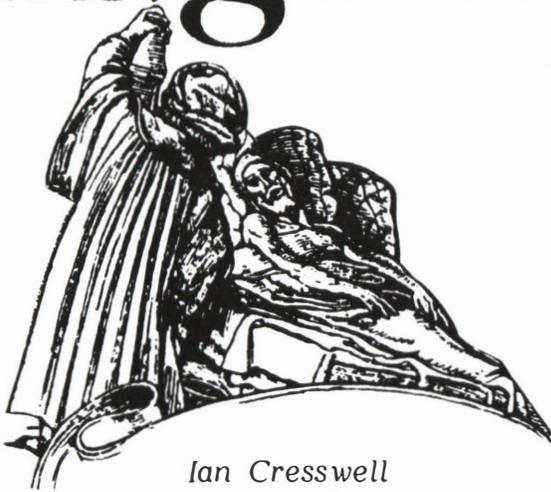


MAGONIA 16 / July 1984

magonia



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MAGONIA

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notes, letters or articles - we can't promise to use all the contributions in the next Magonia, but even ones not used will provide a valuable insight into current ufological thinking on this central issue.

We are still getting a steady demand for back issues of Magonia and MUFOB, and our supply is now depleted. Most issues of Magonia are only available as photocopies, price 75p. [\$1.50], post paid. There are still back issues of MUFOB New Series 8 to 15 available, at 50p. [\$1.00]. We also have available copies of some numbers of the old series of MUFOB. If there are any you need to make up your collection, please let us know, and we will send you availability and prices.



OFTEN, when an issue of Magonia is being put together, a theme seems to emerge, quite unplanned, from the variety of contributions within its covers.

This issue appears to be one such, with a concentration on the 'myth' of ufology. Ian Cresswell's contribution looks at the possible mechanism whereby mythic elements may emerge into a percipient's conscious experience. Peter Rogerson, in a deeply-felt piece explores the greater myths that may render our own ufological preoccupations pointless; while Hilary Evans contributes a short note (written as a starting point for a stimulating discussion at the 1984 Anglo-French UFO meeting in Hove) which queries some of the assumptions held about UFOs as an 'authorised myth' of a scientific age.

For the next issue of Magonia we have actually planned, rather than serendipitously discovered, an overall theme. Although Magonia has in some ways led the retreat from the ETH as a viable explanation for the UFO mystery, we are still aware of the immense strength of the hold the hypothesis has on ufological and popular thought. After our examination of the psycho-social and mythic dimensions of UFOs, we felt the time was ripe for a consideration of the present position of the ETH in ufological thought.

We would like to hear from our readers where they think the ETH now stands. If the naive ETH of the fifties and sixties is dead, is there a newer version which can confront the objections of New Ufologist or sceptic? We would like to hear from as many of our readers as possible - short



WHAT DREAMS MIGHT COME

Ian Cresswell examines the subjective nature of close encounters, and their similarity to dream and trance states.

WHILE it has been assumed by many ufologists that the nature of the UFO phenomenon is of an objective nature with perhaps an element of subjectivity involved in some of the cases, the content of the close encounter experience seems to fully negate this belief. At first, this opinion may seem to be a fair possibility, going by the general appearance of the phenomenon; but not when these experiences are taken apart and certain strange inconsistencies start to appear, along with distortion, and other aspects that don't make sense within this framework. Perhaps some people involved in our subject haven't understood the extent of subjectivity present in the UFO phenomenon - especially with the close encounters.

I have made the decision to concentrate on CE cases because they seem to offer the most as far as contents and complexity are concerned, leaving us in the position to accept the experience as genuine or not, rather than also study the rest of the UFO phenomenon which could well be reports of many different things not necessarily connected with the close encounters.

One thing that I must make clear at the start is that I consider most of the close encounters to be genuine in as much as that the percipients are convinced of what they have experienced. The phenomenon is a reality - this is no longer in doubt. There will be only a small number of hoaxes in these cases and an equally small number that can be put down to psychosis.

Surprisingly, one of the first things that made me doubtful that there was an objective basis for these accounts was the

large number of cases that have been reported from around the world. It seemed much too large a sample, and too wide a variety of types of craft and individuals, if physical objects were involved. A smaller number of cases and types would have been more convincing - what is involved here is more than just different descriptions of the same object or entity. Even individual cases with more than one witness produce different descriptions of the same events - more than one might expect from human error in descriptions. Similarly, there are innumerable cases where events lack witnesses, even in densely built up areas.

Many of these incidents appear to be dream-like in their appearance and contents. On the surface there is a pattern that so often emerges: one of apparent physical craft, with extraterrestrial occupants. Although the 'plot' seems correct, the script isn't and the actors don't seem to know their lines, judging by the nonsense they spout. So often in these cases objects will appear or disappear from nowhere; entities will appear through the walls of a craft rather than a doorway; objects will land on soft ground, yet leave no markings.

Some ufologists have tried to argue that these distortions and inconsistencies can be explained by the conscious will of the entities in an effort to confuse us as to their real identities, but this argument is merely indulging in intellectual somersaults in order to keep the phenomenon on an objective basis.

I suggest that what the percipients are experiencing is a distortion of objective reality, and they are perceiving a series

of images superimposed on objective reality, and indistinguishable from it. The origin of these images is subjective, and so is the process by which they emerge into consciousness. They occur outside the conscious will of the witness; they don't cause them to happen, they can't imagine them into being, because they occur spontaneously on a seemingly selective basis.

From the standpoint of psychiatry these images would be considered to be of an hallucinatory nature because the percipients are seeing something not objectively there. But this does not seem to be a satisfactory position, because largely the witnesses are not psychotic, and the hallucinations - if such they can be called - are clearly not pathological in nature. Although something is occurring on a subjective level it is no less real than something happening on an objective level: the images of objectivity are built from sensory data that is decoded in the brain.

Too often the unconscious is regarded as a dustbin with little of value in it, but its contents are far more than things which have been repressed because the conscious part of the psyche can't face the truth. We can imagine the psyche like the proverbial iceberg, the unconscious being the seven-eighths underwater. We hold so very little at any given time in our conscious state, but within the depths of the unconscious lies a complete history of all that has happened to us on both a personal and racial level, and all that has occurred on the objective and subjective level.

It is from this combination of both conscious and unconscious that our night-dreams are made. I feel the images of close encounters are of a similar combined process, with more emphasis placed on that imagery that has never been conscious. Dreams are hallucinations, but are not pathological - or we all be psychotics! It appears that in the dream state we have the closest comparison to the CE experience, both being formed out of subjective images that take on their own 'reality' when they are taking place.

It is said that dream states are very much like psychotic states, with the inner imagery continuing over into waking life. Schizophrenia appears to be a conscious dream state, but with one fundamental difference: in the dream state the sense of self and its relationship to the dream world is intact. The contents of the dream may be strange and bizarre, but they are still usually accepted as being real events at the time they occur, and it is only on waking their nature is revealed. In schizophrenia the sense of self is lost, and so is its links

with other people, and the environment.

It is not just a case of splitting away parts of the personality, but rather a total shattering of it. The schizophrenic believes in the reality of his hallucinations and delusions, and not just at the time they are occurring. This does not match the UFO percipient, as he accepts as reality subjective images which may happen only once in his life, with no further pathological reaction. He is perfectly aware of the rest of the environment and his links with it. The UFO event is the odd thing out and does not belong with the rest of the images of objective reality.

Although the dream state is very much like the close encounter it would not be true to say that the latter is a conscious dream. But their origins, and the process of becoming manifest within consciousness is the same - this is the reason so many of the factors against the causation being objective stand out so clearly. The fact of distortion involved in these images is

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due to their unconscious nature, and has nothing to do with external events. The distortion of objective reality is because the origin of the images is different from that of the perceived state of the witnesses normal levels of consciousness. They only appear to have an independent existence because they are not a product of the conscious human mind.

A number of other factors involved in the process of manifestation also cause distortion in both dream-states and UFO encounters. The use of symbols instead of the actual object, and a symbol of a different type to that meant, causes a great deal of distortion. I am using 'symbol' in the sense of a subjective image portraying the contents of the unconscious. The same type of distortion can be seen with the process of 'condensation' which is the combination of a number of separate images to form one composite image.

Another factor found in both dream-states and close-encounters is 'scene-jumping'. The perceived images suddenly change instantly into something else, apparently against all logic.

