

# ANCIENT ASTRONAUTS, MODERN MYSTERIES

By John A. Keel

## SKY-GODS AND OUR "SEEDED" PLANET

Swiss author Erich von Daniken has become an international celebrity because of his claim that Man was first seeded on this planet by beings from another world. The gods of the ancients were, according to his theory, astronauts from some distant planet and in his latest book Von Daniken embellishes his concept by suggesting that all religious miracles and ghostly apparitions are projections and manipulations by that far off civilization.

Actually, the "seeded planet" theory has been bandied about in scientific and science fiction circles for a great many years. A host of European authors had produced massive volumes based on the theme long before Von Daniken picked up his pen. But none had managed to capture the public's imagination. Certainly, no one before Von-Daniken had succeeded in raising so much public discussion and debate on the matter.

Is it possible—really possible—that the first man came to Earth from somewhere else? If so, how did he originate on that other world? Was he seeded there from still some other place? It's the age-old question of which came first, the chicken or the egg? Is the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden actually a description of another planet, another beginning? That story did not begin with the *Book of Genesis* but was part of the folklore of many ancient cultures. It told simply how the first man and woman found themselves stranded on an alien world—a world already occupied by a hostile force or group known as the "serpent people." They did not appreciate the innocent intruders and tried to get rid of them in all kinds of fiendish ways. Modern theology translated these "serpent people" into the Christian devil. The serpent

was simplified into a symbol—a demonic creature who encouraged Eve to violate a cosmic secret, to eat the fruit of the sacred apple tree.

Some invisible super-intelligence was overseeing the situation, protecting Adam and Eve from the serpent people, but after they had broken the rules they were cut off from direct contact with the super-intelligence, and all our problems began. We have been trying to reestablish contact with the invisible overseer ever since. We began with "magic," with secret rites which sought communication with the overseer but which, more often than not, merely succeeded in stirring up the serpent people—the demonic forces. As our population grew, we set up religions centered around men who claimed they were in close contact with the overseer. Many of the ugly rites of the earlier magical cults were cleaned up and adopted by the religions. In the West we even adopted the pagan holidays as our own. Winter solstice became Christmas. The spring holiday devoted to fertility rites became Easter (but we still retained the ancient fertility symbols—eggs and rabbits).

When the population was small, only a few men and women were able to communicate directly with the super-intelligence, receive prophecies of the future, and undergo mysterious distortions of their own reality. But now that there are over four billion people scratching around on this planet trying to survive, the number of prophets has grown in direct ratio. Millions are now receiving fragmentary glimpses of the future. Millions are now coming into contact with strange apparitions. The population will almost double in the next 20 years and we will find ourselves in the midst of many millions of prophets,

haunted people, UFO contactees, and bewildered psychics.

This, then, is the first law that governs occult events: such events do not necessarily increase during specific periods of time. The number of people capable of having these experiences increase, instead, as the population increases.

### DARWIN VERSUS VON DANIKEN

Earthlings come in a wide variety of distinctive forms. If we had all sprung from a common seed like a small band of colonists from another planet, we should all be approximately the same in size, color, bone structure, and general racial characteristics. This is not the case. Anthropologists are still busy cataloging the many differences among the people from different continents. The erect, gangling *Homo sapiens* appeared suddenly, even mysteriously, in a thousand isolated places around the world somewhere between 70,000 and five million years ago (scientific estimates vary). He developed slowly according to the conditions of his immediate environment. He was not very smart in the beginning, nor did he have any real culture. If he had come from another world he would have certainly brought along the culture of that world with him, and he would have been bright enough to build homes and societies from the outset of his visit to Earth.

If early man had been dumped here from somewhere else, or even if this planet was used as a penal colony for misfits (another recurrent theory in ufology), we would not have retrogressed to the caveman stage. We would, in all likelihood, have built shining cities 100,000 years ago and by now we

(Continued on page 54)

# ANCIENT ASTROS

(Continued from page 16)

would be exploring the far reaches of the galaxy with a technology far advanced beyond our present one.

History and folklore tell us that we were still in pretty miserable shape a mere 5,000 years ago. Then, suddenly, we were visited by assorted strangers who taught us agriculture and gave us the first laws to lead us to a more civilized state. Some of these strangers were said to have come out of the oceans and seas. Others descended from the skies. They were our first gods and the men who chanced to meet with them and learn from them became our kings, our prophets, our priests. These men underwent peculiar changes after their encounters and ruled by "divine right" because they were somehow different from the rest of us. Their children inherited their powers—their psychic ability to see and communicate with supernatural beings. For thousands of years these talents were rare because the population was small. But as the population grew and crossbreeding took effect, more and more people inherited these abilities, just as people capable of painting realistic pictures or writing beautiful poetry were once rare but are now fairly commonplace. The modern cultural "explosion" is related directly to the population explosion. The modern explosion in supernatural experiences of all kinds is likewise an offshoot of the population explosion.

Who were those gods of yesteryear? Von Daniken assumes they were astronauts. Occultists assume they were elemental demons, mischievous en-

tities who coexist with us beyond the range of our vision; the original serpent people. Scientists have no explanation for them at all, except to dismiss them as "mere mythical figures."

