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Fig. 16

UFOs have been a major topic for the past twenty-three years on *21st Century Radio*, and Dr. Bob Hieronimus is often fond of opening his UFO interview shows with his famous Rules and Regulations. Dr. Bob's R&R goes something like this:

- ***We are not alone in the universe and never have been.***
- ***We are more than our physical bodies; we have an immortal component that is wiser than you can ever imagine.***
- ***What we do to the earth, we do to ourselves.***

The second part of rule number one is where we find ourselves in Jacques Vallee's most recent work. It was in 1990 that we first featured Dr. Vallee as a guest and when he treated us to a marathon interview on his works up to that time.

We particularly emphasized his most recent books *Confrontations: A Scientist's Search for Alien Contact* (Ballantine, 1990) and *Dimensions: A Casebook of Alien Contact* (Contemporary, 1988), but we also touched on the groundbreaking classic *Passport to Magonia: From Folklore to Flying Saucers* (Regnery, 1969). Vallee has joined us several times since then over the decades, most recently in November 2010 when we reviewed his coauthored book *Wonders in the Skies: Unexplained Aerial*

Objects from Antiquity to Modern Times created with Chris Aubeck and published by Tarcher Press.

Jacque Vallee is one of today's most widely respected researchers of unexplained aerial phenomena. He earned his master's degree in astrophysics while living in France and holds a PhD in computer science from Northwestern University. Vallee is the author of several books about high technology and unidentified phenomena, and he was the model for the French ufologist played by François Truffaut in the 1977 film *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. He lives in San Francisco, and his website is www.jacquesvallee.net.

His collaborator on this book is Chris Aubeck who, inspired by *Passport to Magonia*, built the largest collection of pre-1947 unexplained aerial cases in the world. In 2003 he cofounded the Magonia Project, a remarkable network on the internet of librarians, students, and scholars of paranormal history.

The group has accumulated thousands of references, searched media archives in several languages, and collected hundreds of rare documents, scientific reports, and newspaper clippings. Aubeck lives in Madrid, Spain. You can learn more about the Magonia Project at http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/magonia_exchange or by email: icaubeck@gmail.com.

The Magonia Project

AN INTERVIEW WITH JACQUES
VALLEE ON HIS COLLABORA-
TION WITH CHRIS AUBECK

BY DRS. BOB AND ZOHARA HIERONIMUS

Together they have produced a marvelous book which they say is just the beginning of the reporting on this enormous collection. As academically valuable as it is with the authors' painstaking efforts at reference verification, our readers report it also makes a great bathroom book because you can put it down and pick it up from any page and enjoy it.

Hundreds of reports of unexplained aerial phenomena are reported in chronological order, each one headed with a series of categorizing icons to indicate if the report includes an abduction, physical evidence, or entity contact. Other than the Myths and Legends sections, all reports are firmly rooted in historical data for strength of verification. After reading just a few of the accounts, you will find yourself reexamining every account in history as if through a new lens and seeing UFOs and ETs just about everywhere.

What follows is an abbreviated transcript of Vallee's interview on *21st Century Radio* with Dr. Bob Hieronimus. To hear the complete interview online, visit our free audio archives at www.21stCenturyRadio.com. Transcription is provided by Mike Donahue and edited by Laura Cortner.

Hieronimus: Why did you want to do this book?

Vallee: I had always wanted to do this book. You mentioned *Passport to Magonia* was forty years ago. Well, the first two books I wrote about UFOs were pretty much oriented to what most people believe: the extraterrestrial idea. When you first approach the subject, it's natural to think that these objects represent a technology and that technology seems to come from outer space.

It's a logical idea. But then I spent a year in France, where I had access to very good libraries and old medieval records. I started asking myself when did this phenomenon begin? In science, when you're confronted with an anomaly, you try to look for patterns, and you try to see. When did it begin? Was it triggered by some specific thing?

Most UFO books say that the phenomenon of flying saucers began in June 1947 when Kenneth Arnold, a civilian pilot—whom I met, by the way—saw six objects in the mountain air in the state of Washington. The problem is we have records of



Fig. 26

sightings way before then in the twentieth and the nineteenth centuries.

Charles Fort wrote a number of books about old cases from the scientific literature that were unexplained. So, when I wrote *Passport to Magonia* I drew a parallel between ancient cases and medieval records and the modern folklore of UFOs; not drawing any conclusions, but just calling attention to the parallels.

I knew I was only scratching the surface and that there was much more material. I was sure that scholars in ancient records and folklore experts would rush to their collections in their museums and look for that kind of thing. That didn't happen. A number of people pointed out that there were errors in my book. That was true, but there are always errors when you're trying to pin down some ancient things.

