

TIME TRAVEL, UFOs, AND THE FOURTH DIMENSION

Luis Schönherr

ON the occasion of the recent article by S.E. Priest¹ I should like to present some comments, as I myself have been responsible for several articles on time travel and the associated topic of the fourth dimension, published in this *Review* several years ago.²

Right at the outset I want to make clear the following. I am convinced that the accumulated body of UFO reports — although in part still insufficiently documented and described — deserves the attention of science and would, in itself, independently of any hypotheses, constitute a genuine scientific problem.

But I am afraid I cannot really identify myself with any of the many hypotheses on this subject whether they be mine, or those of others. This does not mean that I consider speculation as being worthless, for it may indeed lead to working hypotheses, which in turn may be tested by the observed facts. Here again one must not forget that if a system of thoughts can be shown to be logically consistent (this is true in the case of the theory of a fourth or higher dimensions), this in itself is no proof that it is consistent with reality too.

A really conclusive test in this respect is not possible until someone is able to make a fairly reasonable proposal as to the criteria by which this test should be made at all. The reader may decide for himself to what extent this essential prerequisite is fulfilled in the many hypotheses presented during the last quarter of a century. I must confess I am not too optimistic in this respect. It may be even questionable whether all the necessary facts for such a test are observable at all, or if so, have already been given proper attention.

The reader will be well advised to remember this, when he reads the following contribution to the TT-discussion.

* * * * *

Mr. Priest foresees quite rightly some of the problems of a time travelling machine materialising in our time, and his conclusion that it must have the ability to fly (or better, that it must possess a maximum degree of freedom) is certainly correct. He could have gone a bit farther by saying that a TT-machine would have to provide a self-contained biotop for its crew, or — as I had put it over a decade

ago — that it must have the properties of a space ship.³

At about that time I also had similar ideas to those expressed by Mr. Priest when he suspects a lack of skilfulness on the part of the ufonauts.⁴

But while it may well be that we have here indications for certain deficiencies either in the hardware or the software of the control systems of the UFOs, we should perhaps not overlook their possible abilities in some other respect.

Consider for example that form of repeated manifestation, often in the form of a pronounced escalation, that sometimes precedes a sighting or a contact, and which is evident in cases like those of Antônio Villas Boas, or Maurice Masse and his presumed “lavender pilferers.”⁵

If UFOs really originate from beyond our three dimensions, then such a sequence of events inevitably forces upon us the idea that UFOs are able to follow what in four dimensional geometry is called the “world-line” of a body. The expression “world-line of a body” is perhaps a bit misleading. It does not mean that a world line is something different from a body. It is the extension of a body into, or along the fourth dimension.

One could further theorize that this enables the UFO-intelligences to identify and relocate things and places within our three-dimensional space. This would mean that a UFO would not necessarily have to operate within our three-dimensional space in order to search for something therein. Nevertheless it could enter our space at that point where the thing it is searching for is to be found at a given moment in our time.

Up to now I have only written of things and places. It may be a rather disconcerting thought, but... can they also ferret out the world-lines of humans, or of human brains? At first glance there is in principle no reason why this should not be so. One could at best ask whether they can follow the world-lines of all of us, or whether only a certain number of humans have an invisible tag by which they can be located?

Could this be an alternative explanation for some of the repeater-cases that constitute a stumbling block for anyone who is concerned with mass data of UFO sightings?

Valladolid Tractor Driver: Gdn. Creighton's comments (continued from page 10)

which followed it. From the tractor driver's account in the present case and from the accompanying sketch, it seems likely that the UFO shows a striking resemblance to — or may even have been identical with — the Benacazón object, a sketch of which will be found on page 24 of FSR 22/1. In both cases, as will be seen, the object is described as

cylindrical, surmounted by a kind of “hat” and with feet.

The two places where these events are said to have occurred are however far apart. The Benacazón case was near Sevilla, in south-western Spain. Valladolid lies more than 450 kilometres distant, and almost due north from Sevilla.

