

ABDUCTION AT BEBEDOURO

An investigation into an unusual incident hitherto reported only by radio and in newspapers.¹

Húlvio Brant Aleixo

A brief account of the interviews and examinations, including data supplied by third parties. Translation from the Portuguese by Gordon Creighton.

AT 7.25 a.m. on the morning of May 10, 1969, train No. NF-32, coming from Pedro Nolasco, Vitória, in the State of Espírito Santo, arrived at the Belo Horizonte station of the Central Brazil Line.

Sr. Geraldo Lopes da Silva, a railway security official, observed among the passengers descending from the coaches a young fellow who was poorly clad, with a stocking wound round his head, and carrying something wrapped in a cloth. It was precisely this package which had at first drawn his attention to the young man, because thefts of copper wire from the railway were frequent occurrences. Challenging him, the security man asked for his identity papers. "No, Chief, I haven't got any papers, because they were taken from me," he replied, "But I am a soldier." The security agent persisted in his enquiries and took the young man to one of the booking-halls, where he proceeded to examine the contents of his bundle. It contained fishing tackle, some food, and articles of clothing. Under pressure from the security agent, José Antônio da Silva said he had a story to tell, and identified himself as the orderly to Major Célio Ferreira, Deputy-Commandant of the Guards Battalion of the Military Police of Minas Gerais.

After hearing the story through several times, trying to find contradictions in it, the security agent finally accepted it, strange as it was. Then he called for a reporter from the Rádio Guarani local broadcasting station and, after a quick interview by the latter, the soldier was sent off to his barracks.

Major Célio Ferreira, struck by the extremely poor physical condition of the soldier, isolated him for 24 hours in his own home so that he could have food, rest, and medicine.

On the morning of Sunday, May 11, with great difficulty, the soldier made his way up the hill on which his home stands, to rejoin his family. They found him thin, burnt by the sun, bearded, and lame in one leg. His absence from home for almost a week had been worrying them, for José Antônio had never before been away from home so long without informing them. Major Célio Ferreira had indeed gone so far as to organize search-parties, on the day preceeding, to look for him.

On the night of Sunday May 11, CICOANI secured their first interview with José Antônio and, from then on, there followed a whole series of other interviews, without any significant variations being observed in either his account or in his behaviour.

A week after his return, a reconstitution of the

Date of the occurrence: From Sunday, May 4, to Friday, May 9, 1969.

Total Duration: From 3.00 p.m. on May 4 to 4.00 a.m. on May 9 (109 hours, or approximately 4½ days.)

Scene: 1. Point of departure: Bebedouro, a place on the banks of the Rio das Velhas, in the municipality of Matozinhos, 50 km., as the crow flies, from Belo Horizonte, State of Minas Gerais.

2. Point of arrival: at a place 32 kms. from Vitória, capital city of the State of Espírito Santo, and distance 360 kms., as the crow flies from Belo Horizonte.

Eyewitness: José Antônio da Silva, aged 24, unmarried, resident at rua Emídio Germano, Vila Pompéia, Belo Horizonte, an enlisted soldier, No.33930, in the Military Police of Minas Gerais, and orderly to Major Célio Ferreira, at that time Deputy-Commandant of the Guards Battalion of the said Military Police Force.

Investigators: Húlvio B. Aleixo; Alberto F. do Carmo; Heros C. Jardim; Roberto C. Aleixo; Maria Irene M. Neves; Dr. Walter Buhler, is President of SBEDV, Rio de Janeiro; Wanda M. Santos; Edson A. Moura, Luiz Romaniello, and other members of, or collaborators with, CICOANI and SBEDV.

Sketches: by Alberto Francisco do Carmo.

More than twenty interviews and investigations have been carried out, in various places, including Bebedouro. These interviews are still going on, sporadically, so that developments in the case may be followed through.

scene was enacted at the actual site of the occurrence at Bebedouro.

Abducted while fishing

On the evening of Saturday, May 3, 1969, José Antônio da Silva left his home to go fishing. At the

bus station in Belo Horizonte he caught a bus bound for Pedro Leopoldo. Before they reached the latter place, however, he got off, and walked along the Jaguara road to the place known as Bebedouro (formerly the old "Fazenda dos Ingleses"), in the municipal district of Matozinhos. At about midnight he reached the banks of a small lagoon, took his gear out of his cloth bundle, and with the cloth he set himself up a little tent. Then he went off to fish for a while before turning in to sleep.

At daybreak on Sunday, the 4th, José Antônio awoke, folded up his tent, and then began fishing again, but with no success. He stopped for a while at midday to make a meal off a tin of sardines, and then went back to his fishing.

At about 3.00 o'clock in the afternoon, looking away to one side, he was vaguely aware of figures moving about behind him, and the sound of voices. Then he heard a cry "seemingly like a groan coming from deep down in the chest" and he felt his legs struck by a "burst of fire" coming from the direction of a form that was partly hidden by bushes. Seized with cramp and a feeling of numbness in the legs, he automatically knelt down at the lakeside, dropping his fishing-rod.

