

# TRANQUILLIZING VISITATION AT BOUAHMAMA

## An Algerian report of 1958

*Joël Mesnard*

AN extraordinary UFO sighting was reported one night in March, 1958, during the Algerian War, at a Foreign Legion camp at Bouahmama in the Sud Constantinois. The sole witness, Legionnaire N.G., was on sentry duty outside the camp. The site where he was consisted of a fortified emplacement dug out of the ground, lightly armoured and equipped with a telephone connected to the camp.

The night was cloudless and the moon was shining. All was silent on the desert landscape. No large-scale operations were being carried out in the area at the time so N.G., who had been in the Legion for three years, was not feeling especially anxious. He was sitting on the ground near the trench, and had his rifle. If anything unexpected happened he was supposed either to fire his rifle or call the camp by telephone.

Suddenly, at a few minutes after 0.30 hours, something did happen. What it was that happened, we cannot say for sure. The witness remembers seeing a positive, physical phenomenon of enormous size. But he feels that something most unusual happened to him psychologically. And he freely admits that there might well be a difference between what he sincerely remembers and what actually took place.

It began with a whistling noise, the sort of noise you hear if you blow into the neck of a bottle. This sound seemed to him to be coming down from the sky. He immediately looked up, and saw an enormous, roundish

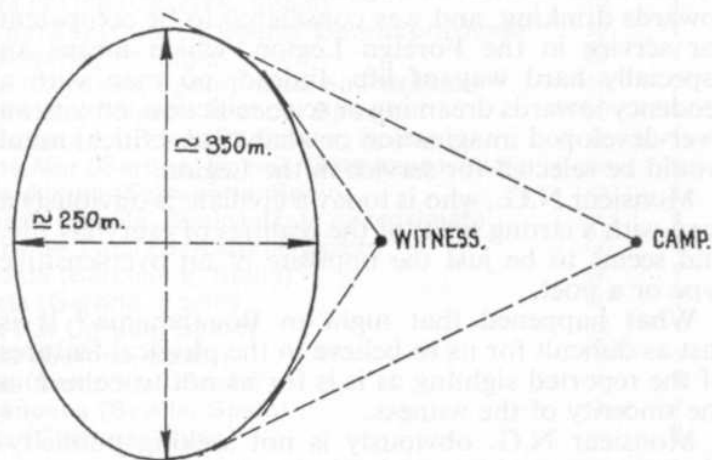
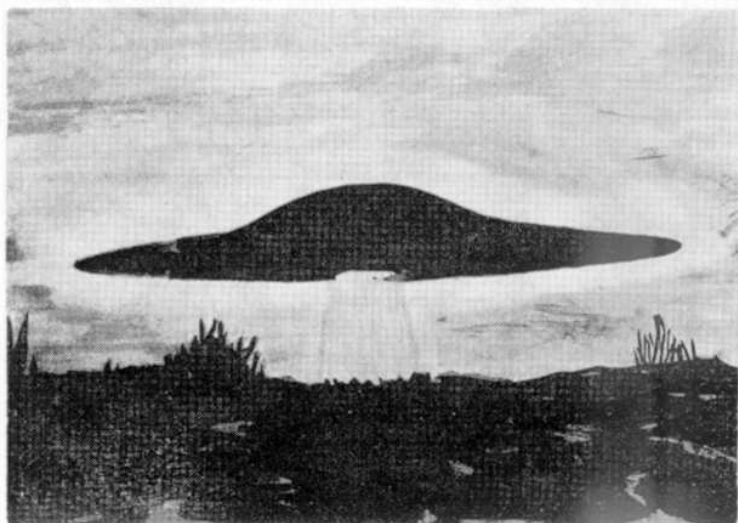
object descending. It stopped when it was about 35-40 metres (roughly 100 to 120ft.) above the ground, and began to hover there, motionless and silent.

He estimated it to be as much as 350 metres wide (1,000ft.). As seen by him slightly from below, during the arrival and take-off phases, it seemed to be elliptical in shape (see Fig. 1), quite independently of the perspective effect that makes a disc look elliptical when observed from a point outside the disc's centre-line. Its span might, he thought, have been in the neighbourhood of 250 metres. He estimated the distance between himself and the nearest edge of the object at little more than 50 metres (150ft.) (Fig. 2).

When I asked Monsieur N.G. to extend his arms towards the ends of the object as he recalled seeing it, he held them out at an angle of about  $100^\circ$  between them. This estimate would fit quite well with the estimates given above of its size and its distance from him.

