

early man. These same impostors now appear as long-haired Venusians" (Keel, 1970). Demonological "manifestations and occurrences . . . are similar, if not entirely identical, to the UFO phenomenon itself" (*ibid.*). In other words, ultraterrestrials are demons.

Charles Fort (1874-1932), the first ufologist, once remarked, his tongue in cheek, "I expect some day to rationalize demonology" (Fort, 1941). In fashioning the concept of ultraterrestrials Keel, whose tongue is not in his cheek, seems to have done exactly that.

Sources:

Fort, Charles. *The Books of Charles Fort*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1941.

Keel, John A. *The Eighth Tower*. New York: Saturday Review Press/E. P. Dutton and Company, 1975.

———. *Our Haunted Planet*. Greenwich, CT: Fawcett Publications, 1971.

———. *UFOs: Operation Trojan Horse*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1970.

UMMO HOAX

Nº 3.781

On February 6, 1966, around 8 P.M., several persons in Aluche, Spain, a Madrid suburb, allegedly saw an unusual flying object. Looking out a window, Maria Ruiz Torres watched an object descending. Through a window a "gigantic eye" stared at her. Another witness, watchman Juan Jiminez Diaz, thought he saw a door open on the craft. Other observers included soldiers at a nearby ammunition dump. Motorist José Luis Jordan Peña got a particularly close, extended view of the object, which he characterized as "enormous."

After reading about the incident in newspaper accounts, the well-known Spanish ufologist Antonio Ribera wrote Jordan. Jordan replied with a detailed letter and included with it a sketch of the disc-shaped structure with three legs he claimed to have seen. On the object's underside was a curious symbol, something like two reverse parentheses with a vertical bar positioned between them. No other witness had mentioned anything like this, and Ribera was intrigued.

At dusk on June 1, 1967, another peculiar visitation occurred in another Madrid suburb, San José de Valderas. This time the investigator, none other than Jordan himself, took statements from witnesses who

described a low-flying disc-shaped structure bearing on its underside the same strange symbol Jordan had seen previously. An anonymous young man took several photographs which the next day he dropped off at a photographic laboratory; he then called newspaper photographer Antonio San Antonio to tell him where he could pick them up. All but one of the photographs show an edge-on view of what appears to be a large, squat disc with a rim through its mid-section—in other words, an almost classic flying saucer. One picture shows the bottom of the UFO. There a symbol much like the one Jordan reported is visible; the only difference is that this time a horizontal bar crosses the vertical and links the two arms. The photographer would never be identified.

In the days following the sighting, leaflets circulated through the area. The ostensible author, "Henri Dagousset," reported that capsules, apparently left by the UFO, were being found in the area. He offered the equivalent of \$300 for samples of these "metallic cylinders with a central disc whose dimensions are provided here for reference purposes. . . . All correspondence must be directed before June 26, 1967, to Mr. Antoine Nancey, main post office, Madrid."

In August another photographer produced two pictures which he claimed were of the same object, taken moments after the young man had taken his. This individual, who signed himself "Antonio Pardo," sent his photographs, along with a detailed letter, to Barcelona author Marius Lleget, whose recently published UFO book had listed his address and urged readers to let him know about their own experiences. Pardo's pictures were of edge-on views of the squat disc. In the same envelope (which had no return address) was a curious artifact. Pardo described its background. He said he had heard that several residents had found some strange tubes. He found one of the discoverers, a local boy, who had opened the object with a pair of pliers. Inside it were two green plastic strips bearing the distinctive symbol noted at Aluche.

Soon afterwards Pardo phoned Lleget and spoke at length. Unfortunately, Lleget neglected to ask him for his address, and Pardo would never be located, even though Ribera and his associate Rafael Farriols would later phone every Antonio Pardo ("Anthony