Nobody had seriously revised it until forty years later. Chris Aubeck, who is a much younger man than I am, is an Englishman who lives in Madrid and has started a project called Magonia Exchange. He contacted me and said, "Look, I have assembled all these records. Why don't we work together in tracking down the references and essentially going over the same territory that was in *Passport to Magonia* forty years ago?"

I was absolutely delighted. I met with Chris in Portugal at a conference on consciousness, religion, and science, and we merged our databases. In the meantime I had accumulated a bunch of new old cases. Then we started tracking down references with the help of his friends on the web.

This has been made possible by the internet. As you know, I'm a great fan of the internet. I had the privilege of working on the early internet, the Advanced Research Projects Agency Network (ARPANET), when I was at Stanford Research Institute.

The internet made this research possible in two ways. First, in assembling a collaboration among about ten people all over the world who were tracking down these cases and also in having access to records of old newspapers, museums, and libraries. Now libraries are scanning all their holdings and putting them online. It's a lot easier than taking five years off and traveling from one little town to another, looking up old records, which was obviously impossible.

So that's what led to this book, *Wonders in The Sky*. We wanted to accumulate enough cases to make it statistically signifi-

cant so we could say something about the patterns. We identified five hundred cases before 1879. Before 1879 there was nothing human in the sky. There were a few balloons, mostly tethered balloons; there were a few free balloons, but everybody knew where they were. There were no dirigibles and obviously no airplanes; no CIA, no SR-71, and no prototypes. None of that. The sky was pure of human contamination.

Many of the cases in our book came from astronomers: two of the directors of the Paris observatory, [Giovanni Domenico] Cassini and [Urbain] LeVerrier, a secretary of the Royal Society in England, people who are stellar names in physics like [Joseph Louis] Lagrange, great astronomers like [Charles] Messier. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, astronomers were actually open-minded, and they liked to associate their name with the discovery or the identification of anomalies in the sky that could turn out to be something important: new comets, new phenomena, novae, supernovae, and so on, and they published what they saw very freely, without fear of ridicule.

We've lost that; science has lost that, probably because of the bureaucracy of science that demands that you be respectable in order to get funding for your projects. You cannot have the reputation of seeing unusual things in the sky.

But all of astronomy is based on seeing unusual things in the sky! One of the fascinating things in researching this book was to track down the observations that earlier scientists had made and reported.

Hieronimus: That's why this book is so extraordinary. I've read every report you have in here, and yet I know you have more. You have many more than just this five hundred.

Vallee: Chris and I see this as the beginning of something, not the end. We've gone over the same territory as *Passport to Magonia*, but we've done it with much greater precision, thanks to Chris's work.

Chris is a scholar of philology, the study of language, and the study of history. He is extremely precise in tracking down references, and this book is really mostly his work. I have added what I could in terms of screening the cases.

Obviously, there were many cases we've found that were meteors or comets, aurora borealis, and other phenomena. As the astronomer on the team, I screened out as many of the weak cases as I could, and we ended up with these five hundred cases.

But we hope this will motivate scholars and researchers around the world to go back to their archives. There must be much, much more, especially in countries where we don't have a good connection like Japan and China and the Middle East, where people were keeping records way before Europe and America.

Hieronimus: While Chris Aubeck and you do not claim that any of the events you have uncovered proves anything about flying objects from alien worlds or influence by nonhuman intelligences, you have come to four major observations. Could you simplify those four major observations you have on pages 11-12?

Vallee: Number one, and this is confirming what had been hypothesized before, is that throughout history there have been unknown phenomena in the sky that people saw as prodigies or celestial wonders, and they made a major impact on the imaginations of the peoples who witnessed them.

Number two: every epoch has interpreted these phenomena in its own terms, often in religious or political contexts. And they still do; I think that's the main point. People have projected their worldview, their fears, their fantasies, their hopes into what they saw in the sky.

And we still do that today. I think to a great extent expectations of aliens and extraterrestrials coming here in spacecraft is just the same thing. It's modern folklore. It's the projection of our expectations because we are on the verge of going to other planets.

Third conclusion: Many details of these events have been forgotten or pushed under the rug of history, but their impact has shaped human civilization in important ways. We cannot understand human civilization without understanding the history of people observing things in the sky and hypothesizing about beings from the sky.

This is not simply from the UFO literature. In the book we quote scholars like Professor [Ioan] Couliano at the University of Chicago and a number of people who have researched the history of religions. This is an accepted fact outside of our narrow field of research.

Number four: The lessons drawn from ancient cases can be applied to the full range of aerial phenomena that are still reported and remain unexplained by contemporary science. People should realize that this continues now, and science does not have an explanation.

The media laugh at people who report UFOs, and they try to ridicule them. But the fact is that even if you can explain eight or nine cases out of ten, you are left with a large number of cases that are detailed, well described, and unexplained.

