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Review of the Vallee and Davies paper by "[Patrick](#)"

L'incommensurability and the metaphysical temptation:

About "Incommensurability, Orthodoxy and the Physics of High Strangeness"

by Jacques F. Vallée and Eric W. Davies

The paper [1] that I ("Patrick") discuss here defends that the continuing study of "UAP" for "Unidentified Aerial Phenomena" -- which includes "appearances" of a religious or spiritual nature -- may bring forth a new theorem for new models of physical reality. It is proposed on one hand that Physics is unable to deal with this, and on the other hand that the UFOs are not "nuts-an- bolts" for they violate the laws of Physics. The authors see a "*psychic*" component in the UAP phenomenon.

The problem with this paper is that Vallée seems to have understood the consequences of the question of incommensurability very differently from what I understood of it. And from there, draws conclusions; which are opposed to those -- that in my opinion and perhaps other opinions -- the notion of incommensurability infers [2] [3].

"**Incommensurability**" is the notion that if certain UFOs are *extraterrestrial* machines, if there are encounters with their occupants, it is only sensible to think that human witnesses cannot really correctly interpret neither correctly perceive neither understand the physics of the machines at a glance and cannot comprehend neither the behavior nor the intentions of the occupants.

We are in the position of the native of Papua-New Guinea in their first encounters with the western explorers. For the natives, a Land Rover is "the mother" of its occupants. It "gives birth to them" when they open the doors and come out of it. Their clothing are "a strange skin inside of which they can introduce their hands without bleeding" (the pockets). Their power unit is "an animal with a monstrous growls, which never sleeps". The explorers may be their own dead people returned from the "country of the dead," etc [4].

And in this case, we have a meeting of 2 civilizations which share the same biology, the same environment. If other civilization not sharing the same biology nor the same environment are encountered, it is not even possible to imagine how huge the incomprehension, the impossibility of understanding their technology, their intentions, and the functions of their objects and equipment would be.

This is incommensurability.

It is this incommensurability which was evoked by science-fiction author A.C. Clarke [5] when he wrote that appearance of *extraterrestrial* visitors (in which he did not believe with the argument that he never saw any) would appear to us as an act of magical characteristics. It is this level of incommensurability which French sociologist and ufologist Pierre Lagrange tries to indicate when he recently explained on national TV that *extraterrestrial* beings would be, for us, almost "invisible". Parts of the paper I comment here precisely develop this concept. I think that this is the part of paper ascribable to Eric Davies. What I fear is that this fundamental part of paper goes unnoticed or misunderstood, to the benefit of a reading of the paper as an argumentation against an *extraterrestrial* origin of some UFOs.

One among the most speculative variations of this is to support that "nuts-and-bolts *extraterrestrial* beings" are illusions forged "to fool us" by "an intelligence" which is supposedly not of *extraterrestrial* origin but of some "meta-terrestrial" or "ultra-terrestrial" nature (whatever this may mean).

This is a concept there that Vallée inter alia [6] often proposed [7] elsewhere. And it appears in this paper again. I think that it is speculation at its worst, seemingly the elaboration of a more refined theory than that of "ordinary" *extraterrestrial* beings. But it is actually not a good theory. It is merely the explanation of a problem with a mystery. It is a bad theory because its explanatory capacity is null.

On the contrary, the notion of incommensurability is precisely that which makes it possible to avoid such ad hoc constructions: *extraterrestrial* machines and their occupants do not appear familiar enough to us, seems to violate certain "laws of physics?" Well, how could it be different? How can anyone seriously think that *extraterrestrial* ships and occupants from another planet should necessarily appear and behave simply as we expect?

Vallée -- on the ground that the UFOs and occupants do not comply to a certain credo of human conception -- claims that the UFO phenomenon is strange and absurd and that thus it cannot have any straight-forward *extraterrestrial* origin.

On the contrary, I claim that if there were neither strangeness nor absurdity, then it could not be *extraterrestrial*.

In addition, mocking ideas concerning the so-called "nuts-and-bolts hypothesis" are proposed. First of all, as far as I am concerned, there is a theory and not an hypothesis there. Moreover, there is no need for bolts-or-nuts as we figure. What I want to say is that Vallée speculates that the *extraterrestrial* occupants are not *extraterrestrial* beings because they do not behave as *extraterrestrial* beings should according to his own interpretation of a "nuts-and-bolts ETH." He reduces the theory of the *extraterrestrial* intelligent origin of certain UFOs to a simplistic and cartoonist imagery and proposes a more "para" or "ultra" vision, as if the "paras" and the "ultras" would then be of a not *extraterrestrial* nature (*extraterrestrial* intelligence would then apply only to visitors who would be "like us" from almost any point of view (biology, technology, intentions, behaviors) except that they would originate from another planet. "Para-this" and "ultra-that" would be of not-*extraterrestrial* -- that is to say thus, terrestrial (??))