- Holledge, James. *Flying Saucers over Australia*. Sydney, Australia: Horwitz Publications, 1965.
- "Humanoid Scares Lady." *Australian UFO Review* [UFOIC edition] 10 (December 1969): 31-32.
- Hynek, J. Allen. *The UFO Experience: A Scientific Inquiry*. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1972.
- McDonald, James E. *UFOs—An International Scientific Problem*. Tucson, AZ: The Author, 1968.
- "Mackay Landing." *Australian Flying Saucer Review* [UFOIC edition] 9 (November 1966): 14.
- Maney, Charles A. "The Antarctica Sighting." *Australian Flying Saucer Review* [UFOIC edition] 9 (November 1966): 24-25.
- Norman, Paul. "The Electromagnetic Effect of the UFO." *Australian Flying Saucer Review* [VFSRS edition] 4 (December 1965): 4-5.
- Perisse, Daniel Alberto. "Deception Island UFO Sightings." In Walter H. Andrus, Jr., and Richard H. Hall, eds. *MUFON 1987 International UFO Symposium Proceedings*, 142-54. Seguin, TX: Mutual UFO Network, Inc., 1987.
- Phillips, Colin A. "Flying Saucers." *UFO Research* [Queensland, UFOCON] 5 (November/December 1980).
- "Report on UFO Photographed at Balwyn." *Australian Flying Saucer Review* [Victorian edition] 6 (December 1966): 11-12.
- Roberts, B. G. "Unidentified Flying Objects—An Evaluation based on Australian, American and British Air Force Reports." Summary of an address given by Mr. B. G. Roberts, Operational Research Office, Department of Air, Canberra, to the Ballarat Astronomical Society at Ballarat, February 1965.
- "Scoop! Flying Saucer over Westall." *Australian Flying Saucer Review* [Victorian edition] 5 (July 1966): 13-14.
- Seers, Stan. *UFOs: The Case for Scientific Myopia*. New York: Vantage Press, 1983.
- "Seven Men Will Never Scoff Again." *Antarctic* (September 1962): 120.
- Story, Ronald D., ed. *The Encyclopedia of UFOs*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, 1980.
- Summary of Unidentified Aerial Sightings Reported to Department of Air, Canberra, ACT, from 1960*. 1965. Updated 1969.
- Tasmanian UFO Investigation Center [TUFOIC]. *Cressy Document*. 1991.
- "The Thing on the Beach." *Daily Telegraph* [Sydney] (July 21, 1965).
- Turner, Harry. Interviews with Bill Chalker, 1984-1993.
- UFO Investigation Center [UFOIC] files. Personal communications, 1967.
- "UFO Pursues Cyclist—Alleged Landing near Wadonga." *Australian Flying Saucer Review* 8 (1967): 4.
- "UFOs in Western Australia." *Australian Flying Saucer Review* 8 (1967): 13.
- "VFSRS Member Snaps a UFO." *Australian Flying Saucer Review* [Victorian edition] 5 (July 1966): 2.
- "VUFORS Quits CAPIO." *Australian UFO Bulletin* (November 1968).
- "Weird 'Saucer' over Canterbury." *Sydney Sun-Herald* (March 8, 1967).

ULTRATERRESTRIALS

Ultraterrestrials, according to occult-oriented UFO theorist John A. Keel (*see Paranormal and Occult Theories About UFOs*), are supernatural entities from another dimension of existence. Keel calls this dimension the "superspectrum," an intelligent energy field which is able to manipulate matter. Ultraterrestrials, materialized manifestations of the superspectrum, appear to human beings as gods, angels, fairies, poltergeists, monsters, UFO beings, **men in black**, and other entities. They also speak through mediums, psychics, visionaries, and contactees.

Though ultraterrestrials may affect a benign air, they hold human beings in contempt, plying them with false information which may disrupt their lives or drive them into madness. The ultraterrestrials' true purpose is to enslave us. Behind the scenes these entities control all human life and history. They created the world's religions, and they have inspired both political leaders and political assassins. There is some evidence as well that one ultraterrestrial group is in conflict with another group. In this conflict human beings are used as pawns.

Keel writes, "The Devil's emissaries of yesteryear have been replaced by the mysterious 'men in black.' The quasi-angels of Biblical times have become magnificent spacemen. The demons, devils, and false angels were recognized as liars and plunderers by

Brown”) in the Madrid directory. Neither “Dagousset” nor “Nancey” could be traced. The artifact would prove to be of terrestrial manufacture. It was a hard, weather-resistant plastic used in military projects and in the space program.

Another sighting reportedly occurred in the area on June 1. Between 8 and 9:30 P.M., in the suburb of Santa Monica, three persons allegedly witnessed a landing near a restaurant called La Ponderosa. The next day one of the witnesses went to the site and found three rectangular imprints, each six by 11 inches, forming an equilateral triangle, each side of which measured 18 feet. A burn mark was visible at the center of the triangle, and there were deposits of a metallic substance.