Before leaving the area of dreams and close-encounter experiences, there are three more subjective experiences worth considering. The first two can be classed together for convenience - hypnogogic and hypnopompic states. The former is the perception of dream images before falling asleep; the latter the perception of such images upon awakening. Their origins and processes of manifestation are the same as for dream states. Although technically, in psychiatric terms, regarded as being hallucinatory in nature, they are not pathological. They are just subjective images. These states are particularly relevant to 'bedside visitor' [or 'Old Hag' - Ed.] types of experiences reported in UFO contexts.

The other state I wish to look at is that of the 'waking dream'. This is often just a single image, or occasionally a series, which breaks through the usual barriers of ego-consciousness to appear in the form of visual images that are superimposed on the environment with no apparent difference at first being noticed. These states are again hallucinatory, but not always pathological in nature. I say 'not always' because these states can occur with over use of narcotics or alcohol, or during periods of sleep deprivation. But they can also occur when a subjective image arises with enough associated emotion to drive it through the usual barriers of consciousness to manifest as an objective experience. These are often wish-fulfillments. During the non-pathological appearance of these images there is no loss of self and no loss of contact with the percipient's surroundings.

It is of great significance that so many of the close encounter abduction cases have come to light because of hypnosis, often following a series of nightmares or a loss of memory following a UFO sighting. I feel that these cases do not argue the case for any objective event having taken place. In the hypnotic state a person will bring forth a series of images which are by now all subjective, regardless of whether they once had occurred in an objective state. In the hypnotic state reality, whether objective or subjective, is regarded as the same, and truth, fantasy and myth are all intertwined. The hypnotic subject will still be able to relate to it, and still feel very aware of self in these trance remembrances. Regressed memories of this kind are no sure proof of the of the reality of the experiences, but they could well be evidence of its subjective 'reality'. Consider if a person had a dream during which he encountered a grounded UFO and its occupants, which develops into an abduction scenario. Upon awakening,

like most dreams this is forgotten. But because of the high level emotional energy connected with it, it is likely to return to consciousness one way or another; usually in small remembered sections. Then under hypnosis the dream is brought back fully, and understood as a memory of an objective event of a physical nature.

We have seen how dream and other related states do throw light on the true nature of close encounters.

There is one more state of trance which I would like to suggest is of importance to our understanding of CE cases - that of somnambulism. In its classical psychiatric sense this means the carrying out of physical motor activities, often of a complex nature, while asleep - commonly called sleepwalking. At first glance this may not appear to have much relevance to our field of study, but I would like to draw attention to an important study by C.G. Jung; 'On the psychology and pathology of so-called psychic phenomena', first published in 1902, and can be found

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ufological context**

in the collected Works, volume 1: Psychiatric Studies. Although connected with hysteria, I feel the case is important because of the type of material coming out of trance cases, and the light it throws on the mechanisms involved in 'paranormal' activity.

In view of the length of this case-study by Jung, I can only give a short summary, and then an extract from it. The case involves a young girl known as 'SW', 15 1/2 years old, whose family and near relations manifested many unusual activities, often of a parapsychological nature, which would be of interest to ufologists. The girl was 'normal' apart from a rather reserved manner which occasionally gave way to displays of exuberant joy. She heard about 'table-turning' from some friends in July 1899 and soon took part in it. It was discovered that she was a good medium, with communications of a serious nature taking place through the spirit of her dead grandfather.

Then in August of the same year her first somnambulist attack took place. During this she became very pale, sunk down to the ground or onto a chair, closed her eyes, became cataleptic, drew several deep

breaths, and began to speak. In this trance state she copied the voices of her dead relatives. Gestures and actions accompanied the words. These attacks, at their height, went on for about eight weeks, during which time numerous personalities spoke through her, answering questions put by the people present with Jung. The general level of these messages was superficial and at times childish, whilst others appeared complex and intellectual. Sometimes during the attacks the girl's eyes would be open, at other times closed. Although in a sleep-like trance she could walk around the room and perform complex physical motor activities, unaware that she was doing so.

In these trance states - which she took as being totally real - she was often taken by her 'spirit guides' to other parts of the world, to see relatives to see relatives and other people. During one of these trances something happened which I think holds great significance for the understanding of close-encounter states:

"For instance, she once returned from a railway journey in an extremely agitated state. We thought at first that something unpleasant must have happened to her; but finally she pulled herself together and explained that 'a star-dweller had sat opposite her in the train'. From the description she gave of this being I recognised an elderly merchant I happened to know, who had a rather unsympathetic face.

"Apropos of this event, she told us all the peculiarities of the star-dwellers: they have no godlike souls, as men have, they pursue no science, no philosophy, but in technical arts they are far more advanced than we are. Thus flying machines have long been in existence on Mars; the whole of Mars is covered with canals, the canals are artificial lakes and are used for irrigation. The canals are all flat ditches, the water in them is very shallow. The excavating of the canals caused the Martians no particular trouble, as the soil there is lighter than on Earth. There are no bridges over the canals but that does not prevent communication because everybody travels by flying machine.

"There are no wars on the stars, because no difference of opinion exists. The star-dwellers do not have a human shape, but the most laughable ones imaginable, such as no-one could possibly conceive. Human spirits who get permission to travel in the beyond are not allowed to set foot on the stars. Similarly, travelling star-dwellers may not touch down on Earth but must remain at a distance of some 75 feet above its surface. Should they infringe this law, they remain in the power of the Earth and must

take human bodies, from which they are freed only after their natural death. As human beings they are cold, hard-hearted, and cruel. SW can recognise them by their peculiar expression, which lacks the 'spiritual', and by their hairless, eyebrowless, sharply cut faces. Napoleon I was a typical star-dweller." *Psychiatric Studies*, pp. 34-35.

There are many other interesting parts of this case study and I can only mention a few of them in passing. A 'metaphysical chart' was given on the nature of reality; a great deal about reincarnation and the past-lives of SW. The main period of activity was about eight weeks, with a steady decline over the next six months, until she was finally caught trying to fake physical apports during a seance. From this it would appear that as subjective images started to dry up, SW began to create her own effects; a pattern similar to several close-encounter witnesses who have faked physical evidence to prolong the phenomenon after an initial genuine encounter. If reported today instead of 1899 these events would almost certainly have been interpreted in a ufological context - the imagery is identical.

I should add that Jung considered the case was a result of hysteria, and that SW's experiences, although hallucinatory in their nature, had been conscious parts of the ego-state which had become unconscious, then returned, along with other types of internal unconscious imagery to form subjective image-visions of a non-psychotic nature.

In passing, I would also like to refer to another case of around the same period, that has been brought to light by Flournoy in his book *From India to the Planet Mars* published in 1900. This is the Helene Smith case, and again we have a young girl and a situation of trance-like state of consciousness. Through automatic writing she produced what was said to be the Martian language, but was later shown to be a mixture of French and Sanskrit, with pseudo-linguistic products of her own. This was not done consciously, but the girl was a victim of her own subjective nature. These cases show that today's events are by no means unique, only the form has changed slightly, and, of course, our interpretation of it.

What we appear to be dealing with in the close encounter experience is something like the somnambulistic state which affects consciousness, to induce a state of semi-consciousness in the person undergoing this experience. In this state subjective imagery, mainly from the unconscious, replaces the other ego-complexes to produce a trance state in which automatic behaviour

still takes place.

Consider a driver going home on a lonely, deserted stretch of road. There is little to do but relax. It is dark, so there is little to see, and attention begins to drift, and turn to reflective inner thoughts, or else the driver will fall into a peaceful state of mind rather like the state just before sleep. These are the conditions in which the classic close-encounter or abduction occur - a bright light just above the road, a strange sound, and the light takes on the shape of a disc-like object. The car engine stops dead. Small entities emerge from the 'object' and approach the car. Suddenly the object vanishes in a flash, at the same time the car engine starts up on its own. The incident is over, and another CE III is recorded.

But is this a physical event, is the car stoppage the result of a physical effect on the cars electrical system? I would rather postulate that the driver has experienced something that is totally subjective, in its nature and in its process of manifestation as a series of images imposed on objective reality.

Typically, the light is the first sign of something about to occur as the percipient falls into a different level of consciousness. Although still conscious and aware of his surroundings, the imagery that is being formed is doing so in the same manner as during a dream state, or during a somnambulistic state of trance. Then, as the state gets more trance-like the witness automatically (and thereby unknown to his conscious self) stops the vehicle.

