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*INEXPLICATA is the official journal of the **Institute of Hispanic Ufology**, an organization dedicated to increasing and promoting information and awareness on UFO and paranormal research in Spain, the Caribbean, Central and South America.*

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The Millennium Arrives

OK, OK, so it won't be here for another year, but the "commercial" millennium is only 70 days away as I write these words, completely oblivious to astronomers and others bent on reminding us that the 20th century ends in double zero, not in ninety-nine. INEXPLICATA feels no embarrassment at joining in the happy (and growing) ranks of '99ers and celebrating the arrival of the third millennium of the Common Era along with the best of them.

This issue of INEXPLICATA is the longest one to date and perhaps the most significant. Having presented the work of many notable authors from across the Spanish-speaking world, we now have the chance to let our readers "hear" their own voices on a number of UFO and paranormal questions--replies that convey concern, understanding and even humor about the protean field that brings us together. A variety of points of view are represented: hard science, spiritualism, old-fashioned ufology and even the ubiquitous Teletubbies get a plug.

Manuel Carballal, who has just returned from a hazardous trek across Mongolia, shares his thoughts on "Saucer Exhibitionism and Close Encounters" while Andrea Pérez Simondini considers the boon of "Experimental Ufology--a New Trail to Blaze"; Dr. Rafael A. Lara's MEXICO WATCH discusses an aberrant case of popular psychosis over a diminutive "UFO dummy" in Veracruz which attracted the attention of the Intelligence agencies. In short, we hope that you will find what you're looking for in this last issue of the Millennium (so to speak).

Scott Corrales

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Aside from being an experienced webmaster for his own site, "Expedientes Secretos" and for Spain's highly popular "Mundo Misterioso", Rubén Sobrino is a noted ufologist and a member of SEIP-La Coruña. This is his first contribution to INEXPLICATA.

UFOs, Astrophysicists and the MIR Space Station

by Rubén Sobrino

On January 16 of this year, almost all the newspapers in our country echoed the same remarkable news item from Moscow, carried by the prestigious EFE news agency.

The agency in question disclosed certain controversial statements made by Russian astrophysicist Boris Rodionov to Moscow's *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, in which he claimed to have proof of the existence of "a highly developed extraterrestrial civilization on one of the satellites of the planet Jupiter.

The astrophysicist also claimed that the enigmatic "flying saucer" phenomenon which has stimulated popular imagination worldwide could well be "outriders for this civilization."

Wielding a vast amount of scientific data and photographs transmitted by NASA's "Galileo" probe, Rodionov, a tenured professor of Microphysics and Cosmophysics of the State Institute of Physical Engineering, stated that Europa, smallest of Jupiter's four main satellites, "was inhabited by an ancient and technologically advanced civilization." Through the use of a high-powered computer and sophisticated photographic analysis technology, the scientist managed to obtain a close-up with a record-breaking resolution of nine kilometers from the satellite's surface, enabling him to make out the contours of what he calls pipes, tunnels and spherical domes. The photo clearly shows--according to Rodionov--that the lines formerly considered as mere fissures by the scientific community actually cross over each other like a knot of expressways.

According to Rodionov, the variety of "pipelines" and "tunnels", having a diameter similar to the "Chunnel" that crosses the English Channel, is surprising. "There are 100 kilometer segments, as well as other pipelines having immense junctures or orifices between them."

Anyone may join the controversy, since the image in which Rodionov claims to see the aforementioned pipelines and tunnels is available to anyone having Internet access and a simple photo retouching program capable of analyzing it. This photo, which is available from the NASA/JPL net server that provides images for the "Galileo" mission, in fact portrays a number of lines (fissures, in fact) which cross each other but never at different

elevations, as the scientist has claimed. Having a width of 20 to 40 kilometers and thousands of kilometers in length, it is believed that the fissures are attributable to a period of global expansion on Europa, caused by volcanic eruptions or geysers under its frosty surface, creating a series of fractures on the ice crust.

This news item would not go beyond being an amusing anecdote, were it not for the fact that it is the first time that a person related to the armed forces or the Russian Space Agency made similar statements to the press.

On December 23, 1998, another news item pertaining to the UFO phenomenon appeared in a number of papers. As with the preceding one, it also came from Moscow, but in this event, the source was cosmonaut Alexandr Baladin.

Baladin stated that "flying saucers" have come into close proximity to the MIR space station as well as the Baikonur Cosmodrome, further adding there is sufficient evidence in existence to warrant a scientific study of the phenomenon, and that it is time that world governments officially acknowledge the UFO phenomenon's existence.

"General Vladimir Ivanov, former commander of Russia's Military Space Forces, recalls that three objects flew at a considerable altitude over the Baikonur Cosmodrome and were picked up on radar. There is no way they could have been airplanes." insisted the cosmonaut.

Baladin also disclosed at Brazil's First International Ufology Forum that he himself had been the protagonist of a disturbing experience (along with fellow cosmonaut Musa Manarov) during his second space mission. While the docking operations between his space capsule and MIR were underway, Baladin became aware of a glowing object gyrating a short distance away.

Manarov managed to capture the strange phenomenon on videotape, which was also shown during the UFO congress in question. Baladin claimed that the recording, along with other evidence presented during the Congress, "must be studied by an international scientific commission."

Baladin insisted that the Russian military has a great contribution to make to UFO research, giving as an example the multiple-witness case at the Kaputsin Yar missile base, whose personnel sighted a semi-circular object flying at low altitude and lighting up all of the base's depots and magazines with a powerful searchlight in June 1989. "Many of my old comrades, who are now working at top-secret military facilities, acknowledge having seen unidentified flying objects over manufacturing centers, gunnery ranges and military facilities."

In any event, Baladin made it clear that "not all that can be seen

should be taken for a UFO, since it is very possible that we may be facing natural phenomena which have not been properly studied."

All of these explosive and unexpected statements should at least cause us to ask many questions about what is happening in the former USSR on the ufological level. Questions which shall invariably remain unanswered...or will they?

The region of Galicia in northwestern Spain was the site of a massive UFO flap several years ago. This 1997 report from the FENIX Group is testimony to the thorough research conducted by UFO investigators during this saucer wave.

Humanoids in Galicia

by Grupo FENIX

The UFO wave remains in full force throughout the northern part of the country and some very well documented cases are becoming known. ENIGMAS magazine has visited the locations which have been in the news lately to present new data regarding the strange visits being reported in certain parts of Galicia, as told by the witnesses to this event.

On Thursday, February 20th, the village of Paradaseca (Orense), belonging to the municipality of Chandexxa de Quiexa, found its usual peacefulness disturbed by a strange visit. Local shepherd Heliodoro Núñez, 76, was the hapless protagonist of an incident involving a number of 3 meter-tall entities. "It was around four in the afternoon, more or less, when I was with the herd in a field located some three kilometers from the detour on the Chandexxa road, along the Devesas River. Suddenly, the dogs started barking and staring at a point behind me. At first I thought I might have to do with wolves, but when I turned around and saw those tall, weird "things", I realized they were no wolves..."

On the days following the event, members of La Coruña's Grupo Fenix visited the scene. The aged witness assured them that he had been able to see with great clarity two enormous beings looking over the hedges. They stood in excess of three meters and [their heads] were covered by something similar to a strange "mortarboard" or "luminous bishop's mitre". The whole--the two beings, who were like "Siamese twins" and their curious headgear--changed color in unison, acquiring various shades of red, blue, yellow and green...

"It was otherworldly," stated Heliodoro Núñez, "and the fact is that I began to pray when I saw the apparition." The fear this man experienced did not go unnoticed by his closest relatives over the following days. Heliodoro's wife told ENIGMAS that "he arrived home feeling very, very scared. He prayed for a long time and

spent two sleepless nights afterward, unable to eat anything. I can't tell you what he saw, but it scared him very much."

Aside from Heliodoro Núñez, our companions found another witness to this spectacular event. Juan González González, 42, a resident of Casteligo (also in Chandrexa de Queixa municipality) claimed that on the very same day and time, and at the same place where the humanoid encounter occurred, he saw a deep red light motionless over the treetops. Given the distance separating him from the man from Paradaseca, he was unable to see the "two giants". He did confirm, however, that when he came across Heliodoro, the man was "running with this goats in fear." Forty-eight hours later, Juan González told Orense's *La Región* newspaper: "At first I thought it was a fire, but no smoke rose from it. I also thought it was a tractor, but it couldn't be. It could've been a balloon, but it didn't move at all. I don't know what it was, but it easily measured three meters."

The investigation is ongoing. Members of Grupo Fenix have found some metallized spheres at the site which are being subjected to analysis to identify their nature.

Almost simultaneously, Heliodoro Núñez's son began experiencing night terrors and pronounced ocular irritation. It would seem that the 25 year old man appeared in his parent's bedroom the night before, carrying a mattress and fully ready to spend the night with them. According to his account, he was afraid of sleeping in his room since "strange lights were appearing before him."

Newsflash!

The incident in Chandrexa de Queixa municipality is by no means the last one. In the early morning hours of Saturday, March 15, a rhomboidal object was filmed from the top of the A Espenuca hill in the town of Betanzos. The object consisted of five and six lights, alternately. The aerial phenomenon was caught on film at 04:13 hours while a group of youngsters followed the progress of comet Hale-Bopp. A day later, at 19:00 hours, a couple and their son were driving along the Alto de Sesta highway near Abadín (Lugo), when they were able to see a spectacular celestial event they compared to Fátima's "dance of the sun".

The Galician flap doesn't seem to have ended yet, as can be gleaned from these cases. Contributing Editor Manuel Carballal gives us the following information.

"Ultima Hora" (Newspaper), June 2, 1999

Four Residents of Laxe Claim Having Seen a UFO for Over 2 Hours

by Cristina Viu -- Newsroom

Around eleven o'clock last night, Antonio Toja swept clean his bar

in the port town of Laxe while his wife María Elena and son Roberto viewed the last chapter of *Mareas Vivas* on TVG. He suddenly noticed a very bright light suspended in the sky. Although startled, he proceeded with his task until half an hour later, during the intermission of the televised broadcast, he remarked about the incident to his family. They then reached for a pair of binoculars and realized that the object was nothing "customary."

Around that time, they summoned a neighbor, José Manuel Pato, president of the Yacht Club, to act as their witness, because according to María Elena: "Whenever I saw these things on TV I thought [the witnesses] were people suffering hallucinations." The three men decided to venture to the graveyard in order to get a better view of the object.

The sighting lasted two hours until the object moved downward and to the right to shine with even greater intensity around 1:30 a.m.. The case has caused a stir in Laxe and there were people scanning the skies yesterday.

No Explanations or Confirmation

The sighting could not be confirmed by the control tower at Lavacolla Airport nor by the Regional Maritime Rescue Center. Neither of these two agencies, according to their spokespeople, had any information--whether directly or indirectly--regarding a strange event on Monday night in the Laxe area.

The A Coruña Meteorological Institute stated that no strange phenomena occurred on Monday which could have been mistaken for a UFO, and did not hazard any guesses. On the other hand, the astronomical observatory in Santiago explained that no extraordinary events had been envisioned for time, but ventured a hypothesis involving the planet Venus, which came undone when the object's movements were explained to the investigator. In any case, he advised that a sky watch should be kept over the following days. In none of the cases did the parties consulted betray any surprise while explaining the phenomenon allegedly seen at Laxe.

"Ultima Hora" (Newspaper), June 5, 1999
"Living Stars" Over Laxe

On Sunday night, they show X-Files on TV, but its more fun watching it live. This can be done without any problems in Laxe, and it happened again last Thursday. At first, only five or six people were involved. When things got serious, all the cellular phones came alive as word spread throughout the area. That's when things got started. Enthusiastic spectators (though not all) followed the maneuvers of a luminous "signal" which appeared and disappeared in the dark skies. Four local residents had seen it two days earlier.

There were close encounters of the third kind in Laxe. Third, because people had already met twice: the first time involved four residents, successfully; the second was washed out due to the clouds and rain.