Messages from Ummo. On May 20, 1967, a bizarre announcement was published in the Spanish newspaper *Informaciones*. It declared that soon a spacecraft would land near Madrid and fly earthbound extraterrestrials back to their home planet Ummo. Then on May 31—a day before the Santa Monica sighting—Fernando Sesma, president of the Society of the Friends of Space, spoke to an audience of 40 persons gathered at a Madrid cafe. According to Ribera, he said that the Ummites had given him a startling printed message: a spacecraft would appear near the city the evening of June 1. The space people had also supplied the exact geographical coordinates. Twenty-four hours later the UFO would appear exactly as promised.

Though Sesma, sometimes called the Spanish George Adamski, had been consorting with space people of various sorts since the early 1950s, these particular extraterrestrials, the Ummites, had not approached him until 1965. This approach was not a face-to-face one. Sesma—and before long two associates, Enrique Villagrasa and Alicia Araujo, and then still more individuals—would hear from the Ummites by phone or mail. The printed messages consisted of typed, single-spaced documents, sometimes dozens of pages long, discussing in excruciating detail life on Ummo, which revolves around the star Iumma, located 14.6 light years from the earth; the Ummites thought Iumma might be the same as the star known to earthly astronomers as Wolf 424, but they were not sure because Ummite and earthly cosmic coordinates are radically different. The messages also addressed a

wide range of scientific, mathematical, technical, linguistic, psychological, social, and political questions, the last of these with a pronounced left-wing slant. Each page was stamped with the Ummo symbol: the same symbol reported by Jordan and allegedly photographed by the anonymous young man.

Villagras told Ribera and Farriols what it was like to talk over the phone with a man from Ummo. The first of a number of such exchanges began at 12:10 A.M. on November 28, 1966. The caller spoke in a slow monotone and with a foreign accent, answering each question Villagras raised with great precision, whether the topic was history, science, archaeology, or anything else. It was as if “he were reading the answers out of a dictionary,” Villagras said. Sometimes he had the impression that he was talking with an “electronic brain.” Villagras could never call the Ummites; they would call him. Others who received such calls reported the same.

One day recipients of the Ummo mailings received a letter from a man who claimed to be the operator of the duplicating machine used to copy the documents. The correspondent related an odd story: After he ran a newspaper advertisement offering his services, two Scandinavian-looking men called on him. The one who did all the talking spoke in a singsong voice and identified himself and his companion as Danish doctors who wanted to dictate technical reports. The copyist felt uneasy about the men, but they offered him so much money that he felt he could not refuse them.

The first “doctor” visited the copyist regularly. Then one day he dictated this sentence: “We come from a cold celestial body called Ummo, which is 14.6 light years from the earth.” The copyist was startled but kept writing. When he was through, the Ummite said, “Don’t be afraid. What I have dictated is the truth. And I will prove it to you.” From a jacket pocket he produced a tiny sphere which he hung in the air between the two of them. A scene appeared on a screen on the sphere. The copyist saw a scene from the day before, when his wife had told him she did not trust the doctors, suspected they were spies, and urged her husband to alert the police.

Another story, allegedly related by an anonymous professor of medicine at the University of Madrid,

was circulated with another mailing from the copyist. In an open but unsigned letter the professor reported that he had received phone calls from an Ummite. Though impressed with his caller's advanced medical knowledge, he had scoffed at the man's assertion that he was an extraterrestrial. The professor invited the caller to make a personal appearance, which the latter declined, saying he would send an emissary with the proof. Soon afterwards the copyist delivered a small package. Ribera writes:

When opened, it proved to contain a little square box, with no projecting parts, that is to say, with entirely smooth sides, of metallic appearance, and of a dull black color. On one of its facets this little box had a translucent screen which was joined to the rest of the box *without any dissolution of continuity*: that is to say, without any mark, as though the union had been effected at the molecular level [Ribera, 1975].

With it was a set of instructions which directed the professor to speak certain vowels in order. Once these were spoken, the screen went on, displaying vivid holographic images of neurons and other microscopic tissues. Not long afterwards a bearded stranger reclaimed the device, and that was the last the professor saw of it.

Like the Ummites themselves, the copyist and the professor proved untraceable.

In one of their early communications, the Ummites gave this account of how they came to earth:

In the terrestrial year of 1950 (March) we landed on this OOYAA (cold star). About two years (terrestrial years) prior to that, we had picked up a faint signal with a frequency of 413.44 megacycles which we were unable to decipher. It had been sent out about the year 1934.