"The burst looked like fire, but it wasn't, because it didn't burn my leg", he said. It was a beam of light, greenish in the middle and reddish at the edges, and fanning out slightly from its point of origin.

In a matter of seconds he found himself between two individuals in masks, who seized him under the armpits and dragged him off through the swampy thickets which they negotiated with great ease. With his knees scraping the ground, José Antônio gave up resisting as he thought of what would befall him if a further jet of light were to be fired at his head.

When they had gone only ten metres or so from the lake, he saw, in the long grass, a third individual who was identical with those accompanying him. This one made no move as they passed by, and remained behind. All three, he observed, were carrying a sort of weapon, but he thinks this third one was the one who had fired at him and had uttered the deep sound like a groan.

Description of his captors

José Antônio was dressed at the time merely in a pair of brief yellow leather shorts, with a big rosary tied round his waist and, on his head, a cap made from a woman's stocking, under another cap of black mesh.

The little fellows, as he noted, were about 1 metre 20 cms. in height and they were completely covered. Their bodies were clad in a shining, light-coloured garment, with articulated segments at the elbows and knees. Their heads were covered with masks² of a dull grey colour, "like dull aluminium." The masks were rounded at the back and squared off at the front with sharp edges, and were flattened all the way down from the forehead except at the level of the nose, where there was a corresponding projection. At the level of the eyes there were two round holes about two centimetres in diameter. The mask, seemingly rigid, descended wide on to the



Scale: 1 inch = 197 miles

Map of the Bebedouro Region

shoulders and was not connected to the clothing. From the lower part of the mask came a tube of material resembling plastic which, passing over the chest and under the armpit, ended in a small metal container affixed to the back of each little man.

The latter had human proportions, and were robust in relation to their small stature. Their legs seemed to be thick. José Antônio remarks: "I think I could have taken on two of them, if I had wanted to." At this stage in the affair he still felt more curiosity than fear.

A landed machine

As soon as he had gone past the third individual, he caught sight of a machine. They were carrying him towards it through the trees. It was standing, slightly inclined, on a small dirt road. It consisted of a vertical cylinder joined at the bases to two lenticular or flattened pieces, both of them having a diameter greater than that of the cylinder, and the upper one being wider than the lower one (See Fig.1). In order to describe this shape, José Antônio made use of a tumbler with its base set on a saucer and with a larger saucer, up-side-down, placed on top of its mouth. From the edges of the upper platform, at regular intervals, ran rods which were set obliquely into the base of the cylinder (and not into the rim of the lower platform). In the cylinder there was an opening resembling a door, some 1.30 x 0.60 metres in size. The external height of the machine was about two metres, the upper platform being about three metres in diameter and the lower platform, which rested on the ground, being some 2.5 metres in diameter. The cylinder was of a grey colour, and the two platforms were black.

Taken into the machine through the door, José Antônio found himself in a quadrangular compartment, each side being about two metres long and the height about the same. The walls, the ceiling and the



Fig. 1

Photograph of a coloured painting by Alberto Francisco do Carmo, based on the description given to him by Antonio da Silva of the craft in which he was kidnapped by humanoid creatures

floor was a dark grey, reminiscent of a stone surface and the seats, which had no legs, were of the same colour. Near the wall containing the door was the longer of the seats, on which his two companions and he took their places. In the centre of the room was the smaller seat, which later was to be taken by the third crew-member who was still outside.

The lighting in the compartment was intense, "of the mercury vapour type," but he was unable to detect any sources for the light,³ nor any openings or salient parts on the smooth surfaces.

When they had him seated in the centre of the hard bench, the two beings accompanying him placed on his head a helmet similar to the ones they were wearing, and to get it on him they pushed his head through an opening in the back of the helmet.⁴ This helmet likewise had a tube which led round towards his back but José Antônio was unable to see whether they fixed on him a container like the ones that the crew were wearing on their own backs. He agrees that this item may have been put on him across the seat, but he did not detect it.

The two crew members, seated one on each side of him, next fastened his feet, and then his waist, with a "dry", rough material. Then they made themselves fast, and at that point the third crew-member came in and sat down in front of him, on the single seat, and also fastened himself down.

At this stage José Antônio could only see out through the two holes in the heavy mask, the sharp edges of which were beginning to hurt his shoulders and the back of his neck.

The journey

As he sat there, facing the other three, the single crew-member who was on the small seat by himself, moved sideways a small lever set in the floor on his left. Immediately, José Antônio heard a

humming noise coming from the upper part of the machine and felt the sensation of taking off. Then, when the pilot operated a bigger lever which was above, to his right, the soldier heard a hum in the lower part of the machine, and had the impression that the machine was accelerating vertically.