It all started at 11:50 p.m. José Manuel Pato, president of the Laxe Yacht Club; the four crewmen of an Irish merchant vessel, along with a couple of residents and a journalist noticed that something funny was going on up there.

And, what was it they saw?

A light-- similar in size and intensity to what three Venus-sized planets could produce in their maximum evening glory--hung quietly in high above the horizon. Nothing unusual up to this point. The problem, to give it a name, is that the light suddenly dwindled in intensity until it remained a mere point of light. Again, nothing unusual here, except that the light began glowing again with renewed intensity...and this is really unusual.

The most spectacular part of the event lasted barely twenty minutes, up to 12:10 a.m. more or less. The light decreased gradually in intensity and began doing strange things in the measure that curiosity seekers reached the top of the hill. The astronomical equation remained thus: plenty people, little glow. And little faith.

Cars began arriving at the spot near the cemetery. One of them carried the cast of *Mareas Vivas* with the shellfish gatherer, the doctor and the clients of Petróleo's bar. "Doctor" Carlos Blanco was in charge of livening up the proceedings; an incredulous girl stated that [the light] was only an airplane. "Be quiet, Scully," Blanco told her, alluding to the skeptical agent in the X-Files. There was no point in breaking up the mood, anyway.

At another point, the actor indicated that the light could very well be an item of extraterrestrial political campaigning, such as "Vote for XTY of the M-35 Galaxy" or some such.

The worst part is that the light became increasingly lazy and would not reappear, even when called upon to do so. And when it did appear, the shouts of:"Here, Hey! Over Here!" would, of course, make it turn off. At least it was captured on video--from where it can't get away.

INEXPLICATA Contributing Editor Manuel Carballal investigates one of the most "character flaws" of the UFO phenomenon--its persistent need for making a spectacle of itself! This article originally appeared in the June 1999 issue of *El Ojo Crítico*.

Saucer Exhibitionism and Close Encounters

by Manuel Carballal

It had happened again. Upon reaching the small village of Lestedo, scant kilometers from Compostela, I ran once more into what I've come to term as "UFO exhibitionism". The recent landing case of a supposedly unidentified craft posed a scenario I had already seen in many similar cases, only that on this occasion it was positively shameless. Now we were dealing with a "flying saucer", described by the female witness as a "large disk with borders filled with yellow lights, having a slightly larger and reddish light in its middle..."

Dunia Sinde, a delightful eight-year old girl, was home alone on that October night. Her parents were busy running the cafeteria they own in Santiago. At around two in the morning, Dunia was startled by a strange sound like that of "a felt tip pen while drawing on a piece of paper." A strange yellow glow poured into her room from the exterior. She got out of bed and headed to the window. That's when she saw it. Right in front of her. Some 80 meters away. Almost touching the ground but without contacting it: it was a "flying saucer."

When I reached the landing site a few days later, both Dunia and her father, Alejandro Sinde, patiently answered my questions, allowed me to take soil samples, take photographs and make video recordings. What they could not explain was why that object--whatever it was--should have chosen that site to "show itself off."

The Sinde family's home is discreetly isolated. Right in back of the house, where Dunia's bedroom "happens" to be located, there is a 150 meter long lawn surrounded by eucalyptus trees. This expanse is cut down the middle by a bushy row of trees. Why did this object choose to land precisely next to the house? Why didn't it land at the other side of the trees, which would have made it completely invisible to prying eyes? From an aerial perspective, this situation is clearly visible. If a pilot--alien or human--wanted to land without being seen, it would do so on the left hand side of the expanse, beyond the trees. However, the object chose to land a few meters to the right, on the other side of the trees--just enough to be seen by the witness. It landed, allowed Dunia to look at it for a few seconds, and then "started making the felt tip pen sound again before leaving and vanishing from site..."

UFO Exhibitionism

Regardless of how much information they may amass, the reports they may file, or how much data they feed into their computers, those ufologists who do not engage in field work will never be able to understand certain facets of the UFO phenomenon: aspects, sensations, intuitions or even events that only become apparent while burning shoe leather and beating the same roads, trails and highways where the slippery saucers have allowed themselves to be seen. The contempt expressed by certain self-appointed "scientific ufologists" like Ricardo Campo against what they term "picnic

ufology" leads them to miss out on certain aspects of the phenomenon, which are indispensable for its comprehension.

Hoofing it to the geographic sites where close encounters have occurred gives us precisely this perspective. That's why when I reached the remote village of Mansilla in the province of Burgos, I felt that sensation yet again. I was accompanied by Carmen, a young graduate in Geography and History who had gone through an uncanny experience precisely at the same place where we stood.

Carmen was returning to her home in Burgos in the fading hours of the afternoon. While driving along the road between the villages of Mansilla and Arroyal, she was surprised by a luminous object that swooped down on her car...

I managed to find burned shrubs and strange prints at the exact location of the "encounter". While taking samples which would later be analyzed by Reia Lab Scan, S.A., it suddenly dawned on me that the object had "landed" only 30 meters from a discreet hollow where it could have remained invisible to any indiscreet glances from Carmen or anyone else driving along that road.

Carmen agreed to undergo all manner of tests, including two hypnotic regression sessions--one of which I witnessed-- performed by Dr. José Andrés Lozano from Burgos. We were unable to extract a reasonable answer to this evident UFO exhibitionism from her stories, whether awake or under hypnosis. It is as if the object had been expecting one witness in particular, at that place and time, and chose to "act" upon him or her...

The cases catalogued by the late J.Allen Hynek as "close encounters" are often accompanied by this disconcerting attitude, leading certain researchers, myself included, to believe that the old ufological theory--so popular in the '60s and '70s--of alien scientists being caught unawares by indiscreet witnesses is false. Landings and humanoid encounter cases, or at least a fair share of them, appear suspiciously "forced". The witness appears to find him/herself at exactly the right time and place for a UFO or its shameless occupants choose to allow themselves to be seen. One of the most graphic examples of this UFO exhibitionism has taken place on a number of Spanish beaches.

Strangers on the Beach

I found fresh evidence of UFO exhibitionism when I travelled to Punta Hidalgo on the island of Tenerife [*one of the Canary Islands--Ed.*] to research some notable UFO sightings which had occurred there over the preceding months. However, none of them had been seen closely as the case experienced by Olga and José, a married couple, scant weeks before my visit. Olga and José were inside their vehicle, admiring the spectacular night sky as seen from Punta Hidalgo as well as from many other spots on Tenerife. Although they did confess that their visit to the area was prompted by constant stories of UFOs in the area.

The couple suddenly noticed a strange, luminous, semi-spherical object approaching the coast. Motionless, the couple witnessed the uncanny event from their car seats: some strange, tall entities, with long hair and completely human-looking, had "landed" on the sands of Punta Hidalgo before their very eyes...What ufologist could even dream that some "alien scientists" wishing to remain anonymous would exit their craft on a beach, right in front of the only car parked in the entire area?

The fact is that Spanish beaches have been the stage--and I underline the "stage" part-- of an infinity of UFO incidents. Can there be a less suitable place, and more devoid of shelter, for protection against curious glances than a beach?

Having reached this point, it is inevitable to mention the Conil case, without a doubt one of the most famous and controversial UFO cases of the past years. When the TASS news agency stunned the world in 1989 with news of a UFO landing in the Russian city of Voronezh, it eclipsed all subsequent UFO stories. For this reason, the media paid no heed whatsoever when a new UFO incident took place 2 days following the events at Voronezh, this time in the town of Conil near Cádiz in southern Spain.

Dozens of researchers made the pilgrimage to Conil in search of new information on the elusive saucer phenomenon. The witnesses endured, with saintly patience, the questions of a thousand and one ufologists, and retold their experiences on the beach at Conil an equal number of times--a case involving two strange humanoids that allegedly emerged from a UFO. I took the trouble to climb the hill located on the right-hand end of the beach to take some general photos of the "encounter". A glance at these photos will suffice to show that beach features much more discreet locations than the point, which is right in front of the town center and several hotels and small businesses, where the supposed aliens were "accidentally" seen.

This behavior has remained a constant in similar cases. Months after the Conil case, a new "humanoid landing" took place on another Spanish beach. A case hitherto unknown, as so many others. But on this occasion we must travel to the other end of the country, more than 1000 kilometers away.

Much like the Conil case, this new incident, which was shared by multiple witnesses, took place in the town of Sada (La Coruña). And I use the word "shared" because as at Conil, a group of witnesses observed strange lights in the sky--"UFOs"--shortly before other witnesses noticed the strange humanoids on the beach.

On that night, right at midnight, D. José Francisco García, director of the Radio Oleiros station, was driving in his car accompanied by his wife and in-laws, bordering the beach at Sada. The four witnesses managed to see the strange luminous, cigar-shaped object "completely surrounded by light bulbs" as it crossed

the sky. Their observation lasted some 5 to 6 minutes, as they would later tell me. Upon visiting the area, I learned that another couple had an even more surprising experience on the same beach. As Juan (a witness who demands the utmost anonymity) would tell me, he and his wife were on the beach that night a few hours after José García and his family witnessed the strange aerial object. They suddenly ran into two strange humanoids who appeared to emerge from the sea. Both of them, as in the Conil case, were dressed in long tunics and carried a kind of bag "into which something was being poured." My investigations in the area show that it is probable that other people witnessed the manifestation of the entities from a greater distance, but why in that precise area of the beach and not by the cliffs, which is much less conspicuous? One could honestly believe that the two entities were there, and at that moment, for the benefit of Juan and his wife.

The Transcendent Experience

This "UFO exhibitionism" -- as if the phenomenon were choosing precisely the right time and witness to appear -- leads us to a further question: the fact that encounters with UFOs and their alleged "occupants" go far beyond representing a casual incident in a witness's life. Without arguing if these experiences are real or a sort of mystical experience, I can still state that these experiences are more than an "accidental" and isolated event, at least in most cases. Certain authors, largely from the U.S.A., believe that encounters with alleged aliens forms part of a follow-up in the witnesses' lives, thus implying that new UFO incidents will occur over time.

D. Manuel Castro is an airport operator. He has spent a considerable part of his life linked to the world of aeronautics, performing maintenance on airplanes. It is for this reason that he has never been able to identify the strange artifact that he saw land in a Galician town in the summer of 1958. Out of this object-completely atypical in UFO lore--there emerged three humanoids dressed in tight-fitting outfits who then proceeded to collect soil samples. This amazing and "casual" encounter with the humanoids appeared to be an isolated experience in his life until he had a repeat UFO experience in the Nineties. One of them, which took place in the heart of the city, was so impressive that it led him to immortalize his experience on canvas. D. Manuel's painting, which depicts the UFO that surprised him in the middle of the night, is impregnated with the full emotional burden that a UFO witness can convey.

It is precisely this emotional factor, the trembling in the voice, the beads of sweat on the witness's forehead, that cannot be captured by any questionnaire submitted by mail from a ufologist. It is all too often that so-called "analysts" or "armchair researchers" miss out on this dimension of the phenomenon. A dimension that is of the greatest importance, to my understanding.

The emotional burden in many cases constitutes an invitation to reflection. As well as the disquieting coincidence of details in witness accounts, separated by hundreds of kilometers or dozens of years. These coincidences, not only in the shape of the objects but in the description of the devices, are perceived by the field researcher even in the use of language, in the comparisons made by the witness, or in the emotion arising from the retelling of the experience. Could these similes be attributable to chance? Perhaps, if the experience being described was archetypical, in other words, a story involving a "flying saucer" brimming over with macrocephalic little green men, which have been made commonplace by the media or films. But, what if the witnesses are describing the same phenomenon, completely different from the psychosocial influence of the cinema? When Manuel Castro, for example, drew in my field notebook strange phone-booth shaped UFO one from which three "astronauts" in tight-fitting coveralls emerged, I found it absurd. I had to traverse the nearly 950 kilometers separating Galicia from Seville to find a "twin" case, only better documented.

