

THE “APPARITIONS OF THE VIRGIN” AT FÁTIMA CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO THE UFO PHENOMENON

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Introduction

AFTER six years of intensive effort, my lady Colleague Dr. Fina d'Armada and I have succeeded in assembling an impressive body of documentary and testimonial evidence that throws a radically new light — radically new, that is, for us Portuguese — on the question of the so-called Apparitions at Fátima which commenced in May 1917 and continued until October of that same year. (However, two years earlier than that, some other young people had also given accounts of having seen apparitions of luminous beings, of moving objects in the sky, and sometimes of headless entities — this latter detail nothing new in the context of “apparitional phenomena” as a whole.)

Dr. Fina d'Armada received her Doctorate in History in 1978, and a Government grant for her studies, and thanks to the official permission which was given to her we have been able to fill in many of the gaps in the known documentation on Fátima and we were even able to track down, among the manuscripts in the Sanctuary at Fátima, a number of items essential for our task. One of the most interesting of these discoveries of ours was the testimony given by a “fourth percipient”, Carolina Carreira. We designedly call her by this term, “fourth percipient”, because her account of her experience describes a telepathic type of contact with a fair-haired being of small stature who instilled into her head a repetitive order couched approximately as follows: “Come here and say three Ave Marias, Come here . . .” etc. Such was the experience claimed by this new witness whom we have discovered and whom we have designated “the fourth percipient” in order to mark her off from the quite considerable main body — from both the sociological and the representational point of view — of some hundred or so other ordinary witnesses whose first-hand statements we have used in constructing the framework of our study.

As a result we were able, in 1982, to publish our book,¹ *Intervenção Extraterrestre em Fátima — As Aparições e o Fenómeno OVNI*, which, in our view, will serve to reinforce simultaneously both the singularity and the objective, factual nature of the “Marian Apparitions Phenomenon” so typical of the Latin countries where Catholicism is predominant. This means that, in our opinion, the “apparitions phenomenon” is a



Fig. 1. Reconstituted sketch, showing the “small being” seen at the Cova da Iria on July 28, 1917, by the “fourth percipient”, Carolina Carreira.

real one, which occurs within the framework of our Space-Time coordinates but which also involves the intervention of a religious component serving possibly as a formative factor and also as an appropriate vehicle for the phenomenon. The relationship between the total conjunction of physical and psychophysiological features of the “Apparitions Phenomenon” and the modern “UFO Phenomenon” is only too evident; the causal correlation, the effects established, and the respective processes all fall into line, perfectly delineated, within the pattern of plausible hypotheses presented by eminent workers in the field of the most qualified Ufological research.

The Sources

Our sources consist, in essence, firstly of the original interrogations of, and statements made by, the three principal percipients, namely Lúcia, Francisco, and Jacinta, and also of other selected testimonies — about one hundred in all — the entire edifice of which represents a minimal stable historical basis that has been subjected to the most rigorous criticism. In

our opinion this material pinpoints the cause of the "Marian Apparition" as identical with the cause of the "UFO Phenomenon" and, symptomatically, we shall designate it as "The Unusual that could not have been invented."

Our first piece of proof, and our first surprise, came from the original description given by Lúcia, the eldest of the three percipients, when, at the Parochial Enquiry, she spoke of "a very shining lady, about 1 metre 10 cms. in height, seeming to be between 12 and 15 years old; she was wearing a narrow skirt, a jacket, and a cloak, all with little golden cords running crisscross through them; she came from 'above', and vanished gradually in the inverse direction; she made no facial movements, nor did she articulate her lower limbs when she walked; she spoke without moving her lips, and moved only her hands from time to time". She turned her back towards the percipients when she departed.¹