The images become more solid and more complex as the elements from another level of functioning flood through the barriers that have now been broken between the percipient's conscious and unconscious. The encounter is now the most important aspect of the percipient's conscious field. As the trance state then begins to lose power, the images vanish, and as they do so the witness again starts up the engine. The incident is over, leaving the driver with no conscious memory of having controlled the car.

It is interesting to see how large a part the presence of light plays before the start of all these subjective experiences. It is a light of a subjective nature. It may be important that the vast majority of these incidents take place during the hours of darkness, as with the coming of darkness the normal states of consciousness begin to alter, the mind is more receptive to subjective imagery from the depths of the unconscious. It may give rise to a state in which the dream has become a total

reality for the percipient, as with Jung's patient 'SW', their reality is accepted without question.

Something very strange is taking place within the psyche of man, the dark side of the moon is becoming visible. That which was invisible is now being manifested. Magonia is alive and well, functioning within the depths of the human unconscious.

But what is the nature of the intelligence behind this production of unconscious imagery? Can it be of archtypal origin? An archetype is a primordial unconscious image that is common to all people as part of the collective unconscious. This is why any subjective image of this nature could be experienced by more than one person at a time. Jung did not regard man as being the creator of these images, but that in some way we are the projection of them.

These images seem to be of a purely subjective nature, having no place within the conscious ego-state. They appear to have been with us throughout history, with new ones being added with the passage of time. The close encounter experience and the images that are associated with it may signal the emergence of a new series of archtypal images centres around the theme of alien vehicles and occupants.

But is their original human one, or something much deeper that subjective myths and images only mirror? This is not a question that can be really answered by science working on an objective level, but one that can only be answered subjectively - an area that depth psychology appears to best give us an approach to.

What we are dealing with is not the product of pathology, but at the same time is something very different from 'objectivity'. Even at this state of our knowledge the answer can only be speculative. \$\$\$

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of course, is entirely up to the persons with whom you are in contact.

I would like to assure you that this is not a joke. Should you require information on this subject, please remember that a reply will be sent only if a Stamped Addressed Envelope is enclosed with your letter.

Yours sincerely

Harold Mattam, FSC., 3 Comet St., Weir, Bacup, Lancashire.

CRASH!

Peter Rogerson examines the psychology of radical misperception, and the fears that lie behind the power of myth.

IN HIS excellent and perceptive article in *Magonia* 15, Jacques Scorneaux raises some vital points, among which are: the process of radical misperception, and the failure of rationalist analysis of human society.

I would like to couple these perceptions with an analysis of some of the neo-romanticist attitudes which have arisen in recent ufology.

In trying to come to terms with works such as *The Green Stone*, it is dishonest not to acknowledge real difficulty. The gut-reaction is to wax indignant about the betrayal of integrity by the participants, who confuse reality with 'dragon and dungeon' fantasy. Given the recent press coverage of clerical condemnation of such fantasy games, it is perhaps wise to take the 'new ufology' route of trying to see the motivation behind such fantasies, without impressing ones own value judgements.

It is clear that, for example, the storyline of *The Green Stone* represents a process by which evil is defeated and cultural boundaries re-established by a series of ritual acts. Whether or not these events occurred in 'real life', they may well be the process whereby certain individuals are able to re-define their own psycho-social boundaries.

Furthermore, it seems that it is an excellent example of the main theme of the neo-romanticist revolt: the rejection of the intellect, the cult of immediate experience. For some ufologists the UFO experience becomes an access to an alternative reality, a twilight zone beyond the world of daylight reason. For example, Paul Devereux's own UFO sighting takes on this aspect.

Devereux's own account of his peak experience is a prime example - ditching his own 'naive realism', recognising that the perceived image is not the same as the object watched, then it becomes clear that the 'Earthlight' or whatever is a sign of transcendence, a radical break with 'daylight' reason. The misperception, in effect the marginalisation of the perception, opens the door to the numinous. The radical misperception is, in a very real sense, a seeing for the first time, parallel with the sense of perceptual shock produced by such drugs as LSD. Here enters the idea of Magonia in disguise - the secret of the cosmos in a leaf blowing in the wind - going right back to the initial study of fairy-lore. We can thus equate radical misperception (or re-perception) with enlightenment.

Now let us try to work out why ordinary events should reveal their numinousness by masquerading as alien spaceships. Alien spaceships are contemporary cultural symbols of the 'wholly other', seen in other cultures as spirits, gods, etc. When the moon is seen as a phantom spaceship it reveals a sense of its radically alien nature.

This 'misperception', the enchanted glimpse into the mysterious heart of the ordinary, transforms the life of the percipient. It lifts them from the world of daylight reason and commonsense by reintroducing drama into the world. "Something out of the ordinary", quite different from the dull, normal round, has taken place - at the very least the percipient has a good after-dinner story. To admit that it was 'only' a misperception thus deflates the percipient, it reduces them from being a 'witness' of the magical and 'wholly other', to being a 'victim' of a trick of light and mind.

It would seem that much of the neo-romantic, fantasy enterprise is a way of holding onto that drama and retaining the perception of the numinous. The 'investigators' now become figures in a drama of their own construction, enacted in its own world of meaning which is in stark contrast to the banal world of bureaucratic routine.

Ultimately the neo-romantic UFO quest becomes a protest against the hollowness of the world of 'reason', of senseless trivial conversation which obfuscates all real meaning. Given this glimpse of magical escape, few would willingly subside back into such a world. Perhaps the recent TV serial *Driving Ambition* has penetrated the private world of at least some UFO percipients better than any 'documentary' UFO report.

Where the neo-romantics fail is in their attempt to draw this encounter with Magonia into the daylight world by insisting that 'these things can be'. Untempered by reason and commonsense, Magonia can soon 'abduct' us.

What is this 'Magonia' which is encountered in the shades of twilight? It seems to me to represent the 'Wilderness', all those aspects of reality and the world which are beyond rational control. It stands against the world of human reason, culture and ingenuity, which I shall call 'Habitat' (I apologise to anthropologists and others who may take exception to the term, I am simply looking for verbal symbols at present).

One writer on psychical research has used an excellent term to describe our encounters with Magonia - 'crashing'. Magonia descends on us like a ten-ton weight - suddenly the ghost is in the house; the light on the road is a spacecraft; the polt throws the pots at us; Nessie surfaces onto the placid surface from unplumbed depths. Wilderness is upon us.

It is hardly likely that those with an extremely strong commitment to some metaphysical 'Habitat' system should be extremely disturbed by this. Rationalists and Christian fundamentalists, deeply committed to strict rules and tight repression, when confronted with the crashing in of Wilderness, without so much as a knock on the door, not surprisingly are tempted to see it as a manifestation of evil, or at least cosmic bad form!

In the opening chapter of *Book of the Damned*, Fort compares the 'damned data' to the lumpenproletariat of society, unacceptable in the bourgeois drawing room. This is a profound insight, indeed. Part of the central force, the dynamic potential of the 'crash' of Magonia, is its equation with the untamed aspect of the personality, society and cosmos. Fortean phenomena are damned because ultimately they are signs of pure 'Wilderness'. It is obvious that on a macro scale this 'crashing' can lead to disaster. Iran is a prime example of the sudden explosion of dramatic mythic power into a society, and the chaos which results when that power is unchecked.

It seems to me that Scorneux is correct in his estimate of the power of myths on our society, for good or ill. The Falklands or Greenham Common are excellent testimony to the power of a-rational appeals on human history; and it is not at all clear what myths may drive a world that is coming up to a close encounter with annihilation. There is just no way of telling what would

happen in the last hours of countdown to nuclear war, but perhaps one could hope against all reason that there would emerge from Magonia an elemental, global, lust for life which would sweep all before it. Perhaps in this crisis of final despair all existing social ties would be broken, and all government, power and authority would be smashed apart.

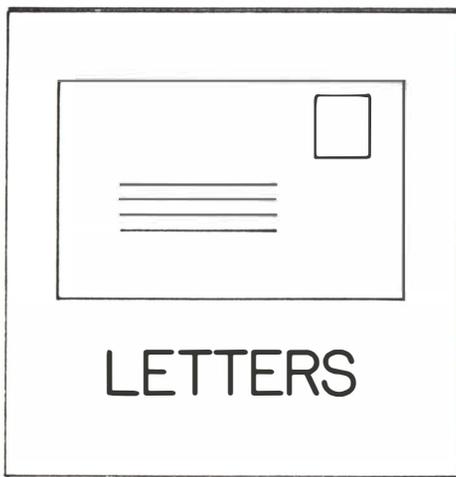
It would no doubt be the second greatest human tragedy possible, yet for all its pain and grief, might it not be an infinitely better outcome than that Last Winter?