Hieronimus: Especially when you go back several thousand years. Alien contact may be mankind's oldest story, so let's take a look at some of your earliest sightings. The first in the book is 1460 BC in Lebanon: "A star defeats the Nubians." Do you recall that sighting?

Vallee: Yes. The early cases in Egypt and the Roman Empire are very interesting because they show how reliable these records are. I expect that one of the criticisms of the book will come from people, including ufologists, who will say, "Well, old records, who knows? This is in the dust of history, and it's unreliable."

Well, on the contrary; we do know a lot about those records because people at the time were so impressed with what they saw that they recorded it on what was, at the time, very expensive media such as papyrus or parchment. They put it in their official records.

In this particular case, in 1460 BC, they actually engraved it in stone. So, this is a stele erected in honor of Thutmosis III describing a fantastic celestial event during a war. There was a battle going on with the Nubians, and what they called a star, a bright object came from the sky and positioned itself above the army.

The translation is from a German Egyptology journal, which we cite. We tracked all this down to the earliest possible scholarly reference:

[The star] positioned itself above them as though they didn't exist, and then they fell upon their own blood. Now [the star] was behind them (illuminating) their faces with fire; no man

amongst them could defend himself, none of them looked back. They had not their horses, as [these] had fled into the mountain, frightened. ... Such is the miracle that Amon did for me, his beloved son in order to make the inhabitants of the foreign lands see the power of my majesty.

This is an Egyptian record of something that came from the sky and obviously was not a meteor, was not a comet, was not an aurora borealis. Something that created terror among the opposing army. It was felt important enough to be recorded. The stele is on display in the Museum of Jardum in Sudan.

In this book we discounted legends. We wanted only cases that could be pinned down to a particular place and time and hopefully the name of the witness. In a surprising number of cases, we had all that.

Hieronimus: I'm just thrilled at the sources of information, and you print them right beneath the stories. This makes so much sense.

Vallee: In the UFO literature people have tried to do this before, including me, and it was very difficult to have access to the original sources. Before the internet this was very hard to do. We've tried to track down all those stories and correct mistakes.

In UFO books, you'll find things like: "In 1810 two discs flew over London." Well, when you track it back to the original reference, it doesn't say anything about discs. It says, "two lights



Fig. 15

were seen over London,” and the UFO believers have turned the light into a disc.

Obviously, we tried to correct those mistakes. If it was a light, it was a light; that’s what the witness said. It may or may not have been a disc, but we don’t know that. We can’t jump to that kind of conclusion.

Hieronimus: The second sighting I was very excited about was in 1347 BC at El-Amarna, Akhenaton’s flying disc. My wife and I worked in Egypt under President Sadat and partly on the Akhenaton temple project with Dr. Donald Redford, so I was just fascinated with this material with regard to Akhenaton’s flying disc. What can you tell us about this?

Vallee: This was also engraved on a stele. Pharaoh Akhenaton was Amenhotep IV and had an experience that shaped Egyptian history and the history of the ancient world. He saw a shining disc that descended from the sky, and here the actual translation is “a disc.”

He heard a voice coming from what is referred to as a solar disc, and that voice told him he had to build a new capital for Egypt and give it the name Akhetaton, the horizon of the solar disc. He built a new capital for Egypt and also founded a new religion based on the worship of the solar disc.

We were fascinated with this because there is an impeccable record of this, and its impact on history is very clear. Its impact on the history of religions is very clear.

Hieronimus: So we go from Egypt to Israel around 850 BC, the shores of the Jordan River and the abduction of Elijah. The

reason why I wanted to especially note this was because there are a lot of parallels between these ancient cases and what goes on in abduction phenomena today.

Vallee: The book ended up containing a number of abduction stories, which were, as you said, very much parallel to the recent reports of alleged abductions, the so-called abductions. Most of the abduction researchers, people like Budd Hopkins and Dr. David Jacobs and so, on claim that abductions are a recent thing.

Their theory is that we are being invaded by aliens who started abducting people thirty, forty years ago. Yet abductions by beings from the sky is mankind’s oldest story. It goes back to the Bible.

It even goes back before the Bible in older traditions. The American Indians have such traditions, and all over the world you find it. We did not pay much attention to that kind of story when it was not dated. We wanted actual cases that we could pin down and try to correlate with natural patterns, scientific patterns.

However, in the Bible, which of course has many records of paranormal happenings, there are a few cases where we do have an approximate date and the name of a witness about whom we know something. Elijah is one of those. The episode is described in the King James Version.

And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so. And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

This is in 2 Kings 2:9-11. This was considered important enough that it was recorded in the document that is still read every day by people all over the world. We have an indication that people believed in the reality of what they described as chariots. Every civilization has described it in its own terms: chariots of fire from the sky taking somebody up into the sky.

Hieronimus: You also list a second abduction of Ezekiel in 593 BC. How was Ezekiel’s abduction similar to what today would be characterized as an abduction?

