

# A REPORT FROM OLD MEXICO

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OSCAR A. GALÍNDEZ's recent article *Violent Humanoid Encountered In Bolivia* (FSR, July/August 1970) brings to mind a curious story which can be found in the book *Naufragios* (Shipwrecks) by the early Spanish explorer of Central America, Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca. Cabeza de Vaca was himself shipwrecked off the coast of Florida in the early 1500s and he and three of his men wandered down along the Gulf Coast into northern Mexico. The journey took eight years, during which period they lived entirely among the Indians. They were the first white men to set foot in this part of the New World. Cabeza de Vaca later explored the region of the River Plate in what is now Argentina, and became the Spanish Governor of the territory that is now Paraguay.

The story is as follows:

"The Avavares and the tribes we had left behind related an extraordinary experience which, in our equivalent of their vague way of counting, seemed to have occurred fifteen or sixteen years before.

"They said that a little man<sup>1</sup> whom they called *Bad Thing* (Spanish, *Mala Cosa*) wandered through the region. He had a beard and they never saw his features distinctly. When he came to a house, the inhabitants trembled, and their hair stood on end.<sup>2</sup> A blazing brand would suddenly shine at the door as he rushed in and seized whom he chose, deeply gashing him in the side with a very sharp flint two palms long and a palm wide. He would thrust in his hand through the gashes, *draw out the entrails*,<sup>3</sup> *cut a palm's length from one*, and throw it on the embers. Then he would gash an arm three times, the second cut on the inside of the elbow, and would sever the limb. A little later he would begin to rejoin it, and the touch of his hands would instantly heal the wounds.

"They said that frequently he appeared in their midst during the dance, sometimes in the dress of a woman, and at other times in that of a man. When he liked, he would take a *buhio* (Indian word for *house*) up into the air and come crashing down with it. They said they offered him victuals many times, but he never ate. They asked him from where he came and where his home was. He pointed to a crevice in the ground and said his home was there below.<sup>4</sup>

"We laughed and scoffed. Indignant at our disbelief, the Indians brought to us many who they said had been so seized, and we saw the gash marks in the right places."

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## Notes and Comments by Gordon Creighton

<sup>1</sup> See also Brian Stross: *The ?hksals*, and my accompanying article *Middle American Creature Reports* (both in FSR for May/June 1968). Admittedly all this is folklore, and material for folklorist and anthropologist alike. But what must surely begin to be the dominant question in our minds is this: what is it that triggers off all these tales of giants and goblins, fairies, trolls, and so on? Are they not in fact "UFO experiences"?

Apropos of the Scandinavian tradition regarding *trolls*, be it noted that these creatures were said to have long noses or hooked noses. See, for example, the description of the small flying entity with a long nose and very long ears from the case at Coldwater, Kansas, USA, in September 1954 (Coral Lorenzen: *UFO Occupants In United States Reports*, in THE HUMANIDS). See also the sketch of the little hook-nosed creature recently reported to have emerged from a "flying saucer" in Finland (Sven-Olof Fredrickson: *More On The Imjärvi Case*, in FSR for November/December 1970). All this is the stuff of fairy-tale and folklore. It is evidently the stuff of "Ufology" too.

<sup>2</sup> There are on record several recent UFO cases in which the percipients claimed that *their hair stood on end*.

Indeed this is so regular a feature of reported encounters with "ghosts" or "spirits" that the term "*hair-raising*" has become current in various languages. That there is a magnetic or electrical significance to all this seems evident, and in this connection Dr. P. H. M. Edwards' article *UFOs And ESP* (FSR November/December 1970) becomes extremely important. Dr. Edwards makes the suggestion that EM force-fields from the UFOs trigger off ESP responses in human brains. This seems to me to be one of the most valuable suggestions made yet.

- <sup>3</sup> My italics. It will be recalled that the creature said to have been seen in Bolivia allegedly cut out small sections from the intestines of the sheep.
- <sup>4</sup> All over the world we find popular traditions and folktales which refer to fairies or goblins or trolls or other creatures whose habitat is always stated quite specifically to be *underground*, or *inside the earth*.

As I have long maintained (see my *Postscript To The Most Amazing Case Of All*, in FSR for July/August 1965, p. 24) it seems to be growing steadily more clear that if we really do want to know more about the so-called "UFO entities" then we are going to have to study not only "Ufology" but parapsychology, mythology, folklore, witchcraft, and demonology too.

For our guidance in this research we already possess some excellent handbooks in *The Books of Charles Fort*, Dr. Jacques Vallée's *Passport To Magonia*, and John Keel's *UFOs: Operation Trojan Horse*. Furthermore, in his article *Thorny Topic* (FSR, November/December 1970) Charles Bowen has again set forth some of the very cogent reasons why we cannot omit the methods and the findings of psychical research from our own essential working equipment.

Nor should it be thought that no progress has been achieved. The articles of C. Maxwell Cade, Dr. Berthold Schwarz, and Dr. Bernard E. Finch on medical and psychological and physiological aspects have already begun to furnish us with an impressive documentation regarding the various ways in which alien intelligences, be they extraterrestrial or ultraterrestrial, may be tampering with and influencing human minds. Similar valuable evidence is also to hand in Aimé Michel's remarkable account of the case of "Dr. X", published in FSR Special Issue No. 3, *UFO PERCIPIENTS*, and, as already mentioned above, Professor P. H. M. Edwards' *UFOs And ESP*.