Miguel Fernández Carrasco's experience should occupy a privileged position in European ufological history: on the night of January 28, 1978, Miguel, who was then 24 years old, had dropped off his girlfriend, Carmen Alvarado Sáenz, age 20, at her house around midnight, and returned home from Sanlúcar la Mayor to Benacazón, some four kilometers away.

According to his report, he noticed a "shooting star" around twelve-thirty a.m. A few minutes later, the "star" turned in to an unidentified craft which landed some five meters away from the witness. The object had a parallelepipedal configuration, much like a telephone booth "but much larger" (some two meters wide by three and a half meters tall)--similar to the one described by Manuel Castro in Galicia, having a sort of dome on its upper section which issued red and white flashes. Near the upper edge of the vehicle's "trunk" were two appendages shaped like fins. A kind of door in the shape of a half-archway opened, spinning on hypothetical hinges. At that moment, a blinding light issued from the inside of the ship, and a ramp projected toward the floor.

According to the young man's story, he was frozen in terror as two humanoid beings standing some two meters tall emerged from the craft. They wore tight-fitting coveralls "like a frogman's wet suit", according to Miguel, and a thick belt whose buckle emitted soft, rhythmic red flashes. Despite his terror, Miguel managed to control his panic and broke into a run. The humanoids promptly returned to the object and it "took off". Looking behind him as he ran, the witness claims that the UFO rose in a great puff of smoke, heading toward him--which only served to increase his panic. The craft soon overtook him, and Miguel felt that he was hit with "a burning exhaust or emanation" from the UFO. The young man remembers nothing more until he appeared at the entrance to his house.

He was taken to the emergency room of Seville's Hospital San Lázaro where he underwent extensive tests. According to the report I found at said institution, he was found to have strange burns and ocular irritation "similar to having been exposed to a very powerful light". The most surprising fact about the case is that a Seville judge called Miguel to testify, giving place to the only court action ever taken in a case of UFO aggression in Europe. A legal action which, I might add, was lost in the shuffle of paperwork and took me many days to obtain, involving an adventure which touches the limits of the unimaginable. This legal action constitutes, without a doubt, one of the most extraordinary documents in European UFO history, and the strange premature aging of the witness over the past years should also be cause for reflection on the matter.

Does this extraordinary pursuit by an unknown craft represent a unique case in Spanish ufology? Not at all. I would now have to travel to Barcelona to research a case disconcertingly similar to Miguel's.

This case involved Juan Soler Cintas, a resident of Manresa, who lived through a chase quite similar to Miguel's. The protagonists of the event were a cigar-shaped object and humanoids dressed like "astronauts". Could three men from Galicia, Cataluña and Andalucía have invented such similar characters while having no contact between them?

These coincidences, these significant "chance events" in UFO stories can only become visible in the field researchers logbook, when he or she has had the opportunity to interview the witnesses in very similar cases, event though these may be separated in space and/or time. It is said that an image is worth more than a thousand words, and when three witnesses separated by time and space draw an apparently identical phenomenon in my logbook, it is hard to attribute this coincidence to "chance".

In 1996, I visited the community of Proaza in Asturias to investigate a series of close encounter events. One of them was experienced by Monserrat and Camilo Rivera. It was 21:35 hours when the young couple observed an enormous white light descending over the trees near their house. The luminous sphere stopped 50 meters from the house at treetop level. Once again, the phenomenon chose to appear within full view of the witnesses and not in the concealment offered by the nearby woods. It had a kind of "door" in its middle and suddenly projected a sort of "multicolored ramp of lights". According to the witnesses, the enormous sphere terrified them. In fact, Monserrat was the first one to run into the house to protect her children from "a thing that wasn't of this world". When Camilo Rivera drew what he had seen in my logbook, I was left dumbfounded. The humble Asturian farmer had drawn an object suspiciously similar to the one described by the witnesses of the UFO landing at Galdar (Las Palmas, Canary Islands) many years earlier. But let's not get ahead of ourselves.

A new landing would take place long afterwards, this time in remote spot called Ferreiras, in the municipality of Friol, and that's where I was headed. José Manuel Castro, an illiterate worker, was the main protagonist of this incident. According to his story, an enormous, spherical object resembling the full moon descended over the treetops scant meters from his home. Gripped by panic, Jose Manuel ran into his home; peeping through the window and shielded by a pane of glass, he noticed how the gargantuan sphere had stopped over the trees and projected a halo of light "like a rainbow".

The description made by José Manuel Castro in Friol was astoundingly similar to the one made by Camilo Rivera regarding the sphere that had hovered over the trees at his home in Proaza, 250 kilometers from Ferrerías. But there's more. When Jose Manuel Castro looked out the window and saw the "ramp of light looking like a rainbow", he could also see a group of three or four small humanoids descending along it, while an equal number of 2 or 3 meter tall beings remained on board. Even more surprising is that after analyzing the terrain on which the object had supposedly landed, we found the prints of--landing gear?--forming a triangle measuring 8 x 8 x 10 meters and some completely unidentifiable "footprints". We managed to make plaster casts of the prints, which could not be attributed to any known animal after analysis at Universidad de Santiago and by zoologists in the city of Lugo.

What is boggles the mind is that this utterly illiterate farmer had drawn several "giants" within the sphere, suspiciously similar to a classic UFO incident which took place thousands of miles away and twenty years earlier. When we visited Galdar on the island of Grand Canary, we managed to secure the exact same description of an object much too similar in appearance and behavior to the one in Ferrerías or Proaza to be "coincidental".

The Thousand and One Faces of a Myth

Antonio Meilán López is a normal man leading a normal life. He owns a small store, is a devoted family man, and a football fan...like so many other normal men. As a teenager, he witnessed a completely amazing phenomenon: while returning home one afternoon in a small Galician town, he ran into a group of small beings wearing tunics. Steeped in Galician popular culture, Antonio Meilán identified those strange creatures with the *Santa Compañía* his elders had told him so much about. Like Antonio, many Galicians who have encountered strange entities in the night have identified them with the *Compañía*. When similar tunicked creatures have been seen in any city in Castille or Cataluña, or on a beach in Conil, they have been identified as "aliens". Only after having a "classic" UFO experience a few months ago (our reason for interviewing him) did he take an interest in ufology, and after reading a few books and articles on the phenomenon, he rethought his opinion about the creatures, believing them to be more closely related to outer space than to folklore.

Antonio Meilán's experience should lead us to ponder. Anthropology and Sociology texts are laden with alleged "folklore" cases which undoubtedly conceal genuine "close encounters with humanoids" which could engross the files of any ufologist.

Serafín Pena Tejeiro, for example, is a young resident of Cospeito (Lugo) who was catapulted to national prominence in the national media after recounting his encounter with two strange flying beings. As he told us upon visiting his home--a humble farm--Serafín had left home before dawn to reach the spot where a friend would pick him up every day to go to work. No sooner had he left his doorstep than he witnessed an amazing sight: over the treetops he could see a sort of "luminous stand" upon which two humanoid figures were walking. They reminded young Serafín of the Blessed Virgin that can be seen in the town chapel, and who else could it be? The unspecialized media dubbed the story "The Virgin Appears at Cospeito". However, any student of Marian phenomena would notice that Serafín's encounter lacked any of the elements which characterize Marian events. There were neither messages nor mystical phenomena; the witness was not a clairvoyant; there were no healings, and the apparition never repeated itself. Serafín employed a simile that matched his cultural context to describe what he had seen--just like thousands of other witnesses. To identify the nature of the phenomenon by means of what the witness transmits to the researcher is very daring and often incorrect.

In very few cases can we illustrate this concept more clearly than in the series of "apparitions" which occurred in the gypsy neighborhood of Penamoa (La Coruña) in the mid-'80s: over days, if not weeks, the residents of Penamoa and some researchers who joined them, patrolled the surroundings of the town, armed with rifles and handguns in an attempt to hunt down the strange humanoid that had been seen in the vicinity. The discovery of some animals slain under mysterious circumstances, plus the strange lights in the sky that accompanied the manifestations of the humanoid, were overlooked by non-specialized chroniclers. To the gypsy community--strongly influenced by evangelical churches--the apparition had to be demonic, and the services of a group of pentecostal exorcists were recruited in an effort to banish the entity through prayer.

As had occurred in similar cases, such as the apparitions of humanoids in Vega de Coria or Santander following repeated sightings, the humanoid disappeared along with the enigmatic lights in the sky. Was it a diabolic apparition, as the Protestant pastors claimed, or a new UFO humanoid incident?

Beyond all the anthropological, religious, folkloric or even ufological explanations that can be put forth, we have the eyewitnesses' own testimonies. Accounts which may coincide despite the effect of time or distance and which often point to an incomprehensible exhibitionism on the phenomenon's part; accounts of phenomena which will be identified by the witness according to

his or her cultural context. However, aside from all our conjectures and speculations, "they" remain out there--lurking in the shadows for the right place and time so that one of us, perhaps even you, becomes an involuntary witness to the absurd phenomenon known as UFO.

Fear of the Unknown: The Ultimate Evidence

In 1997, the overwhelming UFO wave in Galicia caused us to wander some 2000 kms. from one town to another in the Spanish northeast. Each investigated sighting bore rumors of a new case in another town, and the car's front end immediately pointed in that direction. Finally, after collecting testimonies from several witnesses on the border between Galicia and Asturias, a powerful snowstorm trapped my car, lacking chains for the tires, on a mountain pass where the interviewees had warned me of the presence of wild bears. Such are the hazards of field research.

Shivering from the cold -- the Lada Niva lacked a heater -- and mindful of any noise in the surrounding forest, I remained there for a few endless hours awaiting the arrival of the tow truck I'd requested through my cellular phone. Hopefully it would reach me before the bears did. The mechanic found me huddled in the seat, defending myself with a ridiculously small knife. I must have been a sight when he knocked on the windshield and made me jump out of my body. "I can see you weren't exaggerating over the phone, boss," the fellow in the blue coveralls remarked, "you were pretty scared, huh?" He was right. I wasn't lying when I phoned the nearest shop and said I was in an emergency; the fact is that real, sincere and spontaneous fear is one of humanity's most eloquent elements, including the UFO phenomenon.

An even more eloquent and revealing case came from Sierra de Outes (La Coruña). We met with the witness, Manolo Javela, in the town's only bar. When told that we had travelled the distance because of the UFO experience, he knotted his brow and violently denied all of the rumors that had reached us: "I made that stuff up, and besides, I didn't see anything!" Having travelled hundreds of kilometers to interview the man, we dejectedly finished our coffee and sandwich before leaving. Only when we made it clear that we weren't journalists and no photos of him would be published did his attitude change. For Manolo Javela had been through two traumatic experiences: a close encounter with humanoids and the pitiless mockery of the press. It had led him to conclude that it was better to be taken for a joker than a madman (and I invite all "pseudo-skeptics" to reflect upon this).

On the day of the incident, Manolo had been found by some neighbors huddled inside his car and shouting for help. When they managed to get him out of the car, he wouldn't stop screaming that a flying saucer and some little green men had attacked him. "I never saw a man gripped by such visible fear," said one of the locals who found him. To the people of Outes -- putting aside all journalists, armchair ufologists and pseudo-skeptics -- Manolo's

fear was sufficient proof of the honesty of his encounter with the "little men", because everyone in the town remembered how when a gang of toughs arrived in town to start a fight, Manolo Javela had faced them all alone and run them off. Javela is a brave character who isn't afraid to take on delinquents by himself...but the creatures who descended from above that night managed to shatter his resolve, turning him into the umpteenth victim of terror of the unknown. A questionnaire send by mail, fax or e-mail by the armchair ufologists shall never manage to understand this aspect of the UFO phenomenon.

The Questions Raised by the Phenomenon

Are UFOs alien craft wanting to show off? Not in my opinion. The problem with applying the ETH (extraterrestrial hypothesis) to the UFO phenomenon is that it is much too simplistic.

