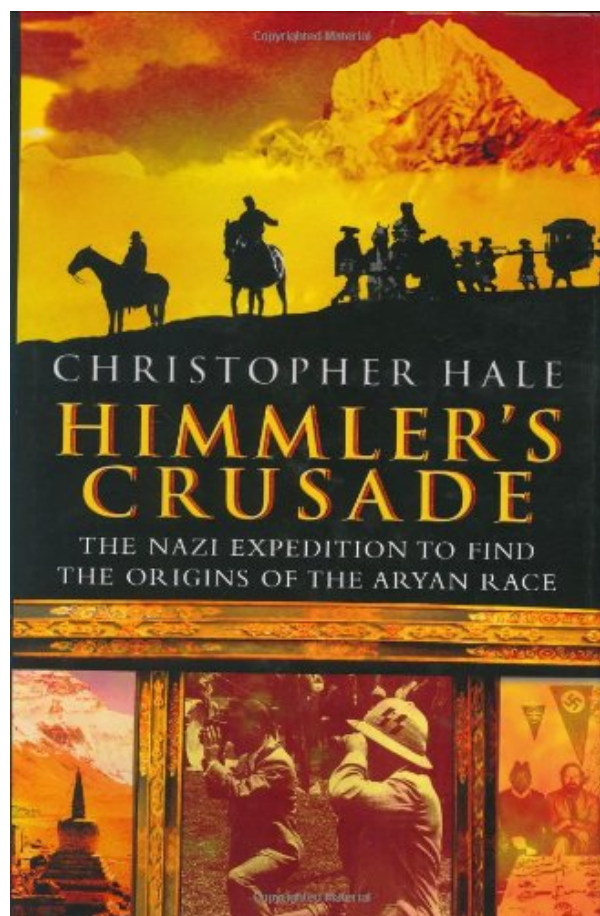
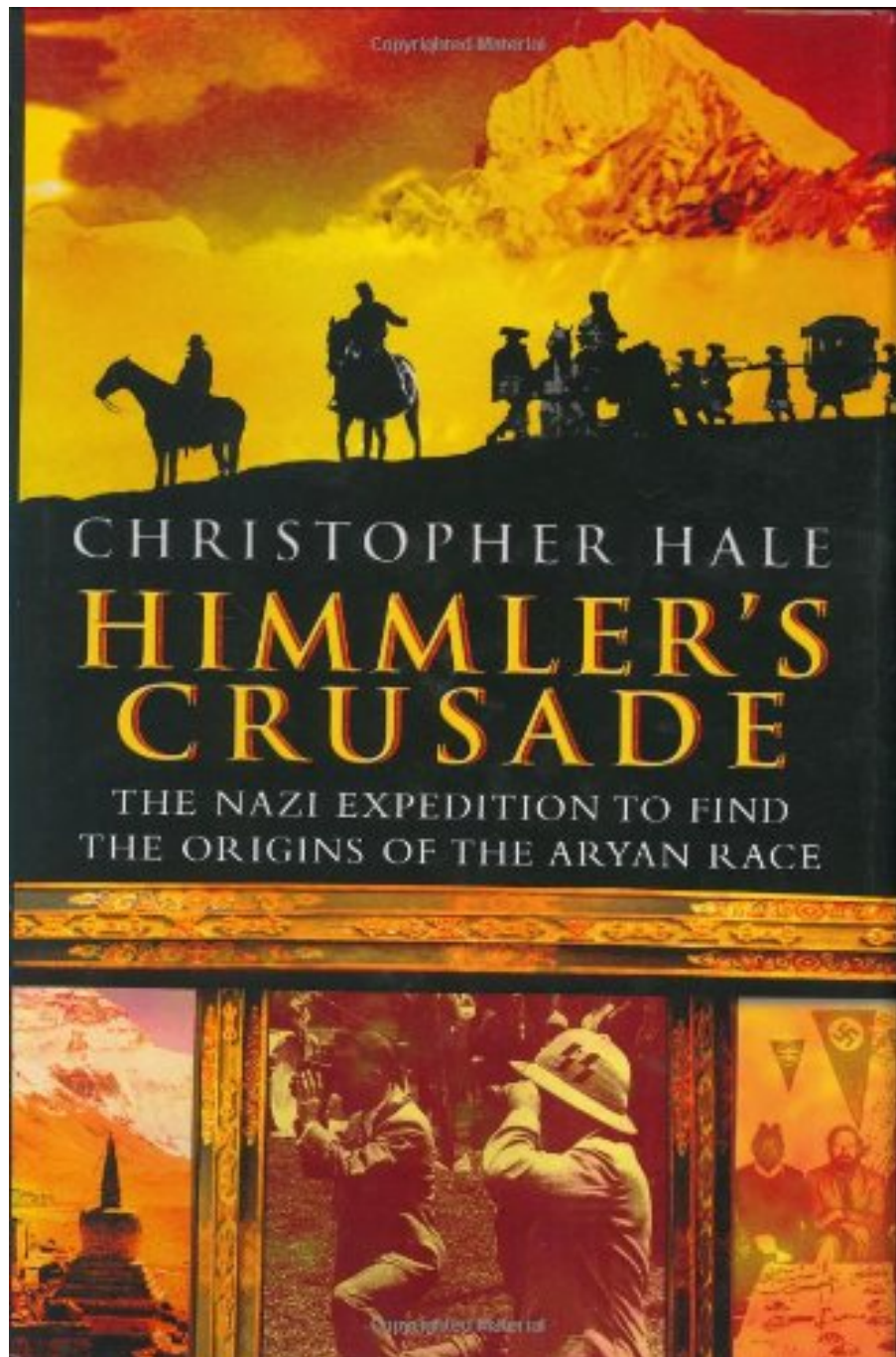