Vallee: Ezekiel is very interesting in many ways. We are not naïve enough to believe that Ezekiel wrote the Book of Ezekiel. The Book of Ezekiel was written by scribes and monks who compiled it from a number of different records, including records that went back to the days of Ezekiel but had been written by other people.

The Book of Ezekiel as it is in the Bible was actually compiled about seven centuries after his death. We understand the history and the controversies about these records. A lot of biblical scholars have studied all this.

The observation by Ezekiel is remarkable in several ways. Essentially, he saw a strange craft. He describes it very much as a machine, not as a light, not even as a chariot, but really as a machine with wheels within wheels, a brilliant dome and four be-

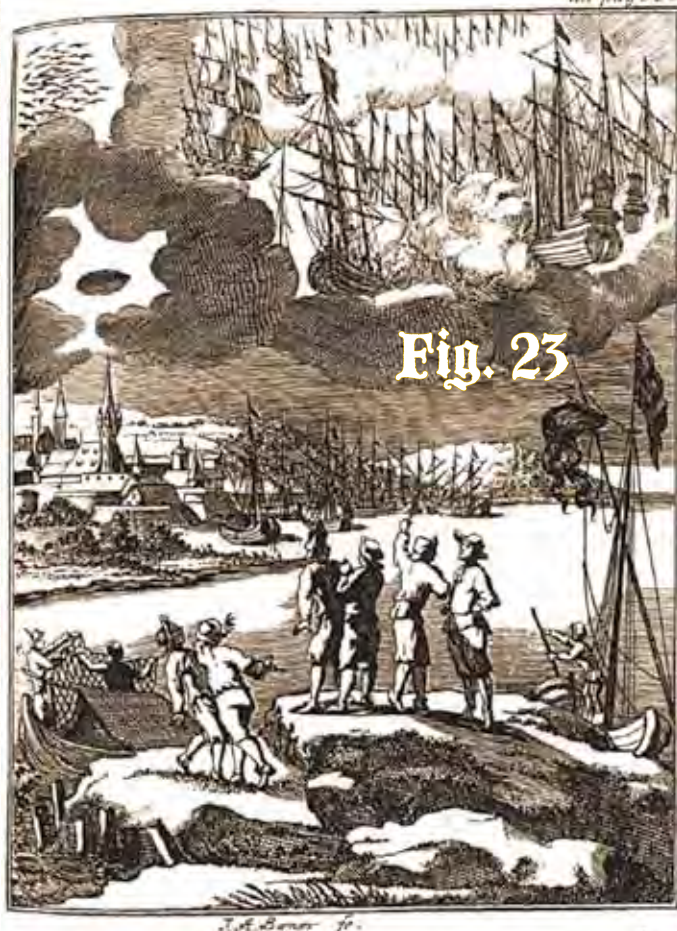




Fig. 28

ings associated with it. He was transported by it to a mountain-top. He didn't know how he got here, and he remained stunned, in a state of stupor, which is very much what happens to people who describe abductions today.

We make no hypothesis or conclusions about the reality of any of that. We really want to leave that to the reader because the material is just too rich for us to draw any conclusions at this point. I'm using the word *abduction* because that's the word that's in the literature; it's a word that people understand today.

Most abductees that I've known have described a loss of a sense of reality during the abduction and then finding themselves somewhere, not knowing how they got there, what had happened, often having lost time in the transition, and being completely confused. And that's exactly what Ezekiel describes.

There are other things that are very peculiar in the record of Ezekiel. You know how scholars analyze ancient writings: They put everything on a computer, and then they provide an index or a dictionary of the words, and they look in what context words appear.

They compile dictionaries of ancient languages from different centuries so that they can translate, for example, a Coptic manuscript of the tenth century, compare it to an Arabic manuscript in another century, and put it back into context. When you do that with Ezekiel, you find that he uses words that are used only once in the entire Bible, including the word translated as *beryllium* or *beryl* when he describes the brilliant dome of the machine.

That word is used only once in the whole Bible, in Ezekiel. So the translators had to guess. The word translated *beryllium*, as I understand it, is just a guess. There are also words that are not used anywhere else in the language of that particular period.

He was grasping at words trying to express what he had seen. What he had seen were wheels within wheels and these four beings. It reminds us of many modern descriptions of witnesses who saw disc-shaped or wheel-shaped objects. They had difficulty providing a good description of it.

Hieronimus: When I saw the cover of this book, I thought, That's the book for me. Tell us about the front cover.

Vallee: That's not an authentic ancient engraving. We do have actual engravings describing aerial phenomenon within the book, but this one is a composite drawn to represent the frequent descriptions of entire armies seeing flying discs in the sky that were very often described as flying shields.