A time must come when all the polite little articles and not so polite book reviews become just idle chatter. If we are to take our role seriously we must speak out at some point. For more and more people the shock that lies at the heart of Magonia is the realisation of a world order founded on cynicism, tyranny and mendacity, and defended ultimately by the threat of the immeasurably evil crime of mundicide - the murder of a world and all life, hope, love, joy; yes, even hate and sorrow! It is hardly surprising then that there is "crime, banditry and the distress of nations". Indeed, the greatest imaginable sign of hope, and the greatest testimony of support for wise old Pelagius, is that there is so little, and that they overwhelming majority of people demonstrate, for the overwhelming majority of the time, so much love, tenderness, kindness and compassion.

It signals that human beings are not politico-economic puppets, miserable sinners requiring supernatural grace or extra-terrestrial nannying. Nor are they lumps of jelly whose sole purpose is carrying 'selfish genes', or spirits trapped in alien matter, 'strangers in a strange land'. Rather we are the Children of Olduvai, the One People, the inheritors of the multiform cultures of our planet, bound for the stars.

What dreams the dust of the universe dreams, and what greater hope could one have than this.

We have mentioned on several occasions the ASSAP Library which is in process of formation. This is growing rapidly in its home at Purley Library, Banstead Road, Purley, Surrey. In the future this will become one of the major archives of UFO and anomaly literature, and we urge all our readers when 'weeding out' their own libraries to consider donating material to it.



Dear Sir,

Jan Krogh, of Norway's NIVFO, quite reasonably describes my article as 'tourist advertising', for one of my intentions was to urge British ufologists to visit Norway and see for themselves the location of so many interesting sightings.

As to what those sightings might be, I am certainly not in an authoritative position to state. My visit to Norway may have helped to show me how interesting the sightings are - because of the geographical circumstances - but it certainly didn't make me an expert. My knowledge of the sightings is wholly secondhand. But prolonged discussion with those who have investigated them at first-hand convinced me that the Norwegian phenomena deserve our attention, even if Jan Krogh is correct in saying that the case is more complicated than my article suggested. That article was intended only as an introduction for the British reader, and not a definitive account, so of course I did not go into the complexities.

However, on of those complexities is raised by Jan Krogh, in his reference to the Lillevoid statement, where he says, inter alia, that no metallic colour was mentioned, that the distance was 50-60 metres, and so on. Here by contrast, is his first-person statement as given to Arne Thomasson of UFO-Norge: "...I saw an egg-shaped or an oblong object above a telephone line about 30 metres from my house. It was a metallic centre, with an orange bright light among. It was a soft wool-field around the thing, which I am sure I could put my fingers on, it was something I could compare to a physical object. I am sure it was made of metal."

I am not discounting the possibility that the witness may have changed his estimate, or that something may have been lost in the translation. But clearly the situation is, as Jan truly says, a complicated one, and no one person or organisation has a monopoly of the truth. I hope that NIVFO and UFO-Norge can between them enlighten the rest of the world about what is, unquestionably, the most promising of current cases, if only for the reason that it is so persistent.

Yours sincerely

Hilary Evans, London SE3

Dear John,

Peter Rogerson, in his review of the atrocious Brandon compilation in my favourite journal honours me by including me in the company of such luminaries as Richet, Schrenck and Zorab (even if he comes a cropper over some of the names).

Meanwhile we live and learn: I never realised that I was a member of a fraternity of 'vehement materialists'; I was even vainly hoping that I was free of all vehemence.

As to the so-called 'Miroir-faces' (properly speaking only one) even my hypercritical friend Dingwall had to concede that the evidence shows that it was NOT a cut-out from the French magazine. Things are never that easy. Schrenck-Notzing's refutation is found in a rare pamphlet entitled *Der Kampf um die Materialisationsphaenomene* (Munich 1914) which not even the learned (and much maligned) Dr. Inglis is acquainted with, judging by his latest offering.

As to the Jenkins book, it got a good review from Dr. Dingwall in the SPR journal.

Yours sincerely

Manfred Cassirer, London NW6.

My apologies for the mis-spelling of Zorab's name - only those who have tangled with Peter Rogerson's automatic writing will know the problems an Editor faces. J.R.

Dear Editor,

Having read your editorial in *Magonia* 15 in which you express concern over the paranoid direction of FSR, I must add my comments in full agreement with you. When Charles Bowen stood down as FSR's editor through ill-health, I wrote of the forthcoming problems that Gordon Creighton's instatement could bring. This I did in *Probe Report*, vol. 3, no. 4, (April 1983), using, as you, the editorial. Since then my fears have been more than realised, and even I did not foresee the depths to which

FSR would be taken. It has declined to a journal primarily dedicated to Creighton's obsession with conspiracies and cover-ups. The political comments that he often squeezes in are also unnecessary and often unwelcome. The fact of the matter is, FSR can no longer be regarded as a serious UFO journal (a state that has been realised since last summer), and the responsibility of being Britain's leading independent serious UFO journal indeed rests with *Magonia*.

However, bearing in mind that particular responsibility, I think it vital that readers should be able to read what you print. My copy of issue 15 contained some of the worst reproduction quality yet, and parts of pages 6, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19 and 20 were near illegible. No doubt there are simple reasons, but it is a pity when one is unable to appreciate the obviously sensible and serious literature being published by *Magonia*.

Yours faithfully

Ian Mrzyglod, Ashton, Bristol.

We are only too aware of the poor quality of printing in the last issue of Magonia. Our last two printers have either closed down or put up their costs prohibitively, and we were forced to cast around for anyone who could come up with the work quickly - with the result you have seen. We hope that these problems have now been settled, and the present issue is of a better standard. J.R.

Dear Magonia,

I never thought I would catch myself in the act, but I must congratulate Hilary Evans on his informative and sensible report on Hessdalen in *Magonia* 14. Indeed, it was one of the most balanced items I've seen in the magazine for some time. There is far too much sociological theorising in some quarters of British ufology in my opinion. [Who could he be thinking of? - Ed.] In fact the sociologists have taken over from the ETHers as the dogmatists. The ability to think through problems, to read theories carefully and to be free from their own psychological impulses seems to elude the sociologists just as surely as it did the ETHers.

Evans actually touches on a vital factor - the psychic element. I'll be exploring this in an earth lights context more fully in my next book - with Nigel Pennick - out in spring 1985. But just to touch on it briefly here: Rutledge stated that he and his team "interacted with the phenomenon under study". In at least some cases he felt there was a telepathic response by the aerial lights to team members; and in other cases response by the lights to words and small

motor movements, which could easily be related to thought processes.

As a gamble I asked members of the Hessdalen team if they too had noticed such responses by their lights. They were surprised I had asked such a question, but yes, they had clearly registered such behaviour (it's not the sort of thing one makes too much report of in general accounts of such work... it is a little embarrassing...).

So in perhaps the two best field studies of UFO activity we have had a similar observation. I hope the toytown science of the sociologists doesn't prevent observation of this important factor.

My own feeling is that what is being witnessed is what I have already outlined in *Earth Lights* - a symbiosis between mind (witness) and phenomenon (aerial light form). In other words, that the energy making up the aerial light is consciousness-responsive. That is where Evans's 'manifestations of intelligence' originate.

However, I also think this symbiosis is more complex, and here I take note of Persinger's ideas (I have read his manuscript, and agree with Evans as to its importance). I think that whatever the concatenations of energy are that go into the manifestation of one of these aerial lights, they can also trigger events in the brains of suitably susceptible local inhabitants: the intercourse between light and witness might be a two-way affair.

If this is so, a pattern ufologists should be looking for is whether 'window areas' can provide evidence of psychic crisis in one or more individuals synchronous with the manifestations of lights. I think the pattern is there. Egryn had its Mary Jones; Dyfed has its poltergeist-infested Ripperston family. I asked about this also from the Hessdalen investigators. Yes, they replied again, although there is only a scattered population they knew of three individuals or families exhibiting signs of psychic crisis. Let us look at this pattern more closely, shall we?

