

JOURNAL FÜR UFO-FORSCHUNG, No. 207, 3/2013

ENGLISH SUMMARY

UFO observations (pp. 66-70)

This issue discusses two films taken of alleged UFO encounters. In the night of 4 to 5 March 2012, a whole Schwabsöien family noted a bright, point like UFO on the southern horizon and started to film. They stopped filming and went to sleep while the UFO was still present. The UFO changes colour, size, and at one time even appears to explode. An astronomical check showed that the light was the star Sirius, it's strange behaviour due to the autofocus of the camera attempting to get a clear image, and the colour change is due to the scintillation of the atmosphere.

A film taken on 1 June 2009 at Homburg (Saar), of the setting sun, shows a streak of light – obviously a lens flare.

New research in earthquake lights (pp. 70–71)

Following the 6 April 2009 L'Agila earthquake in Central Italy, Cristiano Fidani of Perugia University collected all reports about unusual light phenomena before, during and after the shocks. This article summarizes his published results.

On the problems of correlation in radar-visual UFO cases (pp. 72–75)

Hynek declared that radar-visual UFO cases appear to offer the greatest test as to their physical reality. However, as the author points out, there are problems with this idea. Some of the classic RV-cases, when closely scrutinized, show a temporal lapse of 10 minutes between the object observed and the radar traces noted. They also display different behaviour. A second problem is that of easy verification of radar traces and visual observations by each other: a radar screen is so full of responses, and the night sky so full of potential stimuli, that once confirmation is sought it will easily be found. Radar-visual cases, therefore, are little less than run-of-the-mill reports and finally rest upon the interpretation of the observer(s).

An airship crash near Potsdam in 1913 (pp. 76–81)

According to reports, an airship caught fire and crashed into a forest near Caputh, Prussia, on 12 March 1913. This incident was widely reported in the international papers at the time. The authors have tried to locate German sources to see if further details or possibly an explanation might be found. The result was that the crash was not reported in the local media, but only in smaller newspapers far from the location, with no follow-ups. One newspaper, however, carried a report (unrelated to the crash) that there had been military trials with balloon targets that were shot at with cannons at the time and place of the crash, and this is regarded as a possible solution to the enigma.

Notes on the “reflexive UFO research” (pp. 82–86)

The anthology “Jenseits der Denkverbote” is a first class collection of scientific papers, however, the hands-on aspects of actual UFO research is lost in the mainly theoretical assumptions; also, UFO is mainly defined as alien spaceship. Therefore, it is a good starting point for further ideas of how to design scientific UFO study, but not yet the real thing.

Reviews (pp. 87–96)

Nick Pope: Open Skies, Closed Minds: This book has almost become a classic. Reading it after all these years, it becomes evident how little we learn about the actual work of the UFO Desk and how much the MoD cases resemble those received by private investigation groups.