyone she met about the tunnels.

Her report reads:

"We reached Arica, near sunset, and at a certain point on the lonely coast we were struck by the appearance of an enormous rock, nearly perpendicular, which stood in mournful solitude on that shore, and apart from the cordillera of the Andes.

As the last rays of the sun strike the face of the rock, one can make out, with an ordinary opera glass, curious hieroglyphics inscribed on the volcanic surface.   
  
"When Cuzco was the capital of old Peru, it contained the Temple of the Sun, famed far and near for its magnificence. It was roofed with thick plates of gold and its walls were covered with the same precious metal.

The eaves troughs, carrying off the rainwater, were also made of pure gold. In the west wall, the architects had contrived an aperture, in such a way that, when the sunbeams reached it, it caught and focused them inside the temple's nave and sanctuary.

Stretching inside the temple like a golden chain from one sparkling point to another, the rays encircled the walls, illuminating the grim idols, and disclosing certain mystic signs that were at other times invisible."

By interpreting these mystic signs, according to Madame Blavatsky, the location of the tunnels, their entrance and how they might be entered could be discerned.

She reported these signs were invisible except on certain days when the sun's rays were focused directly on the inscriptions.   
  
Madame Blavatsky reported the tunnels started at Cuzco and ran underground to Lima, a distance of around 380 miles by air. At Lima the tunnels turn southward into what is now modern Bolivia. This is a distance of some thousand miles! She also reported that within the tunnels is a point where a royal tomb has been constructed.

The ancient tomb has been protected by a couple of enormous slabs of stone that form a door. The huge stone door is constructed in such a way that no cracks or joints can be seen. Only by reading certain signs can the secret location of the royal tomb be ascertained.   
  
Exactly where she obtained her information was not mentioned by Madame Blavatsky.

However, she mentioned a [*secret society of custodians*](http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/sumer_anunnaki/reptiles/reptiles23.htm) who protect the tunnels. This secret society is believed by many investigators to exist today, carefully guarding the treasures of the ancients. However entrance could be obtained to the subterranean labyrinth provided the seeker can interpret symbols carved on rocks and visible only when the sun hits the stone at a certain angle.   
  
Even if an adventurous person were to find the entrance, the tunnels would be extremely dangerous to explore. If the Inca's tomb is flanked by huge stone doors that pivot, there must be a method gaining entrance. The doors may be operated by a hidden mechanism. They might open when a certain word is spoken, reminiscent of the "open sesame" of the Arabian nights.   
  
We can assume that the ancient builders of the tunnels anticipated possible grave robbers. They probably created a deadly trap for unwary ghouls. Madame Blavatsky was told during her South American trip that a thousand soldiers couldn't penetrate into the treasure-laden tomb.

Her informant said:

"... A thousand soldiers, were they in the tunnel, would be forevermore one with the dead, did they attempt to force their way into the treasure tomb of the dead Inca. There is no other access to the Arica chamber, but through the hidden door in the mountains near the Rio Payquina.

Along the entire length of the main corridor, from Bolivia to Lima and royal Cuzco, are smaller hiding places filled with treasures of gold and gems and jewels, that are the accumulation of many generations of Incas. The aggregate value of the treasures is beyond the power of man to estimate."

Nearly a hundred years ago, Madame Blavatsky claimed to have an accurate map of the tunnels.

"We had in our possession an accurate map of the tunnels, the sepulcher, the great treasure chamber and the hidden, pivoted rock doors," she stated.

"It was given to us by an old Peruvian; but if we had ever thought of profiting from the secret it would have required the co-operation of the Peruvian and Bolivian governments on an extensive scale.

To say nothing of physical obstacles, no one individual or small party could undertake such an exploration without encountering an army of brigands and smugglers with which the coast is infested, and which, in fact, includes nearly the entire population.

The mere task of purifying the mephitic air of the tunnel not entered for centuries would also be a serious one. There the treasure lies, and tradition says it will lie until the last vestige of the Spanish rule disappears from the whole of North and South America."

When [**Christopher Columbus**](http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/esp_colon.htm) landed on the island of Martinique, a story of similar tunnels was brought to his attention.

The Carib Indians told the Spanish about the Amazon women who lived without men. Columbus and his crew were informed that these women would hide in ancient subterranean tunnels if they were bothered by men. If their persistent suitors followed them into the tunnels, the Amazons cooled their passions with a flurry of arrows from their strong bows.   
  