As for the sociological factors, these are undoubted, and if detractors would study the earth lights work more carefully they would see that psycho-sociological considerations form a plank of the theory. What my colleagues and I have been trying to get across through the conceptual brick wall erected by the sociologists is that we feel that the core UFO (i.e. a genuine atmospheric phenomenon) is the flypaper onto which the sociological fly has become stuck. In the past flypapers have included religion, spiritualism, psychic research, etc.

For sociologists to claim that the flypaper isn't there is where their subjective dogmatism begins to show. For some reason certain sociologically inclined researchers have felt their corner being threatened by the geological theory. Physical and sociological approaches to serious ufology are not mutually exclusive, indeed they are interdependent. One without the other cannot explain the full range of the evidence. Can we all understand that once and for all, and start working together?

As for Evans's point about the physical nature of the phenomenon at Hessdalen requiring more explanation than that given in the earth lights thesis to date - of course! All the resources of science have not yet managed to define the nature of earthquake lights or ball lightning yet. How can anyone expect researchers like me, with infinitely more limited time, money and personnel pop up with the whole answer after a few years?

What we can say is this: no physical theory encompasses the problem of UFOs more satisfactorily than a geological connection. We do not know the full ramifications - yet - of that connection. But we do know that rocks produce light in a variety of circumstances. We do know that such an effect occurs in nature (earthquake lights and mountain peak discharge). We do have strong evidence that faulting enhances the incidence of aerial lights.

There is a very important point to make here: the earth lights theory does not say faults cause UFOs, but rather that these are locations where rocks are most prone to yielding their luminescence effects. Where we have sufficient ufological and geological data the connections have been so strong only the intellectually dishonest can dismiss them.

The earth lights thesis is a starting point - the best we have ever had. If we get down to work it may lead us into some surprising revelations.

The earth lights approach deals with the possibility of real phenomena - the UFOs themselves. The psychosociological approach deals with ufology. They are not the same thing and they are not mutually exclusive.

Yours sincerely

Paul Devereux, Powys, Wales.

It seems to me that in his criticism of the attitudes of 'sociological' ufologists, Paul Devereux is setting up a straw man which he proceeds to demolish; although it is encouraging to note that he agrees that neither physical nor sociological theories

explain the whole phenomenon. I do not think that any of the ufologists who have become identified with the psycho-sociological hypotheses are particularly hostile to the idea of some form of geophysical phenomenon which has been interpreted by witnesses in UFO terms. Most of the criticism which met Earthlights on publication came from those who felt that this idea had been insufficiently demonstrated in the book, and particularly from those who had very considerable doubts about the validity of the sample and analysis of UFO reports on which much of the author's argument depended.

If, in his forthcoming book with Nigel Pennick, Paul is able to produce evidence which will refute the criticisms made, then psycho-sociological ufologists will rejoice. What the reaction of the ETHers will be, I am unable to vouchsafe.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a UFO investigator of several years.

For the past two years or so I have been in telepathic communication with two civilisations outside Planet Earth. Recently I was asked to contact ALL UFO groups operating on Earth and to inform them that if they are sincere in their beliefs, then the best way to obtain information about Beings on other Worlds and UFOs, is to practice Telepathy, in other words mind to mind exchange of thought patterns.

This is a simple process and the only requirements are Silence, Complete Relaxation and Sincerity. Most, if not ALL People on other Planets are Telepathic, and your thought patterns can be picked up at any time no matter where you are, or whom you are.

I have found the following procedure very effective:- Sit comfortably, do not cross your arms or legs. Allow your whole body to relax. Completely clear your mind of ALL material thoughts, then mentally ask if you may be of service.

Be patient and DO NOT BE AFRAID as this will produce a barrier, and no communication will be possible. Do not expect instant contact, then if you do it will be a pleasant surprise. If you do not, then persevere and eventually you will make contact. A period of a few minutes should be sufficient. As for myself, I can modestly say that I am receiving and transmitting even if I am doing something else and, that which I can do, you also can.

Should you make contact you may find that you may receive mental pictures as well as word thought patterns. This,

Continued on page 7

TRACING THE TRACES

Maurizio Verga presents some preliminary notes on a study of physical traces in association with UFO events.

Traces (i.e. imprints, marks and residues on the ground and/or vegetation) ought to provide physical proof of a tangible phenomenon interacting with our reality. Indeed, it is probably the one aspect of UFO study - with the possible exception of photographs - which has enabled the ufologist to refute an interpretation in purely psychological terms; for traces imply that the phenomenon is not something perceived subjectively, belonging only to the senses of the witness, but truly something with physical attributes.

This physical 'proof' has been put forward by the 'extraterrestrialists' as support for their contention that material UFOs - "spacecraft" - exist. The ETH is plainly on the decline, and its proponents rely heavily on physical trace evidence to keep its tenets alive.

Physical traces are often a very difficult problem for any conceptual theory. We have had, for example, the proposition of an 'interdimensional entity', able to assume physical characteristics; and the adoption of paranormal phenomena such as poltergeists and psychokinesis to explain the mechanics of trace creation. It is almost impossible to consider the phenomenon in terms of a hypothesis without taking account of the physical trace evidence.

Trace evidence is one of many aspects of the phenomenon with a clearly contradictory nature. These contradictions may be used as a basis to propose a multiple origin for the phenomenon; that is, several different manifestations as a specific function of specific conditions. It is enough in this context to consider those cases where a UFO is seen on the ground, and yet apparently leaves no traces - in practice certain UFOs leave

physical traces, others do not. Even when we bear in mind that we are always dealing with witness accounts, often poorly investigated and without recourse to the psychology or perception of the event, it would still seem that the phenomenon (if objective) does not display strict or consistent criteria. On the contrary, its criteria are highly changeable, probably because of a completely unknown 'something', which may well be linked to the individual characteristics of the witness.

Of course, if UFOs did have an entirely subjective origin, then the problem would immediately take on a new dimension. Apart from traces which were outright hoaxes, the remainder would presumably be made unconsciously, and absence of traces would be explicable in terms of witnesses inability to manufacture them, perhaps because unconsciously he is unaware of his need to give evidence of his subjective experience. This hypothesis is admittedly improbable, although the belief that UFOs do produce traces is deeply rooted in the popular belief.

We can question the opinion that traces provide proof of the material nature of the ufo phenomenon in two ways: firstly by considering natural phenomena capable of producing traces, secondly by considering the facts and figures, as well as the standards of practice, of present day field investigations.

In nature there are several causes able to produce remarkably strange trace marks under certain circumstances. These include fungi, plant and grass diseases, lightning, animal habits, whirlwinds and other weather conditions, helicopter slipstreams, defoliation and so on. Furthermore the action of man on the environment can also result in ambiguous traces - cars, carts, agricultural equipment, fires, etc. Discovering such a trace after a local UFO sighting can easily lead to their connection with 'alien activity'. Even in situations where no UFO was seen, the appearance of a trace, especially when circular, can reawaken distant memories in the collective conscious of stereotyped flying saucers and their alleged effects.

Both material (e.g. notoriety) and psychological (stimulation by a flap in the vicinity) factors may come into play. The existence of concrete evidence tends to make any case more credible, no matter how spurious it may in fact be. Traces often are unusual, even if quite explicable. The cultural belief systems and possibly emotional states can soon lead to the creation of abstract hypotheses and speculation, even on the basis of naturally or artificially produced explicable phenomena.

These points are critical, and must be carefully borne in mind. The discovery of a

'trace' tends to set the witness thinking in terms of a UFO; and of course, if there is a type-1 sighting at the root of the discovery, he will often go to the area where he saw the UFO (either on the ground or low down) with a view to finding evidence of the reality of the experience. This is not only to convince others, but often to prove it to himself. This intense desire to find proof can easily lead him to discovering a myriad of insignificant anomalies - a broken branch, animal tracks, the remains of a fire) and relate them to the UFO. This is a typical scenario for a UFO seen in the distance, where often the exact location of the landing or near-landing is not known. Less common is the deliberate false linking of spurious traces with a 'genuine' UFO in order to make the sighting more believable. Even so, in my view this latter scenario is quite feasible for many rational people who would not otherwise behave in this fashion.

The above possibilities must be taken very seriously when investigators do not follow up the 'traces', but merely rely on the word of the witness. When investigators do visit the site we should then expect them to validate or invalidate the traces. But the reality of the matter is often rather different.