There is absolutely no question that the economics of data-processing, as well as methodological considerations, force us to apply a more or less rigorous screening, and quite rightly so. But even "cool" scientists seemingly feel now and then a faint uneasiness as to whether or not we do, perhaps, sometimes reject the wrong ones.⁶

But what exactly is the definition for a repeater? Who deserves more credence: the witness who tells us of a rather close sequence of UFO events occurring at the same place, or the man who reports the same in greater intervals and from different locations? How great must an interval in time or space be in order to assign a given case to the one or the other group?

In any case long before we or the "nuts and bolts brigade" entered this field, the connoisseurs of the occult always made their distinction between spooks (i.e. paranormal events related to persons) and hauntings (paranormal events related to places). We should bear in mind that our hypothetical time travellers would be in an excellent position to cause in our world events of both types.

Could some of those peculiar coincidences that have cropped up now and again in connection with UFO-events during the past few years perhaps be cases in point?

On November 8, 1975 PANAM flight No. 944 from San Francisco to Honolulu was reported overdue. The last message from the airliner (a Boeing *Stratocruiser* with the name "Romance of the Skies") was received at 17.04 by a weather ship of the US Coast Guard Service. It did not contain the slightest hint that there were any difficulties. The probable time of the crash was later determined as 17.27. There were, however, no survivors, and the case was never fully explained, although the CAB made considerable efforts to analyse very weak traces of messages — presumably from the lost plane — that had been recorded on tape. One of the inconsistencies in this case was that the plane was apparently not out of control when it touched the water, but the area of touch-down was, nevertheless, 90 miles off the plane's normal course.⁷

Three months later, on February 5, 1958, the grain buyer Reinhold Schmidt allegedly had a contact with some of our hypothetical ufonauts near Elmscreek, 20 miles west of Kearney, Nebraska.

During the conversation the ufonauts put three questions to the witness. One of them was: "What was on board the plane which disintegrated on the way from San Francisco to Honolulu? Now it should be noted that newspapers had reported that the "Romance of the Skies" had carried, among a load of chemicals, some radioactive material. As another of the said questions had alluded to our nuclear experiments, Schmidt thought that this was the answer. He made his opinion public and added "a good teacher puts before his pupils the sort of questions that force them to think."⁸

But the "Romance of the Skies" had yet another "load" on board, far more significant perhaps than the presence of radioactive material. For its Second Officer was W.H. Fortenberry, one of the witnesses of the famous Nash and Fortenberry UFO-sighting

over Chesapeake Bay near Norfolk, Pa., on July 14, 1952.⁷

I do not know how many such coincidences may have been overlooked by witnesses and investigators alike. Maybe by rigorous statistical standards it is completely non-significant if the witness to a spectacular sighting:

- perishes in an unexplained crash,
- that this crash occurs during a UFO-flap,
- that a contactee who has been regarded as an outright fraud by most serious researchers invents a question of the above kind,
- that at the same time the contactee misses the answer, an answer that would certainly have brought him more publicity than a feeble hint of nuclear problems.

I therefore feel really uncomfortable when I still have to report that on the evening of April 2, 1956, at Coffeyville, Kansas, a UFO was seen hovering over, and circling around, two houses, one of which belonged to a Mr. Fortenberry. If there was presumably no relationship with the above officer, then the latter instance of course does not support the above speculations on the use of world lines by ufonauts. It looks rather as if they were using directories (ours ?) which sometimes confuse them. As I cannot devote too much time to our subject, and as, according to my experience, long-distance investigations by letter are time consuming and frustrating, I haven't been able to make a thorough check. But I was told by Cpt. Nash that the name Fortenberry is not a very common one in the United States.

When dealing with such matters, one must of course guard against the danger of self-deception which is particularly present in the evaluation of poor statistics. On the other hand, our ideas of what is significant and what is not, may not be applicable when we are confronted with an intelligence that can perceive (and even operate) one dimension higher than we do.

Years ago I laughed when Vallée devoted a footnote to a mere name-coincidence in one of his books.⁹ But today? Let us say now that I am still laughing, but perhaps no longer loudly. Similarly I must confess that I also missed an important implication of Mr. Bowen's article.¹⁰ But I hope that I can say more about the problems he touched upon more than a decade ago, as well as on some other of the recent considerations of Mr. Priest in a coming issue of the FSR.

