

Book Reviews

WAS THIS MAN'S OLDEST RELIGION?

Charles Bowen

THE historical aspect of UFOs was "researched" for Dr. Condon's Colorado Project by a documentary film producer and artist named Samuel Rosenberg, who explained, when writing in the Condon Report about some of man's early UFO sightings, that they were produced by rainbows, winds and droughts. The Condon Report in general, and the Rosenberg section in particular, are frequently criticised in a new book. F. W. Holiday, the author of an intriguing work, *The Dragon & The Disc* (Sidgwick and Jackson, London, 247 pages, price £3.25), states bluntly that the strange objects he saw, at a time when he had no interest in the subject, were neither the products of droughts, nor were they rainbows, and as he was forced to do Mr. Rosenberg's job for him, he would "start at the beginning."

So Mr. Holiday set out to conduct in-depth studies—in the course of which he makes some interesting speculations—of man's awareness for more than 150 centuries of UFOs, and dragons, those elusive lake and bog monsters. The dragon was known and associated with evil, while the disc shape was venerated, throughout much of that time, and often they were linked symbolically. Says Mr. Holiday: "No other idea has such an enormously long pedigree," for having survived the passing of paganism, it "flourished in carved stone throughout the cathedrals and churches of Christendom."

Mr. Holiday has built up a fine reputation as a researcher of the monster phenomena of Scotland and Ireland, and is well-known for his book *The Great Orm of Loch Ness*. As readers of our journal will recall, his interests broadened to include UFOs after his personal encounters with the aerial phenomenon, and he was soon to realise that the two sets of phenomena had in common a sense of almost "knowing" elusiveness.

After a brief introduction to recent scientific work at Loch Ness, the first part of *The Dragon & The Disc* is devoted to an engaging record of the searches conducted for, and investigations into the history of, the frequently appearing Peiste of Connemara, a great longneck with horned and trailing humps. The name *Peiste*, we are reminded, is derived from the Latin word for something noxious or harmful: horrific illustrations of the creature adorned many early religious manuscripts. Indeed, the lake and bog monsters were known in mediaeval times as the "Great Worms of Hell," emissaries of Satan, and likenesses of them were carved and sculpted in scores of ancient British churches: they are seen on occasion devouring errant humans, but more frequently being overcome by Saints Michael and George, or by Christ with the Cross. A list of such churches is given in an appendix.

Using, as a starting point, Aimé Michel's analysis of problems found in Magdalenian cave art (see *Palaeolithic UFO-shapes* in FSR 15/6) the author demonstrates the human persistence in recording, and using, the flying saucer disc-shape throughout prehistoric and more recent times. Again, the shape has been found scratched, together with the zig-zag undulating serpent shape, on a mesolithic stag antler, and this is a conjunction found in many later instances. The growth of disc culture and the use of the shape in sacred connections is seen over the centuries and throughout the continents: Bronze Age burial mounds, the veneration of the divine eye-disc; Odin worship, Zeus, Jupiter and Djevs, all suggest appreciation of phenomena remarkably like our modern UFO phenomenon.

There is a fascinating chapter on the myriad alignments of Bronze Age relics in Pembrokeshire, particularly in the Prescelly Hills whence came the Stonehenge Blue Stones: an area where the disc-shape abounds in burial places, even to the extent that small pots in the tombs carried decorations based on the eye-disc and, states the author, on the triangulations to be traced across the land outside the grave.

The Bronze Age people not only treated the disc shape as a religious symbol, but, says Mr. Holiday, they "thought discs, they wore them, and the dead were buried under them." The circular burial mounds are everywhere in the land, but are found in the greatest concentration in the country around the great stone circle of Stonehenge.

Searching for clues which might show "whether the Bronze Age discoid mounds were in some way related to the UFO phenomenon of modern report, or not," the author turns to the French UFO wave of 1954. He sees the reports of the giant cloud cigars—so like the great phenomenon that led the Israelites through Sinai during the Exodus—and their attendant discs. He quotes the case of St. Prouant, but gives no mention of the 1952 reports of Oloron and Gaillac which could have given further support to his argument. From cloud cigars Mr. Holiday returns to contemplation of the barrows in the vicinity of Stonehenge. His revelation about their layout is quite surprising. Other readers of the book will be intrigued, or even amazed by this discovery, but I do not propose to steal his thunder by saying more.