Another mechanism is at work with Vallée, that of the mixture of sorts and the leveling of the facts. The mixture of sorts is that if any people claims to have seen a ghost or the Virgin Mary, or if anyone is communicating with "the spirits", then it means to him that the UFO phenomenon has components that "ETH proponents" refuse to take into account. This is incorrect. What I personally refuse to take into account as being part of facts that must necessarily be explained as part of the UFO phenomenon are accounts without verifiable substance, legends, so-called *psychic* effects which either do not have anything other to support them than accounts of gullible people convinced in advance or even making

commercial benefit of it, or so called facts which do not have the least characteristic in them allowing to claim that they bear the least relationship with the UFO question.

The mixture of sorts also consists in suggesting that everything of a strange nature, whether verified or not (*telepathy*, torsion of spoons, appearances of the Virgin Mary, miraculous health recoveries, prophecies...) has a relationship with the UFO phenomenon simply because these alleged facts are strange. And so is the UFO phenomenon in the eyes of many.

The leveling of the facts is to pick up a Middle-Age story -- such as that of the "green children" or a crowd which mistakes an undersun for a divine demonstration -- and to grant to that the same weight as that which may be granted to multiple, independent, qualified and non-believers witnesses, supported by additional, non-visual, media of observation, of the operations of a machine in the sky whose aeronautical performances exclude that it is "ours".

In fact, what I noted again-and-again is the erroneous addition of nonsense to the phenomenon which should not be added at all. I want to give a short example concerning the French UFO flap of 1954. It was claimed that the *extraterrestrial* beings reported during this flap were a "collection of the absurd" in the sense that these reported visitors had nonsensical features and behaviors in so many cases [7].

Remember the *extraterrestrial* visitor wearing an "orange frock coat" brought back by a certain witness. Admittedly, that confers something nonsensical to this *extraterrestrial* being. The only problem there is that this case was explained very early. The witness had judged credible enough for an excuse of being late at work that morning, to invent that his delay was due to his encounter of a saucer and his occupant on his way to work. It is thus rightly -- and not because "ETH proponents" ignore "disturbing facts"-- that this case must not be taken into account in the "ETH" rather than to build a hazardous speculation by adding useless *psychic* or ultra-dimensional components or concept of "witnesses manipulated by the phenomenon".

I may also tell of some cases of hairy or furry extraterrestrial beings [8] or that of this French peasant reporting his 1954 encounter [9] with the crew of a NATO helicopter, with a loud and clear report, including the military uniform, the European language and the tap on the head of the family dog which is in a listing of "UFO landings and humanoid encounters". Admittedly, that *extraterrestrial* beings seemed so affectionate with the farmyard dog, asked for the direction of Paris, had the European type, could seem to be an argument for the theory of "the ultra-terrestrial intelligence which deludes humanity since ages" with producing absurd *aliens*.

But for me -- "ETH supporter" and "nuts-and-bolt ufologist" -- the explanation is very different. The witness accurately reported the landing of a NATO military helicopter, which he did not correctly interpret because he knew nothing on helicopters. Then a local newspaper man with no experience of what ufology is sees "Martians" there. And a ufologist (who should know better) concludes later that the UFO phenomenon includes such nonsense that the explanation cannot be in *extraterrestrial* beings in nuts-and-bolts spacecraft and proposes that the phenomenon is a *psychic* phenomenon created by an intelligence which is beyond physics but capable of creating illusions of a physical nature.

Another example I want to give is the case of Carl Higdon's encounter with a being, certainly not a terrestrial being, and its apparatus in 1974 [10]. This case is definitely very "nuts-and-bolts" in nature. But supporters of the UFOs purported "violation of the laws of Physics" are happy with it. They insist that the spacecraft seemed larger inside than it seemed to be when Higdon saw it from the outside.

Actually, there is no "violation of the laws of Physics" there. Higdon does not have conscious memories from what occurred inside the machine. And it is by the doubtful technique of hypnotic

regression that this impossible space dilation of the vessel was born. There again, the "supporters of the ETH" are accused to reject data. But on the contrary, they are founded to reject this detail. Not because they find it disturbing (the considered wormholes are things of that type indeed), but with the reason that what come into consciousness via hypnotic regression is nothing of the order of established fact.