HIMMLER'S CRUSADE: THE NAZI EXPEDITION TO FIND THE ORIGINS OF THE ARYAN RACE BY CHRISTOPHER HALE



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From the Inside Flap It is a pilgrimage that thousands have taken in search of enlightenment, inner peace, or even sheer adventure. When five officers of the Nazi SS made the arduous journey to Tibet's forbidden city of Lhasa in the winter of 1938, however, the objects of their quest were mysterious, sinister, and, ultimately, deeply malevolent. Under orders from Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler, these scientists were to find proof of a bizarre historical fantasy, lay the groundwork for a global political and military strategy, and pinpoint the origins and remnants of the Aryan "master race." Himmler's Crusade tells the riveting tale of one of the most perverse, eccentric, and frightening scientific expeditions in history. Based on a wide range of previously unused sources, including journals, new interviews, and original research in German archives as well as in Tibet, this real life drama combines the highest standards of narrative history with the high adventure and exotic locales of Raiders of the Lost Ark. Central to this chilling tale is the complex and problematic

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The compelling story of a trek across an exotic land—and the sinister consequences

It was an SS mission led by two complex individuals—one who was using the Nazis to pursue his own ends, and one so committed to Nazism that afterward he conducted racial experiments using the skulls of prisoners at Auschwitz. Himmler's Crusade relates the 1938 Nazi expedition through British India to the sacred mountains of Tibet in search of the remnants of the Aryan people, the lost master race. Based on a wide range of previously unused sources, this intriguing book reveals the mission—a pet project of Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler—to be the result of both a bizarre historical fantasy and a strategy to provoke insurgency in British India. Providing rare glimpses into Himmler's SS stronghold, this riveting tale sheds new light on the occult component of the racial theories that obsessed Himmler and his fellow Nazis.

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A Brilliant Account of History

By A Customer

This is a brilliant and incredibly well researched book analyzing a little known, but powerfully important, part of Nazi history. I picked the book to read because it received such a stellar review by Michael Burleigh, the most renowned international authority on the Third Reich. Immediately, I was entranced by every aspect of Hale's account of an SS-sponsored expedition to Tibet in 1938-39. Hale goes way beyond doing a comprehensive book study of the subject. He actually conducted his own expedition to Tibet, retracing the steps that the SS-sponsored expedition leaders took and interviewing individuals who were either part of the expedition or who were associated with it. For example, throughout the book Hale provides astonishing information from his interviews with Bruno Beger, an anthropologist and SS member who would later be

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29 of 32 people found the following review helpful.

A bewildering (written) History Channel documentary

By Adrian

Remember Indiana Jones? Weren't those silly scenes from "Raiders" quite hilarious, with the Nazis searching for the "Arc of the Covenant"? Well... read this book, and you may not find them so amusing next time around.

Christopher Hale, a BBC documentary producer, really knows how to present and tell a story, no matter how unbelievable and apparently preposterous it may seem at first. After all, what would the Nazis be doing in Tibet in 1938-39, right? Wrong! Turns out they were there, and not on a picnic trip: they were actively looking for their Aryan roots, visiting the forbidden city of Lhasa, meeting with the current regime (and making the British rather nervous at that), while the new Dalai Lama was being found and brought to Tibet.

The story of Ernst Schäfer -who after the war denied any wrongdoing to his allied captors- and his four team-mates makes for an enjoyable and very entertaining reading, while Hale's subtle but precise insights and occasional humorous remarks all you (the reader) to participate on his unique documentary-producer perspective.

Far from offering his own ideological perspective, Hale limits himself to describing -with his keen ability to look beyond the evident and the superficial- closing up the book with a simple yet well structure "moral" (to give it a name) on the inherent dangers of believing that myths are essentially harmless: as he's so clearly explained -and history frequently demonstrated- a nation's inherent and underlying beliefs can lead it to far away places.

In summary: if you enjoy cuddling up with a good history book, and don't feel the need to read a doctoral thesis on the occult roots of Nazism (for which Nicholas Goodrich-Clarke is the best path to follow), get a hold of this very well researched and smartly illustrated book (the pictures do tell a whole story here), written from the unmistakable perspective of a TV-documentaries' producer (you feel like you're watching the documentary on the History Channel). It's an amazing story, proving once again that truth is always far more incredible than fiction.