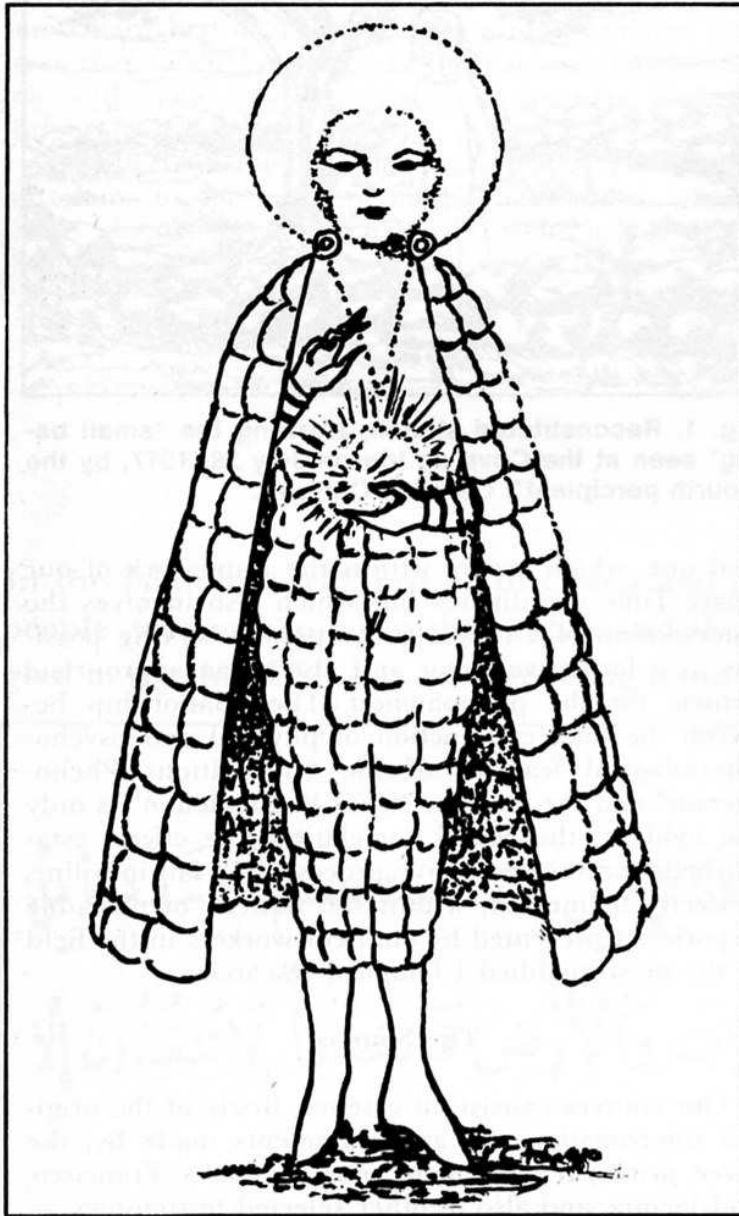


Fig. 2. The Entity seen at Fátima, based on Lúcia's first description, given at the Parochial Enquiry held by the local priest.

After that, we reconstituted the manner of her locomotion when the "luminous Lady" was carried up to the top of the holm-oak tree, at which position she was when the children beheld her. The documents enabled us to affirm that the entity, seemingly feminine, was transported *within a tronco-conic beam of light that was emitted gradually, alternately proceeding and receding*, and that had its source, most probably, in a "cloud" with an anomalous and peculiar kind of movement, namely, *it moved against the wind*. There are modern examples of this type of "solid light", a process concerning which various theoreticians have put forward their views.²

Another determining factor, and one which gives us the distance parameter for the so-called "Solar Phenomenon" of October 13, 1917, was the distribution of the standpoints of the hundred or so witnesses. We found that they were all to be found within a band about 70 metres wide and running through the Cova da Iria area, centre of the phenomena, where a vast