In fact, no serious astronomer discards the possibility of ET's in the universe. What is untenable is that said ET life should visit us, since it would involve a technology capable of surpassing the speed of light, which is unimaginable according to our physics. Let us suppose that there is a technology capable of neutralizing the increase in ship's mass, proportional to its acceleration. Or let's imagine that an astronaut is able to break down to the molecular level, travel at lightspeed, and reassemble himself at the arrival point. We can imagine a technology capable of flying through black holes, etc.--these are all science fiction conjectures. But let's suppose such technology really exists. Would a civilization having such spacecraft use internal combustion engines? Would it be ignorant about anaesthesia? Would it not have cloaking devices? It is hard to imagine a technology able to surpass the speed of light leaving burned grass at a landing site, since any carbonization would be due to an internal combustion engine...not to mention a ship that toys with black holes needing hydraulic landing gear with "legs". It is paradoxical that these prodigious machines should appear on radar screens, when we earthlings have had "invisible aircraft" since the 1940's. It is galling that during a UFO abduction or act of aggression a witness should undergo traumatic "tortures", when our own hospitals have techniques to avoid pain, or to even erase any memory of said operations.

The conclusion is evident: if UFOs were alien, they should be much more than vehicles, and if they are vehicles, then they are not alien. Unless, of course, all the "evidence" of the phenomenon (landing marks, burned grass, radar detection, scars on witnesses) are a "means of expression" for the phenomenon, just as the witness might imagine a "spaceship" to look and behave. In this order of affairs, either everything is due to a strange physical manifestation of the witnesses' beliefs and prejudices--according to his cultural background--or what is more disquieting, a real

phenomenon alien to the protagonist him/herself which uses the archetypes of Western technological civilization to make itself visible "in the likeness" of what the witness would believe if faced with an alien craft.

Ultimately, to continue arguing about the extraterrestrial or non-extraterrestrial provenance of UFOs strikes me as absurd. As our physics indicates, it is absolutely ridiculous to believe in physical and solid craft like the ones that appear on radar screens or leave the imprints of their "legs" on the grass they burn upon landing. We must go beyond the outward appearance of the phenomenon and venture into its true nature, which will more than likely have nothing to do with metallic "flying saucers" filled with small, bigheaded EBES...

Separated by distances that span both the wide Atlantic and continental landmasses, it isn't often that INEXPLICATA's contributors get to exchange views with each other or with our readers. Here's what some of our contributing editors and writers had to say in response to our questions. Participating in this interview are Contributing Editor Lucy Guzman (LG) from Puerto Rico; Contributing Editor Manuel Carballal (MC) from Spain; researcher Andrea Pérez Simondini (APS) from Argentina, "Desclasificado" editor Javier Garcia Blanco (JGB) from Spain; Luis Eduardo Pacheco, editor of "Informe Alfa" (LEP) from Argentina; Inexplicata Contributing Editor Willie Durand Urbina (WDU) from Puerto Rico and Josep Guijarro (JB), editor of "Karma-7" magazine.

Voices of the Millennium: The INEXPLICATA Interview

(Questions posed by J.C. Mallory)

Q: Can you recall when you first became interested in paranormal phenomena? For example, was there any reading or image that acted as a "trigger" of sorts? Do you think young people should become interested in these matters?

LG: As a child, I became aware of the paranormal (I was some 8 to 10 years old) when I noticed that if I wished someone harm, within 24 hours, something would happen to that person. When I realized what my mind was able to do, I begged God for forgiveness and swore that I'd never wish anyone harm again. I later noticed that things I told my friends would turn out to be true. I later began having experiences which I termed "ghostly", and which due to ignorance and lack of knowledge would terrify me to death. As teenager I was moved to investigate what was happening and why they happened without ever finding an answer to my questions. It wasn't until 1972, when I had a missing time experience (2 hours) and months later, after seeing a UFO, I truly felt the urge to find a response to the phenomena I was encountering. That's when I began to read, research and I continue doing it. I think

there's no end to it. Regarding my opinion as to whether young people should be interested in these matters, I will answer that today it appears to be something innate in them, since they are not only interested in it, but find it commonplace. I see no reason why they shouldn't be interested and want to study them, but it depends on their age at the time that this interest is spurred. They should be guided by an adult, preferably by their parents.

MC: I don't recall the precise moment, although I do remember wolfing down novels on vampires, extraterrestrials and strange beings at ages 12 and 13. I also recall that the first "occult" book I read was Formulario de Alta Magia by P.V. Piov --I must have been 14 at the time--but I had been interested in the supernatural and miraculous much earlier. Perhaps that's why I leaned toward the priesthood and studied theology. I now consider myself an agnostic, but I don't reject my theological background, which has helped me to understand the realm of belief with greater tolerance. I think it's wonderful that the young should feel restless and rebellious toward orthodox dogma. It is thanks to these rebels against orthodoxy that science has progressed, but I believe that the paranormal realm holds too many hazards for immature minds--regardless of age--and I know of too many suicides and crimes due to occult beliefs.

APS: I recall that I started taking an interest in paranormal phenomena when I was small. I would have been 11 years old. One day, while home alone with my two younger brothers, I went to the kitchen to get a glass of water and heard a noise on the kitchen table. It was a crucifix that my mother had hanging on the wall above the table. The situation wasn't unusual until the moment we noticed the nail from which the crucifix was hanging was in its place; in other words, it hadn't broken or fallen out. The question my brother and I asked ourselves was that the only way that the crucifix could have come off was if it had been removed. And I can attest to the fact that this could not be, since only my brothers and I were home that time. It was always a source of mystery to me. That was my "trigger" experience. I find it positive that the young should become interested, since these mysteries are there for all generations to look into, and the young perhaps retain that modicum of objectivity that one may lose as one gets older.

JGB: I don't remember the exact moment that anomalous phenomena drew my attention, but I can tell you that I was still a child. Here in Spain there was a program directed and hosted by Dr. Fernando Jiménez del Oso which dealt with these subjects. From there, I went on to read and collect all material that fell into my hands. I think it's fantastic that young people should become interested in these matters. The future of ufology and parapsychology is in their hands.

LEP: I was interested in anything having to do with space since childhood, and of course, it was a matter of time before I asked my father what a "flying saucer" was. I must have been 7 years old and had heard the term on a TV show in my native

Uruguay. It was around 1978 when I got closest to the subject. During that year there was a massive UFO flap in Argentina, to which my parents had emigrated in 1975. Sightings were being reported on a daily basis in the mass media, press, etc. That era has a certain "magic" for me, since we appeared to be living alongside the UFO phenomenon at every second. I'll never forget it, despite not having had any direct experiences.

WDU: I was a few hours away from undergoing surgery for a brain tumor which was causing me constant headache. In those anguished moments I was visited by a "spirit guide" who engaged me in a dialog regarding the operation. It told me to pray to heal myself from this condition. During prayer, I underwent a paranormal experience within myself--I felt that something broke away from my body and my temperature was raised above 40 degrees. I managed to see myself free of the condition, although I was completely drained of energy. A CAT scan would later show that there was no trace of the tumor. Following this experience I had two experiences with UFOs. I think its very healthy for the young to become interested in the paranormal, since during the course of their lives they may encounter certain events or experiences they will not be able to explain. They will require an understanding as to how these phenomena appear, and the best way of doing so is through reading and analyzing the nature of the universe and all that is in it.

JG: The fact is that my connection with strange phenomena was insidious, progressive and surprising. I say "surprising" because there isn't a family background of unusual phenomena. It was a neighbor who lent me the first books on the subject: "Not of this Earth" by Peter Kolosimo and "Without a Trace" by Charles Berlitz. In fact, the Bermuda Triangle was one of my favorite subjects for years until I discovered the critical versions and wisened up. It's important that the young should become interested in these subjects--youth wants to change the world, the established order, curiosity overcomes all obstacles and heeding some strange impulse, youth is able to leave no stone unturned to learn the truth.

Q: Can we speak in terms of a predominant personality type among investigators and researchers, or are we pretty much a "mixed bag"?

LG: The only similarity I've noticed is the attempt to find an answer to these phenomena. Beyond that, I haven't noticed any common patterns.

MC: I think that active minds and non-conformists are drawn to the world of mystery, but others, such as mediocre or ambitious individuals are attracted by it, as are mere swindlers, who find the paranormal as an easy means of sating their egos or pockets. On the other hand, before defining a profile for "investigators" we should perhaps define the term used so flexibly by all manner of individuals involved with the field: Philip Klass, Giorgio Bongiovani, Hilary Evans and Salvador Freixedo, and even myself (and I

know all of these friends and enemies personally) call ourselves "investigators", and I think that the opinions, work methods and even human qualities of each have very little in common. That's why I'll return the question to you, Scott: what the hell do you call an investigator?

APS: As with all activities, I think that there are always dominant personalities and others that are less so. I think it's a matter of the interactions that one may develop within a given group, in this case, the paranormal realm. One will be the leader, another will be passive, another will go against the system...in short, different responses in action.

JGB: Well, maybe we're all a little nuts (*laughs*). But from the researchers that I know, I can say that what we share in common is that we carry this matter deep within us. It consumes all of our time and effort, and we greatly enjoy what we do.

LEP: I think that were a mixed group, but with the passing of time, become polarized or aligned with a more or less clearly defined pattern which marks the three predominant trends in the field: the "believer", the one who "steps back and analyzes", and the "skeptic."

WDU: There are many paranormal researchers who concentrate on a single aspect of the wide world of the paranormal. Some of them specialize in communication with extra-dimensional entities, while others choose to decipher the future. But I believe that the most important thing is to somehow harmonize with the energies emanating from the universe.

JG: I'd say we're a colorful lot. I'm not aware of a more varied and ornery "fauna" that those who are attracted to UFO and paranormal research. This is made even more serious by the fact that these subjects are employed to preach peace, love and brotherhood...It's also true of the field that friends are truer FRIENDS than in any other.

Q: Could you share with us the names of the researchers who have inspired you? Do you consider yourself as part of a give school of thought?

LG: No researcher has served as an inspiration to me, nor do I agree 100% with any of them. Not even with myself. I don't belong to any "school" of thought...I'm a free thinker.

MC: I always recommend reading a book by Freixedo and another by [South American contactee] Sixto Paz; hearing a presentation by Ballester Olmos and another by J.J. Benitez; reading a report written by CSICOP and another by SPR, because only by knowing these juxtaposed points of view can we be free to make informed choices. I admit that I feel a special fondness for the work of John Keel, Jacques Vallée or Hilary Evans, but I also admire Freixedo's boldness, Siragusa's irreverence, Randi's cynicism, Benítez's romanticism, W. Smith's methodology, Von Kevicksky's experience, Hynek's education and above all, Andreas Faber Kaiser's honesty. I don't share any of their opinions fully, but I feel that whether actively or passively, they all have a contribution to make to our knowledge of the paranormal. If there's any school of thought that can collect them all, that would be my

school.

APS: I can't answer this question accurately, because I think it wouldn't be fair toward many people. But I'll give you an approximation. I feel respect for researchers like Jorge Anfruns Dumon, Antonio Huneeus, Stanton Friedman, Adhemar Gevaerd, my friend Rodrigo Fuenzalida, for all researchers in Chile, for my friends Carlos Iurchuk, Alex Chionnetti, and Oscar Mendoza, for the people conducting research in the Province of La Pampa, where my friend Mario Quique is making great efforts, for Claudeir Covo...I don't know, the list feels infinite. On the other hand, I can tell you that my greatest inspiration is my mother, Silvia Pérez Simondini, because she taught me that one should never give in and this belief, applied to the UFO phenomenon, I feel will allow us to earn a small space in the immense UFO community. My school of thought is, as I tend to call it emotionally, rationalism. I think that he or she who researches phenomena that aren't covered by science must have the disposition of the true scientist, which is, that a hypothesis ceases to be one when the facts give you elements to approve it or reject it. My best base are the laws that science set forth by convention but not by demonstration.