Immediately after the take-off the strange beings began talking animatedly among themselves, glancing frequently at José Antônio, who of course understood not a word. In the incomprehensible language the phoneme *r* predominated at the end of many of the words, which were uttered in an arrogant fashion, in a deep, guttural tone.

The higher the machine seemed to rise, the more difficult did breathing seem for the soldier, and at one stage, in addition to his state of low morale, he felt as though his whole body was physically tired out, almost paralyzed. He felt more and more uncomfortable in this position, owing to the hardness and the shape of the seat, the numbness in his legs, and the weight of the helmet, the corners of which were bruising his shoulders and neck.

After a long period of travelling — to him it seemed interminable — he noticed that the light inside the cabin was growing stronger and was pulsating, and although he had the helmet on, he was forced to close his eyes. Then, after what seemed about an hour or so, he realized that the light was diminishing, and he was able to open his eyes again.

Then the journey continued, with no other features of note, until the machine seemed to rotate 90° on its lateral axis.⁵ To illustrate this manoeuvre, José Antônio took a tumbler, to represent the central cylinder of the machine, and laid it on its side. The seats adjusted themselves to this new position of the machine, "and seemed to have swung over themselves." Then, after another lengthy period, the machine and the seats reverted to the

normal positions. And finally, after yet another long period, the machine landed somewhere. "I felt the jarring sensation," says José Antônio.

At some unidentified place

The little men unfastened themselves and then the soldier. They put a band over the holes in his mask, so that now all he could do was hear. Up to now very talkative and seemingly cheerful, they fell quiet. They took him again by the armpits and carried him with his legs drawn up and his knees dragging on the ground.⁶ His legs were still numb, but José Antônio thinks that, had he tried, he would have been able to stand up at that stage. The little men were extremely strong for their small size.

As they carried him along, José Antônio, still in total darkness as the eyeholes in his helmet were covered, heard footsteps and the sound of many people talking. He wanted to look, and at this point even managed to feel cheerful. All the voices he could hear were speaking the same strange language of his companions, who now were silent. Some of the voices were deeper, and others less so. None of the voices however seemed to him to be feminine.

He felt them set him down on a backless seat. Then they removed the bandage from the holes in his helmet, but still left the helmet on him. Through the eyeholes he saw that he was in a very large quadrangular room, measuring some 10 to 15 metres on each wall. His attention was at once caught by the figure of a being who was standing in front of him, at a distance of about five metres, with his gaze riveted on him.

The 'Uranids' without their masks

This individual was a little taller (1.25 m.) than the rest, and also more robustly built. He was

wearing no helmet and no space-suit, and was eyeing José Antônio with apparent satisfaction. Meanwhile, his three captors were taking off their respective helmets, and were talking very animatedly with this new one whom José Antônio took to be their Chief. Like the others, he was extremely hairy. His long tresses, reddish and wavy, fell down behind past his shoulders to his waist; his beard was long and thick and came down to his stomach. He had wide-set eyebrows, two fingers thick, running right across almost the whole forehead. His skin was light-coloured, very pale. His eyes were round, larger than is the norm with us, and of a green shade like the colour of green leaves beginning to wither. The orbital cavities of his eyes were deep, the sclerotica was darker in colour than his skin, and his pupils were dark. His eyes scarcely ever blinked. José Antônio did not notice any eyelashes.

José Antônio says: "I started praying when I saw him. I thought I'd never come back."

The little man's nose, long and pointed, was "bigger than ours." His ears were bigger too. The lower part of the ears was the same as ours, but the upper parts were more rounded than ours. His mouth was wide, with some resemblance to ours, but, said José Antônio: "They looked like fishes' mouths."⁷ I didn't see a tooth in any of them. When they opened their mouths, I didn't see one."

The little chief, surrounded by the three companions who had brought José Antônio, seemed extremely happy, and gesticulated with his hands as he talked. Meanwhile, the soldier's fear was now beginning to abate, because the little fellow "seemed to be nice."

Meanwhile, José Antônio saw others, of identical appearance, arriving from behind him, until at one point there were as many as ten or twelve of the homuncules present, gathered around the one who



Fig. 2

Photograph of do Carmo's paintings of the small, red-bearded beings —

Left: appearance of the beings while wearing suit and helmet.

Right: appearance of the beings when seen without their helmets and suits.

seemed to be their leader. When they came into, or vanished from, José Antônio's limited field of vision, it was always from or to a point behind him, where he supposed there must be a door in the wall. However he did not see this wall, as his position and the helmet he was wearing did not permit. He was only able to see three of the walls of the room and the floor. He did not notice the ceiling, owing to his inclined position, with his legs extended. The seat he was on was very low.