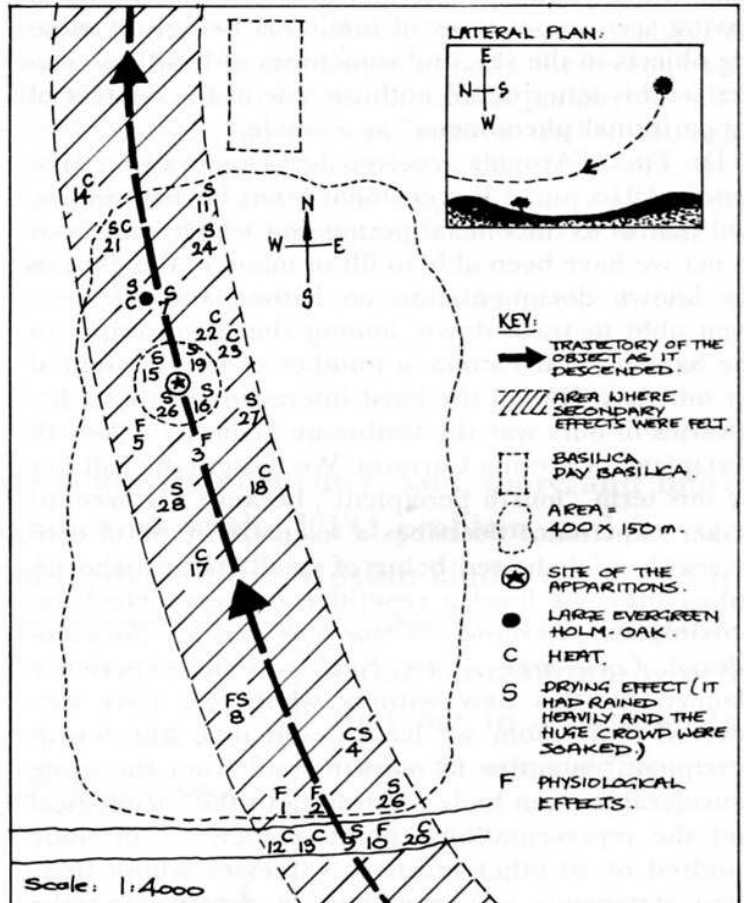


Fig. 3. Fátima. Scene of the secondary effects experienced on October 13 1917.

multitude of people were awaiting the "Miracle of the Sun." This band, oriented South-North, quite patently contains all those witnesses who reported the secondary effects experienced at the time of the "Solar Phenomenon", that is to say, at the moment when the "Solar Object" descended in a terrifying parabola over

the crowd of 60,000 people. The effects felt — and felt only by that segment of the crowd who were standing within the 70-metre band were:—

1. Sudden and intense heat.
2. Drying of clothing and of the soil.
3. Physiological effects (in popular parlance, “miraculous cures.”)

All this occurred after the close approach of the “Object”, the position of which we have localised in space (at its lowest point) as at about the height of the top of a pine tree, according to some of the witnesses — where it was mimicking the Sun.

This triple effect produced by the “Object”, plus the accumulated body of testimony, should suffice to warrant both for the veracity of the occurrence and for its attribution to a source external to the witnesses, and it disposes of various suggestions from some quarters that the “Solar Phenomenon” and its anomalous movements were merely of a completely hallucinatory nature. In fact the various theories about so-called “imagetic projections”, so typical for hypnagogic and hypnopompic states (i.e. states induced inside closed rooms and with the eyes shut) have absolutely no bearing whatsoever on the multiple-witness sighting at Fátima. See in this connection the extensive criticism on this same case by the engineer Ballester Olmos and his colleague Miguel Guasp in their discussion of “imagery” as a response to UFO stimuli.³

The Evidence of Magneto hydrodynamics

Remaining still within the scope of discussion of so-called “Solar” phenomenology, we may now proceed also to a comparison between what have been described as the “chromatic effects” recorded in 1917 after the so-called “Miracle of the Sun”, and certain modern cases. Amazing as it may appear, the eyewitnesses of 1917 anticipated by 65 years the experiments in Magneto hydrodynamics conducted recently by the French physicist Jean-Pierre Petit of the CNRS (French National Centre for Scientific Research) — experiments that have “received the green light of approval” from the highest responsible scientific quarters in France! That is to say: the colour-sequence of the pseudo-Sun at Fátima varied directly with its velocity — a relationship that has been established by Ufological investigators from Aimé Michel onwards. The “Object” over Fátima produced a colouration of the surroundings (excitation of gases) due to its electrical field or to its power source — whatever you may care to term it.⁴

Another possible deduction — and it is an extremely tempting one — is the possibility that *microwaves were involved at Fátima*, being the means of communication between the radiant entity and the small percipients. The reason for my making this suggestion is that a number of the statements made by