Most shields were square, but many shields were round. So when people saw flying discs in the sky, they occasionally describe them in Latin as flying shields. That's a dramatic scene, and that's what the publisher put on the cover of the book.

People may say we don't know the context of this. But most cases came from official records, either religious records or government records. In the Roman Empire, the consuls made a law that every year they had to be presented with a record of all the unexplained phenomena in the sky, any unexplained aerial object.

This was not about UFOs. It was for astrological reasons because it felt that unusual things in the sky would announce the future: future wars and revolutions and the death of kings and the rise of new empires. This is a little bit as if President Obama were asking the Secretary of the Air Force to give him a quarterly report on his desk in the White House of any UFO over the United States!

Hieronimus: You have many accounts of armies seen in the sky. In 1608 in France, the Flying Warriors; July 3, 1612 in Switzerland, Battling Sky Armies and wonderful illustrations of these. One I wanted to focus on is April 8, 1665 in Germany, a domed flying saucer of which you say, "There is no question that this account is authentic, although the date may be incorrect by a few days." Could you please review that particular case in Stralsund, Germany?

Vallee: The man who did the research on this is Illobrand Von Ludwiger. I spent about a week with him when he came through San Francisco, and we reviewed the case together. He showed me the research he had done on this particular case.

This happened about 2 PM. The fishermen of Stralsund first reported a big swarm of starlings in the sky coming from the north over the sea. That changed to a vision of ships in the sky that seemed to be fighting one another.



Fig. 2

Again, we have this phenomenon of what seems to be a vision projected in the sky. There was a lot of smoke in connection with this vision. And then all that vanished. One of people there was a writer.

You have to realize that in those days, there were very few people who could read or write. The records we have come from scholars, people who were educated. One of the witnesses was a writer, Erasmus Francisci, who says, and I quote: "After a while, out of the sky came a flat round form, like a plate." This is, again, an exact quote. This is not my interpretation of it. This is the actual 17th Century text:

... looking like a big man's hat. ... Its color was that of the rising moon, and it hovered right over the Church of St. Nicolai. There it remained stationary till evening.

Now again, this was not a meteor or ball lightning or plasma. It remained stationary from 2 PM until the evening.

The fishermen, worried to death, did not want to look further at the spectacle and buried their faces in their hands. On the following days they fell sick with trembling all over and pain in head and limbs.

In UFO literature in many modern cases, witnesses had physiological aftereffects. You remember in the movie *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* the witness has a sunburn, or people describe strange effects after the sighting. We find the same thing in these ancient records again and again and again: people feeling disoriented, paralyzed, sick in the following days. "They fell sick with trembling all over and pain in head and limbs." This suggests almost a neurological effect.

These cases are very detailed. This is not a vague legend. What the fishermen saw was a plate with a dome, and it was

yellow-orange like the rising moon and hovered; was motionless for a long time.

Hieronimus: What about Dr. Nostradamus? Report #191, February 1, 1554. Tell us about this one.

Vallee: Nostradamus, Michael de Nostre Dame, is known of course for his predictions. But he was also one of the great physicians of his time. He was one of the first to fight disease by promoting hygiene, by washing people, and telling doctors to wash their hands when they went from one patient to another. He had the intuition that disease was not a mysterious, mystical thing, but something that was transported from patient to patient.

Here he writes about a report: There were a thousand witnesses in this town in Provence on February 1, 1554. They saw a bright burning rod flying and changing its flight path between 7 and 8 PM. It was in the sky

for two hours, displaying a swinging or moving trajectory.

He writes this in an official letter to the Duke of Tende. This is an official record. You would not write a letter like that as a hoax or as a joke. It says:

Gracious Lord:

According to reports received, on the first day of February in this year of 1554, a most terrifying and horrible sight was seen ... towards evening, apparently between 7 and 8, which I am told was seen as far as Marseilles. Then it was also seen at nearby St. Chamas by the sea, such that near the moon (which at that time was near its first quarter) a great fire did come from the east and make its way towards the west. This fire being very great, did by all accounts look like a great burning staff or torch, gave out from itself a wondrous brightness, and flames did spurt from it like a glowing iron being worked by a smith. And such fire did sparkle greatly, glowing aloft like silver over an immense distance like Jacob's Road in the sky, known as the "Galaxy" [i.e., the Milky Way], and raced overhead very fast like an arrow with a great roaring and crackling thunderous din as though it were being blown hither and thither by the [raging and roaring?] of a mighty wind. Then slowly, over the course of 20 minutes, it turned until we saw it passing over the region of Arles via that we call the "stony road" which the poets do call immensum fragorem. Then it turned towards the south, high over the sea, and the fiery stream that it created retained its fiery color for a long time, and cast fiery sparks all around it, like rain falling from heaven. The sight was much more terrifying than human tongue could say or describe.