Human corpses

José Antônio was astonished and terrified when he caught sight of a sort of low shelf, apparently of stone, on which the bodies of four men were stretched out, side by side. This was to one side of him and near the left side-wall of the room. The bodies were lying on their backs, naked — wearing no masks — and seemed dead, their eyes being closed, and they had the rigidity of corpses. One of them was dark-skinned, "indeed a Negro," and another was of a light-brown colour. Both seemed very well built. The other two bodies were lighter in colour and thin. One of these was very blond, "like a foreigner." The bodies seemed to be of men resembling us, and they displayed no visible injuries. ("Unless they had them on their backs, which of course I couldn't see," added José Antônio.)

The little men paid no heed to the corpses. In José Antônio however the sight of the latter had aroused gloomy and pessimistic thoughts on the matter of his ever getting home again. Nevertheless, he does not think that the corpses were of men who had been killed by the homuncules. "Perhaps they couldn't stand up to the experience, or perhaps they pulled their helmets off," he thinks.

Description of the room

The walls and floor of the big room seemed to him to be of stone,⁸ in view of the uniformly grey colour. The lighting was also uniform, and was intensely bright, of the mercury vapour type, but no lamps were apparent anywhere.⁹ No windows¹⁰ or doors were visible. On the wall to his left — the wall beside which was the shelf with the corpses — were coloured pictures of many things that were familiar to José Antônio or of which he knew: there were animals, such as the jaguar, the monkey, the elephant, the giraffe. There were pictures of houses and of a small town; there were pictures of trees, forests, the sea. There were pictures of vehicles: trucks, like the FNM (Alfa-Romeo); a propeller-driven two-engined aircraft, and an automobile. These pictures, arranged separately along the wall, covered that side of the room only. There was nothing on the wall facing him or on the wall to his right.

Standing on the floor, a little to his right, was a strange apparatus which put José Antônio in mind of a racing car. It was an approximately cylindrical construction, two metres long and 0.80 m. high, and had no openings. On either side of it, in the positions corresponding to those of the wheels of a car, there were round things sticking out, four of them in all,

which were not touching the ground, and which reminded him of turbines. Try as he might, he was unable to form any idea as to the purpose and the method of operation of that machine.

Some five metres or so from him, in front, there was a small cubical seat, with no legs, on which the "Chief" sat from time to time. On the right-hand side of this seat, and almost at floor level, there was another slab, several metres long, with a white surface. It seemed to him to be about three metres, and it was used later as a slate, for the drawing of sketches.

Amid all the confusion attendant upon the coming and going of the little men, and their gesticulating and their weird language, and the animation evident in their faces, José Antônio finally concluded that his presence there was a source of great satisfaction for them. The various individuals were all extremely alike, despite the variations in size, features, skin colouring, length of beard, and colour of eyes.

Examination of his belongings

José Antônio was surprised to see that one of them was carefully undoing the cloth bundle in which he had been carrying his fishing tackle. When he was captured on the bank of the lake, this cloth was lying open in a small clearing, and his objects all scattered around it. He had no idea who had rolled it up, with the tackle inside, and brought it to this room, but he now thinks this must have been done by the third member of the crew who remained behind among the trees while he was being carried towards the craft.

In any case, there the little men now were, taking out and examining, with much animation, one by one, his various possessions contained in the bundle. From hand to hand they passed around his collections of hooks, his knives, his boxes of matches, his other angler's tools, a tin of sardines and other foodstuffs, as well as his pieces of clothing. And in the meantime he himself was feeling cold, for he was still wearing only his shorts. He was, however, breathing better.

He observed how, immediately after all the objects and garments had been closely inspected, they set aside one specimen of everything of which there was a duplicate. Thus, the little men took one specimen of each type of fishing-hook; they took one of the three big knives; a box of matches; one of his changes of clothing; and a 100-Cruzeiro banknote (old Cruzeiros) from the total of CR\$35,100 which they had found in one of his pockets. All the objects for which there was no duplicate — such as the tin of sardines, for example — were put back into the cloth and this was then rolled up again and carefully fastened. The only exception was his identity card, which they had also found in one of his pockets, and which was passed round for all to see. This, his only identity card, they did not return to him, and it caused many problems for him after his return.

He thinks that the little men had perceived, from his identity card, that he belonged to the military.