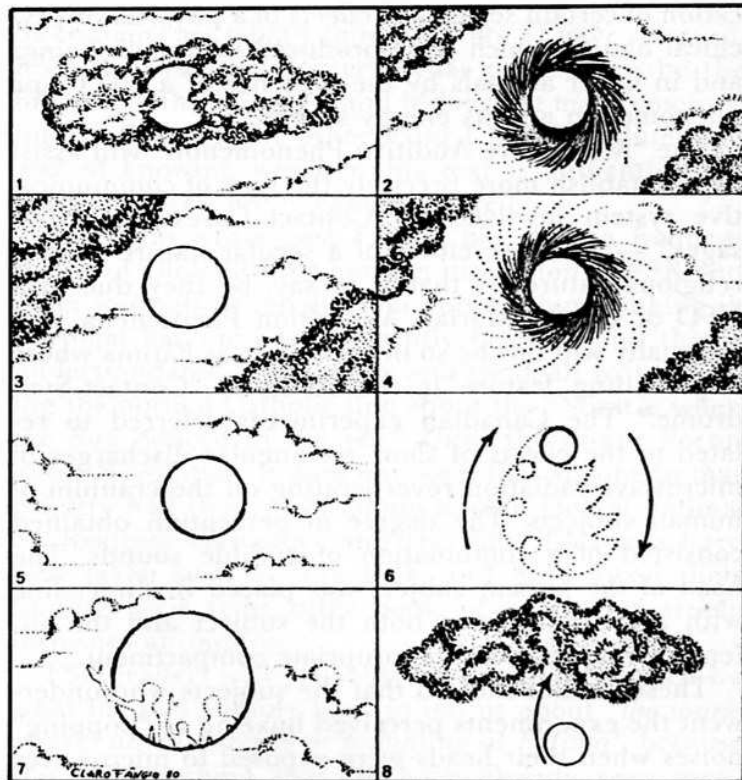


Fig 4. The successive phases in the “Miracle of the Sun”, commencing from the moment when the “cloud” parted. (October 13, 1917).

eyewitnesses who were close to the spot where the “contact” took place mention hearing the “humming of bees”, a feature which is likewise frequent in Type 1 Close Encounter Cases. (Vallée). The properties of microwaves have been studied by (*inter al.*) the nuclear physicist James McCampbell, and they fit the case of Fátima to perfection, with its triple-proof in the shape of (1) intense heat; (2) sudden drying of clothing; (3) the production of physiological cures. Furthermore, the hearing of the characteristic humming or buzzing sound ALWAYS occurred when the “Lady” was talking to the three small percipients BUT WITHOUT MOVING HER LIPS. It seems to us that at Fátima extensive “use” was made of the microwave zone of the electromagnetic spectrum (i.e., between 300 MHz and 300,000 MHz).⁵

Microwave Research

Since McCampbell did his work in this field, fresh laboratory investigations have provided additional support for our thesis, and unexpected corroboration of the ideas that we had as it were glimpsed when considering the Fátima witnesses who had talked about the “humming or buzzing effect.” This additional support to which we refer is to be found in the experiments carried out by members of the Canadian Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, and most particularly by James C. Lin (*The Microwave Auditive Phenomenon*), Sergio X. Salles-Cunha, Joseph Battocletti, and Anthony Sances.⁶ These investigations are very promising in connection with the possible verifi-

cation of certain secondary effects of a physical or psychological nature, which were produced in human beings and in lower animals by the presence of a UFO-type phenomenon and its energy source.⁷

The "Microwave Auditive Phenomenon" will assist us to establish more precisely the type of communicative system involved in "Contact Cases with Messages" — be these either of a secular nature or of a religious nature — that is to say, be they due to a UFO or due to Marian Apparition Phenomena, and especially will this be so in such cases as Fátima where a prevailing feature is the so-called "Contact-Syndrome." The Canadian experiments referred to related to the effects of short rectangular discharges of microwave radiation reverberating on the cranium of human subjects. The degree of perception obtained consisted of a combination of audible sounds. The head of the human subject was placed in direct line with a conic antenna, both the subject and the antenna being inside an appropriate compartment.

These studies showed that the subjects who underwent the experiments perceived buzzing or "popping" noises when their heads were exposed to microwaves of between 200 and 3,000 MHz with a mean potency of from 0.4 to 2 mW/cm² to a density of level of above 300 mW/cm². The modulated frequencies ranged from 200 to 400 Hz. *In general, the sounds were perceived as coming from the inside of the head or from the rear part of the cranium.* It is to be borne in mind that the "fourth percipient" at Fátima was aware of the words of the "angel" *inside her head...*

But, returning to the case at Fátima, the "buzzing" sensation was not exclusive to the three small percipients at the Cova da Iria. In fact we possess a number of statements about it from people who were among those nearest to the children at the moment of the "contact". And it is to be borne in mind that this sound was *heard clearly, and was heard solely, WHEN THE "LADY" WAS TALKING TO LUCIA WITHOUT MOVING HER LIPS.*

Although, despite our efforts to secure permission to do so, we have not been successful in securing an interview with the one percipient who is still alive (Lúcia), there remains one fact that is borne out by the experimental evidence: namely that the "buzzing" phenomenon, while general and affecting a determined area round the three percipients, *had come from a source external to them.* In our opinion, this source must be the communicating system deriving from the luminous "Lady" borne along inside the truncated beam of light. Consequently, in our opinion, everything leads us to believe that the vehicle of communication between the Fátima entity and the little percipients lies within the zone of microradiation.