When sticking to the story of what Higdon consciously perceived of its encounter, "ETH proponents" note that there is no need to introduce neither other dimensions, ultra-terrestrial concepts, nor *psychic* phenomena. They note that if one admits that the encounter happened as Higdon consciously remembered it, the theory that he met a visitor from outer space is perfectly suitable and provides a simple and rational explanation without requiring fundamental upheavals of scientific knowledge. Even less requiring the introduction of psychic phenomena. **[StealthSkater note: why can't you merge "nuts-and-bolts" with the psychic realm? These things exist as a consciousness-based reality until something causes them to take "nuts-and-bolts" form. That reminds one of "monsters from the ID" in the sci-fi classic "Forbidden Planet". The Montauk Project's Preston Nichols talks about creating "artificial realities" within soliton bubbles (used in stealth) that would make internal volumes greater than outside dimensions would seem to allow => [doc](#) [pdf](#) [URL-doc](#) [URL-pdf](#)]**

It is obvious that it becomes very easy to "absurdify" the "ETH" for its opponents if it is enough for them to add per hundreds stories the *extraterrestrial* in orange frock coats, Virgin Mary appearances, inter-dimensional gantries, *extraterrestrial* beings in military outfit speaking Italian, stories of travel in "the astral planes," Near-Death Experiences, channeling, torsions of spoons (it does not matter whether the spoons are or are not really bent via by some psychic capacity of the performing artist, it is enough if he claims to be inspired by the *aliens*). Will it become necessary that the "ETH proponents" also hold account of the Loch Ness monster? In the same order of idea, will it become an argument that the "ETH" rejects lenticular clouds, refusing to see that lenticular clouds disprove the ETH?

Let us check what the paper proposes as characteristic of the "layer II" which is meant to be some "violations of the laws of Physics." The effects supposedly violating physics are quoted as "sinking into the ground"

It remains to be demonstrated that UFOs considered as *extraterrestrial* spaceships were regularly the subject of seriously documented reports and thorough investigation in which serious witnesses, multiple witnesses, qualified witnesses reported a UFO "sinking into the ground". The ground-sinking UFO must actually have been considered to be an *extraterrestrial* spacecraft by opposition (for example, with a stormy plasma, which can indeed "sink into the ground" without even having to be regarded as "violating the laws of physics"!)

"... shrinking in size, growing larger, or changing shape on the spot becoming fuzzy and transparent on the spot dividing into 2-or-more objects, several of them merging into one object at slow speed ..."

There again, I do not see anything anti-physics if only in comparison with aeronautics known for us. A carrier bomber plane launching the X-15 and an in-flight refueling operation, for example, are "2 objects which separate in full flight." Certainly not anything out of ordinary physics and without anything *psychic* to it. A plane with variable wing geometry does not have anything *psychic*. An object which moves away or approaches another can "change size" in the eye of a witness. One will consult with profit the posthumous book by Paul R. Hill -- a aeronautics scientist and UFO witness -- which listed the part of illusion in the "violation of the laws of physics" by UFOs [\[14\]](#). **[StealthSkater note: this author is IMO very ignorant of the spectacular nature of many incidents. They are not a simple separation of 2 aircraft or an F-14 or F-111 changing wing geometry. UFOs were seen to merge in a soundless explosion and form an entirely different craft, often of much larger or**

smaller geometry. Likewise, single UFOs were seen to split apart into completely different shapes whose combined dimensions did not come close to equaling the original craft's.]

" ...disappearing at one point and appearing elsewhere instantaneously; remaining observable visually while not detected by radar; producing missing time or time dilatation; producing topological inversion or space dilatation (object was estimated to be of small exterior size/volume, but witness(s) saw a huge interior many times the exterior size) ..."

A submarine which would make surface in a point, then would plunge under the sea to surface in another point, would not represent anything anti-physics except in the eye of a culture who does not know that this is possible (again, the incommensurability issue). It should be clear that a spacecraft of *extraterrestrial* origin could -- or even must -- show characteristics which should not be described as anti-physics but simply to be the technological consequences of possibilities permitted by a more advanced comprehension of physics from ours. Research in connection with space travel envisions the use of controlled wormholes. They do suggest for example to "shrink" a bubble of space containing the spacecraft to be moved. This research and explorations are in the field of physics, not in the field of *psychics*. Also, it remains to be specified exactly which case is in mind when it is suggested that there are reports of spacecraft smaller in the outside than in the inside [10]. **[StealthSkater note: It wasn't "suggested". Rather eyewitnesses gave clear accounts. Imagine a huge B-52 bomber giving rise to 3 small F-16 fighters.]**

" ...appearing as balls of colored, intensely bright light under intelligent control ..."