(Subsequently we identified the radioelectrical signal as having been put out by a Norwegian ship on the latitude of Newfoundland, in the course of certain experiments carried on by scientists of Norwegian nationality and relating to the use of high frequencies in communication over great distances by ionospheric reflection. The signal was sent out between February 5 and February 7, 1934.)

This date of 1934 is thus a historic one in the relations between EARTH and UMMO. We have photocopies of the radiograms sent out. (These were secured by certain of our brethren in Germany, who went to Bergen, Norway, for that purpose.) And, as of course you will realize, we have the signals in Morse which were unintelligible to us at that time because our technicians thought it would be a binary-system code. (DOT = ZERO, DASH = ONE, or vice versa.) You will be surprised to learn that the duration of the fraction of the radiogram picked up by us was of 2.2 UIW (about 6.8 minutes), which sufficed for us to identify, on galactic coordinates, the position of the Solar System, and our techniques gave a name to your Sun, calling it GAA (Quadrat), because the graph derived with the signal was reminiscent of the analytical equation expressing the area of such a geometrical figure.

It was only when we reached you that we were able to ascertain that the name OOYAGAA (Cold Star of Quadrat) gave an erroneous evocation inasmuch as the nature of the original message was not exactly mathematical [*ibid.*].

The Ummite communications were addressed to an ever wider international network. Most were post-marked Madrid, but as time went by, other postmarks indicated mailings from London, Germany, Austria, New Zealand, Yugoslavia, and Canada. Investigator Antonio Ribera, who began hearing from the Ummites in 1969, noticed that the first letter he received was sent from Paris. An Umno cult began to form, and books—both journalistic accounts and anthologies of Umno writings—found an avid readership. The communications were written first in Spanish; in time others were composed in French, though certain grammar and punctuation oddities indicated that Spanish, not French, was the writer's (or writers') first language. By 1983, according to one estimate, some 6700 Umno communications were known to exist (Evans, 1983c).

Absent evidence. Though the communications certainly exist, the evidence that Umno and Ummites exist is, to all intents and purposes, nonexistent. Independent analyses by the French space scientist Claude

Poher and the American UFO group Ground Saucer Watch determined that the San José de Valderas "UFO" with the Ummo symbol was a small model held close to the camera. The object appeared to be an eight-inch plate suspended by a string or fishing line; the symbol apparently was drawn in ink (*ibid.*; Vallee, 1991).

By the early 1970s Ummo communications and speculations were so ubiquitous that the French government felt compelled to take action. The Ummites allegedly effected a landing near a village in the French Alps on April 24, 1950. The crew lived in a cave for a time, venturing out once to an isolated house in the middle of the night. There, after anesthetizing the owners, their children, and their three employees, they stole a number of items. Government investigators found neither the cave nor the police records that would have verified the story.

If they have nothing to do with extraterrestrials, the Ummo documents are still remarkable and enigmatic. The level of discourse is far above that ordinarily found in contactee discourse, which typically consists of dreary platitudes and airy metaphysics. It is, however, below the level one would expect from a true advanced extraterrestrial civilization. As Jacques Vallee, a scientifically sophisticated reader of the documents, remarks:

The alleged revelations, if they contain no great surprises, are clever and occasionally stimulating. They could have been produced by a person with a graduate degree in physics and a good acquaintance with biology, especially if that person had access to international meetings where extrapolations and avant-garde ideas are often debated ten or fifteen years before they become reality in scientific magazines. A science journalist, a government engineer working on advanced projects, or a frustrated writer could match the psychological profile of the UMMO author [Vallee, *op. cit.*].

Vallee argues that the hoax took its inspiration from a 1940s short story, "Tlön Uqbar, Orbis Tertius," written by the great Argentine fantasist Jorge Luis Borges. No one, however, has ever been able to establish who created the documents or made the phone calls, or why he or they would have wanted to devote so much

energy, time, and expense to the endeavor. Though numerous suspects have been named (Jordan, Sesma, the KGB, the CIA), no compelling evidence points to anyone in particular. On the other hand, that may not be because the hoaxers have been unusually skilled in hiding their tracks; it may have to do—as Hilary Evans, a British authority on the affair, thinks—with the incompetence of the investigation, such as it was, mounted by Ribera, Farriols, and other Spanish and French ufologists who were perhaps more mystified (and more willing to take the communicators at their word) than they ought to have been.