The object was surrounded by pale green light, and an intense conical beam of emerald-green light was coming from the centre of the under-part towards the ground.

Legionnaire N.G. did not fire his rifle, nor did he pick up the telephone. He just remembers staring at the object for 45 to 50 minutes. The pale green and emerald colours were the most beautiful, relaxing and fascinating colours he had ever seen. Legionnaire N.G. had forgotten all about the war. All nervous or psycho-



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logical tension had gone from his mind. He was just feeling happy.

Then came the noise again, like somebody blowing into a bottle, and the object started rising gently, until it had reached a height of about 100 or 120 metres. Then it flew off at tremendous speed towards the North-West, climbing as it went.

What the Legionnaire then felt was a sort of sadness at the disappearance of this beautiful sight. After a few minutes this feeling began to fade, yielding place to a return of his ordinary state of consciousness, until his full mental faculties were back. He quickly picked up the telephone and reported what he had seen. To his great amazement however the officer at the camp simply replied in the manner: "All right. We'll see about it tomorrow morning."

Greatly disappointed at the officer's reaction, N.G. continued his watch until he was relieved by another man in the early hours of the morning. He again reported his experience, and this time more attention was paid to him. Some of his superiors were inclined to believe his story, because N.G., then aged 28, was a well-respected soldier and was considered serious and reliable. The majority however thought it was just a case of psychological trouble caused by the tough conditions of war in the desert.

A careful investigation was carried out at the scene of the sighting. N.G. recalls with a smile that the officers even examined the sand with a magnifying lens. No footprints, no marks, no alien material was found in the area, and no smell either.

Probably more for medical than for "ufological" reasons, the witness was thoroughly questioned by officers. He stuck to his original story, and the affair was considered to be quite amazing. He was sent to the Military Hospital at Val de Grâce in Paris. There he was kept for a week under close scrutiny by neurologists and psychiatrists. An electroencephalogram revealed nothing unusual. The conclusion of all the doctors was that N.G. was in a state of good physical and mental health. He had not been notably affected by the strains caused by wartime service in Algeria. He had no tendency towards drinking, and was considered to be competent for service in the Foreign Legion, which means an especially hard way of life. Indeed, no man with a tendency towards dreaming or science-fiction, or with an over-developed imagination or analytical, critical mind would be selected for service in the Legion.

Monsieur N.G., who is today a civilian, is obviously a man with a strong sense of the realities of everyday life, and seems to be just the opposite of an oversensitive type or a poet.

What happened that night in Bouahmama? It is just as difficult for us to believe in the physical features of the reported sighting as it is for us not to believe in the sincerity of the witness.

Monsieur N.G. obviously is not seeking publicity. He just recounts his experience, in a natural manner, to his own close relatives, and when I met him in May 1970, he looked slightly reluctant for the first few minutes, and then answered my questions without emphasis on any particular feature.

I have been unable so far to find any evidence from military sources regarding his alleged experience. The

Val de Grâce Hospital in Paris does not keep documents about patients beyond a period of ten years.

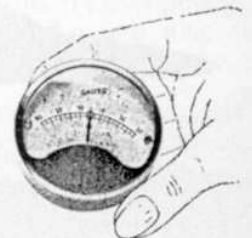
The size of the reported object is so large that, if it actually was where the witness claims to have seen it, it must have been visible from the camp at an angle of about 60°. Yet nobody else reported seeing it. When I asked him about the possible reasons for his having been the only witness, N.G. replied that it is in no way astonishing, since most of the men in the camp were asleep in their barracks at the time. There was a legionnaire on sentry duty at the opposite end of the camp, and he could have seen the UFO at an angle of almost 40°! And yet that sentry reported nothing. Monsieur N.G. does not think that the slope or the irregular pattern of the ground could have been sufficient to render the phenomenon invisible from the camp.

The witness seems to be conscious that something quite extraordinary happened to his mind, but he seems to believe quite positively in the geometrical features of his "sighting." He says he has had no disease or illness of any kind since the night of the sighting, and no unusual physical or mental conditions. He has never had any other experiences involving flying saucers, either before, or since, his experience at Bouahmama. What happened to him there in 1958 has left him with the belief that "there is something," and that "something is coming from another world to watch ours." Regarding his amazingly peaceful state during the sighting, he uses words like: "It was like time running very slowly . . ." and "it was like being in another world."

Since the experience he had felt a certain degree of interest in flying saucers, and recalls having read about UFOs in newspapers and magazines. In any case, the subject definitely does not upset him and his experience, however extraordinary it may seem, has not notably changed his life.