An ordinary plane with its landing lights matches this very description of "balls of colored, intensely bright lights under intelligent control." There is nothing at all anyway which has to be in the order of the *psychic* instead of the order of the *physic* in that.

There are in paper such a quantity of assumptions and ideas I estimate erroneous, that I will not discuss all. But here are some points:

Calling upon C.G. Jung as supporter of *psychic* theories is rather laughable when it is known that Jung had made this suggestion that UFOs are an "artifact of the collective unconscious" before learning on the nature of UFO reports. Then he had completely rejected this concept and joined the ETH followers once he did check out what UFO reports really are [11] [12].

The notion that the UFO phenomenon seems to consist of witnesses' manipulation is quoted as a reason to think that the phenomenon is not of an intelligent *extraterrestrial* nature; in the name of what? Is this in the name of this anthropomorphism which the paper is supposed to reject? Incommensurability is precisely the principle which should encourage to remain careful at the same time on the notion that there really is a "manipulation" of the witnesses by the phenomenon and on the interpretation that it really is a "manipulation.". In any event, it is not reasonable to reject an *extraterrestrial* origin of certain UFOs with the arguments that witnesses are "manipulated" by the phenomenon.

As for the acronym "UAP" substituted for that of "UFO", there is no need to make a case of that. This is a simple "political trick" used by NARCAP (among others) in order not to frighten the scientists that they try to interest in the matter. Too many people still laugh at the suggestion to consider the question UFO as an even remotely valid question, whereas a new acronym is supposed to "sound" more "neutral" without the politically incorrect concept of "*extraterrestrial* occupants". NARCAP and others have thus by tactical convention embraced the habit to call UAP what the USAF called UFO so that supposedly "serious" people (i.e., people who normally scoff at any mention of "UFOs") get interested by the topic instead of laughing at it.

Fair enough. But starting from the difference between UAP ("phenomenon") and UFO ("object"), between "Aerial" and "Flying" it will be grafted the concept that UFOs are not objects and not flying whatsoever, that they are a "mere phenomena" etc. There is an opposite risk of reduction. At the time of Project 'Blue Book', a UFO was not a UFO except if there were reasons to think that an object had been present and flying. With the UAP, the risk is that those which may be allured by the virginity of the acronym again reduce the phenomenon to flimsical plasmoids, aurorae borealis, undersun, will-o'-the-wisps, etc. This said, I think that among those which currently scoff at the UFO question and which are supposed being allured by new name, few will be so easily deceived by this tactical trick. What will occur is more likely that "promoters of the ETH" -- to use the already reducing qualifier -- will again be viewed as people for whom any report of any phenomenon in the sky is a report of an *extraterrestrial* spaceship flyby.

The part of the paper probably reflecting Vallée's ideas will certainly add more confusion on the topic. The most obvious risk come from this distinction between completely speculative "levels" of reality. The principle of incommensurability should make it clear that if a UFO "violates the laws of the Physics", it is because we do not have a complete understanding of what is allowed and forbidden by these laws of Physics. And that we cannot possibly know what may become possible with a technology which -- if it is *extraterrestrial* -- is necessarily in advance in comparison with ours and with all at least be different from ours.

But Vallée chooses to introduce the idea again that when a phenomenon "violates the laws of Physics", it is not that we do not know nor control yet all the "laws of Physics" and their consequences. But it is -- to him -- proof that there is "another physics," or something beyond physics -- ultra-physics or metaphysics of *psychic*. And from that, certain readers will certainly accepts Vallée's shortcut and agree that the main consequence is that that UFOs and their occupants could not be only physical spaceships and their occupants coming from another planet.

Although the paper comprises a small paragraph suggesting that the "violation of the laws of Physics" may be explained by our incomplete knowledge of these laws, its conclusion is different, explaining astonishing aspects of the UFOS not by our very obvious technological inferiority but by the invention of "levels" of realty beyond physics (or *metaphysics*), explaining a small mystery by a complete enigma. That all this is supposedly supported by the notion of incommensurability is something I cannot believe for the reasons indicated above.