The concept of vast underground passages is enough to boggle the mind. That such tunnels could be constructed indicates a science in pre-Inca or Inca days. It means there was a technology capable of building a labyrinth beneath the earth.   
  
And for what purpose? It is one thing to construct an underground shelter in the event of a catastrophe. Such a cavern, man-made or naturally formed, would provide safe refuge against an impending disaster. To construct tunnels that run for a hundred or a thousand miles beneath the South American continent is beyond the boundaries of present knowledge.   
  
But many people persist in hunting for the caverns. I have corresponded with and met several people who search for the tunnel entrance. Some are wild-eyed visionaries with a fanatical gleam in their eyes. A few are mentally disturbed individuals. Others are quick-buck opportunists out to fleece anyone who will put up funds for the funds for an expedition.   
  
A sampling of the correspondence includes this letter from a Brazilian physician who spends his vacation time hunting for the tunnels.

He writes:

"... English Explorer, Colonel Fawcett, disappeared in the jungles several years ago. He was searching for a tunnel entrance into the subterranean world in the Rancador mountains when he vanished.

Reports from that part of Brazil indicate that Fawcett and his son, Jack and their companion were living in a cavern city beneath the mountains. They were well treated, according to these reports, but they were not allowed to return to the surface because they might reveal the location of the entrance.   
  
"The entrance to the cavern city is carefully guarded by the Murcego Indians. They are a ferocious, dark-skinned tribe with a highly developed sense of smell. You must obtain their approval before you enter the caverns. However, should they decide you are not worthy to share the secret, you will not be allowed to return to civilization.   
  
"There is a legend in Brazil that the subterranean cities were constructed by the survivors of Atlantis. We don't know if the present inhabitants are the descendants of the Atlanteans, or whether they died and another race wandered into the tunnels and settled in the city."

**Francisco Pizarro** found tunnel entrances that had been closed with gigantic slabs of stone during the campaign against the Incas.

Pizarro located these entrances at a height of 22,000 feet on Huascaran, the sacred mountain of the Incas. History doesn't tell if he succeeded in entering the cavern or what he found there.   
  
These caves were forgotten until 1971 when a group of South American spelunkers organized an expedition to explore the caverns. They arrived at the Peruvian village of Otuzco.



The group was equipped with winches, miners lamps, ropes, cables, and battery-powered flashlights.

Two hundred feet below the surface, the group found their progress blocked by several huge slabs of stone. It took the efforts of four men to push these doors open, pivoting the slabs on stone balls that acted as guides.   
  
A report on what they discovered indicates history may need to be revised. A Peruvian periodical said:

"The tunnels found behind the stone slab doors would test the ingenuity of today's largest and best equipped contractors.

These tunnels lead toward the seacoast angling away at a slope of 14 degrees. The floor of the tunnel is made from stone slabs. These stones have been mortised and grooved to fit together. They have been marked in such a manner that they are slip-proof.   
  
"The tunnels extend for an estimated sixty miles and end some eighty feet below sea level where they are flooded with seawater. It is believed that the tunnel may have run beyond the coast, under the ocean, and onto an island off the coast. To date, the speleologists have not ventured beyond the spot where the tunnels are flooded."   
  
"Scholars point out that the skills needed to construct these tunnels was beyond the knowledge of the natives of ancient Peru. Exactly who built the tunnel and why, remains a mystery."

Perhaps the mystery of the tunnels will be solved someday in the future.

Until then, we might consider that these structures were probably in South America prior to the reign of the Incas. Some scholars have suggested that the tunnels were built by the Atlaneans. Others have speculated that an unknown race that existed before the flood constructed the tunnels.

Still others debate the possibility that the tunnels were made by the unknown builders of [Tiahuanaco](http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/esp_tiahuanaco.htm) and other megalithic stone-works. It is rumored, but not proven, that subterranean tunnels can be found under the ruins of Tiahuanaco, that the passages spread out from those ruins to other points on the continent.   
  
Peter Cristobal de Molina, a Spanish chronicler in the 15th century, tried to penetrate the mystery of the Inca tunnels.

In *Ritos y Fabulas de los Incas*, **Molina** reported a South American legend about the creator of mankind leaving the surface and going into an underground paradise. The father of humanity did this after his work was complete.

This secret retreat for the "God" or "gods" of old South America was the origin of many culture bearers and teachers who pop up periodically throughout history.