The Bouahmama case, devoid as it is of physical evidence but so puzzling in many respects, invites comparison with a number of other cases. What the role of the witness actually was leaves much to our imagination. It is just one more of those very special UFO sightings which lead us to think that Ufology may somehow be related to some obscure psychic phenomenon.

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# BIOMETRIC DATA IN 19 UFO OCCUPANT CASES

The morphology and behaviour of animate beings in conjunction with UFOs, and the outstanding features of the objects themselves

*Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos*

IN the context of our specialised study of the landing phenomenon in this country, a work programme that we began back in 1969, the *occupant* file has just been thoroughly researched. In an earlier article,\* Dr. Jacques Vallée and I did not widely cope with this question, but gave instead some succinct general information. Though no new development or sensational incident has occurred, the author has decided to take a long and cool look at the "Martian" side of the picture—it sounds exciting to say the least—by extracting the relevant statements from our Iberian (Spanish and Portuguese) Type-I catalogue that at present contains more than 130 entries.

The subject, *UFO occupants*, consists of those reports which mention the presence of a being or an entity (biped or not, humanoid or not) allegedly forming part of the UFO phenomenon and usually linked to a landed object. This essay is designed to be an organised display of data on the morphological conditions and behavioural descriptions of the so-called "pilots" and on the outstanding features of the UFOs with which they were connected. We have limited ourselves to quoting only classic UFO events and do not include herein the nine examples where lone, bizarre creatures are reported. The perception of "beings" in these cases can arise from a

stimulus other than UFOs; so, we have not touched the reports that did not include an unidentified flying object incident. There is no factual proof of any actual relationship of such entities to UFOs, except that they seem to have been borrowed from Science Fiction stories.

My purpose in this article is to present tables of data, and dedicate them to any UFO investigator who is a biologist, psychologist, or scholar of folklore, who is able to find in this theme a rich field for his own specialisation. A superficial survey of the data at hand will be made also for the help of general readers.

## The Spanish material

Our census of 19 sightings is shown in the *List* that follows. The 1968/69 wave is immediately distinguishable, as well as the nocturnal character that Dr. Vallée found in 1964.† Likewise, it is quickly seen that most of the reports refer to an object (the UFO) resting on the ground. A curious detail is that the last occupant case took place in February 1969. Since then, no further

\* See note 5 in Bibliography.

† See note 1 in Bibliography.

					L	W
1.		April	5, 1935	19.30	Aznalcazar (Sevilla, Spain). Date approximate	≡ 1
2.	Monday	July	25, 1938	23.30	Guadalajara (Spain). Location approximate	@ 2
3.			1948		Garganta la Olla (Caceres, Spain)	≡ 1
4.		July	1, 1953	14.00	Villares del Saz (Cuenca, Spain) Date approximate	@ 1
5.	Friday	June	10, 1960	03.30	Algoz (Algarve, Portugal)	@ 1
6.		May	16, 1966		Cordoba (Cordoba, Spain). Date approximate	@ 1
7.		July	1967	03.00	Palma (Palma, Balearic Islands, Spain)	@ 1
8.		September	1967	00.30	Santa Coloma-La Roca (Barcelona, Spain)	@ 1
9.		April	1968		Tossa de Mar (Gerona, Spain). Date approximate	@ s
10.	Friday	August	16, 1968	06.00	Serra de Almos (Tarragona, Spain)	≡ 1
11.		August	31, 1968	20.00	Santiponce (Sevilla, Spain). Date approximate	@ 4
12.	Wednesday	September	11, 1968	23.45	San Marti de Tous (Barcelona, Spain)	@ 1
13.	Saturday	September	21, 1968	02.00	La Llagosta (Barcelona, Spain)	@ 1
14.	Saturday	September	21, 1968	03.00	La Escala (Gerona, Spain)	@ 1
15.	Tuesday	September	24, 1968	21.00	Cedeira (La Coruña, Spain)	@ 1
16.	Friday	October	11, 1968		Setcases (Gerona, Spain)	@ s
17.	Monday	January	6, 1969	20.30	Pontejos (Santander, Spain)	≡ 4
18.	Thursday	January	16, 1969	20.30	Las Pajanosas (Sevilla, Spain)	@ 1
19.	Friday	February	28, 1969	02.45	Miajadas (Caceres, Spain)	@ 2

### Note and Key

These cases are chosen from a catalogue of 130 landing reports, up-dated by V-J. Ballester Olmos in August 1972.

Column *L* indicates where the object was reported to have touched down (@), or to have come close to the ground (≡). Column *W* notes the number of witnesses; s means "several."