Conclusion

The paper's conclusion seems to suggest that the UFO phenomenon can be investigated correctly only if it is considered that it has physical and psychic components altogether. I do not agree. I support that the so-called effects supposedly of psychic nature do not make up for a reality which would not be physical but raised partly from a use of physics we do not yet understand and partly are non-facts -- that is, false stories or incorrect representation of true stories which should not be used in any serious UFO casebook.

I support that the paper -- which will undoubtedly be read without taking account of this -- will succeed in consolidate part of the people interested in the problem in the speculation that UFOs are not physical or not only physical, and that all this will result in the continuation of wild speculations on "other dimensions", "astral planes", and the "ultra-terrestrial". That is, a so-called explanation of the "UFO mystery" by all sorts of other unfathomable mysteries escaping scientific criticism since defined as "beyond reality".

Those who take this dead-end should not complain that all sorts of pseudo-scientific garbage of *paraphysical* nature are spread by unqualified amateurs, charlatans, and gurus of UFO cults. Those who suggest that UFOs are more than physical or beyond physics should not wonder why most uninformed mainstream scientists do not follow them and do not see in the UFO problem anything else than a lot of crap.

Those who read Vallée's writings since the beginnings are accustomed with his deliberate exploration of any possibilities behind the UFO phenomenon (he defined himself as "the heretic among the heretics"). They are accustomed with his apparent or sincere (who can tell?) changes of mind, contradictions which are really wild speculations. They are accustomed with his habit of explaining mysteries by enigmas (crop circles are created by the military; if we never saw them doing it, that is because they use invisible planes as he speculated [13] recently.)

Others will undoubtedly accept any one or the other of the ideas brewed by Vallée as if they were "conclusion" of the UFO problem, which goes against his own idea ("everyone claims to know what the saucers are, 'they are *extraterrestrial*', 'they are not *extraterrestrial*', I am the only one to claim that I do not know whether they are or aren't *extraterrestrial*", he said recently. I am unconvinced that all this can bring anything really interesting. The "para" aspect as seen by Vallée in the UFO appearances is -- as far as I am concerned -- nothing else than the demonstration that we can neither perceive nor understand something of extraterrestrial origin correctly -- an effect, precisely, of the incommensurability.

[StealthSkater note: One of the themes that occurs over-and-over in investigating UFOs is that they operate as by "magic". Many "nuts-and-bolts" researchers say that all of their academic and on-the-job training has not provided them with the theoretical or manufacturing knowledge to even begin to back-engineer these things. Look at the progress of the best scientific minds in all the nations of the World for the last 60 years. Do you see any man-made UFOs in the sky? The progress is zilch.

I make an argument using a "back door" approach. What is the one area in Science which eludes our greatest intellects. It is the study of consciousness -- the *metaphysics* of the psychic realm. I propose that UFOs are an example of consciousness-engineering that makes use of advanced mental development as well as psycho-reactive materials-of-construction. But that still implies "nuts-and-bolts" (albeit quite advanced from our current state-of-the-art).

What Vallée and Davies proposed leads me to refine my hypothesis that perhaps these things exist in "consciousness form" in one of the dimensions that superstring/M-brane theories allow (in the Multiverse). And at times, they can "de-cohere" and become "flesh-and-blood" in our physical 3-D world. At other times, they could exist in their own soliton Macroscopic Quantum Tunneling "bubble" as suggested by Nichols (above) and similarly by UNITEL => <http://www.stealthskater.copm/UNITEL.htm> . (The Philadelphia Experiment would be another example of a UNITEL-type real-life object existing as a quantum waveform.)

If true, one could readily understand the helplessness that our brightest minds would feel when attempting to build such a craft using existing technologies. Better to see what parts of the UFOs could be retrofitted into our manufacturing base (such as Col. Corso claimed was done with lasers, integrated circuits, night-vision, optical fibers).]

FOOTNOTES:

1. "Incommensurability, Orthodoxy and the Physics of High Strangeness", paper by Jacques F. Vallée and Eric W. Davis, NIDS, http://216.128.67.116/pdf/vallee_davis.pdf, November, 2003.
2. "Le Problème de l'Incommensurabilité et le Paradoxe de Fermi", (The incommensurability problem and the Fermi paradox), par Eric Davis, astrophysicist, National Institute for Discovery Science, with some personal comment on <http://ufologie.net/htm/davies01.htm>, 2002.
3. "Le principe de banalité", by Aimé Michel, 1973.
4. Those who may be tempted to see here some sort of "evaluation of merit" in which I would claim the some are "more evolved" than other have simply not understood anything of my speech. These and those are all so evolved, but followed different paths which drifted apart and made correct understanding difficult (which is precisely: incommensurability). Papuan's social life, for is nothing in the order of the "primitive".
5. In his book Profiles of the Future: An Inquiry into the Limits of the Possible, Arthur C. Clarke summarizes 3 excellent points into "laws":
 - 1: "When a distinguished but elderly scientist states that something is possible, he is almost certainly right. When he states that something is impossible, he is very probably wrong."
 - 2: "The only way of discovering the limits of the possible is to venture a little way past them into the impossible."
 - 3: "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from *magic*."
6. See John Keel, The Mothman Prophecies, 1975. In this book, this journalist develops the notion of "Ultra-terrestrial" beings. While he repeatedly blames ufologists in general while not considering himself a ufologist with the accusation of not giving their witnesses names, he is altogether someone who does not give any witness name in support of any event mentioned in his own book, which tells of partly uncheckable stories.

The so-called mysterious phone calls of *paranormal* nature of ultra dimensional nature may be nothing more than pranks by his old friend Gray Barker, the author of "They Knew Too Much About Flying Saucers". It is now common knowledge that Barker approached the UFO problem as a dilettante; found the topic "entertaining" in the sense that it is fun to entertain readers with far-our stories; explaining that it did not matter to much to him whether the stories he told were true or invented as long as they were puzzling, even if he had to make then puzzling by himself. Other example may be endlessly given to demonstrate that the so-called "*paranormal*" or "ultra-terrestrial" components are man-made additions to the saucer puzzle which should be considered highly suspicious (to say it politely).

7. In his book Passport to Magonia (1969), Vallée writes at the start already: "this is not a scientific book." He proposes that beings who came from the skies or elsewhere are documented in folklore since the beginnings of mankind. One half of his followers have understood that it means that UFOs are no *extraterrestrial* craft but folklore without any reality. The other half have understood that he means that some sort of an intelligence visits us since the beginnings of time.

Vallée actually caims that UFOs are physical. But that they are created by some unspecified "intelligence" which fools us by producing things such as UFOs which he claims are deceptions of

physical nature meant to control mankind's evolution (that is, he read one Philip K. Dick book too many.)

8. Jacques Vallée, "Magonia" #221, October 9, 1954, 07:00 P.M., Lavoux, Vienne (France): "Mr. Barrault was riding his bicycle when it saw a being dressed like a diver who directed 2 luminous rays at him. He wore boots without heel and his eyes were very brilliant. He went on the road during one minute then penetrated in the forest. The witness "was paralyzed" throughout incident. The being had a furry chest and there were 2 lights one above the other, in front of him."

Field investigation whose result was published in the French ufology magazine *Lumières Dans la Nuit* as well as in Figuet and Ruchon, showed that Mr. Barrault had been victim of a 18 year-old prankster in disguise. Mr. Barrault had actually quickly learned that he was the victim of a prank. But a newspaperman who heard about the case preferred to release it without the explanation. This is an example among many other showing that the notion of "collection of absurdities" (here, the hairy chest of the so-called *extraterrestrial* being) is built on illegitimate cases.

9. "Un siècle d'atterrissages" (a century of landings), article by Jacques Vallée, *Lumière Dans la Nuit* magazine, #43.
10. "Investigation of the Alleged UFO Experience of Carl Higdon", Leo R. Sprinkle, 1979, in UFO Phenomena and the Behavioral Scientist, ed. Richard Haines, p.225, Scarecrow Press.
11. "I can only say that it is certain that it is not a mere rumor. Things have been seen. A purely psychological explanation is ruled out," stated C.G. Jung in *New York Herald Tribune*, July 30, 1958.
12. See also "Dr. Jung and the UFOs: The Real Story!" par Gordon Creighton *Flying Saucer Review*, Volume 46/4, Winter 2001, pp. 7-11.
13. Crop circles: "signs" from above or human artifacts? Some personal speculations on a fractal theme, article by Jacques Vallée, 2002.
14. Unconventional Flying Objects - A scientific Analysis, by Paul R. Hill, Hampton Roads publishing company, ISBN 1-57174-027-9, 1995.

Addendum:

I wrote the above text in response to a call for comment on Vallée and Davies' paper on the "Aleph" online discussion list. My answer was written in a mere 30 minutes without a second reading. I was rather trustful in the critical spirit of contributors and readers of this discussion group to be sure that if some point of mine were erroneous or criticisable, it would be said so. After having benefited from these critical readings, I did not see any point of my argumentation that I should amend and published it just as it is, adding some illustrative examples to the subject and indicating the precise references which I called upon in my text.