Unfortunately, an investigator is usually on the same level as the witness, having the same unconscious needs and beliefs. He is usually unprepared in terms of scientific methodology. He may well have a strong desire to present a 'classic case' to his colleagues, or have a belief system which includes the material reality of the UFO phenomenon, thus anticipating trace evidence. All of these can lead to frequent and serious errors, if the investigator attempts to support his 'ambitions' and 'needs'.

Obviously there are some truly strange and apparently unidentifiable traces, but their percentage is fairly low - even if it cannot be termed negligible. In any case, a number of doubts must remain. Natural phenomena or human activity could precipitate apparently inexplicable traces. If the circumstance is rare enough the possibility of identification is close to impossible, except in a few luck cases. However, these possibilities are too important to overlook. The much extolled 'physical evidence' is based on a small number of baffling cases, and of these only a fraction (perhaps 25%) are investigated in sufficient depth. Most 'incontestable proof' actually stems from newspaper articles or nothing more substantial than the witness's say-so.

In other words, what we term the 'trace phenomenon' is but a small residue of well-investigated reports; about 3.6% of the total volume of reports according to data

passed to me by Ted Phillips (Phillips's TRACAT, an international catalogue of trace cases, actually now having more than 2100 entries).

We must also not forget the outright hoax. Such frauds may be perpetrated for many reasons: financial, psychological, advertising, or merely as a joke. The number of trace cases determined to be hoaxes is actually quite remarkable, although not excessive - perhaps as a result of the inherent difficulty of proving a hoax. Some 'mysterious' substance placed at the sight, coupled with a good recitation of a fabricated tale, and the gullibility of ufologists and journalists can produce but one result... fake evidence presented as proof of an alien technology. Only the exceptionally skilled or rational investigator (often with the aid of Lady Luck) can rescue the situation at a later date... but this certainly does not happen in many cases.

I believe that I have discovered two fundamental aspects of the traces question, giving us much cause to rethink our attitude towards it:

1. The explanation of most trace reports is to be found in terms of both natural and artificial origins. The range of these is so broad that their identification is often next to impossible.

2. It is impossible to accept some investigation reports as a basis for scientific data. Investigators too often are guilty of extreme subjectivity and emotional involvement. This makes identification of traces very difficult. Not being at the site oneself, one can only assign 'possible' or 'probable' identifications, which is to the detriment of serious research, although UFO fanatics can easily turn it to their advantage by distorting the true situation.

This means that practically all of the so-called trace data is useless in terms of scientific evaluation. We are left with a residue that seems to be small, but not negligible; this seems to show the apparent physical reality of a seemingly unknown phenomenon (although unknown most certainly does not mean alien). But even so we must realise that the best of our investigation and research does not allow strict scientific determinations to be made. We can never totally exclude rare natural explanations. My future research will base itself upon this selected sample of high-strangeness reports - the apparently unknown residue. This is essential if one is to study the subject scientifically.

The conclusion I must reach is this: we cannot be certain that the UFO phenom-



THE MYTH OF THE AUTHORISED MYTH

Hilary Evans queries the role of the UFO as an 'authorised myth' of the age of science.

BY 'authorised myth' we understand a belief or set of beliefs which, despite inadequate scientific evidence for its existence, obtains the sanction of widespread acceptance within the prevailing culture. In unsophisticated Catholic communities it may be the prospect of a visit from the Virgin Mary, for the tribespeople of New Guinea an aeroplane bringing cargo, for an ascetic saint in the desert a tempting demon; and so forth.

The most widely accepted of contemporary myths - as evidence such reliable indicators of prevailing cultural beliefs as TV commercials - is the possibility of extraterrestrial intervention on Earth. This comes in two forms. The simple form, authorised by our own space ventures, envisages surveillance and even visits by extraterrestrial spacecraft. The more elaborate form, authorised by the failure of orthodox religion to provide a convincing basis for belief, envisages direct contact with cosmic guardians.

The role of the authorised myth in ufology

It was Michel Monnerie who explicitly specified the authorised myth as a rational explan-

ation has a physical basis. It is naturally difficult to accept this conclusion; but if we wish to develop a serious field of research then we must learn to accept the destruction of deep-rooted dogmas and common illusions. We need courage to re-think our basics, and understand what is wrong with them. Above all, we must search for understanding and not cling to belief. \$\$\$

ation for irrational UFO reports. He proposed that the sighting of an inexplicable object induces the witness, conditioned by the prevailing myth, to exclaim Mon Dieu, perhaps it's one of those UFO things? and this triggers a waking dream in which his mind constructs a fantasy in which the external sensory stimulus is modified in accordance with the fashionable myth.

Monnerie's proposals came at a time when some such hypothesis was needed. A few diehards continued to see UFO sightings as a wholly objective phenomenon - subject to misinterpretation, no doubt, but not to unconscious mental modification. But a growing number of ufologists were ready to accept that the mind of the witness plays a more creative role in the sighting experience, and were consequently disposed to entertain a hypothesis which linked an objective stimulus to a subjective psychological process. Monnerie offered just such a hypothesis.

"Force est de conclure," he said, "que le fond émane des thèmes universels, des archétypes fondamentaux d l'humanité, tandis que la forme est donnée par les acquis inconscients de chacun des sujets, l'ensemble se développant dans le mythe modern, credible, acceptable." [Naufrage, 215] (We must conclude that the basis of the sighting derives from the universal themes, the fundamental archetypes of mankind, while the form is supplied by the contents of the subject's unconscious, the two forming an ensemble which develops within the parameters of the modern myth, credible and acceptable.)

How tempting to nod our heads and murmur, But of course! We know all about archetypes, they have all the blessing of holy writ. We know too about private fantasy and how it can substitute for reality. These are known psychological concepts, it is reasonable to find them operating in the UFO context. All we have to do is say Oui, M. Monnerie, tu as raison...

And there is a wonderful bonus. Subscribe to my hypothesis, says the tempter, and you can give up ufology with a clear conscience and go back to being a normal person. For says he, "il devient parfaitement clair qu'on ne peut, à partir d'une construction illusoire de l'esprit, bâtir une science, l'ufologie, digne de ce nom." [Naufrage, 56] (It's obvious that a science of ufology worthy of the name cannot be built on a foundation of mental illusions)

I shall resist the temptation to argue Monnerie's logic, beyond questioning his assertion that fantasy is not susceptible to scientific analysis. What concerns us is whether his neat package is really valid?

According to him, a UFO report comprises two elements. First, the basic form, dictated by an archetype of some description. This is no place to discuss the whole notion of archetypes, so I will simply state my opinion that Jung's concept, however stimulating, has in practical terms only very limited application. True, many UFO sightings can be matched with his archetypes - spheres, eggs, discs, etc. But not every sphere-shaped object is to be interpreted as an archetype: a football is round for physical, not metaphysical, reasons, because it is the ideal shape for kicking and rolling, not because it echos something deep within our psyches.

Well, however he establishes its basic form, the UFO witness - according to Monneries - proceeds to modify it according to the contents of his unconscious mind. It could well be so. But he then goes on to say that these modifications are dictated by the modern myth, credible and acceptable.

Well now, are they?

If a myth is to have a meaning, it must have coherence. If this myth of extraterrestrial spacecraft is to mean anything, then the objects reported should be more or less like what people accept extraterrestrial spacecraft to look like. But if there is one aspect of ufology more than another which drives us all to despair, it is the reluctance of one UFO to resemble another, and for more than a handful to look anything like what we would expect an extraterrestrial spacecraft to look like. True, the reality - if there is any - is liable to transcend our expectations; but it is with those expectations that Monneries's myth is concerned. And the fact is that for every logically shaped UFO there is one that is a shapeless jelly, or a Christmas tree, or a wingless, or a transparent box like a TV screen - you name it, somebody's seen it.

The shapeless jelly may be, indeed, what an extraterrestrial spacecraft looks like; it may be what the extraterrestrials choose for us to see; or it may derive from deep down in the witness's unconscious. But neither way, I submit, does it derive from any authorised myth.

To explain why a witness sees a strange object and immediately starts thinking in terms of UFOs, the concept of the authorised myth may be useful. But when it comes to understanding why the sighting experience took the form it does, the concept is quite inadequate, and we must look elsewhere.

References: MONNERIE, Michel. *Et si les OVNI's n'existaient pas?*, Les Humanoides Associes, Paris 1977. *Le naufrage des Extraterrestres*, Nouvelles Editions rationalistes, Paris 1979.

FLYING A COUPLE OF KITES

John Rimmer

Recently we have had a number of readers ask about publication of the INTCAT catalogue of Type I [Vallee] reports. As mentioned in a reply to a letter in the last issue, the publication of regular extracts was suspended as from *Magonia* 9, largely because of pressure on space.