Where the Madrid-area reports of February 1966 and June 1967 are concerned, great caution is warranted. The involvement of Jordan in both, first as alleged witness and then as alleged investigator, is suspicious. A critical-minded reader cannot help wondering if those witnesses whose testimony comes to us only through Jordan are any more real than the copier and the professor. If indeed any real sighting took place on either of those two dates, Vallee and Poher note, it is conceivable that the object in question was a model, perhaps built at and flown from the nearby airport or the Aerotechnical School. There is no specific evidence for this hypothesis, but inasmuch as virtually everything else about Ummo is open to question and nothing else ties it to real UFOs, Vallee and Poher's speculation seems reasonable enough.

Sources:

- Creighton, Gordon. "A Brief Comment on the 'UMMO' Affair." *Flying Saucer Review* 20,5 (March 1975): 16.
- Edmond, T. Bryon. "Mail Bag: UMMO Again." *Flying Saucer Review* 21,5 (February 1976): iii-iv.
- Evans, Hilary. "Ummo: A Perfect Case?" *The Unexplained* 12,134 (1983a): 2661-65.
- . "The Ummites Tell All." *The Unexplained* 12,135 (1983b): 2686-89.
- . "Ummo—Red Alert." *The Unexplained* 12,137 (1983c): 2738-40.
- "Hoax, or Conspiracy?" *Flying Saucer Review* 26,2 (August 1980): 1-3.
- Ribera, Antonio. "The Madrid Landing." *Flying Saucer Review* 12,3 (May/June 1966): 28-31.

———. "The San José de Valderas Photographs." *Flying Saucer Review* 15,5 (September/October 1969): 3-10.

———. "The Mysterious 'UMMO' Affair." *Flying Saucer Review* Pt. I. 20,4 (January 1975): 20-24; Pt. II. 20,5 (March 1975): 13-16; Pt. III. 21,1 (June 1975): 26-28; Pt. IV. 21,2 (August 1975): 24-25,27; Pt. V. 21,3&4 (November 1975): 43-46.

Ribera, Antonio, and Rafael Farriols. *Un Caso Perfecto: Platillos Volantes Sobre España*. Revised edition. Barcelona, Spain: Plaza y Janes, 1973.

Sesma, Fernando. *Otro Planeta Habitado, Ummo*. Madrid, Spain: Editorial Graficas Espejo, 1967.

Vallee, Jacques. *The Invisible College: What a Group of Scientists Has Discovered About UFO Influences on the Human Race*. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1975.

———. *Revelations: Alien Contact and Human Deception*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1991.

UNITED NATIONS AND UFOs

The subject of UFOs occasionally is raised at the United Nations, and at least one of its Secretaries General—U Thant, who served between 1961 and 1972—had some interest in the matter. In early 1966 writer John G. Fuller and Northwestern University astronomer/Project Blue Book consultant J. Allen Hynek met Thant in the latter's office to discuss UFOs and their implications for the human race (Fuller, 1969). It was through U Thant's efforts (McDonald, 1967b) that University of Arizona atmospheric physicist **James E. McDonald** was able to address the UN's Outer Space Affairs Group on June 7, 1967. McDonald urged that "all possible steps be taken immediately by the United Nations Organization, through its scientific staff and through the scientific facilities of all its member Nations, to undertake a systematic global study of the UFO problem immediately" (McDonald, 1967a). The group did not act on McDonald's recommendation.

Ufological discourse was next sounded at the UN on November 3, 1971, when the Ugandan representative asked the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to encourage astronauts who encountered UFOs to treat them respectfully. He wanted to insert a statement to that effect into a UN statement

on space exploration, but his colleagues were unmoved (Story, 1980).

In 1975, 1976, and 1977 the delegation from Grenada brought up the subject of "unidentified flying objects and other related phenomena" in the UN General Assembly. The impetus was the strong personal interest of the tiny Caribbean island-nation's prime minister, Sir Eric Gairy. On July 7, 1978, the Grenada delegation issued a statement calling for "open discussions on the very important subject . . . a matter of great significance at this time for all mankind." On the fourteenth Gairy, accompanied by ufologists Hynek, Jacques Vallee, David R. Saunders, Leonard H. Stringfield, and Claude Poher, met with UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim to organize a steering committee which would develop plans for possible UN involvement in UFO research.