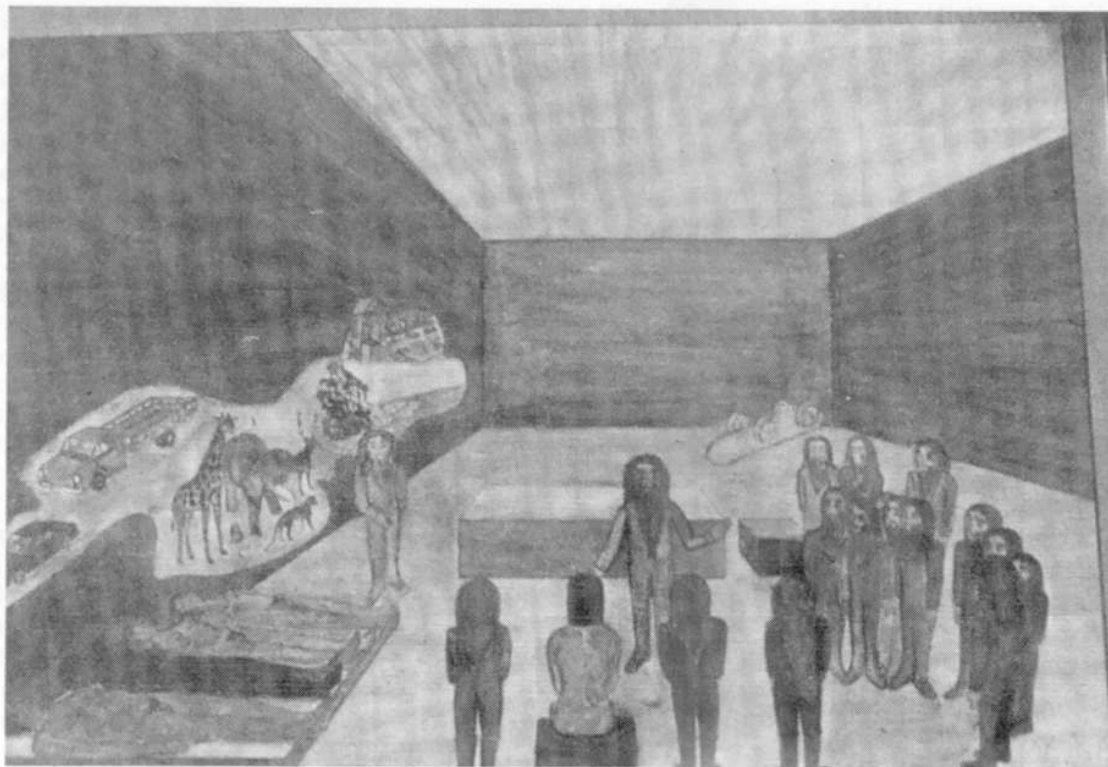


Fig. 3

Scene, depicted by do Carmo, of the examination and interrogation of the witness, based on the latter's description. To his left are four human corpses; at centre the leader with 15-16 small beings; at the far end is a machine like a racing-car.

Demonstration of weapons

For, immediately afterwards, one of them pointed his weapon towards the wall and fired a beam of light which caused a discolouration of the affected area of the wall. And, in addition to that, the first part of José Antônio's "conversation" with the leader subsequently was to revolve around the subject of weapons.

The weapons carried by all the little men were standardized, but of various sizes (Fig.4). A good deal smaller than a rifle, their barrels were very much wider and shorter than those of a rifle and, made of one piece, widened out towards the rear to form the butt. On the top of the central part of each weapon there was a sort of trigger which, when pulled backwards, caused the emission of a luminous beam of the type by which he was struck before being captured.

Attempts to communicate

Into the short, thick fingers of the "Chief" one of the little men passed a small black cylindrical object which he used later as a pencil, for writing on the smooth, light-coloured "slate" beside him. Turning now directly towards José Antônio, he accompanied his incomprehensible speech with wide-sweeping gestures. He pointed at the soldier, then upwards, then downwards, then to his companions, and, after each combination of words and gestures, he seemed to be awaiting an answer from José Antônio. As this series of attempts continued, the soldier thought he began to understand some of it: thus, that the gesture pointing downwards meant: *your country*; the gesture upwards meant: *this room, here, or our country*, and so on. His understanding was amplified by the illustrations, in the form of rough sketches, made by the Leader on the white "slate" and by his accompanying words and gestures.

In the first sketch, José Antônio thought he could see "an army camp." It was a circle with armed figures around it, like sentries. The Leader pointed to the weapons in the sketch, and then to José Antônio, and then downwards, and then finally upwards, from which José Antônio understood that he wanted to get some of our weapons through him, José Antônio. To this José Antônio gesticulated negatively, and, as the Leader still kept insisting on this type of theme, he began to lose all hope of returning home alive. (*José Antônio has repeatedly refused to reveal to us other passages in the "conversation" on this subject.*)

Food?

One of the little men, carrying in both hands a cube which seemed to be heavy and made of stone, came up to José Antônio. The cube was hollowed out on the upper side and contained a dark-green-coloured liquid. The Leader indicated to him that he should drink it, while one of the subordinates loosened his helmet from behind, and raised it with a certain degree of violence. José Antônio resisted and made gestures of refusal. Then, later, seeing that one of the little men was drinking the liquid himself he decided to take some too, for he felt very weak and had had nothing to eat. The liquid had a bitter taste and was contained in a pyramidal-shaped cavity in the cube. From that moment he began to feel better, and had more life in him. And, furthermore, he thinks that after that he began to understand better what the Leader wanted to say.