INTCAT represents a massive investment of time and energy by its compiler Peter Rogerson, and is a potentially invaluable reference tool for ufologists. Its many thousands of entries cover cases from 1880 to 1980, and are all in the form of fully referenced narrative summaries rather than the coded entries which have figured in most other catalogues.

At *Magonia* we are anxious that Peter's work should not go unappreciated, and are considering publication of at least part of the catalogue in book form. We have been in contact with a firm specialising in short-run book printing, and it would certainly seem to be a financially viable proposition to publish the catalogue as a series of paperback volumes, given sales of 150 - 200, each volume.

It seems a logical plan to start at the beginning, especially as a volume of pre-1947 close encounter cases would probably have most of interest for the general ufological reader.

It would be difficult to give, at this stage, any precise indication as to price, but we would anticipate that this would be pretty much in the region of the average 'trade' (i.e. larger format) paperback: in the region of £5 for a fairly substantial book.

All this depends on support, and although we hope that some of the potential

buyers will be institutional in nature, it is on the individual ufologist - you - that we will depend to get this project moving. We would like to have some idea how many of our readers, their colleagues and fellow researchers would be interested in buying a copy of *INTCAT*, Volume I. How many would be prepared to put a fiver up-front to give us some financial backing (bearing in mind this would be no great investment and publication would be a year off, at least)? We would like to reintroduce the rather civilised old eighteenth century idea, and print a list of 'subscribers' in the book.

Please let us know your views (pro and con), and if things start to look promising we'll keep our readers informed.

Now another kite. Concern grows over the abdication of *FSR* as Britain's leading UFO journal. I'm not talking now about the barmy views of its editor, but its apparent refusal to print serious case studies of UFO investigations in this country and elsewhere.

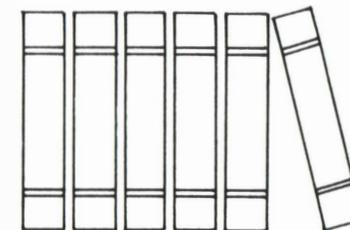
The number of outlets for new case-reports is becoming increasingly limited, even more so now that *Probe Report* has ceased publication. *NUFON News* reports cases from the north of England, but generally summaries only, and the *BUFORA* magazines have to make room for individual reports as best they can amongst theoretical articles, association news, etc. *Magonia* has also been largely a theoretical journal, only carrying reports on a limited number of special cases.

There seems to be the need for a ufological 'journal of record'. We have been toying with the idea of reintroducing *MUFOB* - but this time as *Magonia UFO Bulletin*, a case-histories supplement to *Magonia*. Of necessity, initially at least, this would have to be on a modest scale, perhaps a 16 - 20 page supplement appearing with, or alternating with, *Magonia*.

This is just a thought, and it begs a lot of questions. Is such a publication really needed? Are case reports adequately dealt with by the existing journals? Is a *Magonia* supplement the right medium for this, or is someone else ready to take the initiative? Whither *FSR*?

Once again, we ask your views. It seems that UFO publishing in the U.K. is in the melting pot; old faces are dead or fading away. What, if anything, should be replacing them? Now would seem a good time to open a debate on these questions.

But in any debate on these topics, there is always one uncomfortable question that won't go away: where's the money coming from?



BOOKS

As a service to readers we will be starting in the next issue of *Magonia* a 'Books Wanted' column, which will be free to subscribers.

If you have been looking for a particular book, without success, send us the details and we will list it in the magazine. Advertisers may either quote a price they would be prepared to pay, or ask any potential sellers to name their price (in either case, don't forget postage costs). You may either give your full address in the advertisement, or we will arrange a 'box number' and forward replies (we will make a nominal charge to cover postage, etc.). The books concerned should relate to the type of topics dealt with in *Magonia*, although we will not interpret this too narrowly.

For the moment, this will be just a 'books wanted' column; depending how it develops we shall look at the possibility of a book exchange service. Books for sale advertisements are always welcome, but these have to be paid for at our standard advertising rates.

CERULLO, John J. *The Secularization of the Soul: psychical research in modern Britain*. Institute for the Study of Human Issues, Philadelphia. 1982.

Despite the subtitle this book deals with the intellectual development of spiritualism and psychic research up to 1900, where they are treated as attempts to preserve 'the soul' in an increasingly secular society. Under the influence of the 'Cambridge Group' around Henry Sidgwick and F W H Myers, the SPR developed a separate, more this-worldly ideology than the spiritualists.

Cerullo describes this ideology, epitomised by Myers' concept of the 'sublimated self' as the 'secular soul'. 'Soul' because it posed a mysterious 'other' aspect of the human per-

sonality, 'secular' because it operated in this world. Unfortunately in order to develop this point, Cerullo has to drastically reduce the central role which the concept of post-mortem survival had for Myers, especially.

In many ways his rhapsodic writings were more 'other-worldly' than the materialistic visions of heaven (complete with whisky and sodas and the English class system) which many Spiritualists had to offer. This concept of 'secular soul' is more applicable to the views developed by Rhine and his circle, than to these early years.

Examining the biographies of six lay members of the SPR, Cerullo detects a connecting thread linking their disparate careers - that of the lone individual in battle against bureaucratized 'mass society'. This is certainly a theme which is apparent in the writing of some later members, G W M Tyrell, for example.

In the concluding chapter he argues that the 'secular soul' lost out to the new Freudian unconscious, which with its concepts of 'sublimation' and 'reality principle' could function to suppress dissent. P.R.

FOWLER, Raymond E. Casebook of a UFO investigator. Prentice-Hall, 1981. £5.05, UK.

This is a rather middle-of-the-road UFO book, with neither conspicuous merits or demerits. Much of the material is very well-worn, and one wishes that Fowler, who is obviously a very active investigator, had discussed rather more later cases. Instead of rehashing Exeter yet again. It is a pity that the author wastes so much space on alleged government cover-ups and crashed saucer rumours. P.R.

KLASS, Philip J. UFOs; the public deceived. Prometheus Books, 1983.

Philip Klass delivers sceptical counter-blasts against various UFO cases, with differing degrees of success. He quite effectively demolishes stories of the fabulous hoard of ufological secrets held by the CIA. In a fit of pique after they got taken to court by Ground Saucer Watch, the CIA released a veritable mountain of trivial bumph onto ufologists. This did not deter the ufologist from seeking a missing 200 pages, wherein, they hope, the 'secret' may be found. Klass argues, quite reasonably, that some of these documents may contain genuinely sensitive information about the location of radar and communications centres.

The 'phantom helicopter' which plagued several strategic Air Command bases in November 1975, and the notorious 1976 Iran

case are given quite convincing explanations in terms of misperceived planets.

But as the book progresses, the explanations tend to run thin, and the cry 'hoax' is raised rather too often. In the case of Travis Walton, or the Delphos Ring, this accusation doesn't seem too unrealistic. But in the case of Deputy Val Johnson, no evidence for such a conclusion is presented (other than stress) and the refusal of Johnson to take the notoriously unreliable polygraph test.

The other cases dealt with at length include the Coyne helicopter case and the New Zealand film.

A great deal of space is devoted to the Walton case, with rather inconclusive results. There is no doubt that Klass has seriously damaged the credibility of the case, but has not rebutted some of the counter charges made against him or GSW by APRO.

Though Klass affects a superior, scientific attitude to ufologists, he betrays a marked predilection for show-biz and grand but meaningless challenges. His closing chapters reveal less the voice of the unbiased researcher and more that of the evangelist for rationalism. This, along with his tendency to take comments out of context to make people look ridiculous, tends to detract from the many serious points he makes in his study of individual cases. P.R.

KERR, Howard, and CROW, Charles L. (Editors) The Occult in America: New Historical Perspectives. University of Illinois Press, 1983.

Ten essays on a wide range of topics, ranging from the Salem witchcraft outbreak to flying saucers. They testify to the growing academic interest in areas formerly dismissed as nonsense.

Several of the chapters are primarily of interest to students of American cultural history, but others are of more general interest. Robert Galbraith in 'Explaining Modern Occultism' is severely critical of flight-from-reason styles of explanation for contemporary interest in occultism, and suggests a great degree of historical continuity.