On November 27 Hynek, Vallee, Stanton T. Friedman, UFO witness Lawrence J. Coyne (*see Coyne CE2*), and Grenada Ambassador at Large Wellington Friday spoke before a special UN committee. Grenada sought to interest the UN in a three-member panel to initiate a formal UFO-study program, but its efforts were unavailing. Beyond newspaper publicity, the episode made no impact, and no other nation backed Grenada.

Under Gairy's rule many Grenadians complained of corruption, human-rights violations, and economic inequality. Gairy was overthrown in the spring of 1979 and went into exile for a period, returning only after the American invasion of October 1983 threw out the successors to Gairy's successors. His continued unpopularity, however, foiled plans for a political comeback.

Aside from occasional discussion of UFOs within the confines of the UN building, an unidentified aerial object figures in one account of the plane crash that killed Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) on September 18, 1961. According to the *London Daily Telegraph* (January 20, 1962), an eyewitness, Timothy Kankasa, told an official inquiry that just prior to the crash, he had seen a small, unlighted craft flying above the larger passenger aircraft carrying Hammarskjöld and 15 others. The latter was "beaming lights" on the former. It then flew off to the northeast shortly before the crash ("Mystery," 1962).

Nº 5.062

Parrish, J. K. "Our Country's Mysterious Monsters." *Old West* (Fall 1969): 25, 37-38.

Pearl, Jack. "Monster Bird That Carries off Human Beings!" *Saga* (May 1963): 28, 30-31, 83-85.

"The Search for the Thunderbird Photo (Continues)." *Strange Magazine* 12 (Fall/Winter 1993): 38-39; 15 (Spring 1995): 44-45; 16 (Fall 1995): 40-41; 18 (Summer 1997): 34-35; 19 (Spring 1998): 26-28.

Wiedemann, Charles. "Jumping Carefully to Conclusions." *Pursuit* 9, 2 (April 1976): 44-45.

Winters, Wayne. "Report from the Readers: Situation Normal: All Fowled up." *Fate* 19, 8 (August 1966): 128-29.



Ummo

There is no stranger, more complex UFO hoax than the Ummo affair. It is supposed to have begun in 1965, when Fernando Sesma, a contactee who directed the Society of Space Visitors, allegedly received a phone call from a man who spoke in Spanish with a foreign accent. The caller said he represented an "extraterrestrial order" and declined the offer to meet personally but promised further communications.

Soon documents said to have been written by residents of Ummo, identified as a planet revolving around the star Iumma 14.6 light years from the sun, were arriving in the mail for Sesma and his associates. Each document bore an unusual symbol that resembled a closed parenthesis and an open parenthesis joined by a plus sign: $)+($. Though conventional astronomy recognizes neither Ummo nor Iumma, in time their existence became an article of faith to devoted disciples in Europe and the Americas.

On February 6, 1966, several soldiers and two civilian witnesses saw a large circular object touch down briefly in a Madrid suburb. One observer who caught a glimpse of the UFO's underside saw a curious symbol that those privy to Ummo's secrets immediately recognized.

An advertisement in the May 20, 1967, issue of the Spanish newspaper *Informaciones* announced that on June 1 an Ummo craft would land outside Madrid and carry some of the faithful to the home planet. On that date, in San Jose de Valderas, a Madrid suburb, a flying object with the Ummo symbol on it was seen by a number of witnesses. Two sets of photographs of this UFO turned out to be fakes. In spite of the photographer's effort to hide the fact, it was determined that they were taken by the same man, an untraceable "Antonio Pardo." The image, in which the symbol is clearly visible, is no more than 8.5 inches in diameter, a simple model made of plastic plates. The symbol apparently was scrawled on the bottom of the model with a marker pencil.

Later that evening, in yet another Madrid suburb, Santa Monica, witnesses reportedly saw a UFO descending toward the ground, then taking off and disappearing in the darkness. The next morning apparent landing traces were found at the site. So were metallic cylinders, each with a disc at its center. When opened, the inside of the cylinders contained the Ummo symbol. Shortly thereafter, local shop-



keepers received a letter signed by "Henri Dagousset," who asked that the capsules be sent to one "Antoine Nancey." Neither "Dagousset" nor "Nancey," it turned out, existed. When studied in a scientific laboratory, moreover, the ostensibly extraterrestrial artifacts were proven to consist of conventional earthly materials. One investigator speculates the "UFO" seen in these two incidents was a radio-controlled model. Perhaps significantly, both sightings occurred near an airport and the Aerotechnical School, "both of which would have been convenient places to build, control, and hide a disk-shaped model."