JGB: Well...I've always said that J.J. Benítez is to blame for my being mixed up in the world of UFO research...or rather, his books are. The minute one of his books fell into my hands, I wolfed them down one after another. In spite of this, I don't share all of his hypotheses. I currently think my line of thought is closer to that of Jacques Vallée and his interdimensional hypothesis. The books of John Keel also influenced my perceptions on the UFO phenomenon. I don't like boxing myself into a given "school of thought", but given my country's ufological situation, perhaps I should be counted among those who believe in the non-human origin of ufology.

LEP: I've grown up, ufologically speaking, with the "greats" of the field--from Keyhoe and Benítez to Hynek-- and in my country for a while I had deep respect for the pioneering work done by Fabio Zerpa and his "Cuarta Dimensión" magazine. I say this with a certain amount of sadness, since it has reincarnated into a publication called "Punto Azul" which along with its editor, are a pale shadow of what they once meant for national ufology. Through the pages of that magazine I was exposed to the writings of Alejandro Vignati; the unforgettable columns of Norberto Comte and his "Anthology of the Fantastic"; and it gave me the opportunity to meet an exceptional human being: Dr. Candido Victor del Prado--biologist, author, esotericist--and an all-out "rebel" whose attitude taught me the value of reason in the world of the paranormal.

WDU: The researcher who has influenced me the most, and has taught me to have a wider perspective on paranormal phenomena has been Jacques Vallée. I believe that he remains the one who has created the proper guidelines to follow in dealing with paranormal phenomena. Many researchers have considered his theories when conducting their own investigations.

JG: Well, it all depends on the time frame...at first it was Antonio Ribera, who is a great teacher and whose books constitute a Bible for anyone wishing to delve into ufology. Some have thought that I may be his heir (I imagine that's because, like he, I've taken a great interest in abduction phenomena), but I don't feel this to be the case, since there are many nuances which make us different. I'm an avowed follower of Jacques Vallée, whose way of viewing ufology is revolutionary and in step with science rather than mysticism. I've also felt influenced by the adventures of J.J. Benítez--and who hasn't? . Combine these three researchers and you get Josep Guijarro.

Q: If you had to take three books on the paranormal with you to a desert island, which would these be, and why?

LG: I really don't have a favorite author. Perhaps [a book] by Laura Tuan and others of subjects like telepathy, precognitions, premonitions, oneiromancy and UFO/ET subjects.

MC: The Bible, because while I don't consider myself christian, nor devout, my deepest unconscious is the offspring of a given age and culture, and no other field has promoted the paranormal more than religion has. The other two would be some of my own books, since I've always tried to gather the best of other authors and if possible, to enrich their findings with my own contributions. Besides, logically, I think no one can be closer to what is subjectively true than myself. If I thought otherwise, I'd be either a cultist or an imbecile.

APS: 1) The Bermuda Triangle (for sure); 2) Florencio Balsda's La Raza Roja (an early 20th century Argentinean researcher; 3) a book on Spontaneous Combustion.

JGB: Juan José Benítez's La Quinta Columna, which is in my opinion one of the best field research books on encounters with humanoids; Vallée's Passport to Magonia, since the hypotheses stated in this book changed (or expanded) my view of the UFO phenomenon; Salvador Freixedo's La Granja Humana. In my opinion, and while I don't share all of Salvador's ideas, this book portrays a disquieting aspect of the UFO phenomenon: are we being manipulated at will by the intelligence(s) behind the phenomenon?

LEP: I'd sooner have a good survival manual! (*laughs*). But if I had to choose, I'd certainly lean toward one of Vallée's "classic" works, or Antonio Ribera, or the early days of Juan José Benítez (before the Caballo de Troya books were released). These were authors who, with the passing of time since I first read them, have acquired their true stature.

WDU: If I were to find myself alone on a desert island, my three favorite books would be the following in order of importance: Apparitions by G.N.M. Tyrell; Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind by C.D.B. Bryan; and Electric UFOs by Albert Budden.

JG: Confrontations by Jacques Vallée; Light Years by Gary Kinder, and my book Infiltrados. The first because it is a primer for anyone who conceives ufology as a scientific discipline detached from superstition. The second because it is a

magnificent investigative work on one of the most important events in the contactee phenomenon and does objectivity justice. And ultimately, rooting for the home team, I'd include my book Infiltrados among them because its pages feature wonderful years of memories and experiences that I would always want to remember on a desert island.

Q: In regard to the UFO phenomenon, do you think there are marked differences between the cases you've investigated in your country and the ones in the U.S.A.?

LG: Yes and no. Yes, because many of the cases which have occurred here have also taken place in the U.S. or elsewhere in the world. No, because despite [Puerto Rico's] small size--it's maximum length is of 111 miles by 39 miles wide--and such a high population density-- 3,522,037 inhabitants according to the 1990 census-- not only have large numbers of sightings and encounters with alien races been reported, we also have an infinity of "alleged" UFO contactees. If we compare the island's population to its size, I could say that we are perhaps [one of the places] with the highest percentage of UFO sightings and "contactees".

MC: Absolutely. The cases are very similar, as are the cases I have been able to research in Africa and Asia, aside from a good part of Latin America. Only the witness and the researcher change. The witness subjects his/her experience to a perceptive selection process according to his or her cultural education, belief system and even language. The researcher, on the other hand, usually belongs to a given school and has widely diverging techniques and research methods. We can't compare a French ufologist from the Psycho-Social school with an American conspiracy theorist, or an expert in African tribal legend. All three experts would focus the same UFO event from different perspectives, and I therefore suppose that their conclusions for one given case would be very different.

APS: There are no marked differences as regards the phenomenology, but there are massive differences regarding the case histories. I think that there's a great consumerism in your country as far as UFOs are concerned, which fortunately has not occurred in Argentina as of yet. This allows us researchers to have a greater degree of truthfulness in witness experiences and in the specialist's opinions. For example, when we collect evidence from an alleged UFO landing and take it to a university to be studied, no researcher in said academic environment ventures an opinion regarding an alleged UFO event. I think this might make any scientific verdict all the more conclusive.

JGB: Personally, I've tried to concentrate on close encounter cases in Spain. At first blush, the phenomenon behaves in a similar way all over the globe. Perhaps the greatest difference between the U.S. and Spanish cases is the way that certain cases in the U.S. are treated by some researchers. Perhaps there's an excess of sensationalism in certain events.

LG: As I've always said, I'm not a researcher. I'm an enthusiast for the subject with a grain of sand to contribute to it. From that perspective and analyzing the Argentinean cases, recent years have shown a tendency toward incorporating "elements" and "patterns" which were uncharacteristic of these lands. It would seem that, on the one hand, the globalization of the culture and the popularization of the subject in the media have brought along a baggage of things that have served to modify popular perception on the phenomenon, "modelling" a uniform pattern in the popular unconscious. I think that this is one of the most interesting aspects of modern ufology as a mass sociological phenomenon. A brief analysis would be impossible.

WDU: The differences between Puerto Rico and the U.S.A. as regards UFO activity are clearly marked. Number one is that the military government of the United States is much more involved in many of the events which have occurred in Puerto Rico. There is currently a UFO flowchart here in Puerto Rico involving over 15 Federal agencies, and these are mentioned when an sighting takes place on the island.

JG: The differences are remarkaable. Basically because the UFO phenomenon isn't a terrific business for anyone here in Spain, while the contrary occurs in the United States. It's harder to study ufology here due to the lack of resources, but it's also easier to remain independent.

Q: In your opinion, are there typical traits common to UFO witnesses or abductees worldwide? Could we speak in terms of a "regional mindset" among witnesses stemming from language, culture, etc.?

LG: Globally speaking, there are several characteristic traits among witnesses, abductees and contactees. They come in all types...regarding their mindset and mental level, these factors do play a part, since they witness the phenomenon differently.

MC: At one time I published a study on 100 abduction cases, and I've only been able to follow a dozen or so of them over the years. I still wouldn't venture an opinion on the abduction phenomenon, but as with all of the UFO phenomenon, I think that traditional ufology's focus hinges on an flawed premise.

APS: We've asked ourselves that question thousands of times. I think that if a cultural pattern does indeed exist, then it is a global one and therefore, no regional patterns can be found. I think this is one of the great mysteries to be unveiled.

JGB: A country's culture and customs weigh heavily on the way in which a possible sighting or UFO encounter is retold. However, all witnesses appear to describe similar creatures and artifacts. On the other hand, the witnesses belong to all types of social, economic and cultural strata. The UFO phenomenon doesn't discriminate among its witnesses.

LEP: As I said my preceding reply, an "archetype" has been created in recent years about the UFO phenomenon, which all cultures and countries are gradually assimilating. The subject of

abductions is clearly the most visible exponent. A few years ago, the abduction of humans by ufonauts with seemingly physical experimentation purposes took place on a wholly "physical" level. The victim was usually in a lonely place where he/she was often forcibly taken into a UFO and examined (Villas-Boas, Betty Hill, Franzetta, etc.). A particular detail is the diversity of humanoid phenotypes involved in these experiences. The exact opposite occurs today, where the abduction phenomenon acquires a more dreamlike than physical nature, and most cases involve a single type of being, thus giving us an entirely new generation of ufonauts born in the shadow of Eighties conspiracy thinking, which modified the "shell" or external aspect of ufology. Thus, today we are abducted by "Greys", "Reptoids", "Rigelians", etc. as opposed to beings with a more "astronautical" and this friendly appearance. I believe that the influence of this subculture in regard to the creation of new ufological images and icons that are subsequently assimilated by potential witnesses is clearly evident.

WDU: I've met persons that have had UFO experiences and who never cultivated or mentally formulated a desire to have such an experience. I don't believe that their intellectual formation or their religion played a role in this. Specifically, they were simply in the right place at the right time to undergo the experience. Other persons have had encounters with these objects and appear predisposed to have all kinds of paranormal experiences, since they come from families in which spiritualism is practiced. Furthermore, many of them live in areas rich with folkloric traditions and abnormal events.

JG: Naturally. UFOs are a universal phenomenon, regardless of the existence of ufologists who collect UFO cases or witnesses willing to describe their experiences.

Q: As you know, ufology in the U.S. is divided between believers in the ET hypothesis and believers in more rational explanations. Do you get such marked divisions in your country?

LG: Yes, there is a difference, but not as marked as in the U.S.. I wouldn't characterize Puerto Rican ufologists as "believers in a hypothesis" but rather searchers of a serious, scientific and objective answer.

MC: Absolutely. [the divisions] are ferocious and border on irrational hatred. In my humble opinion, these ego-wars constitute a universal malaise in ufology.

APS: Yes, definitely. But I'll also add that there's a third line of belief, which is the one that I subscribe to: the rational posture within the extraterrestrial hypothesis. A good position to be in, I think.

JGB: We could say so...although in Spain, the defenders of the non-human origin of the phenomenon could be divided in turn into those who believe that it has an ET source and those who lean toward a multidimensional hypothesis or others. In this regard, the Spanish landscape is somewhat peculiar. The

existence of denial groups such as ARP or "rational" ufologists such as those belonging to Fundación Anomalía have created a peculiar division. Simply stated, we could say that researchers have divided themselves among those who believe in an anomalous origin and the naysayers and believers in the psycho-social hypothesis. However, it's much more complicated than that.

LEP: It occurs, although timidly. As opposed to other scenarios, belief in the ETH is predominant in Argentina. New voices have emerged lately in the ufological community which tend to modify said approach and draw attention to other alternative origins, but the influence of the extraterrestrial scenario as a possible origin is still strong.

WDU: The division between the theory that postulates the interplanetary or interstellar origin of these creatures is very sharp. There are few of us who hold the belief that these entities are interdimensional and that the psyche plays a very important role in these experiences.

JG: Yes. What's more, the most radical standpoints can be found in Spain. You can start the spectrum with the most recalcitrant skeptics (debunkers) of the A.R.P. organization, followed by the rational ufology of the *Fundación Anomalía*. The midpoint would be occupied by the Third Generation ufologists (Sierra, Carballal, Cardeñosa and myself), and the "believer" end of the spectrum would include the pro-J.J. Benítez, [Antonio] Ribera sector. Finally, you'd have the ET Contact extremist groups such as Aztlan, etc. It's worth noting that the ufological "center" takes other hypotheses into consideration--from interdimensionalism to the psychosocial hypothesis--leading it to fan out considerably.