The Leader's proposition

Among all the various aspects touched upon in the attempts at communication, there is one point on which José Antônio is in no doubt: these individuals

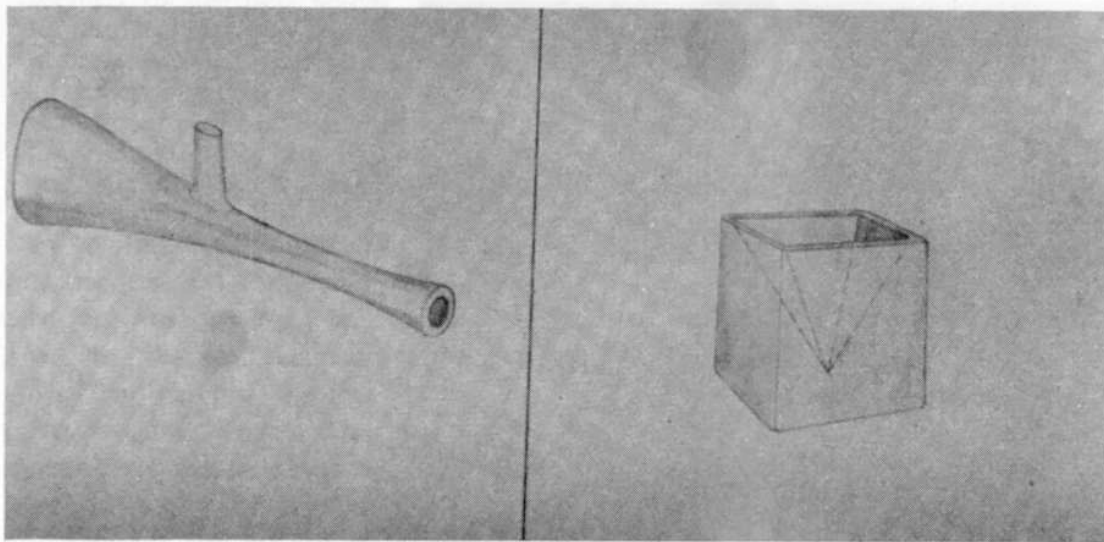


Fig. 4.

Left: the type of weapon carried by the small, red-bearded beings.

Right: the "cup" in which Jose Antonio was given a liquid to drink.

were insisting that he help them in connexion with their purposes *vis-a-vis* our society.

Using the big pencil on the horizontal "slate," the Leader patiently traced two big circles, side by side. Then he blackened one of them, leaving the other circle white. He pointed first to one circle and then to the other, and then finally to José Antônio and downwards, and José Antônio finally grasped that the white circle corresponded to the terrestrial day and the black circle to our night. After the considerable period of time which it had taken for José Antônio to arrive at this conclusion, he nodded his head affirmatively, and the Leader continued with his sketches.

He next outlined an enormous series of small circles with white insides, linking them, by gestures, with the bigger white circle. As he had stopped referring to the blackened circle, José Antônio understood that the small circles corresponded to "days." As he drew each small circle, the Leader of the little men paused, and drew José Antônio's attention by gestures, so that he began to count them. Very patiently, the Leader completed a great mass of small white circles, and then drew around them all another larger circle. José Antônio lost count when he had got beyond 300 with the number of small circles, but concluded that the whole lot taken together signified a year, or 365 days. When he had given his affirmative gesture to the Leader, the latter went on to draw nine more agglomerations of small circles, linking them by gestures to the first agglomeration, and drawing the attention of José Antônio who now perceived that he was talking about a unit of *ten years*, as each agglomeration of small white circles was circumscribed by another larger one.

Then the little man drew a thick line separating off three of the agglomerations from the remaining seven, and then began pointing, first at the group of three agglomerations of circles, and then at José Antonio, and then downwards. After that, he again pointed to the soldier and then upwards and then at the group of seven large agglomerations, and made still more gestures, thus giving José Antônio to understand the sequence of his message as follows:

"He is proposing to take me to the Earth, where I

shall remain for three years, collecting information for him. Then he will send for me to come to them, where I shall remain studying for seven years. And then finally they will land on Earth, with me as a guide."

José Antônio's reply to this was a gesture of negation, indicating his refusal. At that moment he was already fingering the Rosary which he had been wearing rolled round his waist, and he was praying aloud. When he had got as far as the fourth "mystery" of the first part of the telling of his beads, the Leader stepped towards him and, displaying irritation for the first time, seized the Crucifix and snatched it from him. One of the beads rolled onto the floor and was picked up by one of the little men, who showed it to the others. The Crucifix was passed round in the same way, arousing the curiosity of all of them.