Notes

1. S.E. Priest: *Ufonauts as Time Travellers*. FSR Vol.21, No.6, (April 1976), p. 12-13.
2. A great part of my views on this subject can be found in the following back issues of the FSR (most of them under the title *UFOs and the Fourth Dimension*): Vol.9, No.2, March/April 1963, page 10-12. Vol.10, No.1, Jan/Feb. 1964, page 16-20. Vol.11, No.6, Nov/Dec 1965, page 12-13. Vol.14, No.6, Nov/Dec 1968, page 12-13. Vol. 17, No.2, March/April 1971, page 22-25.

(Concluded on page 13)

CUFOS HOLDS ITS FIRST TECHNICAL CONFERENCE

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THE Center for UFO Studies (CUFOS) has been in existence less than three years and it has already published in-depth analyses of UFO data, supported various investigations and continued development of an extensive computerized file (known as UFOCAT) of sightings, developed and maintained a reference library, and has recently sponsored its first international technical conference. As a participant at this meeting, I would like to give an "insider's" view of what took place.

The conference was held at the Lincolnwood Hyatt House Hotel in Illinois from April 30 to May 2, 1976 and attracted over 70 persons from as far away as Brazil, Canada, England, and France as well as most sections of America. As soon as I read the programme I knew that this was not going to be the typical gathering of UFO enthusiasts. The overall high level of personal dedication to serious UFO studies (as evidenced by the past achievements of many of the participants) and the presence of some "newcomer" scientists and engineers suggested that the tone of the meeting papers and content of the informal discussions would be both impressive and important. I was not disappointed; the depth and breadth of topics presented in the 29 formal papers was most impressive. In addition to these papers, nine others were distributed at the meeting but were not given orally.**

Rather than review the papers in their original programme order I have regrouped them into four general categories: I. General Papers of Historic or Broader Focus (2 papers); II. Analysis and Observations on Selected UFO Cases (12 papers); III. Advanced Methodologies for Use by the Physical and Social Scientist (12 papers); and IV. Theoretical Issues Such as Social and Strategic Implications, Propulsion Physics, etc. (3 papers).

I. General Papers of Historic or Broader Focus:
(1) Tom Gates, *UFOs and Public Awareness*. In order for the UFO investigator to deal effectively with the general public in gathering data it is imperative to develop and conduct an effective public education



Pleased with progress? Dr. J. Allen Hynek

program. There is no reason for the investigator to be defensive about his work, indeed, we need to develop ways to redirect initial scepticism of others toward more positive, constructive questions and personal involvement.

(2) David Jacobs, *UFO Research, the ETH, and Other Murky Problems*. The suggestion was made that a far more "pluralistic conception" of UFO phenomena is needed to account for the highly varied nature of the sightings. We should classify and study the diversity of UFO characteristics not just their similarities. UFO phenomena appears to be far more varied and complex than previously thought.

II. Analysis and Observations on Selected UFO Cases:

(1) Ted Bloecher, *The Stonehenge Incidents*. An

Luis Schonherr notes (continued from page 12)

3. See FSR Vol.9, No.2, March/April 1963, page 11.
4. See FSR Vol.10, No.1, Jan/Feb 1964, page 18-19.
5. Aimé Michel: *The Valensole Affair*, FSR Vol.11, No.6, Nov/Dec 1965, page 7.
6. J. Allen Hynek: *The UFO-Experience*, Abelard Schuman, London page 30 (Footnote).
7. Robert Serling: *The Probable Cause*, Doubleday, New

- York, German Edition: Motorbuchverlag 1964, page 71.
8. Weltraumbote, Zurich (now defunct): No. 36/37, Nov/Dec 1958, page 15.
9. Jacques Vallée: *Passport to Magonia*, Regnery, Chicago 1969, page 43.
10. Charles Bowen: *Time Saucers and the Fourth Dimension*, FSR Vol.9, No.3, May/June 1963, page 13.