Here some of the points which were discussed, and the answers that I gave, including additional offline reactions and opinions.

A. "Physics is limited"

Readers protested that Physics is limited or does not explain everything or makes errors:

- B. "Admittedly, Physics is not finished. But is there anything which would be explained better than by Physics through some other way than that of Physics?"
- C. "Will Physics be finished at any time? It was so often rewritten that isn't Physics intrinsically restrictive of its field of exploration and thus of its conclusions?"
- D. "Of course not! Physics does not limit its field of exploration at all. Once again, note what Physics explored. Note what it explained. Compare this with the fields that other research path explored and explained. What did *paranormal* researcher explain? Rain? Stars? Diseases? *Telepathy*? Ghosts? *Psychokinesis*? So, where is the explanation? Give me the explanation."

I did not receive a single word of answer to the latter question. Maybe Physics does not have an explanation for *telepathy*, ghosts, spoon-bending, and Near-Death Experiments (assuming that these phenomena are real; which I do not know). But it has many answers to many questions. It seems that *paranormal*, *psychic*, religious, *mystical*, and whatever other non-scientific approach you may fancy do not explain anything at all -- not even the object of its own (ghost investigators may claim they proved ghosts do exist, but they do not explain or even theorize how they exist). There is zero explanation when you give up the scientific method. **[StealthSkater note: true ... but that could just be a sign of our current state of development. Just because one cannot explain something does not mean that it doesn't/can't exist. Example: explain God of Heaven]**

I wrote: "Since you claim Physics is unable to answer your requirement not to get more-and-more questions to solve, will you try to settle questions which are still open by parapsychical investigation by religious faith, wild speculation, *psychics*? Will you rely upon very convenient unspecified "other dimensions", intelligences which control us by means of delusions, mysterious forces that physics cannot grasp nor explain? Will you trash binoculars, radar, test tube, maps, space research, exobiology, sociology etc. and consult a psychic healer and other "channellers"? Under what terms? Where are the achievements of these other approaches when it comes to providing explanations?"

A critical reader wrote: it is absurd to demand that religion or *metaphysics* produce "discoveries" in the way that Science is required to. **[StealthSkater note: it's not really absurd, more like frustrating. We are all after the final ultimate "Theory of Everything". But if it encompasses things which lie outside our mortal senses, we may never come up with all the "nuts-and-bolts" answers in this mortal existence.]**

"Never did I demand anything of the sort. I am not the one who suggested that *parapsychology* for example -- or anything else than Physics in general -- will provide an explanation for UFO phenomena, which would not be only physical. I think that this will not happen and that it is, indeed, nonsense to suggest that it would. My statement was that traditional Science is the only way to work on the UFO phenomena in order to get explanations of them."

"I think that when Vallée suggests that the UFOS have a "dimension" in them which is not only physical, he is unduly a pessimist as for the explanatory capacities of the physical sciences and unduly optimist as for these other approaches of the problem. I think that if this is supposed to be a manner of raising the interest of more scientists to the subject of UFOs, that will rather deter them more than they already may be."

- E. "Scientism is full of hubris and dogmatics"

A reader fustigates scientific pride and finds that Science lacks modesty. I answer:

"It is in these other paths -- the non-scientific paths -- that I see hubris. In religion, all things are explained once and for all (although the once and for all explanations varies from one religion to another, from one timeplace to another), for example. Nothing like it in the physic sciences which have no other ambition than to provide the best explanatory theories and leave the door open to improving them, call them into question, to replacing them, in a modestly pragmatic, unreligious way. Science is modest and autocorrective. Religion, belief in the "unexplained", invocation of mystical effects and forces are not autocorrective."

This gentlemen then quoted Copernicus, Einstein, and Pasteur as example of daring innovators fighting against stubborn scientific dogma. My answer was:

"Listen, honestly you must be joking. Copernicus as hero of the irrational, persecuted by the "scientists" of the church? Copernicus, Pasteur, Einstein, fighting against scientific dogma? But they are Science, they invented science versus religious dogma!

It was stressed that "scientific hubris" will now replace religious hubris. I corrected:

"Scientific pride, you say. No. Pride, courage, and honesty to accept that 10.000 new questions spout out of the dubious and temporary scientific resolution of some questions. In opposition to the fallacious comfort of these "other dimensions", "*psychic* phenomena", and other "astral levels" which answer all question by explaining nothing."