48 of 61 people found the following review helpful.

Should have been written by a real historian

By A Customer

C. Hale's "Himmler's Crusade" continues the scholarly and sometimes not-so-scholarly attempt to examine Nazi esotericism. The Nazi expedition to Tibet is a subject not often commented on, never by mainstream historians and infrequently by writers on Nazi mysticism. Unfortunately, Mr. Hale should have done more research and gotten his facts correct. He refers to the symbol representing the SS as a "double thunderbolt." They are not thunderbolts but double sieg runes, representing the pagan Germanic letter for victory. Mr. Hale refers to Heinrich Himmler as "by far the best educated of the Nazi leaders.." Himmler had a degree in agriculture from Munich Technical College. Paul Joseph Goebbels, Minister of Propaganda, earned a

doctorate in philology

from Heidelberg University. Goebbels had a background in many bodies of knowledge. Himmler's intellectual background and experiences were quite pedestrian compared to those of Goebbels.

On page 117, Mr. Hale writes " Himmler had rivals for political power, but he also resented the cultural status of Alfred Rosenberg..." I hardly think this likely. Rosenberg was considered to be the outsider among the leading Nazis. He was a subject of private jokes. His name seemed to identify him as Jewish. Himmler would not have been threatened by him.

In the sense that this book explores a previously unknown chapter in Nazi history it is a welcome addition to the modern historian. However, Mr. Hale should have done a more thorough job in his research.

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It is a pilgrimage that thousands have taken in search of enlightenment, inner peace, or even sheer adventure. When five officers of the Nazi SS made the arduous journey to Tibet's forbidden city of Lhasa in the winter of 1938, however, the objects of their quest were mysterious, sinister, and, ultimately, deeply malevolent. Under orders from Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler, these scientists were to find proof of a bizarre historical fantasy, lay the groundwork for a global political and military strategy, and pinpoint the origins and remnants of the Aryan "master race."

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Central to this chilling tale is the complex and problematic character of Ernst Schäfer, the expedition's leader. A serious and extremely competent young zoologist, Schäfer was so consumed by ambition that he was eager to become Himmler's protégé and to do anything his patron commanded in return for opportunity, fame, and influence at the very highest levels of Nazi power. Though they had their own projects to pursue, Schäfer's team spent most of its time in Tibet doing Himmler's bidding, which included sowing the seeds of rebellion, undermining Britain's relationship with the Tibetan ruling class, and confirming Himmler's grotesque theories about the origins of the Aryan race.

Part spy thriller, part detective yarn, and all real-life adventure, Himmler's Crusade takes you from Himmler's SS stronghold at Wewelsburg Castle, where he inculcated elite SS recruits with the appropriate racial thinking, to the dizzying Himalayan heights, where Schäfer and his team examined Tibetan nobles for signs of Aryan ancestry. It asks penetrating questions about the relationship between science and politics and sheds new light on the occult theories that obsessed Himmler and his fellow Nazis. Supplemented with dozens of fascinating photos taken during the expedition, this engagingly told tale provides deep insight into one of the strangest episodes in the tumultuous months just prior to the outbreak of World War II.

From the Back Cover

"As the Indiana Jones films showed, Nazis, new age mumbo-jumbo and exotic locations are a formula that works. Christopher Hale's gripping and well-researched tale of an SS-sponsored scientific mission to Tibet in 1938-39 has the whole shebang: mad occult beliefs, mountains, strange characters called Bruno or Ernst and stomach-churning concentration camp experiments to round things off."

—The Sunday Times (London)

A scientific expedition or a sinister mission?

Why would the leader of the Nazi's dreaded SS, the second-most-powerful man in the Third Reich, send a zoologist, an anthropologist, and several other scientists to Tibet on the eve of war? Himmler's Crusade tells the bizarre and chilling story one of history's most perverse, eccentric, and frightening scientific expeditions. Drawing on private journals, new interviews, and original research in German archives as well as in Tibet, author Christopher Hale recreates the events of this sinister expedition, asks penetrating questions about the relationship between science and politics, and sheds new light on the occult theories that obsessed Himmler and his fellow Nazis.

Combining the highest standards of narrative history with the high adventure and exotic locales of Raiders of the Lost Ark, Himmler's Crusade reveals that Himmler had ordered these men to examine Tibetan nobles for signs of Aryan physiology, undermine the British relationship with the ruling class, and sow the seeds of rebellion among the populace. Most strangely, the scientists—all SS officers—were to find scientific proof of a grotesque historical fantasy that was at the center of Himmler's beliefs about race.

Set against the exquisite backdrop of the majestic Himalayas, this fast-paced and engaging narrative provides new and troubling insight into one of the strangest episodes in the history of science, politics, and war.

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