It is not possible in the space of a few paragraphs to discuss every point that is made, and to consider every speculation. While the subject matter seems generally to have been widely researched I confess I feel a little uneasy about the sources of some of the modern Warminster incidents which are quoted. It was necessary for the

illustration of his theme for the author to show that there are many modern UFO reports from the Salisbury Plain region: unfortunately the over-enthusiasm of some of the reporters in that area is only too well known. Be that as it may, the book is well reasoned and engagingly written, and it is thoroughly recommended. A very compelling argument is put forward that the ideas of good and evil associated with the concepts of the disc and the dragon were two of the main tenets of faith of groups widely dispersed throughout the ancient world. Was this mankind's oldest religion, inspired by apparitions which, largely unheeded, still beckon to, or attempt to alarm, today's huge human audience?

RESEARCH IN SHACKLES:

An Important New Book

Gordon Creighton

THERE is no English version, as yet, of the book reviewed here (the author is working on an English edition now) and FSR would not normally devote space to the reviewing of a work not yet available in English. It is however my conviction, after reading the German version, *Forschung in Fesseln. Elektro-Gravitation UFO-Phänomenen: Das Rätsel der Elektro-Gravitation*, by "Rho Sigma" (Ventla-Verlag, Wiesbaden, Germany, 1972), that, if what this writer says is true, then it is a very, very important work indeed.

The English rendering of the title would read: *Research in Shackles. Electro-Gravitational UFO Phenomena: The Riddle of Electrogravitation*.

His thesis is that the basic discoveries that would open up for us the way to mastery of the method of electromagnetic propulsion as already used by alien craft operating in our skies have already been made, and that *it is only because of a monumental cover-up and conspiracy of silence by all-powerful vested interests that no further research and development have taken place.*

The author, whose identity is known to me and with whom I am in contact, is a German-American research engineer with 30 years of international experience in Aviation and in Space Research Engineering. He is a member of the highly respected AIAA (the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics). He worked during World War II at the German rocket-research centre at Peenemünde, and for a few years after the war was a scientific correspondent for an important West German paper. In 1952 he went to the USA and worked first in the aircraft engine industry and then (for seven years) in Alabama and elsewhere on NASA Space-Programme projects.

His purpose in writing this book, which is copiously annotated against important American source material, is to call for a re-examination of the work of such pioneers as Thomas Townsend Brown ("T. T. Brown"); Dr. Erwin J. Saxl; Dr. P. Biefeld; Dr. Horace C.

Dudley, and others, for these people, so he maintains, are the ones who have already given us the necessary clues for unlocking the secrets of electrogravitation or, to use the current term which "Rho Sigma" prefers, *electromagnetic propulsion*, which would give us gravity-free flight in Space.

Lacking a scientific training, I am unable to comment upon the validity or otherwise of this extraordinary thesis. I can therefore only make my contribution by drawing attention to the existence of this book and its author, so that those who are scientifically qualified may pronounce upon it and may profit from it should it yield pay-dirt.

"Rho Sigma" tells us that the work was originally written by him for "one of Europe's biggest publishing houses—already well known from the fact of their having published two books on the possibility of visits to the Earth by extraterrestrial beings in past times." The identity of the publishing house in question is thus not difficult to guess, but since "Rho Sigma" does not actually name them, I shall not name them either. But, so he tells us, when the publishers in question had read his manuscript and had perceived what dynamite it contained, they rapidly lost interest.

Karl L. Veit, of the German UFO-Investigation Group in Wiesbaden, accordingly took over the task of getting the book into print through his Ventla-Verlag, and I think that Herr Veit is to be congratulated most strongly for this courageous step.

The book is dedicated to the memory of a great American scientist, Dr. James E. McDonald, whom "Rho Sigma" knew. Like myself, "Rho Sigma" is certain that many recent deaths of prominent UFO investigators have not been fortuitous, and this is why he prefers to remain anonymous at the present time.

"Rho Sigma" is telling us that the required evidence is here before our eyes, and the clues too; that the groundwork has already been done; that NASA already possesses ample documentation proving that there is unlimited energy in the Universe, simply waiting to be tapped. But, as he recently wrote to me: "*So long as official science continues to look the other way and ignore all observed E/M effects, we will never get ahead and learn more about it.*"

I say it again. This may be a vitally important book. I hope that we shall soon hear that the English edition is forthcoming, and I hope that *Research In Shackles* will be studied carefully by those who are competent to pronounce on these matters and who are also not wearing their blinkers.

OUR COVER DRAWING

is by **Joël Mesnard**, author of the article starting on page 17. M. Mesnard is an investigator for the French group G.E.P.A.—although his article has not appeared in their journal.

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