The experimental stages of all this work are far from finished, particularly as regards the whole of the radiation effects upon the witnesses. It would be very desirable that some well equipped investigators

should make an attempt along these same lines and secure confirmation, with statistically representative results. We think also that other studies will have to be undertaken, not only in connection with the psychophysical behaviour of humans and lower animals, but also at the level of a semantic analysis of the subject-matter of the conversations held by the contactees — both the "religious" ones and the others. The famous "messages and secrets" of Fátima, as a mystical tradition, are of course a representative example of this.⁸

We would recall moreover in this connection the hypotheses voiced by Dr. Claude Rifat regarding the apparent distortions of content (i.e. the apparent unreality) of both the UFO Experiences and the Marian Apparition Experiences. In the review *UFO Phenomena* he emphasised the role played in these situations by the *Locus Coeruleus*, an important area in the brain of mammals. It is in there, as he showed, that the phenomena of dreams are induced. Maybe the radiating source (UFO, humanoid, luminous entity) interferes with the normal functioning of the brain, possibly by emitting microwaves. The distortion or alteration of the "messages" (not to mention images) according to the subconscious of the human subject (cultural and religious education, etc.) might then be the result of this type of interference in that part of the brain referred to above, namely the *Locus Coeruleus*.⁹

Notes and References

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Our contributor, Joaquim Fernandes, is the Editor of a well-known newspaper, *Jornal de Notícias*, in Oporto, Northern Portugal, the principal UFO investigator in that country, and a long-time reader and correspondent of FSR. For some years he was the Director of the Review *Insólito (The Unusual)* issued in Oporto by Portugal's pioneer UFO investigation group CEAFI (Centro de Estudos Astronómicos e de Fenómenos Insólitos.) He is also MUFON's representative in Portugal, and he is at present playing a leading role in the establishment of a new national body in Portugal to be known as the Comissão Nacional de Investigação do Fenómeno OVNI (National Commission for the Investigation of the UFO Phenomenon).

The paranormal events that occurred at a rural spot known as Cova da Iria, near the village of Fátima in Portugal, during every month from May to October of 1917 (i.e. covering the precise time-span between the moderate and reasonable Russian Revolution of March and the take-over by evil forces in the Revolution of October) are regarded by many throughout the Catholic world as purely religious in nature and of supreme importance for the whole of mankind, particularly in view of the remarkable information about Russia gleaned by three illiterate and ignorant Portuguese village children long before the much-vaunted Dawn of the Millenium which was to bring Lenin to power. Among Ufologists on the other hand there are many who may think that the happenings at Fátima seem to have a familiar *ufological* touch about them. *And some there are who think that Fátima was maybe of both ufological and religious importance.* (The British mathematician and pioneer teacher of religious and spiritual matters, John G. Bennett of Coombe Springs, told me once in the mid-1950s that in his opinion Fátima was probably the most important event of the Twentieth Century and therefore of far greater significance even than the two World Wars.)

There are numerous books in Portuguese, French, Italian and Spanish on Fátima, but few in English. (The best of the latter are probably W. T. Walsh's *Our Lady of Fátima*, published in USA and Britain soon after the last War, and Father C. C. Martindale's *The Message of Fátima*, published in London by Burns Oates and Washbourne in 1950.)

The "Message" of Fátima refers to a secret part of the information given to the three children in 1917. It was to have been divulged to the world by the Bishop of Leiria in 1960, but the Vatican has kept very tight-lipped about it so far, which is not at all surprising if

its contents are what I think they are. (I have received, from two different sources, what purports to be the full text of the Message, and it does not make comforting reading. On the other hand I have absolutely no way of knowing whether this text is authentic, so I shall not dwell on its contents here.)

For many years past Fátima has been a frequent theme of Ufological or Fortean discussion in FSR and other journals devoted to our subject, but thinking in Portugal has until very recently been — and this is understandable — orthodox and rigid, all writers taking the normal Catholic line about the "Miracle when the Sun danced in the sky." Until the recent Portuguese Revolution, it does not seem that anyone in that country had thought of taking a fresh look at Fátima. Sr. Joaquim Fernandes and Dr. Fina d'Armada have now taken such a fresh look, and have given their findings in a remarkable book, of which this article furnishes an outline.