Q: It's almost impossible not to bring up Roswell. What's your take on it?

LG: I don't doubt that it did occur, but I think there's been a lot of cover-ups and disinformation.

MC: Years ago, I made the decision not to voice my opinion on cases that I hadn't researched myself, and while I've studied other "UFO crash" cases in depth, and have indirect references to Roswell through my work on the Secret Services' (Spain's CESID in particular) involvement with the paranormal, I haven't formed an opinion...yet.

APS: I think that Roswell is the mystery of the century because of all its details. I don't think we will ever know what really happened and we'll never know what didn't happen. I think it ought to remain in an "investigative black hole", much like we deal with "legislative black holes" in the legislature. I reached this conclusion when I spoke with Stanton Friedman. I think the eyewitness accounts have been exhausted...

JGB: I truly believe that something important happened at Roswell. Did a UFO crash there? I honestly doubt it. Nevertheless, I think that something very special occurred there and that U.S. authorities have tried to conceal it. Regarding the controversial affair of the alien autopsy film, I'm convinced it's a fraud.

LEP: It's an example of how a myth can survive itself. The image that most readily comes to my mind when I realize that there are still those who believe in a non-terrestrial origin to this case is that of someone desperately giving CPR to a skeleton. I often wonder how contemporary ufology would be without Roswell. The amounts of time, effort and money that would have been saved...To me, the end of the case came about with the publication of Kent Jeffrey's Anatomy of a Myth. After reading it with an open mind, there's little that can be done to keep the case alive without behaving like a fool.

WDU: The Roswell case is the most sensational UFO event that has taken place in the U.S., but it is an event that has been transformed with each successive retelling over the past 40 years and to which no one, like we researchers, attributes much credibility. Perhaps part of this event may be somehow linked to extraterrestrial evidence.

JG: All my investigations regarding this phenomenon lead me to believe that an incident with enormous repercussions took place there in 1947. I don't know if it was an extraterrestrial spacecraft, but it was something with tremendous significance for humanity's progress.

Q: Do you think that governments are able to "keep secrets", regarding animal mutilations, aliens, etc.?

LG: It's been proven that they have been able to, and their creation of false reports has also been proven. Their reasons for doing so is only known to them. I cannot applaud disinformation; however, I can comprehend the need for a sort of cover up on grounds of national or global security.

MC: I consider this to be another error in focus. Governments don't hide anything, since at least in democratic societies, the change every couple of days. The keeper of the secrets and holders of control are the highest military echelons, and other types of para-governmental agencies. Information is power, and those who hold the information have the power.

APS: I definitely think they can't. I'm going to tell you what I've always told my mother. As you know, I serve in the Argentinean Congress as an active member of a political party. I play a role in the decision making process for substantial matters. Oftentimes, these decisions affect certain sectors of the population negatively or positively. But these decisions are implemented and the average person never hears of the details that led to the implementation. This leads me to think: I, Andrea Pérez Simondini, a minor player within this immense structure, am able today to do the things I mentioned to you earlier, I cannot imagine [that this would not be the case] at the very top of the system's pyramid. Am I making sense here?

JGB: Governments all over the world conceal information on strange events. However, I doubt that they're in contact with alien civilization or that they know the true origin of the UFO phenomenon. In Spain, at least, all they have is a wealth of reports on sightings, landings, etc..I don't think they know more about the phenomenon than we do. One thing's for sure:

they hide information that would be of great assistance and interest regarding certain events.

LEP: I think they can, but not to the extent that conspiracy theories would have us believe. Obviously, any power mechanism or structure must possess means upon which to act to avoid a certain subject or another from becoming known. But said mechanisms always have an axis on which they pivot-- a human being. And there lies the weakest link of the chain. There is always someone willing to talk, to retell what he or she knows, what they saw, etc. This does not imply believing in those who claim having seen something but can't prove it. My opinion is that I don't think there is as broad a conspiracy around UFOs as many believe and would like us to believe. The belief that we only ever see what "Big Brother" would like us to see is rooted in a number of things:

First, the contradictory nature of the phenomenon itself. It's behavior is thoroughly irrational but still shows a certain logic or a vaguely "outlined" plan.

Second, our own ignorance of the phenomenon. We know more about what the phenomenon ISN'T than about what it IS. This leads us to having fertile soil for any theory--the wilder the better--without any need for corroboration.

Third, generalized and global mistrust by the governed toward their government, political leaders and military men.

If we combine these three ingredients we have the basic recipe for any conspiracy theory. As for the alleged conspiracy of silence by the military toward the UFO phenomenon, we may have an inkling of what's going on if we step into the boots of anyone in uniform.

I don't think its a matter of concealing human advances in extraterrestrial technology, nor dark power pacts with a dying alien race, nor anything similar. It has to do with the inability of those who control the most sophisticated technological means on the planet to admit the existence of "something" about whose origin they haven't the least idea, much less its intentions. To say: "We haven't a clue as to what it is," is tantamount to saying: "We are defenseless...", which is inconceivable to their rigid and omnipotent mental framework.

WDU: Puerto Rico is, today, the most active site for UFO activity in the entire world, and the place in which the most animal mutilations have occurred. The government is involved in a struggle against a growing number of events in which no scientific explanations can be found for animal mutilation. UFO researchers are responsible for educating the public on the phenomenon, which has astonished and disturbed the Puerto Rican people. The government has exposed itself to ridicule by trying to find rational explanations for the situation, but when witnesses to these events explain that they have seen military personnel at the site in which military helicopters were seen a day earlier, many people are now able to forecast when cattle mutilations are about to occur at the site. We believe that the government is concealing something, or that it plays an active role in the events.

JG: I haven't the least doubt. Mi personal research confirms (at the level of Spain) what most ufologists worldwide have maintained.

Q: In the U.S., we can safely say that abductions represent ufology's greatest concern. Do researchers in your country hold this opinion?

LG: I think there's a concern in my country over abductions, but there is greater concern over their ultimate causes and effects.

MC: In Spain, the fact that we've become the second country in the world (after the U.S.) to have authorized a declassification (albeit a questionable one) of a portion of the Ministry of Defense's UFO files, has displaced all ufological attention in that direction, eclipsing all other facets of the phenomenon.

APS: I think we're not as wrapped up in the abduction topic because we don't have cases in the same amount and forcefulness. Our emphasis is on videos and photo evidence.

JGB: Abduction research gained importance here in Spain some years ago. Certain researchers like Josep Guijarro and Javier Sierra concentrated on this subject for a while. However, Spanish researchers have concentrated on all aspects of the phenomenon. Perhaps over the past years (due to international ufology's interest) the subject of abductions is closer than ever, but the other aspects of the UFO phenomenon have never been neglected.

LEP: No. Or at least not until a short time ago. Obviously, the media's influence has caused the subject of abductions to become fashionable and set trends, but I think that abductions have been secondary in Argentinean ufological history.

WDU: Puerto Rico has experienced dramatic events involving abductions. Six year-old children tell us about what they have undergone in their experiences with strange entities; people who remained quiet for years now discuss their abduction experiences. We believe that after the cattle mutilations phenomenon, abductions occupy the next most prominent place, since there is so much to be investigated: the site where the witness lives, his or her family history, hypnotic regressions, etc. these factors alone lead us to give it importance due to the level of high strangeness.

JG: Yes, for a period of time. However, I've changed my mind about it, given that the massive broadcasting of abduction cases has managed to taint the seriousness of ufological research, and its enormous impact remains a blow against it. Might we dealing here with a weapon created by certain interests to discredit the UFO subject?

Q: Would you be so bold as to tell us what's the greatest problem facing paranormal research at the turn of this century? Likewise, what changes would you like to see implemented by 21st century researchers?

LG: I don't see any reason why the change of centuries should

affect research itself. Regarding the changes I'd like to see, I think I'm already beginning to see them...the uniting of researchers on a global, non-profit basis.

MC: The researchers' education and means. We endeavor to revolutionize Newtonian physics and the entire scientific paradigm; we speculate on the existence of other intelligent, non-human life forms, the survival of consciousness after death with the mind's non-sensory capacities...and we investigate using a tape recorder, a photo camera and a notebook. Until the universities and scientific hierarchies commit themselves, we will be fighting the Goliath of mystery using David's paltry slingshot.

APS: I think the greatest problem has to be lack of training among researchers and the final acceptance of a method [of research]. We aren't giving playing the scientists' game by developing investigative techniques. This will make us seem more credible to our own selves. In order to convince others, we will have to convince ourselves first.

JGB: The greatest problem would have to be "official science's" lack of interest in researching these phenomena. Ufology and parapsychology need the help of scientists in various fields. Perhaps, when science decides to take a serious look on these subjects, we'll begin to make progress in the study of both disciplines. Meanwhile, all of us researchers must limit ourselves practically to the task of popularization. In the 21st century, researchers must be more critical, have scientific training and pursue field research, which is indispensable, in my mind.

LEP: I don't think that they are different from the problems it has experienced in the past 20 years. I think the Internet is something we'll have to pay attention to. It is an absolutely revolutionary means, but it is the ideal place to generate all manner of rumors which undermine the phenomenon's seriousness and the trust of those approaching the subject for the first time.

WDU: The world is currently facing a struggle between good and evil, which is manifesting itself through events that lead us to believe that we're facing entities that are somehow trying to involve themselves in the destiny of our lives. I don't believe they have the best intentions in mind. They disguise themselves as angels, small, large-headed beings, beings of light, and myriad other forms to penetrate our minds and control our actions. I would like to see paranormal researchers in the coming century accept the fact that there are new avenues of exploration, new revelations and theories, and that they can discard old concepts that will lead them nowhere.

JG: It's hard to foretell. The most immediate concern it to see how the phenomenon transforms itself after the sudden structural, social and scientific changes we are about to experience in the new millenium.

Q: INEXPLICATA's readers are just dying to know if you've ever witnessed any paranormal event yourself, whether it be

ghosts, strange creatures, UFOs...

- LG: Yes, some of them pleasant and other less so. But I usually don't mix research with my own experience. It's hard for me to be objective when I've had personal experiences; but when I set out to investigate a case, I prepare myself mentally to insure that my own experiences do not influence the investigation. I also have the help of my husband, Ing. Orlando Plá, who while believing in the possibility that we are not alone in this beautiful universe, is skeptical and always keeps me alert, so that I'll never cease being objective and looking at the UFO/ET phenomenon through a scientific, serious outlook.
- MC: In the 15 years I've devoted to intensely studying the paranormal, I've had the chance to experience 3 or 4 paranormal experiences (in the UFO, shamanic and parapsychological fields) that I haven't been able to explain.
- APS: Yes, I have seen [such things]. My father retired from a multinational corporation here in Argentina called Perez Compac, an oil company involved in the privatization of energy sources. My father was in charge of developing an assessment of SEGBA, the former power utility. Its warehouses had been used during the military dictatorship as a prison camp, according to reports from thousands of witnesses. During stock rotations at the warehouses, [people] could hear screams and [something like] electric discharges. When my father told me about this, we staked out the area, and what we saw and experienced, to my mind, was straight out of a Sightings episode. We saw [something like] greenish-blue bolts of energy coming from the roof, followed by terrifying screams. It was truly hair-raising. Subsequent research with people who'd been kidnapped there identified the screams as those of a pregnant woman.
- JGB: Unfortunately, I've never seen a UFO, nor have I ever witnessed a paranormal phenomenon. I have participated in several "spirit recording" sessions which have produced some rather interesting results, though.
- LEP: None. My paranormal life has less excitement than a Teletubbies episode (*laughs*).
- WDU: When I was small--10 years old at least--I was visiting some neighbors and people close to my family. While spending time together, I was asked to look out for the family's elderly mother as she warmed herself in the sun. While standing beside her and looking at the horizon, I was able to observe something strange that moved like a cigar-shaped cloud moving at high speed. The other clouds remained still, while small saucers resembling "Mexican hats" moved around the larger one. This was an utter astonishment to me. At my age, I was unable to understand why they didn't look more like airplanes! After many years, I discussed my experiences with a relative, who kindly gave me a book entitled Platillos Voladores de Otros Mundos, which finally opened my understanding to these matters. It was a translation of Major Donald E. Keyhoe's famous 1953 book (Henry Holt Eds.). I

guard it jealously in my library!