He explained the research he did, and the people that he called and confronted with their report. He says:

Two days after the fire had been seen, the Prefect of St. Chamas came to me and indicated that he and other townspeople had seen the same thing, and that it had taken the shape of a half-rainbow stretching as far as the Spanish Main. And if it had been low down rather than high up, it would have burnt up everything and reduced it to ashes as it went by. ... This omen was seen by more than a thousand people, and I have been bidden to confirm this and write to your Eminence about it, insofar as I have in my own estimation seen and heard how it happened. And I pray Jesus Our Lord that he may grant Your High Eminence long life, and that he may richly multiply and extend your good fortune.

Given in France at Salon-de-Provence, this 19th of March in the year 1554. Your Eminence's most humble and obedient servant, Michael de Nostre Dame.

This is not a joke or a hoax or a casual thing. This was seen by a thousand people. Before he wrote this letter he did his own research: asking people, talking to witnesses who came forward, and compared their observations to be sure that what he was describing was real.

Hieronimus: Can you describe how you and Chris chose which cases to include in the book?

Vallee: When I first published the account of St. Agobard, the Archbishop of Lyons in 815 AD, there was a barrage of very nasty criticism against *Passport to Magonia*, which is now something of a classic. But at the time, the ufologists hated it.

They said, "We know that UFOs are spacecraft, they came here after 1947, maybe because of the nuclear explosions at Hiroshima and so on, and these aliens are coming to study us. But don't tell us about all that ancient stuff, and all that stuff about Magonia." Some of the UFO groups were even nasty enough to suggest that I invented St. Agobard and his writings.

In my next book, I published the text in Latin with the translation. It says very clearly "vessels" or "ships" in clouds: "*naves veniant in nubibus.*" There is no question that Agobard existed.

His books are recorded in the archives, and now they have been translated by the church. What that tells us is that the belief in things that flew through the clouds in the form of vessels is very old. It also was believed not only that these regions in the sky were inhabited, but that they could pick up human beings who traveled with them.

I should explain how we wrote this book. It was born out of a tension—which was very healthy—between Chris Aubeck and me. We often disagreed about what should and should not be included. Some of the cases in the book are precise, with accurate references. But we also have cases that we could not trace to an original source, and those we flagged with a little "i" in a circle, meaning we need more information about that particular case.

It took six years to compile this book. We had many, many discussions about every case. Chris argued that we should not include any weak cases. There are many cases from Japan, for instance, where we know that there is a sighting in the literature, but we don't have the original Japanese source.

My argument was that we've done all this research and we've found these cases; yes, they are vague, and we don't have the

exact references, but if we don't call it to the attention of other people, we'll never get the reference! The reader expects us to mention it, and we should mention it while saying we do not stand firmly on that particular case, but we need more research.

Somebody may be in a position to pick it up and go look it up and see if it was, in fact, a strong case with a reference, or if it was an error, in which case the next edition will be better.

We see this book as a beginning. We negotiated about many of these cases. Similarly, I was more willing to include cases of beings seen without an actual object, but Chris won that particular battle. He said "Look, if we do that, it's going to be a five-thousand-page book, not five hundred, because there are so many cases of strange beings, allegedly from the sky, that we should only include the cases where there was an actual aerial object seen in connection with it."

Hieronimus: My favorite section was "Myths, Legends and Chariots of the Gods," where you have cases like "400 million years ago in Kentucky" and "12,000 years ago granite discs tell a story." How did you handle this section?

Vallee: We had a lot of fun with that one. The second section of the book is a description of the cases we rejected and why we rejected them. It's a lot fun to read. We disclosed all the sources and how we studied it. The last section of the book is statistics showing that the pattern of the ancient cases is very, very similar to the pattern of the modern UFO.

Hieronimus: Bedroom visitations have been reported for centuries that are similar to twentieth and twenty-first century abduction accounts.

Vallee: I have to confess something. I can't speak for Chris, but if I had known that this was going to be so much work, I don't think I would have started on this book six years ago. It was a lot of work; nobody got paid, it was not sponsored by anybody.

