

# ONGOING "MARIAN" PHENOMENA OVER BRAZIL: "HYSTERIA", OR "UFOs"?

*(Translation from Portuguese. G.C.)  
Brazilian UFO Journal No. 39 (August 1995)*

There have already been several "Apparitions of the Virgin Mary" recorded from the interior of Bahia State. However none of them was ever the subject of an ecclesiastical verification affirming that a miracle had occurred. The fact of the matter is indeed that, in almost every municipal region in this State, it is quite a common thing to meet persons who say they have seen the Virgin, or at least "have felt Her presence". This is an anciently rooted phenomenon which in the popular mind has always been interpreted in a religious or in a mythological fashion and attributed to saints, deities, and other personages embraced within the belief systems of the various peoples experiencing such apparitions.

Consequently there are various lines of approach in attempting to explain the phenomenon. The Church affirms that it is a miracle coming from Heaven; the psychologists explain it as an hallucination born of collective hysteria; while the scientists assert that it is some sort of meteorological manifestation, etc., etc. The Ufologists, in their turn, support the theory that in reality the Virgin is an extra-terrestrial visitor and they offer various pieces of evidence in justification of this point of view.

There are a number of solid pieces of proof attesting to the ufological veracity of the so-called Marian Apparitions which are constantly occurring throughout the whole world. In recent times, the North-East of Brazil has been a frequent target of such phenomena. One of the areas of maximum incidence has been our northeastern State of Ceará, and principally in the vicinity of the town of Baturité. There have been hundreds of eyewitnesses who have seen - and many have also photographed and filmed - UFOs passing through the skies there, burning vegetation and causing climatic changes. But most impressive of all the evidence is the great number of contacts with aliens that have been recorded there by the groups of ufological investigators. [See issue No. 34 of Brazilian UFO Magazine, and the translations from it which have been published in FSR Vol.40, No. 4. ED.FSR.]

The fact of the matter is that a great many people have been perturbed by these "Apparitions of the Virgin", and the recent increase in such miraculous happenings has been sowing confusion right across the board among all sorts of folk from Italian Catholic authorities to even psychologists and sociologists, who attribute the

phenomenon of course to the crisis in present-day human society. For example, the sociologists link the tears of blood shed by the image of the Virgin in Siracusa (Italy, 1950s) to an electoral struggle that was raging with unparalleled violence at the time between Communists and Christian Democrats!

Nevertheless, the apparitions weren't as frequent then as they are now, and were then occurring only in a few places in the world.

## ASSESSING THE TOTAL

At the present time, the phenomenon is so widespread and so abundant, everywhere in the world, that not even the Church can keep a full record of it all. As

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# GIGANTIC "BAT-SHAPED UFO" OVER LONDON'S HEATHROW AIRPORT(1996)

For years past we have been receiving a stream of rumours and hear-say stories about mystery craft which seem to hang around and haunt such places as Britain's two big airports at Heathrow and Gatwick (and also, needless to say, other airports around the world.)

The British newspaper *The People* of July 7, 1996, carried such a report, about a giant "bat-shaped" UFO that was apparently watching as passenger aircraft were landing at Heathrow. The mystery craft was reportedly spotted by a London man and his wife as it passed over their home at Hammersmith.

Chris Rowe, aged 31, and his wife Leisa, 33, a trained nurse, told how they had watched with amazement as the UFO hovered beneath the principal glide-path of planes about to land at one of the world's busiest airports. They also claimed that they subsequently saw several military helicopters flying to and fro over the course followed by the big UFO.

The sighting allegedly had occurred as long ago as an evening in May, 1996. Mr. and Mrs. Rowe said that the "bat" was also seen by some of their friends.

Mr. Rowe said: "There was no engine noise from it; no flashing lights; nothing. It was a clear night, so

we got an excellent view of it. It was about 30 or 40 metres in length, and was surrounded by a bright white light. I telephoned to a friend who lives near the airport, and he and a colleague of his saw it more closely. It looked circular, but on closer inspection it had a bit missing... like the "Batman" symbol on TV. The Rowes made a video recording of the "bat", and watched it for about half an hour.

After that, they saw two more objects appear, one of them seemingly a smaller version of the "bat". Chris Rowe's friend said: "The smaller of these two other craft was performing aerobatics at an enormous speed. It was "looping the loop", and going from side to side and up and down, and was amazing. Then suddenly the other smaller object appeared, with two single flashing red lights. We thought it was a plane, until we realized it was going in the opposite direction to the flight-path."

The total sighting had lasted some 40 minutes. Was the "bat" simply another huge "FT"? (See the review of Omar Fowler's new Booklet, on Page 22) ■

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far as the top ecclesiastical hierarchy in Rome are concerned, all potential miracles must always be viewed with maximum prudence. They assert that about 90% of the phenomena reported as miraculous are either due to collective hysteria or have their origins in lies. In order to assess the veracity of those phenomena that they do regard as sacred the Church have established a commission which gives its verdict on each case. Obviously this has to pass through the sieve of various priests, bishops, and cardinals of the Vatican.

In Brazil, ours being a very "mystical" country, the phenomenon is interpreted in various ways. In the North-West, where the apparitions take place before thousands of poor, simple, uneducated folk, the religious myth prevails.

Nevertheless, there is intensive investigative work going on — performed by the UFO research groups sent there — most particularly our own CPU (Centre for UFO Research) - who report on the delicate shifts or changes in attitude of the local populations. The CPU is performing an important job by this sort of monitoring in the Serra de Baturité area of Ceará, just as another investigation group, the G-PAZ (Zenith Aerospace Research Group), are doing on the Chapada Diamantina (Diamantina Plateau) in the State of Bahia. Both groups are engaged in recording UFO phenomena and gathering statements from eyewitnesses ■

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