JG: Yes, I feel quite fortunate. I've witnessed and experienced healings with psychic surgeons, seen two UFOs and if that weren't enough, I witnessed a small being while researching a UFO abduction case.

Q: In closing, do you have any thoughts you'd like to share with our readers?

LG: Thousands of thoughts...and many more thousands of words of advice...but if I could summarize them, I'd tell them to improve themselves spiritually, to try to become better human beings every day when it comes to respect and love, and to care for our beautiful planet and Universe.

MC: I think that in spite of all the unpleasantness involved with research, in spite of the enormous amount of work and money to be invested in each study, in spite of the fear, lack of understanding, rage and intolerance you must go through by being a scientific heretic and a religious heterodox, in spite of the shameless, miserable and despicable human beings who call themselves "researchers", "contactees", "mediums", "skeptics" and other epigraphs of paranormal wildlife...that which underlies paranormal phenomena is truly worthwhile. In fact, and this is only a personal opinion, but I'm unable to conceive of any aspect of human knowledge that is more important, transcendent or fascinating than researching anomalous phenomena.

APS: Yes, I'd like to share with you what I tell my friends and colleagues. There is nothing more inspiring than to find an answer to something that has no answers. One day, someone will think, "I searched all my life for something that would prove my faith, and now I feel that I've found it."

JGB: I would only ask them to never lose their interest in mysteries, and a word of advice: learn to differentiate between reliable information and that which tends toward sensationalism.

LEP: Only to remind them that as occurs with television, the viewers are ultimately the ones in charge. Therefore, if people who are interested in this subject demand greater seriousness in the treatment of the subject and stop paying attention to the science-fiction rigmarole of the "pseudoresearchers" or "mediumistic ufologists", we'll sooner or later achieve a worthier condition for the subject that interests us so much.

WDU: To quote from Arthur C. Clarke's Voices in the Sky: "The stars speak to each other an infinity of languages...someday we may join that cosmic conversation."

JG: I would only ask them to research and thoroughly compare their information. The Internet has often proven itself to be an effective means of communication, but it's also a double-edged blade where half-truths and rumors circulate. It is high time to remind ourselves of William Moore's dictum about every time that someone repeats unverified information they are in fact contributing to the disinformation process.

Q: Thanks for participating in our interview!

LG: The pleasure is all mine. Thanks for the invitation.

MC: Thank you, and I hope my answers didn't put you to sleep!

JG: On the contrary, it's been a pleasure.

Experimental Ufology: An Optimistic Trail to Blaze

by Andrea Pérez Simondini

Numerous theories have been promoted throughout the world by the most famous researchers in their efforts to find a conclusive answer to the "UFO phenomenon". Essays are seldom accompanied of investigative research that substantiates these theories, and it is for this very reason that UFO investigators are castigated almost daily by members of the scientific community.

A group of Argentinean ufologists have begun pursuing a different path, believing that they have an "important ceiling" as a result of the absence of technological and financial resources, but basically due to the lack of knowledge that they must face in every investigation.

Science has the elements and knowledge necessary to generate the conditions that bring us close to an answer, if not to find conclusive answers about the nature of the UFO phenomenon. Belief that the phenomenon is real and does exist, in the words of nuclear physicist Stanton Friedman, led a scientific commission in December 1997 to conclude that there was a indeed a possibility of studying the phenomenon and moreover, that commissions of the world's air forces were concerned about finding an explanation to this enigma. Mind you, at no time are we discussing extraterrestrials, infraterrestrials, or dimensional phenomena. We are talking about reality.

Argentinean researcher Silvia Pérez Simondini is working earnestly on technology integration based on experimental ufology. Silvia has designed equipment able to detect field variations (magnetic, thermal, frequencies, etc.) in order to produce a topographic survey in one of the areas with the highest concentration of UFO sightings in the Republic of Argentina: Victoria, province of Entre Rios. The parameters obtained are analyzed in detail to create a series of statistics which will ultimately enable us to

make the first conclusions in these fields.

This project was first implemented in the city of Victoria on the 12th and 13th of March, 1999. A number of researchers took part in this symposium: Pablo Warncroukt, Carlos Iurchuk, the Visión OVNI Group, Nestor Gaioli, Pablo Pouchet, Christian Pérez Simondini, Raul Benítez and Andrea Pérez Simondini. Given that this was the initial test, many aspects must still be perfected, since the basic measurements were not taken into consideration.

It is worth noting that on the night of March 12, the experiment undertaken on the summit of Cerro La Matanza twice recorded significant alterations of the magnetic field. On the 13th, experiments took place in a field near Victoria which brought about constant activations of the equipment.

There is still much to be done. It is imperative to incorporate new equipment that will establish measurements from other fields so that as this research is being undertaken, we may annotate the normal conditions of the terrain and the sites where they are made. These studies shall continue to take place, and surely followers of the *El Dragón Invisible* website (www.geocities.com/area51/3184) will find out with due notice in order to take part in them.

It is also worth noting that we have managed to gain the support of the Paraná Air Base in the form of technical assistance (radar readings) and computer services. This enables us to quickly determine the nature of heavenly objects and artifacts of a terrestrial provenance. We have also enlisted the services of Prof. Massimo Teodorani, who places his skills at the disposal of this humble research team.

I will take advantage of this opportunity to encourage all specialists and technicians who may provide data, information and suggestions regarding this research work to please contact us at the address which appears at the foot of this page.

Information on Iridium Satellites

Over the past five years, the development of satellite technology has unleashed a significant communications war, not only based on the financial investment involved, but the technological developments involved in providing better service to the consumer.

The ideal cellular phone is the one that seeks to keep a customer in touch in and with any part of the world, and without any interference or interruptions. This seemed like a pipe dream up until only a few years ago, but it is part of today's reality. Even if the system does not operate as advertised, it nonetheless exists and has produced improvements in satellite technology. This is what I would like to elaborate upon. UFO researchers now find ourselves faced with a new type of satellite --Iridium--which moves through space with completely different characteristics.

During the month of January [1999] there were sightings in the communities of Victoria and Diamante, in the Entre Ríos province; Pueblo Esther, Santa Fé, and Rosario in the Santa Fé province; Santiago del Estero, Mendoza, Neuquén, Chubut and Misiones--and we also have records for countries such as Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Costa Rica--of a series of objects appearing at well-defined times: ten minute sequences with an approximate duration of between ten and fifteen seconds.

Reports on the foregoing sightings started on Saturday, December 5th at 23:03 Hrs. with the presence of a light that grew to a size comparable to that of the full moon and with a powerful light. The powerful light faded gradually as it diminished in intensity. The direction of observation was toward the NW.

Successive manifestations followed the same direction, with less luminous intensity and less time in the following hourly sequence: 23:13/23:23/23:33, gaining three minutes over the course of the next days.

We have contacted the Air Force in an attempt to capture these observations on radar. Radar operators have told us that the phenomenon observed does not appear on their screens, even when receiving notification at the same time the sighting was being made. The important fact here is that what was being observed was beyond radar scope, therefore implying that it was an object beyond Earth's orbit.

We have managed to establish a comparison on the timetables for the sightings from various locations, achieving a 90% correspondence for the aforementioned details. The coincidence in times, direction and type of sighting coincided absolutely.

The abundance of sightings led us to consider that the phenomenon in question was terrestrial. If there is something the UFO phenomenon does not do, is follow measurable parameters. This rapidly led us to consider the possibility of new types of satellites.

Our research led us to satellite manufacturers: there are two systems, Iridium and GlobalSat. An iridium atom has 82 electrons, which is the number of satellites operating under this technology, which enables communication via satellite telephony from any part of the world and to any part of the world. The cost to the end consumer is considerable (about \$3000) with a charge per minute of \$2.50. Technical details on these satellites can be found at the corresponding websites. [*Ms. Pérez reproduces a pre-existing English paragraph from the website--Ed.*]:

The information provided herein is for the visual satellite observer. This information is supplied in good faith by amateurs engaged in an observing activity. Observations that certain satellites are flashing are based on orbital elements

the observer uses to track the satellite. If the orbital element mistakenly identifies a satellite as to name, there is no way for the observer to know that he may be tracking the incorrect satellite. The satellite is seen as a point of light and no identifiable characteristics may be seen other than the characteristics of the light reflected from the satellite. Anyone choosing to act on any information posted on this resource would be well advised to check and double check the facts with the poster(s) before jumping to any conclusions.

This photo was taken by Chris Dorreman on Sept. 20, 1997 at 19:10:23 UT. It is believed to be one of the earliest pictures taken of an unpredicted (before any Iridium flare prediction programs were published) magnitude -8 (estimated) flare produced by Iridium 12 (NORAD 24837/COSPAR 97-030-B). Details: 1 minute exposure on Fujichrome 400 ASA. Zenith is UP with satellite moving left to right. Exposure started at magnitude 0. Flare was bright enough to cause a reflection on the right side of the frame. Stars are on the CIG-LAC-PEG border (northwest is up). Further details can be found in a SeeSat-L message by his father Bram Dorreman (this image @: Chris Dorreman).

Conclusion:

It is important to bear such technical considerations in mind, since they often lead to confusion when on-site research is carried out, given that witnesses often tend to confuse these satellites with anomalous observations. Even so, researchers of the UFO phenomenon should integrate knowledge of this type of technology to their catalogues and files.

Latin America abounds in anomalous areas like the Zone of Silence (Mexico) and El Yunque Rainforest (Puerto Rico). INEXPLICATA is pleased to present its readers with new one: Mexico's Laguna de Alchichica on the outskirts of Puebla.

The Alchichica Lagoon in the State of Puebla, Mexico

by Arturo del Moral Medina, Grupo Cassiopea

Xalapa, Veracruz: January 12, 1998--Some 20 kilometers to the south of the city of Perote, Veracruz, can be found a vast lagoon known as Alchichica, which falls within the state boundaries of Puebla. It is several kilometers in diameter and has an approximate depth of 700 meters. Several researchers who have dived into its waters have commented on the existence of certain currents within it by means of which water enters the lagoon, causing it to always have the same level, regardless of the climactic changes which may take place within said location.

The lagoon presents considerable salinity due to the fact that the large amount of Tequesquitengo rocks which are found within it. Their dissolution brings about this reaction. The aquatic fauna is limited to small fish resembling *charalitos* and the algae surrounding the lagoon are very sparse.

Very strange things began to occur from the moment we broke camp, such as the discharging of our videocassette recorder batteries and those of the radio. Radio waves, moreover, appeared unable to penetrate into the area. This could possibly be due the presence of an electromagnetic cone created at certain times around the lagoon, very similar to the one that takes place at the Zone of Silence in the state of Durango. Even stranger were the thoroughly odd sounds emanating from the interior of the lagoon during the night, giving the impression that something was swimming in its waters. We were also able to observe multicolored lights beneath the surface of the lake itself.

Our investigation was motivated precisely at this site because of the constant reports regarding the existence of certain lights and objects that fly over the lagoon, and above all, by the strange activity that takes place where enigmatic objects have been seen entering and exiting the lagoon itself.

This information came from one witness in particular whom we were able to interview. His name is Roberto Sanchez from the town of Pueblo del Seco, state of Puebla. In this context, he explained that during the month of march last year [1996], at around 10:00 p.m., he was waiting for the bus that would take him back to his home town, since on this occasion he was visiting a friend who lived in one of the dwellings close to the lagoon itself. As time went on, Roberto was able to notice a powerful yellow sheen issuing from the lagoon. This led him to approach the precipice that surrounds the body of water; suddenly, a sizeable luminous object--white in color--emerged from the lagoon, hovering for a few seconds a handful of meters over its surface before shooting off at a tremendous rate of speed into the clear, starry night. This startled him to the point of wanting to break into a run, but he managed to calm himself until his bus arrived. He added that whenever he visits the locale, he remembers the event clearly, which was above all striking and unforgettable.