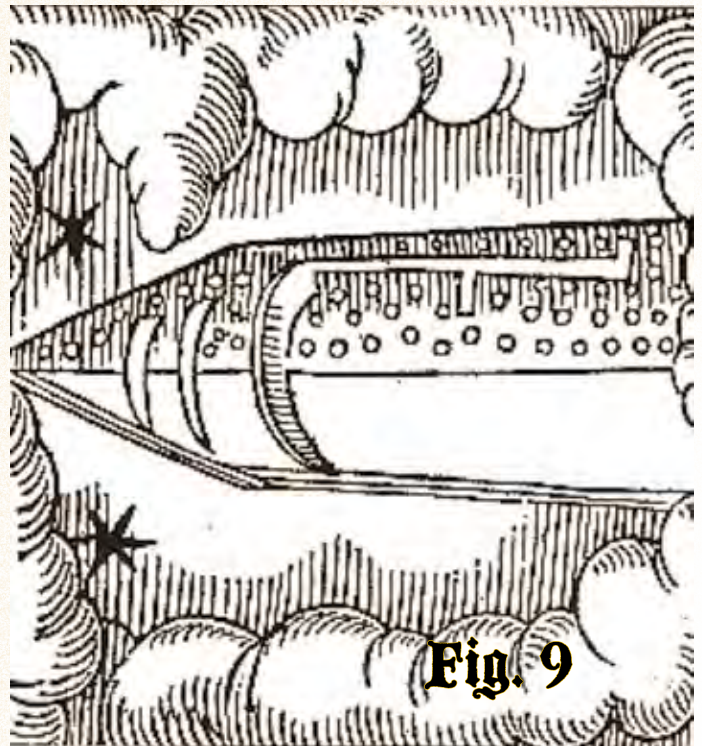


Fig. 9

We just did it! It was made possible by the passion and the shared interest and curiosity of our group, with Chris driving it. But after a while we were hooked because it was just so fascinating to discover this.

As you get closer to modern times, the seventeenth century, and you get to the Age of Enlightenment, the witnesses now are scientists, and their records, their observations were often made with telescopes. We went over the records that Charles Fort talked about, but we tried to do it with much greater precision, with many, many more references.

This is when you have people like Cassini, an Italian astronomer who was invited by the king of France to come to Paris to be the director of the Paris Observatory. Among other things, he observed an object through a telescope that he could not identify, near Venus.

The first time he saw it he did not publish it, as a good scientist would, because he had only seen it once. But he saw it again a few years later, and then he published both of his observations. This is the director of the Paris Observatory, and in those days they already had very competent telescopes, very precise telescopes with very good optics.

After all, our knowledge of the solar system is built on the observations that these people made. LeVerrier, for example, who was also later the director of the Paris Observatory, called for all the observations that semiprofessional and professional astronomers made of objects between Mercury and the sun.

He selected a number of them—about two dozen—for further

study because he was looking for a planet that would explain the perturbations of Mercury. All these records were assembled and studied very closely and very scientifically.

Most of the cases we have from the eighteenth century in our book are from professional astronomers. During a solar eclipse on June 17, 1777 Charles Messier, who gave us a catalog of what are now known as the largest galaxies in the sky, observed dark objects moving in parallel directions during the solar eclipse, and he described them as large, swift, and in the shape of bells.

He didn't quite know what they were, speculating that they might be small meteorites. But why would they be in the shape of bells? Many of these observations are recorded in the correspondence between some of the great scientists of the time, including Gauss and others. This is in the scientific records. Yet most scientists today will brush it aside, saying there couldn't be UFOs, so these things don't exist. In those days, scientists were open-minded.

What a concept! Open-minded science! When did science become this sort of constipated, bureaucratic discipline? Science is about being curious, being interested in anomalies.

Hieronimus: I always thought science was also about suspension of judgment over a period of time, gathering material, and not drawing conclusions prematurely. As soon as you start drawing conclusions, you can really go down some alleys that you can get lost in, without knowing enough about it. As you note, the eighteenth century was a different time period

Fig. 43



in which scientists actually acted like scientists from that perspective and looked at these cases very seriously.

I wanted to touch on this case that you included in your Myths and Legends section. It was 312 AD near Verona, Italy: "A pagan emperor sees a cross in the sky." This was Constantine, and his establishment of Christianity in Rome. Is this the true basis for his conversion?

Vallee: In that section, some of the cases we rejected were cases that are in the UFO books; for example, the Star of Bethlehem. We thought we couldn't do anything with them in the main chronology either because they were in a completely religious context, which we have nothing to say about.

We are not saying they did not happen, or they did not influence people; obviously they did influence people and still do. But there wasn't anything we could say about them. The problem with the Star of Bethlehem is that we don't know the year of Christ's birth, so we don't know whether there was a comet, a nova, whether they were just seeing Venus, or if they were seeing something that was truly unusual. We can't say anything about that.

In the case of Emperor Constantine, the history books tell us that on the day before a big battle he saw a cross in the sky, and this pagan emperor converted to Christianity. With the cross there was a message, and it's not clear whether it was written in the sky or whether he heard it or saw it in a dream, but the message was, "In hoc signo vinces," or "In this sign you will conquer."

And the story is that he converted right there and then to Christianity and went on to win the battle and introduced Christianity to Rome. That's all very good, but when you look at the actual records—and there are several books that were written just about that time—you find that a little before then he had already seen another sign in the sky and had converted to another religion, and so he was sort of in the habit of seeing signs in the sky.

There are two main sources for the story. One is from Eusebius and the other from Lactantius. They contain contradictions, but Eusebius recounts that event in two books, one referring to the cross in the sky.