Meanwhile, growing numbers of Spanish ufologists were getting Ummo documents. By the end of the decade, at least 600 pages of ruminations on Ummo science, philosophy, politics, and civilization had been collected. The documents arrived via conventional mail; most had a Madrid postmark, but others were sent from Australia, New Zealand, England, Argentina, France, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and the United States.

Antonio Pardo (who has proven untraceable) took this photo of a UFO near Madrid, Spain.

(Courtesy Fortean Picture Library.)

The science described in these communications suggested that the author or authors had a university education and a familiarity with current physical and biological knowledge and theory. But few sophisticated readers believed that these were the thoughts of a true advanced extraterrestrial race. In fact, as Jacques Vallee, a ufologist trained in astrophysics and computer sciences, wrote, "The Ummo technology is without major surprises, and it matches the kind of clever extrapolations one finds in any good science-fiction novel. . . . The computers of Ummo . . . may have seemed advanced by the standards of the equipment available in Spain in the Sixties, but they are downright primitive by state-of-the-art Silicon Valley standards."

The Ummites, who look much like us, reportedly arrived on Earth on April 24, 1950, when they landed in the French Alps. Since then they have been observing terrestrial affairs, though without interfering in them. They communicate by telepathy because when they turn fourteen their vocal cords close up. Apparently, however, they are able to speak over the phone, if the testimony of those who say they have received calls from them is to be credited. According to Hilary Evans, "Most of the letters were written in Spanish and the rest were in French, although it looks as though they were written by a Spaniard – occasionally the Spanish spelling of a word is used instead of the French."

What amounts to an Ummo cult claims followers around the world. Compilations of the documents have been published in Spanish and English, and Ummo-composed letters continue to be produced. According to Spanish ufologists Carlos Berche Cruz and Ignacio Cabria Garcia, the most likely instigators of the hoax are Sesma and individuals within his organization, though the investigators concede the charge cannot be proven. They point out, however, that in the 1950s Sesma invented a cabalistic language and circulated writings about his pre-Ummo space contacts in which Ummo-like concepts and ideas were featured.

Other writers have speculated, though without evidence, that Ummo is a sociological experiment engineered by an intelligence agency.

Curiously, the inspiration for the Ummo hoax is apparent. It lies in twentieth-century literature: a 1941 short story by the great Argentine fantasist Jorge Luis Borges. In "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius," a dense, intellectually complex fable, a secret society (Orbis Tertius) invents an imaginary country (Uqbar), then an imaginary planet (Tlön). References to these nonexistent realms begin to appear sporadically and mysteriously in geographical and historical texts, which delve into the strange life of Tlön, "with its architectures and quarrels, with the terror of its mythologies and the uproar of its languages, its emperors and seas, its minerals and birds and fish, its algebra and fire, its theological and metaphysical controversies." Eventually Tlön begins not only to exist but to obliterate our world.

Substitute "Ummo" for "Tlön" in these words of Borges, and you have a perfect summation of the Ummo mystery: "Tlön is surely a labyrinth, but it is a labyrinth devised by men, destined to be deciphered by men."

Sources

- Borges, Jorge Luis. *Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings*. New York: New Directions, 1964.
- Evans, Hilary. "Ummo: A Perfect Case?" *The Unexplained* 12, 134 (1983): 2661-65.
- . "The Ummites Tell All." *The Unexplained* 12, 135 (1983): 2686-89.
- . "Ummo - Red Alert." *The Unexplained* 12, 137 (1983): 2738-40.
- Ribera, Antonio. "The Madrid Landing." *Flying Saucer Review* 12, 3 (May/June 1966): 28-31.
- . "The San José de Valderas Photographs." *Flying Saucer Review* 15, 5 (September/October 1969): 3-10.
- . "The Mysterious 'UMMO' Affair." *Flying Saucer Review* Pt. I. 20, 4 (January 1975): 20-24; Pt. II. 20, 5 (March 1975): 13-16; Pt. III. 21, 1 (June 1975): 26-28; Pt. IV. 21, 2 (August 1975): 24-25, 27; Pt. V. 21, 3&4 (November 1975): 43-46.
- Vallee, Jacques. *The Invisible College: What a Group of Scientists Has Discovered About UFO Influences on the Human Race*. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1975.
- . *Revelations: Alien Contact and Human Deception*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1991.