F. "The lack of explanation should not result in the reject of a phenomenon"

It was criticized that what is not yet explained is unduly rejected by a scientific dogma nowadays, as it was it by the religious dogma in the past.

G. "First, I think that one can indeed explain UFO reports via scientific methodology and physical sciences (including the explanation that some UFOs are *extraterrestrial* craft). In addition, what do I reject? I reject the idea that understanding the UFO phenomenon and to get the interest of more scientists in this topic, *parapsychology* should be used. Let us leave the question opened except if you can provide an example of what *parapsychology* had explained as regards UFOs or other phenomena. I certainly not reject UFOs as *extraterrestrial* visits in the name of "scientific dogma".

Aucun exemple d'une explication d'une observation d'OVNI découverte par la parapsychologie ne sera apporté pour démentir mon propos. Unsurprisingly to me, this reader never came up with any example whatsoever of an explanation of a UFO report discovered via *parapsychology*.

Incidentally, the criticism is bears no relation with the matter I discussed. I in no way "rejected" the UFO phenomena.

H. "*Paranormal* sciences (i.e., studies) are -- or may be -- conducted scientifically"

I am told that *parapsychology* -- at least on certain unspecified occasions -- was exerted in the strict respect of methodologies and principles of Science.

I do not disagree *a priori*. The problem is different; it is the absence of explanations by *parapsychology* when it comes to UFOs in particular. The impotence of going beyond what remains attempts to "acknowledge" the reality of the phenomena (to demonstrate that *psychokinesis* is real using a lab and scientific procedures is fine; but the goal of Science is -- beyond the reporting of empirical facts -- to provide a comprehensive and testable explanation of those empirical facts).

Incidentally, a *parapsychology* using scientific methods does not justify any more of the "para" prefix and becomes integral part of the physical sciences, contradicting the idea that the physical sciences would be insufficient to explain the UFO phenomenon, among other.

I. "What about spirituality?"

Since I spoke on the hard scientific approach of things, spirituality was remembered to my attention. I answered:

"Spirituality? Of course. I found my spirituality and of serenity in Lao Tseu or Zen. To feel the inherent beauty or harmony of things in Nature... Why not?"

J. "But as regards to understanding how things occur in Nature such as for example finding a valid principle for the propulsion of UFOs; or finding if this or that UFO photograph is that of a bird or an *extraterrestrial* spaceship; or to understand a report on the results of the Viking experiments on Mars; to distinguish if one abductee tells a real experiment or suffers from a psychological syndrome; to know if this or that UFO may be a meteor, a plasma, a spaceship, a plane, I refuse to yield to the call of Vallée. And while looking at the history of sciences and other 'methods', I do believe that those who take on Vallée's call will find no explanations for the UFOs."

K. "Bravo."

A reader explains that he does not wish to contribute anymore to online discussion groups. But he continues to follow the posts [in which a draft of my text above appeared] and he wrote: "I write these few lines to tell you that I always find your posts very relevant and very patient." He adds, "The reactions [in connection with my comment of the paper by Vallée and Davies] prove the intellectual seduction that he [Jacques Vallée] exerts in France and what I call the "temptation of a scientific transcendence" which seized French ufologists. A UFO of a *psychic, paranormal* nature or controlling time and space appears more credible to them -- and intellectually more acceptable -- than an *extraterrestrial* spacecraft using, inter alia, commonplace MagnetoHydroDynamics physical laws in general." He concludes, "Vallée's speech is tainted with obvious contradictions and scientific inaccuracies. But one prefers to take them for evidence of his opened mindedness." (I fully share this view.)

Another reader writes, "I really agree with your argumentation which dismantles the idea of "anti-physics" aspect of the UFOs as asserted by J. Vallée." The reader also asked for references of documentation concerning the of C.G. Jung reversal which I gave. These references are in this online version of my article.

[StealthSkater note: Scientific statistical analysis of *paranormal* events have been documented under rigorous conditions => [doc](#) [pdf](#) [URL](#)]. The more extravagant claims of telekinesis and "spoon-bending" have not been photographed on news cameras, however. There is a Canadian who for decades has offered \$1,000,000 to anyone who can do such events while being photographed by bona fide scientific researchers. More paranormal results seem to reside in the remote-viewing area. One remote-viewer -- Lyn Bucanon -- achieved notoriety when he "influenced" a quantum event that resulted in a meltdown of a military laptop computer. This is a fact. More of remote-viewing/influencing at => [doc](#) [pdf](#) [URL](#)]

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