When you study the human body you soon realize that it is a machine! A biochemical robot so cunningly designed that the vague speculations of the Darwinists cannot really account for it. Furthermore, the brain of this machine is a complex electrical computer that can be programmed and reprogrammed by an outside force. We sat in caves and treetops for a very long time until this force was introduced and got us moving. First it gave a few men new insights into their surroundings and helped to mold the social systems which improved our chances for survival. Our own historical records tell us how it then led us into religious wars led by prophets and visionaries to further improve and expand those social systems. Early in the game it became apparent that two separate forces were at work and we interpreted this as a war between gods and demons. The gods were Von Daniken's mysterious sky people. The demons were the mischievous serpent people. We became so certain and so enthralled with this interpretation that it clouded our vision and confused us for many centuries.

Meanwhile, we were being subtly manipulated toward a distant future goal—a collective destiny—that we still cannot fully discern. Even the delicate programming and reprogramming process was hidden from us until the second half of this century. But now the phenomenon is slowly but surely revealing itself to us.

## COMING OF AGE

The gods of the ancients are return-

ing, Erich von Daniken tells us. But actually they have been here all along. Through our studies of UFO contacts and contactees we are beginning to understand what is *really* going on. While many millions of people have been having casual sightings of strange things in the sky and on the ground, other millions have literally been abducted by the phenomenon and subjected to a brainwashing process, they emerge from the experience with total amnesia, or with a vague dream-like memory of what happened. But their lives change suddenly and remarkably. Their intelligence is sharply increased. Their characters and personalities are altered. In several well-documented cases, their chronic ailments have suddenly been cured. They divorce their spouses, abandon their families, even change their names, and move into new and better jobs. The process is more sophisticated now than it was in the time of the cavemen because we are more sophisticated ourselves. We have changed slowly, and improved slowly, over those thousands of years.

In other ages these experiences were regarded as supernatural and mystical. Today we try to fit them into a technological framework. We view the contact stories with some alarm, fearing that an alien race is trying to take us over. One group of ufologists is, in fact, convinced that some of these brainwashed humans have managed to attain top jobs in government and industry, and that the affairs of the world are now being controlled by extraterrestrial aliens.

However, the phenomenon does not really seem interested in our mundane day-to-day affairs except where they

(Continued on page 56)

(Continued from page 53)

may influence their mysterious long-range plan. Darwin was partially right, perhaps, when he speculated about a process of evolution. But he did not see it as a completely controlled process. He lacked the historical perspective needed to view the development of Man as a series of rungs on a long ladder of enlightenment. The phenomenon was completely hidden from view in his day.

The flaw in the ancient astronaut theory is the absence of motive. They arrived quietly, gave us some guidance, and then went away just as quietly. Were we just the recipients of an exercise in benevolence? Or were they already making plans for us?

If we really are biochemical robots constructed by some "Tinker Toy" addict in ancient times we were undoubtedly meant to serve some purpose. An Adam and Eve could not fulfill that purpose. The manufacturer needed millions of models to achieve his goal. It has taken a very long time, and required the careful conditioning of billions of people. Now the nature of that conditioning is slowly being revealed to us, perhaps as a first step toward revealing the entire master plan. The final revelation may not come in our generation, however, or even in the next dozen generations. The phenomenon is in no hurry.

We were first directly controlled by our manufacturers. We called them

gods and worshipped them. Before they departed they set up a system of rule based on "god-kings"—human beings who had been processed and given hereditary powers not possessed by the general population. The planet was divided up among about 30 of these god-kings and their system remained in effect for thousands of years, surviving well into the modern Industrial Age. But the mode of control gradually became diluted and polluted by human greed, politics, and religion. Finally it collapsed altogether. The conflict between the serpent people and the rulers of the biochemical robots has continued, however, and the situation is now so desperate that both sides seem willing to expose their *modus operandi* to us through overt action in the framework of the UFO phenomenon. In other ages, we accepted this conflict as a battle for men's souls. Now it is becoming apparent that there is more at stake. We, the biochemical robots, are the prize!

The serpent people—the anti-human forces—are imitating the UFO phenomenon through hallucinations and distortions of reality to confuse us, while the gods are trying to reveal more of themselves and their purposes to us. Millions of people are now able to see beyond the visible spectrum and to sense the presence of these forces, and our two very different worlds are beginning to overlap. The future will bring a series of small climaxes, explo-

sions of sudden insights and information, and a gradual strengthening of the communication channels between us and "them." As our awareness increases we may become more and more subservient to these forces, sliding back to our ancient condition when we were enslaved by them.

The process of change is already underway. The UFO phenomenon is rapidly becoming a new religion. A religion based on the premise that we are inferior to some advanced race from another world; a race that is coming to save us from ourselves. The basic theme of UFO contact has been anarchism and the promise of a marvelous new socio-religious system. It has almost been an election campaign. The promises have been dazzling but there has been no attempt to fulfill them. The ancient gods, and their successors, the god-kings, lied to us and manipulated us, and there's no indication that the tactics of the modern ufonauts are any different.

If we are biochemical robots helplessly controlled by forces that can scramble our brains, destroy our memories, and use us in any way they see fit, then we are caught up in a poker game being played with marked cards. Someone seems to be trying to tip us off about the marked deck but we are like the inveterate gambler who, when informed that the game is crooked, shrugs and says, "But it's the only game in town." ★