Larry Davidson's 'Paranormal Memorates in the American Vernacular', despite its formidable title, is an extremely valuable study of the literary rules of the 'true personal experience' ghost story. He warns that parapsychologists have paid insufficient heed to these, and to the transformations which take place in a tale with repeated telling.

David Jacob's 'UFOs and the Search for Scientific Legitimacy' (the concluding

chapter) shows how 'legitimate' ufologists sought to create an acceptable face for ufology to present to the scientific community yet were unable to stem the tide of growing 'strangeness' within the reports. The failure to gain scientific credibility, and the fact that the phenomenon had grown so strange in the 1970's that it had moved beyond rational control, inspired ufologists to seek new theories so that they could experience "a renewed sense of intellectual achievement".

Attempts to obtain physical data failed and led to an increased reliance on subjectivity: "By the 1980's UFO proponents were divided and confused. Older theories had failed to explain the totality of UFOs; no newer theories had evolved to solve the enigma, and the subject had taken on occult qualities that helped prevent scientific explanation. Thus UFOs seemed as shrouded in mystery as ever..."

Jacobs, however, does not properly address the facts that the 'ETH' presented by 'scientific' ufologists was really above the comic-book level until the mid 1980's, and that the moment serious intellectual effort was applied to the idea of 'extraterrestrial intelligence' (by Aime Michel and others), it rapidly became apparent that it was the sort of 'explanation' which simultaneously explained everything and nothing.

The ufologists could never see that by its very nature, science was a 'game' which played to certain rules, one of the most important of which rules out the 'arbitrary will's' of superhuman forces as an explanation for physical events.

This was also the central failure of spiritualism. Its attempts to marry scientism with essentially religious concerns were doomed from the start, inviting accusations of occultism from one side and materialism from the other.

Several of the contributors point out the progressive nature of Jackson Davis's philosophical spiritualism and his radical critique of Victorian society. In some respects we should perhaps see spiritualism and related nineteenth century religious ideas as the last attempts to analyse the human condition in religious terms before the coming of such secular ideologies as those of Marx and Freud.

However, as Mary Farrell Bednarowski's essay 'Women in Occult America' shows, 'religious' critiques of society still have an audience, as exemplified by the feminist 'Wicca' and its rejection of 'male' scientific and objective perception.

Though hampered by the essay format, which sometimes prevents authors from really developing their arguments, this is a valuable and stimulating book. P.R.

UNDERWOOD, Peter. No Common Task; the autobiography of a ghost-hunter. Harrap, 1983. £8.50

More concerned with name-dropping than ghosts! P.R.

EVANS, Grant. The Yellow Rain Makers; are chemical weapons being used in South East Asia? Verso, 1983. £5.95.

Since the collapse of the pro-US regimes in Indo-China in 1975, Vietnamese troops have been involved in warfare against the Hmong mountain tribespeople of Laos. Allegations of the use of chemical weapons have been made by the Hmong refugees, and taken seriously by US authorities. This book is a detailed critique of these reports; the author argues that they contain many dubious and absurd features, and that they stem partly from the role played by belief in witchcraft and secret poisons in Hmong culture. (Thus, similar equally dubious tales of mass-poisoning by US forces were current in the early 70's)

At one point the author makes a passing analogy with UFO reports. The analogy is certainly worth pursuing. The Hmong reports, like UFO reports, can be seen as a social panic centring round tales of mysterious aircraft that allegedly leave physical evidence and after-effects on witnesses.

The US Government agencies that have disseminated such stories seem to have played a role similar to that of many UFO groups. They have been over-confident in the reliability of 'eye-witness' evidence, and ignored the fact that different accounts are contradictory in many details. The physical evidence they rely on is at best ambiguous (some 'chemical warfare' traces have been shown to be bee excrement, and the 'poisoning' symptoms are identical to those of diseases endemic to South East Asia).

Since the author is a sociologist, it is rather surprising that he has little to say about the prevalence of 'mass-poisoning' panics, since a look at some of these would have further strengthened his argument. The alleged 'poisoning' of Arab children in the Israeli occupied West Bank no doubt came too late to be included, but readers of *Fortean Times* will recall several similar cases from Britain.

Ultimately this book leaves one wondering about the social construction of knowledge. For many belief or even interest in UFOs is still the sign of the 'crackpot'. However, chemical warfare stories, based on no better evidence than many UFO stories have found their way unchanged into major newspapers and have been used as justification for the current arms race that may yet culminate

in a manner too fearful to contemplate. Perhaps those writers on the Sceptical Enquirer who believe that uncritical acceptance of paranormal claims will lead to a new dark-age should be looking sceptically in other directions.

R.S.

COON, Robert. Elliptical Navigations through the Multitudinous Aethyrs of Avalon. Excalibur Press, 1984.

This is indubitably the work of a Master who has harnessed the phoenix power of the Hierarchy. Only those who have made intensive practical study of the esoteric tradition of the Harwood Grimoire will appreciate the full significance of the author's achievement - recognising a kindred soul they will marvel.

Coon has understood more fully than most the importance of the harnessing of the dramatic symbolism of the phoenix power of the true Zodiac. The hyperstructural realism of this approach consists in utilising the essential tension between being and not-being. The Polynesian metaphysical concept of 'tepu' is perhaps the only way we can comprehend what is involved, and it is to be understood that advanced Polynesian geomantic/zodiacal magican techniques contain a coral reef echo of the deep ocean mysticism of the protean Atlantan tradition of stellar evocation.

There is a buried tradition of geomantic wisdom, which initiates have preserved. The influence of this tradition/wisdom/magic on certain esoteric groups is much speculated upon, but the facts are known to few. Even fewer are aware of the direct influence of the English landscape on the American and French revolutions.

However, those who have examined, with authentic clarity, the great tradition of North-Western Masonic initiates from Hugh Brewer to A. G. Bennet (all undeniably Great Gatekeepers of Brigantia), have few doubts; and if truth were told behind many a provincial civic society there lies a High Priest of some Atlantean nomadic magic. But some truths are beyond telling.

Until Pooley and O'Malley's **Golden Griffins; alchemical secrets of the West London Zodiac** is published, **Elliptical Navigations** is likely to be the most potent evocation of Proto-Druidic mystery to be released to the uninitiated.

E.L.W.

RIMMER, John. The Evidence for Alien Abductions. Aquarian Press, 1984. £2.50

Of course, it could be one big hoax, the whole lot of them... But that's a paranoid idea, as cranky as what John Rimmer calls

the ETH (Extraterrestrial Hypothesis). No, I'll accept that there are hundreds of people who truly believe that they have been kidnapped by things from space. Whatever the facts, and whatever it means, this is itself a Phenomenon.

John Rimmer gets us quickly past the first hurdle of they're-all-liars-or-nuts, and on to the mind-stretching stuff beyond. His great virtue is to be sensible without being a wet blanket. The subject has the appeal of a detective story, and JR is a model detective.

He picks over the evidence, and find nothing conclusive: no telltale debris, no abandoned extraterrestrial lunch-box (although in one encounter a man is left holding a cold but earthly pancake!) He examines the witnesses, and finds them pretty ordinary - not suspiciously ordinary, just average - and sane. He lines up the pros and cons most scrupulously.

I must admit my own prejudice. If there really are superior intelligences out there, why don't they do something important? It's a bit like Uri Geller: who needs a force unknown to science to bend a teaspoon? The messages these aliens impart to their guests are about as exiting as that cold pancake.

For me the book takes off where it stays most firmly on this earth. JR points back to folk-tales of children stolen by fairies to a land where time stands still and they are fed the food of paradise: the same story without the space-age props. I remember the thrill of first hearing those tales. Where does that come from?

He points to the shamans of primitive tribes: again, intriguing correspondences. And, from a whole stable of psychological interpretations, he leads out the favourite: the Birth Trauma Hypothesis. Is it coincidence that these aliens so often have the features of the foetus? Is the spaceship a womb?

It's a seductive theory I'd like to credit, but... Life-before-birth is an area that has attracted other explorers. There is a whole school of therapeutic 're-birthing' that uses similar techniques of regression to those described in this book. And the 'memories' they find are different, strongly physical and difficult to put into words. The accounts of abductees sound more like an adult's eye-view of the womb - precisely because an eye-view is what they are.

Besides, it seems too neat. I don't want there to be a simple answer, whether ETH or BTH. I think these abductions are a fairy story. But don't get me wrong. Real fairy stories are important, rich and never quite explicable. They come from somewhere in as as mysterious as Alpha Centauri.

Philip Gross