The question is whether he saw the cross or heard the message or saw the message, or whether part of that was a dream. In any case, I think he was a little bit opportunistic. Crosses in the sky are not unusual; just as when you see a bright light across the street through a screen door, the screen door is going to create a luminous cross. It's not a religious miracle; it's just a refraction phenomenon. So crosses can be seen in the sky, and it's not a manifestation from God.

Hieronimus: As you note, he used the Latin sign of the cross on his coins before his conversion, in reference to the sun.

Vallee: However, that still shows that ascribing things to miracles or to aerial phenomena in the sky can have an enormous historical impact in the Roman Empire, and Christianity became the official religion of Rome. He had had a vision like that in 310 AD that he took for the appearance of Apollo, and he worshiped Apollo as the sun god. So he's met gods of two opposite religions in the space two years.

Hieronimus: He can be all things to everybody, I guess.

Vallee: He was a politician; what do you expect?

Hieronimus: Dr. Vallee, thank you for joining us. It's always a great joy having you on our show. I always learn so much from your books. My copy of this book has 1,500 little flags on it, just about. It's a great book. Thank you, sir, for joining us.

Vallee: It's a pleasure being on your show. Thank you very much. **UFO**

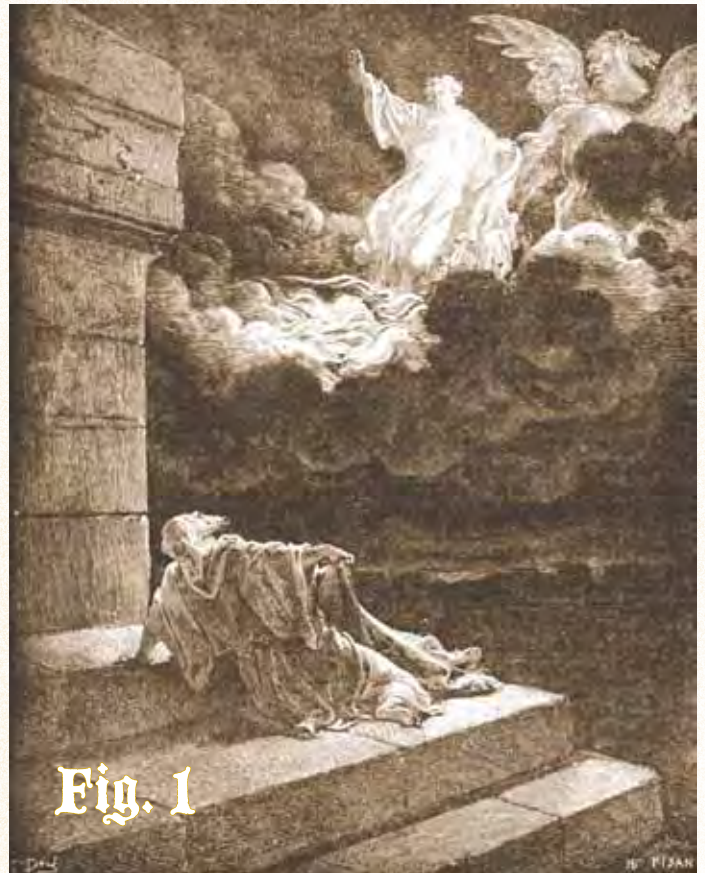


Fig. 1

Figure 16, p. 38. The sighting at Nuremberg. On April 14, 1561 AD in Nuremberg, Germany at sunrise, many spheres and disks, red, blue and black were seen to come out of two vertical cylinders and apparently have an "aerial fight" which lasted about one hour.

Figure 26, p. 40. The Regensburg phenomenon. August 18, 1671 AD in Regensburg, Germany an amazed crowd staring at ships in the sky, various mythical animals and armies arrayed for battle.

Figure 15, p. 41. Object seen in Salon de Provence, reported by Nostradamus, February 1, 1554 AD, Salon de Provence, France.

Figure 23, p. 42. The Stralsund phenomenon. April 8, 1665, Stralsund, Germany.

Figure 28, p. 43. Mecklenburg phenomenon. November 4, 1697 AD in Mecklenburg and Hamburg, Germany, two enormous glowing wheels are shown in a picture with crowds watching the sky.

Figure 2, p. 44. The abduction of Ezekiel, circa 593 BC, Chaldea, near the river Chebar, Iraq.

Figure 9, p. 45. Arabian "rocket" from 1479 AD. Whatever was observed does not conform to our knowledge of comets.

Figure 43, p. 46. An interpretation of Alexander's "silver shields." 330 BC, Sur (Tyre), Lebanon.

Figure 1, p. 47. The abduction of Elijah (Gustave Doré), circa 850 BC, shores of the Jordan River, Israel.