Another witness is Carlos Arias Sánchez, a water biscuit vendor on the road linking the cities of Perote and Puebla, who told researchers that silvery objects, as well as red ones, have been seen flying over the region in the late afternoon. He indicated that at the close of a nocturnal festivity held in the town of Guadalupe Victoria--3:00 a.m., approximately--he witnessed an orange light moving very slowly a few meters over the water as he returned to his home (which is also close to the lagoon). In the blink of an eye, the object turned off its light and vanished into the darkness of the evening.

Events such as these are widely commented by local residents, whose accounts match the ones issued by the foregoing witnesses, leading some to believe that these lights are the infamous UFOs, and other to think that they are witches. Among the witnesses there are senior citizens who added that the phenomenon increases at night during the months of March, April and May.

Dr. Rafael A. Lara Palmeros, a famous researcher of the UFO phenomenon and the author of many magazine articles worldwide [*and Inexplicata contributing editor!--Ed.*], has led groups on camping expeditions around the lagoon and has confirmed the fact that the phenomenon, as presented, is real and authentic, since this renowned investigator has managed to capture these objects on video as they enter and depart the lagoon at high speed. The objects are luminous and emit flashes of white and red light. Dr. Lara concluded that the UFO and paranormal phenomena are common in these locations and that further in-depth research is needed to produce a clear explanation about these high-strangeness events.

Among the evidence collected by the young UFO researcher group is the following: on skywatch nights, recordings were made of red objects transiting over the area and in the vicinity of the lagoon itself. Around 4:00 p.m. one afternoon, a American football-shaped object was seen to emerge from the lagoon in a straight line until it hovered 40 meters from the water's surface before vanishing in the wink of an eye.

Team members remarked that they always felt "being watched" by something during their stay in the area, and their attention was drawn to certain very small reddish lights which appeared in the lagoon's horizon before vanishing abruptly.

This location confirms the existence of strange bodies capable of intelligent movements, and the lagoon is apparently the power source the use for this purpose. The group's research has led to the conclusion that water constitutes a vital source for these entities, since the places boasting the largest share of sightings are areas in which aquifers and volcanoes exist.

Upon inspecting a map of the area, it was noted that the Alchichica lagoon is curiously aligned with archaeological sites such as Tula, Texcoco, Tzintzuntzan, Cempoala and others. It is likewise situated on the same axis as the Tequesquitengo Lagoon--thus constituting a highly fertile area for sightings and encounters with alien entities.

Ex Libris
A Random Sampling of Hispanic Ufology in Print

ABDUCCION

by Antonio Ribera. Barcelona: Ediciones del Bronce, 1998. 174 pages. Paperback.

Antonio Ribera now wears the purple robes of an elder in ufology and is without any doubt the "great old man" of Spain's research community in this field. There can be no denying that he was there among the notables in the first generation of UFO investigators in the 1950's, and his interests went far beyond the uncertain field of saucerdom. An accomplished scuba diver and explorer, translator, dramatist and poet, Ribera richly deserved to be awarded Catalunya's Cross of St.Jordi in 1990 for his endeavors.

ABDUCCION, however, is a reread of his older books--landmark works such as Secuestrados por Ovnis and Las Maquinas del Cosmos -- and offers little new information. However, it is very possibly the only book by Ribera that Generation Xers might ever get to see, and it certainly is worthwhile reading for anyone being introduced his work. One of Ribera's main assets is the way in which he draws the reader into the book, creating the sensation that the book has been written expressly for the particular reader. The feeling that the author is sharing juicy paranormal gossip with the audience makes all of Ribera's books a delightful experience.

Aside from offering insights on some Spanish abduction cases which are thoroughly unknown on this side of the Atlantic (such as the Próspera Muñoz case and the highly visual abduction of hunter Julio F. and his dog "Mus"), Ribera analyzes some U.S. chestnuts such as the Pat Price, Travis Walton and Betty Hill cases, offering a refreshing new perspective on them. U.S. ufology seldom has someone holding up the mirror to show it its own cases, and Ribera does a wonderful job at it.

We'd like to give it a higher ranking, but refuse to let nostalgia and admiration get in the way of an otherwise objective review. The good news is that Spanish books on ufology and the paranormal can now be ordered from <www.crisol.es> on the Internet, thus placing ABDUCCION within everyone's reach.

INEXPLICATA gives ABDUCCION ★ ★

Dr. Rafael A. Lara's
MEXICO WATCH

[Editor's Note: Dr. Lara has very kindly allowed us to reprint the text of his personal letter to our office. It is a vivid example of the pitfalls of UFO research outside the U.S. and the inescapable problem of "popular delusions and the madness of crowds"]

I am writing to inform you about what transpired here a few months ago.

Since April of this year (1999), persistent rumors made the rounds regarding the fact that a worker at the IMSS (Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social--the hospital at which I work) had discovered a being with uncommon characteristics. One Sunday during the month of June, this person, whose name is Jesús Rivas, reported to said hospital bearing with him the "entity" in question, causing an uproar among physicians, nurses, staff, etc.. The man had brought the alleged creature to the Emergency Room in order to have it "examined". The commotion was such that I was called in along with biologist Arturo del Moral, another person named Daniel Monge and even TV Azteca to have the situation aired over television.

Fortunately, I wasn't home at the time and it wasn't until the following day (Monday) that I received the news. Personally, I believed absolutely nothing about what I was being told. Three weeks went by until Don Jesús appeared with the "extraterrestrial" in the department in which I work. We spoke for a while about how his son had found the being in a coffee plantation not far from his house and took it. Without any hesitation on his part, he said it was an "extraterrestrial" and further added that the "being" had so much energy within it that it was "able to engage in telepathic communication...". Furthermore, strange sounds could be heard in the house.

Upon examining it, I found myself looking at a crude foam rubber doll, made of the same material employed in making balls, certain types of gloves, etc.. Out of sheer courtesy I refused to tell him that it was phoney, but I did make it clear that it was terrestrial and manmade. In spite of this, the collective psychosis gripped the hospital in such a way that many "rationalist" physicians who had always held critical views of the UFO phenomenon suddenly involved themselves in the event, claiming that the doll moved, had a light in its chest (sic), was endowed with an aura, and so forth.

We still don't know who "blew the whistle", as we say in Mexico, but on the last Monday in June, National Security and Mexico's Interpol agents descended upon the hospital, interviewing hospital director Dr. Joel Vela Sáenz and the medical assistant director, Dr. Rubén Torres. Finally they interviewed the chief of personnel,

Dr. Roberto Hernández. After long, gruelling interviews with these physicians, the agents went out looking for Jesús Rivas, apprehending him and forcibly removing him to the *Centro de Inteligencia del Estado de Veracruz* (CIEV), where he was subjected to interrogation. I reported to said center to tell them that they were dealing with nothing more than a foam rubber doll, pure and simple. This apparently settled the situation, but on subsequent days, I found people with cellular phones monitoring my arrival and departure from the hospital; my phone calls were being intercepted and above all, correspondence was being monitored. It was for this reason that my mail to a number of places was so unreasonably delayed.

Subsequently [*UFO TV personality*] Maussán visited to Jalapa and...headed for Mr. Rivas's house. The latter claimed that he was offered money and the opportunity to have the entity "analyzed" to determine its origin. The analyses took place and my original explanation was confirmed. It was nothing more than a paltry foam rubber doll. Even so, the public insisted on its strangeness and that's when contradictory information appeared on the Internet. What is most humorous about the case is that a doll having the same exact characteristics and called "Teocelo" was found near Jalapa, and there was the possibility that other similar ones might appear in other places. At one point, reporters for the *Política* newspaper interviewed me, elaborating on the points discussed earlier in this letter. This led to controversy and bad feelings among Mr. Rivas's family. The reporters still consider this case to be "open" (open, but to what?).

In short, I am sending you some documentation on the case as well as photos of the *corpus delicti*. Your comments on this are always welcome.

[It is worth noting that Dr. Lara's correspondence is apparently still under surveillance: his envelope arrived in the U.S. opened with a sharp instrument on two sides and the photographs had been removed--Ed.]

From "POLITICA", Thursday, July 8, 1999

Close Encounter of the Third Kind in Colonia Higuera

by Alberto Morales/Gisela Uscanga

An image. Its size: approximately 8 centimeters. Color: brown; Eyes: large; Arms: long. Inert. The story told hereabouts is that it has a wound on its skull which possibly brought about what we Earthlings call "death".

Politica was in touch with a cybernaut yesterday who showed us a number of graphic images. Distrustful and sullen, she didn't say much about the origin of the photos--what we do know is that there are two versions of how the alien was found. We are only telling the reader what is said here without making any claims for its authenticity. Here they are:

- 1) On the side of a football field located in Colonia Higuera, a man who was playing ball on the site noticed something amid the grass when he went to collect the ball. He picked it up, looked at it, then threw it back. But one spectator of the game was well aware of his gestures and of the object he dropped to the ground: the problem is that when it hit the ground, some sparks flew off it. The spectator went straight to the player, demanding to know what it was. The player riposted that he could have it, if he wanted it. The strange object that drew the fan's attention proved to be a sort of doll, almost the size of a hand.
- 2) A girl found the alien in a *milpa* (maize field) and took it to her father, who is only 17 years old. The girl's grandfather has been the one to face the media during this event.

What's being said about this creature is that it communicated telepathically. The alien claimed to be an "android" from the planet "Andromeda", who had come to Earth to carry out a mission which was now over. Being the only female among the crew, her companions decided to leave her behind...for unknown reasons. The person who had the "android" in his possession says that whenever he woke up, objects in the house had been inexplicably rearranged. He claims to having neither heard nor seen anything at all.

Saucer chaser Jaime Maussán contacted the creature's keeper upon learning of the phenomenon. He requested permission to take the being to conduct tests, and was refused. On the other hand, a specialist working at IMSS Clinic 11 took some photos of the "critter" which are circulating throughout the city.

Thus, so that the story won't end too soon, it is rumored that another unidentified being will be found in Xalapa 2000.

From "POLITICA", Tuesday, July 13, 1999

BABEL (editorial)

by Javier Hernández Alpizar

Like in a Scooby Doo episode, the skeptics arrived with a flashlight and discovered the trick and the special effects. The alien was just a foam rubber doll, made of the same stuff as the balls juggled by beggar children at the intersections to make a few coins. Once again, skeptics are the executioners of illusion. It will be necessary to wait for a reappearance of the large headed dwarves, fearful that other young men may discover that synthetics and the human hand are the authors of such great expectations as a close encounter with other intelligences.

For the moment, Enrique Yasser and José Hernandez are to be congratulated. Their skepticism is proof that there is still common sense and decency among the young. Aside from the natural

ambition of having a "scoop" and the urge to be in the limelight that shadow any reporter who is proud of being one, their demythifying task is plausible. To make a living off deceiving respectable people with hoaxed videos and photos like Jaime Maussan has done (most famous for his autopsy of the plastic alien) is a way of being a scoundrel. The gullibility of the masses does not justify such behavior: the masses may not believe in politics, the government, the opposition, and they may find it increasingly hard to believe in God, but they are eager to embrace any astrological claptrap or alleged visionaries and prophets in the same way that they are willing to believe in the innocence of narcocelebrities. According to the massive UFO industry, we are being visited by beings from all galaxies and they're all midgets: the large-headed, large-eyed offspring of Steven Spielberg. It would appear that we are the one's who are different, and that they must see us as monsters. This time, the fraud was exposed, and no dismissal will be strong enough, but not because the respectable citizen isn't gullible: he's just anxious to be deceived. Therefore, the manufacturers of aliens will be in business for a long time...

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