Vile Vortices

Ivan T. Sanderson, a zoologist with a wide-ranging curiosity about anomalous phenomena and a creative imagination that often outraced available evidence, subscribed to the view that an intelligent civilization lives, undetected by the rest of us, in the oceans of the Earth. (It may also be, he said, that "there are intelligent entities who have been coming here from elsewhere" and who base themselves in the oceans to avoid detection.) At least some UFOs are their aircraft, which double as submarines.

Taking note of what he characterized as mysterious plane and ship disappearances, he went on to suggest that these aquatic "OINTs" (Other Intelligences) may be snatching people as they traverse the oceans. These disappearances take place in disproportionate numbers in ten "vile vortices" - lozenge-shaped areas that stretch in parallel bands at equal distances above and below the equator, exactly 72 degrees apart. Besides these ten, Sanderson added the two polar regions to make a total of a dozen vile vortices.

"And do not for a moment think that the disappearance of planes, ships, and subs is the *only* odd occurrence reported," he wrote. "Other oddities include wild reports of all sorts of UAOs [unidentified aerial objects] therefrom."

The vortices, of which the most famous is the - to Sanderson misnamed - Bermuda Triangle, are areas where OINTs operate. They are also areas where erratic natural phenomena (sudden high winds, storms, rough water) cause disturbances in space and time. In this milieu, where the OINTs are most likely to be detected, they are on occasion forced to take dramatic action to keep their presence a secret. Not wanting us to "know about their presence and activities," the OINTs may kidnap a "whole ship and everything in and on it."

Nº 4.307

THE
UFO
BOOK



298

In the other major hoax, beginning in the mid-1960s in Spain, persons unknown posing as extraterrestrials from the planet Ummo produced many hundreds of documents, often of considerable length and technical sophistication, and sent them to European UFO enthusiasts. The Ummites also produced photographs and other artifacts to buttress their claims. Whole anthologies of Ummite writings, which kept being produced for years afterwards, have been published, and a small but devoted Ummite cult thrives in Europe.

Tabloid and other tall tales. Other notable hoaxes of the period began as tall tales in supermarket tabloids. In September 1969, introducing what would prove to be a durable myth, the *National Bulletin* reported that the Apollo 11 astronauts had seen UFOs soon after their historic July 16, 1969, landing on the moon. As proof the tabloid reprinted the alleged transcript of radio communications between the astronauts and Mission Control. The *Bulletin* said that NASA had managed to censor the broadcast even though news media were covering the landing as a live event. The transcript, as sophisticated observers were quick to point out, was full of elementary factual, terminological, and other errors. Three years later ufologist Stuart Nixon challenged the tabloid to produce its documentation or, failing that, its reporter (identified as "Sam Pepper" in the by-line). Neither, Nixon was not surprised to learn, existed. Nonetheless, the story of the Apollo 11 encounters would live on in fringe UFO literature.

Official UFO, the brainchild of notorious schlockmeister Myron Fass, first treated UFO matters with reasonable accuracy, then changed its format to feature preposterous tales alleged to be true. Fass's most audacious hoax appeared in the January 1978 issue. In breathless prose the magazine recounted the destruction of Chester, Illinois, by marauding UFOs on the night of August 2, 1977. Reporters from the mainstream press interviewed residents of Chester (which, unlike the attacking UFOs, existed) and wrote tongue-in-cheek dispatches. Fass straight-facedly insisted that the incident had really happened but that the aliens had instantly rebuilt the town and erased most citizens' memory of the event.

Two science-fiction novels on UFO/extraterrestrial themes were marketed as true stories. In a paperback titled *The Terror Above Us* (1967) George Wolk, writing as "Malcom Kent," invented a UFO abduction and an onboard sexual experience. *An Account of a Meeting with Denizens of Another World 1871*—a hardcover published in Britain in 1979 and in the United States a year later—purported to be a lost manuscript written by a Buckinghamshire man, William Robert Loosley, and rediscovered by author David Langford. The book contained pictures of Loosley, his family, and even his grave. Loosley was indisputably a real man, not a literary creation; his "experience," however, was an invention of Langford, whose wife was a descendant of Loosley.

Nonentities. Besides these visible and widely circulated hoaxes, others received brief notice in newspapers and in the UFO literature and quickly passed into obscurity. Some of the stories involved alleged encounters with alien entities.