FSR readers will probably be greatly interested by what the two authors have to tell us about "*the sound of bees heard buzzing or humming at Fátima*", because this is something that we have already seen mentioned in not a few UFO-contact cases. (There is not time for a search through the literature of our subject, but I can quote for example the case of Dionisio Llanca in Argentina. See FSR, Vol. 26, No. 4, page 7.)

I can confirm from my own fairly wide reading of Portuguese accounts of Fátima that there were quite a lot of folk in the vast crowds there who afterwards told how they had heard the "*humming or buzzing of bees*" (*zumbido de abelhas*) while the phenomena were at their height.

(Father Martindale S. J. even relates an amusing story about this. During the visit of a party of British Catholic pilgrims to Fátima in 1948 a lady named Maria dos Anjos, who is the elder sister of the girl Lúcia, the central figure in the Fátima story — now the Carmelite nun Sister Maria Lúcia of the Immaculate Heart — gave a demonstration by actually poking a stick into a bees' nest. Out swarmed the bees, of course, all buzzing. "*Ha, it was just like that!*", said Maria dos Anjos, delighted, and not worried in the least that a bee had just stung one of the British pilgrims.)

When we consider these reports of "buzzing" or "humming" sounds together with Claude Rifat's suggestions about the role possibly played in UFO experiences by a small area of our brain known as the *Locus Coeruleus*, together with the reports of some recent Canadian experiments, it is not difficult to see that the new suggestions by Joaquim Fernandes and his colleague could possibly result in a spectacular discovery about the fashion in which alien beings might contact the human mind.

With regard to the matter of translation, I should perhaps add that I have rendered the Portuguese word *vidente* (literally "seer") as "*percipient*." There

were only three such percipients at Fátima, namely the three children, all of whom saw the luminous entity, and our two authors mention a "fourth percipient" whom they have discovered, and who had seen a female entity on a previous occasion. For the hundred or so other people selected by the authors from

those among the vast crowd who saw or heard or felt other extraordinary phenomena but did not see the actual radiant being, I have used the terms *witness* or *eyewitness* (*testemunha* in Portuguese.)

G.C.

AN ENCOUNTER WITH "RAT-FACES" IN ITALY

Antonio Chiumiento

Investigator and Member of the Board of Directors of C.U.N. (Italian National UFO Research Centre, Turin).

(Translation from Italian)

There have recently been reports of encounters with highly unpleasant-looking "rat-faced" creatures. Here is an Italian case from 1978. We shall shortly publish a very similar Brazilian case that happened a year later, in 1979.

Ed.

TAKING advantage of the fact that, though cold, it was a sunny day, Signor Angelo D'Ambros, aged 61, a resident of Gallio in the north-eastern Italian Province of Vicenza, had gone on the morning of November 24, 1978, to gather firewood in a copse in the nearby locality of Gastagh. The time was just about a quarter of an hour before noon when, turning around to set down a branch which he had just been chopping up, he was gripped with horror at the terrifying sight that met his eyes, for there, extremely close to him, and watching him, were two "beings" with only approximately human-like features.



Fig. 1. Sketch by Ugo Furlan, based on discussions with witness.

Long Ears and Tusks

They were suspended in the air at about 40 cms. from the ground. One of them, he estimated, was about 1 m. 20 cms, in height, and the other about 1 m. They were extremely thin, and had a yellowish skin that was stretched so tightly that he could see great veins standing out on the head and hands of the bigger creature, which was the nearer to him of the two. Their heads were large and elongated, like pears, smooth and bald, with enormous ears that rose straight up and ended in a point. They had great white eyes, sunken and without eyelids, set above a nose of pronounced dimensions which almost reached down beyond the lower lip, the latter being pretty fleshy, and large mouths displaying, at their extremities, two long, pointed "tusks."

From immediately below the knee right up to the neck, the two creatures appeared to be clad in dark very closely-fitting overalls, which also covered the arms down as far as the wrists, leaving the hands and the rest of the legs and the feet uncovered. The hands and feet were of a remarkable size and out of proportion to the rest of the body, with extremely long fingers and long nails.

At first the two creatures were side by side but, straight away, the shorter of them began shifting constantly between the right side and the left side of D'Ambros, in very rapid leaps and without moving its long feet, almost as though it were gliding on an invisible surface, and making, with these continuous movements, a very faint sound of air displacement and a rustling of the vegetation as the tips of its long ears-