A vision and a secret

Suddenly, while the little men were involved in a lengthy discussion, José Antônio saw appear, almost right in front of him, and as though out of the void, a human figure. It took up position in front of him, and remained there immobile, with a firm and friendly demeanour, and looking straight at him and speaking to him in a very clear Portuguese. José Antônio at once concluded that this vision was exclusively for *him*, because, despite the favourable position of the figure in the room, it was apparently not perceived by the little men, who went on talking among themselves, while getting more and more angry.

Despite the way in which the apparition had arrived, it was quite clearly the figure of a man of about 1.70 m. in height, lean, with long fair hair and beard. His complexion was pink and white, his eyes clear and serene. His dark clothing reached to his feet, which were bare. His robe had wide sleeves, the collar was turned down, and he wore a sort of thick white cord around the waist, with a knot at each of the hanging extremities, like a friar's cassock.

José Antônio, who until that moment was in sore distress and without hope, felt relief coming at once

from the presence of this person whom he identifies as "a good person, one of our people" and, in particular, took heart from certain revelations that the vision made to him. These revelations were to be imparted to nobody else, so José Antônio tells us, until he had received fresh instructions, and that might perhaps not be before two or three years have passed.

On the matter of this vision, the soldier has displayed tremendous resistance to questioning, especially as regards the message received by him, which he considers to be a secret. Even these details of the physical description of the individual seen in the vision were given by him only with the greatest reluctance, for he maintains that these details could suffice for the identification of the person.

We asked him how it could be possible for the secret to be discovered merely from a simple description of the features of someone whom we did not know and would never meet. He gave us to understand however that it *would* be possible to recognize the person, and that it *would not* be impossible that we should meet him. Asked whether the vision was of Jesus, José Antônio promptly replied that it was not. As to whether it was some Saint, he was unwilling to reply, merely smiling and changing the subject of conversation. After repeated interviews we managed to obtain some indications regarding the contents of the message. (See the concluding part of this Report.)

The return journey

The tall individual vanished in just the same way as he had appeared in the room — suddenly. And, at precisely the same moment, the little men began to show signs of irritation against each other. The Leader came over to the two custodians, who had never left José Antônio's side. Then the eyeholes in his helmet were covered again with a blindfold. And, in the same fashion as he had been brought, the soldier was now taken under the arms and carried to another place which, when the blindfold had been removed, he discovered to be the inside of the machine that had brought him.

Then began the long return journey, with the same three crew-members and with the same incidents as when he had been brought, that is to say, with the machine changing position for a time, and with the light increasing and pulsating for a certain period.

Arrival in the state of Espírito Santo

Immediately after he had felt the shock which meant that the machine had touched down, his companions loosened and then removed his helmet. Then he suffered an almost total loss of consciousness, being merely aware that they were dragging him into the darkness. He thinks he remained in this condition of semi-consciousness for about an hour, after which he began to notice the first signs of the approaching dawn. Then he became aware of the sound of running water near by and, impelled by intense thirst, he crawled along on the ground until he came to a brook. He had his bundle, from which he drew out his waterbottle, which he filled

twice. He estimates that he drank 1½ litres of water, yet still his thirst was not entirely quenched. Then he got out his fishing tackle and managed to catch a few small fish, which he ate.

When the sun came up he was able to take a better look at his surroundings, which he found to be a landscape that was totally strange to him. He had been left on the edge of a small stone-quarry, beside a ravine. Lame, confused, exhausted, and unkempt, with his great growth of beard, he started to walk, and soon came to a paved road where he approached somebody who was passing along it. He asked them where he was, and was told that he was 32 kms. from Vitória, the Capital of the State of Espírito Santo, and that he was on the road leading from there to the State of Minas Gerais. On hearing this he was amazed, and asked what day it was. This time it was the turn of the unknown passer-by to be amazed, for he told the soldier that it was Friday, May 9.

Four-and-a-half days absent

Making a quick mental calculation, José Antônio concluded, with great alarm, that he had been away for four-and-a-half days. He asked in which direction Minas Gerais lay, and then set off along the road, absorbed in his own thoughts. He came to the conclusion that he had better not return to Minas Gerais, since he would be unable to account for his absence: nobody would believe his story. So he decided that he would prefer to make for the woods and try to live off fruit and fish. He was especially afraid of being picked up by the Police of Espírito Santo, as he had no longer any identity card that he could show them.

Nevertheless, while his thoughts followed this trend, his route was bringing him back ever nearer to the Minas Gerais State-line. Several times motorists, seeing he was having difficulty walking, stopped to offer him a lift, but he refused them. His right leg was the one more seriously affected, and seemed to be swollen at the knee. In addition to that, he had three open wounds on his shoulders and below the nape of the neck, caused by the action of the helmet rubbing against him.

At last however, overcome by fatigue, he gave in and accepted a lift, which brought him to near the town of Colatina. But he remained extremely careful to conceal his story, and when people asked him questions he gave the excuse that he was "fulfilling a vow."

Setting out again along the road, he met a group of children, and asked them the shortest way which would bring him to the nearest station on the Vitória-Minas Gerais line. He complains that, after having told him the route, the children pelted him with stones and jeered at him, maybe because of his strange appearance.

Following the railway line, he finally came to a small station, which was in fact Colatina. There he stopped and asked the station-agent when the next train to Belo Horizonte would come, for he had already changed his mind by now, and was resolved to return home and face the consequences.

As it would be quite a long time yet before the train arrived, he remained in the station talking to the agent, with whom he struck up a friendship, with the result that he went to the agent's house and had something to eat, and met his wife and children. He also met a settler who lived nearby and who offered him a job, which he did not accept. Grateful to the agent for the way in which he had treated him, he gave him one of his two remaining knives. In addition, he paid for the ticket of a youth who had no money. The little men had put back CR\$35,000 into his pocket out of the total of CR\$35,100 (old Cruzeiros) that he had been carrying.

Back in Belo Horizonte

At 7.25 a.m. on Saturday he got out of the train at the Belo Horizonte station of the Estrada de Ferro Central do Brasil (Central Brazil Railway Line), where he was approached by the railway's security man, Sr. Geraldo Lopes da Silva. Finally, he told the security man the whole story¹¹ and was sent by him to the Barracks, from where he was taken to the home of Major Célio Ferreira.

In the course of our interviews with him, José Antônio was very insistent that we should go with him to the spot where the machine had landed when it brought him back, for so he said, we should probably still find there a little fish swimming about in a small pool in the rocks into which it had fallen when he threw it back, after having eaten enough. He also said that the railway agent at Colatina would know him and would show us the large knife which he had given him.

Footnotes and comments by Gordon Creighton

¹ The title which we used was *Fortyeight Hours In A Flying Saucer*, this being the heading of the original press-report of May 16, 1969.

² At times Sr. Hulvio Brant Aleixo describes this headpiece as a mask (Portuguese: *mascara*) and at other times as a helmet (Portuguese: *capacete*.) [See Alberto do Carmo's sketches.]

³ I draw attention once more to this very important feature of the compartment's brilliant lighting, coming from no visible source. It is a feature that has appeared in numerous claims made by individuals who say they have been inside landed UFOs, and, since these people are not usually students of the UFO literature but rather unsophisticated folk with no previous knowledge of our subject, it strikes me as arguing strongly for the truthfulness of their stories.

⁴ As I pointed out in *Fortyeight Hours In A Flying Saucer*, this feature of the helmet which they placed on their prisoner's head reminds us strongly of the case of Felipe Martinez of Argentina who told a Buenos Aires newspaper in October 1965 that, in one of his several encounters with small beings from landed UFOs, they had tried to put a 'space-suit' on him but that it had caused circulatory disturbances. He also claimed that they had once produced a numbing or paralyzed effect in his legs. But this too is a feature that has been claimed very often, as is the upright shaft said to be running through the centre of the UFO. (On Felipe Martinez, see Case 44 of *The Humanoids In Latin America*, being

Section 4 of *The Humanoids* (hard-back edition, Neville Spearman, London, 1969).

⁵ Compare Charles Bowen's article *Fantasy or Truth?* on the "Salzburg-Mars Express", in FSR Vol. 13, No.4, July August 1967. The anonymous Austrian who claimed to have been paralyzed and kidnapped by a small being, and abducted in a saucer, said that soon after take-off the vehicle seemed to reverse poles and that a second motor, previously below the 'floor' and now above the 'ceiling', took over from the other motor.

⁶ This recalls the scuffing of the toes of Barney Hill's shoes (See John G. Fuller: *The Interrupted Journey*, Dial Press, New York, 1966).

⁷ This too we have heard before.

⁸ Everything—walls, floor, shelves or slabs, and even the drinking vessel—appears to be of *stone*. Perhaps there is a valuable clue here.

⁹ See Note 3 above.

¹⁰ And here, maybe, is another clue.

¹¹ Finally, as regards the setting of this extraordinary alleged experience of a Brazilian soldier, it should be noted that it lies not very far to the north of Itaperuna, which has figured so often in our reports of late. And the creatures described in the Itaperuna episodes also seem always to be around the 1 metre or 1 metre 20 size.

Moreover there is another place quite close (see map) which has even more sinister connotations. This is Diamantina, not far from the Rio das Velhas, near which stream José Antônio da Silva said he had been captured. It was at Diamantina (see Case 29 in my *The Humanoids In Latin America*) that, in the early hours of August 1962, the diamond prospector Rivalino Mafra da Silva (no relation of José Antônio, so far as we know) was abducted on the very doorstep of his hut, and before the eyes of his small son, seemingly by two mysterious balls, following upon a night of terror during which weird small forms had appeared inside the hut and inspected him and his sleeping children. We understand that Rivalino da Silva was never seen again.

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